



Food from Ravens

Stories of God's Power
& Provision Through Prayer

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* Full names withheld for privacy.

Several years ago, while listening to one of our World Mission Prayer League missionaries share her testimony of God's supply in a very specific way, I felt a nudge from the Holy Spirit to collect these stories and write them up for people to read and be inspired by the greatness of our God.

We were at the annual Hunky Dory Camp at that time, and as I spoke with several people about it, they were supportive of the idea. But, for one reason or another, the project did not take hold until about two years later – again at Hunky Dory – when Wanda Manson and I were listening to a missionary sharing another of these experiences.

Wanda and I then seriously discussed this project and began to collect stories of the Lord's answers to specific prayers, of his provision or intervention in some situation, or of outright miracles.

In the Scriptures, we read of many times when God commanded his people to tell of his deeds to their children and to succeeding generations, so that they do not forget and lose faith. These stories need to be shared, and here they are!

Stories in this book are the result of this admonition to God's people. They are accounts of God's working in the lives of WMPL missionaries over the years, and it is our heartfelt desire that they bless your life and help us all to see what a great God we have.

The title of the book refers to the story of God's miraculous supply of food for the prophet Elijah found in 1 Kings 17. The stories in *Food from Ravens* again tell of God's power and his care for his own.

To God be the glory!

Jan Tollefson
Mexico/WMPL USA

There have been many times throughout my life when I have been deeply moved while hearing a story of what God is doing in this world, of how he has protected, supported and provided for his children. I find stories like this to be a huge encouragement to my faith. Our God is certainly a God of wonder and might. These stories are a testimony to the character of God and his abiding love for each of us.

Throughout my years working at World Mission Prayer League, I have often thought that these stories of God's faithfulness should be written down so that they could continue to encourage others. Once Jan and I began this project, I was excited to read the stories as they came in. They are powerful stories that point to an all-powerful, loving God.

The stories found in *Food from Ravens* tell of the God who is alive and well and who is at work today. And that means that we all have a story to tell. Psalm 9:11 says, "Sing praises to the LORD, who sits enthroned in Zion! *Tell among the peoples his deeds!*" (ESV) [emphasis mine]. My prayer is that this book will inspire each of us to continue to tell our own story of how God is working in our lives. I also hope that you will be as encouraged by these "God moments" as I am.

As the old hymn says,

"We've a story to tell to the nations
That shall turn their hearts to the right,
A story of truth and mercy,
A story of peace and light,
A story of peace and light."¹

Thanks be to God!

Wanda Manson
WMPL Canada

¹ From *We've a Story to Tell to the Nations*. Henry Ernest Nichol. Public Domain.

We are grateful, first of all, for the intervention, provision and guidance of our Lord through all the years of ministry of the World Mission Prayer League in various parts of the world. These stories are evidence of that, and give us much cause for thanksgiving and trust in our wonderful God. Our heartfelt thanks go out to each of you who submitted stories for this book. There are certainly a lot of other stories out there that could have been included, but we thank you for responding.

We are also grateful for those who have contributed in different ways so that these stories could be ready for printing and distribution. Thank you to Ruthie Lee Wagner for laying the groundwork for the book. Thank you also, Chris McWeeny, for your untiring work on editing and working on many other details of the preparation for printing. Thanks to Kelly Kinnunen for a great job on designing the cover and layout. Also, thank you to Emily Adamow, Carol Lackey, LaVonne Nerge, Kristin McWeeny, and Deb Ringblom for your diligent help to edit these stories. We are so grateful to you and thank God for you. And we thank God for each of you who read these stories, and give thanks for your prayers and encouragement.

May the Lord be honored and lifted up through these testimonies of God's working in the hearts and lives of so many people.

Jan Tollefson and Wanda Manson

July 2015



Deliverance

A FOOTHOLD ON THE MARDI KHOLA* Nepal

— Joyce Ruohoniemi

Prayer: For God to bring resolution
to a strike against the Mission project



Top: Nepali worker using drill press at
Nepal Hydro Electric, Butwal 1989
Bottom: Suspension bridge

Tensions ran high among the team of missionaries newly arrived at the site of the hydroelectric project on the banks of the Mardi Khola River in the Pyuthan District of Nepal. Just above the housing area, under the big tree, the crowd of strikers was shouting and milling about in agitation. The leader called for the death of the project manager and suggested that all the foreigners be put into bags and dropped into the rain-swollen river.

The management had taken its stand against the strike, refusing to negotiate until other representatives were found to replace the three who had threatened and bullied their way to power, then disrupted work for weeks. The acting project manager, although firm in his conviction that he had made the right decision to not give in to unreasonable demands, was fearful for his family and the rest of the team. At that time there were five families, including six children who had come from Norway, Northern Ireland, England, and Australia to work in this remote area. They had come to build a power plant to provide electricity for the people, as well as to bring the light of the Good News of the one true God and Jesus Christ, whom he had sent. Was it all to end before it had even begun?

“God has brought us here and he is with us, but we need to pray!”

The two young engineers came into my small sitting room. Indeed, we had been praying – daily, several times a day, alone and together. But, like the three young men at the threat of the fiery furnace, we knew “...our God whom we serve is able to deliver us.... But if not...” (see Daniel 3:17,18 ESV).

God has plans and purposes far beyond our understanding, and our part is to remain faithful and trusting no matter what happens. We knew word had been sent out to the Mission headquarters in Kathmandu and that people were praying for us there also. As a new awareness of freedoms and expectations had come upon the country following political demonstrations in the spring, strikes and threats had been occurring in other projects as well. Now, here in my living room, with the shouting a few hundred yards away, we prayed again, committing ourselves, our families, our Nepali co-workers, and the project into God’s hands.

The next morning the word came. The workers had turned from the strike leaders and were willing to elect new representatives and to negotiate with the management. Work resumed. The Lord had answered. One crisis

had passed, and although there were many more to come, we had made a foothold on the rocky, sandy banks of the Mardi Khola.

A Sunuwar woman named Maili met the Lord while a patient at the Okhaldhunga Hospital. She could not read Nepali but found comfort in just having the Book. Her son was very angry when he heard about her conversion and told her she must leave. Maili came to Kathmandu and lived on a small pension. She was still praising the Lord.

The son, back in his village, became very ill and called for the *jockari* (witch doctor), who performed his rites using sacrifices of eggs or chickens. After the first ritual, the *jockari* was knocked to the ground. He tried a second time and the same thing happened. Trying a third time, he increased his chanting and again was knocked to the floor. He rose up and asked, “There is a Power in this house greater than the power of my gods – what is it?” The son thought and in his weakness replied, “It must be the Book – that Christian book my mother lives by.”

It wasn’t many days before the son made his way to Kathmandu to find his mother. She is now back with her son in a village near Okhaldhunga, and there is a small fellowship of believers there.

During one of my terms in Pakistan, I was living on my own and was the only one running the middle school. One time, when I was going through some major struggles, I was feeling very alone... and worried... and panicky. God seemed so far away, and my problems seemed overwhelming. I don’t remember any of the details now, but I do remember experiencing a feeling of relief at some point. About three weeks later, I received a letter from my mother in Michigan. She told me the Lord had awakened her during the night with an intense burden to pray for me. In the letter she asked me what was happening. In those days it took about three weeks for a letter to reach us. She told me the exact day and hour when she was prompted to pray. Sure enough! It was the very day and hour when I was feeling the most overwhelmed. It wasn’t so much the answer to prayer that impressed me, but the fact that God did indeed know my need. I wasn’t really alone, and God does care. I was also grateful for a mother who was so sensitive to the prompting of the Holy Spirit!

*Adapted excerpt from *Fellow Workers*,
Special Issue 1991

A GREATER POWER IN OKHALDHUNGA

Nepal

— Ruthie Overvold



A *jockari* (Nepali witch doctor)

A MOTHER’S PRAYER

Pakistan

— Pat Lelvis

Prayer: A mother is prompted to
intercede

BE THEIR GOD

Nepal

— Carol Gurung

Prayer: That the girls in her dorm
would come to know the Lord



Top: Nangsali (2nd from right) and other students with Bibles
Middle: Johan, Nangsali's brother, made a sign for the *Kuriakos* church
Bottom: His people

I sat on scrub grass overlooking familiar terraced fields, a ten-hour walk in the mountains from the road to Kathmandu, and prayed again for the rural people I'd worked among for two years. Nearly every day granted me opportunities to share about life in Christ, but I'd seen little immediate fruit for God's kingdom. Now it was time to leave. Our Mission's involvement with development projects in that area was winding down and I was needed elsewhere.

In my new assignment, I was responsible for the youngest girls in a school dorm in Kathmandu. God worked into his plan an unexpected link: nine-year-old Nangsali, who attended the school on a Mission scholarship, came from that same mountain ridge where I had first worked.

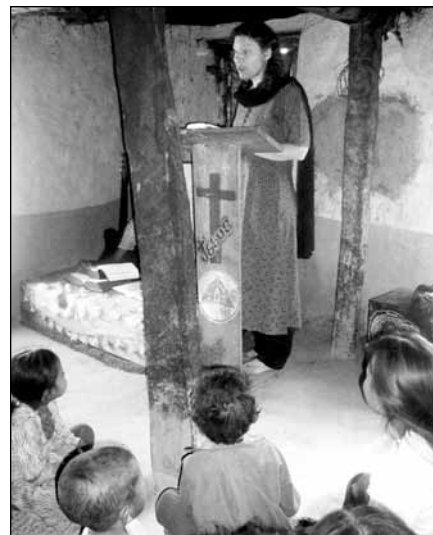
While kneeling by the tin trunk in my bedroom one August morning in 1987, I meditated on Genesis 17. A cassette of praise music played quietly in the background. Just as I read, "I will be their God," from the promise to Abram in verse 8, I heard the same words sung: "be their God." The cassette song – based on Revelation 21:3,4 – celebrated the fulfillment of that promise for every people group. The coincidence of simultaneously reading and hearing those words caught my attention, and I prayed specifically for the fulfillment of those good plans among my dorm girls and beyond. I noted it in my journal.

