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I. Letters

1. Charles Hellman <charmary32@gmail.com> June 7:
   Congratulations to all our Pakistani young people there in California who have graduated and also those who are doing further study. We spent ten years in Pakistan and have many friends from there who are now living in the USA. Their spirituality and their accomplishments in academics warms our hearts....Pakistan Zindabad !!!!!!!!

2. Vara Prasad Deepati <vdeepati@aiias.edu> June 8:
   Congratulations to Dr. Justus Devadas, president, Spicer Memorial College, who has been approved for PhD guideship. May God continue to bless him with greater wisdom and strength as he continues to share his talents and gifts to the cause of God in general, and at Spicer in particular.

3. Jane Jesu <jane_jesu@yahoo.com> June 8:
   Congratulations, Dr. Justus Devadas, on being approved as Major Guide for the Research Students of PhD in History of Manav Bharti University. I would have been more happy if you were the Guide for PhD in English!

4. Gladwin Mathews <gladwinmathews@hotmail.com>
   Every Spicerian has fond memories of his Alma Mater and of course the good friends with whom you have cherished those precious few years of your boarding life. Yes, I recall Romain Rabot’s name from my first semester of 1977 at Spicer College. I think he was one of the assistant dean of men.

I also would like to join him in acknowledging my fond memories of another friend, a blind student who had joined us in the theology department then, and by God’s grace was able to complete his studies. It gives me great joy to say that not only he was able to finish his senior studies but went on to complete his doctoral studies. At present serves as faculty at Spicer College in the Theology department. I also had the privilege to work with him in the same department at Spicer College. His name is Dr. Sharath Babu Nakka. What an example of a dedicated life for the Lord! May God continue to bless his ministry and his family. I pray that the Lord will continue to use him for His work and also may he be an inspiration to other blind students who wish to find opportunities in life.

II. Death of Mrs. Choppala Venkata Rathnamma

Priscilla Shyam <priscillashyam@SAAA.ORG> June 8:
We regret to announce the passing of Mrs. Choppala Venkata Rathnamma.
Mrs. Venkata Rathnamma is the mother of Raj Shaker Choppala a long time member of the Southern Asia Adventist Association (SAAA). She was born on April 9, 1932 and passed away on June 7, 2012 at 2:30 PM (local time in India). Funeral services will take place on June 8, 2012 in Rama Raju Lanka, East Godavari District in Andhra Pradesh, India. Mrs. Venkata Rathnamma had the privilege of visiting her son Raj Shaker and family in the US in 1998, stayed with his family for two years and had the pleasure of meeting many of you. Please remember Raj Shaker and his family in your prayers.
May God comfort the Choppala family and friends as they go through this difficult time. Messages of condolence may be passed on directly to Raj Shaker at the following phone and/or email address:
Home - 301-989-9492
Cell - 301-219-7490
Robert Choppala (Raja's son) 301-219-7490
Email: <jackschoppala@gmail.com>

III. Death of Raja Thomas
   Gideon Dayak <Gdayak@adventistrisk.org> June 11:
   Life Sketch
   Raja Thomas was born on July 28, 1947 to Mr. and Mrs. PonnuSwamy Naidu at Dharmapuri District of Tamil Nadu. At a young age he moved to Bangalore to find and develop a career in printing and binding technology.
   As a young lad he grew up in an industry which printed scripture literature, and was deeply interested in learning more about the gospel. He came to know of late Elder K. C. Dayak who taught him the love of Christ, and soon he took Bible studies and was baptized by late Pastor J. Daniel at Bangalore in 1973. He was very conscious of the quality of work he exhibited and was keen to reflect the character of Christ in all his undertakings.
   He married Laila John in 1973 and then began to establish a wonderful Christian home in Bangalore. To this couple was born two wonderful children, Roopa and John.
   The Lord opened doors for this family to move to Pune in 1979, where Raja and Laila both were employed at the Oriental Watchman Publishing House.
   Roopa and John were students at the Hume Mc Henry School at the Park. Raja excelled in his work at OWPH and won the appreciation of all his supervisors and the management.
   Raja then moved to the Middle East to further develop his career, and also to earn funds to build his own home and establish a small business on his return to Hosur in the year 1999. He continued to serve the Church by providing quality printed material from time to time.
   Raja was always a humble Christian and exhibited the teachings of Christ in all his endeavors. He has left a legacy of his life of sacrifice, diligence and humility to his family and to all those whom he touched in his life.
   In November 2011, he visited the USA to spend time with his daughter's family at Seattle, Washington. At this time he suffered a heart attack and was hospitalized there for a short time. He returned to India and continued to serve the Church at Hosur. On Thursday, May 24, he suffered an massive heart attack and after being taken to Ananth Ashram Medical Center, was moved by ambulance to Bangalore where he breathed his last.
   He leaves behind him his loving wife Laila, daughter Roopa, son-in-law Abraham Ninan, their three children Rachel, Michael & Mathew and their son John who currently lives in Sydney, Australia. Raja also leaves behind his four brothers, Kumar, Padma, Chandra, and Deva and their families. His life has revolved around all his extended family and friends who are going to miss him very dearly.

