

**WAS THIS  
A MIRACLE?**

**Jonathan Gray**

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Jonathan Gray has traveled the world to gather data on ancient mysteries. A serious student of origins and pre-history, he has investigated numerous archaeological sites, and has also penetrated some largely un-explored areas, including parts of the Amazon headwaters. Between lecturing worldwide on archaeology, religion and biblical textual issues, the author has hosted newspaper columns and contributed to various magazines.

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## **Introduction: Are Miracles Possible?**

At times we hear of astonishing things that occur to people. Sometimes such accounts almost strain credibility. However, events that we might call miracles are constantly occurring.

Whether one accepts them as such depends upon one's attitude concerning the existence of God. If one accepts the reality of a Superior One who created us and directs the universe, it may make sense.

What we might call "supernatural" could be perfectly natural to a Supreme Being, quite natural to His power. If He created laws of nature, might He not override such laws? Using even natural phenomena in a "supernatural" way?

Could I suggest that even when supernatural events find explanation in the framework of understood natural phenomena, does that lessen the divine, miraculous wisdom behind them?

May I also suggest that much that we attribute to chance is due the all-wise and loving providence of our Creator, who works circumstances together for the best good of those who commit their lives to follow His ways and place their trust in Him.

My desire is that the following reports will inspire, encourage and fill you with confidence in a heavenly Father who loves you very much.

# 1 Last Food Gone

We grumble about the recession. It is true that many are suffering. There are some countries, however, where no government relief is available.

A widow with several small children had nothing left but bread. And she served the last of it for dinner that night. It was a cold night, snowing in fact. Her last cent was gone. And she wondered what she could give them to eat for breakfast.

Next morning she set the table as usual. She even called the children to the table. “Children,” she said, “we need bread. We must ask the Lord to supply it.” And pray they did – all of them.

Scarcely had they finished their earnest request, when a loud rap at the kitchen door sent the oldest boy racing across the room to answer it.

“My truck’s stalled in a snowdrift around the corner,” said the man at the door. His arm was piled high with loaves of bread. “Can’t make any more deliveries today, and I can’t sell this bread tomorrow. Ask your mother if she can make use of it, sonny.”



## 2 The Baby Sitter

Those who choose a relationship with Jesus have often been persecuted by others who do not understand. The tortures inflicted upon native Christians in Kenya during the dread Mau-Mau rebellion were unsurpassed in cruelty and bestiality. The greatest atrocities of the Mau-Mau were committed on their own people who had adopted Christianity. Although they knew that torture and death might result, many Christian people, young and old, in Kenya, defied the Mau-Mau.

One of these was a teen-aged girl named Gakui. When the Mau-Mau leaders demanded that Gakui take their oath, and even her parents pleaded with her to submit, the native girl remained adamant. She had heard whispers of the obscene acts initiates were required to perform, and she knew that the oath included the promise to worship Jomo, the Mau-Mau leader, even over God and His Son, Jesus. And Gakui could not possibly denounce her love for Jesus, nor could she disobey that commandment which says “You shall put no other gods before Me.”

Time and again Gakui slipped into the bushes and hid when the Mau-Mau came by. One day, however, a neighbour woman came by Gakui’s home and asked the girl to mind her child. As evening came on, and the mother still had not come to pick up the baby, Gakui thought she had better return the child to its home. She tied the baby on her back, and set out through the jungle paths. Near the baby’s home three men stepped out of the vines beside the path and seized Gakui. It had been a trap, after all. The mother appeared and took the baby, and the men led Gakui to the Mau-Mau ceremonial hut. They demanded that she take the oath. She refused and they began to slap her face.

“Do you want to die?” they asked.

“No, I don’t want to die,” Gakui cried, “but I will not die. Jesus will rescue me. I know He Will.”

The men picked up clubs and beat her until she was unconscious, beat her even while she was lying senseless on the floor.

She was still lying there unconscious when other members of the Mau-Mau brought in a group of young natives to take the oath. They picked Gakui up and threw her limp body over against the wall, then proceeded with the ceremony. She regained consciousness, only to lie helpless and watch her friends in the village, young people her own age, perform the filthy acts and swear the terrible oath the Mau-Mau required.

One of the men saw that she was conscious, and taunted her. "So your Jesus is taking care of you, eh?" he said, "Well we'll see about that. But don't worry, we're not going to kill you yet. There's no need to. There's only one door and it's well guarded. You can't escape from us, Gakui."

And he returned to the ceremony, as Gakui lay in horror, weak and helpless from loss of blood. She could only pray.

As she prayed, Gakui felt strong hands grip her feet. She felt herself being pulled, slowly but steadily, through a hole in the wall of the hut out into the freedom of the night. Finally she was completely outside the hut, and rose unsteadily to her feet. She looked around to see whose strong hands had pulled her to freedom, but she saw no one. She managed to make her way to the home of a Christian native family, where her wounds were cleansed and she lay hidden while she recovered from her beating. Some months later, government officials rounding up the Mau-Mau came to ask her to identify her tormentors. Gakui refused. The men who had beaten her did not realise what they were doing, she said. There was still hope for them.

One of the government men asked her to tell about her escape. When she finished, they shook their heads incredulously.

"Gakui," one of the officials said, "we have been in that hut. We have examined it minutely. There is no hole in any of the walls, nor is there any sign whatever that there ever was such a hole. This is the most mysterious thing I have ever heard of."

But it was not mysterious to Gakui. She had known all along that her God would not let her die.

### 3 Change of Clothes

“What a beautiful morning!”

Jose had leapt out of bed early. He had a long journey to make. He hitched his horse to the cart. His heart was singing.

His friends at the local church had donated a decent sum to equip and finish a hospital at Belem, in Brazil. Jose was the treasurer. He had to take this money to the mission office 80 kilometres away.

Jose had on his best clothes. He whistled happily as he rode along.

As he was crossing a solitary place, he noticed someone on the road. He thought maybe it was one of his friends who wanted to go to town with him, but as he came closer, it turned out to be a stranger.

Some Brazilian folk like to talk and tell you all they know. The stranger said, “Who are you?” And Jose replied, “Well, I’m the treasurer of the village church, and I’m taking our good big offering in to the mission.”

“So how much is your offering?” asked the stranger.

“Oh, I have here in tithes and offerings about \$2,500.00.”

The man proved to be a thief. He pulled out his revolver and said, “I’ll just save you the trip down to the city. Just play that I’m the mission treasurer.”

Jose was very sad. He pulled out the roll of bills and turned the Lord’s money over to the thief.

Then the robber looked at him and commented, “You are quite well dressed. My clothes are old and shabby. We will just trade clothes. Take off your coat, your trousers, your underwear.”

So there they traded clothes. The robber dressed in the man’s clothes – and took off down the road as fast as he could go.

The treasurer was sad as he looked at those old dirty clothes saturated with tobacco, and then thought of his good clothes. Finally, he had to dress in those clothes that the thief had discarded. Then he didn’t know what to do. Should he go to town, or back home? He had no more money. He paused a moment to pray, and asked his Lord what to do.

When Jose stepped up into his cart he felt something in his pocket. He reached his hand into the pocket, and there was the roll of bills. The robber had forgotten to take them out! Then he felt in the other pocket, and there was another roll of bills, amounting to about \$3,000 – which the robber had evidently stolen from someone else.

He got going in the cart and went down the road in the opposite direction as fast as he could go. When he got to town, he went in a roundabout way until he could get some new clothes. Then he made his way to the mission office, turned the money over and asked the mission treasurer what he should do with the rest of the money.

“At least you should return tithes on it and give the Lord a liberal offering,” was the reply.

Jose did this and gave \$1,000 to the hospital. He went home a different way with about \$1,500 and a new suit of clothes.

There’s a biblical promise for those who serve God: “*Before they call, I will answer.*” (Isaiah 65:24) Do you notice how *that* promise was kept, on this occasion?

## 4 Four Men on the Roof

When bandits took a North China city, hundreds of Chinese women and children fled to the mission compound for protection. The lone missionary stationed there despaired for their safety, for it seemed certain the compound would be attacked soon after dark. She wondered what she would do when the shooting began.

In this troubled state of mind she prayed, “Oh Lord, I have borne witness to these people that You are able to deliver those who trust in You. Please prove Yourself strong now on our behalf, for Your own glory.”

All night long she moved among the refugees, encouraging faithful Christians among them who continued in prayer.

Horrible acts of violence were committed on all sides of the compound, but none within the compound suffered harm.

Soon after the bandits had been routed by the militia, the head of a neighbouring family called on the missionary.

“Little Sister,” he said, after thanking her for the protection the compound had afforded the women and children, “I would like to know who the four men were who stood guard on your housetop all night.” A second and a third man came later asking the same question. Each vowed he had seen “the man.”

A promise in the Bible reveals that an angel of God protects each person who reverences the Creator – brings deliverance. (Psa.34:7)

## 5 No More Left

During April, 1939, a severe drought was devastating Angola, in Africa. In one location, a mission outpost, food supplies were totally exhausted. Not even the locusts had come!

The director of the station was absent at the time. His wife called the people on the station together for a meeting. "We have run out of food," she announced. "We should pray that God will provide for us our daily bread." So in faith they earnestly made their request for food.

After the prayer service, the director's little girl went out of the house, and in a short while she came back with her hands full of a kind of white stuff, which she was eating.

"What are you eating?" asked her mother.

"I went out," she answered, "and saw three people, and they said to me, 'Little girl, God has answered your prayer. He has sent you food. It is manna. Take it and eat it.' That is what I am eating."

Then her mother and others went out, and they all found the same white stuff on the ground that the little girl had in her hands. Joyfully they gathered it, discovered it to be sweet as honey, and their hunger was satisfied.

Greatly impressed with this miraculous food supply that had come to them, the director's wife sent posthaste for her husband, bidding him:

"Hurry home. A miracle has happened."

So he returned to the mission and saw the food that the Lord had sent. It fell for three days, and only on 40 acres of cleared land, which was mission property. No one ever saw it come down, but in the morning when the dew had been dried by the sun, there it was! Unlike the manna in the Bible story, it did not spoil at the end of each day, so pots and bowls were filled, and the mission group had all they needed to eat until the next harvest time.

The mission director, fearing that his colleagues down in South Africa might question his story of this marvellous deliverance, sent a bowl of the manna along with his report by way of verification.

Edward Cardy travelled from Africa to Washington, U.S.A., and showed a little black box which held a sample of the “food from heaven”. Many people examined it. It fitted the Bible description of manna in every detail.

(The book of Exodus records how, when the Hebrews were hungry in the desert, the Lord rained down manna for them. When the dew evaporated, there lay on the surface of the desert something small and flaky, as fine as frost, on the ground. “It was like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey.” Ex.16:14,31)

## 6 Drifting at Sea

During World War II, the world was directed to the miraculous experience of Captain Eddie Rickenbacker, a famous aviator. Sitting in the conference room of Secretary of War Stimson's officers in Washington, D.C. a few days after his return to the United States, Captain Rickenbacker related the following experience:

On the night of October 31, 1942, he with seven Army officers and enlisted men had boarded a Flying Fortress and taken off on a special mission to the South Pacific.

By the next morning their compass had gone awry, their radio had ceased to function and they were completely lost. When their fuel was exhausted, they crashlanded in the ocean, managed to save three rubber life rafts, inflate them and climb aboard.

"The hours were interminable," said the serious-faced captain in a voice pregnant with memories. "We organised little prayer meetings in the evening and morning. One of the men had brought along his Bible. We sustained ourselves by reading it, for we had no food – only four oranges, a little water and two fishing lines, but no bait. On the eighth day, tormented by the pangs of hunger and thirst, we prayed frankly and humbly for deliverance.

"If it wasn't for the fact that I had seven witnesses, I wouldn't dare tell this story, because it seems so fantastic. But within an hour after that prayer meeting a seagull came in and landed on my head: It was bait which enabled us to catch fish. These we ate raw, and they were our only food. One man died before help came out of the very skies from which we had fallen 3 weeks and 3 days before."

"We prayed frankly and humbly for deliverance." And God heard their cry and answered. Another concrete proof that man's extremity is God's opportunity – and that His ear is always listening earthward.



## 7 “Stop! Let Me Drive”

We were travelling down a narrow country lane. My friend was driving at the time. It was her car.

I cannot explain why, but I felt an inner urge to drive. I cannot say that it was a natural urge, but something just made me blurt out, “STOP! Let me drive.”

Somewhat perplexed as to why, she obliged nonetheless, and I took the wheel.

We had hardly travelled very far when suddenly I felt compelled to stop.

“What on earth for?” asked my friend, even more bewildered. “What are you stopping for?”

We were already late and the last thing we wanted to do was to waste more time!

But stop I did! No sooner had we pulled up than another car came careering towards us down the hill, and, in front of our very eyes, went out of control and rolled upside down!

*It pulled up literally half an inch from our front bumper.*

If we hadn’t stopped at that precise moment we would have been caught up in a head-on collision in which we could both have been seriously injured, if not killed!

- Mrs Libby Rothwell, Wales

## 8 The Minnesota Plague

In the summer of 1876, grasshoppers nearly destroyed the crops in Minnesota, USA.

So in the spring of 1877, farmers were worried. They believed that the dreadful plague would once again visit them and again destroy the rich wheat crop, bringing ruin to thousands of people.

The situation was so serious that Governor John S. Pillsbury proclaimed April 26 as a day of prayer and fasting. He urged every man, woman and child to ask God to prevent the terrible scourge. On that April day, all schools, shops, stores and offices were closed. There was a reverent, quiet hush over all the state.

The next day dawned bright and clear. Temperatures soared to what they ordinarily were in midsummer, which was very peculiar for April. Minnesotans were devastated as they discovered billions of grasshopper larvae wiggling to life prematurely. For three days the unusual heat persisted, and the larvae hatched. It appeared that it wouldn't be long before they started feeding and destroying the wheat crop.

On the fourth day, however, the temperature suddenly plummeted. And that night frost covered the earth. It killed every one of those creeping, crawling pests as surely as if poison or fire had been used.

Grateful farmers never forgot that day. It went down in the history of Minnesota.

## 9 Fed for 3 Days

During a time of persecution in France, Merlin, chaplain of Admiral Coligny, was hunted, on account of his faithfulness to Jesus Christ. He escaped his pursuers by clambering over the roof of a neighbouring house, but fell through an opening into a garret full of hay. Not daring to show himself, since he knew not whether he would encounter friends or foes, he remained for 3 days in this retreat, his sole food an egg which a hen laid daily within his reach.

(This divine interposition seems almost as distinct as that of the biblical Elijah, who was fed by ravens.)

## 10 When the Wood Ran Out

In the heart of a severe northern winter, the wood ran out for a widow with two children. She gathered them to the table and they prayed for help.

Soon after, there was a rap on the door. When she opened the door, there stood a man with a pile of chopped wood in his arms. He came in, dropped the wood on the floor, and proceeded to load the fireplace.

The woman and children just stared in astonishment, not daring to speak. Without a word, the stranger lit the fire, arose, smiled and walked out through the door.

The mother immediately rushed to the door. He had vanished. And left no footprints in the snow.

If we are to credit numerous reports by sane, responsible people, such things are happening by the thousands in just about any place you like to name.

## 11 Paralysed on the Spot

A Christian man in Canada relates this incident:

“Some time ago, on a stormy night, I was suddenly impressed to go to a distant house of an aged couple, and there to pray. So imperative was the call that I went out, drove to the spot, and pulled up under the shed, entering the house unperceived, by a door which had been left open. There, kneeling down, I poured out my petitions to God in an audible voice, for divine protection over the occupants of that house. After this, I departed and went home.

“Months later, I was visiting one of the principal prisons in Canada, and, moving among the prisoners, was accosted by one of them, who claimed to know me. I had no recollection of the convict, and was fairly startled when the latter said: ‘Do you remember going to such and such a house one night, and praying in the dark for its occupants?’ I told him I did, and asked how he came to know anything about it. He said: ‘I had gone to that house to steal a sum of money known to be in the possession of the old man. When you drove into the yard, I thought you were he, and intended to kill you while you were still outside. But I saw that you were a stranger. I followed you into the house, and heard your prayer. You prayed God to protect the old people from violence of any kind, especially from murder. And you prayed that if there was any hand uplifted to strike them, that it might be paralysed.’

“Then the prisoner pointed to his right arm, which hung lifeless by his side, saying, ‘Do you see that arm? It was paralysed on the spot, and I have never moved it since. I left the place without doing any harm, but am here now for other offences.’

## 12 The Spider's Web

Henry Havers, of Catherine Hall, Cambridge, was being pursued by enemies. He sought refuge in a malt house, and crept into the kiln.

Immediately afterward, he noticed a spider fixing the first line of a large and beautiful web across the narrow entrance. The web being placed directly between him and the light, he was so much struck with the skill of the insect weaver, that for a while he forgot his own imminent danger. But by the time the network had crossed and recrossed the mouth of the kiln in every direction, the pursuers came to search for him.

He listened as they approached, and distinctly overheard one of them say: "It is of no use to look in there. The old villain can never be there. Look at that spider's web. He could never have got in there without breaking it."

This incident occurred in 1622. The experience is almost the same as one recorded of a French Huguenot, in the days of the St. Bartholomew Massacre.

## 13 Guns to their Heads

During the communist regime in Bulgaria, two Christian men in Varna, Dimiter M. Dimitrov and Alexander Marinov, worked secretly to translate and print as many Christian books as possible.

The work was slow and risky. Although they played loud communist music to muffle the noise of their typewriters, the state security soon discovered them. One day, two young officers broke in on them during a typing session.

Holding 9mm guns to their heads, they screamed: “Be prepared to face the maximum penalties!”

Possession of a single religious book meant 3 to 5 years in prison. Printing and distributing religious literature earned a sentence at a high-security prison camp or death.

Just then, a third man, wearing the uniform of a high-ranking state security officer, entered. Dismissing the young officers, he stated, “I’ll handle the situation from here.”

Dimitrov will never forget what happened next.

“God bless you, and keep printing!” said the officer as he turned to leave.

He was never seen again. In fact, Dimitrov discovered that no officer by that description had ever worked in Varna.

“It could only have been an angel of God,” concluded Dimitrov, “sent to protect the work of Christian publishing in Bulgaria.

- Excerpted from *Inside Report*, September 1992

## 14 The Impossible Fire Survivor

Mrs Wentz was owner of a fine eating place, the M & E Restaurant, in Grand Rapids, Ohio.

It happened on Christmas morning. She awoke in the early hours to find that the apartment building, which housed 8 families, was on fire. The flames had got a good start, and Mrs Wentz realised that if she were to save herself there was no time to lose.

In a very short time she found herself outside the building, and as she looked back, she knew she was fortunate to be out of the inferno that was but a short time ago her place of sleep. Six fire departments came to the rescue from the surrounding towns, but despite the tonnes of water that were directed upon the fire, the cruel, unrelenting flames had taken their toll. The building was a total loss, and months later it would remain a black, forbidding shell of a place, entirely stripped of its contents.

Little did anyone realise that all the while the fire was raging a modern miracle was taking place right in the middle of it all! During the great flurry of excitement, Mrs Wentz was not thinking about her Bible, which was lying on a table in the living-room, before the fire started. But there it lay right in the open all the while the flames licked high about it – so high, in fact, that **THE WHOLE FLOOR FELL THROUGH TO THE EARTH BENEATH**. Six fire departments had **AIMED THEIR HOSES** into that terrible holocaust...

And yet, when it was all over, there amidst the rubble, the miracle shone forth. There was that Bible, looking as good as when she first obtained it 7 years earlier.

It was not an expensive Bible. It had neither leather binding, nor the usual India paper used in most Bibles.

And listen to this. Inside its pages was found an old receipt which was badly scorched – but not one of the pages showed any signs of scorch. More than that – ashes were found between the pages, but the pages were untouched in any way. And, despite the fire hoses, the Bible was neither water-soaked nor wet.



Certainly a divine hand has preserved the Bible through the millennia. It is an immortal Book. What happened in the fire is symbolic of God's preserving power.

## 15 Empty Gas Tank

I was a salesman, and that evening I had a 9.00 p.m. appointment with a building contractor living on a rural road about four miles west of Castile, New York. Our home was in Curriers, about seven miles north of Arcade. To avoid a route that would have forced me to go east in a roundabout way, I had gotten instructions to go cross-country on some county roads that would supposedly save me a lot of travel time. Unfortunately, it didn't. I got lost three times because of the constant crossroads, and I made wrong turns. It meant stopping and asking directions at farms, and I arrived almost an hour late.

On my way there I realized that my gas gauge had dropped rather low, but reasoned that the best thing to do was to fill the tank in Castile afterward. We got involved talking business, and time flew by. When I had finished writing up an order and was ready to leave, my watch indicated almost midnight. By then the thought of getting gasoline had left me. The contractor, desiring to save me going into Castile in order to take Route 39, a state road that would carry me west into Arcade and home, suggested that I drive three miles west from his residence, then take a left that would get me directly onto Route 39.

I was reluctant to go that way, but he said I couldn't make a wrong turn because of a huge landmark at that intersection. As I stepped out on the porch, the cold chilled me instantly. He looked at his thermometer, which read five degrees below zero.

"I hope you have a good battery," he said.