That same afternoon, Nangsali and three other girls bought Bibles which they showed to me and asked if I would teach them. Sitting on Nangsali's bed, we looked at Romans 3:23, 6:23, John 3:16 and other verses as I explained the meaning of words like sin, holy, grace, repent and confess. Nangsali bubbled with excitement, "I'm so happy! It's really good news!" I told them what they could talk to God about for new life in Christ, but did not actually lead them in praying this particular prayer because I wanted them to do it with Jesus, not to please me. In addition, it was illegal in Nepal to "make" a person become a Christian. However, a couple of days later, I wrote in my journal: "Nangsali told me she is following Jesus." She was the first of the Hindu and Buddhist girls in her dorm to make this decision, but another twenty would join her before I had to leave my work at that school nine months later.

Nangsali grew up and we lost contact with each other for twenty-two years, until God arranged for our paths to meet again. Married now, Nangsali

lives and teaches in her home village on that same mountain ridge where I worked and prayed in my earliest days in Nepal. At her invitation, I hiked out to visit her in April 2009. The houses, terraced fields and rhythm of life in that community have changed little over the years, with one major difference – a church meets in the upstairs of Nangsali’s mud and stone home. When asked to share in the morning service of the *Kuriakos Fellowship*, I read from Revelation 21 and told them about the day their first follower of Jesus Christ, Nangsali, became God’s own. What a surprise to find out, only after telling them that story, that the name they chose for their church means “belonging to the Lord.”

I believe that the promise I simultaneously read and heard sung on cassette back in 1987 is for people of all ethnicities. It was for Abram, but it included girls from the school dorm and now includes the church that meets in Nangsali’s village. God is faithful to his Word. He will be their God, and they will be his people.



The author visits *Kuriakos Fellowship* in April 2009

I was a parish worker for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya (ELCK) serving the Kibera Church in Nairobi. I felt privileged and blessed to visit patients lying in beds along the walls of the large wards of Kenyatta Hospital. Speaking of God openly was part of the African culture among Christians as well as non-Christians. But best of all, the patients usually welcomed the witness and Word of Jesus.

But *not* every day! One day I was rejected completely by Bibi*, a woman from Turkana, an un-evangelized tribe in northern Kenya. When she saw me approaching her bed, she recoiled in terror and attempted to hide herself. Chills came over me, and I was brought to an immediate halt! Nurses explained her story of coming from a pastoral tribe in Kenya to the big city – by plane, all alone, and suffering excruciating pain from a torn body as a result of unqualified helpers attempting forced labor in an abnormal pregnancy.

Bibi had rejected the Nairobi medical staff, and they no doubt hoped the chaplaincy could help. Evidently not! But we knew One “...who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine” (Ephesians 3:20).

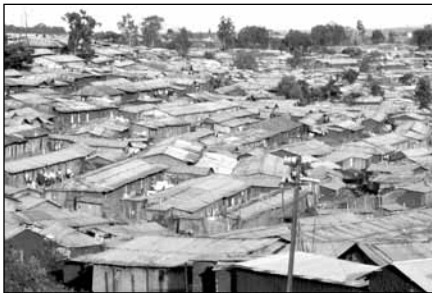
BIBI’S FEARS TURN TO FREEDOM

Kenya

— Margaret Wall

Prayer: For provision of a Turkana speaker

“The immediate transformation of Bibi as her fears were washed away was beautiful...”



The Kibera area of Nairobi, Kenya

Our heavenly Father had given me the gift of his Son, Jesus, as my Savior and Lord in my youth. He also revealed that his love and eternal life were meant for the whole world, being proclaimed by the power of his Spirit through believers. So, here was Bibi, sorely in need of a friend who could speak Turkana. I prayed that the Lord would provide.

Time passed, but even in the midst of other duties, I could not forget Bibi. Calling various friends and other missionaries for information of a person who knew the Turkana language was fruitless. But one Saturday, while in prayer, I felt this delay must not go on any longer. So I prayed, “Tell me, dear Lord: what shall I do?” – and God did! For I heard a voice in my spirit saying, “Go down to the Christian bookstore for help.”

So, there I was, at close to noon, asking for information concerning someone who spoke the Turkana language. The clerk inquired at an office nearby but returned empty-handed. Then he turned around and in a loud voice asked everyone in the store, “Does anyone here know of someone who speaks Turkana?”

To my surprise, someone standing behind me answered, “I do!” Here was Jon*, the Turkana evangelist, together with a missionary pastor, waiting in line to do shopping at the bookstore.

A wonderful answer to prayer? Oh yes! Thank you, Lord. But there’s more! Unknown to them, the Lord had sent them on a long journey to Nairobi to be the answer to a prayer that had not yet been prayed. For it is written, “Before they call I will answer, while they are yet speaking I will hear” (Isaiah 65:24).

By early afternoon, Jon was introduced to the staff at Kenyatta Hospital and ushered into Bibi’s ward. Standing a short distance away, we watched with excitement as Jon slowly walked toward Bibi’s bed and stopped for a moment. He gently greeted her in Turkana, her heart language and the only language she knew. The immediate transformation of Bibi as her fears were washed away was beautiful, a blessed miracle and confirmation of God’s love and mercy for those still sitting in darkness.

Our group of spectators grew larger as others joined us in watching the scene with wonder. Jon and Bibi, previously strangers to each other, were in earnest conversation. When it ended, we were ready with our questions

for Jon, especially the big one: “Why was Bibi so afraid of us?” I believe he paused for a moment before giving his unexpected answer: “Because she thought you were going to kill her.” We were shocked into silence.

After each of us left Bibi, Jon was willing to go the extra mile. He made several cassette tapes in Turkana telling the gospel story of the Father’s love in giving us Jesus. Jon shared that Jesus was given to save us from sin, death and the devil [“Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8).], and to grant eternal life to all who receive him.

No, I never visited Bibi at her bedside again, but I did see her sitting peacefully in the African sun with friends. She looked strong, enjoying the freedom from fear that a gracious God – whom she had not previously known – had now provided.

Bibi’s story took place about thirty years ago. Prior to and since that time, numerous Kenyan Christians, together with helpers from abroad, have lifted high the cross of Jesus in Kenya. Some have even given their own lives to do so. Should times of darkness and fear come our way, may we know “the eyes of the LORD range throughout the entire earth, to strengthen those whose heart is true to him” (2 Chronicles 16:9a).

“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined.”

Isaiah 9:2

*Names changed

It had been a dream, a calling, a stirring in my heart for years. Since the third grade at a mission-focused Bible camp, the desire had been growing in my heart to be a missionary. Now we were here. My husband and I had finally reached our “mission field.” We were in Kenya. The excitement of being commissioned and sent by our church with many prayers had worn off after weeks of Swahili language school in the capital city. Finally we had taken our first trip up-country to actually meet the Samburu people and see where we would be living.

It was a typical Samburu day: dry and hot. The ten-hour trip to Ngilai in the back of a pickup had actually been fun as we searched the landscape for wild animals. Then setting up our tent reminded me of our camping vacations. This was going to be great!

The next morning we drove another two hours “deeper into the country” to a location where there were no missionaries and no church. This was

BUT GOD CAN Kenya

– Anita Jackson



The author with Samburu friends

a potential site for us to live and do our Samburu language and cultural learning. The chief of the area met us to arrange the details. Unfortunately, he had been drinking alcohol, and his main interest was the money and projects we might provide if we came there. With his rifle unself-consciously balanced on his shoulder and pointing at us, we stood in the wind on the hot, dusty plateau and tried to carry on a conversation. More people from the area showed up to see who had brought a vehicle there. As we were unable to communicate except for forced smiles and gestures, we relied on our guide to do the discussion.

This was followed by more dusty driving back to the other missionaries' home and another day of only beans and rice for all our meals.

There was no running water. The little water I had gotten for washing up in our tent had bugs in it. The outhouse had bats in it. Mosquitoes buzzing outside probably carried malaria. Over our suppertime, we heard stories of poisonous snakes and other wild encounters. The cat I had held during that story time had fleas and I now felt itchy. My flashlight had dead batteries, but that didn't matter because I had earlier heard the story of elephants charging at fire at night (or a flashlight?): I'd be too scared to use it anyway. I was thirsty but didn't want to drink for fear of the wild path to the bat-filled outhouse at night.

As we tried to find a comfortable position for sleeping, the tears started flowing. "I thought I was called to be a missionary," I whispered as I cried harder. "I can't do this. This is too much. I can't live like this for the next years and years. I just can't do this." Surprisingly, my husband agreed with me. He gave me a hug to comfort me, and we fell asleep.

It was heavy on our minds as we awoke. After praying, my husband said, "You were right. We can't do this... but God can. If we needed God only for things that we could do ourselves anyway, would we have true faith that he can do miracles?"

"We can't do this, but God can. He'll need to do a miracle in us to make this work."

It's been eight years since that morning. It's true: God does miracles. He gave us his heart for the Samburu; we stayed and we love it.

The promise found in Isaiah 49:24,25 is one we have claimed many times:

Can the prey be taken from the mighty, or the captives of a tyrant be rescued? For thus says the LORD: “Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken, and the prey of the tyrant be rescued, for I will contend with those who contend with you, and I will save your children” (ESV).

