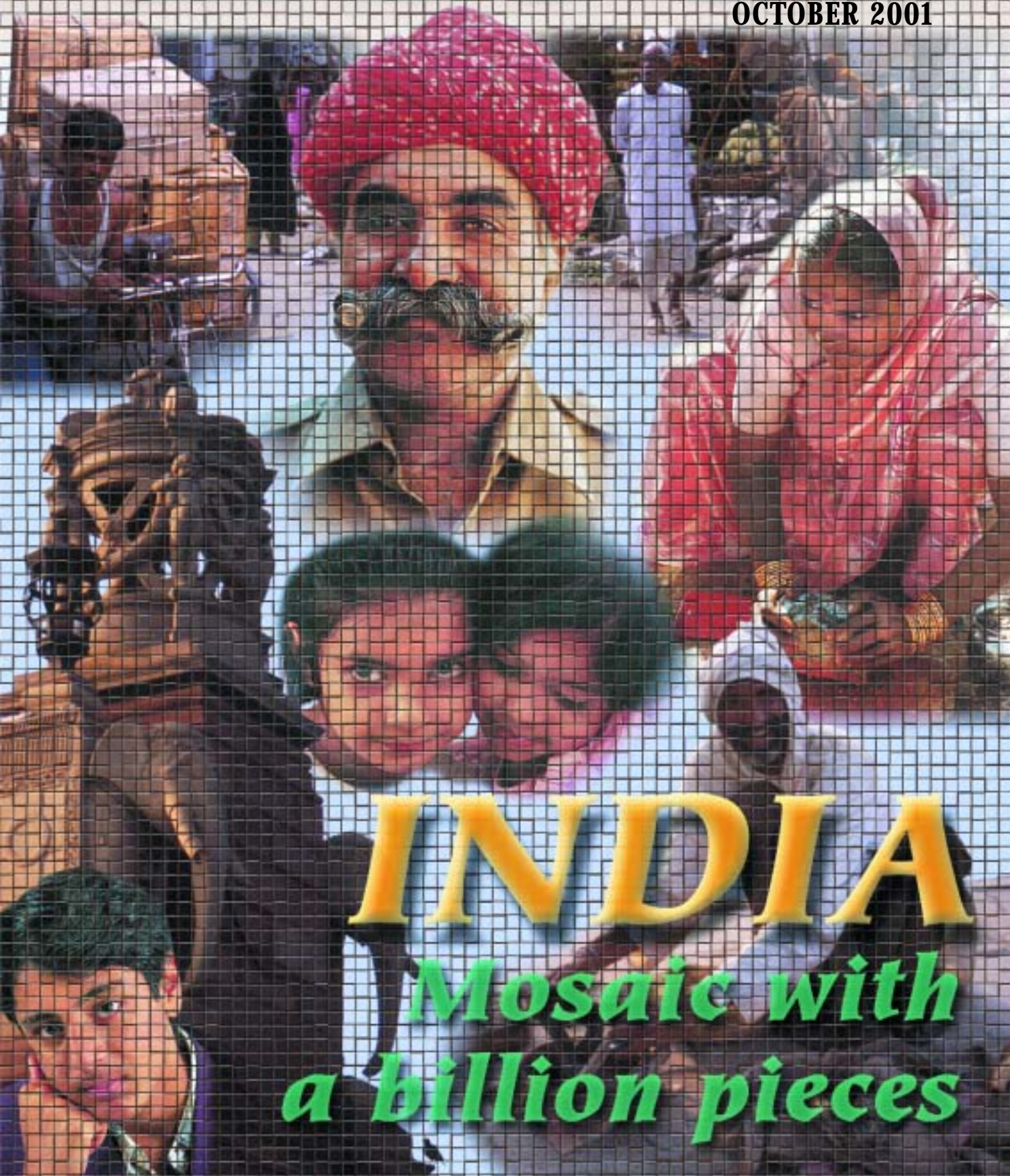


# UPLOOK

OCTOBER 2001



## INDIA

*Mosaic with  
a billion pieces*

# MOSAIC *with* a BILLION PIECES

*The land called India, with the immensity of its need, cries out for our hearts.*

As of May 11, 2000 the population of India officially reached one billion—not one billion statistics but one billion souls for whom Christ died. I cannot take it in. It doesn't compute. I read the numbers but what do they mean? Augustine of Hippo wrote, "We must not despise the science of numbers. That science is of eminent service to the careful interpreter." But how would he interpret these numbers?

Approximately 340 million Indians are under the age of 15. Ten thousand children a day die of starvation (while millions of shrines receive their daily food). Child prostitution is rampant—in Bombay alone there are over 100,000 prostitutes, most of them minors. There are 3.2 million lepers, 10 million blind (one quarter of the world total), 60 million deaf. While one of the largest countries in the world with an area of 1,269,219 square miles (3,287,263 sq. km.), by any standard large areas of India are now overpopulated. From a population of just under 300 million in 1900, it increases at about 1800 per hour! The second edition of *The World Christian Encyclopedia*, just released, describes conditions:

India's huge and growing population magnifies every human need and problem into Himalaya-like proportions. With a growth rate of 1.8% annually, the people added to the country every year equal the population of Australia. India's carrying capacity has been estimated at no more than 300 million, so that, in effect, over 600 million are not being properly fed, clothed, or housed.... Illiteracy is estimated at 48% nationally, but in certain areas... it is as high as 87%. Life expectancy is 64 years but a variety of diseases ravage the impoverished villagers, cutting their productive years to no more than 40. Per capita income is \$240 but there are hordes of unemployed in the cities who eke out their daily lives on less than 10 cents a day. The daily calorie supply is 2,229, but the average diet is so deficient in vital nutrients and proteins that it can be described as only little better than fasting.... Nearly 41% of the urban population and 51% of the rural population live below the poverty level. This means that the majority of Indians live in unrelieved misery all their lives (p. 361).



These conditions exist in spite of one of the best systems of higher education in the world, a flourishing industrial base (10th largest in the world), and a reasonably good infrastructure. And the worst of it is this: That after these millions "live in unrelieved misery all their lives" for most of them a hopeless eternity awaits.

How do you grasp the thought of India? These one billion people live in a land that is home to sixteen

major languages and hundreds of minor ones, thousands of ethnic groups, and scores of religions. It would seem to me that India, like any other country, must be understood one person at a time. Statistics may expose the enormity of the challenge, but each soul, in God's book, is worth more than the whole world. Then where do we begin?

*We can plead for India:* We need to be informed about the land, the workers, the challenges. We need to pray large prayers to our mighty and generous God. How He loves boldness in faith mixed with a passion

for souls. William Carey wrote just before arriving in India in 1793: "A large field opens on every side, and millions tormented by ignorance, superstition, and idolatry plead with every heart that loves God. Oh, that many laborers may be thrust into the vineyard, and the Gentiles come to the knowledge of the Truth!"

*We can give for India:* No doubt there are beggars and charlatans aplenty who will try to tap into Western Christian giving. And we must be wary of doing damage with our money. But that doesn't mean there are no viable ways to invest in the work of God in India. If done wisely, our resources can be multiplied a hundred-fold due to the low cost of goods and services there.

If nothing else, *we should weep for India.* May God help our often over-indulgent, self-absorbed, easily-distracted Western hearts to beat a little more like His heart of whom it was written: "When He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion... because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Mt. 9:36).

*J. B. Nicholson*  
J. B. Nicholson, Jr.

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- 1) by using the reminder envelope sent to facilitate your renewal;
- 2) by using the form on our website at:

[http://www.uplook.org/magazine\\_uplook/subscribe/](http://www.uplook.org/magazine_uplook/subscribe/)

- 3) by contacting our office at any time, by phone, fax, mail or e-mail.

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# The sin of loveless hearts

*Am I my brother's keeper?*

**T**here he lay in the gathering gloom of the hot Indian evening, hardly discernible from the rags that partly covered him. At a glance, he almost appeared to be just another of the piles of refuse swept into a corner. Then I saw a movement. A dark, scrawny arm appeared from the rags, outstretching a hand, hopefully cupped to receive a little *baksheesh* from the passersby.

From where I was standing a little distance away, I could barely see his face and couldn't hear his voice. It was his eyes that spoke volumes to me as I stood on that crowded street. Sad, empty and set deep in their sockets, they spoke only of despair.

An impoverished human being, reduced to beggary. As his pleas were ignored, he withdrew under his pathetic camouflage like a frightened animal. But he is no animal. Within that taut covering of skin, within that prison cage of ribs, somewhere behind those haunting eyes, there exists a human spirit—a precious soul loved by God, for whom Christ died on Calvary's cross.

For a moment I tried to put my soul inside that emaciated form that knows nothing of what we in our luxuriating comfort consider to be essential for survival: someone who cares, ample food, clean water, adequate shelter, personal hygiene, and a respectable covering. I tried to look out through those eyes to see things as he might—hopeless despair, helpless fear, and a homeless future. Of course, it is most unlikely that anyone brought into the world in a land of gospel light and

surrounded by prayer, Christian values, and blessings, could even touch the ragged hem of the sackcloth that beggar clutched around his skin and bones, or get the feel of what living in this world means to him.

*"Without Christ...having no hope, and without God in the world."* Those words came hammering into my mind and I was profoundly convicted of having a heart from which flows so little of the love of Christ for humankind. Having eyes so seldom watered with an honest tear for the lost and perishing, my fellow-travellers to eternity.

Two men on an Indian street, but an unbridgeable gulf between them of privilege, culture, and language—at least, that was the excuse given to God as I turned to make my way back to my comfortable capsule of lodging, food, and fellowship.

Fifteen thousand miles away, another scene. No beggars here. I sat waiting in a modern shopping plaza and watched the people go by. Hardly a smile creased a face. Lines of care, the tense jaw, frowns of anxiety were frequent as these shoppers walked among the glittering baubles of affluence.

Scanning those faces I became aware that the music that had been playing over the sound system had changed. The raucous racket of rock was replaced by the sweet-singing voice of a woman, yet singing one of the world's songs. Only one line do I remember. It went something like this, "If there's anybody out there, shine on me."


How fitting it all seemed to be, expressing so eloquently what was

etched in the faces of the people as they scurried by, seeking to fill up the present moment. "Is there anybody out there?" "If there is, does He care about me?" "Does He care enough to help me?"

No beggars! No rags! No dirt! But just as lost if they have no Christ as Saviour, no God as Father, and no hope forever. Now what will my excuse be? We speak the same language. We live in the same culture. How can I turn from these with cold heart and dry eyes and an undisturbed conscience? I am my brother's keeper!

We who have known salvation's day have a Light for their darkness. We have the Bread for their hunger, the Water of life for their burning thirst and the Hope for their emptiness. Whatever will our answer be when we give account at last?

May God help us not to be ashamed of the Lord Jesus, nor His gospel. As we prostrate ourselves before Him, confessing the sin of loveless hearts, it may be in His mercy He will touch us with the tincture of His compassion for the lost and open again the floodgates of our tears and unloose these stammering tongues to tell "His love immense, unsearchable."

*"Shall we, whose souls are lighted  
with wisdom from on high,  
Shall we to men benighted,  
the lamp of life deny?  
Salvation! Oh, salvation!  
The joyful sound proclaim,  
Till earth's remotest station  
has learned Messiah's Name."* 

—Excerpted from *The Watered Garden*

# Symposium on the church

*Deeper meaning, richer truths in the Church than we sometimes suppose.*

A series of studies on the biblical teaching of the Church will be held, Lord willing, each month through April 2002 at Hopedale Bible Chapel in Oakville, ON. The sessions are scheduled for the third Saturday of each month and run from 9:00 AM until noon.

October 20	Harry Graham	<i>The Mission of the Church</i>
November 17	Wm. Yuille	<i>Authority of Scripture</i>
December 15	Brian Gunning	<i>Practices of the NT Church</i>
January 19	Joe Mikhael	<i>Figures of the Church</i>
February 16	J. B. Nicholson	<i>A Holy/Royal Priesthood</i>
March 16	Randy Amos	<i>The Church: a Holy Nation</i>
April 20	Jim McKendrick	<i>The Church: Her Future</i>

Contact: W. H. Burnett 905-634-6345

wh.burnett@sympatico.ca

## CONFERENCE in WILMINGTON

The saints at Brandywine Bible Chapel (2005 Shipley Rd., Wilmington, DE) invite you to join them for purposed meetings Nov. 2-4 with speakers Roy Hill (England), Steve Hulshizer (PA), and Jim McKendrick (MI).

The conference begins on Friday, Nov. 2 at 7:30 with a Bible study on 2 Peter 1. On Saturday and Sunday, the ministry meetings are scheduled for 2:00 and 6:30 with dinner served between meetings.

