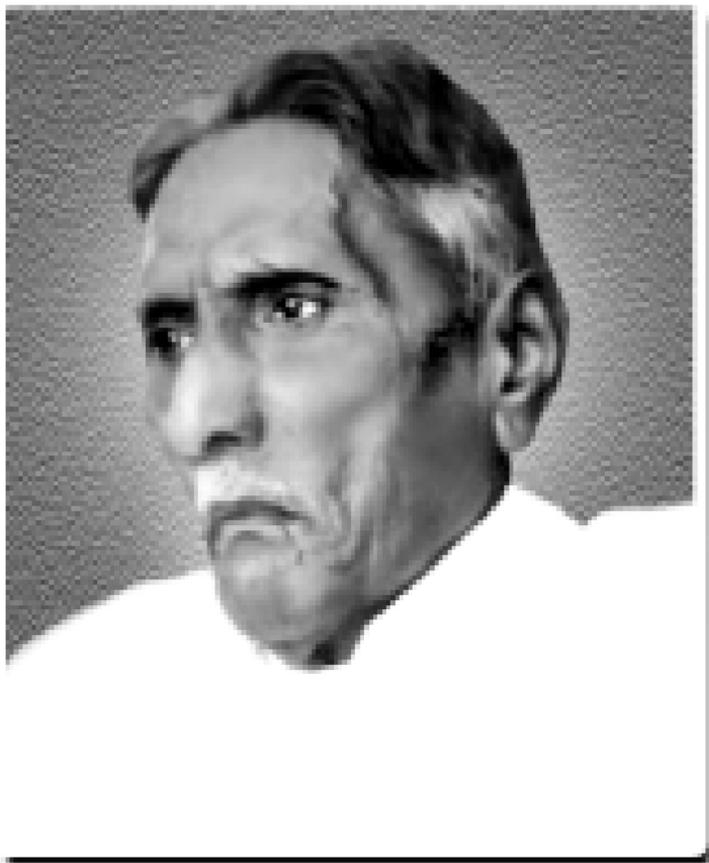


**THE GLIMPSES OF  
THE BIBLE MISSION**



FOUNDER  
**M. DEVADAS**

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## THE ANNALS OF FATHER M. DEVADAS: THE FOUNDER OF THE BIBLE MISSION

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## I. THE ANNALS OF FATHER M. DEVADAS : AN OVERVIEW

Father M. Devadas is the founder of 'The Bible Mission', a small but fast growing denomination in South India. Father **Devadas** remained as a bachelor throughout his life of 120 yrs. He is a mystic with many spiritual experiences which are very peculiar to common Christianity. It is a strict order from him when he was alive, that one should not resort to write his Biography. The reason is one cannot unravel the totality of his life. So, it is only our amateur effort to record some of the events that took place in his life of ecstasy which he experienced in deep communion with his Creator, Saviour and Bridegroom, Jesus Christ. He is not a catholic Father, but is called that way by his followers.

### ***(A) Meek and meditative beginnings :***

Father **Devadas** grew up in the humble and rustic surroundings of the Godavari delta region of Andhra Pradesh. His parents are evangelists. They are not very rich in worldly matters. But they are far wealthier in many spiritual aspects who used to spend their time in prayer and intercession every day till late night. As they did not beget children after many years of their marriage, in their old age God gave them the glorious gift i.e. a boy child, whom they named as '**Devadas**' which means 'Servant of God'

### **1. Birth and Childhood :**

Fr. *Devadas* was born in 1840 to Jonah and Satyavatamma, in *Jegurupadu*, a small village in East *Godavari* district of Andhra Pradesh. He grew up in the best spiritual atmosphere which his parents provided. He was always contemplative while his young mates engulfed themselves in playing and making merry.

It is incredible to the human wisdom to understand and believe some of his friendly experiences with the heavenly world and its beings, at this very adolescent age. For Example:- He used to make friendship with the divine 'Attributes of God'.

He used to follow his parents, in their evangelistic tours and strictly observe their meditative line up by being straight on his knees. He received God's special calling during these times.

## **2. Schooling and Education :**

He was sent to a small school in *Jegurupadu* by his parents for his primary Education. He is a clever child and a spontaneous learner. After coming from school he used to help his parents in their ministry and day to day life. He is very active in school and had inculcated a sense of profound love for the nature and care for the living creatures.

When he was 6 years old, his parents took him to a pastors get-together. When a missionary asked him to pray there he prayed: "Lord Jesus, , Let me be like Thee when you are in my age." From then onwards the missionaries had a special eye on child *Devadas*.

## **3. Missionary Patronage:**

After completing his primary education, his parents took him to the Lutheran Missionaries at (N.M.E.L.C) Nigam Memorial Evangelical Lutheran Church, at Dhavaleswaram on the banks of river Godavari, and left him under their patronage for further education and spiritual growth. There he finished his 8th standard and qualified as be a Higher grade teacher. Having closely watched his innate zeal and strong sense of determination to serve

the Lord, the Lutheran missionaries immediately absorbed him in the teaching faculty of their mission schools.

He is always loyal to his authorities and is of excellent disposition towards his superiors. His ideal life is a serene acme for the growing children to be punctual, sincere and humble. He marvelled his authorities in all the challenging responsibilities that are entrusted to him.

#### **4. Meditative Solitude :**

Whether at home or in missionary boarding, he inculcated the habit of making his mind quiet and silent, only to converse with his Father. He believed in these verses and strictly observed them. "I am the Teacher" Jn.13:13; " And Learn from Me" Mt. 11:28. To realize his objective, he spent hours of solitude both day and night. This kind of habit later, paved the way for his mysterious life of ecstasy. It also resulted in the visible experience of communing with the Lord, face to face, with naked eyes. All his meditative practices made him a perfect seer.

This is the internal dimension of his life which remained obscure to most of his colleagues and superiors. Heavenly saints, holy angels, earthly saints and sages from Himalayas are his regular visitors in his meditative life of solitude.

#### **5. Meek Mentor :**

Under the patronage of Lutheran missionaries, Father *Devadas* developed his bodily, spiritual and mental faculties. There he was in the process of becoming a great spiritual giant. His personal fellowship with Jesus Christ increased day after day with mysterious experiences concerning heaven, earth and the nether world,

resulting in an unequivocal understanding and analysis of the Scriptures in general and the deep meaning for the tough passages in particular. Thus he was ready as a perfect Bible teacher, trainer and mentor to humbly discharge his duties at various levels to various sections of people in India.

