

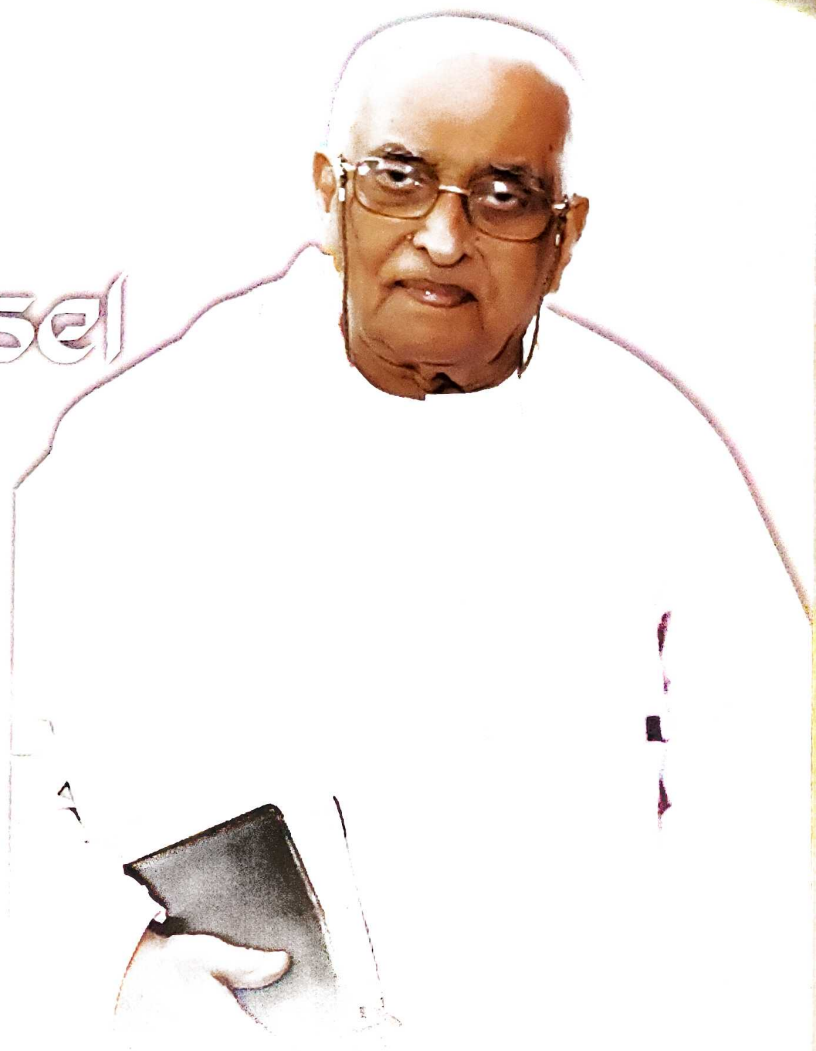
HIS Chosen Vessel

Testimony of Bro. K. Philip

*(Transcribed from his Testimony given
in Mumbai on 25th November 2011)
Bro. John Philip*

Maharashtra happens to be my spiritual birth place. My father chose for me a career at sea when I was fifteen. I joined the training ship, Duffrin off Bombay at Mazagon. In ships there are two parties, i.e. Catholic church and Protestant church. So my father told me, that since there was no Syrian church there, I could attend the Catholic church at that time. The ship's captain used to take catechism for us. Seeing my honest conduct he said, "Why not give Philip first Confession and Holy Communion?" My father replied, "Don't interfere with him now. Let him choose what he wants. Let him be free." After three years on the training ship I switched to marine engineering. I had to work in the Mazagon Dock for four years. After finishing my workmanship, I joined the ship as an engineer.

In those days I used to go to the



house of Mr. Nawazkar called 'Boys House.' The whole household of this brother was genuinely converted and all the servants of God who passed through Bombay came to their house. I was with Mr. Nawazkar's son in Lamington Road YMCA when he said, "There is a man called Bro. Bakht Singh. When he prays, people are converted, the sick are healed and others are brought to the knowledge of the Bible." When Nawazkar came to Bombay, in that house, all the servants of God like- Bro. Bakht Singh, Bro. Golsworthy, Bro. Jordan Khan, Bro. Flack had an opportunity to worship and fellowship together. At that time, I took the opportunity to visit that house. Bro. Bakht Singh and the others were having tea and Mrs. Nawazkar said, "Bro. Philip has come from the ship. He is with us." Bro. Bakht Singh got up from the table, came to me and

