Tribute to Pr. Robinson - One Man Army
by Dr. M. S. Jeremiah
A gamut of emotions engulf my heart as I contemplate the recent passing away of Elder Robinson, the Development Officer of Southern Asia Division. The church has lost a great son of God, and whilst thousands across the world are deeply sorrowful and mourning his demise, we here in Southern Asia Division will miss him the most as his impact on Southern Asia was truly remarkable and extraordinary. In spite of failing health, he was always on move to offer hope, succor, and comfort to the multitudes who were hugely depending on his benevolences. He labored consistently for the advancement of Gospel Ministry and educational ministry.
Through this letter I pay my tributes to this great legend who strode the rugged paths of Southern Asia's rough terrain uncaring about his comfort or personal safety. Along with his equally devoted wife, both chose a lifestyle that few of their fellow citizens would ever accept or even imagine, spending days and nights in regions far isolated from the conveniences of Western civilization - in places where 47-degree Celsius temperatures, poisonous snakes, tigers, crocodiles, scorpions, malaria and other scourges were common. The isolation further heightened with lack of good medical care. Yet he persevered through his unrelenting commitment and devotion to the Gospel Ministry. He walked all the way to the boundaries marked out for him. He was beyond doubt a one-man army of God.
During our many meetings together I once asked him how he was able to overcome such odds. His reply was simple. "Obstacles have loomed large, again and again. My wife and I prayed over our favourite Scripture verse - 'Trust in the Lord with all your heart; and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight, and I've found that He has never let us down."
I recollect my meeting with him in the Sunderban Island in West Bengal, a place I was asked to visit in connection with setting up a seminary and helping him with a school that he was building. Reaching it necessitated a crossing by boat in crocodile infested waters and actually legging it through a swampy stretch. The place where the school he was building was in a labyrinth of mangrove trees and marshland. I was told that the entire area was a very dangerous place inhabited by tigers and other wild animals. Elder Robinson later confirmed that there was scarcely a family in the region that did not have an encounter with wild animals.
The moment I set my eyes on him I knew that I was meeting a man with a giant heart. I could see the Holy Spirit at work. My first visage of Elder
Robinson in Sunderbans is of him working with the labourers lifting bags of sand and cement and helping them mix mortar and sand, literally physically building a school for orphans, semi-orphans and other needy children of the area. Not only providing them with an education but with boarding and residential provisions to ensure that once they came under the fold they were totally cared adequately. While building the school, he was also instrumental in reaching to the villages with Gospel Ministry. With his untiring efforts, he built hundreds of churches in West Bengal.

Elder Robinson's entry into Southern Asia was without fanfare and rather conspicuous. Not much is documented about his early years here, save that he took it upon himself to face huge hardships and dangers to evangelize unchartered territories. Division Minutes show that it was voted to call Mr. Robinson to Southern Asia to be the administrative assistant to the President and care for the expansion of evangelistic work. He was to be accompanied by his wife who joined as the Associate Treasurer of the Southern Asia Division.

Since then he has singlehandedly raised millions of dollars, travelling regularly to the US, attending camp meetings talking about his strategic plans on evangelism and raising enough resources to build upwards of 500 churches and schools in the Andhra, Telangana and West Bengal regions of the country, spiritually and intellectually equipping the future children of God to be His worthy followers.

All the Mission fields in Andhra and Telangana- South Andhra, North Andhra, West Andhra, North East Andhra, South West Andhra and all the regions are the great beneficiaries and recipient's of financial resources to establish schools and churches in their respective fields. He spent considerable time and resources to establish school at Miriyalaguda, A.P. Every evangelist and field officer is known to Elder Robinson personally. They are all struck with grief at present. He is snatched away from our midst and the tragedy is too heavy.

He was a beacon of light in stormy seas, a great defender of Adventist tenets and principles. His spiritual guidance, his passion for providing education to those who desperately needed it, brought thousands to the kingdom of God making him one of the most important, most distinguished and influential individuals ever to have worked for the Southern Asia Adventist Church. Of his many great talents one that really stood out was his uncanny knack of using his skills to direct people in the field of Evangelical Ministry.

I recall vividly the time I was called to pray at his bedside when ill health was taking its toll on his overworked body. As I knelt down to pray, tears rolled down. I stared into his calm face and saw his pious life flash by. My voice choked but I prayed hard. Never before had I prayed with such inner power as I did then. I thanked God for such a wonderful life that had been a blessing to humanity. It was painful to see a man who laid foundations in time and eternity so fragile and vulnerable. I beseeched God to be merciful and to be kind and to providing His healing touch. The legacy that he leaves behind will be hard to follow or emulate. Everywhere we look across, a vast swathe of Southern Asia, we are surrounded by the abundance of a rewarding and fruitful life. We love Elder Robinson - he taught our people, he served our people and we owe him a great debt of gratitude. It was my proud privilege to have known him personally and
collaborate with him in running a school and a seminary in the Sunderban Island. I feel blessed in this relationship and I more than most will miss his powerful presence.

I will be failing in my duty if I do not mention Mrs. Robinson - a great lady and a pillar of strength to him who toiled with him willingly and uncomplainingly, faithfully fulfilling her wedding covenant vows and being with him through thick and thin, cherishing him and honouring him, sacrificing her comforts and helping him expand the kingdom of God. Truly a lady who merits the highest praise and accolades and I recall with great fondness and joy her jest for life, her erudition, her simplicity and her infinite faith in God and his goodness. Her willingness to share his vision is major contribution of Mrs. Brinda Robinson. The great values run in the family are evident from her dutiful children who are all contributing in various ways to the Adventist church and above all to their children ho willingly donated kidneys when renal failure necessitated the kidney transplant for Elder Robinson - truly a magnificent family that has led Christian lives and have been a blessing to the church and society.

In the near future, I can loudly hear the Master proclaiming and pronouncing on Elder Robinson "Well done, good and faithful servant." Elder Robinson was a devoted husband, a loving father, a faithful friend and servant of the Most High God and he is truly sharing in his Master's happiness today. If our Lord grants a star on our crowns for every soul we save to His kingdom, there is little doubt that Elder Robinson's crown will be studded with thousands of glittering stars that add a special luminance and radiance to God's heaven.

Rest in Peace, great servant of God. You lived a overwhelming life and a complete life. You will be sorely missed.

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