"Yes, sir. One of the best for winter driving." Waving goodbye, I left. Because of the bitter cold, it took longer than usual to get heat into the car, and it absorbed all my attention. I had travelled about five miles when all of a sudden the engine began to lose power. A glance at the gas gauge told me the tank was empty. Terror struck my mind as I realized that the last farm I had passed was more than a mile away, and no more were in sight.

Like a flash I saw myself in a hospital bed with my toes cut off. You see, when I was 17 years of age, I froze all my toes one morning in northern Quebec when the temperature had gone down to 42 below. I spent five months in the hospital. The flesh turned black and actually fell off my toes. Afterward I had a number of operations, skin grafts, etc. And the day of my discharge the surgeon who had worked on my feet sat me down and stated that I should no longer live in that part of the world. He believed that my feet would quickly freeze if exposed to the cold, and that the only thing that could be done then would be to amputate.

Now in a burst of fear I cried out, “Dear Jesus, please help.” Many times before when certain destruction stared me in the face, I had made that call for help, and Jesus had never failed me. Immediately a great calm came over me. But the car was still slowing down.

“Forgive me for being so panicky, seeing that You have never failed me,” I thought. “O Lord, I know that the Spirit of God that transported Philip 20 miles so long ago can get me and this car over those hills into Curriers if He so chooses. Dear Jesus, may the Spirit of God that controls the atoms please fuel this car so it will take me home without stopping. Thank You, Lord, for Your help.”

It was almost as if something hit the back of my automobile, and it shot forward; then the motor started to accelerate and hummed like never before. The speedometer climbed and when it reached the speed limit I had to release my foot from the pedal, as the vehicle kept dashing ahead. Eagle Hill – which I had never climbed without the transmission shifting down – I now sped up in high gear. Jubilantly I praised the Lord for His miracle-working power.

I began quoting verses of Scripture, such as Psalm 107:1, 2 and 8. “O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy.” “Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men.”

Praising the Lord with my whole heart and at the same time crying for joy, I felt the words of Psalm 105:1-5 HAD NEVER SOUNDED SO WONDERFUL. “O GIVE THANKS UNTO THE Lord; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people.

Sing unto him, sing Psalms unto him: Talk ye of all his wondrous works. Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord. Seek the Lord and his strength: seek his face evermore. Remember his marvellous works that he hath done; his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth.”

After I pulled into the driveway, up a small grade, and past the side entrance of our house, the car stopped. It did not reach the garage. Turning the ignition off, I ran into the house, surprised to see the lights on in the kitchen.

About 11.45 p.m. Hilda had awakened, and realizing that I was not home yet, got on her knees and prayed for God’s loving care over me. As I entered, she knew that something great and wonderful had happened. “You look excited. What’s the good news?”

I recounted how the Spirit of God had brought me home 27 miles without any gas in the tank. We had a praise session to the Lord that probably lasted an hour, then went to bed but could not sleep most of the night, as we kept talking about my experience.

In the morning I tried to start the car, but it would not. We had to fetch gasoline from the neighbor’s farm to get it going.

*Roger Morneau*

## 16 Floating Paper Money

The islands of Vanuatu sit in the vast Pacific Ocean near the equator. Here Alec Thomson was caring for a mission station in Santo.

This event occurred around the end of 1961 or during 1962. Pastor Iati, the district director living on the small island of Mafia off the east coast of Espiritu Santo, came in to present his reports. The distance he had to paddle was more than a mile of open ocean. He pulled up his canoe onto the beach and walked to the road, hoping for a lift, or if necessary a taxi. That made him think of money and his wallet. He put his hand to his pocket. But there was no wallet. He went back to the canoe and searched the beach, but there was no sign of it. So he walked to the mission office a few miles and put in his reports. He told no one of his problem, hoping to find the wallet and money when he got home. But there was no wallet. He and his family searched the beach and the house. But still no wallet.

That night, as usual, the family prayed together, but their special request was, "Lord, please help us find the wallet." All prayed, the youngest repeating the words after Ruth, the mother. The next morning they did the same. That wallet, containing his few notes and some silver, was very important to the native man and his family. A month is a long time to live without cash – even in that remote outpost of the world.

They searched the house again, then their garden out in the bush. But nothing was found. That evening, they prayed together again. And also the next morning. That was the third day.

Was it lost in the middle of the Pacific? Obviously the weight of the silver coins would take the wallet to the bottom.

Iati was working in the garden close by. Ruth was in the house on the high ground overlooking the sea. The children went to play on the beach facing the Big Island (Espiritu Santo) and the sea.

And there was the wallet on the beach. They grabbed it, but there was nothing inside it.

They stood there, disappointed. Suddenly, on the flat water of the lagoon they saw some paper money floating toward them! Four of the notes! They grabbed it and raced home. What excitement! They had no doubt the notes were from the lost packet. They were so grateful for the answer to their prayers. But they noted that one note and all the silver was missing.

The rest of the story is so fantastic it is difficult to recount so as to be credible! The plain facts are that the family – small in number, poor in this world’s goods, but vitalized by a strong and simple faith – returned to the beach and saw floating toward them a piece of driftwood. And on top of it was the missing note; and on top of that again, the silver coins! Not a cent was missing!

Can you imagine the joy as they found their voices and called Iati! What a wonderful prayer session they had in their house that day!

Jesus says, “If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, nothing is impossible.”

*Postscript.* Alec Thomson reports in a letter to me: “As mentioned, I found it difficult to believe this fantastic miracle. I discussed it with Pastor Maseng after I had heard it and he went to Mafia to find out whether the story we had heard was true or not. When he returned, he reported that it had happened just as we had heard it. The empty wallet and then the money separately after three days. Jesus said: And ‘What is impossible with men is possible with God.’ ”

## 17 26 Armed Guards

A missionary serving in Africa went back on furlough to the United States and gave a report in his home church in Michigan:

“While serving at a small field hospital in Africa, every two weeks I travelled by bicycle through the jungle to a nearby city for supplies. This was a journey of two days and required camping overnight at the halfway point.

“On one of these journeys, I arrived in the city where I planned to collect money from a bank, purchase medicine and supplies, and then begin my two-day journey back to the field hospital. Upon arrival in the city, I observed two men fighting, one of whom had been seriously injured. I treated him for his injuries and at the same time witnessed to him of the Lord Jesus Christ. I then travelled two days, camping overnight, and arrived home without incident.

“Two weeks later I repeated my journey. Upon arriving in the city, I was approached by the young man I had treated. He told me that he had known I carried money and medicines.

“He said, ‘Some friends and I followed you into the jungle, knowing you would camp overnight. We planned to kill you and take your money and drugs. But just as we were about to move into your camp, we saw that you were surrounded by 26 armed guards.’

“At this I laughed and said that I was certainly all alone out in that jungle campsite.

“The young man pressed the point, however, and said, ‘No Sir, I was not the only person to see the guards. My five friends also saw them, and we all counted them. It was because of those guards that we were afraid and left you alone.’”

At this point in the sermon, one of the men in the congregation jumped to his feet and interrupted the missionary and asked if he could tell him the exact day that this happened. The missionary told the congregation the date and the man who interrupted told him this story:

“On the night of your incident in Africa, it was morning here and I was preparing to go play golf. I was about to putt when I felt

the urge to pray for you. In fact, the urging of the Lord was so strong, I called men in this church to meet with me here in the sanctuary to pray for you. Would all of those men who met with me on that day stand up?”

The men who had met together that day stood up. The missionary wasn't concerned with who they were – he was too busy counting how many men he saw. There were 26.

This story is an incredible example of how the Spirit of the Lord moves in mysterious ways. If you ever hear such prodding, go along with it. Nothing is ever hurt by prayer except the gates of hell.



## 18 Poison Drink

During persecutions of Christians in eastern Europe a man had been arrested and imprisoned.

One day he was taken from his cell and led into an interrogation room where a police officer and a doctor were sitting at a table. Lying open on the table was a Bible, and the prisoner was asked if he believed that book to be the Word of God.

He answered that he did.

Then he was asked to read Mark 16:18. And he read aloud, *“And if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them.”*

“Do you believe this part of the Bible too?” the officer demanded. And the Christian replied, “Yes.”

The officer then placed a filled glass on the table and said, “In this glass there is a strong poison. If the book is true, as you insist, it won’t hurt you. But to show you we don’t play with you, watch this!”

A large dog was brought in and given some of the liquid. In a very few moments the dog was dead.

“Do you still claim that this book you call ‘God’s Word’ is true?”

“Yes, it is God’s Word. It is true.”

Then, with the doctor looking on, the officer shouted, “Drink the entire glass!”

The Christian asked permission to pray first. He knelt down by the table, took the glass in his hands, and prayed for his family that their faith might not fail. Then he prayed for the officer and the doctor that they too might become followers of Christ. Then he said, “Lord, You see how they have challenged You. I am ready to die. But I believe Your Word that nothing will happen to me. Should Your plan be different, I am ready to meet You. My life is in Your hands. May Your will be done.”

Then he lifted the glass and drank it down.

The doctor and the officer were amazed and not a little surprised. They hadn't expected this. They thought he would break first. Now they watched for him to collapse. He didn't.

There was complete silence. The minutes seemed like hours.

Finally the doctor made the first move. He felt the prisoner's pulse. It was normal. He continued his examination but could find no symptoms, no evidence of harm.

He couldn't hide his astonishment. At last he slumped into his chair, paused a moment, then took his party card from his pocket, tore it in half, and threw it on the floor!

Then he reached out for the Bible, took it in his hand, and held it reverently. "From today," he said with conviction, "I too will believe this Book. It must be true. I too am ready to believe this Christ who did this thing before my eyes!"

## 19 Angel Co-Pilot

When Henry had offered to fly his friend David in his small Cessna 180 for some family business, David had nervously accepted. He had never flown in a small plane. But as the little aircraft lifted gracefully into the early morning sun, his tension eased.

When the plane passed Greenville, South Carolina, patches of fog began to obscure their sight. There was enough visibility for Henry to clear the first mountain range, but ahead was a solid wall of fog. Henry radioed Asheville Airport for instructions and David's tension returned.

"Our field is closed because of fog," the air-traffic controller responded, "and we have no capability for instrument landing. Return to Greenville."

"But we don't have enough fuel to fly back to Greenville," Henry protested.

There was a silence. Then, "Okay," the radio voice snapped. "We'll get the ground crew ready. Come in on an emergency landing."

David gripped the sides of his seat. They seemed to be flying in a dense gray blanket through which no control tower could possibly see them. How were they to land? Where was the runway?

Suddenly a voice came over the radio: "Pull it up! Pull it up!"

Henry immediately pulled up on the stick. Through a split in the fog, the men realized in fear that they had almost landed on a busy interstate highway!

"If you will listen to me," the controller's composed voice broke into the tense silence in the cockpit, "I'll help you get down."

"Go ahead," Henry radioed back in relief.

"Come down just a little to the right. Down a little more..."

David prayed intently. The fuel needle hovered on E but the voice went on with calm authority: "Not so fast. Easy now." Was this nightmare flight ever going to end?

“Raise it up a little now. No, you’re too far left.” The journey seemed to be taking forever when suddenly the controller said, “You’re right over the end of the runway. Set it down... now!”

Obediently, Henry dropped the plane through the fog, and the two men recognized the beginning of a runway just ahead, with lights along both sides. It was the most welcome sight they had ever seen. Within minutes, they had touched down and taxied to a stop.

After a quick prayer of thanksgiving, they turned to the radio to thank the air-traffic controller for saving their lives.

“What are you talking about? We lost all radio contact with you when we told you to return to Greenville. We were stunned when we saw you break through the clouds,” responded the incredulous controller.

- Adapted from *Where Angels Walk*, by Joan Webster Anderson.

## 20 Food From the Sky

In the early days of mission work in China, there was an elderly man named Li who accepted the Gospel. Having learned the truth, he immediately began to share his faith with others.

One day, soon after his conversion, he read “covetousness which is idolatry” (Colossians 3:5). Determined not to fall into idolatry, he gave away all of his property and lived day to day from the hospitality of the people whom he was trying to help with the Gospel truth.

Not far from Li’s home was a large temple in which lived a cousin who was a pagan priest. From time to time the young priest would visit his old relative, bringing him a small present of bread or millet from his very adequate supply.

Each time the old man received the gift, he would say, “My heavenly Father’s grace!”

After a while, this began to annoy the younger man. He said, “Where does your heavenly Father’s grace come in? The millet is mine. I bring it to you. And if I did not, you would very soon starve for all that He would care. He has nothing to do with it.”

“But,” replied the old man, “it is my heavenly Father who puts it into your heart to care for me.”

“Oh, that is very well!” interrupted the priest. “WE SHALL SEE WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I BRING THE MILLET NO MORE.”

For a week or two he kept away, although his better nature kept prompting him to care for the old man...

In the passage of time, old Li’s food supply finally ran out. The day came when he no longer had enough food for one more meal. Kneeling alone in his room, he poured out his heart in prayer to God.

He knew very well that his heavenly Father would not, could not, forget him. After pleading for a blessing on his work, and upon the people all around him, he reminded the Lord of what the priest had said. Then he asked that, for the honour of His own great name, the Lord would send that very day his daily bread.

Suddenly the answer came. While Li was still kneeling in prayer, he heard an unusual clamour and cawing and flapping of wings in the courtyard outside, and a noise as of something falling to the ground. He rose up and went to the door to see what was happening.

A number of ravens, common in that part of China, were flying all about in great commotion above him.

As he looked up, a large piece of meat fell at his feet. Thankfully, the old man picked up the unexpected food, saying, "My heavenly Father's kindness."

Then, glancing about him to see what had fallen before he came out, he discovered a large piece of Indian meal bread, cooked and ready for eating. Another bird had dropped that also. There was his dinner, bountifully provided.

With a thankful heart that was overflowing with joy, the old man started a fire to prepare the welcome meal. While the pot was still boiling, the door opened. To his delight, who should walk in, but his cousin, the priest!

Looking into the pot, the priest cried, "Why, where ever did you get this?"

"My heavenly Father sent it," responded old Li, gladly. "He put it into your heart, you know, to bring me a little millet from time to time; but when you would no longer do so, it was quite easy for Him to find another messenger."

And then Li told his cousin the whole story about the coming of the ravens.

The priest was very impressed by what he saw and heard – and it led him to eventually accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He gave up his comfortable living in the temple and became a teacher of righteousness.

## 21 Why the Horse Baulked

Laurence Hastings of Boston was a man of faith, regularly committing the lives of his family to God.

One day, in 1850, he started out for the mill at Rockland, Rhode Island, with a bag of rye to be ground into flour for the family bread.

On the way the staid old family horse unaccountably baulked on a bridge over a stream, and began to turn and back up. The horse kept treading backwards until the rear wheels of the wagon tipped off the side of the bridge.

Alarmed, the farmer jumped out.

The horse then stood still, holding the front wheels still on the bridge (so that the wagon did not crash over the edge), but letting the back wheels dangle so that the contents were thrown into the water.

Neighbours came to help get the rear of the wagon back up – and the grist was fished out of the river.

Here was the mystery: the horse had shown no fright, and had never behaved this way before. Mr Hastings was most perplexed. Only that morning he had prayed that the angel of the Lord would encamp around his family that day – and here was an unexplainable accident.

His son recalls: “He returned home, and we went to work to dry out our grain and prepare it for grinding. But when we spread out the rye upon a cloth in the sun to dry, we saw, scattered through it all, fragments of a fine, glittering substance, which, on examination, proved to be glass. Thousands upon thousands of tiny pieces of glass mixed in with those two bushels of rye – enough to kill the whole family if the grain had been ground, baked and eaten.”

(An investigation was made. That rye had been kept for some time in a barrel that was open – and over it the workmen had been smoothing axe handles, using bits of glass to scrape and polish the wood. This had continually been falling into the rye – but had been unnoticed when the grain was placed in the sack to be taken to the mill when bread was needed.)

How gratefully they thanked God for speaking to the horse, telling it exactly what to do!



## 22 The Sliding Lorry

Esther, a white-haired widow, received a plea for help from Jews in the neighbouring region of Nagorno-Karabakh, scene of fierce battles between Armenia and Azerbaijan. She and her friend Vlasta set out in a private car to investigate. Bagrat, another friend, was driving.

As they climbed the serpentine road into the mountains snow began to fall, more heavily the higher they climbed. They neared the peak and were stopped behind several lorries parked on the steel incline, unable to continue due to ice on the road.

Vlasta reports: “I was in the front seat with a thermos in one hand, a cup in the other, enjoying a hot drink, laughing and talking. Suddenly I realised the lorry about 10 metres in front of us was **STARTING TO SLIDE BACK**. I didn’t understand what was happening. Then I saw the driver and a passenger jump out and I realised the problem was serious. I didn’t know what to do. I Dropped the cup and tried to open the door.

“It was my first time in the front and I couldn’t get the door open. I realised it was too late.

“I closed my eyes and said, ‘Jesus – help!’

“When I opened my eyes I saw the lorry stopped just one metre away from us. The lorry driver was shaking when they brought him back a half-hour later.

“‘I said goodbye to you and the lorry already,’ he told us, ‘because a situation like this always ends up as a great catastrophe.’”

“We knew that God was with us and we should continue.” They went on to help two families escape that tense region.

## 23 The Angel Lawyer

During World War II, the chief policeman of the Romanian city where my grandfather pastured demanded payment to keep the church open. Naturally, my grandfather would not bribe the man. In revenge, the chief secretly sent a letter to the higher authorities describing my grandfather as an “army deserter.” As a result, a few weeks later he was taken to Bucharest, the capital, along with other deserters, to be tried and punished by the Martial Court.

On the day of the trial, forty men awaited sentencing in the courtroom hall. Halfway through the day, the court recessed and my grandfather learned that he would be the first one examined after the break. Imagine his anxiety as his thoughts went back to his wife and three children!

During the break, a man he had never seen before offered to plead his case in court for 10 lei (Romanian currency). At first my grandfather told the man to go on his way, but the stranger persisted, so he finally agreed and gave him the money.

As the session started again, my grandfather learned that all the cases before him had received the death sentence, and he fainted. The next thing he knew was that somebody was waking him up. “You’re free to go. That man has defended your case so well, that we had to let you go.”

My grandfather searched in vain for the lawyer that argued his case so persuasively. No one knew of him or had seen him since. But the Bible promises that “He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways” (Psalm 91:11).

- As told to *Adriana Timsa* by *Antonella Assimiti*.

## 24 Contact Lens

Brenda was a young woman who was invited to go rock climbing. Although she was scared to death, she went with her group to a tremendous granite cliff. In spite of her fear, she put on the gear, took a hold on the rope, and started up the face of that rock.

Well, she got to a ledge where she could take a breather. As she was hanging on there, the safety rope snapped against Brenda's eye and knocked out her contact lens. Here she was on the rock ledge – with hundreds of feet below her and hundreds of feet above her. Of course, she looked and looked and looked, hoping it had landed on the ledge... but it just wasn't there.

Here she was, far from home, her sight now blurry. She was desperate and began to get upset. Then she prayed to the Lord to help her to find it.

When she got to the top, a friend examined her eye and her clothing for the lens, but there was no contact lens to be found. She sat down, despondent, with the rest of the party, waiting for the others to make it up the face of the cliff. She looked out across range after range of mountains; and she thought of that Bible passage that says, "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth." She thought, "Lord You can see all these mountains. You know every stone and leaf. And You know exactly where my contact lens is. Please help me."

Finally, they walked down the trail to the bottom. At the bottom there was a new party of climbers just starting up the face of the cliff. One of them shouted out, "Hey, you guys! Anybody lose a contact lense?"

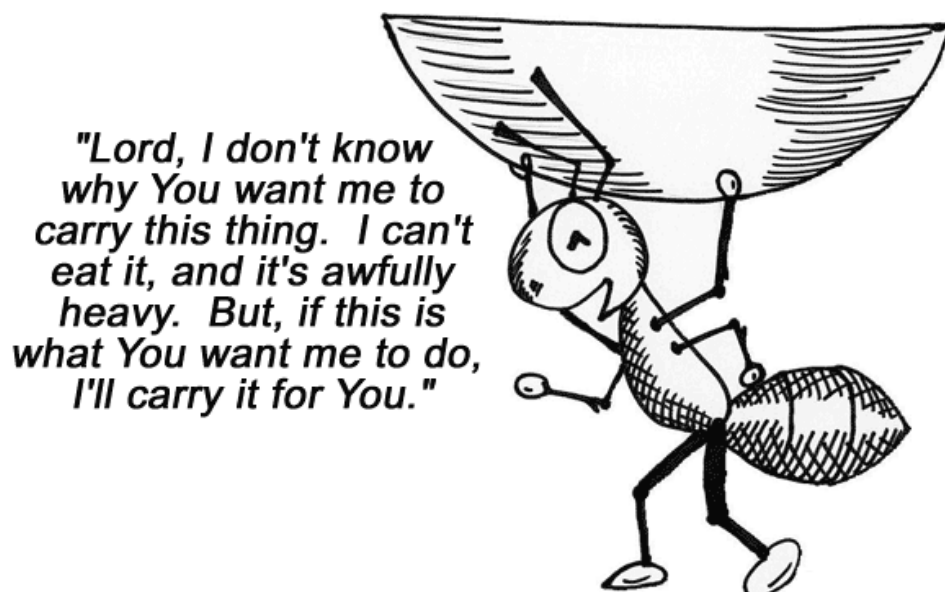
Well, that would be startling enough. But do you know why the climber saw it? An ant was moving slowly across the face of the rock... carrying it!