### **(B) Perfect Christian Profile :**

While performing all the necessary functions of his daily routine, Father Devadas kept up a life of direct communion with the Lord. This made his personality a perfect and unique one among his contemporaries. He did not do any work out of his own, but after the Lord's command. That is why he could able to perform all the roles which his mission superiors had entrusted him with great confidence.

#### **(1) School Teacher :**

*Father Devadas taught all subjects at the kindergarten level. He also taught the higher grade students and imparted to them spiritual and moral education. Even the noisiest boy in the school, would pay heed to him, soon after listening to his kind expression and seeing his pleasant face. He never scolded a child throughout his teaching career. He won all their hearts only with 'Love.' He wrote a simple English grammar book specially for school children which became very popular in those days. Any popular aspect of his life is thoroughly wrapped up in his modest character of spiritual reticence. What he demonstrated is only a fraction of what he is and what is in him.*

#### **(2) Hostel Warden :**

As he is like a parent and a teacher to the children, the missionaries entrusted him with the hostel re-

sponsibilities as well since his work place is a boarding school. Unlike other wardens, Father Devadas was thrift and frugal in his spending and returned the remaining money from the allotted budget to his authorities at the end of every month. This very much astonished the missionaries.

Once there took place a disastrous famine and all the boarding schools were run with just one square meal per day because of cut in the supply of food items. But in the boarding school managed by Father *Devadas* pupil were given three full meals per day inspite of the rationing. This was made possible by the Lord, as be Fr. Devadas made Him as the patron of his students and not the missionaries. This is to say that Father Devadas in all his ways and at every step has always looked to the Lord but not the missionary aid. Then the missionaries exclaimed that “life of faith means the life of Devadas”.

### **(3) *Seminary Instructor :***

Later, he was asked to teach in the Lutheran theological seminary at Luthergiri, as part of advancing his spiritual teaching techniques. His teachings gave birth to many new doctrines which are in practice of the Biblical times. His Christian rationale was universal, historical and impartial in its nature. His teaching has always been preceded by an experience where he never professed a new teaching from the Bible without receiving it from the Lord. In his teaching careers one day, he taught on the subject matter “Even today, God shall speak and appear (to men)”. This caused little turmoil among the students other, faculty members and the Lutheran higher authorities. Some of them accepted its validity and truth value but some felt that they do not pertain to their teaching domain. Yet,

all his Biblical expositions coupled with sound reasoning; backed up by the powerful practical demonstrations, tranquillised all the queries and lead the students and teachers alike, even to experience the same. Here, it is worth while to quote what he observed: “my spiritual education is from the Lord’s School. That’s why my teaching is perfect and correct ”.

#### **(4) Sanatorium Caretaker :**

Apart from the academic and theological responsibilities, the missionaries had also given him the additional charge of comforting and encouraging the Sanatorium patients.

According to His given schedule he used to visit patients to nurse, guide and console them with his divine presence and the words emanated from the infallible love of Christ. According to Rev. S. Samuel the former President of the Bible Mission and one of the close disciples of Father Devadas, ‘The patients anticipated much for Father Devadas, than their medical staff and Doctors.’ He is a man with divine nature whose words and deeds worked alike for both physical and spiritual sufferings of the masses.

#### **(5) Itinerant Preacher :**

In his untiring services to the Lutheran Mission, he worked relentlessly in all the possible areas his superiors had put him to, at his best. Yet, he also managed to be a touring evangelist. In this ministry he captured the attention of the touring mobs gathered in great number to observe certain rituals and religious festivals in and around Andhra Pradesh. His reaching out to the masses is very innovative as he used to show “Magic Lanterns”, and some cultural art forms which at once astonished

peoples attention and drew them to Him. Then he used to relate the Gospel message to that folk art or dance which he performed and nativize it for their understanding. Afterwards his followers used to distribute the “Gospel tracts” published by him. One of such pamphlets is “Bountiful Message” (Pushkalopadesamu) which addressed the austere audience bathing in holy rivers where the occasion come for each river once in twelve years. In Sanskrit, ‘pushkara’ means twelve.

### **(6) Church Pastor :**

In his association with the Lutheran Church, Father Devadas served as a regular ‘Parish Priest.’ It was a living experience for all who attended his service. His worship services have always witnessed new songs, new messages and new explanations of the Scriptures; all received by him in different times and situations from the Lord.

During the severest drought of the early 1940’s in India, he composed a song and made it sung by the children in the Sunday service. At that time all the Church members wept aloud. After the service all the missionaries encircled him, asking How? Devadas! how? **How** were you able to manage these days?” The Hymn says like this: “What do I lack when my chief patron is with me!! The loving God is my Caring Supporter and my only Saviour.

### **(7) Christ like life :**

Father Devadas was a living replica of Christ. He believed and proclaimed that all children of God must resemble Him. Throughout day he worked for his mission in preaching, teaching, nursing and caring. Throughout night he spent time in isolation with his Lord, in convers-

ing with Him, about the work of the day and plan of action and execution. and interceding for the people.

Throughout his life, he never rebuked any person or any student. Regarding this nature he gently remarked that, "If he would rebuke a person he can never live." He presented Christ in the way, the world would best receive Him, and in the way Christ wanted him to.

### **(C) A Matchless Matured Man of God :**

This section deals with the personality of Father Devadas. It tries to understand him, his works and teachings from a typical point of view that describes his maturity of mind and perfection of body.

#### ***(1) Stream of Consciousness :***

This represents his vast and universal thought that intended salvation even for the originator of sin in this world i.e. 'Satan'. His prayer is that no man should go to hell. Every morning he used to embrace the whole universe and pray for its total salvation. He wept, knelt, fasted, and finally kept his body upside down for the fulfillment of his spiritual goals. For this he evolved a detailed fasting prayer order which can be adopted for various time frames and periodical sessions, i.e. for forty days; for one week; and for a day. His saving technique was extended even to the living creatures such as animals & birds. He prayed for the natures (redemption mentioned in Rom. 8<sup>th</sup> ch.) salvation which in turn would make if teach the humans openly. Thus, his views were revolutionary and certainly leave their own typical and indelible impressions on the present day Christendom.

We welcome you to know further, about this stream.

## **(2) Philosophy of Suffering :**

Father Devadas voluntarily welcomed all types of suffering and ailments. For him, sufferings are like the litter (Royal Cab) that carry the believer to the close fellowship of God. He preferred the internal suffering in hands of the evil powers than the bodily afflictions only to prove their inability in driving his attention from his Creator and the special prayers that he is offering Him.

