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SATHTHIYA

VAARTHAI

IBT Founder (Late) Rev. Prof. S. Panneer Selvam

WORD OF TRUTH -
PUBLICATION OF INDIAN BIBLE TRANSLATORS

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SOLDIER OF THE CROSS

"Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (II Tim. 2:3).

Golda Meir, the late Prime Minister of Israel, once made a bold and pragmatic statement that the Israel Nation cannot afford for a civilian to be born in its soil. The tiny but strong country of Israel is surrounded by a host of hostile nations around. Sensing the impending perennial danger, she was prompted to make that statement. "Yes! Every child, male or female when grown, must be drafted into the Army of Israel nation". In the same way, there is a spiritual war going on in this world. From the day Lucifer, the leader of the fallen Angelic host, rebelled against God, a state of war had been declared in heaven against the devil and his agents.

This spiritual war between the hosts of heaven and the Satanic forces, has been going on in this Earth, even before the creation of Adam. This spiritual war has far-reaching consequences and involves far more precious souls and eternal lives of

billions of human beings at stake, than the war of Israel.

When we accept Jesus Christ in our hearts as Saviour and become his followers, we are drafted into His army as soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ. What a great privilege to be a soldier under the banner of the Army, whose captain and commander is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ! We are called upon to put on His armour and become co-warriors with Him, in vanquishing His enemies and extending His Kingdom on the earth. We cannot afford to betray the sacred trust that God has placed on us. We must remain loyal to His calling, obedient to the core and faithful in every bit of our service to Him. We must keep every word of His command and precept.

I. IMPLICIT OBEDIENCE

How to be a good and successful soldier of the Lord Jesus Christ? The first requirement that makes one a good soldier of

any Army, is implicit obedience. Somebody has well said that 99% obedience is disobedience. This attitude of half-hearted obedience can be seen from the life of King Saul in I Samuel - 15th Chapter. God commanded Saul, the first King of Israel, to go and fight against the Amalakites and destroy them, men and women, infant and sucklings and their oxen, sheep and asses. But when God gave Saul victory over the Amalakites, he and his people spared Agag, the enemy king and the best of the sheep and the oxen. This grieved the heart of God and God sent Samuel, the prophet to rebuke the erring King with the following words. *"To obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams"* (I Sam 15:22).

Partial obedience is no good for a soldier of God. I remember the story of a King who was winning many battles, though his was a small army. Some body asked the king what was the secret of his strength. To demonstrate to the visitor the strength of his army, he called one of his soldiers and commanded him to go to the top of the building and jump down. Immediately the Soldier obeyed. The valiant soldier didn't hesitate, didn't look back to verify whether the King is playing a joke with him or probably after going half way, the king would call him back. There is a beautiful song that eloquently illustrates this point.

I have decided to follow Jesus (3)
No turning back, no turning back
The cross before me, the world behind me
No turning back, No turning back

All true and loyal soldiers of the cross and those who love and respect the captain of our Salvation must gladly declare, "we will

obey at any cost; we will go anywhere He commands us to go without questioning; we will carry out His errands to its minutest details, whatever befalls on us. We are His to command". Remember that a true Christian is a soldier in the front line and not on the side line.

II. ARMOUR OF GOD

A soldier must be well armoured and equipped. During China's invasion of India in 1962, India suffered a humiliating defeat, when Jawaharlal Nehru was the Prime Minister. The reason for this humiliating defeat of Indian Army was that the Indian soldiers were not properly equipped with Armours. Immediately the then defence Minister V.K. Krishna Menon tendered his resignation. For a soldier in the Army of God, the Bible provides all the Armour he needs in his fight against the satanic forces. The following scriptures give a graphical description of a typical soldier of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness. And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith

ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation; and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (Eph. 6:10-17).

In the above scriptures, God has provided five fold armour for His soldiers. Let us see one by one.

II (a) LOINS GIRT ABOUT WITH TRUTH

Jesus said, *"ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free"* (John 8:32).

Very often, we know certain portion of the scripture but we do not quite understand the truth it illustrates. I would like to define 'truth', as the word of God properly interpreted and taught, and its truth understood and grasped. We should not be easily swayed and tossed about by every wind of doctrine that floats in the space of Christendom. When we do not understand the word of God properly, the Truth belt around our loins also gets loosened and we are found naked. We must read, study and meditate the word of God and we must be illuminated by every facet of its truth.

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season, his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. (Ps. 1:1-3).