Brenda told me that her father is a cartoonist. When she told him the incredible story of the ant, the prayer, and the contact lens, he drew a picture of an ant lugging that contact lens, with the words, "Lord, I don't know why You want me to carry this thing. I can't eat

it, and it's awfully heavy. But if this is what You want me to do, I'll carry it for You."

It would probably do some of us good to occasionally say, "God, I don't know why You want me to carry this load. I can see no good in it and it's awfully heavy. But, if You want me to carry it, I will."

God doesn't call the qualified; He qualifies the called.  
We should all be as obedient as the ant.



*"Lord, I don't know why You want me to carry this thing. I can't eat it, and it's awfully heavy. But, if this is what You want me to do, I'll carry it for You."*

*"I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me." Phil. 4:13*

## 25 Does God Speak to Us?

At Bible study the pastor had shared about listening to God and obeying the Lord's voice. The young man couldn't help but wonder, "Does God still speak to people?" After service he went out with some friends for coffee. They talked about how God had led them in different ways.

It was about ten o'clock when the young man started driving home. Sitting in his car, he just began to pray, "God.. If you still speak to people, speak to me. I will listen. I will do my best to obey."

As he drove down the main street, he had the strangest thought – stop and buy a gallon of milk. He shook his head and said out loud, "God is that you?" He started on toward home. But again, the thought – buy a gallon of milk.

The young man thought about Samuel and how he didn't recognise the voice of God. "Okay, God, in case that is you, I will buy the milk." It didn't seem like too hard a test of obedience. He could always use the milk. He stopped and purchased the gallon of milk and started off toward home. As he passed Seventh Street, he again felt the urge, "Turn down that street." That is crazy, he thought, and drove on past the intersection. Again, he felt that he should turn down Seventh Street. At the next intersection, he turned back and headed down Seventh. Half jokingly, he said out loud, "Okay, God, I will".

He drove several blocks, when suddenly, he felt like he should stop. He pulled over to the curb and sensed some-thing; "Go and give the milk to the people in the house across the street."

The young man looked at the house. It was dark and it looked like the people were either gone or they were already asleep. He started to open the door and then sat back in the car seat. "Lord, this is insane. Those people are asleep and if I wake them up, they are going to be mad and I will look stupid." Again, he felt like he should go and give the milk.

Finally, he opened the door, “Okay God, if this is you, I will go to the door and I will give them the milk. If you want me to look like a crazy person, okay. I want to be obedient. I guess that will count for something, but if they don’t answer right away, I am out of here.”

He walked across the street and rang the bell. He could hear some noise inside. A man’s voice yelled out, “Who is it? What do you want?” The door opened before the young man could get away. A man was standing there in his jeans and t-shirt. He looked like he just got out of bed. He had a strange look on his face and he didn’t seem too happy to have some stranger standing on his doorstep. “What is it?”

The young man thrust out the gallon of milk, “Here, I brought this to you.” The man took the milk and rushed down a hall way speaking loudly in Spanish. Then from down the hall came a woman carrying the milk toward the kitchen. The man was following her holding a baby. The baby was crying. The man had tears streaming down his face. The man began speaking and half crying, “We were just praying. We had some big bills this month and we ran out of money. We didn’t have any milk for our baby. I was just praying and asking God to show me how to get some milk.”

His wife in the kitchen yelled out, “I asked Him to send an angel with some.. Are you an angel?” The young man reached into his wallet and pulled out all the money he had on him and put it in the man’s hand. He turned and walked back toward his car and the tears were streaming down his face. He knew that God still answers prayers!

## 26 Love's Miracle Power

Like any good mother, when Karen, of Morristown Tennessee, found out that another baby was on the way, she did what she could to help her 3-year-old son, Michael, prepare for a new sibling. They found out that the baby was going to be a girl, and day after day, night after night, Michael sang to his sister in Mommy's tummy. He was building a bond of love with his little sister before he even met her.

The pregnancy progressed normally. However, serious complications arose during delivery. Finally, after a long struggle, Michael's little sister was born. But she was in very serious condition. She was rushed to St. Mary's Hospital, Knoxville, Tennessee. The baby got worse. Karen and her husband contacted the local cemetery about a burial plot.

Michael, however, kept begging his parents to let him see his sister. But kids are never allowed in Intensive Care. Finally Karen decided to take Michael whether they liked it or not. If he didn't see his sister right then, he might never see her alive.

But the head nurse spotted him and bellowed, "Get that kid out of here now!"

Karen glared steel-eyed at the nurse. "He is not leaving until he sings to his sister."

The 3-year-old boy gazed at the dying infant. After a moment, he began to sing: "*You are my sunshine, my only sunshine; You make me happy when skies are grey.*"

Instantly, the baby began to respond. The pulse rate began to calm and become steady.

*"You never know dear, how much I love you; Please don't take my sunshine away."*

As Michael sang, the baby's ragged, strained breathing became normal like the purr of a kitten. Tears now trickled from the nurse's face.

The next day... the very next day... the little girl was well enough to go home.

What miracles are wrought by LOVE!!!



## 27 The Flying Kitten

The following is a true story which occurred recently.

A kitten climbed up a tree in a pastor's backyard and then was afraid to come down. The pastor coaxed, offered warm milk, etc., but the kitty would not come down.

The tree was not sturdy enough to climb, so the pastor decided that if he tied a rope to his car and drove away so that the tree bent down, he could then reach up and get the kitten. He did all this, checking his progress in the car frequently, then figured if he went just a little bit further, the tree would be bent sufficiently for him to reach the kitten. But as he moved a little further forward... the rope broke. The tree went "boing!" and the kitten instantly sailed through the air out of sight. The pastor felt terrible. He walked all over the neighbourhood asking people if they had seen a little kitten. No. Nobody had seen a stray kitten. So he prayed, "Lord, I just commit this little kitten to Your keeping," and went about his business.

A few days later he was at a grocery store, and met one of his church members. He happened to look into her shopping cart and was amazed to see cat food. Now this woman was a cat hater and everyone knew it, so he asked her, "why are you buying cat food when you hate cats so much?"

She replied, "You won't believe this..." and told him how her little girl had been begging her for a cat, but she kept refusing. Then a few days before, the child had begged again, so the Mum finally told her little girl, "Well, if God gives you a cat, I'll let you keep it."

She told the pastor, "I watched my child go out in the yard, get on her knees, and ask God for a cat. And really, Pastor, you won't believe this, but I saw it with my own eyes. A kitten suddenly came flying out of the blue sky, with its paws spread out, and landed right in front of her."

## 28 When the Hot Water Bottle Burst

One night I had worked hard to help a mother in the labor ward; but in spite of all we could do she died leaving us with a tiny premature baby and a crying two-year-old daughter. We would have difficulty keeping the baby alive, as we had no incubator (we had no electricity to run an incubator) and no special feeding facilities. Although we lived on the equator, nights were often chilly with treacherous drafts. One student midwife went for the box we had for such babies and the cotton wool the baby would be wrapped in. Another went to stoke up the fire and fill a hot water bottle. She came back shortly in distress to tell me that in filling the bottle, it had burst. Rubber perishes easily in tropical climates.

“And it is our last hot water bottle!” she exclaimed.

As in the West it is no good crying over spilled milk, so in Central Africa it might be considered no good crying over burst water bottles. They do not grow on trees, and there are no drugstores down forest pathways.

“All right,” I said, “Put the baby as near the fire as you safely can; sleep between the baby and the door to keep it free from drafts. Your job is to keep the baby warm.”

The following noon, as I did most days, I went to have prayers with any of the orphanage children who chose to gather with me. I gave the youngsters various suggestions of things to pray about and told them about the tiny baby. I explained our problem about keeping the baby warm enough, mentioning the hot water bottle. The baby could so easily die if it got chills. I also told them of the two-year-old sister, crying because her mother had died.

During the prayer time, one ten-year-old girl, Ruth, prayed with the usual blunt conciseness of our African children. “Please, God,” she prayed, “send us a water bottle. It’ll be no good tomorrow, God, as the baby’ll be dead, so please send it this afternoon.”

While I gasped inwardly at the audacity of the prayer, she added by way of corollary, “And while YOU Are about it, would You

please send a dolly for the little girl so she'll know You really love her?"

As often with children's prayers, I was put on the spot. Could I honestly say, "Amen"? I just did not believe that God could do this. Oh, yes, I know that He can do everything. The Bible says so. But there are limits, aren't there? The only way God could answer this particular prayer would be by sending me a parcel from the homeland. I had been in Africa for almost four years at that time, and I had never, ever received a parcel from home; anyway, if anyone did send me a parcel, who would put in a hot water bottle? I lived on the equator!

Halfway through the afternoon, while I was teaching in the nurses' training school, a message was sent that there was a car at my front door. By the time I reached home, the car had gone, but there, on the verandah, was a large twenty-two pound parcel. I felt tears pricking my eyes. I could not open the parcel alone, so I sent for the orphanage children. Together we pulled off the string, carefully undoing each knot. We folded the paper, taking care not to tear it unduly.

Excitement was mounting. Some thirty or forty pairs of eyes were focused on the large cardboard box.

From the top, I lifted out brightly colored, knitted jerseys. Eyes sparkled as I gave them out. Then there were the knitted bandages for the leprosy patients, and the children looked a little bored. Then came a box of mixed raisins and sultanas – that would make a nice batch of buns for the weekend. Then, as I put my hand in again, I felt the... could it really be? I grasped it and pulled it out – yes, a brand-new, rubber hot water bottle! I cried. I had not asked God to send it; I Had not truly believed that He could.

Ruth was in the front row of the children. She rushed forward, crying out, "If God has sent the bottle, He must have sent the dolly, too!"

Rummaging down to the bottom of the box, she pulled out the small, beautifully dressed dolly. Her eyes shone! She had never doubted. Looking up at me, she asked: "Can I go over with you, Mummy, and give this dolly to that little girl, so she'll know that Jesus really loves her?"

That parcel had been on the way for five whole months. Packed up by my former Sunday school class, whose leader had heard and obeyed God's prompting to send a hot water bottle, even to the equator. And one of the girls had put in a dolly for an African child – five months before – in answer to the believing prayer of a ten-year-old to bring it “that afternoon.”

“Before they call, I will answer!” (Isaiah 65:24)

- *Sentiment for the soul*: Janan Chandler

## 29 Praying Away the Fog

The captain of a steamship on the Liverpool-Canadian run related this story concerning one of his passengers on the voyage 5 weeks earlier:

“The last time I crossed here, five weeks ago, one of the most extraordinary things happened, and it has completely revolutionised the whole of my Christian life. Up to that time I was one of your ordinary Christians.

“We were stuck in a fog off the Banks of Newfoundland. The ship could only creep slowly through this fog.

“We had a man of God on board, George Muller, of Bristol. I had been on that bridge for 22 hours, and never left it.

“I was startled by someone tapping me on the shoulder. It was George Muller.

“‘Captain,’ he said, ‘I have come to tell you that I must be in Quebec on Saturday afternoon.’ This was Wednesday.

“‘It is impossible,’ I said.

“‘I have never broken an engagement for 47 years,’ he replied.

“‘I would willingly help you. How can I? I am helpless.’

“‘Let’s go down to the chartroom and pray,’ said Muller.

I never heard of such a thing. ‘Mr Muller,’ I said, ‘do you know how dense this fog is?’

“‘No,’ he replied, ‘my eye is not on the density of the fog, but on the living God, who controls every circumstance of my life.’

“He went down on his knees, and he prayed one of the most simple prayers. I muttered to myself: ‘That would suit a children’s class, where the children were not more than eight or nine years of age.’

“His prayer was something like this: ‘O Lord, if it is consistent with Thy will, please remove this fog in 5 minutes. You know the engagement You made for me in Quebec for Saturday. I believe it is Your will.’

“When he had finished, I was going to pray. But he put his hand on my shoulder and told me not to pray. ‘First, you do not

believe He will. And second, I believe He has. So there is no need whatever for you to pray about it. '

"I looked at him, and George Muller said this: 'Captain, I have known my Lord for 57 years, and there has never been a single day that I have failed to gain an audience with the King. Get up, captain, and open the door, and you will find the fog is gone. '

"I got up, and the fog was gone!"

The lesson is lost if it suggests that Muller's faith enabled him to ask strange things and receive the answer. He did not make a practice of praying concerning weather conditions. This was the one such occasion, doubtless, in his long life of faith.

The lesson is that God does open the right way before faith. And He may, on occasions, make known to His children that it is according to His will that a definite request be made for the removal of barriers and the opening of ways where ordinary means fall short and human resource fails.

## 30 The Stranger Knew So Much!

Jimi had flown from Honiara in the Solomon Islands to the south end of Guadalcanal to participate in a church dedication.

On the Wednesday night, the local pastor and he slept at the tiny airport so that Jimi could return on the early morning flight. The pastor left early to return to his distant village.

While Jimi and other passengers waited, a news report advised of an approaching cyclone. All the passengers fled back to their village but Jimi was left alone, as his village was too far away. So he stayed in the small airport building and by midday the fury of the cyclone had struck.

By now he was hungry. As he reached into his travelling bag, he found a small piece of cooked taro. He ate half and saved the rest for night time.

During the night, trees were uprooted and iron torn from roofs. But the little building held firm. By Friday afternoon, the wind and rain had abated.

Jimi was all alone. For comfort, Jimi read passages from his Bible. He had no food and no way of getting out.

After reading Psalm 34:7 and Psalm 91, and especially Matthew 6, he prayed a simple prayer.

“God, I’m hungry... I’m very hungry. I’m just telling you about my needs. I’m totally in your hands.”

Jimi was about to lie down for sleep, when there was a knock on the door. He hesitated to open it, because this was a strange place. Then came another knock. Before him stood a tall, handsome young man dressed in island style, but all in white. Jimi didn’t know what to say, so he just smiled.

The visitor also smiled – and asked, “Are you hungry?”

I’ve been here two days without food. I have just prayed to God about it,” said Jimi.

The visitor had nothing in his hands, but replied: “I’m here to give you as much food as you need. Look down.”

There on the floor was a cooking pot and three sweet potatoes all peeled but not cooked. Jimi was given a plate, spoon, a coconut, a scraper, a knife and a small bundle of wood.

“Cook the food before anyone else comes,” he was told.

In the simple little kitchen was a wood stove. And while Jimi worked, the visitor watched.

“What’s the matter?” asked the visitor.

“I have no matches,” Jimi replied.

The stranger reached into the stove, heaped up the charcoal, and soon smoke and fire appeared. Then the visitor told him to put the wood and pot on the stove, because he was leaving.

Five minutes later, he was back with a reef fish about 50 cm (20 inches) long.

“My friend, where did you get this fish?” asked Jimi.

“You don’t need to know. Just cook it with potatoes.”

“Please tell me, what is your name?” Jimi asked again.

“You don’t need to know,” responded the visitor.

“Where do you come from?”

The visitor replied, “I come from a beautiful place where there is joy, food and happiness. Your place is not like it. I know you; in fact I have known you since you were born. Your name is Jimi and I know your parents and where they live. I want to tell you something. There is no one to feed you. What you now have will last just three meals till tomorrow midday. Remember what I say now – at exactly 3 pm a plane will call to pick you up. Be ready.”

Jimi thanked the visitor. “But who told you about the plane?” he asked.

“No-one told me,” said the visitor. “It is a message from me to you.”

“What shall I do with the knife, spoon and other things when I go?” asked Jimi.

“Do not worry,” said the stranger. “They are only material things. Your life is more important and so don’t worry. The sun is about to set and I am leaving and will not return.”

All along, Jimi thought the visitor was just a good friend, but as he was about to leave he put his hand on Jimi’s shoulder and said, “Son, have faith in God. Trust Him and He will lead you home.”

Slowly he moved away, vanishing into the night.



Jimi closed his eyes. But his mind was wide awake. He realised he had seen an angel. He thanked and thanked God! He ate well and slept well.

The fire in the stove kept burning until his midday meal.

He prepared for the plane's arrival. Precisely at 3 pm a plane landed and drew alongside the building. The engine stopped.

Going to the plane, Jimi asked the pilot and copilot if they could take him to Honiara. They said they could.

“Can you tell me your reason for landing here today?” asked Jimi.

“I don't know why I came,” responded the pilot. “The only assignment we had was from the rice company to make a survey – and also to report on the cyclone damage. We landed here for no reason – because the rice project is on the other side of the island.”

## 31 LATE... LATE... AND LATE!

What a night! Everybody was running late.

It was March 1, 1950, in Beatrice, Nebraska. A choir rehearsal scheduled that evening in the small village church was due to begin at 7.20 pm.

But somehow it didn't work out that way. And by 7.25 pm not one of the fifteen choir members had yet turned up.

The pastor (who was also the choir director) wasn't there... because he was waiting for his wife to finish pressing their elder daughter's dress. The girl, too, sang in the choir. So both of them were late.

One woman was unable to start her car.

Another woman, quite independently, was unable to start HER car either.

One girl hadn't finished her homework.

Two others found a radio play so exciting they both forgot the time.

A mother in another house had to call her daughter twice to wake her.

In fact, there were very simple reasons why nobody else went to the church on time... but only that night!

But these simple reasons suddenly are made to appear in quite a different light, for at 7.25 p.m., a gas explosion blew up the Beatrice church and completely destroyed it.

Was the fact that all fifteen people were late due to divine providence? Did they sense something? Or was it really just an accident that these people all remained alive?

Warren Weaver, who reported the event, calculated that the odds against all ten reasons for being late coming up at the same time that night are a million to one.

## 32 No Rain

“It is because of this foreign missionary and his strange God that we get no rain.” Fu Gwei wiped his sweating brow and collapsed in the shade of a scrawny tree.

“You’re right,” answered Lao San as he flopped down beside him, panting. “Before he came, we had plenty of rain in this valley. Now the gods refuse to send any, though we pray and ask them all the time.”

“If we don’t get rain this week,” muttered Fu Gwei, glancing at the clear sky, “we won’t be able to plant our rice this year. Then what will we eat?”

The two Chinese boys were interrupted by the sound of an approaching step. They leapt to their feet as Mr Lee, the missionary, greeted them.

“Good morning, boys? How are you today?”

Although the two returned polite greetings, their faces were dark with resentment at the sight of the trouble-maker they had just been complaining about!

Suddenly Mr Lee drew two coins out of his pocket. With a twinkle in his eye, he showed them to the boys. “I will give you these if you can tell me how to know the difference between the counterfeit money and genuine.”

The boys brightened. “You must examine it carefully,” responded Fu Gwei.

“Or you can take it to the money exchangers, and they will tell you!” exclaimed Lao San.

“Good answers!” He plunked the coins into the boys’ outstretched hands. “Now, tell me, how can you tell a true God from a false one?”

The boys frowned. Was Mr Lee trying to trick them? Fu Gwei spoke up. “We cannot see *your* God, Mr Lee. How do you know He is good or bad? Have you seen Him?” He continued in triumph: “At least we can see *our* gods.”

“Yes, you can,” Mr Lee agreed. “But they cannot see you. Though I am sure you believe in things you have never seen. Do you believe your grandparents had grandparents?”

“Yes,” Lao San answered promptly. “Of course they had grandparents. So did everyone else in the village. That is the way it always is. And our grandparents and parents have told us many stories about them.”

The boys’ interest was kindled. With a prayer in his heart, Mr Lee continued.

“I have never seen my God, but I don’t have to. I see His works every day. I read stories written by those who have seen Him. I receive many answers to the prayers I pray to Him. By these things I know He is real, and that He loves me and listens to me.”

At this the boys grew very excited. “Does He really hear you? Does He really give you the things you ask for?” The missionary nodded. Abruptly the two turned their backs to him and began to whisper between themselves. Mr Lee waited, puzzled.

Soon Lao San turned to the missionary. “Mr Lee, we pray to our gods to send us rain, but they do not. If your God really answers prayers, ask Him to *send us rain!*” *If I refuse, he thought, they will not believe that God does answer prayers. Of course God is able to send rain.* He smiled at the boys waiting for his answer.

“All right, I will pray for rain. But you must kneel with me as we pray.” And there at the side of the dusty road, the two Chinese boys listened in hopeful wonder to the simple plea for needed rain.

That afternoon, clouds began to darken the sky. By evening, a heavy fog had settled over the area. Soon raindrops began to fall, increasing fast to a downpour that roared. All night long, all the next day, and throughout the next night, the rain fell, soaking the thirsty land. The rice paddies filled with the needed water. Now the rice would grow! The people would not starve!

One day soon after the rain had ceased, a knock came at Mr Lee’s door. Several tanned faces, led by two beaming young boys, greeted him.

“Tell them, Mr Lee,” said Fu Gwei. “Tell them about our God!”

### **33 Quick! Leave at Once!**

Eugene Freeman worked for a Jewish firm in Mannheim, Germany. Hitler had just taken the reins of government – and he was ordered to join the Nazi (National Socialist) Party. But he knew he could not be a practising Christian and a Nazi at the same time.

He politely refused. He was then called before a tribunal and threatened that he would be sent to a concentration camp if he did not comply.

This was no empty threat. So Eugene prayed earnestly for deliverance.