Tony Colaiuta at 610-459-1707

Sid Bhatt at 302-425-0762

## METRO MISSIONARY CONF.

The Metropolitan Missionary Conference is to be held at Good Tidings Gospel Chapel (Malcolm X Blvd., Brooklyn, NY) Saturday, Nov. 3. The invited speakers are Michael Thomas (NY) and Willie Johnson (MO). Contact:

Jim McCall

1775 Bussing Ave.

Bronx, NY 10466

718-994-1318

Jimannabel@aol.com

## TAVISTOCK FALL CONFERENCE

Tavistock and Area Assemblies' Fall Conference is scheduled, Lord willing, for Nov. 10, 2001 from 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM. Doug Kazen (WA) is to minister on our personal relationship with the Lord and with our assembly. Brian Gunning (ON) will speak on giving in our personal life and in the local assembly.

Meetings will be held at the Tavistock Mennonite Church in the village of Tavistock, ON. Contact:

John Martin at 519-655-3347

## INVITATION to LAFAYETTE, LA

You are invited to attend a fall Bible conference to be held at Southside Bible Chapel (4256 W. Congress, Lafayette, LA). The conference speaker will be Donald Norbie (CO). The schedule of meetings calls for an opening session on Saturday, Nov. 10 at 3:00. Dinner will be served at 5:30, followed by an evening ministry meeting beginning at 7:30. The Sunday worship service will begin at 9:15 followed by ministry at 10:20, and coffee break and ministry at 11:15. Lunch

will be served at 12:45.

Contact: Bill Walker

wowalker@bellsouth.net

## CONFERENCE IN CLINTON, IA

The believers meeting in Clinton, IA, invite you to a conference to be held, DV, Nov. 9-11. Some meetings will be held in nearby Davenport. Prayer and ministry on Friday at 7:00 PM and Men's Breakfast on Saturday at 8:30 AM (both these activities in Davenport). Meetings at 1:30, 4:00, and 7:00 on Saturday and at 9:15, 10:45, and 2:00 on Sunday. J. B. Nicholson (MI) is the invited speaker. Contact Abe Chacko at:

achacko@clinton.net

## FALL CONFERENCE IN RAMSEUR, NC

The Christians that meet at Ramseur Gospel Chapel (5151 Gracewood Rd., Ramseur, NC) are looking forward to hosting their fall conference Nov. 11-14 with Alan Parks (SC) giving teaching on principles of worship. Meetings are scheduled for Sunday at 10:15 AM, and 6:00 PM; Monday-Wednesday at

7:30. All are welcome! Contact:  
Mike Moody  
336-824-5525

### IROQUOINA RETREATS

The following is a listing of the planned retreats at Camp Iroquoina (Hallstead, PA) for the upcoming Fall, Winter and Spring seasons:

Nov. 9-11	Father/Son Retreat
Jan. 11-13	Family Retreat
Jan. 18-20	Jr. High #1
Feb. 1-3	Jr. High #2
Feb. 8-10	Sr. High Retreat
Feb. 16-18	Family Retreat
Mar. 1-3	Men's Retreat
May 3-5	Ladies' Retreat
May 17-19	High School Retreat

Tom Freeman 609-585-1835  
tfreeman3@juno.com

### HOLIDAY MINISTRY

The saints at Holiday Gospel Assembly (located on Grand Boulevard, one mile from US 19 in Holiday, FL) are happy to announce their fall conference to be held Friday, Nov. 16 from 7:30 PM to 9:00 PM and Saturday, Nov. 17 from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. The theme of the conference will be "That I May Know Him." Speakers expected are: Ross Rainey (MI) and Oli Jacobsen (FL). Dinner will be provided Saturday at noon.

### MISSIONARY BREAKFAST

Christians gathered at Hillside Bible Chapel in Orillia, ON, invite you to their Missionary Breakfast on Saturday, Nov. 17, starting at 8:00 AM. Come hear missionaries tell of the seeds being planted for our Lord around the world! Missionaries are expected from Europe, Africa and Canada.

For further information or requests for hospitality, contact:  
Ingrid van Schepen  
705-326-9572  
hillside@bconnex.net

### 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF SINGLES' RETREATS

In celebration of our 10th year of singles' retreats at Seabrook Island (Charleston, SC), we plan to host a reunion from the evening of Friday, Nov. 16 until Monday, Nov. 19 at 11 AM. Jamie Hull (CO) is the invited speaker studying God's Great Followers, mighty men with a specific perspective and how each one reminds us and draws us to the Mightiest One. The retreat is open to singles age 21-40 (something). Married alumni and their spouses are welcome to this reunion.

The cost is \$95.00 per person (includes lodging & 6 meals). We will be housed in dormitory-style cabins overlooking the ocean. Sorry, but married couples will be housed in separate cabins. There are tennis courts, basketball, walking on the beach, plenty of beach volleyball and a great bonfire, so bring all the necessary attire.

Mail your reservation soon. A limited amount of space is available.

Skip or Cathy Elliott  
205 Walnut Hill Drive  
Summerville, SC 29485  
843-873-7083  
elliottmarketing@juno.com

### MINI-CONFERENCE SERIES

A series of three mini-conferences on the topic, "What the Bible teaches on practical topics confronting families today" will be held in 2002, Lord willing, at Brandywine Bible Chapel (Wilmington, DE). Jim McKendrick has been invited to speak on practical holiness on March 16; Mike Attwood will address courtship, marriage, and raising children on May 18; J. B. Nicholson will discuss the Faith Once Delivered on September 21. Each conference is scheduled from 2:00 until 5:45, followed by dinne. Contact:

Sid Bhatt  
302-425-0762  
Jim Robinson  
302-478-1677

### COMMENDATIONS

#### Paul and Melonie Robertson

The saints gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus at Courtenay Ave. Gospel Hall in Saint John, New Brunswick (Canada) commend Paul and Melonie Robertson to the grace of God and the work of the gospel in the Republic of Ireland.

Paul moved to the area six years ago from Hamilton, ON. He married Melonie (Budd) and the Lord has blessed them with three daughters. Paul has shown a sincere appreciation for the Word of God. They have been faithful and supportive of all the activities of the assembly. Now the Lord is calling them to help with the furtherance of the gospel in the Republic of Ireland.

#### Rex and Nancy Trogdon

The elders of Fairbluff Bible Chapel (Charlotte, NC) and Believers' Bible Chapel (Pineville, NC) have agreed upon a transfer of commendation for the Trogdons from Fairbluff to Believers' Bible Chapel. The two assemblies look forward to continued fellowship together and the saints at Fairbluff Bible Chapel pray for God's blessing on the new work at Believers' Bible Chapel and offer their continued support.

#### Paul and Marla Vermillion

Anchorage Bible Fellowship (Anchorage, AK) commended Paul and Marla to the Lord's work among Jews. Marla is a Jewish believer in Jesus Christ, and Paul recently graduated from Philadelphia Biblical University's Friends of Israel Institute of Jewish Studies. Their desire is to bring the gospel to

Jewish people wherever they find them—Israel and around the world.

Please pray for the Lord's blessing on Paul and Marla and their children, David (4) and Hosanna (2).

## SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

### Park of the Palms

Park of the Palms Christian Retirement Community currently has two positions open: grounds-keeper and director of assisted living. Qualified inquirers contact:

Park of the Palms  
706 Palms Circle  
Keystone Heights, FL 32656  
352-473-4926  
pop@techcomm.net

### Greenwood Hills Bible Conference

Greenwood Hills (Fayetteville, PA) is looking for a general manager for the conference grounds that operates all year around, with six weeks of camp and three family conferences in the summer, and other retreats throughout the year. The full-time staff includes a cook, a housekeeping manager, and two maintenance personnel. This is a salaried position, with housing and insurance provided.

Greenwood Hills Bible Conference is also looking for a maintenance manager to manage and perform a variety of maintenance functions for the 40-acre conference ground with a variety of housing units and other buildings that operate all year. There is one other full-time maintenance person on staff. This is a salaried position with housing and insurance provided.

Greenwood Hills is located 17 miles west of Gettysburg, PA.

Anyone interested in serving the Lord in this way should send personal information and qualifications to:

Greenwood Hills  
7062 Lincoln Way East  
Fayetteville, PA 17222

### Guelph Bible Conference Center

We are presently looking for one or more individual(s) or a couple interested in preparing menus, food orders and meals for groups of 80+ throughout the off-season weekends. This person would have the same responsibilities during the summer months for 180+ weekly. Kitchen staff would also be an area in which leadership would be required.

Call 519-824-2571

## ASSEMBLY UPDATE INFO

### Union St. Gospel Chapel

Union St. Gospel Chapel in Kingston, ON, has a new correspondent for the assembly:

W. S. Graham  
Box 219  
Newburgh, ON K0K 2S0  
613-378-2586  
graham@ihorizons.net

### Dearborn Chapel

Dearborn Chapel (4180 Monroe Blvd., Dearborn Heights, MI) sent an update of their contact information and schedule of meetings:

Breaking of Bread	9:30-10:30
Family Bible Hour	11:15-12:15
Evening Meeting	6:00-7:00
Midweek Meeting (Thurs.)	7:30-8:30

Correspondent: Robert Bruce  
27991 Gettysburg  
Farmington Hills, MI 48331  
248-488-0467  
RWBruce@ix.netcom.com  
Alternate contact: 313-278-4592

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Jim and Elisabeth Paul  
42 Portal Dr.  
Port Colborne, ON L3K 6A3  
Phone: 905-835-0124

## HYMN SINGING THE WAY IT WAS INTENDED

*Unto Him Who Hath Loved Us* is again available. This excellent tape teaches you how to sing the hymns of the faith in the way that those songs were written. Is there a Christian congregation anywhere that doesn't need an ongoing effort to instruct the saints in how to sing? Do you want to make maximum use of your hymnbooks? Paul Forcucci has a plan. On this unique tape, *Unto Him Who Hath Loved Us*, he collects ideas and suggestions that help assemblies improve their singing of worship and praise hymns. On the tape Jack Spender conducts an informal interview with brother Paul Forcucci. Jack ministers the Word of God in Connecticut where Paul fellowships with the young assembly in Waterbury. Paul is a music teacher by profession and has successfully communicated a love for great hymns to the young people of that assembly. If your entire congregational singing experience has been spent singing only the soprano part while a piano substituted the four-part harmony, you need to hear this tape. You will value your hymnbook more, and set new goals for your Christian assembly after listening to this tape. The tapes are provided and shipped free of charge by Waterbury Christian Fellowship. Order the tape by calling 203-756-1743.



*"We support a growing appreciation for the older hymns assemblies have long used, and to strengthen the confidence of believers in their ability to share in and enjoy the simple blending of voices as part of worship. We want these tapes in the hands that feel the need for help on this subject."* —JACK SPENDER

# Persecution in India

**V**iolent persecution of Christians is increasing in India, the world's largest democracy. India's constitution calls for a secular government and guarantees religious freedom. However, with the election of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) to head the national government and many of the individual state governments, activist Hinduism is replacing secularism. Many new laws have been passed, particularly in the northern states, which restrict non-Hindu religions, and especially Christian witness.

These laws attempt to restrict conversions and make acts such as baptism very difficult to accomplish legally. The RSS, a militant Hindu organization, which many Indians consider Fascist, has set itself up as the instrument to cleanse India of all so-called foreign religions. India would then become a religious state similar to Islamic states like Iran.

The RSS, which has the tacit approval of the national government, has in its agenda to demonize other religions, especially Christianity, through false propaganda. They claim that Christians are bribing ignorant people to convert them through the offer of medical help, food and other essentials not nor-

mally available to the common people. They claim that Christian hospitals and clinics will only provide treatment to those who convert. Many other false claims are being made to incite Hindus against Christians.

Their agenda, unfortunately, doesn't stop there. They want to forcibly re-convert all Christians or drive them out of the country. Their methods include any means to accomplish this

end, including burning church buildings and Christian homes, looting, beating, rape, and murder.

Recently an Indian pastor was found beheaded in a wooded area. Even though no weapon was found near the body, police ruled it a suicide!

Hundreds of anti-Christian acts occur every day. Much of this violence is directed against the Roman Catholic Church as it has more visibility, but our assembly workers are also feeling the heat. Many of our commended Indian brothers are involved in outdoor ministries, an activity becoming more and more dangerous. While the work must continue to reach nearly one billion lost souls in India, a change of emphasis may soon be in order.


Is time running out for India and her people? Not only is Satan at

work in India but we must also consider that the Lord's coming for His Church is imminent. The harvest is there for the reaping and we must make use of the best means possible to reach the lost.

Currently, the gospel is being broadcast by radio in only a few of the sixteen major languages in India. This desperately needs to be expanded to reach more of the souls who need to hear of the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Despite Satan's allies—the RSS and the VHP—souls are continuing to be saved in good numbers, but the Lord's people need our prayers more than ever. The violence against them is just beginning, but as King Hezekiah could ask, while standing on the wall of Jerusalem watching for the invading Assyrian army:

*"From whence cometh my help? My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth"* (Ps. 121:1-2). What better help could we possibly have than the Creator Himself?