II (b) BREAST-PLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

The second armour God gives us, is the breast-plate of righteousness (Eph. 6:14).

Soldiers put on their breast-plate to protect their heart from the attack of the enemy. Here, Paul compares the righteousness figuratively to the breast-plate. Then next logical question is how do we get our righteousness?

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (Rom. 10:10).

In this verse, Paul tells us about 'believing in our heart' and 'confessing through our mouth'. Our mouth confession ensures heart's protection. This means that we should not harbour any unconfessed sins residing in our hearts.

I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. (Ps. 32:5).

He that covereth his sins shall not prosper : but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. (Prov. 28:13).

II (c) FEET SHOD WITH READINESS - EVER READY SHOES

The third armour we should have is found in Eph. 6:14. The translation of this verse in King James Version is not so good. If we read this verse in Good News Bible, it says,

Stand ready with truth as a belt tight around your waist, with righteousness as your breast-plate and as *your shoes, the readiness to announce the Good News of Peace.*

We get the meaning of the above verse as, our feet must be fitted with the shoes marked as "Ever ready to march on Master's orders". I used to wonder why Paul should 'indulge' in comparing our readiness to go for Master's business to a shoe. Then the following thought dawned on me after a moment of reflection. The reason is very simple. Supposing you have a nice shoe. Since you are the owner and you have paid the price for the same, it is natural for you to use the shoe on any day at any time, on any road. It will never say "Please don't use me today. I am dead tired of carrying you, especially last night when you took me through a rough and dirty road. Atleast tell me before you could use me, by which road you are going - whether a rough road or a nice road".

Of course, no shoe will talk like this. But we, the children of God, give all sorts of lame excuses when God wants us to go for His work. How often we have told Him, "Oh, Lord! I am very much tired. I am not in good moods. My family situation is not conducive right now to do your ministry. I am not well prepared" and so on and on. But a good soldier will never give any excuse. As a good soldier of the Lord Jesus Christ, let us be always ready for the Master's business. Stop giving lame excuses.

'Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season', 'Redeeming the time, because the days are evil' (2 Tim 4:2; Eph. 5:16).

Remember that God is not looking for your ability but only for your availability.

II (d) SHIELD OF FAITH

The fourth armour God gives to His soldiers is the shield of Faith (Eph. 6:16). Paul tells us that this shield of Faith is to quench all the fiery darts of the devil.

The most important armour for a soldier of Christ is the shield of faith. This shield of faith is to be deployed against the fiery darts of the devil. Our enemy, the devil often indulges in throwing at us many arrows and darts constantly. These arrows and darts will be in the form of doubts, fears, discouragements, trials and temptations. Oral Roberts, the great man of God in this century, once said, "Fear came and knocked at the door very often. But I sent my faith to answer there is none inside; you can go". Yes! when fear and doubt come and knock at the door of our faith life, we should not go but rather send our faith to answer it.

Once Jesus and his disciples were sailing in a ship. Jesus said, "*Let us pass over unto the other side*" (Mk. 4:35-40). The Bible tells us that Jesus, now physically worn out and exhausted, was sleeping at the bottom of the ship. There arose a great storm of wind and the ship was tossed about. This teaches us two important spiritual lessons. Even though they were going at the command of Jesus, storm arose. Sometime in our lives, whenever we meet a storm, we immediately doubt whether we are going against God's will and His chosen path. Here is a Biblical instance to prove that a mere meeting of a storm, does not prove that we are going against the will of God. Sometimes it is the other way.

The storm proves that we are going according to the command of Jesus. Another point is that the storm arose even though Jesus was in the ship. Now the disciples were in trouble. They simply forgot the words of Jesus, "Let us go over to the other side". They should have remembered, "To go over to the other side, they need not go under". When faith flees, fear fills our hearts. When faith recedes from us, slowly and steadily fear closes in and approaches us. The disciples were filled with fear and awoke Jesus and said "*Master, carest thou not that we perish?*" (Mk 4:38). Very selfish disciples. If the ship is sunk, it is Jesus who will be sunk first. Probably they thought that some-how Jesus will escape, but only they will be drowned.

Jesus arose and rebuked the wind first bringing peace and serenity. Then Jesus rebuked the disciples "*why are you so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?*".

Probably the disciples had left their faith on the shore itself. This is no use. We need the faith most when we meet the storm. Very often, people hear inspiring messages in the Church full of faith but when they get home, unfortunately, they leave their faith in the Church.