Shortly after this, he visited some relatives. He intended to stay about a week. However, after just two days an unaccountable feeling came over Eugene that he should leave immediately.

His relatives could not understand his sudden haste. And his sister reluctantly took him to the railroad station.

When she arrived home, she found – to her great shock – two Gestapo agents who had just come to arrest him. Eugene had left just in time!

Eugene's sister was not able to warn him of the danger, because all letters were censored and phone calls were equally out of the question.

Knowing nothing of what had happened at his sister's home, Eugene went on to visit his brother in Heilbronn. He planned to stay for several days.

But once again he experienced that strange, insistent feeling that he must leave at once.

Much later he learned that scarcely had he left than the Gestapo arrived at his brother's house to arrest him!

Meanwhile, Eugene was on his way to visit friends in Lahr, another town. He expected that they would be pleased to see him – but instead they were horrified. They explained that the Gestapo had already been there to arrest him!

Eugene was stunned! Not only were the Gestapo planning to put their threat of concentration camp into immediate action; but they had intimate knowledge of his friends and relatives!

He realised that there was only one option: escape to Switzerland.

How his wife and he made their escape is another story, but you may be sure they were able to make their plans with confidence and courage. After all, their God had answered their prayers and kept him from the clutches of the Gestapo so far. They had no doubt that He would continue to be with them in the perilous times ahead.

They eventually found their way to England and settled in Manchester.

## 34 Tsunami Miracle, Sumatra

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of December 2004 the Christians in the town of Meulaboh in Aceh wanted to worship Jesus Christ in a combined service.

However, the Moslems in that town objected and told them that if they wanted to have this Christian meeting they have to do it outside the town area because it is a Moslem town.

The 400 Christians decided to comply with their request and went to a hill outside the town perimeter to camp out and held their service there.

As we now know, the following morning there was an earthquake. And the tsunami that followed destroyed the whole town of Meulaboh and almost everyone who was down there.

The whole population of Meulaboh was practically wiped out – except the 400 or so Christians who were worshipping Jesus on the hill outside the town.

The few survivors of Meulaboh remarked: “The God of the Christians has punished us. Some of them asked: “why are there so many of us who died in this disaster, and none of the Christians are destroyed?”

If the 400 Christians insisted on worshipping in that town according to their original plan, they would have perished too. They are seeing that this is the direct intervention of God who saved His children in Meulaboh.

## 35 Another Tsunami Miracle

The story I am about to share with you occurred about 100 years ago.

A missionary family landed from an inter-island freight boat, on Great Sangir Island, just south of the Philippines in the Pacific Ocean, to teach the islanders truth, loyalty and faith.

At first the village people were suspicious of the newcomers. But the chief's son, a young man named Satoo, lingered around the missionary family and they became friends.

When the strangers asked for some land to build a house, it was refused them. So they built a house for themselves down on the sand of the beach.

But soon many grew to love and respect the Christian family and began to visit them. Eventually, thirty people went regularly to learn truths from the missionary and enjoy the songs he taught them to sing. Among them was the chief's son, Satoo.

However, the witch doctor, the chief and many of the head men resented them being there.

They decided to counteract the Christian influence by importing some Islamic leaders from an island nearby.

"The teachers of Islam will not spoil our customs," he said. "They will not forbid our feasts and our dancing and our spirit worship."

When three Islamic teachers arrived – two young men and an older one, named Guru Mula – the chief commanded the village folk to help build houses for them on the hill above the Christian missionary's house.

Tama the witch doctor conjured up a powerful curse to bring harm to the Christian missionary family, but it failed to work.

However, the missionary's little girl in her innocence visited the witch doctor to bring him a bunch of red flowers. This touched the heart of this sinister man.



Guru Mula organised a plot to frighten the chief's son into leaving the Christian way and following Islam. This almost led to the death of the young man.

All this time, rumblings and increased fire from an island volcano two miles across the water, grew steadily more ominous.

The village people began packing up their cooking pots and rolling their mats. Then they were seen climbing up the path to the hills.

The chief ordered the Christian people to go down to the big teacher's house on the beach for protection, believing that the fire spirits were about to destroy the house on the sand. They were not permitted to go with the rest of the village into the hills.

All the Islamic teachers and Islam worshippers who had gathered there stood among the fruit trees on the hill in front of their buildings and looked at the mountain. With them was Tama the witch doctor.

They looked with scorn on the little group of praying Christians in the teacher's garden.

"It is a good thing the chief left me here to see that those Christians don't get away," Guru Mula said. "If we weren't out here watching I should expect them to bolt for the hills any minute."

The thunder under the ground rose in a tremendous roar. Every face grew pale. Both mouths of the volcano spewed forth a sickening blast of fiery rock.

At the same instant, the solid earth of the mountain sprang apart.

Tama the witch doctor flashed down the hill. He heard shouts of the Islam people behind him as they urged him back. But he only ran faster.

Even as he ran, he saw the ocean sucked back almost to the roots of the volcano. Then a mighty wall of water piled higher and higher... and rolled towards the shore.

There was just one thought in Tama's mind – to save Marta, the missionary's little girl who had endeared herself to him.

He strained toward the beach like a maddened creature. He leapt the low rock wall that shut in the missionary's garden. He saw Marta in the midst of the singing people, and the sound of their powerful singing filled his ears:

*"A mighty mountain is our God,*

*A wall that will not falter.”*

“Run! Run!” he gasped out, as though with his last breath. Couldn’t they hear? Couldn’t they understand? Oh, what madness!

He grabbed Marta and clutched her to him. He turned to the low rock wall. Could he make it back up the hill to safety?

No, it was too late. The missionary teacher laid a heavy hand on the witchman’s shoulder and drew him into the midst of the group of singing people – just as the enormous wave broke with deafening thunder on the beach in front of the little house on the sand.

Tama shut his eyes and clutched the child in terror. Thunder crashed overhead. And then he looked.

Evan as the wave struck, the words of the song rang in his ears.

“The wall!” he cried. “The wall that will not falter!”

The mountainous wave had divided just below the gate of the big teacher’s garden and passed by on both sides outside the low rock fence. It stood up to heaven, surely the height of three palm trees, a green wall filled with fishing boats and huge driftwood logs, strange deep sea creatures, shells, and snarled tangles of seaweed.

The wave united into one, just back of the teacher’s garden, and tama could see how far it washed up the hill. In an instant it surged back into the ocean. And when the following wave came it reached only to the front gate of the garden.

Tama still held Marta in his arms, but weakness overcame him now and he sank to the salt grass and closed his eyes. Then Satoo, the chief’s son, bent over him.

“Ah, Tama, God has saved you.” The Boy’s voice broke with gladness. “God lifted up His wall and saved us all.”

All around the big teacher’s garden the wreckage of the giant tsunami wave was piled high, much higher than the whitewashed rock wall. Driftwood, seaweed, Deep sea shells, and broken pieces from the slope of the hill mingled with sand, rocks, dead sea animals, and scraps of fishing boats.

When they went to look, there were no houses left in the village, but most of the coconut palms still stood.

Nothing remained of the Islam teachers’ houses and garden. The Islam teachers had also been swept away.

Only the people who had fled to the high hills in the middle of the island survived. Those and the little group of Christians who sang and prayed inside the teacher's low rock wall.

When the chief and his people returned, and the chief understood how the great wave had divided – and then destroyed everything, even the Islam teachers' houses on the higher slope, he sat down on the beach for a day and a night and spoke to no one.

When he arose again, he called all the people who remained of his village and all the people from other parts of the island to see the miracle that the God of heaven had done. He pointed to the bare and ruined slope where the Islam teachers' fine new houses had stood.

“Listen to me,” he said. “This mountain and this wave were controlled by the God these people worship. The Islam teachers were swept away and so was Gold (an influential villager who had been with them). Tama is here because he loved the big teacher's little girl.”

“This is the true magic. In all the world there is no God like the big teacher's God, who is able to deliver him from the anger of the fire mountain and the great wave. So I make a proclamation that from this day we must follow and our children will follow after us. I, chief Meradin, have spoken.”

No one was surprised when Tama became stronger for God than he had been for the old witchcraft.

When the chief suggested that the whole village help clear away the pile of drift the tsunami had deposited about the teacher's garden, the teacher objected.

“No, I want this to stay just as it is,” he said. “You see how huge and wide it is. Even if all of us worked every day, it would take many days to move it. Let it stand, so that everyone may remember what God has done.”

The chief talked of moving the village away from the spot where it formerly stood, but the big teacher advised them to rebuild a better village on the same spot.

Years later, when Satoo was chief and Tama an aged man, scientists came from Europe to see the spot where the tsunami had divided. These men did not believe such a thing had really happened. But when they saw the drift that remained, they knew that this story was true.

The God who divided the Red Sea is the same yesterday, today and forever.

- Norma Youngbert, *Singer on the Sand*, 1998

## 36 Two Miracles Interlocked

Helen Steinhauer and her parents were on a vessel from Jamaica, bound for New Orleans, USA.

A storm arose and drove the ship far from its course. Then a dead calm... and progress was impossible. It was in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the days of sailing ships. At that time there were fewer ships sailing in the Mexican Gulf than now.

The ship had provisions for only a few days. Soon it was necessary to ration the passengers and crew.

Miss Steinhauer continues the story:

“As the days lengthened into weeks, our sufferings were extreme. I remember gnawing at a kid glove for what nutriment it might contain. We were put upon rations of half a ship biscuit and half a pint of water in the 24 hours – a very small allowance of food, and a still smaller one of drink beneath a semi-tropical sun.

“Some gulped their portion of water as soon as it was given them; others hugged it to them with fierce eagerness, as long as they could, dreading lest a stronger hand might snatch it away. At length our tongues became so swollen from protracted thirst that we could scarcely close our mouths.

My mother found that dipping cloths into the sea and binding them dripping wet about our throats, afforded some relief; but oh, how maddening it was to see water, water, everywhere, yet not a drop to drink! Our sufferings from hunger were extreme, but the suffering from thirst was great beyond expression!

“When 4 weeks had nearly dragged their slow length along, it was decided that to make our scant allowance last one day longer, some of our number were to be thrown overboard. The lot was to be cast at night, but the result was not to be made known till just before the food was given out, in the hope that deliverance might come before the measure was put into execution.

“My father and a Spanish gentleman slept on deck, but my mother and I, being the only females on board, besides the captain’s wife and three women in the hold, retired to our berths in the cabin.

“Of course many and importunate prayers had been offered all along, but my mother determined to spend the entire night in prayer, which she did.

“At early daybreak, she sank into the sleep of exhaustion, from which she was awakened by my father’s voice, saying:

“ ‘My dear, we think that we see a sail.’

“ ‘Oh,’ exclaimed my mother, wearily, ‘it will pass us by, like all the rest!’ We had been constantly tantalised by the sight of vessels passing like dim specks on the western horizon, but so far away that we could not hail them, nor could they see our signals of distress. Then, recollecting her night’s occupation, she repentantly added: ‘No, God forgive me! It is an answer to my prayer; it will come to our relief.’

“ ‘Don’t be too sure, wife,’ said my father gently. ‘I would not have you disappointed. If it be God’s will for us, it will come to our relief.’

“ ‘It is His will,’ replied my mother, confidently. ‘I am sure that help is at hand.’

“As quickly as possible we dressed and crawled up the narrow hatchway. I shall never forget the sight that presented itself as we got on deck. There, on the side of the vessel nearest the object from which the hoped-for relief was to come, were gathered our entire ship’s company. Not a word was spoken, but as the naked eye could not yet discern anything, in breathless silence the ship’s spyglass was passed from one to the other, that each might see.

“It certainly seemed as if it were a vessel. Yes; now we were quite sure of the fact. But would it come this way? Or must we again see it vanish out of sight, like the ship of a dream?

“No; it came nearer and nearer, and nearer still. Soon we could see it with the naked eye. Signals we could NOT make; we were far too weak and helpless. But it came on, nevertheless, straight and true, directly bearing down upon us. By and by they hailed us:

“ ‘Ship ahoy!’

“But not a man aboard had strength of voice sufficient to make reply.

“Still they came on nearer, nor did they stop till within easy distance of our luckless vessel, when a boat was let down, into which stepped four men, one evidently the captain. The supreme tension of

that moment is indelibly impressed upon my mind, child though I was at the time.

“He was the first to board us, and as he set foot on our deck and saw our wretched plight, he lifted his hat and said, solemnly:

“ ‘Now I believe that there is a God in heaven!’”

And this brings us to a second story.

This rescue vessel happened to be a tug boat (a small boat that towed sailing vessels over the bar into the harbour).

Tug boats were not allowed to go beyond a certain distance from port (even to look for vessels needing help).

But now comes the tug boat captain’s strange story.

After he received a strong impression to go out the full limit, the captain felt unaccountably impelled to go still further – even though there was no vessel in sight.

His mate argued with him. “Remember the fine you are liable for if you go on further.”

“I can’t help it! I’ve *got* to go on!” the captain replied.

Soon he became desperately seasick, something that had never happened to him in 20 years. He had to go down to his berth ‘like a land-lubber’. However, he refused to turn back, ordering his crew to push still further out to sea.

Then his crew mutinied, for they were growing short of provisions. They thought the captain must have lost his senses.

At this, the captain became greatly distressed. He implored them to go on, promising them that if they saw nothing to justify his action by sunrise the next morning... then he would give up and turn back.

Reluctantly, the men consented.

Morning dawned. Suddenly the man at the masthead reported a black, motionless object far out to sea.

“Make for it!” exclaimed the captain. He was emphatic. “That’s what we’ve come after.”

Instantly his seasickness left him – and he took the command post.

On reaching Helen Steinhauer’s boat, and seeing their emaciated forms and general wretchedness – although he had been an infidel for many years – he knew there was a God in heaven. The

conviction forced itself upon him with overwhelming power that he had been supernaturally guided.

And later, as he learned how Helen's feeble mother had spent the night, he broadened his view to include the fact that God hears and answers prayer.

It was exactly 4 weeks from the day the distressed boat left Kingston, Jamaica, until the party arrived at New Orleans.



## 37 Sleepless Night

The Count didn't like his king, Frederick William III of Prussia. In fact he loathed him, despised him, and wished he was dead.

His feelings of hatred grew, until finally the Count made a plan to do away with King Frederick. His plot was a clever one. Nonetheless, it was discovered. To his chagrin, the Count found himself cast, for life, into prison at the fortress of Glatz.

The fortress was strong and secure, and the Count had no hope of escape. To make matters worse, this godless infidel was placed in solitary confinement and given nothing to read but a Bible. The Count was not interested in such a Book.

For long months the man sat miserably in his cell, ignoring the treasure within his grasp.

Finally one day, in utter boredom, he picked up the Book and began to read. He only did so, of course, to help pass the long, bitter hours of confinement. The Count neither wanted nor expected the Book to make a difference in his life. And, indeed, it seemed that he experienced no change.

One rough, stormy November night, mountain gales howled around the fortress and rain fell in torrents. The Count lay sleepless on his cot, a tempest raging within his heart. His whole life seemed to rise up before him, and he saw himself as a terrible, hopeless sinner.

"I have tried to live without God, and what has it brought me?" he cried. "Nothing but despair and misery."

Tears of futility wet his cheeks. How could God ever forgive such a sinner?

Desperate, he reached for the Bible. Opening it, his eyes fell on Psalm 5:15 – "Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me."

Surely it was a message straight from God!!!!

The Count fell on his knees for the first time since he was a child.

"God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" he cried.

Suddenly his physical imprisonment no longer seemed to matter, for he had found rest for his soul.

That same night, in his castle in Berlin, King Frederick William III lay sleepless in bed. He was tormented with a painful illness. That night, the pain was unusually severe.

In total exhaustion, the king begged God to grant him a single hour of refreshing sleep.

Almost immediately, he fell into a deep, satisfying sleep. When he awoke, he felt almost like a new man.

“God has looked upon me very graciously!” he exclaimed to his wife. “I want to show my thanks to Him. Who in my kingdom has wronged me the most? I will forgive him.”

The queen thought a moment. “It would have to be the Count who is imprisoned in Glatz.”

“He’s the one!” agreed the king. “I will pardon him today!”

Before dawn a messenger was on his way to Glatz. He bore a message of pardon and release to a man who had already found freedom in the Word of God.

## 38 A Strong Wall

Ingrid Thorvaldsen cracked open the heavy shutters and peered out into a gray winter afternoon. In spite of the miserable weather, the road in front of the house was full of people: old men with small bundles on their backs; young mothers tugging reluctant children; farmers driving a few skinny cows; young boys and girls burdened with pots and pans and loaves of bread. Faces were grim as young and old streamed down the road toward the south.

The thoughts of the young woman standing at the window were bitter and gloomy. They'd hardly been married a year – she and Arne – and now this! Should she and Arne and Mother Thorvaldsen join the throng of frightened people? In so doing they would surely freeze to death! But if they stayed... Ingrid shuddered and slammed the shutters closed.

Arne looked up from his stool beside the fireplace. “We’re staying, Ingrid,” he announced. “You and Mother would never be able to stand the cold. At any rate, we might as well be killed by a soldier’s gun as to freeze to death out there.” Arne stood. “We’ll make things as secure as possible. Here – help me drag the dresser over in front of the door. We’ll barricade it as best we can.”

Ingrid tugged hopelessly at the heavy dresser. She knew as well as Arne that if the Russian soldiers could not break down the door they would simply set the house on fire.

The doors barricaded and the shutters tightly closed, Ingrid fell sobbing to the floor. *Why had Denmark become involved with Napoleon in this horrible war? Why did the Russian army choose this route on their way to battle Napoleon? And why did their home have to be so close to the road?* Arne knelt beside his young wife, clumsily stroking her hair as tears coursed down his own face.

Mother Thorvaldsen watched her son and daughter-in-law in silence. Then she reached for her Bible. For some time she read to herself, fortifying her mind with God’s beautiful promises of protection. At last she spoke, raising her voice above Ingrid’s muffled sobs.

*“Round us a wall our God shall rear, And our proud foes shall quail with fear.”*

Arne looked up, disgusted. “Surely, Mother, you don’t believe that foolishness. As if God would build a wall around this little cottage – a wall strong enough and high enough to keep out the Russian army!:

Mother Thorvaldsen only smiled. “Doesn’t the Bible say that ‘God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble’?”

Neither Arne nor Ingrid replied. But the looks on their faces showed they did not share the older woman’s trust in their heavenly Father.

Time dragged on. Outside, a loose roof tile flapped as the wind increased. Around midnight, the winds died a little, and they could hear a distant clock strike twelve times.

A little later, another sound reached their ears: the blast of a trumpet and the *crunch, crunch, crunch* of heavy boots marching on snow. *They had come!* The three huddled in a circle as the sounds grew even louder.

“Round us a wall our God shall rear,” Frau Thorvaldsen repeated, squeezing Ingrid’s clammy hand. The young woman looked at her husband, and he shook his head. *Just words of a foolish old lady. Nothing could save them now.* The two young people stared ahead, glassy eyed, while the older woman prayed for protection.

Soon shouts of soldiers were mingled with screams of victims and the crackling of flames on thatched roofs. *Any time now. Their turn would surely be soon.* Ingrid closed her eyes and waited.

The night wore on. Was it her imagination – or did the soldiers sound a little farther away? For the first time Ingrid felt a glimmer of hope in her heart. Perhaps – could it be?

Each moment was an eternity. But the time came when the last footsteps faded away, leaving a long, cold silence.

Arne stood up, dazed. “Let’s not look just yet.” He still whispered. “We’ll wait until morning.

When the thin rays of light peeked through the shutters, Mother Thorvaldsen walked to a side window and cracked them open. Then she fell to her knees once more.

“O Lord,” she cried, “thank You for Your wonderful protection. Surely You have built a wall around us!”

The young couple rushed to the window. All they could see was glittering white snow. As they opened shutter after shutter the view remained the same.

With a trembling urgency, Arne forced open the back door. “Quick, look!” he shouted.

During the night, the wind had piled up snow higher than the house, concealing it in a huge white drift.

God’s wall of snow had hidden them from the enemy!

## 39 The Sword Snapped in Two

During the late struggle of the Greeks to gain their independence, a body of Turks were, in 1824, encamped in a part of Greece, and committed every kind of atrocity against the inhabitants. One of the barbarians, an officer, had pursued a young Greek girl, who took refuge in the house of a widow. The widow met him at the door, and mildly attempted to dissuade him from forcing his way to seize the girl. Enraged, he drew his sabre; but when in the act of attempting to cut down the widow, it snapped in two pieces before it reached the victim. The wretch paused ; but drew a pistol to accomplish his purpose in that manner; but it missed fire. And when in the act of drawing a second, he was forcibly dragged away by one of his companions, who exclaimed, "Let her alone! Do you not see that her time is not yet come?" Resolved, however, to take some revenge, he carried off her infant child to the camp. But as though Providence designed to accomplish its work on this occasion, while the officer was asleep the child was carried back to the widow by one of his own men.

## 40 When Invisible Became Visible

*The following story of deliverance is preserved in the records of missionary pioneering in the Dutch East Indies, the populous islands which give Holland a dominion in the Orient. The incident occurred in the life of Von Asselt, a Rhenish missionary in Sumatra from 1856-1876, and was related by him when on a visit to Lubeck.*

When I first was sent to Sumatra, in the year 1856, I was the first European missionary to go among the wild Battaks, although twenty years prior, two American missionaries had come to them with the gospel; but they had been killed and eaten. Since then no effort had been made to bring the gospel to these people, and naturally they had remained the same cruel savages.

