



# Embers

*For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Gal. 5:3*

**India Mission Trip**  
Some information and highlights of Paul's recent trip to India

Page 1

**Return to Vegetarian Potlucks**  
Come and fellowship together next week!

Page 2

**Lessons from the Life of Paul**  
The first General Conference session

Page 2

**Our Health Message**  
What is its real purpose?

Page 4

## India Mission Trip

I spoke with Paul Paulraj about his recent trip to the state of Karnataka in India. The following is some of what I learned about his trip, and the different projects that Paul, along with the help of members from Burnt Mills, has been developing. The four main projects are as follows:

1. Education of Afro-Indian children.
2. Education of poor Indian children.
3. Revival meetings in cooperation with the local conference.
4. Special teaching sessions at the two-year Adventist Seminary in Bidar, Karnataka, in the South-Central India Union Section.

### Afro-Indian Children

The Afro-Indians are descendents of the Africans who were brought to Bombay as slaves by the Dutch in the 1600's. They were generally destined for other international locations, but some were purchased as slaves by the British, and others escaped to the mountains. They are one of the lowest social castes in India. The Afro-Indians still live similarly to their distant relatives in Africa, but have basically adopted the Indian culture and languages where they now find themselves. There are about 50,000 people in this ethnic group. The children have had basically no educational opportunities, until the local Adventist

school determined to help some of them. Then when the Burnt Mills Church learned about the children's situation, we helped the Adventist school with their educational expenses.

A first group of thirty children are now attending one of our Adventist elementary schools. These children are doing well, and enjoying the Adventist influence of the school. A second group of thirty Afro-Indian children were also interested in attending the Adventist school, so one of the Burnt Mill's Sabbath School classes helped them. They all started from 1st grade, and the Sabbath School class has been helping them for the last three years. Initially, the boarding conditions were very poor, but Asian Aid, an Adventist aid organization from Australia, has now provided a hostel so these students can stay more comfortably.

A nice personal mission project would be to sponsor an Afro-Indian child at one of our schools. This can be accomplished for around \$150 a year, and should be considered a multi-year project, so the child can finish elementary or even high school.

### Poor Indian Children

In the city of Kollegal, Karnataka, Burnt Mills members have currently offered to help 15 students in two schools. Students participating in this program have met the following conditions: the student's family must be unable to afford the tuition, and the student must do well academically.

Many other children would also like to receive assistance in this way, if more funding is made available. These students can be sponsored for around \$150 a year, and this support should be considered a multi-year project.

At one of these schools we helped start a library with scholastic books, religious books, and an encyclopedia set. If you would like to send any used school books or religious books to improve the school library, it would be greatly appreciated. Books can be sent for about a dollar a pound if forty pounds are sent.

### Bidar Seminary

In the city of Bidar, Karnataka, there is a two year seminary where students are trained for pastoral work. Many religious books have been sent there to help establish a library. If you have any religious books, Bible commentaries, or Spirit of Prophecy books, they can be sent to this school.

### Trip Details

When Paul arrived in his hometown, soon about a dozen young men of various religious backgrounds showed gathered to learn more about the Bible. Paul studied with these young men for about ten days, and the meetings generally lasted 3-4 hours each night. They accepted many truths, including the Sabbath, but still have questions, and are in need of further instruction. Since Paul left, pastors from other denominations have been trying to

confuse them. In spite of this, they are still eager to learn. A local conference president has been studying with them once a week, but this is currently not enough time to answer all their questions. Some of these young men are Catholic, some are Protestant, and some are Hindus. Three of the young men were all brothers from the same family, and the eldest is solid in the newfound truth, while the middle one is wavering. The third one was currently in a Catholic school training to be a priest. When he attended the meeting discussing the origins of Sunday observance, he asked many questions, and left determined to give up the priesthood. He is now planning to study education instead. Praise the Lord!

Let us lift up these young men in our prayers that they may continue in the things they have found.

I asked Paul what are the greatest needs in India. He replied that the greatest needs are spiritual, since India is becoming an economic giant, and since all the amenities of a good life are now available, people are not as interested in spiritual things.

Paul has a few trustworthy individuals, one of whom is the brother of our Head Deacon, who oversees things for Paul while he is away. They help provide accountability that our funds are spent appropriately helping those in need, and not landing in someone's pocket. If you would like to help support any of these projects, please talk to Paul.

*by Joshua Marcoe*

## Return to Vegetarian Pot-lucks

As we look forward to our October fellowship dinner, the church has decided to return to Vegetarian meals. (But vegan dishes are certainly acceptable). We ask that you mark all vegan dishes as such, so the vegans among can choose accordingly. We will continue to hand out vegan recipes, and hope that these will be a blessing to your family.

If everyone would consider bringing two large casseroles, we can all enjoy a bountiful table, and have plenty to spare. We

also request that parents keep their children with them while going through the food line, and that everyone stays in the Cruze Hall during the fellowship meal. Thank you.