asked, "Are you born again?" I had never heard that expression before. Bro. Bakht Singh explained that I had to be born again, only then I could enter the Kingdom of God. I thought, "I am a Christian. It is meant only for him (Bro. Bakht Singh) because he is a Sikh. I believe in Jesus. I believe in the cross." I didn't say those words aloud. Bro. Bakht Singh continued saying, "You must be born again. Kneel down and I will pray for you." He had a white coat and a Bible. I was also dressed in white! (naval white). He was white on the outside and inside. I was white only on the outside! We might belong to a church highly spoken of or be white outside, but inside, we don't have new life in Christ. I felt a sense of peace after this prayer. I had a desire to know what it was to be saved and how one could be born again. How could we receive new life in Christ?

After that I went to Durban and other places in South Africa. I got in touch with a company of Christian believers who gathered together. In some parts of South Africa, they were strong about colour bar. However, a friend of mine was with me. He took me to a place where both whites and blacks were there. There was nothing grand about this place. Here they were singing and praising the Lord. The pastor asked my friend Martin to give his testimony. He stood up, gave a brief account of where he was born and where he was educated and stated that on one particular day in Tanjore he was saved and the others prayed, "We pray for Martin's friend. He also may be born again. He also may be saved. Protect their ship from torpedoes, German battle ships and so many dangers that are there." The Lord brought me back to Bombay and whenever I came to Bombay I visited Nawazkar's house. The youngest member of the Nawazkar

household was Balwant Nawazkar. He said, "You go to so many places. What wonderful opportunities you have to talk about the Lord Jesus Christ." I replied, "How can I speak about Him until I really know Him?" He replied, "If you want to know him, kneel down and confess your sins. Tell the Lord Jesus Christ that you are a sinner. Ask Him to wash you, to give you the Holy Spirit and promise to follow Him." Both of us knelt down but I could not pray because I was used to the prayer book! Then Balwant said, "If you are sincere about this, you can repeat this prayer after me." I repeated these words, "I am convinced about my sin and sinful nature. I accept Thee as my Saviour on the 11th of April 1943 as my Saviour. Lord, give me Thy Holy Spirit. Teach me Thy Word. I will follow and tell others that Thou art my Saviour." After he finished the prayer I joined him in saying, "Amen" Then he opened his Bible and turned to John 1:12, 13. "As many as received Him, to them gave He the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: Who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, BUT OF GOD." He said, "Believe in this verse. Read your Bible from today and thank God for saving you." This young brother Balwant, was younger to me, but he encouraged me to witness for the Lord. At that time someone gave me a tambourine. Bro. Balwant took me to Chaupathi Beach. I took with me many small booklets about the way of salvation. I did not know Hindi, but I started singing, "Ao, ao, Yeshu paas ao, wohi bulata abhi" (Come, come, come to Jesus. He is calling you). As I sang, people gathered around. I distributed the booklets. I also had with me a banner which read, "CHRIST DIED FOR THE UNGODLY." I kept doing this for some time. I went to my old office, my managing agents McCann and McKenzie. I called out to them, "I was your engineer on your ship. Jesus called me. I am here now to tell you

that Jesus Loves You." There were only two people in the office. They came out to see who was shouting out these words. These were certain spiritual exercises through which the Lord led me.

Bro. Bakht Singh came again to Bombay. He was holding meetings in the Marathi church. I used to finish night duty and come in the morning for the meeting. On Sunday Bro. Bakht Singh was speaking about Aaron's rod which budded. I did not know about Aaron's rod but I understood that he was speaking about the power of God to make something which was dry blossom and be fruitful for the Lord. At the same meeting he said, "Close your eyes, kneel down. If you want the same power of resurrection to operate in your life, raise your hand." I was shy to raise my hand. Slowly I raised my hand. That gave me a new beginning. Bro. Bakht Singh said, "Be bold! God is the God of the Japanese or others fighting against you. He will keep you. Read your Bible." In the ship I had a small cabin (12 feet x 12 feet) where I could read my Bible and pray. Other engineers started to look at me, most of them were foreigners, a good number were Scotsmen. I used to pray before I started the engine. The Lord helped me to maintain the ship even though the ship's engines were old. I was able to maintain the correct speed and go with the convoy. They laughed at me. They said, "Look at this man. He says that he has seen the Light. He drinks only milk. He doesn't drink beer anymore." They were wondering what had happened to me. The Bible says, "Hearken unto Me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is My law; fear ye not the reproach of men." (Isa 51:7) We must be witnessing Christians.