Let us be faithful to our brothers and sisters in the Lord in India and continue in prayer for their safety and a real harvest in souls despite the increasing persecution. 

*Ed Maltman and his wife make their home in Grand Rapids, MI. He serves the Lord with Gospel Missions of India (see p. 29), a non-profit ministry set up in the state of Michigan to support the great task of winning India for Christ. Log on to their updated Website:*

[www.gospelmi.org](http://www.gospelmi.org)



## WHAT'S GOING ON?

### From a UNITED AIRLINES AD

"On Monday, the papers and the news magazines were filled with stories about the new fall TV schedule. On Monday, there were not many people in the religious section of the bookstore... On Monday, we passed strangers without much regard.  
"On Tuesday, September 11, all that changed."  
—USA Today, 9/21/01

is fundamentalism' says an Arabist friend of mine who teaches history at a Christian college....The same hate-fear that drives fundamentalists in Afghanistan also works on the hearts of Christian fundamentalists in the United States." —John Balzar  
LA Times, 9/20/01

### On humbling a nation:

"The Twin Towers of the World Trade Center...and the Pentagon... are the sanctuaries of money and power that our enemies imagine define us. But that assumes our faith rests on what we can buy and build, and that has never been America's true God."  
—Nancy Gibbs  
TIME magazine, 9/11/01

### Why NYC lives up to the Taliban caricature of the western world:

"We are a profoundly secular city; nowhere else in America are people freer to worship their own gods or be godless. No place outside Israel has more Jews. Blasphemy is common, irreverence is obligatory. Art is at least as important as religion. Eccentric ideas and profane entertainment flourish."

—Kurt Anderson, TIME 9/24/01

### On the impact on Muslims:

"We believe that it will be a shaking time for many Muslims... We are praying... that the Holy Spirit may touch them as they honestly face the lies of Islam and choose the truth.... May the Lord use all that happened to glorify the name of Jesus both among the Americans and Arabs."

—Hany Fouad  
Arab ministry in Spain

### In response to the Canadian memorial service which included no mention of God:

"I am ashamed by the actions of my government. Has God no place in the public life of Canada? Is prac-

tical atheism the only viable option open to us? Couldn't we, just once, as Canadians have put aside our preoccupation with political correctness and fear of offending someone? I cannot imagine that anyone with even an ounce of sympathy would have objected, especially given the call for prayer by the leader of the very nation for whom we were grieving!"

—Glenn Penner,  
Voice of the Martyrs

### Reaction to the unharmed Bible found in the burning rubble of the Pentagon:

"I'm not as religious as some, but that would have me thinking. I just can't explain it."

—Army Staff Sgt. Mark Williams  
quoted in USA Today

### In an article accompanied by a cartoon showing Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson and Osama bin Laden singing "Gimme that old-time religion":

"...These two clerics share something basic with radical religious leaders on the other side of the world: fundamentalism... 'Fundamentalism is fundamentalism

### Pope seeks unity with Islam:

Pope John Paul II has continued his theme of cross-religious cooperation on his trip to Kazakhstan. He urged Roman Catholic clergy in Kazakhstan—a country where Europe meets Asia and Islam meets Christianity—against aggressively seeking out new converts. He warned against religion being used as an excuse for conflict. The Pope quoted Kazak scholar Abai Kunanbai: "Precisely because we worship God fully and have faith in Him, we have no right to claim that we must force others to believe in Him and worship Him." —CNN.com

### NYC Rescue Mission had an opportunity to minister:

How else would a homeless man have the opportunity to give a clean shirt and pair of his own socks to a Wall Street executive? How else would a homeless man have the opportunity to comfort a woman who was beside herself, demonstrating God's love and giving her the ability to call her mother in Atlanta to let her know she was OK?

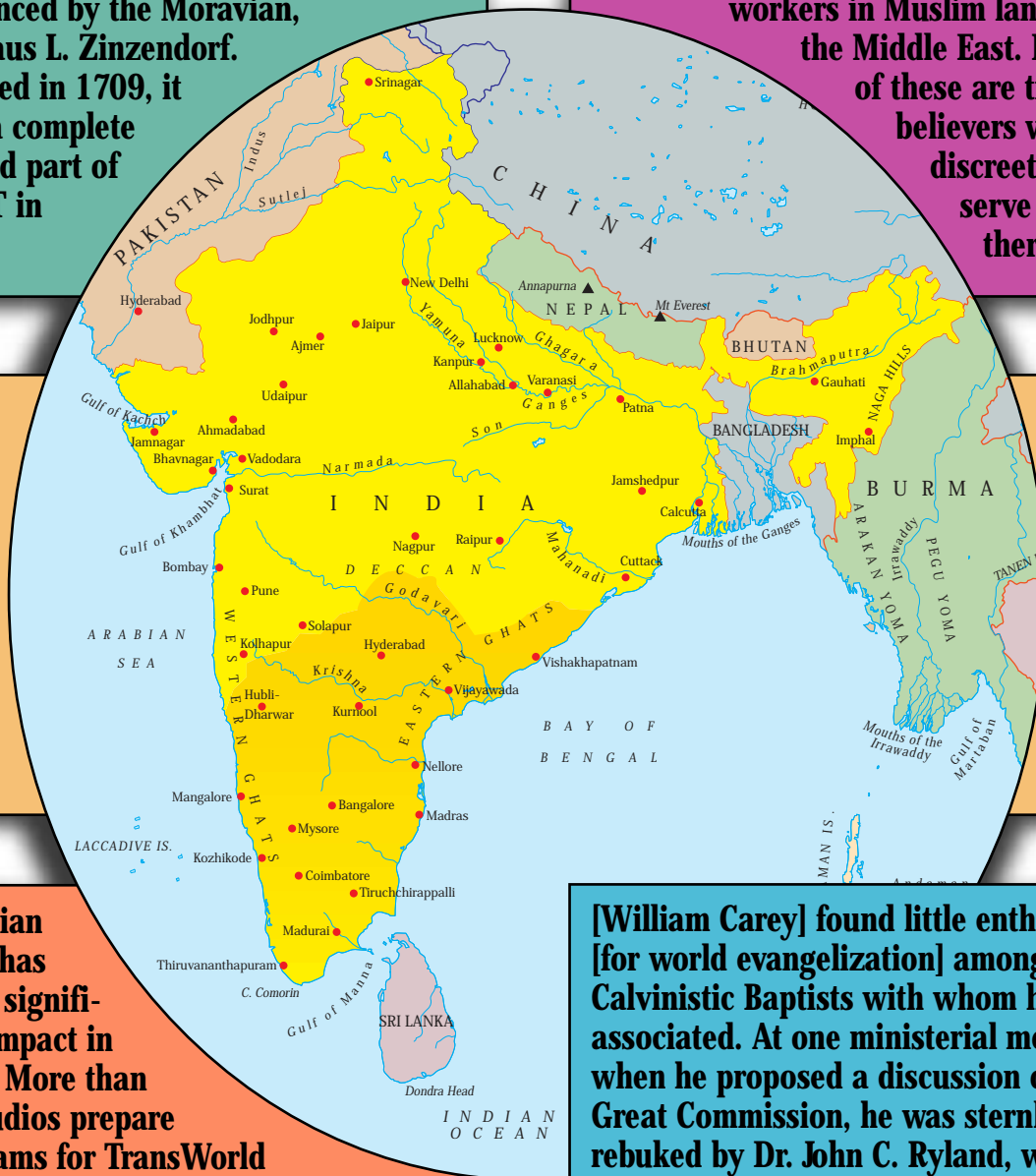
—Dave Shoop



# A sea called India

The first translation of the Scriptures into an Indian language was the work of Bartholomäus Ziegenbalg, a Dane influenced by the Moravian, Nikolaus L. Zinzendorf. Finished in 1709, it gave a complete NT and part of the OT in Tamil.

There are 14 million Indians in other countries (1 million in North America alone). Another million are temporary workers in Muslim lands of the Middle East. Many of these are true believers who discreetly serve Him there.



Christian radio has had a significant impact in India. More than 20 studios prepare programs for TransWorld in Sri Lanka and Guam, and Far East Broadcasting from the Seychelles and Manila.

[William Carey] found little enthusiasm [for world evangelization] among the Calvinistic Baptists with whom he was associated. At one ministerial meeting, when he proposed a discussion of the Great Commission, he was sternly rebuked by Dr. John C. Ryland, when he retorted, "Young man, sit down. When God pleases to convert the heathen, He will do it without your help or mine."

### GENERAL INFORMATION

*Capital:* New Delhi. *Government:* federal republic. *Currency:* Indian rupee (Re)  
*Historical Overview:* Nonviolent resistance to British colonialism under Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru led to independence in 1947. The subcontinent was divided into the secular state of India and the smaller Muslim state of Pakistan. A third war between the two countries in 1971 resulted in East Pakistan becoming the separate nation of Bangladesh. Fundamental concerns in India include the ongoing dispute with Pakistan over Kashmir, massive overpopulation, environmental degradation, extensive poverty, and ethnic strife, all this despite impressive gains in economic investment and output.

### THE LAND: USE & ABUSE

*Total Sq. Miles:* 1,269,219 (3,287,263 sq. km.). *Land Use:* arable—56%; permanent crops—1%; pastures—4%; forests, woodland—23%; other—16% (1993).  
*Current Environmental Issues:* deforestation; soil erosion; overgrazing; desertification; air pollution from industrial effluents and vehicle emissions; water pollution from raw sewage and runoff of agricultural pesticides; tap water not potable throughout the country; huge and growing population overstrains natural resources.  
*Climate:* varies from tropical monsoon in south to temperate in north. *Terrain:* upland plain (Deccan Plateau) in south, flat to rolling plain along the Ganges, deserts in west, Himalayas in north.

### A BABEL OF LANGUAGES

*Spoken Languages:* English enjoys associate status but is the most important language for national, political, and commercial communication. Hindi is the national language and primary tongue of 30% of the people. *Other Official Languages:* Bengali, Telugu, Marathi, Tamil, Urdu, Gujarati, Malayalam, Kannada, Oriya, Punjabi, Assamese, Kashmiri, Sindhi, Sanskrit, Hindustani (a popular variant of Hindi/Urdu spoken widely throughout northern India).  
*Note:* There are 24 languages each spoken by a million or more persons; there are also numerous other languages and dialects, for the most part mutually unintelligible.

### RELIGIOUS & SPIRITUAL

*Religions Practiced:* Hindu 80%, Muslim 14%, Christian 2.4% (many of these are only nominal), Sikh 2%, Buddhist 0.7%, Jains 0.5%, other 0.4%. About 1 believer for every 7,000 people in the four states of South India. Approximately 1 believer for every 3,000,000 in North India (in the state of Uttar Pradesh, the proportion is more like 1:10,000,000!).  
*Scripture translations available:* 46 Bibles, 35 New Testaments, 60 portions (as of 1993, *Operation World*).  
*The Work of New Testament Assemblies:* in the four states of the South (Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka): approximately 750 workers, 1730 assemblies; in North India: 250 workers, 270 assemblies.

### OTHER PERTINENT FACTS

*Population:* 1,013,662,000 (as of 2000). It is estimated that by 2020 India will surpass China as the most populous country in the world. *Urban Population:* 38%. *Major Cities* (20 over 1 million): Mumbai (Bombay)—18,042,000; Calcutta—13,400,000; Delhi—11,680,000; Hyderabad—6,833,000; Chennai (Madras)—6,639,000. *Population Density:* 829 per sq. mile. *Annual Population Growth:* 2%. *Male Life Expectancy:* 62.0; *Female Life Expectancy:* 64.0. *Infant Mortality* (per 1000): 70. *Female Adult Literacy:* 57%; *Male Adult Literacy:* 33%; but functional literacy is nearer 15%. *Economy:* G.N.P. (US\$ in billions): \$427; G.N.P. per Capita (US \$): \$440. *Televisions per 1,000 People:* 69.0; *Computers per 1,000 People:* 3.0.

# The work in India

*A short history of some blessing among New Testament assemblies there.*

*This article cannot claim to be a thorough view of assembly work in India. Neither can it claim to be even or proportionate in its treatment of the various states in India. We culled this material from various sources available to us at time of printing and apologize now for its inadequacies. We trust it will be helpful in what it does say. If only it will spur us to greater prayer for such a land of staggering need.*

Church history states that Thomas the apostle first carried the gospel to India in AD 52.

Through Muslim invasion, Hindu opposition and Franciscan counterattacks it has survived. And though still resisted spiritually and physically, it stands as living proof to the Lord's words that not even the gates of hell will prevail against the Church He is building (Mt. 16:18).

Names such as William Carey and Amy Carmichael have become synonymous with missionary work in India, but there has been a multitude of others. Our purpose here is not to name them all (we don't have records as accurate as Someone else we know) but to trace a general history of the Lord's work among those who have sought to follow the New Testament pattern for the Church.