What it means for one to stand alone among a savage people, unable to make himself understood, not understanding a single sound of their language, but whose suspicious, hostile looks and gestures speak only a too-well-understood language – yes, it is hard for one to realise that. The first two years which I spent among the Battaks, at first all alone and afterward with my wife, were so hard that it makes me shudder even now when I think of them. Often it seemed as if we were not only encompassed by hostile men, but also by hostile powers of darkness; for often an inexplicable, unutterable fear would come over us, so that we had to get up at night, and go on our knees to pray or read the Word of God, in order to find relief.

After we had lived in this place for two years, we moved several hours' journey inland, among a tribe somewhat civilised, who received us more kindly. There we built a small house with three rooms – a living-room, a bedroom and a small reception-room – and life for us became a little more easy and cheerful.

When I had been in this new place for some months, a man came to me from the district where we had been, and whom I had known there. I was sitting on the bench in front of our house, and he sat down beside me, and for a while talked of this, that, and the other. Finally he began: “Now, *tuan* [teacher], I have yet one request.”

“And what is that?”

“I would like to have a look at your watchmen close at hand.”

“What watchmen do you mean? I do not have any.”

“I mean the watchmen whom you station around your house at night to protect you.”

“But I have no watchmen,” I said again; “I have only a little herdboy and a little cook, and they would make poor watchmen.”

Then the man looked at me incredulously, as if he wished to say: “Oh, do not try to make me believe otherwise, for I know better.”

“Yes, certainly,” I said, laughing; “look through it; you will not find anybody.” So he went in and searched in every corner, even through the beds, but came to me very much disappointed.

Then I began a little probing myself, and requested him to tell me the circumstances about those watchmen of whom he spoke, and this is what he related to me:

“When you first came to us, *tuan*, we were very angry at you. We did not want you to live among us; we did not trust you, and believed you had some design against us. Therefore we came together, and resolved to kill you and your wife.

“Accordingly, we went to your house night after night; but when we came near, there stood always, close around the house, a double row of watchmen with glittering weapons, and we did not venture to attack them to get into your house.

“But we were not willing to abandon our plan, so we went to a professional assassin [there still was among the savage Battaks at that time a special guild of assassins, who killed for hire any one whom it was desired to get out of the way], and asked him if he would undertake to kill you and your wife. He laughed at us because of our cowardice, and said, ‘I fear no God and no devil. I will get through those watchmen easily.’

“So we came all together in the evening, and the assassin, swinging his weapon about his head, went courageously on before us. As we neared your house, we remained behind and let him go on alone.

“But in a short time he came running back hastily, and said, ‘No, I dare not risk it to go through alone; two rows of big, strong men stand there, very close together, shoulder to shoulder, and their



weapons shine like fire.’ Then we gave it up to kill you. But, now, tell me, *tuan*, who are those watchmen? Have you never seen them?”

“No, I have never seen them.”

“And your wife did not see them?”

“No, my wife did not see them.”

“But yet we have all seen them; how is that?”

Then I went in and brought a Bible from our house, and holding it open before him, said:

“See here; this book is the Word of our great God, in which He promises to guard and defend us, and we firmly believe that Word; therefore we need not to see the watchmen; but you do not believe, therefore the great God has to show you the watchmen, in order that you may learn to believe.”

May none of us lose the blessedness and the comfort of the knowledge of the ministry of angels in this unbelieving age.

## 41 Undercover Journey

The Vaudois of the Piedmont valleys had been all but exterminated. While the Reformation was spreading in Northern Europe, the papal forces visited the Vaudois villages with fire and sword. The remnant, driven out, had found refuge in Switzerland and southern Germany. After several years of exile, they were endeavouring to return to their homes. Spies sent into the valleys had reported the fields untilled and the villages deserted; and now a pioneer band of eight hundred men was making "the glorious re-entry," as it was ever afterward called.

Against the assaults of their enemies, they had pressed on from Lake Geneva, through Savoy, near to their own country. But on the slopes of a mountain called the Balsiglia, they were surrounded by the French and Piedmont troops sent to make an end of them. Their last stand apparently had been made, and now the enemy, with artillery in position, rested as evening drew on, confident that the next morning would deliver the little band to the slaughter. Wylie says:

"Never before had destruction appeared to impend so inevitably over the Vaudois. To remain where they were was certain death, yet whither could they flee? Behind them rose the unscalable precipices of the Col du Pis, and beneath them lay the valley swarming with foes. If they should wait till the morning broke, it would be impossible to pass the enemy without being seen; and even now, although it was night, the numerous camp fires that blazed beneath them made it almost as bright as day.

"But the hour of their extremity was the time of God's opportunity. Often before it had been seen to be so, but perhaps never so strikingly as now. While they looked this way and that way, but could discover no escape from the net that enclosed them, the mist began to gather on the summits of the mountains around them. They knew the old mantle that was wont to be cast around their fathers in the hour of peril. It crept lower and yet lower on the great mountains. Now it touched the supreme peak of the Balsiglia.

“Will it mock their hopes? Will it only touch, but not cover, their mountain camp? Again it is in motion; downward roll its white, fleecy billows, and now it hangs in sheltering folds around the war-battered fortress and its handful of heroic defenders. They dared not as yet attempt escape, for still the watch-fires burned brightly in the valley. But it was only for a few minutes longer. The mist kept its downward course, and now all was dark. A Tartarean gloom filled the gorge of San Martino.

“At this moment, as the garrison stood mute, pondering whereunto these things would grow, Captain Poulat, a native of these parts, broke silence. He bade them be of good courage, for he knew the paths, and would conduct them past the French and Piedmontese lines, by a track known only to himself. Crawling on their hands and knees, and passing close to the French sentinels, yet hidden from them by the mist, they descended frightful precipices, and made their escape. ‘He who has not seen such paths,’ says Arnaud in his *‘Rentree Glorieuse,’* cannot conceive the danger of them, and will be inclined to consider my account of the march a mere fiction. But it is strictly true; and I must add, the place is so frightful that even some of the Vaudois themselves were terror-struck when they saw by daylight the nature of the spot they had passed in the dark.’

“When the day broke, every eye in the plain below was turned to the Balsiglia. That day the four hundred ropes which Catinat had brought with him were to be put in requisition, and the *feux-de-joie* so long prepared were to be lighted at Pinerolo. What was their amazement to find the Balsiglia abandoned! The Vaudois has escaped and were gone, and might be seen upon the distant mountains, climbing the snows, far out of the reach of their would-be captors. Well might they sing -

“Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers. The snare is broken, and we are escaped.”

- (Wylie, *History of Protestantism*, book 16, chap.15)

## 42 Beneficial bombs

### *First:*

During the Crimean War, a bombshell fired from the fortifications of Sebastopol hit the side of the hill where the British troops were encamped. It buried itself in the earth and exploded.

Immediately, from the ragged hole which it made in the ground gushed a copious stream of clear, cold water.

Thus, in a most extraordinary way, the British soldiers, who had great difficulty in obtaining water, had their needs supplied.

So the Creator often turns what is meant for our harm into good.

### *Second:*

A farmer in Sussex, England, while sending a donation to a mission project, mentioned that his harvest was disappointing, owing to the lack of water on the farm. He requested the recipients to pray that no German bombs would drop on his place.

Ashley Baker answered on behalf of the recipients, the Scripture Gift Mission, that instead of asking God that no bombs be dropped, they would pray that God's will in the matter be done.

Shortly after the farmer received this reply, a big German bomb crashed down on his place.

Breaking all the windows in his house, yet hurting neither man nor beast, it went so deeply into the ground that it liberated a new spring of water, which yielded so much of the crystal liquid that the farmer not only had sufficient for his farm but was able to solve the irrigation problem of his neighbours.

The next harvest was so bounteous that the farmer was able to send a large thank offering to the mission.

## 43 Marooned in the desert

“Oh...no!” moaned Brett.

We sat there dumb... all of us. The motor had died.

Here were six adventurers in one of the deadliest regions on the planet – Israel’s Dead Sea Valley. You just don’t sit there in the desert and wait... if you want to stay alive.

Yet, no matter how many attempts we made to get our four wheel drive vehicle to splutter into life again, it stubbornly refused.

This has to be the eeriest region on earth... an oven by day, and at night just stark, empty silence.

This area reeks of some ancient curse. The deepest spot on earth, it dips down between Israel and Jordan, 1300 feet below sea level, to what is known as the Dead Sea. Virtually nothing grows here. The shore is utterly desolate and in summer it bakes like an oven.

Around parts of the shoreline there poke up the stumps of ancient trees, encrusted in salt. There is a beauty here. It haunts you. It is bizarre.

One is hard pressed to believe that this whole area was once like a beautiful garden... exceptionally fertile.

The sun was blazing hot. The plain was a furnace. The temperature was 49 degrees Celsius (120 Fahrenheit) in the shade... if you can ever find shade. In summer, one could explore no longer than about 30 minutes at a time. The dehydration was rapid and fierce. We felt it. We were drying out.

My mind drifted back to a previous visit, when after just half an hour I had found myself several times searching for a rare spot of shade - to sit down and drink... drink... drink. And on some of those breaks it had taken me an hour before I felt ready to brave the heat again. Heat reflected up from the ashes of some ancient great fire.

Now here we were again – Dane Griffin and David Wagner of the USA, Peter Mutton and Brett Murray from Australia, my wife Josephine and myself.

We lifted the trunk. We fiddled. We tried to start the motor again. We kept fiddling... turning the ignition key... wiping away the sweat... letting the motor cool...

Cool? It remained blistering hot.

Brett tried... Dane... David... Peter... I did my bit...

Nothing worked...

Thirty minutes later, we were still stumped. This was it. We had tried everything we knew. Nothing worked. The motor was dead.

We scanned the horizon. In this vast emptiness there was not another human in sight.

Yes, it was true... I knew that people in this very desert had died of thirst in mere hours. A comforting thought!

We looked at each other. Well...?

Was this archaeological expedition to become our last? The prospect was grim.

Then a voice broke the silence. "Let's pray."

It was Brett who suggested we ask the Creator to intervene. And I do recall that the prayer was intense, direct and brief.

As soon as it was done, Brett got behind the wheel and – for the umpteenth time – his heart beating wildly... turned the key.

"Brrrrrrr...RRRRR!" No wait. The motor leapt into life, sounding so normal, one would never believe what we had just endured.

"Why didn't we ask Him first?" Josephine chirped up. "We could have saved ourselves all that trouble."

## 44 Two locust plagues

In South America, a plague of locusts was sweeping through the country, destroying absolutely everything green. They spared nothing.

A faithful Christian man who had a large farm sent up his plea to the Creator for protection of his property.

As the locusts reached the borders of his land, they ate around it, consuming everything in their path. When they had swept on, the man's farm remained an oasis surrounded on every side by a desert of destruction.

The man's property attracted the attention of many. People drove long distances to see this amazing phenomenon.

When asked to explain how his farm had been spared, the man opened his Bible and read to visitors the promise recorded in the Old Testament book of Malachi:

“Bring ye all the tithes [one-tenth] into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. (Malachi 3:9,10)

He explained that God asked his people to dedicate one tenth of their nett income to His work and see if God would not in return protect all they possessed.

During a visit to the tiny community of Mumblepeg, west of Dubbo in New South Wales, Australia, I met a man called Lockie Roberts, who had experienced a precisely identical experience.

As a plague of locusts approached his wheat farm, he and his family dropped to their knees and prayed, citing the same promise found in Malachi.

The locusts ate everything on ground and trees, right up to his boundary fence on every side, but stopped short of intruding onto his farmland.

The local newspaper, I understand, published an aerial view of this property untouched by the plague, with the wide expanse of devastated countryside surrounding it.



## 45 The lava flow

An elderly Javanese woman lived on Mount Klute in Java. Every year she walked down the mountain with her year's tithe in a bag, which she left at a mission station.

One morning as she arose, her place began to shake violently. She heard an ominous roaring.

She looked out through the window just as the top of the volcano was blown off.

Bubbling hot lava was soon rolling down the mountainside, destroying everything in its path.

This trusting woman quickly dropped to her knees and prayed for protection.

That hot river of lava rolled down toward the house. Then, as it came close, it parted into two streams around her garden, continuing down both sides of her place and roaring on down the mountainside.

Her home was spared like an island in the midst of terrible destruction – a testimony that God watches over His humble children who live faithful to Him.

## 46 “There is fire in the grass!”

F. B. Armitage, an Adventist missionary, tells this experience that occurred in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe):

“I had occasion to make a journey from the new Somabula [Lower Gwelo] station which would require several days’ absence. My wife was alone at the station, with only the native orphan children who had accompanied us from the older Solusi Mission.

“I started from the station early in the morning. Toward evening, a little boy came running into the tent where Mrs Armitage was working, crying, ‘There is fire in the grass! There is fire in the grass!’

“Our mission was in a valley, and down the valley somewhere a fire had been started and was sweeping toward the station. The season had been dry, and the grass was like tinder, standing in places as high as a man’s head. One can imagine how that fire would look to the mission family, with only the orphan children and Mrs Armitage and her own little one on the premises. We had been only a short time at this place, and had not had time to make fire guards or provide any precautions. The situation was indeed desperate.

“For a few startled moments Mrs Armitage watched the oncoming flames, and then to herself she said, ‘Our heavenly Father has never failed us yet, and I believe He will not leave us now.’

“There might have been a chance for flight, but there was the mission station, with all that it represented of struggle and toil and future fruitfulness in the saving of souls.

“She turned to the text that had been the deciding word in our entering Africa, and our stay and support in many a trying experience. Again she read the promise, ‘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; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness.’ (Isaiah 41:10)

“The assurance came to her heart that she was not left alone, and she said, “Our Father will take care of us once more, I am sure.”

“Still the fire came leaping on. It was of no use to think of trying to fight it, with only the little orphan children to help. It came to within seventy yards of the station, and there it went out in front, the flames dividing and passing by on each side of the farm, joining farther up the valley, and sweeping on beyond. The mission was saved.”

- W.A. Spicer, *The Hand That Intervenes*, p. 187

## 47 Two men in the barn

The pre-Christmas snow storm had blanketed a wide patch of rural eastern Pennsylvania, and Chris Clark Davidson probably should have waited until the roads were plowed before she, her mother and her two small sons attempted a drive. But Chris's grandmother lived alone over a hundred miles away, and couldn't get out to buy groceries.

"We'll be fine," Chris reassured her mother. "We'll take that short cut we use all summer."

They found the short cut, and turned onto it. Chris had forgotten how narrow the road was, especially with drifts piled high, and wind blowing snow across the fields. Usually chatting on previous drives, neither woman had noticed how deserted the area was.

When another vehicle roared around a curve, Chris swerved, and skidded into a snow bank. The other car kept going.

The wheels spun uselessly as she tried to pull out. "Mommy, are we stuck?" toddler Phillip asked, from under his blanket in the back seat.

"Looks that way, honey," Chris admitted.

They had only seen that one car since they'd turned onto the short cut. How long would it be before someone came along? How long before the freezing temperature invaded the car's interior? And why, oh why, had she worn SANDALS and pantyhose instead of warm boots?

Chris got out, her feet plunging into a high drift, and looked around. "Lord, please send us some help," she prayed.

Then she saw it – a silo and barn roof peeking up from the hills, about a quarter-mile away.

"Mom," Chris leaned in the car, "I'll walk down to that barn and see if anyone's there. Keep the kids warm."

The journey was incredibly cold, and by the time Chris pushed open the barn door, her feet were icy.

A welcome blast of heat greeted her, along with the mooing of heifers in their stalls. It was a working dairy, clean and well organized, with a shiny window fan circulating the air. Even better, Chris heard young male voices behind a stall.

Maneuvering around fresh manure, she followed the sound and came upon two farmhands in overalls and flannel shirts, kidding and teasing each other. They stopped and smiled when they saw her, and quickly she explained the situation.

“Stay here!” one said, tramping past the cows and out the door. A few moments later, Chris heard a horn honking in front of the barn. There he was, driving a blue pickup truck. “Get in!” he shouted.

Chris hesitated. She didn’t know these men. And yet there was something so merry about them that she couldn’t feel afraid. She and the other farmhand scrambled into the pickup, and bounced down the road.

There was the car, her toddlers bundled up and Mom waving. The driver roared across the field, spun in a wide circle and screeched into position in front of it. “Way to go!” his buddy yelled.

Chris gripped the seat. “Do you always drive like this?” she asked, only half joking.

The driver shrugged. “Well, it ain’t our truck.”

Within minutes, the men had freed Chris’ car, and she opened her purse to reward them. But both backed away. “It was our pleasure, Ma’am. Just drive safely.”

Not like you, Chris grinned as she pulled away. But they had been wonderful guys.

Chris didn’t realize just how wonderful, until two weeks later when she and her mother decided to make a return visit to her grandmother.

Since the snow was almost melted now, the short cut was safer.

Soon the silo and barn roof came into view. “Let’s stop and let the guys know we made it to Grandma’s that day,” Chris suggested.

But when they pulled up in front, where Chris had climbed into the blue truck, she could hardly believe her eyes.

For the barn was vacant, shabby, with paint peeling and door hinges hanging loose.

Bewildered, Chris wiped away a heavy film of dirt and cobwebs on the milk house window and peered inside. Where were the heifers, the floors littered with fresh manure? Even the fan was rusty.

“You couldn’t have seen any farmhands or cattle there,” the woman at the next house told Chris. “No one’s worked that property for years.”

Chris got into the car. “Am I crazy, Mom?” she asked.

“No.” Her mother was firm. “This is definitely the place.”

Then how? Suddenly Chris understood, and she was filled with awe. Her angels had worn blue jeans instead of white robes. But they had delivered the same timeless message, to her and to anyone willing to listen. Fear not. The Saviour is here, and He cares about you. Alleluia!

- Joan Webster Anderson, [www.joanwanderson.com](http://www.joanwanderson.com)

## 48 Trapped on an island!

When a ship was wrecked, the sole survivor happened to be a Christian.

Making it to shore, he found that he was on an island. Day by day he retrieved articles from the wreck. Then, from some wood on the island, he finally erected a small dwelling.

It was just a small island, with very little resources. Consequently, he had a rather difficult time trying to find food to keep himself alive.

Walking away to another part of the island in search of something to eat, he chanced to turn his head.

To his dismay, he saw smoke rising from the location of the dwelling.

He rushed back, only to find that all he had salvaged had gone up in smoke. Even his food supply was gone.

In his despair, he wondered, what option was there but to wait to die? As he sat there downcast, he gazed out to sea... and his heart skipped.

Was that a ship on the horizon? With keenness, he watched the distant object as it approached. His eyes remained fixed on it, eagerly, earnestly, longingly.

The vessel heaved to. As the castaway stood there in amazement, a smaller craft left it, and made out to shore.

A man in the boat was shouting. The castaway ran down toward him.

The voice from the boat cried out, "We saw your smoke signal."

"All things work together for good to them that love God."

(Romans 8:28)

## 49 Who was in the potato patch?

“...and may Your angels watch over us today wherever we are. We ask this in Jesus’ name. Amen”

As prayer ended, every member of the Gonzalez family – even little Jose – said “Amen.”

For just a moment more they all knelt quietly. Then, getting up, they placed their Bibles next to the little oil lamp on the high shelf. Jose and his little sister Maria passed their Bibles up to their big sister, who put them next to hers and big brother’s and big-big brother’s and big-big brother’s wife’s and mother’s and father’s – eight Bibles all in a row, one for each member of the family.

“Today,” announced Father Gonzalez, “we’re going up the mountain to work in the potato patch.” He took his black felt hat off the peg and began putting on his heavy woollen poncho (coat).

“But Father!” protested big sister as she looked at him in surprise. “Are you going up there today? Didn’t our neighbour, Don Francisco, say that those men from the village were planning to come and hurt you and maybe even...”

“Daughter, we have just asked God to send His angels to watch over us today. He protected us the day before yesterday from those same men. They never even got near us! They started fighting among themselves and went home. God will protect us today also! Is that not sufficient?”

Then turning to his sons, Father Gonzalez said, “Come, let’s go.” Then, picking up his heavy hoe, he stepped out of the house into the cold Andes wind.

Indian file, big brother, big-big brother, and little Jose followed up the steep path. Each wore a black felt hat pulled away down over his ears, and a heavy poncho. And each carried a hoe on his shoulder. Little Maria, big sister, big-big brother’s wife, and mother stayed at home.

All that cold, windy day Father Gonzalez and his boys worked in the potato patch. About ten o’clock Maria and big sister came up with some hot “caldo” and “arepas” (stew and corn bread). Not another soul came up the path.



By late afternoon the family was together again in their little home. And again each Bible was taken down from the shelf. Together they bowed to thank the Creator for His blessings and protection.

The following Monday, Father Gonzalez and big-big brother went down early to the village market. They sold their potatoes and then bought dried corn for the “arepas” and some oil for the lamp.

All morning they noticed that the people in the market were looking at them and whispering to each other. But really, that was not so strange. People had whispered like about them ever since they had become Bible followers.

Before starting home they went by the post office. Then just as they were leaving, a young man with a big machete by his side walked up.

