

THE BEST
AMAZING TRUE



MISSION STORIES

FROM AROUND THE WORLD

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PREFACE

Hitherto the Lord hath led! What a joy in these pages to read how God is personally interested and active in the here and now of daily human life!

God's timing in answering prayer may be immediate (as when Elijah prayed for fire on Mount Carmel) or after real or apparent setbacks (as when Daniel was carried to Babylon as a captive). Sometimes answers may come—as illustrated in Jesus' resurrection—after a restful three-day sleep. Yet God's answers to our prayers will always be better, though at times different, than we imagined.

Satan was not incorrect in saying that God had placed a hedge around Job (see Job 1:9, 10). God places such a hedge about each of His children. Real and threatened breaks do occur in that hedge for various reasons, yet always God is there, bending over us with compassion, ready to listen and answer when we call.

It has been my joy to have Pastor Jim Zachary as a friend and to thrill at his accounts of God's personal workings around this earth. In the spotlight here is not the storyteller, nor the subjects of the stories, but the God who answers prayer. Today, as much as in Bible times, He is still a God who cares for us and who answers our prayers.

Come read. Then go, taste and see that He is good!

Gayle R. Wilson, M.D.

HANDS IN THE DARK

"The flood took out the bridge. There will be no train for months. If you need a place to stay, there is an inn across the river on that hill," the passing man counseled Jack at the train station in a village in Canada.

Jack stepped out of the tiny waiting room and headed for the inn. It was almost midnight. The young literature evangelist picked up a stick as he approached the flooded river, which was flowing over the bridge. Feeling his way by striking the bridge surface with his stick, he crossed the river. As he stepped onto land, a large log struck the bridge and skidded over the top.

He stared into the darkness of the moonless night. Ahead he saw a light. As he approached, he saw it was the back of a restaurant. Knocking on the door, he could hear voices inside. Again he knocked. Suddenly the door opened, and a drunken man with a knife stood before him. Jack felt the pressure of the knife against his jacket as the man threatened him. Then he suddenly turned away and shut the door.

What should Jack do? Looking higher he saw another light. Praying that it was coming from the inn, he began to walk toward the light. He climbed a hill that was muddy from the rain. Soon he found himself stumbling over a rough stony area. After several minutes of climbing, he reached a level surface. His spirits lifted; the light was nearer now, and the climb was nearly over.

Suddenly he felt two hands grasp his shoulders and pull him backward. "Who's there?" he called, thinking of the drunken man. There was no response. He could not feel the person who had taken hold of him. *What is in front of me?* he thought. Now on his knees he felt for the surface of the ground in front of him. There was nothing there! Finally he found a small stone and gave it a toss. There was no sound. Thinking that the stone must have rolled into some mud, he picked up a second stone. As Jack was about to throw it, he heard, far below, the faint splash of the first stone.

Now he knew that his guardian angel had held him from falling to his death. Hearing voices, he saw the lights of miners changing shifts. At his call, they waited for him. They told him that an abandoned mine shaft 2,000 feet deep lay open behind him.

This experience happened to Jack, my father, while he was still single. I thank the Lord for that angel. My four sisters and I owe our lives to his intervention. We look forward to the day when we shall meet him face-to-face and thank him for saving the life of our father.

MORE THAN SIXTY YEARS OF EVANGELISM

I praise God for *The Quiet Hour*. In 1970, Jean and I left California and began eighteen precious years of missionary work. It was in the Philippines where I first experienced the encouraging help of *The Quiet Hour*.

We were assigned as professors at Mountain View College, a missionary school. Each weekend, students and teachers hike to distant villages to assist in the worship services and to conduct public and personal evangelism.

A letter was written to *The Quiet Hour* requesting help with transportation for the evangelistic outreach. What a wonderful day it was when Elder L. E. Tucker arrived to dedicate the six used military weapons carriers, which had been converted into buses for evangelism! Now the students could reach out even farther. During the next six years, the students planted forty new churches with the help of their transportation system.