Anthony Norris Groves was the first in modern times to enter India with such convictions. After a short furlough to England, he and his wife returned with two twenty-three year old missionaries, George Beer and William Bowden, their wives, and several others to work in the Godaveri Delta region (northeast

Andhra Pradesh). The principles held to, and the work accomplished, proved to be a pattern for those who would follow, in India and in the rest of the world.

The Godaveri Delta saw the greatest influx of Christians but was far from being the only area reached with the gospel. Twenty-five states and seven territories make up the modern-day Republic of India, each of which has seen the Lord's working in different degrees. What follows is a sketch of that work in each of the states from the 1800's to the mid- 1900's. As the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, and Mizoram did not attain statehood until 1987, their histories will not be dealt with individually.

**ANDHRA PRADESH:** India's fifth largest state, the majority speak Telugu (85%). Most of its approximately 70 million are Hindu, but AP has the third largest Christian population of any Indian state.

A stirring of the believers in this state in the 1920's and 30's has been compared to that which occurred in Dublin about a hundred years earlier. Independent of foreign missionaries, Christians, undernourished by the denominations they were in, began to meet for prayer and Bible study. These groups came to understand the truth of the priesthood of every believer, the privilege of remembering the Lord each week without clerical oversight, and the joy of taking the gospel to their countrymen wherever they could gain an audience.

To these groups came the "White Fox of Andhra"-Silas Fox (see

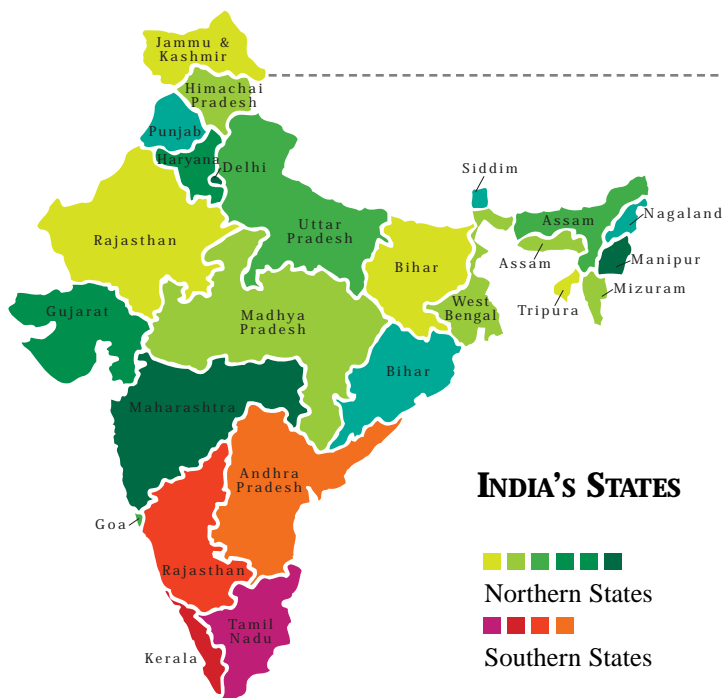
pp.19-20)-a Canadian brother who had himself taken a stand outside of human systems and whose labors greatly helped in establishing these young assemblies in the truth.

Andhra Pradesh saw a revival break out through the preaching of Fox and K. P. Agrippa (called "the Black Fox"). An assembly was started and from there the revival spread, more assemblies being born along the way. Altogether some two hundred assemblies came into being.

**ASSAM:** With a present population of about 25 million, this state has seen the largest growth of the Church among tribal peoples.

Captain James Gordon helped start the first assembly in "the home of tea" in 1847. After he and a close associate, Mr. Merck, became ill and had to leave the country, the Lord brought in Messrs. Deubla and Hesselmeyer from Germany to carry on the work. Mr. Deubla joined with the Baptist missionaries who had first pioneered Assam in 1829. The Hesselmeyer's cared for ten orphans, and superintended a local school. They and the orphans who had been saved engaged in itinerant preaching in the villages of their district. Mr. Hesselmeyer wrote, "I feel that the mass of my hearers are but waiting the signal, in the conversion of one of their village elders, to leave idolatry en masse." The Lord blessed greatly during these years.

**BIHAR:** With close to 90 million, this state has one of the poorest and least literate populations in India. North Bihar has been known as the graveyard of missions.



Speaking in 1854 in England, Mr. Start could not remember more than one national who had come to the Lord in Patna, a city of more than 200,000. But that was not the worst. Villagers who showed interest in the gospel would mysteriously disappear. Believers had their homes burned down, their crops and property pillaged, and were themselves severely beaten.

Despite such discouragements, the workers came (many from Germany). They worked and people were saved despite the opposition. Dr. F Ribbentrop wrote, "Our consolation and joy are the school children, after visiting whom we nearly always return home pleased: we should like to cover the land with schools. If the old make sport of us, we receive a hearty welcome from the young."

Many others labored in Bihar—in dispensaries, in evangelism, itinerant evangelism, and the especially difficult work of shepherding the new believers in the local assemblies. But even with so much activity, this area proved to be a somewhat barren field. Hinduism's pressure, the power of the caste system, and ostracism by family for believing the gospel among other things hinder many from accepting the Saviour. Much prayer is needed for the believers subject to mob violence.

**GUJARAT:** This NW coastal state adjoining Pakistan (pop. approximately 50 million) became well-known to the world after the January 26, 2001, earthquake which proved to be the worst in India's recorded history. Gujarat has seen disaster before, however. The crop failure of 1900 led to a famine that killed hundreds and left many hundreds more destitute. To this needy place H. Handley Bird and his sister Florence went to care for

orphaned children, their labors during this famine time resulting in the orphanage at Mount Zion.

In this state which is Gandhi's birthplace, several extremist Hindu groups have polarized society by violent acts against both Muslims and Christians. Problems are many, but through diligent Indian workers, the gospel continues to penetrate.

**HARYANA:** In 1966, the state of Punjab was divided, the predominantly Sikh population retaining the name and the south becoming Haryana (present pop. approximately 18 million). Haryana means "the green place" and its well-watered fields live up to that title. But not in the spiritual sense; Haryana is one of India's least evangelized states. Hindu revival movements are increasingly active and very anti-Christian.

Lloyd and Eileen Bone (SK), and later Daniel and Evelyn Taylor, saw an assembly started in the city of Ambala. Literature, personal testimony, and a small book-room were tools effectively used in this area. Blessing was also seen in the capital city, Chandigarh, during a gospel campaign held in 1959.

**PUNJAB:** The name comes from a word meaning "five rivers," but these five do not ward off the aridness of this dry, sandy plateau. Arthur and Rita Stedman helped to begin the assembly in Chandigarh, the state's capital city which it shares with Haryana. Door-to-door evangelism, literature distribution, and tent campaigns were all used in the outreach that preceded that assembly's birth.

**HIMACHAL PRADESH:** To the north and east of Punjab lies this hilly state loved for the relief it provides in summer from the heat. The Wrights, Harold Avery, the Wards, and the McKenzies all labored in this area around the turn of the century. Evangelization and a leper home in Sabathu were the prime focus until World War 11 when the missionaries began to hold meetings for the servicemen stationed in the area. Following the imprisonment of Mahatma Gandhi, riots broke out, endangering the foreign workers especially and forcing some to leave.

**JAMMU & KASHMIR:** Three unequally divided sections of this state are administered by India, Pakistan, and China. The fighting in this area has often been fierce, the violence continuing until this writing, and one result being that little gospel work has gone on there in the past. Recently some evangelists have moved there.

**KARNATAKA:** The London Missionary Society first

took the gospel to this area in 1820. Some strongly evangelistic Methodist missionaries later took over their work. Orphanages sprang up to care for the victims of the Gujarat famine of 1900 mentioned earlier. Some who worked in the orphanages were Mr. and Mrs. Irvine of New Zealand and Ebenezer W. McGavin. Irvine would later enter the work of publishing and writing and oversee a leprosy hospital. Later in life he rejoiced to see those of high and low caste breaking bread together.

**KERALA:** It is in this coastal area that Thomas the apostle is said to have first evangelized, followed by Pantaneus of Alexandria in AD 50. The fifth century saw the arrival of Christians from Antioch. In more recent decades this state benefited from the labors of such workers as Volbrecht Nagel, E. J. Jacob, and J. M. Davies. The work of God through Tamil David was powerfully seen here as well, reaching many in the Syrian Reformed Church. As Frederick Tatford says of this time, "How many there were in those days, whose lives and ministry made an impression for God."

**MADHYA PRADESH:** James and Grace Rowberry joined the McKenzies, the Stokes, and Osmond Peters in Jabalpur in the 1940's to work with a small assembly that had been started there by a few believers. From this central city of India's largest state these workers traveled many miles, often by foot and at considerable risk, to distribute literature and contact believers. They received help from the neighboring state of Andhra Pradesh in the persons of Mr. and Mrs. Silas Fox who were a great blessing.

**MAHARASHTRA:** India's capital city Bombay (Mumbai) was the target of H. Handley Bird's efforts in his later years. In 1934, he moved to the city, witnessing on the streets and discipling young men in the things of God. He was joined later by Harold Avery and Wilfred S. Durham. When Handley died in 1938, Durham took on his responsibilities. A literature ministry that had begun became the Gospel Literature Service (GLS) in 1942. Other areas, including the state governments summer seat at Poona, have had the presence of the gospel for many years.

**MANIPUR:** Christian missionaries first arrived in 1874 but only in the north. By 1909, Presbyterians had entered the south, and they were followed by various missionary societies. C. F. John went, in 1968, to Churachandpur where an assembly was started.

**MEGHALAYA:** The Baptist Missionary Society was the first to take the gospel to this small state made up of primarily tribal peoples. 1859 saw the first recorded conversion, but little assembly activity has been seen.

**NAGALAND:** No known assemblies had been established in this state up through the 1950's, but there has been in Nagaland since the 1870's a strong Christian presence. While we may not agree with every belief or the reported political involvement of some of these groups, we can thank God for their faithfulness in the gospel over many years and the thousands who will be in heaven because of them.

**ORISSA:** This state has been known in recent years for extreme violence against non-Hindus and has become somewhat infamous to the world since the murder of the Christian missionary Graham Staines and his two sons in 1999 at the hands of a Hindu mob. Assemblies were started in this area in later years but not during the time this article covers.

**RAJASTHAN:** An assembly was begun here in 1960. A young man went to Kota to pass out literature and hold gospel meetings. He was not warmly received. A mob burned his literature and beat him after his first Sunday in the city. They threatened to kill him, but the Lord protected them and some were added to the assembly. There are now assemblies in Jaipur, Alwar (where there is a school for evangelists) and elsewhere.

**SIKKIM:** The Church of Scotland Mission began to establish elementary schools in 1886 in Sikkim. Around the turn of the last century, the Free Church of Finland also began to conduct schools and train people in industries. Other than this, the work has been sparse.

**TAMIL NADU:** At seventeen, a young man named John C. Aroolappen met A. N. Groves on the latter's first visit to India in 1833. When they parted, Aroolappen had obviously understood the importance of Groves' principles for when he set out to serve the Lord he refused a salary, instead choosing to support himself through agriculture. He and others who gathered with him worked diligently, setting up a printing press, overseeing several schools, and teaching the believers, as well as preaching itinerantly and in the bazaars. This amount of work, though admirable, was not out of the ordinary for the workers who followed. Work was done in translation, schools, literature distribution, visitation, prison work, and the list could go on.

**TRIPURA:** Tripura is the smallest of the Indian states, covering only 4,035 square miles. No assemblies were begun in earlier days and it is the last few years that some small ones have begun.

**UTTAR PRADESH:** A group of believers began, in 1854, to make month-long trips from Bihar to preach in the cities of Ghazipur; however, it does not seem that an assembly was formed at that time. The work has continued through others. Dr. Geoffrey D. Lehmann turned away from his engineering degree when he heard God's call to go as a doctor to India in 1934. Eventually he became an eye specialist and with his wife, Monica, worked in North India for many years.

Alan J. Linton married Dr. Shobha Gulati in 1956. They distributed thousands of pieces of literature, worked with Emmaus correspondence courses, held open air and tent meetings, and saw many saved and brought into local assemblies.

**WEST BENGAL:** Near West Bengal's well-known city of Calcutta is Serampore where William Carey, Joshua Marshman and William Ward centered their work in the 1880's. The city has changed greatly since their time in it, rarely for the better. Mr. and Mrs. John F. Smele moved from Bihar to Calcutta in 1927 to work with the English-speaking assembly there. During World War II British servicemen especially enjoyed the time they spent in that assembly. Other workers soon joined.

The Campbells distributed tens of thousands of pieces of literature with the help of Indian believers. Ken and Bee Smith worked with Emmaus courses as well as producing a radio program.

The work was busy in other areas too, such as Darjeeling and Kalimpong, the former being where a large school was established to teach the young, unsaved nationals and the latter where a boy's home was founded. Much work was also put into evangelizing those traveling on the trade route to the closed country of Tibet.