Each time I have prayed this, I have noted the date in the margin of my Bible, followed by the date of the answer. The first time the Lord gave this promise was in April of 2001 when our night guard’s son disappeared off the streets of the capital – taken by soldiers. Two months later, in June, his family was able to locate him and obtain his release. We clung to this promise again in the same year when eight people from a sister organization were captured and imprisoned by the fundamentalist government. They were dramatically rescued that November. The last instance was in the year 2008, when two former colleagues were kidnapped by a criminal group and there was very little hope of their release. However, both survived the ordeal, as one was released and then the other rescued in October. What joy when God directs us to pray his Word and to receive the answers according to his promise!

“Here come the hallelujahs! Here come the hallelujahs!” Down the little village street the word was passed from hut to hut, until all heads were poking out of doorways and the shouting had grown to a crescendo. Yes, they had arrived! However, seeing the hatred of the people who were openly shouting threats, Ramón¹, the leader of the little band, decided to go on to a more remote village in the mountains which form a steep saddle at the junction of the states of Durango, Nayarit and Sinaloa, Mexico. No, there was no stopping now, although the little band was weary, thirsty and footsore from its all-day tramp up and down the rugged, rocky trails.

But wait! Was that not a friendly smile on the face of that old woman? True, she did resemble a witch, but she was smiling. And then she spoke quite kindly, it seemed: “Here, take this for your supper. It is all I have. But do not stop to eat until you are well away, for your lives will be in danger.” Another smile, and a few sausages were thrust into the leader’s hands. Then she disappeared into the darkness of her dismal hut.

CAPTIVES FREED

Central Asia

– Ruth*

Prayer: For deliverance from captivities

DEATH STALKS THE MOUNTAINS*

Mexico

– Ruth Temple

Prayer: For protection in travel



Remote village in Mexico

“First, they paused for a prayer of thanksgiving to God for their deliverance.”

¹ Ramón Osuna was a pastor with the WMPL Mexico work for many years

*Adapted excerpt from *World Vision*, April 1953

ERNESTO FINDS GOD Bolivia

— Sheldon & Sharon Groff

On through the main street plodded the little group, not speaking to any of the villagers, not looking to right or left. As it became apparent to the shouting villagers that they intended merely to pass through, they quieted down, until only three hungry dogs followed them to the edge of the village and out onto the trail.

At the end of half an hour the band dared to stop, considering that they were now sufficiently safe. First, they paused for a prayer of thanksgiving to God for their deliverance. Then Ramón, sensing that they should not eat the innocent-looking sausages, gave them to the dogs that were still with them. The little group continued to rest along the trail, feeling that it was better to take time out now and then travel again later under a full moon. As they lingered there, the dogs began to act strangely, and very shortly they rolled over on the ground and were dead! Again they lifted a prayer of thanksgiving heavenward – this time for deliverance from death by poison.

God used a young boy from the rural area of Apolo, Bolivia, to bring three of his relatives into the kingdom. During our final term in Bolivia, Ernesto came to La Paz with his family. He had a leg injury that had gone untreated for about a year. His leg had a cancerous tumor the size of a basketball. Unfortunately, the cancer had spread to his lungs, and his leg had to be amputated.

After staying with us for six months, Ernesto died in the Mission House living room. During Ernesto’s stay, he invited Jesus into his heart; and so did his mother, his grandmother, and another family member. While he and his family lived with us those six months, we celebrated his 15th birthday with a birthday cake and gifts. It was the first birthday celebration of his life. We remember this because we have never had a son, only two daughters living in Seattle. So for six months God gave Ernesto to us as a son. It was a wonderful experience for us, and although we had not been present at his birth, we had the privilege of celebrating his funeral and his going to heaven.

One of the most sincere prayers that I have ever heard came in a passionate and spontaneous cry from my daughter Ruth. She was, perhaps, six years old at the time. Her prayer was more than passionate: it was almost immediately effective as well.

We had been camping as a family on the side of Mount Cotopaxi, the tallest volcano on earth and an anchor for Ecuador's northern skyline. Dan and Kim Sollie and their young family were camping with us. We were having an absolutely lovely time until we packed into our aging Land Rover for an outing up the mountain. Our goal was a stone refuge at approximately 15,000 feet, from which attempts on the summit were staged. We didn't make it.

The road – a narrow path, really, carved into the side of the volcano – was covered in snow here and there. At one point, the snow was deep enough to nearly block the road altogether. I was driving and decided that it would be a good idea to take a bit of the shoulder with the right front tire. But there was no shoulder there. Just off the narrow roadbed there was nothing but gravelly ash and lumps of pumice. The ash pulled our vehicle right off the road, as if by suction. We slid sideways at a dizzying angle toward a precipice, somewhere below.

The car went stone quiet. It felt as though we could roll right over sideways – and a terrific wind from the peak was blowing its hardest, it seemed, to try to scour us right off the mountain. Carefully, we opened the back door, got everyone safely out, and wondered whatever to do.

That's when Ruth prayed. She hollered, really, above the wind, "Dear Lord! Get us off this mountain! And get us off now!" I will never forget her cry; it can still give me chills, now years later.

As for the Land Rover, it was hopeless to maneuver the vehicle forward or backward. With every meter forward or back, we slid another two meters down the slope. Finally, I backed the truck downward at an angle so that it faced perpendicular up the slope. Dan and I scavenged bits of rock and pumice to put under the tires. And inch-by-inch, we crept back to the road.

That night, safely again in our tents, we thanked God as a family for hearing Ruth's urgent prayer and preserving our lives. We learned something about prayer that day. Effective prayer doesn't require a theological degree.

GET US OFF THIS MOUNTAIN!

Ecuador

– Chuck Lindquist

Prayer: **For God's deliverance from danger**



Cotopaxi volcano, 19,347 ft.

"With every meter forward or back, we slid another two meters down the slope."

“She prays because she knows that God is present, that he is active and able, and that he cares for her immensely.”

GIVE THE POOR SOUL RELEASE*

Mexico

— May Rendahl Swanson

**Prayer: For deliverance from
spiritual attack**

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free.”

Luke 4:18

A child can pray effectively. A child knows precisely how to do it, without doubt or pretense: she prays for what she sees right before her eyes. She prays because she knows that God is present, that he is active and able, and that he cares for her immensely. She prays simply and earnestly.

God hears “adult” and sophisticated prayers, too, I am sure, prayed from books and manuals. But sophisticated prayers may not have fit so well that day on Cotopaxi. That was a day for hollered praying. And then, of course, it was a day to give simple and unpretended thanks.

I’m back in the thick of the fight – the fight against principalities, against powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness. The god of this world really has a hold on the minds of unbelievers. But the Lord has told us, “Resist him, steadfast in your faith...” (1 Peter 5:9a). So, we go on, trusting only in the Lord, praying as King Asa did: “Help us, O LORD our God, for we rely on you... let no mortal prevail against you” (2 Chronicles 14:11b).

Just after I came back to Mazatlán, we had such an experience of looking to God and finding help in our need. It was after our prayer meeting one evening that someone came to the chapel and called us to help a sick woman. She was having an “attack,” they said. Or, as they so often say, she was “bewitched.”

A group of Christians went to her hut. When we got there she was screaming and laughing wildly. She seemed to have unnatural strength: it took six people to hold her down to the cot. Two held her feet, two her hands, one her shoulders, and one her head. The woman struggled to free herself and even tried to bite those who were holding her.

A crowd had gathered and everyone was peering through the cracks in the wall of the house while listening to her raving. They were talking loudly, too, and that didn’t help matters any. I heard one woman say, “No wonder this happened to her. Her parents have left the old beliefs and have joined the evangelicals.” It is true that her parents are Christians and had been with us that evening in the chapel.

The father was standing in the doorway looking up the street to see if the doctor was coming. He had sent for him, but he didn’t have much hope because doctors just don’t bother to make a call on people they know are too poor to pay.

Some of us remained outside the one-room house and prayed. Others of our group went inside. As we all prayed quietly, the woman stopped laughing, but she was still struggling fiercely. Then Doña Fulana, a woman of deep faith, came up to the head of the bed. As she put her hand to the sick woman's face to anoint her, she prayed to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit to give the poor soul release. Eleanor [Schulz], whose hand was on the woman's shoulder, felt her relax. Her head sank back on the pillow, and at once she fell into a quiet sleep.

The people outside the hut were astonished and awed at the change. They began to talk in whispers. I heard no more scoffing at evangelicals for coming to pray. Instead I heard one woman say, "I'm going to send my children to Sunday school in the chapel next Sunday." May the Lord use this interest to the salvation of souls!

**Adapted excerpt from World Vision,
August 1956*

In the early years of the work in Ecuador, our Mission decided to start work in two provinces: Azuay and Cañar. Ray and Carol Rosales were assigned to work in Azuay and they lived in Cuenca. Audrey and I were assigned to Cañar and we lived in Azogues, its capital.

We rented a home in Azogues which had a room for a meeting hall. The day that we arrived in Azogues, there was a letter under the door which said, "We don't want heretics in our town. If you move in here, we will burn the house down with you inside. Beware!" Well, we moved in anyway, and soon began with regular meetings each week. The response was slow at first, but we would also go out to the town plaza where we had street meetings on Saturday, which was market day. It was not hard to gather a crowd because the place was filled with people who had come from communities and villages around there for market day.

Audrey would play the accordion, and we would sing some songs to attract people. Then I would give a message, often using picture rolls to illustrate the biblical message. Following that we would offer New Testaments and Bibles for sale and give out gospel tracts. We would also invite people to our worship services and Bible studies at the Mission.