“You certainly thought you were well cared for last week, didn’t you?” he asked almost curiously.

Another older man stepped up beside Gonzalez. “Say, where do you keep all those extra men that work for you?”

“I-I-I don’t have any extra men – just myself and my three sons.”

“Don’t try to tell us that, Senor Gonzalez. Ten of us went up the mountain the other day to get rid of you and your religion. But there were twice as many men with you as with us. So we came back down again.”

For a moment Gonzalez looked puzzled. Then slowly a smile spread over his face and tears came to his eyes as he said, “Yes, amigos, that’s right! *Those were my angels!*”

That evening, the little oil lamp shone from the high shelf as the Gonzalez family met for evening worship. After the Bible was read, they bowed together as Father Gonzalez prayed, “... and we thank You, father, for sending Your angels...” As he finished praying, every member of the family said “Amen!”

- David Mitchell, *Faith in Action*

## 50 The Volcanic Sulphur Panic

On the coastal vessel *Portal*, beating its way along the Duke Coast of Vella Lavella into a stiff nor'wester, two men, one of them the veteran missionary Reuben Hare, sat on the hatch, talking over events that had occurred along this very same coast.

“Hey,” said one to the other, “there’s a boy on board who considers that the Bible story of Peter’s release from prison is a very small story indeed.”

“Why does he say that?” asked Reuben.

“Because,” replied the first man, “he has had an experience that outrivaled Peter’s experience in both intensity and effectiveness.”

“I must meet this person,” said Reuben. He began his hunt. And finding the boy, Elakae, by name, he tried to draw from him the story of his experience.

It was difficult. Elakae was shy. But he gave a happy little chuckle when he said, in pidgin English:

“Eau, marsta, ‘im ‘e story belong Peter ‘im ‘e only lik lik story. Story belong me ‘im ‘e big fella story ‘im ‘e no gammon.”

Reuben asked him why his was a bigger story than that of Peter. He just smiled and said:

“Eau, marsta, Peter ‘e only got a few soldiers watch ‘im, me five hundred or a thousand plenty.”

After much persuasion, the story elicited from Elakae was this: It was during World War II in the Pacific.

Elakae and another boy, both about seventeen years of age, had been taken captive by the Japanese. They were forced to act as guides to the Japanese army, which was sending regiments of soldiers through the difficult mountain areas of the Duke coast of Vella Lavella.

The Japanese were afraid of this territory, since there were a number of volcanic sulphur pots and other things they wished to avoid.

All day the going had been hard, particularly as, during the previous night, Elakae’s companion had managed to make his escape,

which left Elakae alone. The sulphur fumes from the volcanic blow holes were more pungent than usual. The Japanese regiment slowly picked their way along the narrow trail, which was often not visible to any eyes other than those of a native.

At times the trail seemed to be utterly swallowed up by the steamy jungle. Time and again, Elakae, guiding the column, would receive an encouraging prod from a bayonet, to remind him that he was in enemy hands and had better do his job right across this hazardous mountain trail.

Each day of the journey was a repetition. And at night, when the column halted, some food would be thrown to this native boy, before they once again bound him hand and foot for the night, to sleep as best he could, surrounded by soldiers.

Soon the ordeal was taking its toll. Elakae was reaching the point of physical and mental exhaustion.

And at last, one night, after they had bound him as usual, he felt he could stand the torture no longer. It was then that there flashed through his mind a promise from the biblical book of Psalms: "He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him." (Psalm 91:15)

Elakae immediately wondered whether God really meant that text for a black boy like him. He lifted his heart to God in a simple prayer in which he reminded his heavenly Father that though he was just a black boy yet he was a Christian, and according to God's promise he asked Him to deliver him.

No sooner had Elakae finished his simple plea than he fell asleep.

How long he slept, he did not know. But the next thing he knew, it seemed as if the end of the world had come. Thunder crashed and roared, lightning flashed and crackled, and the rain fell in sheets. The sky literally poured forth a flood. The air smelled so strongly of sulphur that it seemed as though the lid of the nether regions had been lifted a little.

In a few moments the entire Japanese column was seized with panic. Here was an enemy they could not see, and there was something so overwhelmingly fearful about it that the men screamed and fought with one another. Bayonets were fixed and the rifles flashed while madness ran riot among them.

In the midst of this, the prisoner was forgotten. Indeed, he was in danger of being trampled to death by the demoralized soldiers.

Lying there and wondering what was going to happen, Elakae suddenly realised that his wrists were no longer bound. Then, looking down at his feet, he saw that the bonds that had been there were gone.

Positive that God had answered his specific prayer, Elakae crawled on hands and knees right through those milling, struggling soldiers until he gained the shelter of the friendly jungle.

Then, like a shadow of the night, he made his way over the mountain trails until he reached the cave to which his own people had fled in their endeavor to escape from the invaders.

It was long after midnight when he reached that hiding place. But were his kinsfolk sleeping? No, they were even at that moment praying to God for their boy.

You can imagine how they felt when Elakae stepped into their midst and said simply:

“It is all right. Here I am.”

## 51 When the Clock Struck 13

Some years ago, two men stood one night at the foot of the large clock in the city of Plymouth, England. At midnight, both of them observed that the clock had struck thirteen times.

Not long after this incident, one of the two men, Captain Jarvis, arose early one morning, dressed himself, and descended the stairs to the door leading to the street. Upon opening it, he was surprised to find his servant waiting for him with a saddled horse.

"I felt an impression that you needed your horse," he said, "and I could not go back to sleep. So I came and saddled it."

The captain was astonished, but said nothing. He mounted his horse and gave it free rein. The horse carried him to the edge of the river and stopped near the place where the ferryboat would dock to pick up passengers who wanted to reach the other side. His amazement grew when he saw the ferryman on the boat waiting for passengers. It was still very early in the morning.

"Why are you here so early today?" asked the captain.

"Sir, I could not sleep. I had a feeling that someone needed to cross the river.

The captain got aboard the ferry with his horse and they soon reached the other side. He again loosened the reins and the horse followed its nose. After a good ride, they arrived at a town. The captain inquired of a passer-by if anything of interest was happening there.

"Nothing sir, except the trial of a man indicted for murder."

The captain went to the courthouse, dismounted, and entered the courtroom just as the judge was asking the accused if he had anything to say in his own behalf.

"I have nothing to say, Your Honour, except that I am innocent, and that there is only one man in the world who can testify to my innocence, but I do not know his name or where he lives. Some weeks ago, that man and I were together in the city of Plymouth at midnight and both of us heard the clock strike thirteen times rather

than twelve, after which we commented on the incident. If he were here, he would confirm what I have just said. But I do not nurture the slightest hope because I do not know where he is."

"I am here! I am here," shouted the captain. "I am the man who was in Plymouth that hour and heard the clock strike thirteen times rather than twelve. The prisoner is speaking the truth. On the night of the murder, on the exact moment it happened, he was with me in Plymouth and we remarked to each other the fact that the clock had struck thirteen times at midnight."

Thus the man's innocence was proven, and he was acquitted of the charge.

May I ask, who was it that arranged those events in such a manner that the two men should meet exactly at that hour? Who awakened the captain so early in the morning? Who roused the servant and constrained him to saddle his master's horse? Who guided the horse to the ferry? Who awakened the boatman and compelled him to go down to the river? And, who led the horse to the town in which the innocent man was going to be sentenced for murder? Finally, who influenced the captain to enter the courtroom at the right time? Who imparted these "impressions"?

## 52 Unseen Companion

Harald Hokland, a seller of Bibles in Norway, had to descend a very dangerous mountain trail to reach families in the valley. At one steep, dangerous place he stopped to pray that an angel would go with him. He safely reached the valley.

At the first cottage he met a man and his wife, who, it seems, had been watching him as he came over the mountain.

“Where is your friend?” they asked.

“What friend?” he replied.

“The man who was with you.”

“But there was no one with me. I was alone.”

“Is that possible?” they exclaimed in surprise. “We were watching you as you came down the track and it really seemed to us that there were two men crossing the mountain together.”

## 53 Surrounded By Soldiers

“Quick, inside! The mob is coming!”

High in the Andes mountains of Peru, a mission station was under attack. The fury of the mob was such that it was certain they would demolish the buildings and kill their inhabitants.

The whole besieged group, using its only weapon, knelt together on the dirt floors of the huts and prayed.

Suddenly, without warning, the mob scattered and fled.

The next day one of the missionaries asked a local why they had disappeared.

“Why,” came the answer, “when we saw all those soldiers about the compound, we just ran. You would have been scared too!”

In my files are numerous recorded incidents of this nature, from all over the world.



## 54 The Tablecloth

The brand new pastor and his wife, newly assigned to their first ministry, to reopen a church in Brooklyn, USA, arrived in early October, excited about their opportunities.

When they saw their church, it was very run down and needed much work. They set a goal to have everything done in time to have their first service on the evening of December 24.

They worked hard, repairing pews, plastering walls, painting, etc., and on December 18 were ahead of schedule and just about finished.

On December 19 a terrible tempest - a driving rainstorm - hit the area and lasted for two days.

On the 21st, the pastor went over to the church. His heart sank when he saw that the roof had leaked, causing a large area of plaster about 20 feet by 8 feet to fall off the front wall of the sanctuary just behind the pulpit, beginning about head high.

The pastor cleaned up the mess on the floor, and not knowing what else to do but postpone the December 24 service, headed home.

On the way he noticed that a local business was having a flea market type sale for charity, so he stopped in.

One of the items was a beautiful, handmade, ivory colored, crocheted tablecloth with exquisite work, fine colors and a cross embroidered right in the centre.

It was just the right size to cover up the hole in the front wall. He bought it and headed back to the church.

By this time it had started to snow. An older woman running from the opposite direction was trying to catch the bus. She missed it. The pastor invited her to wait in the warm church for the next bus 45 minutes later.

She sat in a pew and paid no attention to the pastor while he got a ladder, hangers, etc., to put up the tablecloth as a wall tapestry. The pastor could hardly believe how beautiful it looked and it covered up the entire problem area.

Then he noticed the woman walking down the centre aisle. Her face was like a sheet.

"Pastor," she asked, "where did you get that tablecloth?"

The pastor explained.

The woman asked him to check the lower right corner to see if the initials, EBG were crocheted into it there.

They were. These were the initials of the woman, and she had made this tablecloth 35 years before, in Austria.

The woman could hardly believe it as the pastor told how he had just gotten the tablecloth.

The woman explained that before the war she and her husband were well-to-do people in Austria.

When the Nazis came, she was forced to leave. Her husband was going to follow her the next week. He was captured, sent to prison and never saw her husband or her home again.

The pastor wanted to give her the tablecloth; but she made the pastor keep it for the church.

The pastor insisted on driving her home, that was the least he could do.

She lived on the other side of Staten Island and was only in Brooklyn for the day for a housecleaning job.

What a wonderful service they had on December 24! The church was almost full. The music and the spirit were great.

At the end of the service, the pastor and his wife greeted everyone at the door and many said that they would return.

One older man, whom the pastor recognized from the neighborhood, continued to sit in one of the pews and stare, and the pastor wondered why he wasn't leaving.

The man asked him where he got the tablecloth on the front wall - because it was identical to one that his wife had made years ago when they lived in Austria before the war - and how could there be two tablecloths so much alike?

He told the pastor how the Nazis came, how he forced his wife to flee for her safety and he was supposed to follow her, but he was arrested and put in a prison.. He never saw his wife or his home again all the 35 years in between.

The pastor asked him if he would allow him to take him for a little ride. They drove to Staten Island and to the same house where the pastor had taken the woman three days earlier.

He helped the man climb the three flights of stairs to the woman's apartment, knocked on the door and he saw the greatest reunion he could ever imagine.

## 55 When the Old Ford Stopped

Here is an amazing story that came to me recently - a story so remarkable that I'm sure you will think I have made it up. But I haven't. It truly happened to a minister friend of mine, and he has assured me that there's no doubt about it at all.

Some years ago this Mr. Brown - we'll call him that for now - was very hard up. He had no money in his pocket and none in the bank, and no friends to give him any.

Bills were piling up all around him, and he didn't know what to do.

His chief worry was the doctor's bill. You see, Mrs. Brown had been ill a long time, and the baby, too; and the doctor's bill had just got higher and higher, till it seemed as though he would never be able to pay it.

Now they needed to go to the doctor again - but how could they when they hadn't paid the last bill? All together things looked pretty black.

So they told Jesus about it, and asked Him in some way to keep His promise and supply all their need.

Then Mrs. Brown's health grew worse, and they decided that money or no money, they would have to see the doctor anyway; but how they did wish that, somehow or other, they could pay that bill they owed him first!

One afternoon they set out for town. Now their car was so old, and it rattled and shook so much as it went along, that they often wondered whether it would fall to pieces some day and drop them all out on the roadway.

They had proceeded a few miles along the bumpy country road that led to town, when suddenly the car stopped, and like some obstinate mule, refused to go any farther.

Mr. Brown looked at the petrol, the oil, and everything else he could think of, but all in vain. Then he remembered the old saying that if a Ford stops, you should get out and look underneath to see what has dropped out by the way.

He looked, and his gaze lit upon something right underneath the engine that almost made his eyes start out of his head. It wasn't a part of the car by any means, but a curious, dirty roll of paper that looked for all the world like paper money.

Surely it couldn't be!

Forgetting everything else in his excitement, he crawled underneath the car, and picked up the mysterious parcel.

Yes, it was money, real money! And the outside notes were so dirty and worn that the package must have been lying there covered with the dust for a long, long time, so that there was no hope of finding the owner.

"Look!" he cried, almost too happy to speak. "God has answered our prayer. He has sent the money we needed so much. Now we can pay the doctor today!"

And then another remarkable thing happened. Without touching the engine, Mr. Brown got back into the car and tried once more to start up in the usual way. Without a murmur the car shot forward as if nothing had ever been the matter with it.

"You know," he said to me, "I shall always believe that the angels knew that money was there and stopped the car right over it."

What wonderful ways God does have of answering His children's prayers!

## 56 Night Escape

Kata Ragoso's father was a high chief in the Marovo Lagoon around new Georgia, in the Solomon Islands - and a cannibal headhunter - until he learned about the Creator's plan of rescue. And he accepted it.

After World War II broke out in the Pacific, as British settlers withdrew, Kata Ragoso (pronounced Rangoso) was left in charge. The war brought its trail of death and desolation. But Kata Ragoso called to his council of leading workers and together they worked out details.

First-aid parties were selected and trained. Spotting parties were appointed and given their posts, from which thousands of the keenest eyes in the world scanned the skies in search of any unlucky aviator who might be shot down. Rescue squads were ready, and as reports were passed in by drum, messenger, or the devious methods known only to natives, they went out at the double by canoe or afoot, and in numerous instances the rescue squads were on the move before the unfortunate aviator had finished his fall.

So well organized was this service that official records reveal the fact that more than 200 allied servicemen's lives were saved.

They worked faithfully, and did every sort of service that was asked of them. But one thing they refused to do: They would not work on the biblical holy day, the Sabbath, except to save lives.

The Japanese were on the move south and nothing seemed to be able to stop them.

In order to prosecute the war to his utmost ability, an allied captain on one occasion asked Kata Ragoso to do certain things that his conscience would not allow. The tall, dark fuzzy-haired man said, "Sir, I cannot do that."

That answer by a simple Solomon Islander made the war-jittery captain so angry that he knocked Kata Ragoso unconscious. When he revived and got up, the captain demanded, "Now do as I told you."

Kata Ragoso was firm. "Sir, I am sorry, but I cannot disobey my Lord."

The captain ordered him whipped. A 40-gallon gasoline drum was used as the whipping post, with the victim laid across it. The instrument used was a supple cane.

With his back bleeding, Kata Ragozo was made to stand before the captain again.

“Will you do as I told you?”

Drawing himself up to his full height and looking the officer in the face, Kata Ragozo replied, “No, sir. I am sorry, but I cannot.”

Rage got the better of reason, and the officer, with a snarl, drew his revolver and, using it as a club, struck Kata Ragozo full in the face, smashing his nose. Then he beat him again and again on the temple and about the head, until he fell to the ground unconscious.

Only the intervention of a young girl, who pled that the native’s life be spared, prevented the officer’s attacking Kata Ragozo as he lay on the ground.

When Kata Ragozo regained his senses, he was once more commanded to carry out the orders given him.

When the answer was again an emphatic “no”, the officer, blazing with rage, yelled, “Then you shall be shot.”

The captain stood Kata Ragozo before the firing squad. “I will count to three,” he instructed the soldiers. “When I say, ‘Three’, *fire!*”

The soldiers got ready. In a dramatic silence, the captain began to count. “One! Two! .....” Somehow the word would not come. He could not say, “Three!”

He started again: “One! Two! .....” Still his tongue refused to pronounce the fatal word.

Almost crazed, he tried again. “One! Two!” For the third time speech failed. In fact, the officer could not speak at all, nor could he for a day and a half afterward.

Kata Ragozo was thrown into the stockade, and left there with Ludi (pronounced Lundi), one of his faithful assistants – perhaps to die. The officer did not want to see him again. The prison compound was secured with a padlock, and the key was kept in the office.

The Christian natives in the Morovo were becoming worried over the situation. These men were the sons and grandsons of the most intrepid and fierce headhunters in the whole of the South Pacific Ocean. They could, at any time they wished, have swooped down on the post and rescued their leader.

But this thought was furthest from their minds. They were not heathen fighters any longer, but Christians – sons of God. Therefore it was to God they looked.

Council was called, and it was decided that on a certain night as the moon came over the mountain they would all gather in prayer to God for help.

The drums beat out the message, and over the hills and through the valleys the appointment was made for prayer.

The night for the prayer meeting came, and in villages and odd places on the trail the people gathered in little groups to plead with God for the life of Kata Rago. But God had already heard them.

Life in the army camp went on as usual. Guards were posted. The officer wrote a report that he hoped he would be able to get through to headquarters. The moon rose a little before ten that night.

Just as the first peep of the moon came over the mountains, a tall man entered the stockade with a bunch of keys. He put a key in the padlock, turned it, and opened the gate.

Standing there in the light of the moon, he called in a loud voice, “Kata Rago!”

“Yes, sir!”

“Come here!” Kata Rago came.

Again the man called: “Ludi, come here!”

When Ludi joined Kata Rago at the gate, the man reached in, took each by an arm, and drew them outside. Then he shut the gate and locked it.

“Follow me,” he said.

He led them down the path toward the beach. As they came within sight of the water, the tall man stopped and said, “Go down to the beach. There you will find a canoe. Take it and go home.”

They walked on a few paces. And there in plain sight lay a canoe complete with paddles for the two men. They turned to thank the man who had taken him out of prison. The path was empty. No man was there – though in the moonlight they could see the path quite distinctly for more than a hundred yards.

They never again saw that man, nor the keys he used. The real keys had been on their peg with the officer all night.

Evidently, angels still open prison doors, just as they did for Peter, as recorded in the biblical book of Acts.



Kata Ragoso went back to his work and kept right on. He was there when the Allies swept the invaders back.

“Later,” reports Reuben Hare, “I asked him what he thought as he stood before that firing squad. His reply was, ‘I was not worried about myself, but I did wonder if there was something I should have done that would have made the work go better.’

“What a spirit! What men! What faith!”

The officer who was responsible for the flogging and assaulting of Kata Ragoso was later “boarded and dismissed in disgrace from His Majesty’s service.”

- Reuben E. Hare, *Review and Herald*, 1950

## 57 Down a Well

Chen Yurong tells the true story about her younger brother, a Communist party member who persecuted her fiercely for her Christian faith.

Her brother had two sons, ages nine and five. One day as his sons were playing near the village water well she heard the older brother crying out in terror that his 5-year old brother had fallen into the well.

The boy had not yet surfaced when Chen Yurong arrived at the well. Chen cried out to God, "Lord, save this boy! Let me die instead."

Suddenly, as the villagers were gathering around the well, the young boy came to the surface of the water.

The villagers lowered ropes, and the boy was pulled out of the well.

"Did you swallow a lot of water?" one of the villagers asked the boy.

"No," said the 5-year old boy. "There was a man in white holding me up."

After this Chen's brother stopped persecuting his sister for her belief in Jesus.

## 58 A Covering Protection

At the time of the Japanese invasion of China in the early 1940s, a school for refugee children was being operated in the Chinese interior.

During an air raid, a unit of the compound was struck by a falling bomb. It was discovered that three little orphan lads had been buried beneath a mass of bricks and mortar. The raiders passed on. As soon as help could be obtained, the workmen and missionaries rushed to the spot where the boys had been buried.

They worked desperately to remove the debris, hoping against an apparently vain hope that they could reach the children while they still lived.

Finally they reached the boys, and carefully and tenderly extricated them. The boys were carried to the mission hospital for a thorough examination.

The examiners were amazed. Not only were the children uninjured, but they were also unscratched!

Each was questioned separately regarding the experience he had just gone through. Their stories agreed to the smallest detail.

They had heard the bursting of bombs all around them, and were naturally terrified. However, during their short stay at the mission compound, they had learned to believe in the Supreme One who hears and still answers prayers. So they knelt down together, and in their simple, childish way asked Him to take care of them.

Upon looking up, they saw a Being in white, who said to them, "Lie down quickly on your faces, and I will cover you."

They did as instructed. And a promise in the Bible was confirmed to them: "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust." (Psalm 91:4)

The news of this event was broadcast over the radio in Shanghai.