**AND THERE WERE OTHERS:** Fairness says that every worker be mentioned. Space and available information do not allow it. Needless to say, many more worked in India during this time than can be spoken of here, but we hope that this brief history will increase the desire to know more of what God has done in India. More importantly, we desire that each of us will be motivated by God's faithfulness to do what He has promised in us and through us.

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*The Pilgrim Church* by E. H. Broadbent, Gospel Folio Press  
*Operation World*, Patrick Johnstone, Zondervan  
[www.Britannica.com](http://www.Britannica.com)

## PRAYER POINTERS ✓



✓ Safety for the servants of God, especially those who are working in North India.

✓ The Muslim community of 110,000,000 is one of the world's largest and most accessible. They need Christ!

✓ The higher castes have shown little open response to Christ. Pray for the Brahmin (priestly), Kshatriya (warrior) and Valaya (merchant) castes.

✓ Many of the teeming millions in the cities live in abject poverty. Who will go?

✓ Over 70% of Indians live in the 600,000 villages. Less than 10% would have any kind of Christian church.

✓ Pray for Christian students to have boldness in their witness. India's student population numbers 4 million in 176 universities and 6,400 colleges. 📍

# RISE UP & WORK

*Contact the travel co-ordinator for your area if you need help getting there.*



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<b>England</b>	Roy Hill	275-332475 <a href="mailto:roy.hill@ukgateway.net">roy.hill@ukgateway.net</a>

# Bus charters

*Enjoy fellowship to and from the conference by booking a seat on a bus!*

## BUS ARRANGEMENTS

(If you know of someone who is arranging a bus and the information is not listed here please let us know.) All of these buses are scheduled to depart Dec. 26 and return Dec. 29 unless otherwise indicated.

### MICHIGAN

Depart Grand Rapids at 1:00 PM,  
Return by 6:00 PM Saturday.  
Cost: \$40-50 round trip.  
Contact: Kevin Shantz  
616-456-9166 office or  
616-677-2507 home  
kevin@uplook.org

### GEORGIA (Augusta)

Cost: \$65 round trip.  
Contact: Jon Reimer  
706-860-2986 office or  
706-863-6006 home  
jonathanreimer@hotmail.com

### MINNESOTA

See under Manitoba.

**MANITOBA** (Winnipeg) MB,  
Fargo, ND and Minneapolis, MN  
Depart Winnipeg at 9:00 PM, Dec.  
25, arriving in Fargo at 1:00 AM,  
December 26, and Minneapolis at  
5:00 AM. Arrive Indianapolis around  
6:00 PM. Returning to Minneapolis  
at 11:00 PM, December 26, Fargo at  
3:00 AM December 27, and  
Winnipeg at 7:00 AM.  
Cost: US \$60.00 per person.  
Contact: Ron Hampton  
204-669-6026  
rhampton@attcanada.ca

### ONTARIO (Toronto area)

Depart: Rossland Ridge Bible  
Chapel parking lot (320 Rossland  
Road, W., Ajax) at 7:00 AM Dec.  
26th. It is a 55 passenger bus and

seats go on a first come first serve basis. If there is room we could stop along the way to pick up passengers west of Toronto.

Cost: CDN \$70.00 per person.  
A letter requesting a seat(s) and a cheque made payable to Kirk Dupre can be directed to:  
Kirk Dupre  
39 Meadow Crescent  
Whitby, ON L1N 3J2  
905-723-1278  
kirk@msc.on.ca

### ONTARIO (St. Catharines)

Depart: Brockview Bible Chapel  
December 26 at 7:00 AM, and return  
from the hotel in Indianapolis on  
December 29 at 12:00 noon.  
Cost: CDN \$70.00 per person.  
Contact: Bill or Anita Sloetjes  
905-563-5571  
protec@vaxxine.com

*All of the messages I heard touched my heart and strengthened my walk with the Lord. This conference truly had an impact on me and I'm praying it did the same for others...I was so amazed at the number of brothers and sisters in Christ that were there to learn more about our Savior and how He works in our lives...I have made my decision to go to the next conference. I am so thankful that God gave me the opportunity to go and meet so many other believers from around the world. Isn't our Savior wonderful?!!*

*I'VE ATTENDED THE  
PAST TWO RISE UP  
AND BUILD CONF-  
ERENCES AND WAS  
TRULY BLESSED  
THROUGH THEM.*

*Many of the messages had a certain point that was just for my life. I'm glad that we have such a great opportunity to hear godly, well-studied men who I could tell love the Lord. It has been a real blessing to me and I have found so much that I need to work on in my life.*

*The sessions I attended and the messages I heard will be firmly planted in my head because they all touched my heart in some way and I know I can use them towards strengthening my faith and sharing the joy God brings to our lives.*

*We find these conference refreshing, uplifting, and reconstituting. For me, the real and chief benefit is being able to be comfortable... We come from all over, yet we share a common loyalty to the truth of the NT assembly...*

# Echoes from India

*A collection of stories and quotes from missionaries to India*

Adoniram Judson's first convert in India became a preacher. Listening to his first sermon, a heathen man saw the new light and cast away his idols.

He began to preach the gospel and in less than three years, thirty new churches were established, and more than 3000 converts were baptized.

If the results from this one convert's labor were all he accomplished in India, did Judson pour out his precious life at the Saviour's feet in vain?

**For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! 1 Corinthians 9:16**

"Attempt great things FOR God; expect great things FROM God." —William Carey

## *Deliver Me*

*From prayer that asks that I may be  
Sheltered from winds that beat on Thee,  
From fearing when I should aspire,  
From faltering when I should climb higher,  
From silken self, O Captain, free  
Thy soldier who would follow Thee.*

*From subtle love of softening things,  
From easy choices, weakenings  
(Not thus are spirits fortified,  
Not this way went the Crucified)—  
From all that dims Thy Calvary,  
O Lamb of God, deliver me.*

*Give me the love that leads the way,  
The faith that nothing can dismay,  
The hope no disappointments tire,  
The passion that will burn like fire;  
Let me not sink to be a clod;  
Make me Thy fuel, Flame of God.*  
—Amy Carmichael

**They are the messengers of the churches,  
and the glory of Christ.**

**2 Corinthians 8:23**

We heard from dear Rhenius last night; he is reduced to a fortnight's provision of bread, but has in hand a good stock of faith and trust.

—From the diary of Anthony Norris Groves

## *Sowing and Reaping*

*In spite of sorrow, loss, and pain,  
Our course be onward still;  
We sow on Burma's barren plain,  
We reap on Zion's hill. —Adoniram Judson*

Edwin Lewis, missionary in South India wrote:

The question is sometimes put to us, "Are you encouraged in your work?" I do not much like that question; it very faintly expresses what we feel in regard to our work.

Our feeling is, "Woe to us if we preach not the gospel." It is the fact of preaching and winning hearts that makes us so confident that by-and-by they will come to Christ, and will be His. That is encouragement!

In the last great Indian famine, when we were surrounded by multitudes of poor, starving people, many of them too weak to come forward and stretch out a hand to ask for relief, we did not say, "Have we encouragement to feed these people with bread?" We were too enthusiastic for that! We said, "We must have bread for these people; they are perishing, and we must give them something to eat."

We say the very same thing with regard to preaching the gospel.

**Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation. Romans 15:20**

# The White Fox of Andhra

*“Thou art my battle axe and weapons of war” (Jer. 51:20).*



India is a colorful land and God has sent some colorful Christians to labor there. One of those at the fore was Silas Fowler Fox. “No one sleeps when Silas speaks” was his billing.

Silas was born December 22, 1893, just outside Medicine Hat, Alberta, to Caleb and Bessie Fox. His father died just three weeks after the birth of Silas, and some time later the young widow remarried a certain Mr. Roberts who was given to drink. Eventually, after innumerable beatings, Mrs. Fox, in the dead of winter, gathered her few belongings and her children into a sleigh and left, never to return. These grim memories left Silas with a hatred of alcohol: “Drink is a curse and should be left alone by Christians.”

Years later in Bombay, during one of Silas’ sulfur-flavored sermons—his text was Jude 23, “*And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh*”—fire was the theme. In his biography, Silas’ son Donald writes, “One could almost sniff the brimstone in the hot atmosphere.” Hearing the shout of “Fire!” someone called out the fire department, thinking a building was burning. The incident reminds us of what Spurgeon said: “Find a church on fire and the whole community will come out to watch it burn.” And communities did come out to watch this man on fire.

The match was lit when a nineteen-year-old in Toronto, Canada, named Silas Fowler Fox, came to Christ. Three years later he enrolled in the Toronto Bible College to study

under W. H. Griffith Thomas and Frank Weston. Married to Emma Grau in 1916, by January of 1917 they were in India under the Ceylon and India General Mission.

He left that mission board in 1926, and thereafter became an outspoken advocate of New Testament missionary practices. He was persuaded that faith practices keep a man faithful, and that many uncalled and unqualified foreign workers were being wrongly sustained by mission boards.

Speaking of the shipwreck in Acts 27 he made this sly dig, “Here we see the scriptural justification for boards. It says in verse 44 that some escaped ‘on boards.’ Many a board keeps a sinking missionary afloat!”

As an itinerant preacher, Silas spoke Telugu as though he had heard it from the womb, and he mastered a number of Indian dialects. He saw some fifty assemblies gathered to the Lord Jesus from his numerous children in the faith.

When someone said, “I hear, Mr. Fox, that you’re an independent missionary,” Silas would retort, “I’m *not* an independent missionary! I’m not independent of *God*, of *Christ*, of the *Holy Spirit*, or of the *Bible*!” He was a man who felt dependent. If his spirit was dull he would bemoan the lack in his diary entries, “No fire, no points, no grip.”

It was at such times that he would apply to himself the lesson of a favorite message. This was his message on the lost axe head (2 Ki. 6:1-7). To him the lost axe head sometimes represented the servant of God who had lost his usefulness. Silas

writes:

*What did he have left in his hand after the axe head fell off?* Answer: Of course only the handle would be left in his hand. Suppose he covered up his loss—then all afternoon he could have continued hitting trees with the handle. Now he would never fell a tree with an axe handle. As we look around we can see much Christian work and activity—only sad to say there is NO POWER in it. No power of the Spirit of God in it—too bad—the axe head has gone, if it was ever there. Sunday School teachers...even those behind the pulpit—I repeat again—activity but NO POWER, and this should not be.

John the Baptist had a real ministry and the word was, “*The axe is laid unto the root of the trees*” (Mt. 3:10). The Jews at that time had the belief that by being children of Abraham they were children of God. This was a wrong tree and God used John to cut it down.

Today it is nominal Christianity and people think because they are “Christians” they are safe. This tree must be cut down—it has grown very big. The message is: “*You must be born again*”—an individual matter. When you repent and receive Christ, you receive power and a new life (see Jn. 1:11-14).

It says in Ecclesiastes 10:10, “*If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put to more strength.*” That is how real preaching should be. The Word of God is as the axe and it is not dull, but one needs the power of the Spirit to use it effectively. We are to preach *the gospel*

with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven (1 Pet. 1:12).

When I was a boy, I saw woodsmen cutting trees in the forest, felling big trees with an axe. It was a grand sight to see these men bared to the waist, their muscles rippling as they worked. Now today of course this is all done mechanically; they have big machines to do the job. However real preaching should be like the man using the axe on the trees—seeing chips fly.

May the Lord help us to preach in the power of the Holy Spirit so that big trees might fall and new lives begin as people trust Christ. That young man lost the axe head, but he cried out and Elisha came and brought back the axe head. By the power of God the sunken axe head swam.

If we are not conscious of that power in our life, we must confess it and cry out. Elisha asked, “Where did the axe head fall?” And today I ask you, “Where did you lose the power?” Did worldliness creep in? Was it the love of money? Or carelessness? Confess it to the Lord and come back to Him today. Paul prayed, “*That the power of Christ might rest upon me.*” May this be our experience: the power of Christ resting on us and our ministry.

Dr. Clifford Wilson describes hearing “the axe head sermon” at a camp in Melbourne, Australia:

Silas pictured the man (2 Kings 6:1-7) continuing to chop down the tree, after the axe head had flown off. There he was (Silas, that is), pencil in hand—for that was the axe—moving it up and down against the imaginary tree. A friend came along and watched in amazement as “the axe handle” kept up its rhythmic movement.

“What are you doing, man?” he asked at length.

“I’m chopping this tree down,” was the answer, hands still going through the motions.

The friend watched for a minute, confused. Then he spoke up again. “But man, you can’t chop a tree down with just an axe handle!”

“Don’t worry,” hands still going up and down, “I’m being faithful!”

Wilson, himself a discouraged missionary, saw this, and there learned from Silas that with God there is no point in “going through the motions” if one has lost the power of the Holy Spirit in his life. That power can only be restored by God Himself when we cry to Him. “Being faithful” is not enough.