For him, it was said that the whole day was life and the whole night was death. For a believer to grow to the maturity of Christ and to the measure of God's attributes sufferings are the best means which shelter, guard, grow and perfect his/her faith. He opined that suffering should be at our disposal and it should come when invited and should leave when ejected. When we undergo the pain of suffering, he said that we should talk to pain saying "O suffering! anyway, you have come into my body! So don't leave me until you give me the gift that you specially brought for me."

Certainly there is a difference between his philosophy of sufferings and that of the reflections of the Catholic monks of Middle Ages.

## **(3) Meticulous Meditation :**

The main focus of Fr. Devadas' miraculous life lied in his powerful meditations concerning man, God and Creation. His concept of meditation had the Indian mode of observing it which was followed by the Ancient Indian Rages of Himalayas.

In every aspect of creation we can see the divine form and qualities manifested either explicitly or implicitly. He captured this Clement of creation and thus praised God.

For example: In the life of a small plant He displayed all the divine qualities that are innately working in it.

In His meditations the holy saints, holy angels, earthly saints and the holy sages from Himalayas whose head is Kailasa Rishi, the Muslim monk from Alexandria, Greece; (who was made known to western world by Sadhu Sunder Singh.) used to come, appear talk and commune with him.

#### **(4) Ecstatic Experiences :**

As God enabled him to watch and wander in heaven, earth and Hades, alive, he had several ecstatic experiences of working in those wonder lands. He visited the dead souls by 'the gift of flying in spirit and body' and preached them the way of their salvation as per divine orders. He visited various remote corners of the earth with the help of that gift and came in touch with Sadhu Sunder Singh & Kailash Rishi and some of the mysterious wonders of the Himalayas.

In his heavenly journey he met many of the Old Testament saints and New Testament saints and the Chief Arch Angels. He closely observed the heavens' schedule and the nature of praise, people are offering there to the Lord. For all these experiences "**Sannidhi**" which means waiting in the Lord's presence for about an hour or more with undivided attention to upon His Countenance only to listen to His voice and see His form, is the sole reason and base.

#### **5. Hades : A New Discovery :**

'Hades is a Greek term referring to the nether world whose particular and detailed nature and functioning was revealed by the Lord to Fr. Devadas.

In his ministry he paid much of his attention to the unsaved dead souls.

In one of his “ **Sannidhi**” meetings at Berhampur with Dr. Nina ottmann, God revealed him about the sorry state of these dead souls who could not have access to listen to the Gospel and accept Christ, over the past centuries when they lived on this earth. So, The Lord has - kept all - these unbelieving souls bound in Hades to be preached to by some of His close and powerful servants.

### **6. Universal Perspectives :**

‘Fr. Devadas’ views concerning Church and God are universal. He said “Do not hate or despise any man or any religion, when you do not understand things, just ask God.” He opined that man, in any cultural set up, from any corner of the globe must talk to his Creator and continue to develop relations with Him, so as to fulfill His will on this soil.

He also believed that ‘the Rapture Church’, is being prepared from among all the churches, across the world which are in close union with the Bridegroom, Jesus. He saw good in all religions but the ultimate and perfect good is seen in Christianity in terms of the crucifixation of Christ.

### **7. The hall marks :**

Father Devadas life and words were a living mystery to those around him when he lived on this soil. When he taught about the ‘Holy Spirit Baptism’ and the direct revelation of Jesus Christ in form of the Son of Man many people were sceptical about it. As the Lutheran Mission aries asked him to show a sign in order to prove his teachings, he called Rev. Neidorfer Junior and asked him to write down the details of his brother Rev. Neidorfer Senior who was in America. Them, Father Devadas narrated about the work that he engaged in, the type of car that he drove, the colour of suit that he wore; at at that particular hour and day and asked Junior Neidorfer to confirm them

with his brother. When Senior Neidorfer wondered and confirmed all the details, then the Lutheran missionaries believed Fr. Devadas and asked for his Pardon, and acknowledged that Father Devadas is righteous and true in his teachings ways and revelations.

## **II. HISTORY OF THE BIBLE MISSION : EARLY, LATER & PRESENT.**

### *(A) Early history of the Bible Mission :*

1. The Revelation.
2. The Founding
3. Early Hardships
4. New Challenges
5. Turning Points

### *(B) Later history of the Bible Mission :*

1. Unaccepted Registration
2. First Cleavage
3. Rajahmundry to Guntur.
4. Proper Registration
5. First Executive

### *(C) Present history of the Bible Mission:*

1. Stability and Growth.
2. Missionary Campaigns.
3. Widening Horizons
4. Able Administering
5. Beyond Boundaries
6. The Clarion Call
7. The Legacy

## II. HISTORY OF THE BIBLE MISSION: **EARLY LATER AND PRESENT.**

### ***(A) The Early history of 'the Bible Mission' :***

For the convenience of the reader, we have organized the Bible Mission history in three phases. They are : The Early, the Later and the Present history of the Bible Mission. When Father Devadas began preaching about 1) The Baptism of the Holy Spirit, 2) The gift of tongues, 3) The gift of visions, 4) Divine healing, 5) Casting out demons, 6) The Rapture & 7) Waiting (for the Lord's revelation); there came a great uproar from the leaders of the Lutheran Mission. When asked why he is teaching them, (since they do not conform to the Lutheran doctrines) he said that, the reason they are in the Bible, he is teaching them to the public. Yet, the elders of the mission forbade him teaching them.

This is the time Lord is looking for, to reveal His "Bible Mission" to this great man of God.

### ***(1) The Revelation :***

On 31<sup>st</sup> January of 1938, at about 3:00 p.m, when Father Devadas sat in prayer, a great lustre from heaven filled his room. In that he saw the golden letters in Telugu, "The Bible Mission." Then the Lord told him to start His mission with His given principles & practices with His constant fellowship.

Though Fr. Devadas was 90yrs old at that time he obliged to God's revelation and started the mission having kept the Lord as the sole leader, guide, Patron and in-charge of it. He said "It is not my mission or India's mission, but the mission of the Lord. And He alone must run, cater, provide and develop His mission. With this staunch faith he started the Bible mission in Andhra Pradesh, India.

## **(2) The Founding :**

Father Devadas established the Bible mission on May 5<sup>th</sup> 1938, with a very limited number of followers. (It is the Lord's commission that the Bible mission should not depend on the foreign aid in any form.) Even those who loved him very much rejected him, on the pretext of the Bible mission. Mere faith alone is the sole base for him and the evangelists who work in this mission. This is the base of his faith: "The Bible Mission is not born out of human efforts but of God, the Almighty.