IV. The Mother Jilani Story
   Almost a year ago we began bringing you this story, chapter by chapter.
   Now we come to the end of the story--almost! In the next issue we will bring the current Simla Bazliels' follow up of "If I have 12 sons." There were and they did!
   Some time ago I came across a quite old book lying around our house (among many others that seem to be accumulating over time!) by Goldie Down.
   I had never heard of it before though I had seen several of her other books.
   This one is about Mother Jilani, the mother of Dr. Mrs. I. R. Bazliel who, with her doctor husband, WERE Simla Hospital for many, many years.
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   IF I HAVE 12 SONS, by Goldie Down
   Chapter 17  "Here Am I, Send Me"
   "We would like to go to our mission hospital in Nuzvid for three months to gain an insight into our hospital organizations." So read the letter that Major Bazliel received soon after he had expressed his willingness to work with the Seventh-day Adventist mission.
   "Nuzvid? Where's that?" asked Sakinah.
"I think it’s somewhere in South India," replied her husband. "Just a bit of a village, I believe."
"We can’t go there," Sakinah declared positively. "We can’t take the boys there until we know what the conditions are like. What language do they speak there? Is it terribly hot? Are there any schools near the hospital?"
"I don’t know." The major shrugged and drew in his lips in his characteristic way. "You’re the one who has been pestering me to join the mission, and now you’re the one raising all the objections."
"It’s not for my sake," Sakinah defended herself. "I’m ready to go anywhere the Lord calls us. But Dilavaiz had just begun nursery school. Will there be a school for him? And what about mother? It will be too hot for her."
"Your mother will have to go and live with Jamila. She’s married again, and she can take her turn. Maybe we can get a tutor for Dilavaiz."
"Not in that outlandish place," wailed Sakinah. "Pervaiz is in Vincent Hill School in Mussoorie, and the baby is too young to care where he goes; but I won’t go if we have to take Dilavaiz to Nuzvid."
"It is only for three months--to observe," Robinson reminded his worried wife.
"It might be longer," Sakinah predicted darkly. "These things have a way of lengthening out." Then she had an idea. "Maybe we could send Dilavaiz to boarding school with Pervaiz."
"They don’t take children under seven years," Robinson pointed out.
"But this is an emergency. They just might," Sakinah insisted. "You can try."
When she told Mrs. Ritchie, the pastor’s wife, about their invitation to Nuzvid, Sakinah stressed the fact she could not take little Dilavaiz there.
"He’s so lively and full of fun," she explained. "He needs to be in a school with other children. I want him to go to Vincent Hill with his brother."
"The rules say no children under seven are admitted," Mrs. Ritchie reiterated. A boy four and a half is too young to be away from his mother. There are no ayahs to care for the little ones, and you would think he was neglected if he had no ayah to wait on him hand and foot."
"No, I wouldn’t," Sakinah declared stoutly. "He’s very bright for his age and could easily mix with boys of six or seven."
"Well, I’ll see what I can do," promised Mrs. Ritchie. "The principal of Vincent Hill School will be down here on a student drive next month, and I’ll mention it to him."
When he heard all the details, the principal reluctantly agreed to take the little boy. Pastor Ritchie’s sister was a teacher at Vincent Hill, and with her help the details were ironed out, the exception was made, and impish little Dilavaiz joined the Vincent Hill School family.
When all the excitement of packing, moving, and settling into a new home was over, a reaction set in and Sakinah cried for her child. "He’s so small," she protested. "I should never have let him go away from home."
"Don’t be foolish," Robinson chided her sternly. "It was all your idea. You wanted him to go there, you wouldn’t be satisfied until he was admitted, and now you are weeping for him."
But a mother’s grief cannot be reasoned with, and Sakinah continued to fret for her little son until one day a postcard arrived from Pastor Ritchie’s sister.
"Dear Mrs. Bazlieli," it read. "We have never met, but I know a mother’s heart. I know how you must be missing your little son, I want to tell you he is quite all right. He is well and happy. I see him on the playground every day."
Sakinah cried again, but her tears now were of joy and relief. "I know God made her send it to comfort met," she said as she showed the card to her husband. "I’ll never cease to thank her for it."
Sakinah’s prophecy proved to be correct. The three month’s observation period at Nuzvid stretched into years—long, hot, dusty years. The going wasn’t always smooth. Satan did his best to upset the newly baptized doctors, but God’s hand guided them constantly.
One amusing incident points up the wisdom of having indigenous personnel to work for their own countrymen. A Nuzvid pandit, a self-styled priest-cum-fortune-teller, had set up his business right at the gates of the hospital, and proved himself an unmitigated nuisance.
For a small fee, he would tell the fortune or cast the horoscope of any passerby. Nervous patients, particularly those who needed surgery or other major treatments, frequented his "office" to seek consolation from his forecasts.
Like in any other hospital, Nuzvid had a weekly schedule as well as a daily routine. Monday and Wednesday were surgery days unless there was an emergency. Tuesday and Thursday were village clinic days after the usually daily work was done. But the pandit took a fiendish delight by upsetting all this whenever he could.
He knew the hospital program as well as the staff did, and he made it his business to tell a nervous client, "There is a dark spot on your future--bad luck. I see an 'M,' or it may be an inverted 'W.' Do nothing, go nowhere, have nothing to do with Monday or Wednesday. Ill fortune awaits you on those days." The pandit would shake his head and mutter ominously.