II (e) HELMET OF SALVATION

The next day I returned home from my two months foreign trip, I took my scooter and went to the town. Though I had my helmet, I never bothered to put on my helmet because it is a big nuisance. So I was riding my scooter as usual without my helmet. As I was approaching the town, I saw almost all the scooter riders wearing helmet, an unusual sight for me. I grew suspicious and stopped one scooter rider and asked him, 'whether

any law has been enforced to wear helmet for the scooter rider'. Then I was informed that the previous month it has been enforced and he informed me, "If you don't wear a helmet, you will be heavily penalised". Then I had almost reached the town and it is not worth returning home. So every police I met, I had to tell him my position. It became so difficult to tell every red headed person I met on my way. So I stopped my scooter at some place and walked the remaining distance to the Church service I wanted to attend.

After this incident, I always do remember to put on my helmet before I take my scooter. This incident can teach us some spiritual lessons. As I was unaware of the passing of the Government law concerning the helmet for scooter-riders and its penalty, many Christians are ignorant of the Law of Heaven and eternal punishment for failing to wear the helmet of salvation.

In many crusades, big meetings and camps, I have frequently come across one type of Christians. These Christians will be very zealous for God, very hard working and doing a lot of work for the crusade and camp. But if you happen to ask them when they got saved and how they accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour, they will be simply blinking. Once I happened to meet one such Christian in one such big meeting. When I asked him when and how he got saved, he said, "I do not have such a salvation experience, but I regularly come and attend this meeting".

I noticed another point. Just as I felt it was a nuisance to put on the helmet before riding the scooter, these unsaved Christians also feel annoyed and uncomfortable if some

one asked them, "Are you saved?". John Wesley was very busy in doing God's work for many years without the personal experience of salvation. Then God met him, converted him and used him as a mighty instrument.

Dear reader, may be you are one among those Christians who are busy doing God's work, riding the scooter of active service of God. Better you check up whether you have put on the helmet of salvation. In some cities, the police penalises the scooter rider without helmet, by handing over another helmet for the actual price. So if heavenly police on the earth viz. God's workers here, might encounter and interrogate you to-day, do not feel annoyed. If they offer you the helmet of salvation, get the helmet of salvation by paying the price of confessing and forsaking your sins today.

What is the motive behind the strict enforcement of the law forcing every scooter rider to wear the helmet? Obviously, it is for the safety of the rider. Usually, the head injuries even in a minor accident prove to be fatal. Similarly, Heaven is concerned about its citizens on the earth and about their safety.

Without having the experience of salvation, we can not be recruited into the Army of Jesus Christ. What danger would befall on an individual who tries to do God's ministry without salvation experience, and what dire consequences will happen, can be understood from the incident as recorded in Act 19:13-16.

Here we read about certain vagabond Jews, exorcists, who were trying to do God's work; a very good intention indeed, but without real faith and salvation experience in

their personal life. These exorcists tried to cast out the devil from a man possessed with evil spirit with the following words, "*we adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches*". The result was disastrous. The man possessed with evil spirit, leaped on these vagabond Jews with the words, "*Jesus I know and Paul I know but who are you?*". They fled out of the house naked and wounded.

Dear reader, are you saved? Are you sure that your sins have ben forgiven? If you are not sure, then you seriously ponder over this most important issue in your life and settle it today. The Bible warns you, "*Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation*" (II Cor. 6:2). Do not try to postpone it. To-morrow may not come. Any undue delay on your part may bring fatal consequences in your eternity. You are here today, but you may be gone tomorrow. And that one day will make the everlasting difference between hell and heaven. God says' "Don't postpone" But Satan says, "Not today, procrastinate!" "Whom are you going to listen to?". I hope that you would listen to God's counsel and obey Him.

II (f) SWORD OF THE SPIRIT - THE WORD OF GOD

The Sixth armour that God gives us is the word of God - The sword of the spirit.

All the other armours we have seen so far viz. the Truth, the breast-plate of righteousness, the shield of faith, the shoes of being ever ready for God's work, and the helmet of salvation - all of these come under the category of "Defensive weapons". These defensive weapons help in protecting us. But a true soldier must be ready not only to defend himself, but he must possess offensive weapons also. Unless we deploy our offensive

weapons, Satan will always continue to fight with us. If you want him to take to his heels, you have to use the only offensive weapon viz. the word of God. Sometimes offence is the best defence.

