



God's Word from Little Flock Christian Fellowship - September 2011

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## THE DESERT SHALL REJOICE AND BLOSSOM

Rao Gollapalli

... the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose – Isaiah 35:1

And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, *shall be* grass with reeds and rushes - Isaiah 35:7

While these scriptures have a direct reference to the millennial kingdom of Lord Jesus Christ, they also speak about the transforming power of the Cross of Christ. One day the Lord shall visibly return to this earth; Satan, Antichrist and their associates will be defeated at the Armageddon battle. The Antichrist and his coworker, the False Prophet, will be thrown into the lake of fire, and then Satan will be bound and cast into the bottomless pit for one thousand years (Rev. 16:16; 19:20; 20:2). This war is not the end of all things. In fact, this is the beginning of the glorious kingdom of our Lord. The earth shall see the glory and honor of the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. As Paul says in Romans 8:21-22, due to sin the earth is presently groaning and travailing. The whole creation also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. But the prophecy of Isaiah (35:1) shall be fulfilled in the millennial rule of Christ. Earth shall indeed be renewed in such a way that the deserts shall become fruit bearing lands. And there shall be no parched grounds. The Sinai desert in Egypt stretches many miles between the Gulf of Aqabah in the East and Suez on the West. When you travel from the border city Eloth (Ezion-Geber - 1 Kings 9:26) in Israel towards Cairo in Egypt, you will be crossing this vast desert which even today remains barren. In 2009, my

wife and I had the privilege of driving through this desert from Sinai Mountain to Cairo. About 3,500 years ago, God led Israel through this desert to the Promised Land, and one day He will show them the same desert totally transformed by His divine presence on earth. As per the prophecy of Isaiah, one day this desert will be transformed into a land of wells and pools – a total transformation. The literal presence of Christ on earth will cause this amazing transformation. Where Christ reigns, there cannot be parched lands or lives. But we have to humbly confess that we have yet to see and understand the full meaning of Isaiah's prophecy. But let us not forget that Isaiah's prophecy is not just about transformation of earth under the millennial rule of Christ; more importantly it tells us about the transforming power of the cross that can renew human heart which is desperately wicked. The Lord Jesus Christ said, the human heart is filled with all kinds of evil (Matt. 15:19). The man possessed with evil spirits who wandered among tombs hurting himself (Mk. 5:1-20) displays clearly the inner nature of a man without Christ. But the same man was made a new person by the power of the voice of Christ causing wonder and amazement to the people around. Man without Christ is like a parched ground; dry and fruitless. He is like a land that is infested with dangerous dragons; his talk, his plans and his deeds hurt others. But when Christ comes into him,

the amazing transformation takes place in him without any intervention of human power. That is the power of the Cross of Christ!

Scripture says, “if any man be in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Cor. 5:17). A man in whose heart Christ dwells and rules is bound to be transformed; he is bound to blossom and bear fruit; he is bound to be a blessing to others. Indeed he is heaven bound! Bible has many illustrations to explain this truth. A man by name Saul was wasting his life in hunting for the followers of Christ, to kill them. One day his heart was touched by Christ and transformed him into a great apostle from whom came fourteen epistles (including Hebrews) with eternal truths which have become pillars of the church. A man who was a beggar from his childhood, lying at the Beautiful Gate of Jerusalem, became a worshipper of God, just by receiving the power of Jesus Christ our Lord. A woman by name Mary, resident of Magdala, a small town near the Sea of Galilee, was once possessed by evil spirits (Lk. 8:2). The voice of Christ gave her deliverance and made her an ardent follower of Jesus Christ and the first evangelist (John 20:17). What a change! Man cannot bring about such a change. A transformed sinner is not only blessed by the Lord, but shall become a blessing to others. There shall be joy and fruit in his life. This joy is unspeakable and full of glory as Apostle Peter tells us (I Peter 1:8). The lame man touched by the power of the Cross, leaped and jumped for joy which he never knew before (Acts 3:8). This marvelous transformation is possible because of the victory won by Christ on the cross of Calvary. On that day when Christ was hung on the cross, it appeared to man as a victory to the world and the devil. But, indeed it was a victory over the world and the devil. Today, as in the past, the preaching of the cross is foolishness to the world but to us who are saved it is indeed the power of God (I Cor 1:18).