## 59 Gasoline Wouldn't Burn

Did you ever hear of gasoline that would not burn?

You have heard of Elijah's experience with water that burned, but here is an equally interesting experience of God's power.

When the Japanese armies came to Nanking, during the war in China, they plundered shops and homes, and burned those for which they had no use.

In their path was the residence of an old Chinese Christian. Mr Chen had been conducting Christian meetings in his home.

Mr Chen felt he was too old to try and escape. And besides, he had nowhere to go. So he dropped to his knees and asked God to protect him and allow him to continue with his work for others right there.

When the band of soldiers arrived, they banged on his door, demanding admittance. With a prayer in his heart, he invited them in.

"What kind of work do you do?" they asked.

"I am working for the Lord God, Creator of all", he replied.

"Oh," said one of the band, "he is just a Christian." And they ordered him out.

But Mr Chen refused to go.

Seeing that the man would not leave, the leader of the band ordered some of his men to pour gasoline on the building and set fire to it.

Realizing what they were about to do, the old man went into an inner room and knelt before the Lord. He pled for protection, wisdom and guidance in this time of danger.

He was in there 15 or 20 minutes.

During the whole time he could hear the soldiers running about and their officer giving loud commands. He could also hear the gasoline being poured over the building.

Finally, he heard swearing. And a few minutes later, all was quiet.

He went out. The smell of gasoline was everywhere. He noticed that there were burnt matches strewn around the yard, but there had been no blaze. The gasoline just would not burn!

Later on, another attempt was made to burn his house and chapel...  
but with no success.

## 60 The Naked Runner

The following two incidents are so amazing that, on first thought, one might be tempted to dismiss them, were it not for the fact that they are testified by living witnesses of integrity and sound mind.

The first report reached my desk late in 2002 from Pastor Paul Ciniraj, of Kerala, India.

Hawa Ahmed was a Muslim student. One day, she read a Christian paper in her dormitory, and decided to follow the way of Jesus. Her father was an Islamic ruler, so she expected to lose her inheritance because of her conversion.

Hawa was completely unprepared for what really happened. When she told her family that she had become a Christian and changed her name to Faith, her father exploded in a rage. He and her brothers stripped her naked and bound her to a chair fixed to a metal plate with which they wanted to electrocute her.

Faith asked them to at least lay a Bible in her lap. Her father responded, "If you want to die together with your false religion, so be it." One of her brothers added, "That will show that your religion is powerless."

Although they had bound her, she was able to touch a corner of the Bible. She felt a strange peace, as though someone were standing beside her.

Her father and brothers pushed the plug into the socket - and nothing happened. They tried four times with various cables, but it was as though the electricity refused to flow.

Finally, her father, angry and frustrated, struck her and screamed, "You are no longer my daughter." Then he threw her out into the street, naked.

The girl ran through the streets, humiliated and in pain. People looked at her, curious rather than shocked. Shaking and tearful, she reached the house of a friend. Her friend let her in, clothed her and gave her shelter.

The next day, her friend asked neighbors what they had thought when they had seen Faith running naked through the streets.

“What are you talking about?” they asked. “The girl had a wonderful white dress on. We asked ourselves why someone so beautifully clothed had to run through the streets.”

Had the Mighty One intervened – to hide her nakedness from their eyes, clothing her in that beautiful white dress? In gratitude and love, Faith has now become a full-time missionary.

## 61 Buried Alive

On the evening of May 20, 2004, Victor and Deborah Khalil of Poway, California, were in shock. They had just received a message that sounded so incredible, at first. But, talking it over, they knew there was one thing they had to do: they must contact family members in Egypt to confirm the details that had been given there on the news.

“Did it really happen?” they asked.

“Truly... every detail of it,” was the response.

A Muslim man had killed his wife and buried her with their infant baby and eight-year-old daughter. The girls were buried alive! He reported to the police that an uncle killed the kids.

Fifteen days later, another family member died. When they went to bury him, they found the two girls under the sand – alive.

The girl was asked how she had survived.

“A man wearing shiny white clothes, *with bleeding wounds in his hands*, came every day to feed us,” said the girl. “He woke up my mom so she could nurse my sister.”

The girl was interviewed on Egyptian national TV, by a veiled Muslim woman news anchor.

The anchor woman said on public TV, “This was none other but Jesus, because nobody else does things like this!”

Of course, Muslims believe that Isa (Jesus) would do this. But to these witnesses in Cairo the wounds meant He really was crucified, and it also became clear to them that He was alive!

Muslim leaders have been teaching that Jesus did not die on the cross and rise from the dead, but that some other person was crucified instead of him, and that Jesus escaped alive.

According to news reports, the country was outraged over the incident, and the man would be executed.

However, two facts were clear:

1. The child could not make up a story like this, and
2. There was no way these children could have survived without a true miracle.



With Egypt as a media and education center of the Middle East, you could be sure the account of this incident would spread.

Who was that individual, who came to be with those children?

## 62 Who Bore Him Up?

This happened in Brazil.

Sonny was five years of age. One of the things he most loved to do was to swing in a big hammock that hung between a large tree and a post in his back yard. Monkeys chattered and jumped from tree to tree just over the back wall and great, heavy jack fruit could be seen in the branches.

Sonny's friends often came to play with him, and one day a large boy, much bigger than Sonny, was pushing the hammock far out and almost over just to see how high he could make it go with the little boy in it.

The little fellow cried out to slow down, but to no avail. And as he swung too high his small hands loosened, and soon he was flying high up and through the air.

The other children came running into the house crying, "Sonny fell out of the big swing to the ground. And we saw him and thought he would be killed, but he didn't get hurt at all. We watched him come down. He floated like a leaf or a feather and landed right on his stomach. And he didn't even cry."

## 63 Raised From the Dead

In August, 2006, Israeli forces bombed suspected Hezbollah positions in Chbaniy, Lebanon.

Several hundred of the poorest Christian believers huddled on a small piece of land in an old barn as a home. They owned nothing but possessed everything by their faith as the bombs fell.

Amid the fire, death and destruction, a Christian minister, Pastor Hamdan, was critically injured, with severe burns, dialysis and in a coma.

Finally, he was pronounced dead and placed in the morgue refrigerator.

It was there in the morgue on Saturday, August 12, that Pastor Hamdan heard Jesus calling him, "Wake up my son, wake up my son. You still have much to teach and help Pastor Victoria."

As often occurs in resurrections, life returns from the inside out. He could not move, but was aware when the hospital came and threw his body outside on a pile of bodies to be buried.

It was shortly after this that he became conscious to this world and was able to move and get up - shocked that he had new life.

He walked many miles to the bombed out church building where the congregation was in the process of mourning his death.

You can imagine their shock and as he describes it, some fainted. Some could not speak. Others began to choke, saying, "Jesus send you back."

The young man who had emailed Hamdan's colleague Pastor Victoria of Hamdan's fatal injuries and who had taken him to hospital fainted several times and even asked Pastor Hamdan, "Who are you?"

Hamdan reports that prior to the injury and his death he had much pain in his body, stomach, teeth, and so on - but now says he feels no pain, no scars, no weakness and full of energy of the Holy Spirit. What a God we serve!

This has caused ripples in Lebanon, as those who were in the hospital and saw his body go to the morgue (and then he gets up and walks away) have been shocked.

Says Pastor Victoria: This "miracle" of bringing a poor, humble butcher from death to NEW LIFE complete with healings of burns, kidney failure and wounds all in the twinkling of an eye is beyond words! It proves that even in our darkest moments, maybe even a morgue (And nobody was there to lay hands on him physically), JESUS is there with you!

If you could speak with Hamdan today he would tell you not to ask the 'why's' rather to concentrate on the 'what's'. What is Jesus going to do to bring GLORY to Father's name out of your seeming difficult situation?

Jesus is still walking His beloved 'promise land ' and Jesus was walking in the morgue of a little hospital in Lebanon just yesterday afternoon.

What was Jesus saying yesterday? I can perceive it went something like this: 'Father I'm going to do something to glorify Your Name and bring my beloved servant Hamdan to life again! For he has been willing to pay the ultimate price for the ultimate sacrifice.'

HAMDAN, COME FORTH !!!!! To a suffering, dying world and an encumbered body of believers. Yesterday's words are still ringing..... can you hear them?.... .....COME FORTH! Your Servant, Pastor Victoria. August 13, 2006

What follows is Pastor Hamdan's unedited testimony of being raised from the dead yesterday in a morgue in a hospital in Lebanon. Every effort has been made to relay the facts as they occurred. His testimony was received 8/12/06 4:37pm CST A previous email dated 8/8/06 had been received from a member stating Hamdan's dire situation and coma with need for blood and kidney transplant from burns and wounds received.

- *Pastor Victoria at [seer2spirit@yahoo.com](mailto:seer2spirit@yahoo.com)*

### **Hamdan's personal testimony (spelling as received):**

praise jesus and praise lord king our matar our father [He is saying Martyr] dear prophet he give me new life again. i was in hospital in coma and they sent me to morgue and i woke up and walk away i say jesus i am alive and have new life. i so happy and tel people

around me and say is miracale. thank you thank you so much for your payar

i go to see membar al cry for me dead and se me hurt and burn and samir tel me they say in hosipital i must be opearate in musht have kindney and they did not do it becouse i have no moneie and they send me to morge after they aonnince i am died and now praise jesusfor new life .

thank you sister i love you.. jesus bles you and love you much.and thank you for your reqwest for jesus to bring me alive he tel me so. yours servante hamdan

## 64 Perfect Timing

When Catherine Scott was a little girl, money was very tight, especially right after her father was ordained as a minister.

She recalls: “My mother often reached the end of her grocery money long before the end of the month. She used to send me into my father's closet to go through the pockets of his pants and coats. Since he was very absent-minded, I often found money during these treasure hunts.” Somehow, it was always enough.

There was one place, however, where neither Catherine nor her mother would search - father's bottom dresser drawer. That was where he put the contents of the church's “poor box,” money that parishioners gave to aid the neediest among them. Catherine knew she and her mother were never to take anything from that box, even though they also were sometimes poor.

One day when she was about five, Catherine heard her mother crying. “Mama, what's wrong?” she called.

Catherine found her mother sitting on her bed staring at the bottom dresser drawer. “Nothing, sweetheart.” Catherine's mother hastily wiped her cheeks. But despite her young age, Catherine understood. There was money in the drawer, and no doubt enough to feed them. But Mama couldn't use it. That money belonged to the church.

“I can go through Papa's pockets again,” Catherine suggested. Her mother smiled wanly, and Catherine started a search. But today there was nothing to find, even though Catherine looked carefully in every one of her father's garments.

“I could sense my mother's desperation,” Catherine says, “but I wasn't afraid. Perhaps I was too young to know how serious the situation was. But I did remind her that we still had some Cheerios left, and my brother and I could eat that if nothing else turned up.”

Catherine's mother did not seem especially cheered by this revelation. But within minutes, the back doorbell rang.

Catherine was usually not permitted to answer a doorbell alone. But right now her father was working, her brother at school, and her

mother trying to repair her tear-streaked face, so the little girl was alone when she opened the door.

A man in badly worn jeans was standing there.

“Is your daddy home?” he asked Catherine.

She shook her head.

The man squatted down in front of her and handed her a battered envelope. “Your daddy gave me a school desk several years ago,” he explained. “There's money inside here to pay for the desk.” Catherine noticed his warm smile. And his eyes seemed to twinkle too. “Hurry up and take this to your Mama,” he told Catherine. She closed the door, and did what he had told her.

Her mother opened the envelope. There was a five-dollar bill inside.

“In those days, five dollars was more than enough to get us to the end of the month,” Catherine recalls, “so my mother was extremely grateful. She did not remember the desk or the incident, but felt certain that my father would.”

But later, Catherine's father was sure that Catherine had gotten the details mixed up, and he questioned her over and over again. Who was this stranger? The father had no idea.

“He actually had given an old school desk to a poor family many years ago, but that had happened in New Jersey, and we now lived in Illinois,” explains Catherine. “Why, after fifteen years, would a man travel 1,000 miles to return money he had never been asked to repay?”

Catherine's family never discovered who the man really was. But his timing was perfect.

Promises of such intervention are made in the Bible. And evidently there is Someone out there, who honors those written promises.

## 65 Journey Into Danger

“Sheer madness,” screamed the police officer. “The roads are closed. The blizzard’s getting worse.

“But I have to go!” Ron exclaimed.

“Unless it’s a life or death situation, stay off the roads,” warned the officer.

Ron knew that he had to go. He didn’t know why, or for whom. He went.

In the early hours of that bleak December morning, as was his custom, Ron Wyatt had asked his Lord to lead him to someone who was in real need.

Immediately came the strong impression that he must drive to Columbia, Kentucky. That was a good two and a half hours from his Nashville home. In good weather, that is.

The roads were deserted... and slippery. His 1976 Dodge Maxi Van had chronic fan belt problems. It was several long hours of miserable driving. He began to resent the whole thing.

Then his conscience began to trouble him. He began to pray that God would forgive him for his rebellious feeling and not let someone go without needed help just because Ron was, as he put it, “a jerk”.

Suddenly, from the median of the toll road, staggered a dark form, falling and struggling to get to the side Wyatt was travelling on. Slowing down to see if it was a hurt animal, he realised it was a person! With a feeble wave, the man signalled Ron to stop.

He was badly frozen.

Ron helped him into the van. “What are you doing out there without a car?”

The man’s speech slurred; the cold had thickened his tongue. He slowly raised his arm and pointed to the median; he HAD a car was what he was trying to say.

Jumping out of the van, Ron crossed the road. Sure enough, buried deep in the snow, sat a red compact car.

“There’s no way we can get it out of there,” Ron said.



“Would you please just try,” the man pleaded.

Clearing the snow from the top and sides, Ron found a chain. He secured it around the back axle and stretched it. “Father,” he prayed, “if You want this car out of the snow, You are going to have to do it. I sure can’t.”

At that exact moment, down the east lane of the road, which had been entirely free of traffic all those hours, appeared the headlights of two cars. They slowed to a stop.

“Can we help you?” asked one of them. And out poured eight young men. Nobody else in these cars - just eight strong, young men. Within seconds, the car was up on the road.

“A piece of cake,” someone said. Then they piled into their cars and drove off.

Puzzled at having missed their approach, Ron now watched them leave. In a dip in the highway, they disappeared from sight. However, they never arose from that dip! There was no exit for at least two miles, and they hadn’t turned around; they had simply vanished into thin air!

The man’s car engine started easily. “Do you believe in God, mister?” he asked, with almost pleading eyes.

Over an hour later, still sitting in the van, the man, with tears rolling down his face, had at last found the answer to his questions.

“How can I explain all of this to my wife and children?” he asked. And Ron handed him a copy of his favourite book, *The Story of Redemption*.

Suddenly, Ron realised what this trip had been all about.

Ron confessed he was an addict. If he did not experience such a “divine encounter” for his Lord every week, he would go into a state of depression. Then he knew he had to ask God to show him what was hindering him from being useful. Once he had straightened out that problem in his relationship with God, he was able to bear witness again.

## 66 Desperate Phone Call

“I don’t know what to do!” exclaimed Ken. “Perhaps I need a change.”

For quite a while now, Ken Gaub’s time had been spent giving a boost to others... helping those who were hurting... trying to influence their lives in a positive way.

With this in mind, he and his family had travelled, both across the United States and overseas.. He had also established a counselling service on radio and television.

But that day in the 1970s as Ken, his wife Barbara and their children drove their two buses down 1-75 just south of Dayton, Ohio, Ken was feeling drained and discouraged.

“Oh,” he cried, “Am I doing any good, travelling around like this? God, is this what you want me to do?”

His thoughts were suddenly interrupted. “Hey, Dad, let’s get some pizza!”

Ken turned off at Route 741. There was sign after sign, offering fast food.

“A sign,” mused Ken. “That’s what I need... a sign.”

As Ken’s family poured out, and across to the pizza parlor, Ken announced, “I’m not really hungry. I’ll just stretch my legs.”

He grabbed himself a soft drink and ambled back to the bus. Was it burnout? He was just plain exhausted.

A persistent ringing broke into Ken’s concentration. He looked across at the outside phone booth. The attendant seemed oblivious to the sound.

Ken grew impatient. “Why doesn’t someone answer it?” he wondered. “What if it’s an emergency?”

Nine rings. Ten...Fifteen...

His curiosity perked up. He shuffled over to the booth and picked up the receiver. “Hello?”

The operator’s voice came through. “Long distance call for Ken Gaub.”

Ken was dazed. “No,” he heard himself saying. “You are crazy!” And then, realising how rude that must have sounded, he apologised and tried to explain. “I was just walking down the road here. And the phone was ringing...”

The operator simply asked again, “Is Ken Gaub there? I have a long distance call for Ken Gaub.”

Oh, this must be *Candid Camera*, he thought, instinctively. Ken ran his hands through his hair. But no camera crew appeared.

He looked toward the pizza house. The family was still inside. They were at this restaurant only on a whim. It was randomly selected. And no one knew they were here. No one.

“I have a long distance call for Ken Gaub, sir.” The operator sounded quite insistent now. “Is Mr Gaub there or isn’t he?”

“Operator, I’m Ken Gaub.” Ken could make no sense of this whole thing.

“Are you sure?” asked the operator. Then suddenly there was another woman’s voice on the phone.

“Yes, that’s him, Operator!” she exclaimed. “Mr Gaub, I’m Millie from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. You don’t know me. But I’m desperate. Please help me.”

“How can I help you?” And Ken heard the operator hang up.

The woman at the other end was weeping now. Ken patiently waited. Finally, she gained control. “I’m at the end of my rope. I was about to kill myself. I started to write a suicide note. Then I began to tell God I really didn’t want to do this.”

In her despair, Millie recalled that she had seen Ken on television. Oh, if she could only talk to that kind, understanding person....

But that was impossible. There was no place she knew, to reach him. Millie spoke a little more calmly now. “So I began to finish the note. And then some numbers came into my mind, and I wrote them down.” Millie was weeping again.

Silently Ken prayed. “Show me how to help this woman.”

Through her tears, Millie went on. “I looked at those numbers. And the thought came... wouldn’t it be wonderful if God has given me Ken Gaub’s phone number? Oh, Mr Gaub, I just can’t believe I’m actually talking to you. Are you in your office in California?”

“No,” responded Ken, “I do not have an office in California. It’s in Yakima, Washington.”

“Then where are you?” called the woman, bewildered.

Even more puzzled was Ken. “Millie, it was you who made the call. Don’t you know?”

“No, I have no idea what area this is,” said Millie. “I just dialed the long-distance operator. I gave the numbers to her, and made it a person-to-person call.”

Daub advised Millie what to do. And it was to take her into a successful new life.

Still stunned, Ken hung up.

“Barb,” enthused Ken as his family climbed back into the bus, “you won’t believe this! God knows where I am!”

This incident was reported by Nancy Leahy to Joan Wester Anderson and appeared in the #1 *New York Times* bestselling *Chicken Soup for the Soul*, by Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen.

May I ask, who was it that arranged those events in such a manner that Ken and Millie should meet on the phone exactly at that hour? Who prompted Ken’s son to ask for pizza exactly when he did? Who led Ken to pull into that precise restaurant? Who persuaded Ken to stay outdoors near the payphone booth? Who gave Millie the exact sequence of numbers that would ring that precise telephone beside the road? Who imparted these “impressions”?

*Who answered both their prayers with one “miracle” connection?* To each separately it was an electrifying response.

## 67 Two Tall Men

Now across to Central America... Guatemala, to be precise.

Feliciano Barrientos was eating supper in his hotel. A man walked up to the table and asked him if he was the itinerant book seller who was visiting the area.

“Yes,” he replied.

“How much are your books worth?”

“[so many] quetzals,” was his answer.

“How many have you delivered today?”

“Fourteen,” was Feliciano’s response.

The stranger next queried Feliciano as to when he planned to leave, what town he would visit next and what road he would take.

In his friendly manner, Feliciano told the man what he wanted to know, and then added that although he travelled alone, heavenly angels were his protection. And even though that region might be a bit wild, he felt that he was always safe, since he was working for his Maker.

When the visitor had departed, a hotel employee immediately approached Feliciano with the news that that man was a well-known thief and murderer.

“I suspect he asked you all those questions,” said the attendant, “because he intends to do you harm on your journey. Why not have a good night’s sleep then go to a different town from the one you told him?”

Feliciano thought deeply about the matter. Then he committed the situation to his God and claimed the biblical promises of a safe escort. He would make the journey as planned.

After an early breakfast the next morning, Feliciano returned to his room, again spent some time praying about the matter, then started out.

About a mile and a half on his way, he saw ahead of him two men sitting by the roadside. Both were armed with large machetes, apparently ready to attack him.

Coming closer to them, he sent up another prayer for protection. He reminded God of his personal commitment to Him, and that he had a wife and children at home depending on him. He continued forward, confident that he was not alone.

As he passed by, the two men both sprang to their feet. Then they promptly sat down again. He spoke to them kindly and continued on his way.

Three days later, Feliciano met one of the men – the very one who had asked him so many questions in the hotel dining room that other evening.

“Sir,” he enquired, “Why did you tell me you travelled alone? That morning when you passed my friend and me by the road, we saw two large men dressed in white, carrying arms, and you were walking between them!”