The local priest was not very happy about this, and he soon figured out a way to counteract what we were doing. He borrowed a loudspeaker system

HANDS PARALYZED: GOD'S DELIVERANCE IN AZOGUES Ecuador

— John Johnson

**Prayer: For God to deliver them
from an angry crowd**



Azogues town plaza, site of
evangelistic street meetings

“When we were given
the signal to start
throwing the stones,
our hands were just like
they were paralyzed...”

from the United States Point Four program office located in the town and set it up to play loud music across the plaza. So we would alter the time of day that we had our street meetings. Sometimes we had them early in the day when he was busy with other things so we could finish before he got the system set up. Other times we would have them at noon or afternoon. He was not happy with us and would speak out very openly against us. One day he accused me of having once been a Franciscan priest who had negated his vows and then married a street woman. Audrey wasn't too happy about that, but we prayed for him, disregarded his threats, and kept on preaching the gospel.

Another day we came out to the plaza and found it packed with people, mainly market and country women. We began our service, but then we were interrupted by these women who began to claim we had no right to be there. A bunch of high school and university boys had also come out to listen to the message. And so arguments broke out throughout the plaza between these women and the university and high school students, who defended us. Then a police captain came over and got up on a bench and spoke to the crowd. He told them that there was freedom of speech in Ecuador and we had every right to be there. And those people didn't like what they were hearing. They were hearing that we were free to leave, but they had no right to harm us. Finally, a bunch of the students gathered around us and helped get our things together and escorted us back to the Mission.

The next day our cook went to buy food in the market and heard the other side of the story. These women had gotten together and concluded that since the men of the city weren't doing anything about these “heretics” being there, *they* were going to take measures to get us out of town.

That social class of women commonly wore two or three ankle-length woolen skirts, one on top of the other. When they came to the market, they would fold up the outer one from the bottom and this would serve to carry their fruits and vegetables that they bought or sold. That day they had filled them with rocks and had planned to stone us. But they said, “When we were given the signal to start throwing the stones, our hands were just like they were paralyzed, and we couldn't do it. Could it be that God is really with those *gringos*?” they asked. Indeed, God *was*, and once again he showed himself faithful and answered our prayers for safety.

Our WMPL missionaries had moved into three different homes near Mirik village in India. The Hjelmerviks were perched up on the hill, Becky Grimsrud continued in Gurung Cottage, while we Hagens had just moved from Darjeeling to a tiny three-roomed, mud-walled house near the market.

One day the Mirik post office delivered three registered letters, all sealed with ominous black sealing wax; we normally sealed important letters with red sealing wax. We all cautiously opened the envelopes to find eviction notices from our landlords saying, “We have been ordered to appear in the Darjeeling *Kutchery* (Courthouse) for renting houses to foreigners. We are threatened with losing all our property. Please vacate the three houses within thirty days!”

God had sent us to Mirik. We had obeyed. The work was his. Now he would have to keep us there. We were totally cast upon the Lord, so we fasted and prayed for him to overrule. We took courage from Psalm 105: “When they were few in number, of little account, and strangers in it... he allowed no one to oppress them...” (see Psalm 105:12-14).

We also claimed Isaiah 54:17: “‘No weapon that is formed against you will prosper; And every tongue that accuses you in judgment you will condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, And their vindication is from Me,’ declares the LORD” (NASB).

A little card someone had sent me gave great encouragement. It contained three points based on the following Scriptures:

Fret not, He loves thee (John 13:1)

Faint not, He holds thee (Psalm 139:10)

Fear not, He keeps thee (Psalm 121:3)

Soon after, the landlords wrote, “We have found it wiser to apply for permits to rent our houses to the World Mission Prayer League.” The permits were eventually granted. We praised and gave thanks to our Father for answered prayer.

Nineteen foreign students were on their way from Hong Kong by train while we made preparations to take them to a rural village to visit the primary school that was located south of our city. The students had arrived in Hong Kong ten days before in order to go to the Hong Kong Hospital and University. However, the outbreak of the flu was being tracked across the world, and the seriousness of the situation affected our plans. Sadly,

HE ALLOWED NO ONE TO OPPRESS THEM

Nepal

— Alma Hagen

Prayer: For God to overrule resistance



Rented home in Mirik, 1965

HE TAKES THE BAD TO CREATE THE GOOD

East Asia

— Steve & Debby Holm

Prayer: For God to deliver a visiting team from potential cancellations

“We sent up our prayers
to the One who could
help us the most.”

HIS NAME WAS JUAN **Bolivia**

— Richard Gunderson

we received word that the students could not come to the hotel in our city because of the flu outbreak. We went to the hotel to find out what we needed to do to change this. The hotel manager listened as we explained that the students had already been here for ten days, well past the seven days considered for spreading the flu. The manager required us to send the students to the hospital to be checked and approved by the doctors there. We sent up our prayers to the One who could help us the most. As we were running around talking and listening, everything became calm. They heard our reports and approved the students to stay in the hotel for the week.

As these things were going on, the primary school was now questioning the activities that were planned for their students by our assessment group. So we had the same problems to solve all over again: all the reports to be filled out, visits to the hospital for check-ups, etc. Once again, the prayers sent up to God covered us with peace and understanding. He worked through everything for the good of all of us. As we finished with the projects, the largest blessing came as we were leaving. Of the nineteen helpers who came with us, ten have accepted the Lord. This is how he takes the bad and the hard and creates the good. Praise the Lord!

His name was Juan. He was an elder in the church out in the valleys of the Andes Mountains and an early believer who had made the radical break from the old ways to follow Jesus as his Lord and Savior. Juan's health was failing. As a matter of fact, he could hardly get up from his bed or navigate around his place. As I look back on that time, I suppose that today I am older than Juan was. But my life has been much, much easier than his ever was because of the daily work that was common for the people of rural, mountainous Bolivia: Every year, during one growing season, they planted, cultivated and harvested potatoes all by hand and at over 13,000 feet above sea level. Then they did the same with corn during the second season at a slightly lower elevation in the high valley. After the 1950's, others added yet another rotation by going to the lowlands to plant rice and beans. It was hard and heavy work to grow crops to feed their families and to sell in the market in the city of La Paz.

Now Juan's body was wearing out and he was in great pain. But there was a greater discomfort in his life. That pain was caused by unresolved offenses with his neighbor and fellow believer of their congregation. I

became aware of this problem when Juan's son came to our house and asked me to attend a meeting at their home that night. The purpose of the meeting was to call the neighbor over and seek to resolve the problem before Juan died.

It was quite an experience and a privilege for me as a missionary to learn from these dear folks the biblically-based lesson in reconciliation. First, through tears, Juan spoke of how pained he was for this broken friendship and the hurt that accompanied it. Then, after some time of talking about how the Scripture had spoken to him regarding the issues that needed to be resolved, he attempted to get out of his bed. Get out of bed he did! With great difficulty and struggling with pain, he went to his neighbor, bowed down, wept, and asked forgiveness of his long-time friend and fellow believer.

I noticed that his friend was not so eager to forgive. This bothered me greatly but it did not discourage Juan. He was determined to confess his errors and take responsibility for them and ask for forgiveness. Finally, his friend forgave him. Then we prayed, and it was like a tremendous heaviness was lifted accompanied by many "Amens" and "Hallelujahs."

I shall never forget my walk back home in the dark that night, praising God for the victory and freedom given. It was a momentous time when Satan and his band of slave drivers were defeated on the battlefield of the lives of precious souls. Juan was really free and now felt ready to die.

The most interesting and significant thing to take place after that night was that Juan didn't die! Freed from the terrible guilt and condemnation that he had carried for so long, Juan recovered and lived many years afterwards! As he was able to deal with the sin in his life and get right with his brother in Christ, a healing took place in his body. He lived to be an old man, but more importantly, a free man.

"If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

John 8:31,32

It was March 15, 1997, in the early afternoon on a warm and beautiful day. I was out with the village team, which consisted of the driver of our vehicle, three Pakistani health workers, a young registered nurse from Germany on a short term, and me. We had been to one of the most remote villages in the area. In order to get to this village, we had to ford several fairly large streams, which we can usually do in our Toyota double-cabin,

IN THE NAME OF JESUS WE HAVE THE VICTORY*

Pakistan

— Annetta Dale

Prayer: For God's deliverance during a holdup



Top: Remote country roads, Pakistan
Bottom: Author and the village team
visited many isolated locations

four-wheel-drive pickup truck. After leaving the main road, which is actually not much of a road, we had to drive about another eight miles or so out into the desert on just a desert path. Then suddenly, as if right out of the desert sand, appeared a rather large village.

On our return from the village, after having had a very busy clinic, we were chatting and recalling incidents of the morning as we were driving along. From a distance we noticed two men standing on the desert path ahead of us. At first we didn't pay too much attention to them as there are often men walking on the path. But, as we approached, we saw them pull their turbans up over their faces and motion for us to stop. Our driver stopped, not knowing what they wanted, and as he did so, from behind their backs we saw them each pull out a *Kalashnikov* – a Russian-made machine gun. At this, we knew that their intentions were not good. My heart began to race as I realized this was for real. We were being held up and there was no way to know what these bandits might decide to do.

While one continued to point his gun right at us, the other one came to the driver's side of the truck and demanded money and whatever we had. We never carry money with us, and all that we had in the car were our lunch and medical supplies. Our driver, a young Christian man from the Tank congregation, told them in Pashto that we were a medical team from the Mission hospital and that we didn't have anything to give them. They didn't believe this and demanded that he get out of the pickup and open up the back so they could see what we had. At this time, those of us in the truck began to pray out loud, each in our own language – English, Urdu and German.

From the back, I could hear the driver talking to them as he showed them our medical supplies. He said, "This is all we have. If you want it, take it." At this they became angry. Then I heard him say, "All right then," and he came around to the front of the truck.

At this point, I think the bandits probably thought he was going to get something for them. Instead, he jumped into the truck, locked the door, and grabbed the megaphone that we would use to announce our arrival in the villages. This megaphone had a very loud siren on it. He turned the siren on full blast and held it next to the window. Somehow, this put the bandits off guard enough so that he was able to start the engine, put it in

gear and take off like a shot, spraying sand behind us. As we pulled away we could hear the gunfire behind. I told the girls in the back seat to put their heads in their laps and not look up. Thankfully, not one of the bullets hit the truck. I am sure our Protector had something to do with that.