Once Martin Luther was troubled by Satan. Satan brought a big list of sins committed by Martin Luther and told him : "You have committed such a numerous sins and yet claim yourself as a saved saint of God!" Really, Martin Luther was caught on the wrong foot and he could not answer. When Satan came next time, he got the list from Satan and wrote the following verse across the big list: "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all our sins". Of course, Satan took to his heels and fled away.

Jesus, when he was tempted in the wilderness, employed the same technique. Every time Satan encountered Jesus, He always said "It is written" "It is written". "It is written". It is incredible to think that Jesus the God-head of wisdom and knowledge, did not choose to use His own words to answer the devil, but always used the scripture to answer the devil. So let us always use the word of God to defeat Satan.

Though God has given us all armours, both defensive and offensive, we must not fail to note here that God has not provided any weapon to protect our back. We have to resist the devil and he must flee. We should not flee, lest our unprotected back be exposed to the attack and assail of the devil.

III. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Samuel Logan Brengle, one of the greatest soldiers of the Salvation Army, went

to the International Head Quarters of Salvation Army in June 1887. He was met by General Booth, the founder of Salvation Army. Looking at him, General Booth commented, "Brengle, you belong to the dangerous classes. You have been your own boss for so long, that I don't think you will want to submit to Salvation Army discipline. We are an Army, and we demand absolute obedience".

To this, the raw recruit Samuel Brengle replied, "I have received the Holy spirit as my sanctifier and guide. I feel He has led me to offer myself to this great Army. Give me a chance".

The training period was torturing, but Brengle stood that litmus test. Every morning his first duty was to polish the boots of his fellow cadets and in that lowly service, he found sweet fellowship with the Saviour and after many years of such training, God used Samuel Brengle as a mighty instrument for the salvation of thousands of souls around the world.

Before we ask, "Oh, God use me", we must pray, "Oh, Lord, make me usable".

The loftiest motto for a soldier has been immortalized by the following statement of C.T. Studd, one of the greatest soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ, "If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for Him".

Endure hardness as a good soldier of the Lord Jesus Christ. (II Tim. 2:3).

Article based on the message given at Logos '96 by

- **Rev. Prof. S. PANNEER SELVAM**

NEWS LETTER

Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ,

Greetings to you in the Sweet Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

The One who lead us as Ebenezer for the last two months of this New Year 2018, will surely lead us in this third month as well, with His abundant Grace. All glory and honour be unto Him alone! God who called us is True and Mighty, to lead us till the end. The Lord's Word *'is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path'* (Ps. 119:105) and shall prevent our feet from dashing against a stone (Ps. 91:12).

He assured Joshua: *"as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee; I will not fail thee nor forsake thee"*. (Joshua 1:5). Similarly, He will be with us, not only throughout this month, but also in all the days to come and will surely guide us. Glory and Praise to Him alone!

God has given us innumerable Promissory verses in His Holy Bible. *"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away"* (Mtt.24:35) said Jesus. It is not enough if only a section of people receive these priceless Promises, but it should reach to all sections of people, speaking various languages, so that they too can enter the Promised Eternal Kingdom. This is how God revealed His Will to our Founder Director, Rev. Prof. S. Panneer Selvam. Obeying that divine vision and commission, our Ayyah founded the Indian Bible Translators, to undertake the great task of translating the Holy Bible into many Indian languages in which there was not even a portion of the Bible was available. At present, IBT is carrying on translation of the

Holy Bible into 37 minor Indian languages. New Testament has been released in 10 languages by IBT. Very soon, we are looking forward eagerly and prayerfully, to come out with Full Bible in at least two languages in this year. We still need translators in 16 more languages. Would you please pray for this and partake in meeting the various needs and requirements?

From 12th to 16th February 2018, Rev. Subramanian, Senior Translations Advisor of the Bible Society of India, undertook checking of New Testament in 2 languages and review of translated portions of Old Testament in 9 languages along with the respective language translators of IBT. Rev. Premraj Nag, Senior Translations Advisor of BSI undertook checking of New Testament translated into Mundari language, from 19th to 24th February 2018.