His main ministry is in form of printing gospel tracts and distributing them among various caste Hindus. He also used 'a kind of local made trumpet', which is named as 'The voice of Maranatha' to preach the gospel in popular indigenous forms which appeal to all sections of people alike.

Thus, he founded the mission on mere faith lines without fixing regular remuneration for his workers.

## **(3) Early hardships :**

The followers of Bible mission suffered greater hardships for their faith during their early years. Many people, who became a part of Bible Mission, were socially boycotted from their villages. They were not allowed to take water from the village ponds. They were not sold any commodities. They were not allowed in Church buildings for any marriage functions and social get-to-gathers. They were not given work in the fields. All these, come from the local Christians. Because, the some of the believers of this mission, belong to other denominations primarily, Lutheran.

This paved the way for the mission to penetrate among the Hindus who were convinced by the liberal theology of

Father Devadas. As it is the message from the life of Father Devadas, that hardships are the royal cab of glory, the early followers felt it as a privilege to suffer for their mission. Even, they did not complain of their troubles.

#### **(4) New Challenges :**

Both the Pastor and the Church suffered alike in the early days of the mission. As the Church members were put to all sorts of restrictions, some of them withdrew from the Bible Mission. In some places the Bible mission churches were almost on the verge of extinction. Yet, they sprouted again in course of time.

As the workers didn't have constant income and fixed salary, these conditions augmented their woes further. To cope up with this situation was really a challenging for the workers to continue their ministry in the Bible Mission. Many believers sold their lands and properties for supporting their mission workers. The Christian leaders of other denominations had made it their mandate to debase and throw false allegations on the Bible Mission and its workers. They claimed that Father Devadas was a 'false Prophet' and the Bible Mission which was revealed in midair, would seen be mixed up in ether and would be no more after his death.

But it is the promise of the Lord that the Bible Mission shall reach all the places where ever the air can penetrate. Creating faith in the Bible Mission among the Christians and the fresh converts was the other tough challenge, the mission had faced. The following lines are the only answer for all the challenges and woes of the Bible Mission.

- 1) "Thou hast established" - **Thou wilt provide;**
- 2) Thou hast established - **Thou wilt Prosper.**

3) Thou hast established - **Thou wilt lead and guide.**

**(5) Turning Points :**

In course of asserting itself in the main stream of Christianity, the Bible Mission has witnessed many turning points. The peculiar principles introduced by Fr. Devadas, formed majority of them. Since there are no fixed salaries for the workers, they always looked to Jesus for any small help they are at need. This formed the solid base for their life of faith which anchored them to the Lord against all tempests of this world. This was led to the further mission expansion.

The Special Bible classes conducted by him gathered all the workers and enriched their understanding and experience on the themes of faith, hope, witness, endurance and so on. Since the Biblical teaching had its deep penetration into the mindset of the workers, their commitment to ministry became solid and lasting. The special meetings for the anointment of the Holy Spirit are very crucial in the Early history of the mission. The healing campaigns paved the way for the people to come in and the Holy spirit anointment meetings established them in the mission as staunch believers and later turned them into faithful workers.

This was how the early days of Bible Mission were in terms of its founding and standing.

**(B) The Later History of the Bible Mission :**

This phase witnessed some amount of steady progress in the mission's struggle to assert itself on par with the others by the efficient measures taken up by Father Devadas with the help of some resourceful people at his disposal. Firstly, he registered his mission and then, started certain healing centres and framed the executive body and so on.

## 1) Rajahmundry to Guntur :

Due to the separatist turmoil at Rajahmundry, he had to leave that place. In that sojournment, he came to prathipadu and started a healing centre there. From there he came to Elur and finally to Guntur on 15<sup>th</sup> February 1949.

This event had turned the course of Bible Mission's history. In Guntur he came to "Bethel House", the residence of Rao Bahadur J. Raja Rao who voluntarily invited him to be there. Here Fr. Devadas saw a written vision on which was mentioned: "Lord, Jehova had brought you to this place."

This vision was fulfilled in course of 12 years, which he spent there, explaining the meaning of 'The Song of Songs' and "The Book of Revelation." This place witnessed the growth of the mission and the fulfillment of Fr. Devadas' vision.

## 2) Proper registration :

Guntur became the centre of the Bible Mission and its main network. The fulness of the mission is slowly seen here. Here, Fr. Devadas started his famous healing centre at Kakani, near Guntur on 'Monday' the 16<sup>th</sup> of May 1949. Since then he concentrated on the ecumenical character of the mission and published at least 40 new books on various new themes, concepts and practices of Christian life in the Bible Mission. At last, nearly after a full decade of growth and stability of the mission at Guntur, he registered his God revealed mission, according to His original revelation, as "The Bible Mission" in 1959, July 22<sup>nd</sup>. Then he praised God saying, "Lord, by now, I could able to set up your mission in the manner. Thou hast revealed me."

### **3) First Executive :**

After proper registration, Fr. Devadas nominated four of his senior Reverends and as the President, Vice-President, Secretary and Joint Secretary. When asked about his becoming the first President of the mission, he calmly remarked that He was just the first member of the Bible mission and that He is only a God's servant but not an executive authority in the mission.

They are; Rev. B. Elisha, Rev. B. Charles, Rev. G. Samuel and Rev. P.M. Jacob, respectively. They are out of many, some of the prominent persons that clung to Fr. Devadas in his oldage, particularly during the time of bitter cleavage. Thus, he set his mission on the firm grounding and took every step for it's further enhancement and penetration.

### **(C) PRESENT HISTORY OF THE BIBLE MISSION :**

Father Devadas left this world and went home in 1960. Till that time, he worked for the mission and laboured hard to make it strong. After his departure some commented that, this old man's mission will soon die down like him. Yet, the Bible mission is still alive and more active under the auspicious prayers of Fr. Devadas and constant guidance and the grace of the Lord Almighty.

During his very last days he remarked that he would be emptying the crucible of his suffering body and after which he would make the mission run like anything. You and I are the witnesses of that statement. For the Bible mission has reached its zenith, today, truly after the four decades of Father's departure.

### **1) Stability and growth :**

Because of the unitary command of Fr. Devadas and his teachings, though the mission expanded in terms of

its number of branches and multiplicity of membership, since majority of them primarily came from the traditional Hindu Communities, it was stable and free from all types of internal tumults and external cleavages.