After we had driven for a few miles and our fear level had dropped enough so that we could talk again, the driver said, “Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!” We all agreed with that. Then he said, “It is time to sing now.” (We often sang Christian choruses and songs on our way to and from the villages.) We then started to sing with great gusto, though perhaps a bit off-key, “In the name of Jesus, in the name of Jesus, We have the victory! In the name of Jesus, in the name of Jesus, Satan will have to flee” – a chorus from some years back that has been translated into Urdu.

Yes, that day we really knew we had been spared through the Name of Jesus. We found out later that, less than an hour before this incident happened, some of our fellow workers back at the hospital in Tank had been praying for our safety as they sat down to have their lunch.

When we arrived back at the hospital in Tank and pulled into the compound, we paused for a while before getting out of the truck. We felt it was only right to have a time of prayer to thank and praise the Lord for his protection on our way. We also prayed for the men who had held us up, that somehow the gospel message might be able to reach them and change their hearts.

These kinds of incidents don’t happen only in Tank, Pakistan. They are happening all over the world. Evil and sin are present everywhere. But it is thrilling to know that Jesus, our Lord and Savior, is the ultimate Victor. He is with us wherever we are and in whatever situation we find ourselves.

It is very sad that in recent years, for security reasons, the Village Health Care Team from Christian Hospital Tank has had to suspend their program of visiting villages to bring medical care to women and children who have very little access to good care. We pray that whatever has been done will continue to be a witness to the villages, and we leave the future in the Lord’s hands for his timing.

“Thankfully, not one of the bullets hit the truck. I am sure our Protector had something to do with that.”



Road mileage sign on the way to Tank

*Adapted excerpt from *Fellow Workers*, August 1997

KICHWA BECOMES AN EVANGELIST

Kenya

— Mike Koski

Prayer: For God to heal a man's
sick son



Mike in Samburuland, Kenya

Not everyone welcomed our coming to Ngilai to begin mission work. One gentleman was quite upset because the church was given ten acres of land that he identified as belonging to his family. Actually, there was no individual ownership of land there, and the three local chiefs had agreed that this place would be best for us – centrally located near a water source.

As time went on I got to know this man as *Kichwa Nyeupe* (White Head), a name that described him well. Kichwa came to me one day and asked that I pray for his ill son. I did so, and that night his son was healed. From then on Kichwa wanted to know more about our God, and I shared the gospel with him through a Christian cassette-tape ministry. He became an unofficial “evangelist” bringing the gospel to many *manyattas* (homesteads) in the area.

About twenty years later, my wife Gail and I visited Ngilai again. Pastor Charles and I walked to Kichwa’s *manyatta*. It was an hour or two from the Mission and the Lutheran church at Ngilai. By this time Kichwa was old and blind, but he remembered me and my voice. We had a time in the Word and prayer. I was told that Kichwa attends church services when he is strong and arranges a guide to get him there. He travels by foot beginning on Saturday and returns late Sunday after the service. What a sacrifice to continue hearing the Word of God! We arranged that the local church leadership begin a service near Kichwa’s home in order that he need not walk such a distance each Sunday.

LORD, WOULD YOU TURN WATER INTO GAS?

Ecuador

— Audrey Johnson

Each Sunday evening we would drive from Cuenca to Girón to meet with a house church there. Whenever we would visit their village we would meet with hostility. Someone did not want us to come there and almost every time, while driving home, we would have one or more flat tires. We discovered that each time we were having our worship service, somebody from the community was putting horseshoe nails in orange peelings and placing them under our tires. After discovering the orange-peel trick, John would check under the tires each time before we left and that solved that problem.

One particular night it was raining as we were leaving. We started out, and the road was very dark. But before we had driven even a mile the car stopped. John found that there was water in the carburetor. So he cleaned it out and we started again. We would go a little further and the same thing happened again and again – about five times! Finally, feeling pretty

dejected, he said, “They must have put water in the gas tank.” There were no cell phones in those days, no gas stations along that whole road, and no other traffic that had come by to help. It was a very lonely feeling. But we were not alone. The Holy Spirit reminded me, “Jesus turned water into wine” (see John 4:1-11). Surely it wouldn’t be hard for him to turn water into gasoline. So a quiet prayer went up to God, “Would you, Lord?” John turned on the ignition for the sixth time, the engine started, the motor ran smoothly, and we went home rejoicing.

My desire and dream to be a missionary in Pakistan brought great trouble and distress to my family – especially my parents. My mom and dad were not Christians and, understandably, could not comprehend my sense of call. There was much sorrow, crying and prayer before God.

One day during lunch my dad told me, “Gaby, the place that you have chosen to go is certainly dangerous and the countries around it are dangerous, too. But, I read a verse in the Bible last night that mentions that even when thousands surround us, the Lord protects us:

But you, O LORD, are always my shield from danger; you give me victory and restore my courage. I call to the LORD for help, and from his sacred hill he answers me. I lie down and sleep, and all night long the LORD protects me. I am not afraid of the thousands of enemies who surround me on every side (Psalm 3:3-6 GNT).

My father continued, “It is so good to know that God will protect you and will take care of you as he did and does.”

I was astonished! You see, my father had become a Christian and now was beginning to understand. Once more, through the valley of sorrow and darkness, God’s plan was revealed. How good is our God!

Two weeks ago my dad was visiting me in Quito, the capital city. I invited him to come with me to a missionary meeting at the hospital where I am training and working. He went and even shared with the people at the meeting. After that there was a message about co-workers in difficult places. (I did not know that they were going to talk about it.) He also heard me renewing my desire about going to serve one day. Isn’t it interesting how God works? We will see what the future holds.

MY FATHER AND HOW GOD WORKS

Ecuador

– Gabriela Cristina Armijos Ruilova

**Prayer: For God to help family
understand her call to serve in
the frontier**

NERMIT FINDS JESUS*

Nepal

— Mildred Hasselquist Tengbom

Prayer: For God to change a girl's heart



United Mission to Nepal school for girls, Kathmandu 1980

*Originally in *World Vision*, April 1951

One day I was talking to Santa, one of the teachers in the high school and a good friend of mine. “I wonder if Nermi will ever become a Christian?” she said. “It seems such an impossible thing. She is so worldly, so defiant, so reckless. Even her parents can’t control her.”

Santa was expressing her opinion about one of the older girls, and I must confess that the same doubts had often crept into my own heart. We talked on a little more about Nermi and then wound up with, “Let’s pray for her.” There were others praying, too.

It wasn’t many days until an unusual sound began to float into the window of my room – a *strange* sound, but one sweet to my ear – the sound of Nermi singing gospel songs. The first time I heard it, I stopped my work abruptly. I couldn’t believe it, and so finally walked to the window to look out and make sure that it was Nermi. But it *was*. Day after day the singing continued, and I began to smile knowingly – and wonderingly – to myself.

Nermi herself told me later what had happened. One evening as I was sitting in my room studying, there was a knock at my door, and in she came. Her eyes were shining, and she said all in a rush of words, “I’ve come to tell you that I’ve become a Christian and want to live for Jesus.” The next day, when Santa heard the story, she remarked with awe, “I never thought God would answer prayer so quickly!”

PRISON WARD, MATHARI MENTAL HOSPITAL

Kenya

— Alpha Jaques



Mathari Valley, Nairobi

Part of my assignment as parish worker in Nairobi’s parish, Kibera, was being on the hospital chaplaincy team because I was a fluent Swahili speaker.

All men incarcerated in the hospital prison ward were there because they had committed murder and had been deemed “insane” when they committed the murder. When the hospital chaplaincy had started in 1968 and I began going to the Mathari Hospital, the prison ward was a “hell on earth,” with beatings, fights and all kinds of violence, including murder. But four years of receiving the gospel had led to many changed hearts and lives.

On one visit, the choir leader asked me if I knew the melody for the gospel hymn *At Calvary*.¹ I did, and taught them the melody. That day we saw how the message of that gospel song was powerful in each one of them – especially the chorus: “Mercy there was great, and grace was free; Pardon there was multiplied to me; There my burdened soul found

liberty, At Calvary!” Each of them was well aware that if they were ever released, they would face the automatic death sentence for their crime, unless President Kenyatta forgave them.

¹ From *At Calvary*. William Reed Newell. Public Domain.

In our ministry in Cañar Province, we not only preached and ministered in the capital city of Azogues, but we tried to reach out to as many towns and villages around there as time allowed. The next largest town in the area was Cañar. Ray Rosales and I had visited Cañar in the second year after our arrival in Ecuador, and some of the Indians from that area had become Christians. Ray wrote about those first visits in his book, *It's About Mission!* It is well worth reading.

The Lord had touched the lives of some of the people who came to the Mission in Azogues and so, whenever possible, I would take one or two of them with me as I traveled in our Land Rover to other places. One day two of the brothers went with me to visit Cañar.

We arrived at the central plaza, where we usually went in each of the towns we visited, and there we had a street meeting. We played some music and gathered a nice crowd of people. Many of the women and young girls came out on the balconies of their homes to listen. (Thirty-five years later, when we returned to Ecuador for one year to help in the Bilingual School, one of the teachers in the school who had now become a Christian told me that she remembered listening that day as we were preaching. Those were the first seeds of the gospel she had ever heard.)