Of course the poor superstitious patient believed it all and, full of fearful forebodings, would refuse point-blank to have an operation on Monday or Wednesday. Missionary doctors would plead or scoff, cajole or threaten, but without success. The pandit's malicious tricks worked every time. If the hospital gave in and changed their surgery days, he found out fast and changed his days of evil omen.

"Hm-m," Robinson said when he heard the tale of woe from the other doctors. "I'll see if I can fix that chap. It takes an Indian to know an Indian."

Thereafter when he was in charge and a patient complained that he could not possibly receive treatment on the appointed day because it was a day of ill omen, Robinson would smile blandly at him.

"Is that so? Monday and Wednesday are unlucky for you? Well, that is a shame, because my pandit tells me that they are the best days of the week for me. On any other day my stars are all wrong, and I might make some mistakes. That would be too bad if you were the patient then, wouldn't it?"

Whether he believed the doctors little tale or not, the patient usually saw the humor of the situation, and the hospital program went ahead without interruption.

From Nuzvid the Bazliels were transferred to northern India to a sanitarium in Simla, seven thousand feet up in the Himalayan foothills. The locale was much more to their liking, since it was the climate Robinson was used to. The colder the frost and the deeper the winter snow, the happier he was. Sakinah was delighted with the balmy summer weather. With military precision Robinson began his new task. Together the doctors and staff worked to beautify, enlarge, and serve the little hospital and community.

It took a long time before Hagar gave in and was baptized a Seventh-day Adventist. "I'm too old to change," she used to say. But eventually, in the twilight of her life, she found the peace that passeth all understanding. That peace sustained her during one final crushing blow. In 1952 Jamila was killed in a car accident.

A year later the mission sent the Doctors Bazliel to America to take a postgraduate course in White Memorial Hospital in Los Angeles. Sakinah was a little awed by all that she saw there and shrank from taking an active part in the hustle and bustle of American hospital life.

"But you must take a course in anesthesiology," Robinson begged his wife. "Please, for my sake. How can I operate freely unless the anesthetic is being properly administered? We can work as a team if you will." And of course she did.

By the time the Bazliels returned to their work at the Simla Sanitarium, their family was practically grown up. Each Sabbath they all attended the little chapel in the village and enjoyed singing the familiar gospel hymns while Gulvaiz played the piano. The three strapping young men nearly dwarfed the major and their mother as they all sat together in the front pew.

Pervaiz had finished his medical internship by this time, and Dilavaiz had already taken his final medical board examinations. Gulvaiz had passed entrance examinations into medical college, and would begin his studies there as soon as the summer holiday was over. Jamila had raised one daughter, Perveen, who was already in college, taking her premedical work.

Hagar was an old, old woman now, and nearly blind. But she was satisfied. The children would all be doctors, of course. After all, what else could Gulam's grandchildren be?

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