Bro. S. Rajasekaran explained about IBT's Ministries and gave God's message in both the services on Sunday, the 28th January 2018 in the CSI Christ Church, at Trichy Road. On 16th, 17th and 18th February 2018, Sister Sujana Raja gave God's message in the Lent Convention Meetings of CSI Immanuel Church at Picham Palayam, Tirupur and on the same days, Bro. Simon explained about IBT Ministries and shared the Word of God in the Lent Convention Meeting of CSI Church at Slater Puram, Perundurai. Bro. Simon explained about IBT Ministries and shared the Word of God on 23rd and 24th February 2018 and Prof. Dr. Vanaraj gave God's message on 25th February 2018 in the Lent Convention Meeting

of CSI Church at Mopperi Palayam. We thank the Church Presbyters and Pastoral Committee members of these churches for giving an opportunity to IBT in their respective churches.

School and College Examinations will be taking place in the months of March and April. We keep praying for all the children writing the examinations. Dear students, write your examinations prayerfully and boldly without fear. The Lord will abide with you. He will enable you to remember all that you have studied. He will help you to solve and answer even tough

questions. He will give you victory. Let not your heart be troubled. Believe in God. God will surely bless you.

Dear readers, pray for the children writing various examinations, for IBT staff, and for the growth of IBT Ministries and for the speedy completion of Bible translation in various languages.

Yours in the service of Christ.

- **Bro. R. Johm William**

ONE-DAY MEET ON 26-01-2018

By the abundant Grace of the Lord, a One-day Family Meet of the Indian Bible Translators, Coimbatore, was held on Friday, the 26th January 2018 (Republic Day) in the Church complex of CSI Christ Church at Trichy Road, Coimbatore. Rev. H. John Gunaseelan, Presbyter and Chairman of CSI Christ Church, Trichy Road, Coimbatore, presided over the meeting. The meeting commenced at 10-00 a.m. with prayer by Bro. R. John William (Secretary, WPT). Bro. Devadas and his troupe lead the meeting in praise and worship with devotional songs.

IBT President, M. John William, while welcoming Rev. John Gunaseelan to preside over the meeting, mentioned that CSI Christ Church of whom he is the Chairman, are supporting over 100 missionaries and have been continuously been supporting 3 missionaries of IBT, by their regular monthly support. On behalf of IBT, he thanked Rev. Gunaseelan for permitting IBT to hold this meeting in their Church complex and for consenting to preside over the same.

Two little girls, Gidhiyal Sharon and Catherinal Sharon, rendered a melodious welcome song in English and the entire gathering admired their sweet voice. On behalf of IBT, Bro. John Sekar welcomed all the distinguished guests as well as all who were present for the gathering. Bro. Simon sang a Hindi song for the glory of God, along with its translation in Tamil, encouraging everyone present.

President M. John William explained about IBT very briefly. Sister Poonkili along with her husband Siriraj, sang sweetly in 'Toda' language to glorify the name of God. Then Sister Poonkili shared her testimony about her translation ministry - how much she had to struggle and overcome opposition from 'Toda' speaking community and successfully completed the translation of New Testament in 'Toda' language which was released by the Grace of God on 27th August 2017. She read out from Toda N.T. verses John 1:1 and 3:16 and requested the gathering to pray for her ministry, her family and for the salvation of 'Toda' community.

ONE-DAY MEET PHOTOS



Rev. H. John Gunaseelan giving his Presidential address



Little Girls singing melodeously



Sister Sujana Raja giving her Special Message



Dr. Prof. Vanaraj explaining IBT Ministries



'Toda' language translator Sister Poonkili giving testimony



Participants in the Meet

Then, Dr. Vanaraj (Retired Principal) introduced in detail about IBT ministries. He pointed out that IBT is providing 'life' to the 'lifeless' by giving the Holy Bible to many people in their own mother tongue. Hence it is a very honourable and respectable ministry. Apart from translation of the Bible, IBT is also rendering Missionary work, Church planting, Children's Home, Social work such as helping the blind, Imparting training to women in Tailoring, Knitting and Computer. In the Literary field, IBT is publishing and making available various spiritually-inspiring books written by our Founder Rev. Prof. S. Panneer Selvam Ayyah, and publishing the monthly magazine, "Saththiya Vaarthai" in Tamil and English. Before concluding, he appealed to the gathering - "In what way can we contribute to this IBT ministries? Yes, in three ways. Firstly we can pray, secondly we can support by our monetary contributions, and thirdly, by associating ourselves with IBT, either as a Staff member or as a voluntary Representative. You may give your share as the Holy Spirit may lead you."