It happened to be a church holiday that day, and there was a religious fiesta going on. When the people involved heard that we were there, someone gave the order to break up our street meeting. So one of the men got four sky rockets, lit them one by one, and tossed them into the crowd gathered around us to listen. The people saw and heard them coming and so jumped aside for the first three. But the last one came down just as a little boy decided to cross over to the other side of the crowd, and the sky rocket exploded in the air with a great bang just above his head. The boy temporarily lost his hearing and fell to the ground. The crowd at the street meeting became angry and went en masse to get the fellow who was throwing the rockets. That left us alone with those of the crowd who

ROCKS, ROCKETS AND RESISTANCE: GOD'S DELIVERANCE IN CAÑAR Ecuador

— John Johnson

**Prayer: For God's deliverance from
the angry crowds**

“That left us alone with those of the crowd who were against us, so they ran to get some rocks to stone us. I saw what was going to happen...”



The town of Cañar, Ecuador

ROSA'S SAVIOR Ecuador

— Chuck Lindquist

Prayer: **Intercession for freedom
from oppressive powers**

were against us, so they ran to get some rocks to stone us. I saw what was going to happen, and we quickly threw things in the back of the Land Rover and started the motor. But one of the two men who had come with me was apparently lost somewhere in the crowd. He finally realized we were leaving just as the rocks started hitting the car. As it had a canvas top, most of the rocks just bounced off. However, one of them broke out the back window, and a man crashed his fist into the driver's side plastic window, broke the window, broke my glasses, and gashed open my face. Still, we managed to get away without any major damage either to us or the car. Thankfully, the little boy also recovered.

Once again, the Lord had answered prayer and delivered us. It was not an easy decision to go back to Cañar two weeks later. Nevertheless, the Lord delivered us, and we continued to minister in that area until the Norwegian Mission took over the work in Cañar.

When Cindy and I first arrived in Ecuador, now many years ago, we rented a little flat from a woman named Rosa. But “flat” is a bit generous, really. We rented a room and a toilet. We cooked our rice on a camp stove on the floor.

We began to pray for Rosa almost immediately. Rosa was a believing woman. She believed in lots of things, actually – especially an array of saints and virgins represented by statues lining the walls of her bedroom. There must have been a hundred of them, anyway.

The statues bore names like “Augustín,” or “Gerónimo,” or simply “Virgen.” But they had very little to do with the historical figures of our Christian heritage. Rosa had a large assortment of *vírgenes* (virgins), especially. Some had darker complexions; some were lighter. Rosa explained that some of the *vírgenes* were actually cousins to one another. Each one had its own family and tradition and specialty powers – and special appetites, as well.

Every evening Rosa had the custom of reviewing the performance of her many saints and virgins. If they had done her a recent favor – and not caused her undo mischief – she might reward them with a little gift, maybe a votive candle. If they did not perform well, however, she might discipline the statues. Sometimes she would turn a statue around on its

shelf to face the wall. Sometimes she would turn a figure upside down on its head. Sometimes she would turn a statue to face the wall, upside down, and cover it over with a handkerchief.

If Rosa's discipline was ineffective, however, and her statues could not be bribed with gifts, Rosa could find herself in trouble. The saints and virgins could do her mischief, sometimes. In Rosa's estimation, they could cause illness, or accidents, or worse.

This is why we prayed for Rosa. She was afraid. She understood that the world is a spiritual place, with many spiritual powers at work. She was right about that. She wanted to find some safe way through the powers. That was commendable, too. She even understood that Jesus Christ was somehow the ultimate answer for her life. But she was unable to trust him. She had too many hungry, mischievous statues on her wall.

We prayed that Rosa would discover freedom from the oppressive power of her statues. Sometimes we talked to her about the historical Virgin Mary, so unlike her statuary depictions. Rosa thought that evangelicals didn't believe in the Virgin Mary. Cindy and I explained to her that we did, indeed. The difference, however, is that most evangelicals believe in the Virgin Mary *more literally* than Rosa did.

This line of reasoning got Rosa's attention. When the Virgin said of her Son, "Do whatever he tells you" (John 2:5b ESV) – well, evangelicals believe that we should take her advice literally. We could honor *her*, we explained, by following *him*. Rosa came to think this way as well, eventually. She threw out her statues and surrendered her heart to Jesus.

We learned something about prayer through our relationship with this good woman. We learned to pray for people where they are at, and not where we think they should be. We learned that *fear*, for very many people, is a big motivation in spiritual things. We learned that Jesus cares about our fears, too, and is bigger than any one of them.

We also learned that it is not exactly right to say that prayer *works* freedom in situations like these. Jesus does. But prayer discovers his power to do so and claims his freedom-working power in our lives. Then, at last, we can throw out the window the "statues" we have come to trust.

"She had too many hungry, mischievous statues on her wall. We prayed that Rosa would discover freedom from the oppressive power of her statues."

RUTH'S TESTIMONY

Nepal

— Carol Gurung

“We are from God.
Whoever knows God
listens to us, and
whoever is not from
God does not listen
to us. From this we
know the spirit of truth
and the spirit of error.”

1 John 4:6

Esther Grimstad stopped sweeping – her kitchen floor would have to wait. She leaned on her broom and cried, “Oh God, Carol needs your help! Why did she have to go to a place like that? Lack of sanitation... culture shock...!” It had been twelve years since Carol had participated in the college group that met in their home on Friday nights for Bible study, led by her husband Art. The sudden burden to pray so intensely for Carol surprised Esther, and she especially wondered why she had prayed such things – she believed mission work was good and she supported missionaries. It was so unusual that Esther made a special note of the date on her calendar and followed it up with a letter telling of the experience.

Meanwhile, twelve time zones away – in Kathmandu – I couldn’t sleep, shaking as the day’s events replayed vividly in my mind:

Ruth had greeted me warmly at the door of her dimly lit, tiny rented room. Inside we chatted, prayed, sang worship songs, and read from her Bible as we continued with her reading and writing lessons. She coughed some but assured me she was taking medicine for it. (Looking at Ruth’s frail build, one would never guess that she supported herself financially by carrying basket loads of bricks for hours a day.) Ruth was eager to learn to read the Bible herself and had made amazing progress in just the few weeks we’d been meeting since I had returned to Nepal. As usual, we ended our literacy lesson and fellowship time in prayer, and then I needed to use the outhouse in back before riding my bike home. A minute or two later, when I stepped out into the sunshine, I found Ruth lying, unresponsive, in a large pool of blood. “TB,” said the neighbors standing around. Though I secretly suspected it might be too late, a taxi driver reluctantly took us to Patan Hospital – I had promised extra payment and spread my rain poncho out under Ruth in the back seat. At the hospital it was verified that Ruth had already passed away. A Christian nurse said she would take care of contacting our pastor, so I returned to Ruth’s rented room. There the neighbors gathered around listening as I told about Jesus, adding that Ruth had trusted the Lord, loved him, and though she had died, she was alive with Jesus forever.

Now, in the dark of night, doubts about my own salvation haunted me. Being a missionary didn’t make me immune. I woke my husband. “Kris, this morning I told Ruth’s neighbors that she knew and loved Jesus. I believe she did. But how do I know that *I* do?” Kris asked me what John said about

it. As I read in the fourth chapter of First John, a happy peace immediately replaced doubt when I came to verse six: “Whoever knows God listens to us.” I realized that I had just turned to God’s Word in full trust to find truth – and doing that, in itself, was evidence that I know and love Jesus.

Doubting my relationship with Christ that night wasn’t my only struggle following Ruth’s death. Culture shock hit worse than it had the first time around. Though I’d lived four years in Nepal before getting married, I was now back in the country after three years in the U.S. – this time with a one-year-old son who seemed to always want to put things from the ground into his mouth. How could I keep our son healthy? And why did many of these people have unsanitary practices that contribute to TB and other illnesses? Loneliness and dislike for my adopted country welled up.

These feelings, as well as thoughts about how Ruth died, were difficult to bear, but one thing in particular sweetened my memory of Ruth’s last moments on earth. At Ruth’s funeral an elderly woman who lived alone, as Ruth had, told how she used to worry about what would happen when it would be her time to die. She imagined being alone at that time when she would most wish for Christians at her side. She imagined her body – maybe undiscovered for days – not being cared for. But now she saw how God had brought a friend to be with Ruth for fellowship at the time he called her home. God provided for the church to be notified immediately, and he provided one more chance for Ruth’s neighbors to hear of Jesus. The elderly woman had gained peace and newfound confidence in God’s care for his children at death.

Culture shock is something normal that cross-cultural workers have to endure and get through. But I believe God helped me do so by a woman’s God-honoring testimony at Ruth’s funeral and by a different woman’s prayer in her kitchen, halfway around the globe.

Teresa was an invalid who lived in Nabón, Ecuador. From around the age of nineteen she was confined to her bed. Teresa lived alone with minimal family support and would count on friends and neighbors for her basic physical needs. She lay in a bed in a simple adobe house which was wall-papered with newspaper stuck on by flour glue. When the wooden shutters were pulled back from the windows, she had enough light to read. Teresa

TERESA OF NABÓN **Ecuador**

— Josie Pillman



The author's son Justo visits Teresa at her home in Nabón, Ecuador

THE BOY MOHAMMED

Kenya

— Alpha Jaques



Kenyan students

especially liked to read the Bible. She had a few cats for companions and a radio which was always tuned to the Christian radio station HCJB, broadcast from Quito. Teresa had been raised with Roman Catholic teaching and had a few images, or idols, in her room.

One day Teresa was poring over the apocrypha section of her Bible. This part is accepted by the Roman Catholic church as inspired. She was reading about worshiping and praying to an idol. A cat came and knocked her idol over, breaking it. She pondered, “If a mere cat could knock down and break an image, how much power could the image have? Could it really have prayer-answering power?”

Teresa cried out to God and prayed for answers. Shortly after that time, she had a dream of a white man coming to her bedside to explain the Scriptures to her. When my husband Paul, a Caucasian missionary, arrived in Nabón, he was told he needed to visit the invalid Teresa. Paul went and discovered that she was ready to receive Jesus as Savior. He was glad to supplement her teachings from HCJB with other Bible studies and singing and fellowship. Teresa loved to testify about how she would pray for help, or for supper or other needs, and how the Lord faithfully helped her and answered very specific prayers for her.