Presently, the Bible Mission had its own place and rank among the other denominations of the Christendom. It was estimated as the first, fast growing Church in the Indian Sub continent. The Annual Convention of the mission is the main attraction and prime source of its growth. Nearly, 5 lakhs of people have gathered this year and were fed for three full days on every 27<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of January. These are the fixed dates of the Annual Conventions.

## **2) Missionary Campaigns :**

Chiefly, the growth was observed from the various missionary campaigns organized and arranged by Rev. S. Samuel, the former president of the mission, to many capitals and important cities of India. People who are interested in Gospel work and tract distribution were taken by him in three to four tourist buses, depending on the number, to various cities only to fill them with the Gospel messages that are typical of the Bible Mission. Most of the visited places now bear fruit for the Bible Mission. It is he that sought after the mission's development, after the departure of Fr. Devadas. Here, it is note worthy to mention the prayerful support of Smt. P.J. Graceamma to Rev. S. Samuel, in tune with the mission's growth and progress.

## **3) Widening Horizons :**

With these missionary camps the Bible Mission has made known its existence, work and vision to the rest of the Christian world in India and abroad. Now its network

has expanded even to other countries. Due to his selfless services in the mission, Rev. S. Samuel was asked to the 1984 world Christian leaders conference held at Amsterdam under the leadership of Billy Graham. But he sent Rev. P. Sajeeva Rao, the present Joint Secretary of the mission, in his place, to voice the message of the Bible Mission. That was the first International appearance of the Mission.

From then on wards, it never looked back. Many Gulf countries invited the mission speakers to conduct meetings there. Most of the African countries witnessed the glory of the Bible Mission. Now the doors are opened for the Bible mission and they shall never be shut until we completely establish our work on this surface.

#### **4) Able Administration :**

In the recent past, with the advent of Rev. Dr. J. John Selvaraj, the mission has seen through and proper functioning in terms of its administrative matters. He regularized many things in the mission. He abolished some of the harmful practices, in the mission, in tune with the foot steps of his predecessor. And incorporated certain new visions and ideals for the efficient output and growth of the mission.

He commissioned the translations of Fr. Devadas writings into various Indian languages with special reference to English the official language of India. For his outstanding contribution in governing and pampering the mission, he was declared the International Man of year, 2000."

#### **5) Beyond the Boundaries :**

Now, the Bible Mission was the focus of many christian leaders and researchers, who tried to observe and analyse its activities and development from various dimensions

of theological, religious and empirical models. This Paved the way for others to study and reflect upon the mission. The 'Rainbow Team' from the United States of America visited the Head Office, at Guntur and specially watched the healing programmes conducted there in.

Delegates from the Mauritius Islands visited various healing centres of the Bible Mission and glorified the work of the mission. A Doctoral thesis has been submitted to the university of Hyderabad, on one of the premier topics of the mission i.e. the meaning of The Song of Songs.

## **6) The Clarion Call :**

The Bible Mission with all its fulfilled state and outlook, now stands at the cross roads of the Universe and invites the subjects to come to the redemptive cross of Christ. We particularly extend our warm welcomes to the present day Christendom to get united at His feet and listen to His voice only to do according to what He says in evangelizing the whole world and preparing the universal church as the spot/less Bride.

This was was the small prayer offered by Fr. Devadas to realize this mission :

O Lord! appear unto me  
 appear unto all.  
 O Lord! Speak unto me  
 Speak unto all.

Having Christ as its chief **T**eacher and **M**odulator the Bible Mission with His revealed universal expositions, principles and practices, invites the rest of the Christian world to be prepared as His raptured "Bride Church" who put on the form and nature of the Bridegroom, Jesus Christ.

## 7) The Legacy :

Now, the Bible Mission leaves behind it a great legacy from its varied and excellent spiritual traditions which epitomized the Rapture preparation and the pure state of the young Bride. Nearly, after 64 years of its inception, the mission had become truly mature and strong enough to influence the world in general and the Christian world in particular towards one particular goal i.e. is the Rapture (The second coming of Jesus Christ).

It unfolds the path way to the '**Bride's line**' and encourages the Churches to practice the silent hour (**Sannidhi**) so as to transform their shape and nature to the likeness of the Sun of Righteousness, Jesus Christ.

Dear friend, Here we invite you to ponder upon this wonderful Mission and be a part of its glorious mission and vision. May God bless you and catch you up in His Rapture.

### **PRECEPTS OF THE BIBLE MISSION**

This paper on the Precepts of St. M. Devadas is an attempt to know more about the teachings of St. M. Devadas who hailed from Andhra Pradesh and lived upto the age of 120 years as per popular belief . Eventhough he lead a simple life his devotion and his teachings continue to inspire many people in leading them towards our Saviour Jesus Christ.

#### **Precepts of the Bible Mission as professed by St. M. Devadas:**

**1. Baptism:** The water baptism given by the pastor is the baptism for the spiritual life. This baptism is performed in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. God is our Father and we are his children. This birth

relationship is established by baptism. In the Bible it is simply mentioned as baptism but no clear method of baptizing is specified. The pastor using water without any measure baptizes him that repents and believes in Christ in the Name of the Trinity. Therefore baptism wither by immersion or by sprinkling of water is correct. In the Gospel of Matthew 28th Chapter verse 19, our Lord commands to baptize in the name of the father, Son and the Holy Ghost. Hence the baptism either by immersion or by sprinkling is accepted. If a person is baptized once, no matter when he received it or by whom it is performed, in which way it is performed, in which denomination it is performed is baptism. A person baptized in the name of Trinity should not be baptized again. The apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:5 writes 'one Lord, one Faith, one baptism.' Hence baptism is one.

**2. Baptism of the Holy Spirit:** Through water baptism, one will get membership in a Church. But through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, one will get heavenly membership. This baptism of the Holy spirit is given by Lord Jesus Christ. It is the chief instrument for the development of the spiritual life and also for the spread of the gospel. In John 3:5 it is written 'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' Hence, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is vital in the life of every Christian.

**3. Washing of the Feet:** Our Lord washed the foot of His disciples before the last supper administered the last supper to His disciples as written in John 13:1-5. In John 13:15 Jesus said "for I have given you an example, that ye should do as I had done to you." He had set an ex-

ample and commanded His disciples to follow. In obedience to this word pastors should wash the feet of the believer before administering communion to him for the first time.