The church grows when the entire membership is involved in sharing Jesus with the community. But villagers had a difficult time supplying materials for the new and enlarged church buildings. Often the members went into the jungle to cut trees for construction. *The Quiet Hour* frequently provided sheets of metal roofing.

Then there was the day when the Manobo tribal chief asked for teachers to come to his village. This animist tribe had only a handful of members who had even minimal reading skills. What a blessing when funds from *The Quiet Hour* listeners made it possible to send teachers into several remote jungle villages. Today, more than 3,000 of these people are now followers of Jesus. Again, thanks to the ministry of *The Quiet Hour*.

Following my six years at Mountain View, I spent three years as a professor at the theological seminary near Manila. The most effective type of training is by demonstration, so a citywide evangelistic program for Manila was organized. We needed Bibles. A letter was written once again to *The Quiet Hour*. "Can you help us with 100,000 Bibles?" was our request. Church members in Manila prayed for those Bibles, which were to be used in the outreach of 300 small groups. The day the letter arrived in Redlands a special prayer was offered for Bibles. Before the day was over, a *Quiet Hour* supporter called to say, "I feel impressed that you can use funds for Bibles." This dear sister pledged \$50,000 for Bibles. The Holy Spirit touched the hearts of hundreds of supporters. In four months the Bibles were ordered. What a wonderful day when church leaders in Manila unloaded the hundreds of boxes containing the 100,000 Bibles! On the final day of the public meeting, 1,500 people were baptized. In the weeks that followed, hundreds more were baptized, and eleven new churches were formed.

UNDER HIS WINGS

During my academy days, my father had moved the family to a farm near Oshawa Missionary College in Canada. Days were spent between the classroom and caring for the farm. Everyone helped. My four sisters and I learned how to work.

Family worship was always a part of the start of a new day for the family. Dad would read a portion of Scripture or a page or two from a Spirit of Prophecy book and then lift his voice in prayer to God.

One day I was hoeing a field of vegetables. Dorene, my oldest sister, was cultivating an adjoining field with a spring-tooth cultivator. This field was being prepared for sowing a new crop. The cultivator was being pulled by three horses hitched up to a three-horse eveners.

Molly was the family favorite. This horse was a delight to work with. While cultivating endless rows of corn, Molly would turn into the next row without any guidance. For my sister Dorene, Molly was easy to guide.

Suddenly I heard a noise. As I turned, I noticed that the tongue of the cultivator had dropped out of the ring on the yoke. As the wooden beam struck Molly's feet, she began to run. By the time I saw them, the three horses were at a full gallop.

Dorene was clinging to the metal seat. The reins had fallen to the ground. I knew my sister could fall under the cultivator at any moment. She seemed seconds away from death or serious injury.

"Dear Lord, help me," I prayed. The reins had fallen under the cultivator. The horses were galloping in a large circle. I ran toward the runaway team. Taking hold of a bridle I brought the horses to a stop. Dorene was still clinging to the seat. We thanked God for His protection as we unhitched the horses from the broken cultivator.

GOD HEARS AND ANSWERS PRAYER

The most precious gift parents can pass on to their children is a strong faith in God. I thank the Lord that my parents displayed a strong faith in their daily lives. One incident stands out in my mind. It was during the Great Depression. My father had lost his little business. The family had nowhere to turn for help.

After considerable prayer my parents decided that they had to leave our home in a small village and move to a city where Dad hoped to find employment. The move was made, and Dad began to search for work.

It wasn't long before all his savings were gone. We did not meet the minimum residence requirements to receive welfare. The picture is still very vivid in my mind. Our family was seated at the table. Mother had opened the last can of food and sliced the last loaf of bread. The cupboard was empty.

We sat around in semi-darkness early one morning. Dad did not have the funds to pay for electric power, so our electricity had been cut off. We bowed our heads in prayer. Dad prayed simply, "Dear Father, thank You for the tomatoes and bread. You know, Lord, that this is all the food we have. Please provide food for our lunch and supper today. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Mother placed a small portion on each plate of the seven family members, and we started to eat. There was a knock at the door. In his small-town manner, Dad called out, "Please, come in." The door opened. I saw the silhouette of a man as he stood in the doorway. He stood there for a few moments taking in the picture of the morning meal. He said nothing, closed the door, and left.