If you are a believer in Christ, and if you are daily under his rule, you should be blossoming, and be like a fruitful land with joy overflowing from you to others. Every believer should have this testimony that he or she was at one time a desert – a parched land – a land infested with dragons, but now a new creation in Christ Jesus, bearing fruit and bringing glory to Him. The nature of dragons shall no more be in him. The world should be able to see in us this amazing transformation wrought by the power of the cross. If you have not yet experienced this transforming power of the Cross of Christ, you can have it now. The pow-

er of the Cross of Christ can reach out to any sinner in any condition. He promised: The desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose (Isaiah 35:1). Christ died and rose again from death to make this prophecy a reality for us. He has pronounced forgiveness on the cross. You can receive forgiveness of your sins by believing in Him. Say to him: “Lord, I believe that you have died on the cross for me, a sinner; please come into my life”. He is waiting to come into your life. Once He comes into your life, you will become a new person in Him; He will bless you and make you a blessing to others. Being transformed you will rejoice and blossom. The above prophecy of Isaiah can be your experience today. Please do not ignore this message. Come now to your Savior – The Lord Jesus Christ, Who loves you and gave Himself for you on the Cross of Calvary.

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## FISHERS OF MEN

*Brother Bakht Singh*

(Based on audio tapes containing his messages and testimony given in Europe and USA, and on Bro. Rao's personal conversations with Bro. Bakht Singh)

(Continued from last issue)

### Awakening in the city of Madras

By the year 1937, modernism and worldliness had spread among many Christian Missions in India. Pastors of several leading congregations in Madras (Chennai) were preaching against the doctrines like: Bible is the inspired Scriptures from God, virgin birth of Christ, the second coming of Christ, and atonement. This caused a great confusion and spiritual barrenness among many churches. But at the same time there were many people who were against such teachings and started meeting in small groups with much burden for prayer. They were praying fervently for a revival in the city. In September of 1938, when the Lord took me first time to Madras, we had gospel meetings for 19 days. There I could discern an unusual hunger for God's Word in many people. They flocked to attend the meetings in such numbers as I had never seen before in any part of India. The halls where the gospel meetings were held could not accommodate all the people. So much so, we had to remove benches (pews) from the meeting halls, so that people could sit on the floor. Even then many people had to stand outside listening to the messages. People of different

denominations attended those meetings. I could clearly see the Lord working in the hearts of those people. Seeing the hand of the Lord in those meetings, I felt in my spirit that the Lord was preparing this city for a bigger harvest and for something new. Please note, this was my first visit to Madras.

After those meetings I left Madras for the North. But many people of Madras began to write requesting me to visit Madras once again for a city-wide gospel campaign. But during those days there were spiritual needs in many other parts of India also. Earlier, we had many revivals given by the Lord in several cities of North India and Pakistan. But as letters from different church leaders continued to come for two years, requesting us to visit Madras again, I was constrained in the spirit to pray about it. This was like the Macedonian call which Apostle Paul had experienced when he was at Troas (Acts 16:8,9). Finally, after much prayer, my coworkers and I felt that the Lord would like us to visit Madras for a period of three months from July to September 1940.

Gospel meetings were held in various places of the city. Some of those places were: Tondiarpet, Purusawalkam, George Town, and Royapeta. We walked through the city in processions displaying gospel banners written in Tamill and English languages. This way of witnessing brought a great quickening among believers and others who were spiritually gone back. In those days we had frequent all-night and fasting prayer meetings. One evening, we had a bonfire in the city to burn sinful books, pictures and other articles of sin. Many people threw such books and articles into that fire. Those days, we had Bible studies early in the morning which people joyfully attended. In the gospel meetings, a large number of people received Christ and were saved. People bought all the Bibles available in the local Bible stores. As the Bible Society was not able to supply enough Bibles, people had to look for used Bibles in second hand book stores. Some of the brothers composed spiritual songs through which the Lord brought much life and revival into the meetings. Thus the city of Madras saw a great awakening from the Lord in the year 1940.

But some of the denominational leaders were not able to rejoice seeing those revivals. On the contrary they were angry that we were conducting the rival meetings in the city. In November 1940, the leaders of different denominations met together to discuss the situation. They resolved that if ever I should go again to Madras, I should be barred from preaching in any of their buildings. However, I myself had no plan to go to Madras and stay there, nor did I have any idea if the Lord would want me to be in South India for a prolonged period of time. At the end of our gospel campaigns in Madras, which lasted for three months, we returned to our ministry in North India. However, see-

ing the awakening in the city we knew that the Lord was preparing us for a ministry which at that time we knew not what. We realized that it was necessary that we wait upon Him until His plan in this regard was clearly revealed to us.