“Yes,” responded Feliciano, “those were two heavenly angels who always accompany me in my work.”

## 68 Surprise in the Canyon

It was 1488. And the Waldenses, country people of the Piedmontese valleys of northern Italy, heard that they had been condemned by the decree of Pope Innocent VIII.

The aim was to exterminate those guardians of the Bible - the Waldensians - once and for all. This solemn news cast gloom over the peaceful valley dwellers.

There were seven valleys encircled by mountains, all linked together and accessible from the outside only by a narrow gorge.

Anyway, to carry out his bull, Innocent VIII appointed Albert Cataneo, Archdeacon of Cremona, his legate, to take charge of the enterprise. He was to deliver papal letters to all princes, dukes, and authorities within whose dominions any Waldenses were to be found. The Pope especially commanded Charles VIII of France and Charles II of Savoy, to support him with the whole power of their arms. The bull invited all the ruling church's members to take up the cross against the heretics. And to stimulate them in this pious work it freed them from all penalties, and from any oaths they might have taken. It legitimatised their title to any property they might have illegally acquired - and promised forgiveness of all sins to any who should kill a heretic. It annulled all contracts made in favor of Waldenses, ordered their domestics to abandon them, forbade all persons to give them any aid whatever, and empowered all persons to take possession of their property.

Then, in a gracious gesture, hoards of criminals in the prisons - rapists, murderers and thugs - were offered pardon and reward if they would join the extermination army.

A Waldensian delegation went to meet the papal legate Cataneo, assuring him that they were loyal, peace-loving subjects of the king. But convinced that his forces could easily exterminate them, he brushed aside their plea.

Well, Cataneo advanced up the valley toward the Waldensian strongholds with no resistance. And soon he was ready to force his way into the Val di Angrogna. This valley is a magnificent array of

narrow gorges and open vales, walled in by majestic mountains. It terminates in a circular basin called the Pra del Tor. Surrounded by snowy peaks, it was the seat of their college.

In the Pra del Tor, or Meadow of the Tower, Cataneo expected to surprise the mass of the Waldensian people, who, after the rejection of their plea for peace, had now gathered into this strongest refuge which their hills afforded.

Since their humble petition for peace had been contemptuously rejected, the Waldenses now had three options - to go to mass, to be butchered as sheep, or to fight for their lives. They decided on the last. But first, all who could not bear arms must be removed to the place of safety, the Pra del Tor.

These valley folk fell on their knees and cried aloud, "O God of our fathers, help us! O God, deliver us!"

"Cataneo's soldiers passed the height of Rocomanent, and into the narrow defiles beyond. Here great rocks overhang the path. Majestic chestnut-trees stretch their branches across the way. And far down thunders the stream.

"Between him and his prey rose a steep unscaleable mountain, called the 'Barricade'. It runs like a wall across the valley, forming the strength of a citadel.

"Would his advance have to end here? It seemed as if it must. However, he searched and found an entrance... a long, narrow, and dark chasm. This forms the one only path that leads to the head of Angrogna.

"Cataneo boldly ordered his men to enter this frightful gorge. The pathway through this chasm is a rocky ledge on the side of the mountains. It is so narrow that barely two abreast can advance along it. If challenged either in front, or in rear, or from above, there is absolutely no retreat. Nor is there room to fight.

"The pathway hangs midway between the stream at the bottom of the gorge and the mountain summit. Above the path, the naked cliff runs sheer up for at least 1,000 feet. And the cliff leans over the path in stupendous masses, which look as if about to fall. In some spots cracks admit the rays of the sun, to make the gloomy pass visible. Occasionally a half-acre or so of level space gives standing-room on the mountain's side to a clump of birches, or a chalet, with its bit of meadow.



“The chasm itself runs on for one to two miles. Then there is a burst of light, and a sudden flashing of white peaks, as it opens into an amphitheatre. And in there is a meadow - so large that a whole nation might camp in it.

“It was into this terrible defile that the Papal legate and his murderers now entered. They proceeded, as best they could, along the narrow ledge. They were now nearing the Pra. And it seemed impossible for their prey to escape. Assembled on this spot the Waldensian people had but one neck, and Cataneo’s papal mob planned to sever that neck in one blow.”

But evidently the Supreme One was watching over the valley dwellers. The agency about to save them was one of the frailest in all nature.

“A white cloud, no bigger than a man’s hand, unseen by the invaders, but keenly watched by the Waldenses, was seen to gather on the mountain’s summit, about the time the army would be entering the defile. That cloud grew rapidly bigger and blacker. Then it began to descend. It came rolling down the mountain’s side, wave on wave, like an ocean tumbling out of heaven - a sea of murky vapor.

“It fell right into the chasm in which was the papal army, sealing it up, and filling it from top to bottom with a thick black fog. In a moment the invaders were in night. They were bewildered and stupefied. They could see neither in front nor behind. They could neither advance nor retreat. They halted in a state bordering on terror. (Antoine Monastier, *A History of the Vaudois Church*. London: Religious Tract Society, 1848, pp. 133-134)

The Waldenses saw this as their deliverance. It had given them the power to repel the invader. Coming out from their hiding places, they spread themselves out and while the host stood riveted beneath them, they tore up huge stones and rocks, and sent them thundering down into the ravine.

The invaders were crushed where they stood. Then, when some of the Waldenses boldly entered the chasm, sword in hand, and attacked them in front, the attackers were seized with panic. Cataneo’s forces jostled one another. In the struggle, they threw each other down. Some were trodden to death. Others went rolling over the precipice, to be crushed on the rocks below, or drowned in the torrent.

So the guardians of the uncorrupted Bible manuscripts were spared. And the manuscripts would remain preserved.

## 69 The Stranger on a White Horse

In the early days of Methodism, a Welsh minister, John Jones, of Flintshire, was travelling on horseback through a desolate region of northern Wales. He observed on the other side of the hedge a rough-looking man armed with a reaping hook, following him, aiming to come up with him at a gate where it was necessary for Jones to dismount.

Jones had a bag of money which he had collected for a chapel building, and he felt that not only the money but possibly his life was in danger. He stopped his horse and bowed his head to pray for special aid and protection. The horse was restive to go on, and looking up, Jones saw a horseman on a white steed immediately alongside. He was surprised. His report says:

“I described to the stranger the dangerous position I was in, and how relieved I felt by his sudden appearance. He made no reply; and on looking at his face, I saw that he was gazing intently toward the gate. I followed his gaze, and saw the reaper emerge from his concealment, and run across a field to our left. He had evidently seen that I was no longer alone, and had given up his intended attempt.

“All cause for alarm being now removed, I endeavoured to enter into conversation with my deliverer, but again without the slightest success. Not a word did he give me in reply. I continued talking, however, as we rode toward the gate, though I could not understand his silence. Only once did I HEAR HIS VOICE. Having watched the reaper disappear over the brow of the hill, I turned to my companion and said, ‘Can it for a moment be doubted that my prayer was heard, and that you were sent for my deliverance by the Lord?’ Then the horseman uttered a single word, ‘Amen’. Not another word did he give, though I continued attempting to get from him replies to my questions, both in English and in Welsh.

“We were now approaching the gate. I hurried on my horse to open it, and having done so, waited for him to pass through. He came not. I turned my head to seek for him. He was gone. He was not anywhere behind me. He could not have gone through the gate, nor

made his horse leap over the high hedges on either side of the road. Where was he? Could it be possible that I had seen no man or horse at all, and the vision was but a creature of my imagination? I tried hard to convince myself that this was the case, but in vain; for unless someone had been with me, why had the reaper, with his murderous-looking sickle, hurried away? No; this horseman was no creature of mine. Who could he have been?

“But one thing, and that was that my prayer had been heard, and that help had indeed been sent me at a time of peril. Full of this thought, I dismounted, and throwing myself on my knees at the side of the road, offered up a prayer of thankfulness to Him who had so signally preserved me from danger.

“I then mounted my horse and continued on my journey.”

There is a ring of genuineness in this testimony. Not a few times in the Bible accounts, were human eyes opened to see the presence of the angel messengers. But one's faith in the ministry of angels rests on no visible signs or impressions of the senses. We have the far surer Word of the Lord that all the angels are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation.

## 70 Lost Their Voices?

On the John Ankerberg TV Show in the USA John Ankerberg tried to cast doubt on Gail Riplinger's statement (in her best-selling, heavily documented book, *New Age Bible Versions*), that some of the apostate "scholars" for the false, new Bible versions had subsequently lost their voice.

Ankerberg asked Dr. Don Wilkins, an opponent of the King James Bible, if this was so. Unfortunately, Dr. Wilkins opened his mouth to respond – and no sound came out. He lost his voice!

The cameras caught the poignant moment, but to cover up what happened, Ankerberg ordered the cameras to stop and cut out the telling scene.

After the incident was publicised, John Ankerberg's people were claiming that it never happened. But two scholars who were guests on the same show – Dr. Joseph Chambers and Dr. Samuel Gipp – testified that it did. Then Ankerberg's organisation had to admit the event.

- *Flashpoint*

## 71 The Weather Obeys

For several centuries, Britain's spirituality and commitment to the God of the Bible paralleled her period of greatness. This commitment waned after 1940's. So did Britain. Is there a connection?

During those centuries, Britain was saved from destruction on many occasions:

1. In 1588, the powerful SPANISH ARMADA was sent with papal blessing against Bible-based Britain. In men, tonnage and guns, the Spaniards had a 3 to 1 advantage over the English. Britain looked doomed. Then suddenly a violent storm blew up which destroyed most of the enemy fleet. Prior to this, Queen Elizabeth I had led the English people in prayer for deliverance. Now she had a medal struck, inscribed, "He blew with His winds and scattered them."

2. At Waterloo in 1815, a mighty downpour of rain bogged down the big guns of NAPOLEON and gave time for reinforcements to bolster Wellington's troops – and save Britain from defeat.

3. WORLD WAR I: On April 22, 1915, Germany launched her first gas attack. The wind direction was supposed to be settled for the next 36 hours, but it suddenly reversed and the gas was blown back to the enemy lines with disastrous results. (The Bible speaks of God's dealing with the wind, 116 times.)

4. WORLD WAR I: Toward the end of August 1914, the German army swept all before it into the heart of Belgium and France, and on toward the English Channel, causing Kaiser William to declare, "I will have Christmas dinner in Buckingham Palace." The British people realised that only God could help, and the nation humbly knelt in prayer. In the sky appeared what are today known as the "Angels of Mons". More than once they appeared, causing the Germans to halt and retreat in disorder, and their horses to panic. The "Angel of Mons" incident was observed by many British troops. As this book you are now reading was being proof-read by my colleague John Paige of Serpentine, Victoria, Australia, he commented to me,

“My father Phillip Guy Page aka Paige was there and confirmed the angel’s appearance.” Confirmation also came from Captain Haywood of the British Intelligence Service. The Kaiser missed his dinner in Buckingham and died in exile, chopping wood. Again, prayer was answered.

5. WORLD WAR II: Hitler brought up a host of secretly built weapons, to destroy Britain. These included the mighty Luftwaffe, the biggest air force in the world; the biggest battleships in the world; the powerful rockets; the pilotless “doodlebug”, and many others. Only divine intervention could save Britain when she stood alone against Hitler during most of 1940 and half of 1941.

In May, 1940, it looked as though the British troops, 350,000 of them, would be trapped at Dunkirk and destroyed by the Luftwaffe. France, Holland and Belgium had fallen and Britain was next for defeat!

A day of National Prayer was proclaimed for May 26, 1940, led by King George VI, prime minister Winston Churchill and members of the British Cabinet, in Westminster Abbey. Also, throughout the Commonwealth, millions committed the cause in this dark hour to God.

Within 48 hours, a great storm broke over Flanders, giving cover to the British forces and hampering the enemy. General Halder, Chief of the German General Staff, complained in his diary: “Bad weather has grounded the Luftwaffe and now we must stand by and watch countless thousands of the enemy getting away to England right under our noses”. (May 30, 1940)

At the same time, the English Channel, which is notoriously rough, became miraculously calm, enabling hundreds of small craft from Britain to come over to France and assist in evacuating the troops from Dunkirk. Back in England, the troops re-grouped, were re-armed and helped to overthrow Hitler and bring deliverance to Europe.

## 72 You Can't kill Me!

Anyone sent on the long road to Qinghai Prison had pangs of dread. Many entered this prison, but few ever left. Mr Chang wondered if God would protect him as He did Daniel, or if He would let him die, as He did Stephen.

Qinghai is a barren, flat land with hard, reddish soil and clumps of poisonous greenish grass. The prison guards rationed so little food to the inmates and worked them so hard that many tried eating the grass. Then they died of poisoning.

If anyone tried to escape, there was nowhere to go. A prisoner was easily found on the flat terrain. Besides, the weather in Qinghai is windy year-round, unbearably cold at night even in summer, and bitterly cold in winter.

Mr Chang had never met anyone released from Qinghai. He didn't expect to be released, nor did he plan to escape. But he knew he didn't have to be afraid, for God was with him.

The guards escorted him to a room for questioning.

"Do you know why you're here?" The words were very familiar by now.

"Because I talk about my Friend Jesus." Mr Chang answered as patiently as before.

"You can't talk about Him."

"I know."

"Are you going to quit?"

"No, I cannot."

"Do you know what we'll do to you if you don't quit?"

"What can you do? *You can't kill me!*" Mr Chang could hardly believe he had said these words!

The guards glared at each other, then nodded. *This old man is challenging us, they thought. Who is he to say we can't kill him?*

### **Left hanging**

They took Mr Chang into another room and administered a form of Qing Dynasty torture. The guards tied his arms behind his back.



Then they tied a rope to the roof and hung him by his arms. They placed a millstone around his neck to make him heavier. Then they threw scoops of gravel at him off and on.

At the end of the working day a guard asked, “Are you ready to quit talking this Jesus nonsense?”

Mr Chang was in terrible pain. His arms felt like they would rip from his shoulder blades. He was bruised and bleeding all over, especially on his face. The stench of fresh and dried blood dulled his senses. The pain he was suffering screamed at him to say *yes*, he would quit. He even thought he would have to give in – but not today. Tomorrow, maybe, but for the sake of his Friend Jesus, no! not today.

“No, I cannot stop talking about my Friend Jesus.” To his ears dulled with pain, his voice sounded far away.

The guards left him hanging.

The next day the guards again entered Mr Chang’s cell. Again they threw shovelful after shovelful of sharp rocks against his body and asked him the same question: “Will you stop talking your Jesus nonsense?”

The pain was much worse the second day. His body bled easier because the rocks reopened many of his scabs. The remaining scabs itched, but he couldn’t scratch them. Mr Chang began to feel detached from his body. Oh, to be on firm ground instead of swinging from the roof! Again he was tempted to say yes, but no – he couldn’t do it. Tomorrow, maybe he would tomorrow – but for Christ’s sake, not today.

“No,” he again heard himself say, “I cannot stop talking about my Friend Jesus.” Again the guards left him hanging.

The guards re-entered his cell every day for a week. Each day they continued the torture and asked him the same question. And each time Mr Chang felt the same temptation but gave the same answer.

On the seventh day he looked dead. They took him down and threw him on the dead pile. Some time later Mr Chang came to and found himself prostrate atop hundreds of stinking, decaying bodies. He crawled off the pile and into the camp. *They had not been able to kill him!*

For the time being the guards thought it best to leave him alone. When Mr Chang entered the camp, his face and body were covered with scabs from the torture but, amazingly, his skin was soon clear and healthy again, and all pain in his arms and back vanished. The scabs flaked off easily, and his skin softened. No scars remained. Mr Chang thanked his Friend Jesus for healing him.

Again Mr Chang began asking his fellow inmates, “Do you know my Friend Jesus?” Many were interested in talking with him about Jesus, and soon he had a group of followers who liked to talk about their Friend Jesus. Frustrated, the guards decided it was time to teach him a real lesson.

### **Back on the dead pile**

The guards took Mr Chang into a cell. “Do you know why you are here?”

“Yes. It’s because I like to talk about my Friend Jesus,” Mr Chang replied, smiling. “He can be your Friend, too.”

“Be quiet!” the prison guard barked. “You are not allowed to talk about this Jesus. It’s against the law.”

“I know.”

“Are you going to stop?”

“If Chairman Mao himself were standing here asking me the same question, I would still say that I cannot stop talking about my Friend Jesus.”

Infuriated, the guards seized old Mr Chang, breaking both his arms and legs. They threw him out onto the dead pile once more.

Mr Chang walked back into the camp that same day. Now more inmates than ever were interested in learning about his special Friend.

The guards tolerated the activity for a time, but then they decided to teach him a lesson that would stop his witnessing once and for all. They had tortured him and broken his bones, but they hadn’t been able to kill him. If they couldn’t kill him, maybe the elements could.

It was winter, and the temperature was far below zero. They removed his clothes and tied his hands and feet to a post outdoors. Maybe he had been unconscious the first time they threw him on the dead pile. Maybe they had not actually broken his bones, and that was how he had walked back to camp unharmed. Maybe his body

was naturally immune to the poisons of Qinghai grass, and he thrived on the stuff. But the cold would kill him! This time they were sure they would be rid of this troublesome man.

Left alone in the dark, Mr Chang considered his options. He could freeze to death as the cold set in, or he could trust God and pray.

He prayed to his Friend Jesus. A Presence came and left. The ropes were loose! He wriggled his hands and feet out of the ropes. He was free! *An angel must have untied the ropes*, he thought.

He exercised all night to keep warm. But as the new day began to dawn, Mr Chang began to worry about what the guards might do if they found him untied. No doubt they would blame his friends in the camp. The guards might torture or even kill them.

Mr Chang didn't want to cause any grief to the other prisoners, so he retied his ankles. That was easy enough. But tying his wrists behind his back posed a problem. He needed an extra pair of hands! There seemed no human solution.

He prayed again. "Lord, You sent my guardian angel to untie me. Now, please send him back to tie me up again!"

The ropes tightened around his hands, and he was held fast to the post. It was none too soon. He could hear guards approaching.

When the guards found Mr Chang's skin rosy and warm instead of cold and blue, they were angry indeed. Why couldn't they kill this man who always talked about Jesus?

Grudgingly they began to untie the knots. Undoing the rope at his feet was no problem, but at his wrists the knot was so tight it took them a half hour to get it loose. Mr Chang couldn't help thinking to himself that his guardian angel either didn't know his own strength or had a delightful sense of humor!

Later, back in the prison, Mr Chang became known as the man the prison guards could not kill. From that time on, the guards stopped trying to teach him a lesson and looked the other way when he talked about his Friend Jesus.

## **Friend**

The years rolled by. Chairman Mao died, and the "Gang of Four" gained control briefly. Then in 1979, reform-minded Deng Xiaoping replaced the notorious Gang. Deng himself had suffered

under the Cultural Revolution, and the memory was fresh in his mind. Deng wanted to free those in prison, and Mr Chang was one of the first to be released. He is one of the few survivors of Qinghai. Out of 1,500 people who entered Qinghai, only 100 were left alive.

Today Mr Chang is in his eighties, but he looks like a man 20 years younger, and he has enough energy to tire a man half his age. He still talks about his Friend Jesus to whoever will listen.

Many people in China think the Cultural Revolution wasted years of their lives, but Mr Chang has a special reward from his so-called lost years. He proudly shows his collection of letters from other survivors of Qinghai. They tell him that his experience in prison inspired them to believe that God exists. They thank him for telling whoever would listen about his Friend Jesus.

## 73 “That’s impossible!”

*This story is printed exactly as received, without any alteration of grammar or spelling..*

It was the year of 2001 and I was 23 and never thought about God. I was a Catholic at the time and really never prayed or thanked God.

My Uncle whom I was living with was Christian and always spoke of God, And always asked me to join him to church. I was really not into it and had no care for what my uncle thought.

Well, one night I went out with a friend to a party and my uncle felt it was a bad idea and he told me not to go. I thought I would be fine, Just thought he was overreacting as usual, But before I left my uncle told me to pray, I said Fine whatever.

Then he told me to take his car cause it was new and good condition compared to what mine used to look like.

So off I went to the party by the time I left it was about almost 2 in the morning. And Me and My friend were walking to my car.

As we were walking 2 male men were walking behind us yelling Nasty remarks to us. But we started walking faster But they started running after us and we ran as fast as we can to get into the car.

As we got into the car, they started banging on the windows trying to bust them, I was so scared, My friend was trying to get her cell phone to dial 911, but in the panic at the moment I was trying to start the car but to my shock the car did not turn on.

For that second I really thought I was in a movie, As I tried to turn the car on the man managed to bust one of the windows, The first thing that came out of my mouth was GOD PLEASE HELP US!

The car immediately turned on. I hit the gas and went straight to the Police station.

As we made the report the police went to the my car to try to get fingerprints. That's when the officer came to me and said How did you get here. I said we drove here. He then said well that's impossible you have no battery.

I was in shock and so was the police officer.

He then told me that someone up there must really like me cause the men were later caught and one was a convicted rapist who have raped and killed there victims Before, I was In shock. And cried in tears praising the lord.

Since then I have accepted Jesus in my heart and now a Christian with a beautiful daughter one son and a baby on the way due in September.

God has really touched me in a way that nobody can explain, My friends has also changed and forever in are hearts we will have Jesus in are hearts.