An hour later he returned. He brought with him a bushel basket filled with food. Within an hour my father's prayer was answered. Right on the top of the bushel was a large ham. Mother thanked the Lord for the ham. She traded it for a goodly supply of potatoes. I knew then, as I do now, that God hears and answers prayer.

LEST WE FORGET

As I travel from country to country, I have been touched by the conditions in which many of our believers live and work. Recently, I sat in a church filled with worshipers. But no church workers were present; they were imprisoned for their faith. The Bibles the members so reverently held were smuggled into the country, for the government does not permit the publishing of religious literature.

In another country, I visited a little house on the edge of a city. Each Sabbath, church members secretly entered the house to worship; they sang in whispers to prevent detection.

Then one day police raided the house and arrested the pastor. He remains in prison.

In another country, I met an elderly man sitting by himself in church. When he had refused to send his children to school on Sabbath, the authorities took his children and sent them to a communist boarding school. Today the children are atheists. Only God knows the depth of this man's sorrow.

I visited a Christian community service leader who cannot preach in a church or even make a comment during Bible study time, for religion is monitored where he serves.

In yet another country, a Christian pastor's home was bombed by a radical religious group. In spite of fear for his family, he continues to preach the gospel.

A teenager came to evangelistic meetings, her face and arms covered with bruises. Her father had beaten her to discourage her from accepting Jesus. One night as she returned from a Christian meeting, her father met her and tried to drag her to the barn for another whipping. She clung to a water pipe. Her father gave a violent yank, and the water pipe broke. He forgot the whipping as he repaired the broken pipe. Today, this young woman rejoices in the Lord in spite of persecution.

I stepped into a pastor's one-room apartment in another country. A bare light bulb hung in the center of the room. The pastor knelt on the floor beside his bed, preparing a Bible study. I prayed that, for his safety, the police had not seen me enter the apartment. It would have been far too dangerous to visit the secret house-church. Yet, this godly pastor and his family serve the Lord.

Unsung heroes live and work in many dark and dangerous places around the world. They are determined to serve God at any cost. We must pray for those who are suffering for the Lord, and we must never take our religious freedom for granted.

SAVED BY AN ANGEL

Jack and Viva Zachary always gathered their five children together for family worship, even during the busy days of sowing and harvest time on the farm. Every member of the family helped in the field.

It was time for the hay to be brought in and stacked to provide for the cattle and horses during the long Canadian winters. The family lacked today's modern machinery, so there was a great deal of hand work. As soon as the hay was mowed and dried properly, the hard work of bringing it into the hay loft began.

After a hearty breakfast, my father, sisters, and I headed for the hay field. We climbed on the empty wagon for the ride to the hayfield. The horses were guided to pull the wagon between two rows of hay that had been raked into long windrows.

Dad and I picked up forkfuls of hay and placed them on the wagon. My sisters had been trained in how to move the fork loads of hay to properly load the hay wagon. In about thirty minutes Dad and I were lifting the hay almost ten feet to the top of the load.

The load was pulled into the barn. A large fork was forced into the hay, and the clamp tightened. The fork load of hay was lifted into the barn and dropped into the hay mow.

One day we had completed the task of loading the wagon when I heard one of my sisters cry out in fear. I remembered that she was at the front of the wagon. She had been standing near Molly. Molly was a horse that had been used for many years to pull the family plow and cultivator. Pulling the wagon was a different matter. When Molly felt the back straps hit her on her rump, she was ready to kick or run.

My sister had fallen toward Molly. As I ran to the front of the wagon, she was hanging on to the hay just inches from Molly's back. I took hold of my sister and lifted her to the ground before she could touch Molly's rump.

What was holding my sister from landing on Molly's back, only to be kicked and run over by the wagon? I knew that the hay around a newly loaded wagon was loose. I reached up with my fork. Considerable hay fell to the ground at my touch.

That night at family worship we all prayed, thanking God for sparing the life of Delores.