Then, Pastor Yesian prayed for the Message of God and Sister Sujana Raja gave the special message of the meeting. "Just as an ambassador of a country is well-versed and aware of his own country's policies, its approach to various issues, its life-style, etc. so also, we who are called as 'Ambassadors for Christ', are expected to be mature with the knowledge of

Christ and His Teachings and abide by them, doing only what pleases Him. As per Matthew 5:14, we are expected to be the 'Light of the world'. We see in Genesis Chapter 11, that because of the pride of men, God confused the language of man, which was one in the beginning, and made it many, causing men to separate from one another. Now by His Word, God wants to unite all men, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, God has called us to be the "Light of the world" and shine as 'Ambassadors for Christ'. There are four things we have to follow so as to shine as 'Ambassadors for Christ': 1. See as Jesus saw. 2. Live a life of Testimony as how Jesus lived unblemished. 3. Lead others in their lives as Jesus lead the people. 4. Grow more in His knowledge and fulfill the responsibility entrusted to us. Let us seek the help of the Holy Spirit to enable us to become true 'Ambassadors for Christ' and shine before this world." The message inspired one and all in the gathering.

After the message, the gathering gave their 'offering' while a devotional song was sung. Bro. Lazar Stephen prayed for the Offering. Bro. Christopher gave the vote of thanks. Bro. Devadas rendered a song and prayed the final prayer. Pastor Stephen Francis gave the benediction. The meeting concluded at 1-45 p.m. and food was served for all present.

- Bro. Simon

CONDOLENCE

We regret the sad demise of Mrs. Saral Chiththirai Pandiyan, mother of Bro. Mohan C. Lazarus of Jesus Redeems Ministries, who entered into Eternal Sleep on 1st November 2017. On behalf of Indian Bible Translators, we express our heart-felt condolences to Bro. Mohan C. Lazarus and the members of his family and pray God to comfort the bereaved family.

FIELD NEWS

Translator : Bro. M. Chandran
Mission Field : Aruvangadu (Tamil Nadu)
Language : Badaga

I praise God for the translation work in Badaga language which has been going on unhindered by the grace of our Lord.

Preliminary language-checking is completed in the books of Old Testament - I Kings 6:1 to 22:40. For this, we compared with various Bible versions such as GNB and CEL in English, and CL version and New Translation in Tamil. They have been keyed-in Computer as well. Exegetical checking could be completed by the Senior Translations Advisor of BSI, in respect of some books of the Old Testament - from Isaiah to Malachi except for Lamentations. For these, corrections are yet to be carried out in the Computer. For the remaining 16 books of the Old Testament, we are keeping ourselves ready for BSI exegetical checking, which may take place any time at a short notice. Hence, pray for us to complete in time, our language checking, keying-in work, basic formation of sentences in Badaga, care regarding Poetry books, applying proper uni-code/slash code, etc.

Missionary : Bro. K. Lokesh
Mission Field : H.D. Kotte (Karnataka)

Glory be to the Holy name of our Lord! By the grace of Christ, I could visit 15 villages last month, to preach the Gospel without any obstacles. The places are - Hegdapura, Madupura, K. Belthur, Mamir Halli, KG Halli, SP

Road, Bhaskar Colony, N Bazaar, Kanagun Halli, Bergam Pali and Gurappura Housing Colony. I met many people, preached the Gospel and prayed for them. After conducting Sunday Worship Services, I also conduct Sunday School for children. Children recite the Bible verses by-heart in these classes. 20 persons participated in the Fasting Prayer Meeting on Second Saturday. 35 believers participated in the Communion Service on Second Sunday. During Sunday evening house visits, I prayed for persons who were possessed by evil spirits and the Lord gracefully delivered them. Please pray for my ministry and for my family.

Missionary : Bro. Israel Edla
Mission Field : Kondapuri (Odisha)

Glory be to the Holy name of our Lord! By the abundant grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, I could well carry out my missionary work last month. I preached the Gospel in 20 villages and met many people. I distributed New Testament translated by IBT into Mirgan and Deshia languages. I newly met brothers Shankar, Baliram, Gana, Samthu, Kethra, Neelam, Jagdish, Mohinder, Barsati, and sister Devaki who received the books eagerly, and heard the Gospel with enthusiasm. I prayed for them to grow in the Lord. Sunday Services and Second Saturday Fasting Prayer were conducted at IBT church at the Konda Puri mission station. We prayed for IBT Ministries, Management, Staff and Supporters. Meeting of our missionaries were held in IBT mission stations at Bodo Masigon, and Attigon. We prayed for getting land with 'patta', for building a church at Attigon. Pray for my ministry and for my family.