After that we continued our ministry in North India. After a while the Lord clearly spoke to me to go to Coonoor, a hill station in South India, to spend some time in prayer and waiting on the Lord. We went there in the month of May of 1941. In the mean time the opposition from the leaders of different denominations in Madras continued to increase. But that succeeded only in intensifying the spiritual hunger and zeal of many believers. Many had resolved to obey the word of God at any cost. On my way to Coonoor I had to pass through Madras. When my train reached Madras railway station, I found quite a number of believers on the platform waiting to see me. They began to request me to break my journey at Madras for conducting another gospel campaign. However, I had no peace in my heart about that proposal. I sensed there was danger in having such a campaign without a clear and definite guidance from the Lord. I could see that some of those friends wanted to arrange for more meetings just to oppose those who were unhappy about revival that broke out some time ago in that city. In essence, they wanted more meetings as a competition with the denominational leaders. Then we continued our journey to Coonoor. There the Lord gave us a blessed time of prayer for several days along with some fellow workers.

Finally, under the guidance of the Lord we returned to Madras and began to work there for the Lord.

*To be continued*

## *For Praise and Prayer*

Since our last issue of *The River of God*, by the grace of God we have been able to see the never failing hand of the Lord working in and through us in various ways.

By God's grace, my wife and I were able to participate in the youth camp at Hyderabad, India during the month of May. The theme of the camp was: *The Word of the Lord endureth for ever*- 1 Peter 1:25. Many young believers and unbelievers from different parts of the country attended the camp. Indeed the Lord was with us in those meetings and many received the Lord as their savior. Please continue to pray for the much needed follow up ministry among the youth in India. More than ever before, these

days there is need for us to pray and work among the youth. Today, the enemy is deceiving many young believers and making them spiritually inactive by drawing them into various subtle devices that defile them. We should pray that the Lord will make them overcomers, as Daniel was. It is my desire and prayer that the church today be more and more burdened about this matter. It is easy to satisfy ourselves seeing the success in our organizing various youth meetings and camps. But, our deep desire and burden should be to see these young men and women draw closer to the Lord and also understand the importance of being knit together with the church.

The Lord enabled us to arrange for a youth camp in Michigan during August 10-13. It was held at Faholo Conference center about 45 miles from our place. The theme for this camp was: *O God, thou hast taught me from my youth* Psalm 71:17. This was primarily for the youth of Little Flock; as such we had only a small group of about 30 in all. Since it was a small group we were able to work more closely with them. Almost all of them had opportunities to share their testimonies in the meetings. We had a busy schedule of meetings from 7:30AM to 8:30 PM on all those days. In the morning sessions we studied the lives of Samuel, David and Daniel; then in the evenings we had lessons drawn from the lives of the servants of God of 19th and 20th centuries, like Hudson Taylor. Also, we had special time for prayers in the afternoons. There was time for games before dinner. With all our hearts we thank God for those days of the youth camp. I can see clearly, the Lord is preparing these young men and women for a great ministry in the years to come. Please pray for them.

Believers from Canada, Detroit and East Lansing gathered for three days for prayer, from Sept 1 to 4, at the same conference center. We call it a Prayer Summit. The scripture that Lord gave us for these days was: *Watch and Pray* (Matt. 26:41). The believers opened their hearts in intercessory prayers with much burden. On Sept 3, we had a special meeting in the afternoon for couples. Everyone in the group prayed earnestly. We believe this ministry is vital these days as the devil is seriously attempting to disturb the peace in many Christian families. Once a family loses peace, the church will begin to be disturbed.

These days, we have monthly gospel meetings in the Michigan State University, East Lansing. Students from different countries attend these meetings. Besides singing and sharing the gospel with the students, we arrange dinner for them. Little Flock brothers and sisters are prayerfully participating in this ministry. We are currently seeking the Lord's guidance for starting a similar ministry in the University of Michigan and also in the Eastern Michigan University which are not very far from our place. Please pray for this ministry.

God willing, my wife and I shall be attending Special Meetings in New Delhi from 3rd to 9th of October. Thereafter, God willing, we shall be visiting my brother in Vizianagaram and may visit Hyderabad for a couple of days. Also, God willing, we shall be with the believers in London, UK and Holland from 21 – 28 of October, and then be back in Michigan on the 29th. We shall greatly appreciate your prayers for us. We both have some physical ailments, but the Lord is good. Indeed His mercies are new every morning! As I write this letter I am reminded of the words of exhortation from Apostle Paul:

*“And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things may abound in every good work” – 2 Cor. 9:8.*

Please pray for the ministry in Canada. The believers of Antioch Christian Fellowship are now worshipping in a rented building near Toronto. This place is available to them from 2 PM only, which is not very convenient for them. The Marriott hotel where they were gathering earlier has been under construction for a few months. They are now looking for a place, preferably the same Marriott Hotel, so that they can meet again in the mornings on Sundays. Please pray for them.

There is no better work than the work in the Lord's vineyard. Thank God for every opportunity He gives us to labor with Him. Thanks for standing with us in prayer as we together serve the Lord in these last days.

Praise the Lord!

*Brother Rao Gollapalli*