**4. The Lord's Supper:** By observing the Lord's Supper the believer will receive the body and blood of Christ inwardly. It is desirable to observe the Lord's supper as often as possible. Some sick people will be healed of their diseases if they observe the Lord's supper. (I Cor 11: 23-34).

**5. Word of God:** The Holy Bible was written by the inspiration of God. It is the base of Christianity. This book reveals the mind of God. God may reveal some points through creation, the conscience, divine revelation, good deeds and through troubles. In addition to the written word. When we show the word of God to Satan he will become dumb. Our Lord when He was tempted by Satan on the Mount rebuked Satan by quoting the scriptures. (Matthew 4th Chapter).

**6. Tithes:** God commanded the Jews to offer a tenth portion of their income in the temple. The Lord said to prophet Malachi that if they offered tithes they will prosper (Mal 3:10). Apostle Paul also mentioned that the Macedonians offered beyond their power. Hence, every believer should sincerely contribute their tithes to the church and if possible try to offer amounts in excess of the tithes.

**7. Wearing of Jewellery:** Regarding wearing of Jewellery in the Old Testament it is written that Rebecca adorned herself with precious jewellery, in the time of Moses also the Lord commanded that the Israelites should borrow precious jewels from the Egyptians and adorn their women

with them. In the new Testament our Lord says in Mark 9: 43-47 “if thine hand offend thee cut it off....” Hence whatever could offend can and should be removed. The Bride in New Jerusalem will be adorned with ornaments. They are ornaments of glory. To the Bride in this world ornaments are not forbidden. Adorning with indecent jewellery is not admissable.

### **On faith and Healing:**

**1. Divine Healing:** Divine Healing means healing experienced through the prayers of faith without the use of medicine. God has put the healing powers in herbs and plants. Hence, it is not wrong to use medicines. But it is better to get healing through prayer of faith.

**2. Leading a life based on faith:** To believe that salvation is available only through Jesus Christ, its nourishment only available through Jesus Christ, and to believe that all the necessary things for physical and spiritual life are available with Christ is Faith. In Philippians 4:19 it is written that ‘God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.’ In Matthew 10:10 it is written our Lord says ‘that the workmen is worthy of his meat.

**3. Casting of devils:** Lord Jesus Christ commanded His disciples in Matt 10:8 to cast out devils and has given his disciples the power to do so. Even today the Lord is giving this gift to his believers to rebuke devils and cast them away. (Some people do not believe in the existence of devils. The devils like this kind of false notion.)

### **Prayer and Meditation:**

**1. Waiting upon the Lord:** Every believer should practise the habit of waiting upon the Lord for an hour every day. Distinction should be made between prayer and

waiting upon the Lord. After we pray we should wait for sometime in His presence so that the Lord may respond to our Prayers Hence, this practise of waiting upon the Lord should be observed by all the believers.

**2. God's Presence:** After finding a convenient time and place and having cleanliness of heart, body and clothes if we gather together, sing a song, read the word of God one by one, conduct prayers according to prayer steps and if we question the Lord about our doubts and inquiries the Lord will appear and speak to us and will answer all our questions.

- a. At one time God will appear and speak.
- b. Sometimes, He will send His angels.
- c. He may send the spirit of the Heavenly saints.
- d. He may send the spirit of a saint on the earth.
- e. He may send the spirits of the ungodly people of this world.
- f. He may send the spirit of ungodly people who were dead.
- g. God will send whomsoever we request. They will appear to us, talk to us and give replies to our queries.
- h. He may also allow a demon to appear to us. After the demon has gone, He will comfort us saying that we should not believe the word of the demon and not fear.

Even if we possess all the riches, fame, education etc. nothing can be equalled to the privilege of waiting upon the Lord. Because of meditation all our privileges will prosper.

### **Revelations:**

**a) Revelation by vision:** In the revelations by vision everything may appear to believers. The places such as the earth, the heaven, the hell, upper air region and all things in them may appear in due time. This is called

vision. We will feel happy if God , angels and the glory of God appear to us. We also must feel happy if things such as filthy places, horrible places and dangerous places etc. appear to us for these things are there so let them appear to us. Ref: Isa Chapter 6; Num 12:28; Acts 9:27; Eph 3:3; Acts 10:3,4; Mt 17:3; Acts 9:12; 16:9-10.

**b) Revelation by voice:** In this revelation the words of our Lord and the words of the Holy people will be heard. It reminds of the words that the Lord had told in John 10:27 "My sheep will hear my voice."

**c) Revelation by writing:** In this revelation the message or the words that were written in the air will appear. Sometimes these words may appear like the printed letters. It was written in the I Chronicles that God had shown to David the way of construction of the temple through writing. Sometimes handwriting also will be seen. Sometimes a cardboard will appear from heaven and someone will write on it and show to us. We can read and write them down on our note books. (Exo 31:18; I Chronicles 28:19; Dan 5:5; Jn 8:6.

**d) Vision by dreams:** The angel of the appeared to Joseph in a dream and informed he matter. Likewise our Lord would appear to the believer and speak to him. If the things that are seen in our daily lives appear in dreams it cannot be called as a revelation. The revelation in dreams indeed is a divine revelation. (Exo 37:7-10; Num12:6; I Kin 3:5; Mt. 1:20; 2:12,13; 27:19.).

**e) Vision by thought (perception):** It is also one of the methods of divine revelation. It was recorded in Acts 15:28,29 'For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us ..'

**f) Vision by knowledge and wisdom:** this is the understanding power given by God's knowledge and wisdom.

Was it not through wisdom that King Solomon had judged the harlots? (I Kin 3:11,12). Invention of latest machines, steamers, aeroplanes, computers etc are the result of knowledge. God by His universal love is bestowing this knowledge to the unbelievers also. This is not spiritual wisdom. God gives this spiritual wisdom to the believers only. It was recorded in the Bible that knowledge and wisdom are God's gifts. (Acts 6:10 ; I Cor 1:6 ; 12:8).

**g) Vision by the word of God:** After praying when we search the Bible carefully using our knowledge duly, we will get proper word for our prayers. Luke 4:17,18. If searched with ignorance and folly proper word cannot be found. To illustrate, a Christian prayed the Lord to show from His word what he had to do. After praying he opened the Bible and found the words 'Judas committed suicide.' It did not seem good to him. So he opened the Bible again. Now the sentence which he came across was 'Go and do likewise.' Ashamed of this he did not open the Bible again. This is the ignorant and foolish type of devotion. There is no knowledge in it.