Translator : Bro. Paramesh
Mission Field : Shirlakoppa (Karnataka)
Language : Lambani

Glory be to the Holy name of the Lord! Language checking and keying-in computer, of the New Testament translated into Lambani language, could be completed in respect of Matthew Chapters 22 to 27. I visited villages Kottokeri, Rangoppa, Chikkeri, Hirmagadi, Sigmagadi, Sivali, Bilki, Shirolu, Udukani, Sansikoppa, Pindakatti, Belvandoppa, Ambarkoppa, Paloor, Sadapur and Bogi, preaching the Gospel. I met new believers Ganesh, Nilappa, Nethra, Jeyakumar, Renuka, Lakshmi, Jayant, Abhishek, Puneet Babu, Nisha and Saraswathi and encouraged them to grow in the Lord. Sunday Worship Services and Second Saturday Fasting Prayer were conducted regularly, apart from cottage prayers. Please pray for my translation work and for my family.

Missionary : Bro. Chandrika Das
Mission Field : Selampur (U.P.)

Greetings in the sweet name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

By the abundant grace of our Lord, I visited villages Siddhapur, Haveria, Ramlakhan, Savasha, Bardua, Jairam Gawaria and Selampur. Preaching the Gospel, I also distributed 300 tracts. I gave Gospel books in Bhojpuri language to Sugankumar, Narmada, Minadevi, Arunkumar, Susheela Devi, Manojkumar, Ugankumar and Sanjaykumar, who received the gospel with enthusiasm. Rajendra Babu, Laldi Devi, Sanjay kumar and Amar have expressed willingness to take Baptism. I shared the Word of God during the Sunday Services at Selampur Church. One Bro. Kiyumu and his family are causing a lot of

hindrances to us. Pray God that this family should repent and accept the Lord.

Translator : Sis. Devesh Kumari
Mission Field : Chattarpur (M.P.)
Language : Bundeli

Glory be to the Holy name of our Lord!

By the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, I am carrying out translation work in Bundeli language. Last month, I translated from the Old Testament - book of Jeremiah from Chapter 27:16 to 36:15. Every month, Fasting Prayer Meeting is conducted on Second Saturday and we pray for IBT Ministries, Office Bearers, Translators, Missionaries, Promotional Staff and for the Children's Home at Bappen Palli. Sunday Worship Services are conducted in Saura Road and Gautam Nagar mission stations. Please pray for the early release of New Testament in Bundeli language, for my translation work and for my family.

Promotional Staff : Bro. Christopaul
Mission Field : Tirupur (Tamil Nadu)

By the abundant grace of God, last month I could carry out my ministry in a blessed manner. I praise God for the same. In the Fasting Prayer of Fourth Saturday, prayers were made for IBT ministries, staff and believers. I visited 18 villages and collected contributions for IBT from 118 families, 5 of them are supporting our children at the Home in Bappen Palli, Odisha. God blessed me to give His message in the churches of CSI at Kovil Pudur, Sirukalanji and Dalawai Palayam. Many families enthusiastically supported IBT ministries and liberally gave for Christmas Gifts to IBT Missionaries / staff. Please pray for the growth and expansion of IBT Ministries, my ministry and for my family.

STEPS LEADING TO SALVATION

The sinner cannot be converted until he is convicted of his sins. He will not be convicted until he is awakened to his lost condition. The Spirit of God uses three things to awaken the sinner:

1) He uses the godly, transformed lives of Christians to cause the sinner to see that they have something that he needs. Jesus said, *“Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has lost its savor – it is good for nothing.”*

(2) God uses Spirit-filled intercessors to awaken sinners. We often wonder why more people are not saved. God is having trouble finding intercessors. *“And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none”* (Ezek. 22:30).

(3) God uses a witness to awaken sinners. This witness may be an evangelist preaching to the throngs or may be an individual Christian witnessing to another individual. Jesus said, *“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.”* Christ must be lifted up so that men will be drawn unto Him.

