

26 March, 2007

Hello again to all our friends & brethren back in the USA!

India has gotten HOT! Temperatures are already hovering in the 90's & are soon to be hitting the low 100's. We had a very short winter this year, and there were only a few days I ever needed to wear a jacket. It is understandable that during the summer times here that many suffer due to lack of amenities (fans, air coolers, air conditioners, etc.). Even in our house, because there is no central air conditioning, only a couple of the rooms are comfortable to be in for any length of time...those are 3 of the 4 bedrooms. We installed air conditioners in these bedrooms some time ago, but the one bedroom that does not have an air conditioner is the children's room. They have been camping out in the room with myself & Sony a lot lately! My office is another household hotspot, having next to no air circulation – I have to keep the windows in this room closed for the strange reason that rats have picked my windows to chew through the mosquito nets for entering the house...more than any other room! More than 20 rats have been killed in & around our house over the 4 years we have lived there. Apparently, they enjoy living in good housing also.

This is also the part of year that the work slows down. Meetings are still going on, but we don't want a lot of workers traveling in ways or to places where they might face problems because of extreme heat.

I have had a little bit of a break this month, but not all by choice. I was scheduled to travel with my father to Khammam District earlier this month, but a tragedy occurred & I decided to stay in Hyderabad instead. One of the puppies died while Sony & I were feeding them that same morning. Our only conclusion is that it had choked on its food, dying within a couple minutes. Sony was distraught, as were the children, & I felt I needed to be with them. I also learned that my Dad was very upset during much of his trip. Needless to say, we have been very protective of the remaining 5 puppies ever since.

We were invited to make a trip to our CCMIBS schools in Thubadu & Markapur (the whole family – parents included), but we had the problem arise again about the puppies. Sony & I did not want to leave them in the hands of just anybody, & Sony's mother is really not capable of chasing after such active critters. We did allow Sunshine to go on this trip with my parents & the rest of us stayed in Hyderabad. This, however, led to another unforeseen problem. Because the trip was for preachers' training lectureships, Dad took all the translators from Hyderabad to translate & teach at the lectureships. I have ended up being the office administrator for a couple weeks, with very few meetings to attend.

I attended the worship services yesterday at Jagathgirigutta ("Jag Hills") & Venkatgiri Hills congregations in the morning. Jag Hills is where Bro. N.M. Manick Rao ("NMMR") is the preacher & his family lives in the compound where we have the church building. This building is also used as the CCMIBS & the KCMBI classroom.

Great news!

"NMMR" is the father of Pheobe (yes it is spelled that way, not Phoebe), who is the wife of our office manager, Ganna. Ganna & Pheobe had a baby girl last month...& I finally got to see her yesterday. She is beautiful! Thankfully, she doesn't look too much like Ganna! That is birth #1. I have known Pheobe for many years, having watched her & her younger siblings all grow up. She was probably 8 when I first came to India.

Our housekeeper, Mary, is a wonderful woman, though very uneducated. She has four wonderful children, the oldest of which is also uneducated. Her name is Rosie. Rosie has some sort of mental deficiency, but it is not severe. She was married a few years ago, and they were blessed with a baby boy this month!

Elizabeth is one of my former students. I had mentioned her in one of my letters a couple years ago when she got married. She has suffered a great deal with health problems, but was finally able to conceive. She is currently "great with child" & is ready to deliver at any minute! We pray for her & her husband, Dharma Rao, in this time. Elizabeth's younger brother, David, is one of my close friends & my driver. Elizabeth & David are also some that I have watched grow up. When I came to India in 1993, David was about 13 years old. Now he is considerably larger than I am & is as strong as an ox! Their father is Bro. M. Devinder, a long-time preacher & an elder of the Jawaharnagar congregation.

Getting to watch so many young people grow up here in the Lord & His church has truly been a blessing!

Sad news:

As I mentioned earlier, one of our puppies died. This was so hard for us, because he practically died in my hands, although we tried to help him in whatever way we could to revive him. It was one of those things that I can explain as happening so fast we didn't know how to react.

We have received many requests for medical help, which are all directed to me. I don't normally mention any of these in my reports, but felt a couple should be brought to your attention so you would know a little more about what we face here.

Bro. G. Bhaskar Rao, years ago, fell from a bus & his feet were run over. He is able to walk, but his feet are terribly disfigured & he requires a cane & special strap-on boots. He was admitted back into the hospital a few days ago because some infection has set in & he requires surgery.

Sis. Y.Ch. Devaiah was recently bitten by a cobra. She is undergoing treatment for this, but it is far from inexpensive. Her treatments will cost over \$1000, and that is far more than they will earn in a year!

April 3rd.

I had for some reason or other thought I had actually sent this message out. Sony asked me if I had written lately and I said, yes. Then I got to thinking about it and realized I had written, but did I send it? No...stupid me.

We got more sad news this morning. Bro. G. Bhaskar Rao, whom I had mentioned previously, has had 1 foot amputated. This was done, however, without informing him or the family prior to the operation. Needless to say Bro. Bhaskar Rao and his family are very upset and are very likely to file a police case against the doctor and the hospital for such gross negligence.

I wanted to give all of you updates on the work that has gone on so far this year.

In all of 2006, our team (not just the Americans) have held 143,915 Gospel Meetings (village meetings, house meetings, etc.). From these there have been 277,242 souls that have been baptized and added to the Lord's church. Out of those 443 have been denominational preachers that have obeyed the Truth and decided to leave the ways of error. Also, new congregations have been planted in 2,482 new places.

Since January 1, 2007, our team of preachers has held 58,589 Gospel Meetings, baptizing 115,523 including 59 denominational preachers. There have been 535 new congregations planted!

What a wonderful year this has been...and your prayers, encouragement, and contributions have all been part of it! We need you to continue to help in all these ways so that this work will continue to grow and prosper.

Love to all in Christ,

Kyle E. Clayton