

## WHEN THE BAND QUIT PLAYING

by Tom Wacaster

While working in India this week it was my privilege to travel with brother Nehemiah Gootam to Nakkerkal to work with brother Premdas, one of the preachers in that area. We had completed our morning speaking engagement and had returned to brother Premdas' house, which is situated on one of the major highways that goes to Hyderabad. It would be another three hours before our next meeting. Across the street there was some sort of marriage party in progress. The house was decorated with colored lights, and a colorful tent had been erected outside the house where the guests had gathered so as to provide some shade from the blistering sun. The tent had no walls; only a covering, supported by about half a dozen poles situated at the corners and along the sides to hold the awning in place. From the activities it would appear that no expense had been withheld to provide an elaborate and festive wedding party for the bride and groom. There were fireworks, what appeared to be an abundance of food, and a band that would, on occasion, march from the house to some point down the street, playing their music as they marched along. I could not determine why the entire band would march down the street, unless it was to invite others, or perhaps simply to make their presence known. Upon returning to the house, they would situate themselves just outside the awning so the guests would have enough room to sit in the shade. As the guests gathered and visited, the band played on, with seldom a lull in their festive music.

In the distance I watched as clouds began to gather - dark clouds that promised rain, and along with it cooler temperatures. There was no attempt to make arrangements for the comfort of the guests should it rain, and the band played on, either ignorant of the approaching storm or unconcerned. It seemed like everyone was enjoying the party, and although I was not a guest, it was quite enjoyable to observe the activities from a distance. And then the rain came; and the band quit playing. At least for the moment the merrymaking and festivities came to a halt, and the guests, wedding party, and the band hurried about seeking shelter from the rain. People were shouting one thing and then another. Every effort was made to stay dry, and keep the festivities going. Before the rain, the party went on uninterrupted; the band played their merry songs; all was well. But when the rains fell, the activities were disrupted, and the band quit playing.

I am sure that we have all heard the proverbial saying, "Into everyone's life a little rain must fall." Whoever penned that proverb was trying to express the undeniable truth that life is not a bed of roses. There are interruptions in life; the "rains" come, and our lives are disrupted by the storms that come upon us. Our Lord spoke of just such storms in the parable of the wise and foolish builders (Matt. 7:24-27). One built upon the rock; his foundation was solid, and his house withstood the rains that beat upon it. The other built his house upon sand; and when the rains came, and beat upon his house, "it fell, and great was the fall thereof."

What I observed that day is analogous to so many lives. For the most part, our world marches from one point to another, "eating, drinking, and giving in marriage," unaware of the approaching clouds in the distant future. While life treats us good, the band plays on, and little, if any consideration is given to the foundation upon which we are building

our house. But when the storms come, we are confronted with a dose of reality, and, if only temporarily, the band quits playing.

The rain eventually quit that day, and, once again, the band resumed its playing. It came time for us to leave for our next appointment. As we drove off, I could still hear the firecrackers going off, and the band playing its music. And I thought to myself, "How will my house fair when the rains come? And am I prepared for those occasions in life when tragedy strikes, and the storms rage, and, even if only for a moment, the band quits playing?"