THE SINNER MUST BE CONVINCED OF HIS SINS

There can be no genuine conversion apart from conviction of sin. In our zeal to get converts we have preached an easy believism which has filled our churches with professors of Christ instead of possessors of Christ. The law is a tool in the hands of the Holy Spirit to convict men of sin. The law was given *“that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God”* (Rom. 3:19). *“By the law is knowledge of sin”* (Rom. 3:20). Paul, the champion of grace, said, *“I had not known sin but by the law”* (Rom. 7:7). Please do not

misunderstand – Paul did not teach, nor are we teaching, that we are justified by the law or that we are to live under the law. At the close of his masterpiece on justification by faith, Paul concluded: *“that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law”* (Rom. 3:28). He then raises the question, *“Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law”* (Rom. 3:31). In what sense did Paul establish the law? Putting it in its proper place to be used as a tool of the Holy Spirit in convicting men of sin. Therefore, Paul could say, *“The law is holy, and the commandment is holy, and just, and good”* (Rom. 7:12).

THE SINNER MUST REPENT OF HIS SINS

The New Testament clearly teaches that men must repent of their sins if they are to be saved. Jesus did not come to save us in our sins, but to save us from our sins. Jesus said, *“Repent ye, and believe the Gospel”* (Mark 1:15). When people told Him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices, Jesus said, *“Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all Galileans because they suffer such things? I tell you, Nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish”* (Luke 13:2,3). Peter preached, *“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out”* (Acts 3:19). He commanded Simon the sorcerer to repent of his wickedness (Acts 8:22). When Paul preached on Mars Hill, he said, *“And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent”* (Acts 17:30). Paul reminded the Ephesian elders that he had preached, *“repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ”* (Acts 20:21). When Paul preached before King Agrippa, he reminded them that he preached to both Jews and Gentiles, *“that they should repent*

and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance" (Acts 26:20). Repentance means an about face. When a man repents, he turns to God from his sins.

SAVING FAITH

Now that the sinner has been convicted of his sin and has repented of his sin, he is ready to exercise saving faith. The New Testament is filled with references teaching that men are saved by faith or by believing. The Holy Spirit is careful to make it plain that the faith that saves us is from the heart and not from the head. Saving faith must be a faith that changes and transforms the life. Any other faith is dead and cannot save. While it is true that we are not saved by understanding but by faith, it is also true that faith that saves must be intelligent. The sinner must understand that the Lord Jesus Christ died on the Cross in his place and stead. He must understand that God forgives him on the basis of what Christ has done for him, and not on the basis of his own works. He must

understand that he becomes a Christian by inviting the living Christ to come into his heart.

Many splendid illustrations can be given of saving faith. Suppose that a man is trapped on the third floor of a burning building. Every avenue of escape has been cut off, and he seems doomed to die. As he cringes on a window sill with the flames ever creeping more closely to him, the firemen come and stretch a net below him. They shout, "*Jump into the net and you will be saved*". He looks at the net and believes that it is a good net. He looks at the firemen and believes that they are strong, sincere men interested in his welfare. He believes that if he will jump he will be saved. But all this believing will not save him. If he is to be saved, he must jump into the net. In the same way, it is not enough for the sinner to believe many good things about Christ, he must cast himself completely on Christ.

- Excerpts from the book
'The Anchor of Hope' by Homer Duncan

THANKS

We sincerely thank from the depth of our heart all the readers and supporters who responded generously to our appeal and contributed liberally towards Christmas Gift for all our missionaries and staff members.

- Indian Bible Translators

PRAY AND PRAISE

1. Last month, a Training-cum-counseling review meeting of IBT Translators in respect of the 10 languages in which we have already released New Testament, under the guidance of BSI Senior Translations Advisor, was held at IBT Centre, Coimbatore. Translators from different states participated. Praise God for enabling their safe journey. Please pray

that the participants should carry out their work as per the guidelines given in the meeting, with burden, responsibility and eagerness, so that with the help of the wisdom granted by the Holy Spirit, they may be in a position to strive for the completion of the translation of the entire Bible and for their eventual release.

2. Pray for getting full co-operation from the Bible Society of India, so that every month, exegetical checking is carried out regularly and continuously in respect of all those languages in which we wish to release Gospel books, New Testament and Full Bible in this year.
3. Construction of Compound wall around our children's Home in Bappen Palli, Odisha, is nearing completion and work has to commence for construction of bath-rooms, toilets separately for boys and girls, repairs to Mini-Church and to the residence of missionary couples, etc. Pray for all these works and for meeting their financial requirements.
4. There are some problems/obstacles regarding the land and construction of IBT churches at Attigan and Nanganal, which are yet to be resolved. Please pray for the Holy Spirit to take control of the situation and enable us to overcome these problems and for constructing IBT churches at these places.

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