How many workers have become immobilized by spiritual sloppiness or coldness? Can they move on for God again? Silas was once approached by “Tamil David,” a preacher of renown whom God had formerly used powerfully, especially among Syrian Christians. In his book, *The White Fox of Andhra*, Donald Fox writes,

It is reliably reported that some 30,000 turned to Christ under his [Tamil David’s] ministry. This man, V. D. David, of Tinnevely, had had a setback in his Christian life while touring the United States. At that time, he was under a cloud and had been out of the ministry for seven years.

Missionaries took it in turns to organize conventions, and at one Silas organized, Brother David came up to him and asked, “Can the iron swim again?” This was an allusion to the incident in 2 Kings 6:6.

“By the power of God’s renewing grace, why, of course, yes,” Silas assured him and thereupon invited him to participate in the upcoming convention, where he did so with fresh anointing and went on to resume a useful ministry. With this incident in mind, Silas often preached on “the recovered axe head.” In his mind’s eye he could visualize this old evangelist once more going about his business...The beautiful feet were once more in circulation.

Although Silas Fox invested significant time in specific Telugu-speaking areas, he felt the Lord had called him to itinerate widely. In his first term in India alone, he preached in some 300 villages, preaching to crowds in the village markets. He was renowned for various attention-getting antics in the open-air while preaching, but there was substance to the work accomplished through this firebrand.

As Volume 3 of F. A. Tatford’s series *That the World May Know* states: “Through the efforts of those who had caught the vision of Silas (the ‘White Fox’) over 150 virile assemblies came into being in the next two decades” (p. 137).

V. Luke, a believer from Andhra, writes: “We, the Andhras, owe a good deal to the ministry and life of S. Fox, who, like a star shining in the sky, led us to the Lord Jesus Christ. His messages were characterized by spiritual power from on high. We are witnesses to the rivers of living waters which sprang from within and caused a great blessing.”

EXCERPTS FROM:

*The White Fox of Andhra* by Donald S. Fox, Dorrance & Company, 1977

*That the World May Know*, Vol. 3; The Challenge of India, Echoes of Service, 1983



**Believers at Anantapur (1968) during Fox’s last visit to India**

# Precious bundle

*Wrapped up in dirty clothes lay a piece of everlasting.*



**W**hen I went to southern India in 1946, there was an orphanage, a school, and a hospital on a mission station in Karnataka state, 100 miles south of Bangalore. At first, I worked as a nurse in the hospital and lived in the orphanage with about 150 girls. After working in the hospital for twenty-five years, I was asked to take over the leadership of the orphanage.

Due to the extreme poverty all throughout India, it was not uncommon to have parents bring their children to us, simply because they could not afford to keep them. Sometimes if the parents died, there was no one to look after the little ones—especially girls. Many would take the boys, but they did not want the little girls. So we offered a Christian home for girls.

One morning, not long after I began at the orphanage, an old man came hobbling up the path with a sack in his arms that looked like a pile of dirty clothes. When he got close to me, I could hear a strange whimpering. I leaned over to look, and right away he tried to hand his bundle of dirty clothes to me.

“No, no,” I said. “First you must tell me about your baby.”

The old Hindu explained that the child belonged to his daughter. She had tried to care for her for a while, but when a man offered to marry her (refusing to let the child come along) the mother accepted, leaving her daughter behind.

The grandparents wanted desperately to look after the baby. Every morning, they took her to the fields where they worked, wrapped in a

piece of cloth which they hung from a branch of a tree. They would rock her gently until she fell asleep and then go off into the fields. But eventually the infant would awaken, crying with hunger, and they were too poor to get milk for her. She grew weaker each passing day. At last the grandparents admitted that they could not look after her anymore.

It was at that time that someone told them about our home for girls—we would provide a healthy home for their baby. By the time she came to us, she was so sick she couldn’t even cry. That was the whimpering I heard as this man held out his bundle of dirty clothes.

I remember looking into the little face of a very thin, dirty child, then I exchanged a questioning glance with the person who was helping. “Well,” she said, “I think you’re taking on a problem.”

I was convinced the Lord wanted us to take that problem. We had been praying that the Lord would definitely lead us when anyone came with a baby, and He seemed to say to take her—so I agreed.

The old grandfather took one last look at the wrinkled little bundle, then turned around and walked away with a heavy heart. That child was a part of him; he didn’t want to part with her. As he trudged back down the long driveway, tears were rolling down his face, but he knew that he had done the best thing for her.

Right away we bathed her—she screeched and cried, but for the first time she was clean. Then we brought milk for her and let her drink as much as she wanted! Soon she was

fast asleep. Somehow she had gotten hold of a tiny piece of bread. I saw it as I was putting her down on a little mat on the floor, so I tried to pry it from her fingers. She woke up screaming, refusing to let go, so we left it, and she went back to sleep. Even at six months old, she was so used to waking up hungry that she needed to be sure she would have something to eat when she woke up. For several days she wouldn’t go to sleep without a piece of bread to hold in her hand.

Soon she grew into a healthy, happy little girl. She was a very precious treasure to us, so I called her Satyamani. “Mani” means jewel, and “satya” means true. She was our true jewel!

When she was five years old, Satyamani went to school. She did very well with her lessons and she loved to play with the other children.

She was usually a well-behaved girl and rarely gave us any problems. But one day, when I happened to be looking out the window, I saw little Satyamani walking over by the guava fruit tree in front of our house. All of the girls knew they were forbidden to pick the guavas.

Satyamani looked around this way and that, and I guess she didn’t see anyone, so she reached up as far as she could and grabbed the lowest fruit. She pulled with all of her might until the fruit finally came off.

When I called her over to me, she came with her hands behind her back.

“Satyamani, what did you take?” I asked.

“Nothing.”

“You didn’t?”

“No.”

I asked her to show me her hand. She stuck out one hand. “Show me your other hand,” I said. She showed her other hand. “Now,” I said, “Can you show me both hands at once?” She quickly stuck the guava between her legs in the fabric of her long skirt, and showed me both her hands. “Okay,” I said, “Hold out both your hands and walk over to me.”

Of course she couldn’t do that without dropping the fruit, and the guava rolled to the ground.

“What did you do?” was my question.

“I took it.”

“I know you took it,” I said. “What was that when you took the guava?” She couldn’t tell me at first, so I explained that it was called stealing and being disobedient—that was sin in the sight of the Lord Jesus. Satyamani had heard about the Lord many times, and she hung her head in shame.

The result of that little guava incident was that Satyamani came to know the Lord Jesus Christ as her personal Saviour. That very day, she knelt beside me, on our front porch, and she asked the Lord to forgive her of her sin.

We didn’t usually take boys at our orphanage, but at that time we had a toddler boy, David, with us. About a day or so after little Satyamani was saved, she ran to me with a worried expression, “Ama, David won’t believe.”

When I asked her what she meant, she explained, “I told him he had to confess his sin and he had to trust the Lord Jesus as his Saviour, but he won’t do it.”

“Now, Satyamani,” I said, “David’s a very little boy. He doesn’t understand about sin and about confession and about salvation. In a few years, he will.” She was so disappointed, but I rejoiced to see that she was already concerned for the souls of others.

Satyamani sailed through our school up to the seventh grade, and then went on to high school, where she did very well academically. We were going to continue her education with teacher training, but she wasn’t interested—she waited to see what the Lord had planned for her life.

One day, a family came to the orphanage. They were looking for a wife for Bosca, their son—and they wanted Satyamani. As always, we interviewed the young man and found out if he was a Christian. When Satyamani saw Bosca, she whispered to me, “Ama, is he a Christian?”

“Oh, yes,” I told her, “I had a talk with him, and I know that he’s a Christian. He loves the Lord, just like you do.”

“All right,” she said, “I’ll marry him.” And she did!

They are both happily living for the Lord now in Atan. Right across the road from their home is a Tibetan Colony. Satyamani goes there every week and has a Bible study with the children. She says that many of the mothers come with their children. Eternity will reveal the souls she has pointed to Christ, and the love she has shown for His glory.

I’ll never forget those haunting eyes of that little baby—our precious jewel, not only ours; she was precious to the Lord.

Satyamani is one of hundreds of girls who grew up in our orphanage that are being used of the Lord to share the gospel with people of their families and communities throughout India.

The work in the orphanage is presently being efficiently managed by a fine Christian couple, Vijaya and Lawrence Varadaraj. Vijaya was an orphan child whom we raised, educated and married. She is the mother of two children, and has thirty little orphan girls to love and care for as well.

Lawrence and Vijaya are both school teachers, but now devote their time to the work of the Kollegal Mission Station. Lawrence is active in the outreach of the local assembly and valued for his love for the Lord and his ability to preach God’s Word effectively. They are working under the supervision of the Board of Management for the Girls’ Home Trust.

There is also a school, kindergarten to seventh grade, located on the same compound as the orphanage. Vijaya is the School Manager and oversees the work of the teachers. More than 500 boys and girls attend the school, and the Scripture is also taught for one half hour daily in all the classes. This is meaningful because the student body consists of all Hindu and Muslim children.

Lawrence and Vijaya both participate in the Sunday School work and in the teaching of Bible Study classes. The activities of the orphanage and school are highly respected by the area people, and the work continues to be a light in a dark place as they demonstrate the love of the Lord Jesus in word and deed.



*Anne VanderLaan was commended to the work of the Lord in India in 1946. She served as director of the Girls’ Home Orphanage in Kerala (S. India) until 1997 when she retired to Rest Haven Home in Grand Rapids, MI. She carries on her ministry by correspondence and by visiting India when she is able.*

# Attacked!

*How do we respond to the terror on September 11?*

**T**he recent terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, DC are perhaps the most tragic events witnessed by many alive today. Many watched in real time as the horrific scene unfolded. Through the medium of cellular technology people listened to the last words of some spoken on earth as they made calls to loved ones and others. The hurt brought about by these events is still fresh in the hearts of many. As with any tragedy, questions abound. The believer looks to the Word of God to not only find comfort but also to find applicable eternal principles that help us understand the current scene.

## HONOR THE KING

Support for America's president has never been higher. Many are volunteering for military duty and more are ready to enlist should the need arise. Patriotism is everywhere evident where before it was a vague if not a maligned concept.

While we recognize that we are not of this world and that our citizenship is in heaven, we still heed the words of Peter when he said, "... *Fear God. Honor the king*" (1 Pet. 2:17).

This being said, believers in the Lord Jesus Christ must still evaluate our leaders' words and actions in light of the Bible.

## RID THE WORLD OF EVIL?

Though made in the heat of the moment, President Bush stated that we would "rid the world of evil." Since then the statement seems to have been modified to "ridding the world of *this* evil" referring to the terrorists. Yet facts are stubborn things.

Will we indeed ever be free of terrorism? Is this really a winnable war? If we rid the world of the perpetrators of these attacks do we really think that we will be free of the threat of terrorist activities?

## TROUBLE IS GUARANTEED

The Lord Jesus Himself while on earth told His followers: "*In this world you will have trouble*" (Jn. 16:33 NIV). The freedom God has granted the human race to make their own choices has resulted in countless horrors over the centuries. The events we've witnessed recently are the results of sin taken to an extreme. Even if we "root out" terrorism man's basic nature will not change. Injustice, genocide, and inhumane acts didn't begin with Osama bin Laden. Describing the condition of sinful mankind, Paul said:

*Their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes* (Rom. 3:15-18).

## BOMB AFGHANISTAN?

Under the control of the radical Islamic clerics known as the Taliban the situation is dire. One Afghan living in the United States writes concerning his own countrymen:

"...they're starved, exhausted, hurt, incapacitated, suffering. A few years ago, the United Nations estimated that there are 500,000 disabled orphans in Afghanistan—a country with no economy, no food. There are millions of widows. And the Taliban has been burying them alive in mass graves.



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The soil is littered with land mines... We come now to the question of 'bombing Afghanistan back to the Stone Age'... Trouble is, that's been done. The Soviets took care of it already. Make the Afghans suffer? They're already suffering. Level their houses? Done. Turn their schools into piles of rubble? Done. Eradicate their hospitals? Done. Destroy their infrastructure? Cut them off from medicine and health care? Too late. Someone already did all that. New bombs would only stir the rubble of earlier bombs."

Thousands suffer in Southeast Asia, South America, Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Africa. Many live daily in fear for their lives. This certainly by no means justifies the unwarranted attacks. It does, however, give us a sense of what much of the world lives through daily to one degree or another.

Modern America has been exempt from foreign intrusion and has dwelt in a relative sense of security—separated from much of the world by two oceans and bordered by friendly neighbors. The U.S. has enjoyed a prosperity that most of the world cannot even imagine. Certainly most of us do not mind living in an affluent society and enjoying its benefits.