Twenty years later, when our children went to visit Teresa, she was in that same little room with the same newspaper on the wall, still listening to HCJB and continuing to trust in the prayer-answering God.

In 1972, when I first joined WMPL in Kenya, one of my assignments as parish worker involved visiting the orthopedic hospital. Every Sunday afternoon we had worship and Sunday school for the patients. I taught the older school-age children. One of them was called Mohammed – a charming, almost-fourteen-year-old Somali by tribe and Muslim by name. When I would ask for a favorite chorus from our song book, Mohammed would shout out the number for the gospel hymn *Nothing but the Blood*.¹ For a Muslim, to say the words for this hymn was anathema, but Mohammed was radiant as he sang with gusto, “What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus!”

In early December of that same year, we heard that Mohammed was healed and scheduled to go home as soon as his family could be located. I was

concerned about the boy with his vibrant Christian witness and mentioned my concern to the hospital chaplain. He replied, “God will take care of him.”

One year later, during our hospital visit between Christmas and New Year’s, we found Mohammed back in the hospital, very ill with a vicious resurgence of the TB. Two weeks later, I was back again and asked what had happened to him. The chaplain replied, “He died.” Yes, God took care of him, taking him home – not home to Garissa, but to heaven!

Bang... bang... bang... bang... bang! The noise started suddenly and was loud and insistent. Not good. Not good at all! We were on our way from Murree to Dera Ismail Khan in this frontier province of Pakistan. It was an eight-hour drive. We had three small children in the van and still another six hours to go to get home.

After stopping to check things out, I found that a shock mount had come loose. After some creative repairs we were soon on our way again, praying that would be our only problem. The van was old, and where we were traveling things could turn ugly pretty quickly.

The trip continued smoothly until we were within a couple of hours from home. We came to a river crossing that was usually only a few inches deep and a few feet wide. No problem for our full-sized Ford Transit van, I thought. This time, however, the monsoons had made the river a bit wilder. It was now one hundred yards wide and three feet deep. The big trucks were going through, and I wondered if we could make it. I drove tentatively forward and soon felt the van being pushed into the current, so was relieved to be able to back out. It was, however, many hours’ drive to the next crossing and we did not want to make that trip, so we sat there in the truck pondering our options.

Just then a young man came up and told us that he knew of another crossing where the river was not deep. If we would give him a ride to his village, he would show us the way. He guided us to a place a few kilometers away. Before we got to the village, however, we had to go over a bridge, not much wider than our van, that looked like it was built about a century ago. I got out and took a closer look. The bridge was broken up on the sides but, after some measuring and deliberation, I decided we could make it. Poor

“...and without the
shedding of blood there
is no remission of sins.”

Hebrews 9:22b

¹ From *Nothing but the Blood*. Robert Lowry. Public Domain.

THE TRUCK THAT DIDN'T GIVE UP

Pakistan

— Clayton Mellsen



The challenge of crossing washed-out roads, Pakistan



Top: Raging rivers wash out bridges
Bottom: Isolated village, Pakistan

Brenda probably got a few gray hairs from that crossing. Wait a minute – it may well have been about that time in life that I started going gray!

Another couple of kilometers down the road we came upon our guide's village, with the river running ferociously through the middle. He got out of the van and showed us where to cross as it was not deep at all. With some trepidation we moved ahead. After all, the river was only about thirty meters across. We got near the middle, and suddenly the front of the van dropped down into a deep hole. We were stuck. The water was so deep it began to seep through the doors, even though it was a full-sized van. I climbed out and waded into the water to see what we had gotten ourselves into. The front had dropped into a hole and we had hit a boulder under the water. Fortunately, we had a diesel engine so it kept running even though much of it was under water. I had no idea what to do. There were a couple dozen villagers watching us from shore, but my Urdu had not yet progressed to a conversational level. I didn't know how to ask for help and was probably a little too proud anyway. I got back into the van and put my head on the steering wheel, not having a clue about how to proceed.

That was when I learned a very interesting fact about the Pakistani people. They are happy to watch someone flounder if they feel he is acting superior to them, but when someone shows they are really in need, they will do whatever they can to help. Suddenly the van started shaking violently: I looked up to see about twenty men, up to their waists in the water, shaking my van and telling me to try to back it out. They shook it so forcefully we were wondering if they were going to tip us over. Slowly the van started moving, and a minute later we were back where we had started, on dry land. I got out and tried to thank them, but they only laughed and told me where to cross the river, just two feet to one side of our first attempt. We got across and I thought we were safe now. I was mistaken.

We drove through the village on the other side of the river and then turned down the street to follow a car, a pickup truck and a jeep, vehicles that the villagers had indicated we should follow back to the main road. By now it was nearly dark. We were getting a little worried, as we had been told not to travel the road in the dark because there were many robbers at night.

We got to the edge of the village and found that the vehicles ahead of us had stopped. I told Brenda I was going to go see what was going on, got

out of the van, and started walking. I walked for a few minutes and then found that the road ahead was under water from the flooding. Everyone stood around for a while discussing what to do when finally we saw a bus coming from the other direction. The driver told us that if we could get by this part, the rest of the way was good.

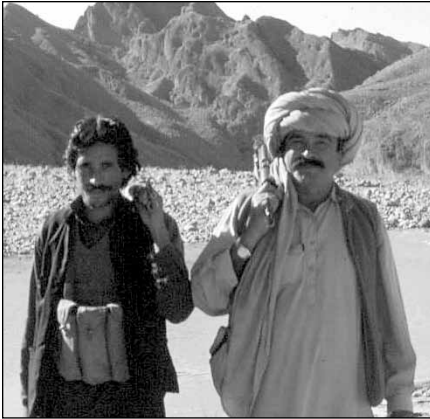
The jeep went first and did fine. Then the car and finally the pickup truck proceeded to cross. If they could make it, I reasoned, then we should have no problem since the van had good clearance. I walked back to the van with this good news and found a frantic Brenda. I had been gone for almost half an hour and by now it was dark. She had no idea where I was nor what to do with three small children in the vehicle.

Well, we got on our way again and crossed the flooded area to a narrow spot in the trail. It was here that the truck ahead of us quit and blocked the road. I got out and helped work on the truck for a few minutes, but to no avail. Finally, we tied a chain to my van, and I pulled him back to a wider part of the road so traffic could get by.

A few minutes later we were on the main road again and good to go, so we thought. We made progress for a few kilometers, when the van suddenly slowed down and the engine died. I got out and looked under the hood, which was filled with steam from an overheated engine. When the van had hit the boulder under the water, it had put a small crack in the radiator. The coolant leaked out and, because the temperature gauge didn't work, I had no way of knowing what was going on. We were now in the middle of nowhere, late at night, with a seized engine and possibly robbers all around us. What could we do other than pray? We had been praying non-stop for most of the trip!

I was a diesel mechanic so at least I had a clue about what to try. I knew that often a seized engine could be saved, at least enough to run for a short time, if it had not gone too far. We had stalled beside a canal (delightful answer to prayer) and Brenda found our water cooler, so I walked over to the canal, filled it up, and with much fear and trepidation began slowly pouring the water over the top of the engine. I knew I should have waited for it to cool down by itself, but we were rather desperate, so I took a chance. I had to keep backing off because of the steam, but finally got the engine cooled down by drenching it several times. Now came the tricky

“We were now in the middle of nowhere, late at night, with a seized engine and possibly robbers all around us. What could we do other than pray? We had been praying nonstop for most of the trip!”



Men in rural Pakistan may carry guns for various purposes

WASHED DOWN RIVER

Bolivia

— Jacqueline Mikaelsen

Prayer: For God's intervention
while being washed down a river
in their vehicle

part – putting water back into the radiator. The engine block can easily crack if cold water hits a hot spot. Our tough little Perkins diesel engine took it, though, and I slowly filled it up.

Now the moment of truth came. Would it start? While we all prayed, I turned the ignition key. It groaned a bit but started turning over, and seconds later the delightful sound of the little four-cylinder engine running filled our ears. It was knocking noticeably but kept on running. I checked to see if there were bubbles in the radiator, which would indicate a blown head gasket or worse, but it was normal. I put the cap back on, closed the hood, and slowly set off again.

Two kilometers down the road we saw a bunch of men walking along the road with guns. We never knew whether they were robbers or the people who patrolled to stop the robbers. They didn't ask us to stop, so we didn't. We just wanted to get home. The van engine quieted down the more we drove, and two hours later we were parked outside our door unloading the van, very grateful to be safe.

We learned later that some folks had been awakened in the night with a burden to pray for us. We were surrounded in prayer. Our God is an awesome God!

The engine never did cause us problems after that. It used a small amount of oil but kept on going. We sold it to another Mission when we went on furlough, and they said it was the best van they had ever had! Cool.

During our years of mission work in Bolivia, we have often made trips out into the country to visit rural churches. Early one Sunday morning our family – Paul, Theresa, Jesse and I – left home in our small Suzuki jeep to visit a congregation. To get there we had to ford a river which brought us to the road again on the other side. After a good morning of worship and singing with these Aymara friends, we enjoyed a Bolivian *hapthapi* (picnic) of boiled potatoes, fried bananas, rice, and boiled eggs, complete with a zesty hot sauce, all laid out on the ground on their *aguayos* (woven Bolivian blankets).

On our way home we came to the river again and needed to cross through it as before. As we got to the middle, we knew things were not right!