### **Note on Visions:**

a) Some people may have any of the revelations cited above. Some may have two or three. And some may possess all of them. The dangerous thing is that when the evil spirit appears, some will misunderstand it as if the Lord had appeared. When the Lord appears, some will misunderstand that it is a demon. When the Lord had appeared on the sea, the disciples thought that it was a demon. So we must think carefully and properly. St. Paul writes that 'Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.' (II Cor 11:14).

b) The believer should be away from bad visions and demons. When visions are not understood, pray for the revelation of their meanings.

c) If the words 'you has prayed but it has not been fulfilled' are told by others or by your own mind or by a demon and even if their words however sweet they may be should not be believed. The written word only should be believed only then we can be safe.

**Speaking in Heavenly tongue:** This is a gift of the Holy Spirit to a believer. Hence, this cannot be forbidden. Interpretation of this heavenly tongue is also a gift. Those who are destined to go to heave will learn this tongue. No other gift was written in the Bible as explicitly as the gift of Heavenly tongue. (I Cor 12:10; 13:1; 14:2, 39,40; Mark 16:17).

**Prophecy:** By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the prophets of the Bible period prophesied to the people about the things of present, past and the future. They recorded their prophecies in their writings. God is bestowing this gift of prophecy on some people nowadays also. Interpretation of the written prophecies with inspiration of the Holy Spirit is another kind of gift bestowed on some by God. God is giving this gift to some in these days also. Some people say that today there are no such prophets as there were during the Bible period. They think that this gift has been stopped at the end of the Bible period but it is not true. God continues to bestow this gift nowadays also. (I Cor 12:10; 14:39,40; I Peter 1:10,11).

**Communion with the saints:** In the apostles creed, it is mentioned that we believe in the communion with the saints. Saints are those who are saints in this world and he saints in Heaven. It is easier to have communion with the saints who are in Heaven. They will come to us when we pray. In this context we recall the events of the past which read about Moses and Elijah descending on the Mount of Transfiguration; the event of

the holy people coming on the day of the death of our Lord and the event of coming of two men on the day of the Ascension are some examples regarding the communion of the saints.

### **The Second coming of Christ and the Later events after the Second coming:**

**Depiction of the Church as the Bride:** Among the saved people those who are selected by the Lord according to their state of heart belong to this group called the bride. Of them those who are alive until the Lord comes will be caught up in the air with life, those who believe in the second coming and who are ready will be caught up in the clouds with glorious bodies along with the Lord when He comes. Those who died in Christ will also rise and come. Both groups together form a single group called the Bride. (Rev 22:20; Heb 12:23).

**The Second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ:** The signs that were to take place before the second coming of the Lord have taken place. So we believe that He will come in our life time. We should firmly believe that He is coming soon. What is the use of believing of the events in Christ's life such as His birth, His death on the cross, his resurrection and His ascension without believing the last and final event that is the second coming. (I Thes 4:13-18; Matt 24th Chapter).

**The later events after the second coming:** After the ascension of the bride (the congregation of the believers who are selected by the Lord) the rest of the people who are left behind will undergo seven years of Tribulation. This tribulation will be caused by the enemy of Christ the anti-Christ. During that period many people will get repentance. (Rev 6:1-17; Mark 13:19; Zephanaiah 1:14-18).

Lord Jesus Christ will come from heaven and make war against anti-Christ at Armageddon and will cast him and his companion namely the false prophet and demons into the lake of fire. And Jesus Christ will bind Satan for one thousand years in a bottomless pit or in the abyss. (Rev 16:12-15; 19:19,20; Zech 14th Chapter).

Later the Lord Jesus Christ will reign on earth peacefully. During this period gospel will be preached completely to the whole world (Rev 20:4-6; 19:15-16; 5:10). The Lord will put His throne on the earth to judge the people who heard the gospel during the period of thousand years and He will hear their decisions. This is called 'the judgement of the living nations' and otherwise called the judgement which separates the sheep and the goats.'

When the Lord looses Satan from the bottomless pit, He will come on the earth and will collect several nations as an army and will make war against the Lord. Fire which comes from heaven will devour that army of Satan. Then the Lord will cast Satan into the lake of fire (Rev 20:7-10). Later the Last judgement, the Lord will judge all people from the time of Adam. In this judgement some will ask "Lord have we not prophesied in Your Name?" (Rev 20:11-15; Ecc 12:14; Daniel 2:27-29). The spirits of those who died in Christ will go to Paradise. This place is also a part of heaven. This was the place about which the Lord had told on to one of the thieves while He was crucified. 16:22; 23:43; II Cor 12:14; Rev 2:7). The spirits of those who died without repentance will be in Hades. St. Peter in his epistles writes about Christ going to this place and preaching there. Because God is Almighty He can save those that have repented, even after their death also. In Psalms 139:8 it was written that 'If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there ...even there shall thy hand lead me.' This

point can be known from the book 'Heavenly visions' written by Sadhu Sundar Singh. (Ps 9:17; 139:8; Amos 9:2; I Sam 2:6; I Peter 3:20; 4:6; Phill 2:9-11; Isa 13:14). Heavenly Congregation of Prayer: In this congregation prayers will be made for the sake of earth. It will be very delightful to know more about this prayer group. (Rev 4:6; Is 6:3; Eze 1st chapter).

The bride will dwell in the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:2). Those believers who are not included in the group called 'the Bride' will go to another part of Heaven which is called 'heaven for the saved.' (Rev 7:1-14; 20:4; 14:3). The believers during the period of vials (held by angels) will remain on earth forever. After the thousand year reign, this earth will be a part of heaven.' (Rev 21:1; II Peter 3:13).

The above are some of the particulars the Bible Mission preaches.

### **THE BIBLE MISSION'S STATEMENT OF FAITH**

The Bible Mission is an indigenous Christian denomination started by M. Devadas, as per God's written revelation, in the year 1938, in Rajahmundry, south India. He led an upright Christian life for 120 years with manifold spiritual experiences. He served the Lutheran Mission for 46 years and held many offices discharging various responsibilities upto the maximum satisfaction of his superiors, until God revealed him the Bible Mission, when he was ninety years old.

The main objective of the Bible Mission is to attain optimum fellowship and in-depth communion with the Lord Jesus Christ. Its main motto is not to hate any man or any religion but to ask God, about the unknown things. Since God alone can clear all doubts, we should approach Him for our better understanding of all the things.