## WHERE IS OUR SECURITY?

Yet these recent events have been a startling reminder that we live in a world of uncertainty. It has been amazing to realize how tenuous a thread many institutions are hanging upon. Within a week of the attack the airline industry laid off 120,000 employees. In one week the stock market lost 1.4 trillion dollars in value. Besides this there is the yet uncalculated cost of equipment and infrastructure. Add to this the insurance companies losses. How strikingly clear ring the words of James:

*Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that" (Jas. 4:13-15 NIV).*

God repeatedly warns His people in the Bible to not look for security in their armies, their governments or their riches, for none of these will provide adequate protection when real adversity hits. These things certainly cannot secure us an eternal dwelling place with the Lord.

*...Those who trust in their wealth and boast of their great riches? No man can redeem the life of another or give to God a ransom for him—the ransom for a life is costly, no payment is ever enough... (Ps. 49:6-8 NIV).*

The Lord warned us that these very things can distract us, focusing our attention on things of far less consequence than eternity.

*Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy (1 Tim. 6:17).*

How many of those that perished in the attack were prepared for eternity? Only the Lord knows, but we can be certain that the majority of those people thought it was just another day. But the Bible says: "*Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth*" (Prov. 27:1).

Yet surely there were those who died that day who, while unprepared for such an unexpected attack, were prepared for eternity. They had previously recognized their own sinful condition before a holy God and had found the truth that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. They had personally called on the name of the Lord in faith and had found forgiveness of sins and eternal life. They could therefore claim the promise: "*We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord*" (2 Cor. 5:8).

## RAMPANT PLURALISM

The president called for a national day of prayer and it was conducted without any apparent opposition. The call of the nation's leaders to prayer is certainly commendable. But what do we make of it when one of the Protestant ministers began his prayer by invoking the "God of Abraham, Mohammed, and Jesus Christ"? In John 14:6, "*Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.*" Woe to anyone who seeks to put Him on the same level as Mohammed or even to elevate modern day Christ-rejecting Judaism with the Lord of glory. Perhaps more clearly than ever we saw the forebodings of events yet to occur when world religions are melded into one.

## MUCH MISUNDERSTANDING

One television host opined about those on the planes, "Their souls were with God before the plane crashed. I just feel in my spirit it must have been like that." Many have called on us to pray for the victims that have been killed. Some have declared, "The roster of angels has been increased." Without the clear light of God's revelation we are left in a fog of uncertainty and speculation. The Bible emphatically states that now is the time, today is the day, and after death is too late! This fact alone should spur the Church on to its business of proclaiming the gospel of God's grace, warning the lost of their plight.

## DOOMSDAY REALLY IS COMING

Soon the Lord will judge the world's economic, political and religious alliance, a system known as Babylon. Remember that Babylon began as a city built in defiance to God; it was noted for its tower reaching to the heavens.

*Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen... And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities (Rev. 18:2, 4-5).*

*And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones...and slaves [or bodies], and souls of men (Rev. 18:11-13).*

## OUR CERTAIN HOPE

We who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ have this confidence: no matter what the future holds, we know who holds the future. We know how the whole thing will end. The throne in heaven is occupied. The Lord is still in control and "*all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose*" (Rom. 8:28).



# SOVEREIGNTY

*This doctrine shouldn't lead to wrangling but to worship.*

**T**he blazing African sun beat down upon the crowded Arab marketplace as women busily bartered with the merchants. The bustling walkways were lined with storekeepers selling their wares, as the children played nearby. The air was filled with the pungent smell of spices and the confusing din of a thousand voices. Amid these dusty streets teeming with people, a pregnant woman began to slowly make her way across a wide thoroughfare. Suddenly, there was a great noise and commotion in the marketplace, and in an instant, an out-of-control wagon, being pulled by horses in full gallop, raced through the marketplace. Without warning, the horses trampled the helpless woman. Immediately, a crowd gathered to see what had happened. The driver, realizing what he had done, brought the horses to an abrupt stop. While looking at the woman lying dead on the ground, he said with callous indifference, "It was the will of Allah," then continued on his way.

To many, this account describes their view of the sovereignty of God. To them, God's actions are arbitrary, capricious, and often unjust. Their attitude is "whatever will be, will be." No matter what happens, it is God's will. This is the fatalistic view of God. Such a God will be feared, but how can He be loved? If He cannot be loved, how can He be trusted?

## DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY AND THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

Thankfully, the Bible does not present such a view of God's sovereignty. It presents Him as both all-powerful and infinitely good. God's goodness, justice, mercy, grace, and His numerous other attributes meet to form the righteous and sovereign actions of God. God's sovereignty may sometimes involve testing in the form of calamity and trials, but never without love, faithfulness, and compassion. His sovereignty may appear for the moment to be without purpose or sense, yet the ways of God are always perfect. He is a God whom we can trust, love, and worship for His sovereign will.

While sovereignty is surely to be believed by all who love sound doctrine, it must not be understood to be exercised in conflict with God's attributes, such as love,

justice, truth, and immutability. Some have erred in this respect and have raised sovereignty to such a level that all the attributes of God become secondary, thereby causing discord in the nature of God. The sovereignty of God can never be exercised at the expense of His divine nature, which is love (1 Jn. 4:8). Concerning this conflict, Dr. James Orr, general editor of the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, writes,

Calvin exalts the sovereignty of God, and this is right, but errs in placing his root ideas of God in the sovereign will rather than in love. Love is subordinated to sovereignty, instead of sovereignty to love.<sup>1</sup>



## SOVEREIGNTY AND THE GOODNESS OF GOD

The biblical principle that God is good and does good applies to His sovereign actions. God's nature and God's holy purposes cannot be divorced; for God will not act contrary to His holy nature.

Throughout the canon of Scripture, the sovereign actions of God are guided by His holy character. Abraham echoed this very principle when he said, "*Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*" (Gen. 18:25).

Scripture reveals that God's mercy, goodness, grace, and compassion all undergird His sovereign purposes and will. Even when affliction and suffering are God's will, it too is ruled by His "*compassion and unfailing love.*" Jeremiah the prophet explains, "*Though He brings grief, He will show compassion, so great is His unfailing love. For He does not willingly bring affliction or grief to the children of men*" (Lam. 3:32-33 NIV).

The Psalmist lays bare the very essence of God's sovereign nature when he writes, "*The Lord is gracious and full of compassion...the Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works*" (Ps. 145:8-9).

Theologians have called this biblical linking of God's sovereign rule with God's infinite goodness the doctrine of "providence." Providence is divine care, sustenance, and love, and His sovereign rule over creation for His glory and the good of humankind. The twofold goal of providence is the glory of God and the good of His people. These two goals are never in conflict but are always

in harmony with each other. God never pursues His glory at the expense of the good of His people, nor does He ever seek our good at the expense of His glory. He

**God's sovereign acts  
are advanced by His  
UNBOUNDED  
OMNIPOTENCE and ruled  
by His INFINITE WISDOM.  
Even the wrath of man  
praises Him.**

has designed His eternal purpose so that His glory and our good are inseparably yoked together.

#### DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY AND THE WISDOM OF GOD

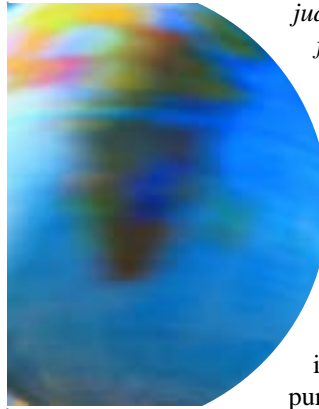
All God's sovereign actions are rooted in His infinite wisdom. God's wisdom enables Him to direct every act that occurs on the world stage into a perfect plan that accomplishes His divine purpose. God is the master of every situation. Man can be frustrated by circumstances outside of his control, but this is never true of God. There is never a situation, problem, or difficulty which can ever frustrate the wisdom of God. His sovereign actions are advanced by His unbounded omnipotence and ruled by His infinite wisdom. He will cause even the wrath of man to bring praise to Himself (Ps. 76:10). The psalmist wrote, "*Great is our Lord, and of great power: His understanding is infinite*" (Ps. 147:5).

The Scriptures manifestly declare that all God's sovereign actions are in wisdom. Whether it be His acts of creation, redemption, or His many works within the world, they are all accomplished in wisdom. His ways are infinitely perfect. No act of God is flawed, marred, or suspect. No decision of God can ever be improved upon. We may not understand the ways of God, yet they remain rooted in perfect wisdom.

It is not our place to raise doubts about our "*God only wise*," but rather to bow in worshipful submission. The psalmist writes: "*O Lord, how manifold are Thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches*" (Ps. 104:24). Solomon writes concerning the sovereign act of creation, "*The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath He established the heavens*" (Prov. 3:19).

The apostle Paul, after surveying the dizzying heights of God's plan of redemption exults, "*Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgements and His ways past finding out!*" (Rom. 11:33).

God desires that we completely trust His sovereign acts of infinite wisdom. He encourages us to know and believe that the "*only wise God*" is in control of the affairs of this world and of our individual lives. The high and lofty One who inhabits eternity permits and/or purposes every event in this world and, yes, all in wisdom.



#### THE BIBLICAL SCOPE OF DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY

The doctrine that God is sovereign in His created universe is a truth that must be believed by all Christians. It must be the very foundation of all biblical doctrine. That God is sovereign means that He is the highest and greatest, exalted above all. He is omnipotent and controls everything, working everything according to His eternal plan and purpose: "*...according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will*" (Eph. 1:11). The Bible states that God is eternal, self-existent, self-sufficient, unchanging, all-powerful, all-knowing and He alone stands unequaled, above all. "*For Thou, Lord, art high above all the earth: Thou art exalted far above all gods*" (Ps. 97:9).

Since God is infinite, His rule is absolute. His rule must involve control of everything in His creation—every circumstance, every situation, every event. God's sovereignty means that He either directly causes or consciously permits all that happens in human history.

God claims full responsibility for establishing and removing human rulers. The psalmist tells us that the sovereign God controls the weather (Ps. 147:16-18). Paul wrote, "*For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things*" (Rom. 11:36). God, according to His holy character, has the right to do those things that please Him. The psalmist states, "*Our God is in the heavens; He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased*" (Ps. 115:3). Yet we must never forget that those things that please Him most are marked by love, mercy, and justice. God is in complete control, yet He does not manipulate people like puppets. He gives them the dignity and freedom to make decisions and holds them

responsible for their choices. Those decisions may bring to pass untold misery and suffering, yet God allows it.

However, through divine omniscience God knows every choice that man would make, and through divine sovereignty He takes those choices and uses them to serve His purposes. In this way, God has complete control over every decision and action, though man has the freedom to make decisions. However, where divine wisdom deems it best, He will overrule man's decisions in order to accomplish His own matchless purposes. Only an omnipotent God can take man's choices and the suffering that follows and cause them to ultimately serve His perfect sovereign will. God does not always allow man's sinful actions to run their full and natural evil course, but He intervenes and overrules. Moreover, we should not question God's sovereignty, but rather yield to the good and perfect will of God.

#### SOVEREIGNTY AND THE SCOPE OF MAN'S FREE WILL

Some have wrongly concluded that if God is absolutely sovereign, then man does not have a free will. It is thought that man can only act inasmuch as God will allow him to act, and that man must act only as God desires. Therefore, according to this view, man cannot resist the sovereign will and desires of God. This view may strike us as biblical and logical; however, Scripture does not seem to support this particular view. Moreover, Scripture emphasizes that God has sov-

***Frequently throughout  
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This ability is granted to  
man from God.***

eignly granted to man the ability to make free choices. This is not man usurping God's role in the world, but this is God's sovereign design and purpose for man in the world. Man could not make free choices except that it was given by God.

This principle is stated by our Lord Himself in His interview with Pilate before the crucifixion. Pilate charges the Lord, "Knowest thou not that I have power

to crucify Thee and have power to release Thee?" Jesus answers, "Thou couldst have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above..." (Jn. 19:10-11). Pilate thought that his ability to make free decisions was a personal right. Our Lord rightly corrects Pilate and states that the ability to make free choices is from God: "it is given...from above."

Frequently throughout Scripture we see man acting in defiance of God's desires. This ability is granted to man from God. King Solomon declares, "For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: They would none of My counsel: they despised all My reproof" (Prov. 1:29-30). In John's Gospel the Lord rebukes the Pharisees, saying, "Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life" (Jn. 5:40). Further, Matthew tells us that when the Lord Jesus strongly desired that the Jewish people come to Him, they rejected the desire of the Son of God: "O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem...how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not" (Mt. 23:37).

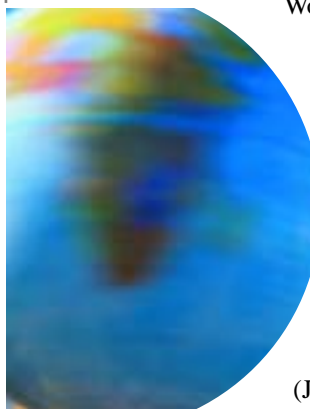
God has not determined and caused all things to come to pass as they do. God exercises sovereign control in the world; but within this control, He permits certain events and purposes others. It is of great importance to carefully distinguish between these two aspects of God's sovereignty.