*by Susan DiBiase*

## Lessons from the Life of Paul

God communicated with the devout prophets and teachers in the church at Antioch. "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." Acts 13:2. These apostles were therefore dedicated to God in a most solemn manner by fasting and prayer and the laying on of hands; and they were sent forth to their field of labor among the Gentiles.

Both Paul and Barnabas had been laboring as ministers of Christ, and God had abundantly blessed their efforts, but neither of them had previously been formally ordained to the gospel ministry by prayer and the laying on of hands. They were now authorized by the church not only to teach the truth but to baptize and to organize churches, being invested with full ecclesiastical authority. This was an important era for the church. Though the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile had been broken down by the death of Christ, letting the Gentiles into the full privileges of the gospel, the veil had not yet been torn away from the eyes of many of the believing Jews, and they could not clearly discern to the end of that which was abolished by the Son of God. The work was now to be prosecuted with vigor among the Gentiles, and was to result in strengthening the church by a great ingathering of souls.

The apostles, in this, their special work, were to be exposed to suspicion, prejudice, and jealousy. As a natural consequence of their departure from the exclusiveness of the Jews, their doctrine and views would be subject to the charge of heresy; and their credentials as ministers of the gospel would be questioned by many zealous, believing Jews.

God foresaw all these difficulties which His servants would undergo, and, in His wise providence, caused them to be invested with unquestionable authority from the established church of God, that their work should be above challenge.

The ordination by the laying on of hands was, at a later date, greatly abused; unwarrantable importance was attached to the act, as though a power came at once upon those who received such ordination, which immediately qualified them for any and all ministerial work, as though virtue lay in the act of laying on of hands. We have, in the history of these two apostles, only a simple record of the laying on of hands, and its bearing upon their work. Both Paul and Barnabas had already received their commission from God Himself; and the ceremony of the laying on of hands added no new grace or virtual qualification. It was merely setting the seal of the church upon the work of God--an acknowledged form of designation to an appointed office.

## The First General Conference

Certain Jews from Judea raised a general consternation among the believing Gentiles by agitating the question of circumcision. They asserted, with great assurance, that none could be saved without being circumcised and keeping the entire ceremonial law.

This was an important question, and one which affected the church in a very great degree. Paul and Barnabas met it with promptness, and opposed introducing the subject to the Gentiles. They were opposed in this by the believing Jews of Antioch, who favored the position of those from Judea. The matter resulted in much discussion and want of harmony in the church, until finally the church at Antioch, apprehending that a division among them would occur from any further discussion of the question, decided to send Paul and Barnabas, together with some responsible men of Antioch, to Jerusalem, to lay the matter before the apostles and elders. There they were to meet delegates from the different churches, and those who had come to attend the approaching annual festivals. Meanwhile all controversy was

to cease, until a final decision should be made by the responsible men of the church. This decision was then to be universally accepted by the various churches throughout the country.

Upon arriving at Jerusalem the delegates from Antioch related before the assembly of the churches the success that had attended the ministry with them, and the confusion that had resulted from the fact that certain converted Pharisees declared that the Gentile converts must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses in order to be saved.

The Jews had prided themselves upon their divinely appointed services; and they concluded that as God once specified the Hebrew manner of worship, it was impossible that He should ever authorize a change in any of its specifications. They decided that Christianity must connect itself with the Jewish laws and ceremonies. They were slow to discern to the end of that which had been abolished by the death of Christ, and to perceive that all their sacrificial offerings had but prefigured the death of the Son of God, in which type had met its anti-type, rendering valueless the divinely appointed ceremonies and sacrifices of the Jewish religion.

Paul had prided himself upon his Pharisaical strictness; but after the revelation of Christ to him on the road to Damascus the mission of the Saviour and his own work in the conversion of the Gentiles were plain to his mind, and he fully comprehended the difference between a living faith and a dead formalism. Paul still claimed to be one of the children of Abraham, and kept the Ten Commandments in letter and in spirit as faithfully as he had ever done before his conversion to Christianity. But he knew that the typical ceremonies must soon altogether cease, since that which they had shadowed forth had come to pass, and the light of the gospel was shedding its glory upon the Jewish religion, giving a new significance to its ancient rites.

### Evidence of Cornelius' Experience

The question thus brought under the consideration of the council seemed to present insurmountable difficulties, viewed in whatever light. But the Holy Ghost had, in reality, already settled this problem, upon the decision of which depended the prosperity, and even the existence, of the Christian church. Grace, wisdom, and sanctified judgment were given to the apostles to decide the vexed question.

Peter reasoned that the Holy Ghost had decided the matter by descending with equal power upon the uncircumcised Gentiles and the circumcised Jews. He recounted his vision, in which God had presented before him a sheet filled with all manner of four-footed beasts, and had bidden him kill and eat; that when he had refused, affirming that he had never eaten that which was common or unclean, God had said, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common."

He said, "God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as He did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?"

This yoke was not the law of the Ten Commandments, as those who oppose the binding claim of the law assert; but Peter referred to the law of ceremonies, which was made null and void by the crucifixion of Christ. This address of Peter brought the assembly to a point where they could listen with reason to Paul and Barnabas, who related their experience in working among the Gentiles.