## **The Bible Mission believes in the following:-**

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ was like a human in outward appearance but God in eternal state. We also believe that He explicitly manifested. His love and real God-head through His divine preachings, miraculous good deeds and vicarious death upon the cross bearing my sins, diseases, punishments; and rising from the grave on the third day and ascending into Heaven. We also believe that He is now interceding for all the human beings and shall come back to *rapture His Church in His Second Coming*. Afterwards there will be seven years of terrible tribulation to those who were left behind. Later in the war at Armageddon between Anti-Christ and Christ; the Anti-Christ and False Prophet shall be thrown into the hell and Satan shall be imprisoned for one thousand years in the Abyss, during which period the Lord shall reign over the whole earth for a thousand years. And we also believe that at the end of His reign the Lord shall judge both the living and the dead.

As Christ, the Lord releases Satan from the Abyss, Satan will come to the earth and from two armies namely Gog and Magog and will fight against God only to get defeated, and Christi will throw him into hell. We believe that, lateron, the Lord shall judge all the people and send the unbelievers into Hell. We believe that, eventually, as the saints on this earth are like one unified church, the earth shall become a part of Heaven and Christ, the Lord shall reside both in Heaven and on earth.

We believe in the Holy Spirit and that He is unitedly working with the Father and the Son as one God. We also believe that the Holy Bible was written by His moving inspiration and that it can be understood only through His enlightenment and that He alone can handover to the

believer the salvation intended by the Father, acquired by the Son through His precious blood. We also believe that the Holy Spirit is the God who is equally worthy to be worshipped along with the Father and the Son. We believe in the fellowship of saints, resurrection and the eternal life.

## THE ACTIVITIES OF THE BIBLE MISSION

The Bible Mission is known for its relentless service. Its activities are not only confined to the religious sphere but also extended to the social and economic domains of human life. Since the Bible Mission depends on the Lord to supply its needs, for all its activities it aims high and accomplishes big results. Its activities are grouped in the following manner.

**Social Activities:** The Bible Mission is much interested in the social dimension of the gospel, since the Lord fed the five thousand and taught them the goodnews, likewise, the Bible Mission too pays greater attention to the social needs of the masses.

It involves in community development programmes that are aimed at the self-sustenance of the poorer communities that are deprived of modern amenities. It takes special interest with regard to street children whose childhood is perverted in various ways. It helps them by providing basic means of life and catering to their overall well being. The Bible Mission pays special attention to the nature calamities such as earth quakes, Tsunamis, Fire mishaps, etc and undertakes special relief works by sending its contingent, who are well equipped for such purposes. They distribute clothes, blankets, plastic sheets, water food, milk and even money depending on the need of the situation.

**Academic Activities:** The Bible Mission owns a printing press to publish its literature that is of general interest of the masses and also specific use of its members. It is one of the important activities of the Bible Mission to distribute special pamphlets praying God to send Rains on the land. In places where there were no seasonal rains, when these pamphlets are distributed much rainfall was seen. The Bible mission works hard to promote peace and tranquility in the country by creating awareness in the masses to pray God to the internal peace of the nation and also for the friendly relations with the neighbouring countries.

Its literature brings much spiritual insight to its readers catering to and conducting their moral lives for the betterment of the nation as a whole.

**Other Activities:** The Bible Mission conducts medical camps and health awareness projects to its workers so that they keep good health and work efficiently. It offers refresher courses to its subjects strengthening their faith and commitment in its thinking line up and working pattern.

Apart from these secular activities the Bible Mission workers conduct massive healing campaigns in their respective congregation. Many non-Christians join those meetings to receive physical and spiritual blessings.

### **THE ANNUAL CONVENTIONS:**

The Annual convention of the Bible Mission is a Mega event that stands as a landmark in its activities. It serves free food for nearly 1 million people for three full days, who participate in the event with their friends, relatives and the entire household. The Bible Mission has neither fixed income nor any foreign aid. It is indigenous in its character and nature of functioning, for it raises its

own funds through voluntary contribution of its members and workers.

*Here are some of the details of the Annual Conventions of the Bible Mission:*

1. The overall expenditure of the conventions is estimated as Eight million Indian rupees, which comes to US\$ 177,777.77. (Year 2005).
2. The vast pendal that was the erected with the Fanpalm tree leaves covers the area of 1.2 million square feet which accommodates nearly one million people.
3. Nine thousand tube lights and Five hundred lamps are arrange to illuminate the pendal and the surrounding open air during night time.
4. Twenty quintals of Dal is used to prepare the Sambar, which is the staple Indian liquid food to mix up in rice.
5. Sixty quintals of vegetables are used to prepare the Sambar.
6. One Eighty Five tones of rice is cooked for all the people for three full days, including the pilgrims who come a day in advance, and depart a day after the conventions. Special canteen services are provided at subsidized rates.
7. Seven huge water tankers supply water only for cooking purposes. Water drawn from Five deep dug borewells round the clock caters to the basic needs of the pilgrims.
8. Police protection is provided for security reasons by the government of Andhra Pradesh. A group of doctors assisted by committed nurses work as a team to render first aid services.
9. The Conventions start at 9:30a.m. And closes by

10:30p.m. Between 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. food is served inspite of this marathon session, the pilgrims so much attention to the programme and sit with great devotion. Many govt. Officials participate and receive the blessings.

10. It's synthesis of India in all its colours. Irrespective of caste, colour, creed, race, gender all communities in rural and urban India participate in this mega event without any bias.
11. True Indian spirit is witnessed in that environment. It's a gathering of indigenized Christianity in Indian colours and twilights. That's why the Bible Mission is successful in its work even in many hostilities that are prevalent in present day India.
12. Many foreign delegates participate and witness the direct presence of the Lord where the moto of the convention is not conversion but the transformation of the soul to meet the Lord in clouds. This is the dream and ambition of the Bible Mission to transfer this legacy to various countries.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Thus, The Bible Mission is one of the fastest growing churches in India. Since it is revealed by God, God alone is looking after its growth and well-being. Since God alone is the mentor of the mission, it is being shaped in his own image and likeness according to His will. Since, God alone is its leader it is being prepared for His second coming, and invites the rest of the christendom to join its fold at the feet of His presence.

If have any queries regarding the things mentioned in this booklet, you may ask God to clarify your doubts, since He alone is the All of the Bible Mission.

May God bless you. ***Maranatha.***

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*For further information please contact:*

**THE BIBLE MISSION OFFICE**

Bethel House, Railpet,

Guntur - 522001. A.P. India.

Phones: +91-863-2556149, +919949121777.