For this reason, the sinful consequences of man's will must never be attributed to God. The

Word of God clearly states that all sinful temptations, the acts of the flesh, wars, lust, killings, and the misery that results because of sin are not caused by God, but by the free choices of man. James writes, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man" (Jas. 1:13). He writes further,

"From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?" (Jas. 4:1). The apostle John wrote, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father..." (1 Jn. 2:16).

The Word of God carefully sets forth both the infinite sovereignty of God and human responsibility. In this infinite sovereignty, God has granted to man a free



will. To detract from either of these truths is to detract from the fullness of the Word of God. A proper biblical balance between the two must be rigorously sought and maintained.

Respected author A. W. Tozer strikes this proper biblical balance between the sovereignty of God and man's free will when he writes:

God sovereignly decreed that man should be free to exercise moral choice, and man from the beginning has fulfilled that decree by making his choice between good and evil. When he chooses to do evil, he does not thereby countervail the sovereign will of God but fulfills it, inasmuch as the eternal decree decided not which choice the man should make but that he should be free to make it. If in His absolute freedom God has willed to give limited freedom, who is there to stay His hand or say, 'What doest Thou?' Man's will is free because God is sovereign. A God less than sovereign could not bestow moral freedom upon His creatures. He would be afraid to do so.<sup>2</sup>

**The doctrine of the sovereignty of God must NEVER PROVIDE MAN with EXCUSES. Systems of theology may give reasons to do so, but not THE WORD OF GOD.**

Respected theologian Dr. Norman Geisler adds further clarity:

Human freedom is not contrary to God's sovereignty. God sovereignly gave man his freedom by creating him a free creature, and God sovereignly continues to allow man to exercise his freedom moment by moment in existence (Col. 1:17). Thus the sovereignty of God is not thwarted by human freedom but glorified by human freedom. For God gave man free will, He sustains man so he can act freely, and He brings about all His purposes without violating man's free will.<sup>3</sup>

The faithful scholar and gifted preacher C. H. Spurgeon draws together in a sermon the importance of these two lines of biblical truth:

Man is a free agent, a responsible agent, so that his sin is

his own willful sin and it lies fully with him and never with God, and yet at the same time God's purposes are fulfilled, and His will is done even by demons and corrupt men—I cannot comprehend it: without hesitation I believe it, and rejoice so to do, I never hope to comprehend it...I worship a God I never expect to comprehend.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, the doctrine of the sovereignty of God must never provide man with excuses. Systems of theology may give reasons to do so, but not the Word of God. No man can deny full responsibility for his actions, claiming that he was irresistibly led by God; for God never does violence to the free will which He has graciously given to man. God's sovereignty and man's freedom dwell side by side in such a way that the former does not force itself upon the latter, but in some cases He does overrule for His highest eternal purpose.

In a future day we will see that mankind, in complete freedom, in uncoerced decisions, has been working out

God's eternal divine plan. How can this be brought to pass? It is only by and through a sovereign God who is characterized by infinite power, wisdom, love, and goodness. *"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been His counselor? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever.*

*Amen"* (Rom. 11:33-36).

*David Dunlap*  
David Dunlap

## ENDNOTES:

1. James Orr, *The Progress of Dogma*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdman, 1952), p. 292
2. A. W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, (New York, NY: Harper and Row Publishers, 1961), p. 118
3. Norman Geisler, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*: ed., Walter Elwell, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1986), p. 429
4. C. H. Spurgeon, *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, Vol. 16, (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1907), p. 501

# If you want to help

*Gospel Missions of India is one possibility.*

If you are exercised to help with the great need of spreading the gospel in India, especially the needy north, how do you go about it? Wisdom and discernment are needed because quantities of misplaced money can ruin a work quickly. But a shrug of the shoulders because the challenge is too great is hardly adequate. *"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith"* (Gal. 6:10).

Gospel Missions of India (GMI) is an avenue through which Christians in the West can provide resources for the work being done by assembly workers in North India. There is a need for literature, transportation, and assembly buildings.

The priority of GMI since its beginning has been to help evangelists meet their basic financial needs through three major funds (similar to CMML in the states). They are: KEM Fund and Indian Evangelical Trust operated from Kerala, and GFTI from Madras.

Funds provided through GMI also help three Bible schools: North India Bible School in Rajasthan, Bengal Bible Training Institute in Bihar, and Stewards Bible College in Madras where training is provided for evangelists, especially in North India.

Much of the population of India lives in more than 600,000 villages. It is nearly impossible to personally reach all of these villages with the gospel. When funds are available,

GMI helps to sponsor radio programs in different languages with the goal of having at least one program in each of India's official languages by next year. No religious broadcasting is allowed from within India so air time must be purchased from outside the country. Living Waters Gospel Broadcasting in Bombay coordinates the programs.

Of the more than 1,400 assembly workers in India, fewer than ten own a car. A few have motorcycles; some use bicycles—the rest walk. GMI has provided small vans to a few of the ministry teams made up of several evangelists working together in an area. In addition to getting around more quickly, these vehicles also provide an element of protection from Hindu fanatics.

The Lord has also provided help with construction of assembly buildings both in the North and South. Hundreds of requests are pending.

Literature is another need. Indians love to read, but literature must be available in their own language as very few can read English. Brethren in India are doing a good job of printing literature for this need, but demand is high.

Gospel Literature Service of Bombay is the major assembly publisher in India. Sathyam Literature Service in Kerala is also active in producing literature, but does not have its own press. They have requested help in buying a press so that literature can be printed quickly and economically. After radio, per-

haps the most effective way to reach India with the gospel is by literature.

The door for the gospel is still open in India but it may close. Fanatics are doing their best to stop gospel work. They are not going to succeed: Our Lord is sovereign. Despite opposition to the gospel and the persecution of evangelists, the gospel is spreading in all parts of India.

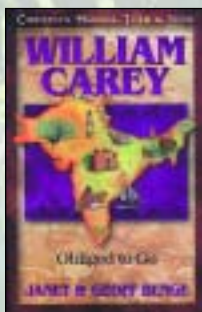
The Indian government does not allow foreign missionaries to enter India, but Westerners can continue to support the Lord's work in India through national workers. Christians in North America can still make a difference!

Western missionaries have done a marvelous job in India. God blessed their efforts and many ministries continue as a result of their work. Indian brethren are grateful for the sacrificial efforts of many foreign missionaries, especially from the West. Their investments are bringing rich dividends. But now the work has to be done by national workers. Thankfully, India has many believers who are gifted, trained, dedicated, and available. We need to stand behind and help them. What they need are resources and prayer.

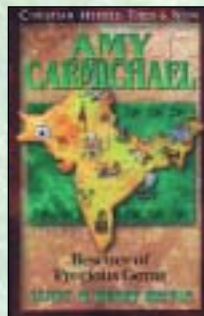
The need in India is enormous. We must help them in every way possible. The main role of GMI is to bring this awareness to the hearts of believers here and to see that the money sent to India through them is faithfully invested in the Lord's work and for His glory.

Contact: GMI, PO Box 1043, Warren, MI 48090 Phone: 810-247-7924 email@gospelmi.org

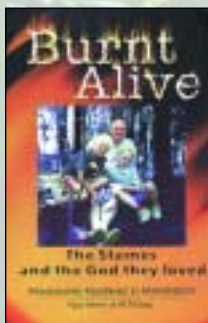
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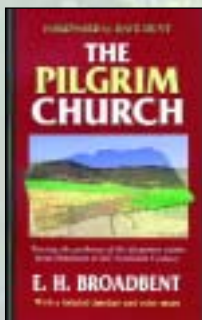


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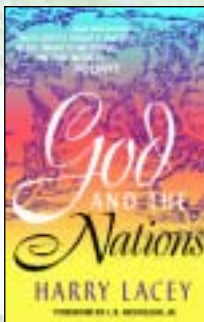


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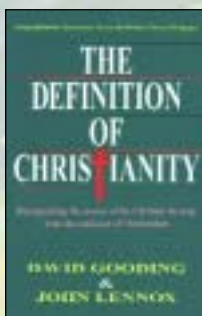
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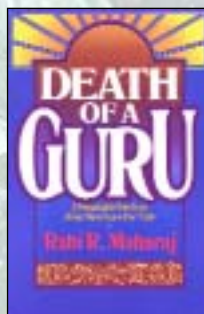
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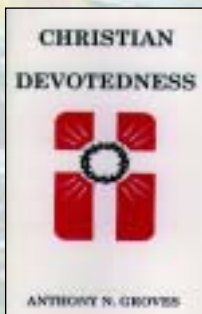
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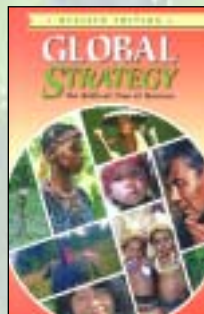
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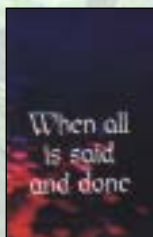
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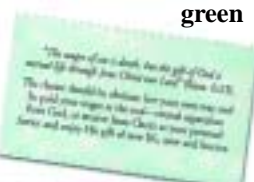
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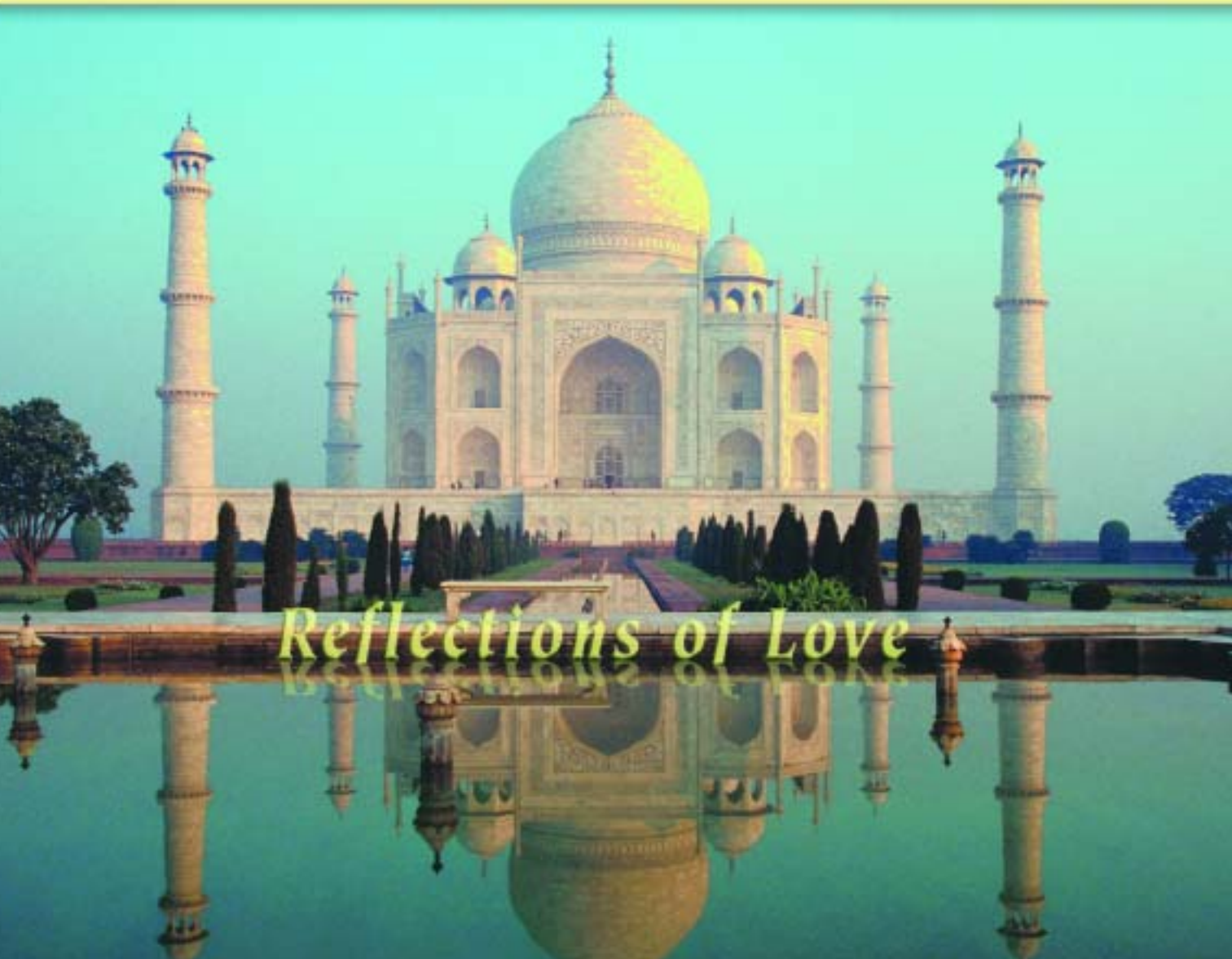
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