### The Decision

James bore his testimony with decision--that God designed to bring in the Gentiles to enjoy all the privileges of the Jews. The Holy Ghost saw good not to impose the ceremonial law on the Gentile converts; and the apostles and elders, after careful investigation of the subject, saw the matter in the same light, and their mind was as the mind of the

Spirit of God. James presided at the council, and his final decision was, "Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God."

It was his sentence that the ceremonial law, and especially the ordinance of circumcision, be not in any wise urged upon the Gentiles, or even recommended to them. James sought to impress the fact upon his brethren that the Gentiles, in turning to God from idolatry, made a great change in their faith; and that much caution should be used not to trouble their minds with perplexing and doubtful questions, lest they be discouraged in following Christ.

The Gentiles, however, were to take no course which should materially conflict with the views of their Jewish brethren, or which would create prejudice in their minds against them. The apostles and elders therefore agreed to instruct the Gentiles by letter to abstain from meats offered to idols, from fornication, from things strangled, and from blood. They were required to keep the commandments and to lead holy lives. The Gentiles were assured that the men who had urged circumcision upon them were not authorized to do so by the apostles.

Paul and Barnabas were recommended to them as men who had hazarded their lives for the Lord. Judas and Silas were sent with these apostles to declare to the Gentiles, by word of mouth, the decision of the council. The four servants of God were sent to Antioch with the epistle and message, which put an end to all controversy; for its was the voice of the highest authority upon earth.

The council which decided this case was composed of the founders of the Jewish and Gentile Christian churches. Elders from Jerusalem and deputies from Antioch were present, and the most influential churches were represented. The council did not claim infallibility in their deliberations, but moved from the dictates of enlightened judgment and with the dignity of a church established by the divine will. They saw that God Himself had decided this question by

favoring the Gentiles with the Holy Ghost, and it was left for them to follow the guidance of the Spirit.

The entire body of Christians were not called to vote upon the question. The apostles and elders--men of influence and judgment--framed and issued the decree, which was thereupon generally accepted by the Christian churches. All were not pleased, however, with this decision; there was a faction of false brethren who assumed to engage in a work on their own responsibility. They indulged in murmuring and faultfinding, proposing new plans and seeking to pull down the work of the experienced men whom God had ordained to teach the doctrine of Christ. The church has had such obstacles to meet from the first, and will ever have them to the close of time. {SR 309.1}

*The Story of Redemption, pages 303-309.*

## Our Health Message

It is October and we are fast coming up on one of our great holidays, Thanksgiving. When a person thinks of Thanksgiving they generally think of a table with all kinds of food. I can still remember all of us gathering at my mother's parent's house for the thanksgiving meal. The table had potatoes and gravy, potato and regular bread stuffing. I can still see all the vegetables, like squash, peas and corn, turnip and beets, pickles and whole cranberry jelly, sliced cucumbers and tomatoes, and on each end of that giant table a huge turkey that granddad had raised.

When we became Seventh-day Adventists only one turkey was cooked because our family of six had become vegetarians. After all that is the diet that Adam and Eve had in the beginning and we were looking forward to going home with Jesus when He came and so we decided to follow the diet that God gave in the Bible. We also as Seventh-day Adventists had the privilege of reading the writings of Ellen White, God's prophet to His remnant church.

God's word quotes good king Jehoshaphat as saying, "Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper." In the 1800's when Ellen White was writing not much was known about nutrition. It is interesting to read some of the counsel that was written back then. Or I suppose it would be better to say it was shocking to read some of the things that was written back then. Yet when I read the counsel given in the Spirit of Prophecy I cannot help but be amazed at the wealth of information that is there on proper diet and how it relates to the health of body and mind.

What this inspired lady wrote back then about the need of a vegetarian diet for better health is a proven fact today. And what she said about the diseases that would infect the animal kingdom at the end of time (our day), and the need to refrain from flesh of any kind. These predictions are now a reality.

But there is one thing that continually amazes me. With all the information that we have on the diseases in the animal kingdom, I am amazed at seeing God's remnant people turning from God's plan to the eating of the flesh of animals. More and more people in the world are turning to God's original diet for mankind. God's word says, "Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper."

We need to believe and follow the counsel that God gives to us through His prophets. We have received abundant instruction through the Spirit of Prophecy on health and healthful living. I would encourage you to read the books, Counsels on Diet and Food, Counsels on Health, and others, if you are unfamiliar with these subjects. The health message will benefit our whole families, for it is now known that an improper diet is one of the things that causes hyperactivity in children. No wonder that God has so much to say about it.

We are also instructed that it is impossible to develop a Christ-like character while neglecting God's original diet. That is why God led the children of Is-

rael out into the desert of Sinai and gave them manna. The book Patriarchs and Prophets tells us that they could not develop the character that God wanted them to have on the Egyptian diet.

We are in the antitypical Day of Atonement, a time of preparation for the coming of Jesus. Therefore we need to all we can to follow the counsel God has given us regarding healthful living. This is an important part of preparing ourselves and our families to meet to meet Jesus when He comes.

*by Pastor Frost*