While I was on another ship in

Alexandria, the Chief Engineer of the ship called me. Generally when the Chief Engineer calls we go with some bottles, either to obtain favour or if you have done something. He was playing darts. He treated me on par and said, "Come, play." After some time he said that he was tired. I told him that he wasn't tired because of playing (meaning that it was his habit of drinking that had worn him out). Then he opened his cupboard and brought out a small Bible. He said, "This is my Bible which my mother gave me when I left Scotland. I have not used it." I said, "This is the time to use it. Kneel down. Tell Jesus that you are a sinner and ask Him to deliver you from this habit and keep you as a true Christian." I do pray that he may be found in heaven.

On January 19th in Karachi, the Lord called me according to Matthew 19:21 "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me." The verse says, "If thou wilt be perfect..." There is no compulsion. Leave the attachment to your possessions and come and follow Me.

I asked the Lord to help me to get leave to go home but I did not get leave. My last voyage was from Colombo via Chennai to Calcutta. At about midnight the boy woke me up saying, "Sir, sir, air raid!" I saw something like a speck and BANG! A bomb was dropped! The ship swung this way and that due to the impact. The boy said, "Let us go down." I said, "Let us pray. Our God is the God of the Japanese also." Again another bomb came toward us, but missed the ship. The next day, there was a burden upon my heart as to what I must do. I had nobody to pray with. There was one more Indian engineer on that ship. I gave him my Bible and told him, "Open the Bible and read." He opened it at Isaiah 41: 8-10, "But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend. Thou

whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away. Fear thou not; for I am with thee; be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee." I never knew that there were such words in the Bible. I wrote my letter of resignation to the Chief Engineer of McCann and McKenzie in Calcutta. I said, "I thank you sir for giving me the best ships for my training but please accept my ambitions in Christ. I was born again. I want to follow Him. I tender my resignation humbly." He was not prepared to let me go. He said, "Give me three months". I said, "I won't get on with the ship. This is my decision. I am going, not to serve in the port or anywhere, but to follow the Lord." He sensed my sincerity, integrity and persistence and sent me off. I took the mail from Calcutta and reached Jehovah Shammah. When I entered Jehovah Shammah, Bro. Bakht Singh looked at me. He asked, "What can I do for you?" He didn't remember me. I replied, "The Lord called me brother." He replied, "Has the Lord called you? Then come and stay here with us. I am staying in the Church at Jehovah Shammah in fellowship with the saints under the government of the grace of God and the Spirit of God and the teaching through His servants I am able to say that the Lord has kept me as a branch till now.

I thought that I should give the gospel to people of my language, Malayalam in Kerala. Bro. Bakht Singh responded to this idea saying that there were many groups in Kerala. He told me that if I wanted I could go for 2 months to Kerala and come back. I went for some time. All this while Bro. Bakht Singh was praying for me. He wrote to me saying, "We are going to Hyderabad for a gospel

campaign. Join us." I was there for the first day of the meetings and the Lord taught me more through the fellowship. The Word given that day was "I was glad when they said unto me Let us go into the House of the Lord." Many were born again and were baptized by Bro. Bakht Singh.

Another problem came in relation to a partnership in the work of God. It is not good for man to be alone. One needs a partner. Bro. Bakht Singh proposed a person who is my wife today. My parents couldn't accept it. After a year they accepted it. Through the mercy of God my wife and I have completed fifty years in serving the Lord together.

Bro K. Philip faithfully served the Lord since the day he went to Jehovah Shammah, Chennai, leaving behind his 'high flying career with the Merchant Navy'. His reverberating sharp voice rang through the churches all over the country and abroad as he became the messenger for his Master. His joyous singing and prayerful presence can never be forgotten. He was called to glory on 15th December 2013. His wife, Sis. C. Philip and son, Bro. John Philip are today serving the Lord in Jehovah Shammah Chennai. His daughter Sis. Anna Timothy and family live in Australia. Kindly pray for the family.

We apologize for wrongly printing the picture of Bro. F John Paul in the biography of Bro. C.E. Dasan titled, 'Saved by Grace' in the 4th Issue (Oct-Dec 2019), Vol V of Green Pastures. We deeply regret the error.



Bro. C.E. Dasan