Unbeknownst to us, it had rained up in the mountains and the river had swollen greatly. Soon we were being washed downstream, bobbing like a fishing bobber. The situation did not look good at all. We started to pray and ask God for help. What were we to do? We were being carried along in the stream and caught in the current. Suddenly the jeep seemed to stop midstream, and at that moment Paul decided to put the jeep into reverse and back out of the river. We managed to drive up onto the bank of the river, and from there we drove among rocks, trees and brush till we found the road upstream. No damage was done to the jeep, and we were able to drive out! To this day we do not know what stopped us midstream in the river – except that God answered our prayers.

“We started to pray and ask God for help. What were we to do? We were being carried along in the stream and caught in the current.”

Over the years Radio Caranavi has broadcast to the Bolivian people, bringing them the gospel message declaring that Jesus Christ is the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. As a result, many lives have been changed representing a wide variety of people: the young, the old, the rich, the poor, the city dweller, the country dweller, the illiterate, the educated, the weak, the influential. God’s love and message is for all!

One example of a life transformed is that of Enrique, a man with a strong socialist background who lived in Caranavi. In the 1970’s he was an influential leader in the Syndicated Federation of Country Workers and took a bold stand against many of the government programs and religious activities in the area. He was a very good orator and had a strong following. He tried to make it difficult for the missionaries and Christians, speaking against Christian principles and beliefs. Radio Caranavi was a prime target of these attacks.

Not long ago, to the surprise of everyone at Radio Caranavi, Enrique was seen in the central plaza dressed in a suit, Bible in hand, proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ. It was hard to believe that this man, who for years had instigated protests and violence against the government and Christianity, was now a pastor preaching that the solution to Bolivia’s problems could be found only in Jesus Christ. Enrique and his entire family were transformed by the gospel heard through the radio’s messages and are now faithful followers of Christ and listeners to Radio Caranavi.

WORDS OF TESTIMONY

Bolivia

— Jacqueline Mikaelson



“Radio Hill,” Caranavi

ZAO BELIEVES**East Asia**

– Betsy*

Sometimes life here can get rather bleak. The poverty and atmosphere of hopelessness, the constant stares wherever we go, and the challenges in adapting to a very foreign culture and language can and do threaten to overwhelm us. We ask, “What are we accomplishing here?” Our efforts feel to us so small, so insignificant as to be almost laughable. And then God does something as if to say, “You’re right. Your contribution is very small. But it’s not your offering that makes the difference – it’s what I do with it. Just trust me.”

We have a helper and friend named Zao. She comes to our home a few hours each morning to help with household chores. Zao is 56, very poor, and very feisty. She has lived her amazingly difficult life as a staunch and hardened atheist. She grew up in the time of a historical social-political revolution and was a member of the revolutionary youth movement in her teens. We have become good friends. Her parents are believers, and I have been to visit them several times. When I pray with them during my visits, Zao leaves the room. She has occasionally asked me about my faith but seemed to regard it as a bit naive.

Zao’s daughter-in-law, who lives in her home, was due to have her first and (in accordance with national population-control laws) only baby in February. One morning a couple of weeks ago, as Zao was ironing in front of the nativity scene in our living room, she called out for Stephen (our 15-year-old son) to come quickly. “Look!” she said, pointing at the baby Jesus in the manger. “The baby’s legs are kicking; and his arms – they are moving!” Stephen looked but saw only the statue lying still in the manger. But Zao insisted, “He’s moving: look!”

That afternoon Zao’s daughter-in-law’s vision suddenly went blurry and she developed a headache. Zao rushed her to the doctor, who said her blood pressure was very high and quickly performed an emergency C-section. The baby and the mother came through it well. Zao says that when they handed the baby to her, he started moving his legs and arms exactly how the baby Jesus had done in the crèche that morning. She said she knew at that moment that God was real and wanted her to know.

Does God really do that kind of thing? It surely doesn't fit in our Western mind-set. But then, much of our Western mind-set doesn't fit here, just as we also don't seem to fit here. But for some reason here we are. And as long as God keeps us here, we will trust him to take our pathetic little loaves and fishes, bless them, add his glory, and provide something really special for someone he has long known and long planned to draw to himself.

• • •



Direction

A HOUSE FULL OF GOD'S CHILDREN

Tanzania

— Lori Kovich

Prayer: For God to show his purpose

“Deep down I didn’t want to be responsible for the life of this young boy.... Jesus must have been smiling at me as I wondered what I should do.”

It was 1:30 a.m. on December 27, and I was in bed under the mosquito net reading a book by the head lamp, when it hit me how wonderful my Jesus is! Everything I had been praying for since arriving in Tanzania after home assignment last September had come about – right under my nose. The miracle had moved into focus – as soft and slow as everyday life in this African country. I had been working in the village of Nkungi and in Singida town with secondary school students and street boys. Little did I know that Jesus had a plan for these two areas of ministry to work together. I had been struggling with my purpose for being there but kept taking it to Jesus in prayer. Now he was showing me his answer...

One day while walking through the streets I saw little Musa, eleven years old, sitting in a drug-induced daze. He had stayed in our boys’ home for three years but was back on the street again. He needed three more weeks of school to finish grade 3, so I had to act fast. I knew I had to do something, but how could I bring him home? In the States we can’t just take children off the street and bring them home, but the next time I saw Musa I did just that. I spoke to many people in the village for help. I even spoke to some of the students I was mentoring. Everyone pitched in with prayer or other help. I was given temporary care of Musa through the regional social welfare office.

I prayed often that Jesus would help me through those difficult weeks. I do not have children of my own; I found that to have a little boy around was hard, and deep down I didn’t want to be responsible for the life of this young boy. Even though young, Musa is very wise. He loves school and does very well, but our strong wills clash sometimes. I had to stop other work to provide for him, and we had some difficulty communicating because he spoke only Kiswahili and I knew very little of that language. Jesus must have been smiling at me as I wondered what I should do.

After Musa finished school he stayed at a friend’s house while I went back to Singida to speak with the welfare worker about what would happen with him. In a ten-minute meeting, I was given custody of Musa!

During that same time Jesus was weaving into my life many other boys who needed help. Besides Musa, Jesus had also led me to take in an older boy who was going to vocational school. God also provided a way for several other students to go to a private school. He even provided a home for another young boy with nowhere to go. I saw Jesus provide for these boys’ needs.

So, in answer to my prayers, on Christmas Day my house was full of God's children. Students we sponsored, the boys I took in, and even a friend and her children shared my home and a rooster dinner. Each person received a Christmas present wrapped in Christmas paper. We sat down at the table that day with a huge prayer of thanksgiving for how Jesus brought all our lives together. He knew way in advance that day would come, and that I would see firsthand his will for my service in Tanzania.

It was August of 1990 and I was sitting in Chuck Lindquist's office while he was trying to convince me that none of the WMPL fields needed a librarian. "Here are some catalogs of colleges in the area that offer degrees in ESL (English as a Second Language) certification," he said. "Perhaps you should look into something like that."

I knew that wasn't what I was supposed to do. I loved being a librarian and really felt that God could use me in that type of position on the field. However, here was the Mission's personnel director telling me that this might not necessarily be the case.

As I was trying to figure out how to politely give all the catalogs back to Chuck and leave, the phone rang. He picked it up and began talking. As I started to leave the room, he motioned me to stay seated. Pretty soon I heard him say, "Well, she's sitting right here. Maybe you should talk to her."

The phone call was from Bolivia. That very afternoon Linda Nelson, one of our missionaries in Bolivia, was going into the Santa Cruz post office when the director of the local American school for missionary kids was coming out. When Linda asked him if there was enough staff for the following year, he told her they were still lacking one key person. You guessed it – they needed a librarian.

"We have one sitting in Minneapolis right now," Linda had said. "Call this number and ask if Carol is still available."

So the director of the school did call, I was available, and two weeks later I ventured off to Santa Cruz. Six schools and more than twenty years later, I am still loving my job as a librarian!

A LIBRARIAN IN GOD'S SERVICE USA en route to Bolivia

– Carol Van Brocklin

"We have one sitting in Minneapolis right now," Linda had said. "Call this number and ask if Carol is still available."

A PASTOR'S WELCOME

Nepal

— Mary Thoresen



Dave Thoresen with flute salesman, Nepal

AN OPEN DOOR IN LAS LOMAS

Peru

— Brian Clark

Prayer: For God to open a door
for ministry

When Dave and I were in language school, we went to a village in eastern Nepal as part of our language and culture acquisition. While there Dave contracted a severe case of bacillary dysentery. We were a long way from any hospital, but we knew that we had to get out to the road and to the closest hospital, which was in Siliguri, India. I had not brought enough money to stay in a hotel in addition to paying Dave's hospital expenses. We didn't know what to do. Dave remembered seeing a cross on a building – a church – not far from the hospital. He suggested that I go there and ask for help. I did so and was warmly welcomed by the pastor. He told me that there was a guest house run by the Church of North India nearby and that he would call the pastor and make the arrangements. Soon I was in a rickshaw on the way to the guest house. What a surprise when I met the pastor. He looked at me and said, "I know you." It turned out that he had heard my Lutheran Youth Encounter team, Rainbow of Promise, when I had been in India several years previously. In addition, he was a friend of the Bergs, WMPL missionaries, and thought very highly of the World Mission Prayer League. He didn't charge me a cent to stay there, and I felt that I was with friends!

It was 1989 and my Christian brother Carlin and I began to take prayer walks, pausing to pray for the people and for open doors for ministry as we traveled through the poorest suburbs of Chiclayo, Peru. In these impoverished suburbs of Chiclayo people are without sewers, water or electricity. Many children do not attend school because they have to work, while others cannot afford to buy their uniforms or notebooks. Would God open a door for ministry among these people?

I remember the day we paused on a rocky desert hilltop overlooking the *pueblo joven* (shanty town) of Las Lomas. On the inside, I felt my heart cry out to the Lord for the tragic condition of this community – people hoveled both physically and spiritually. On the outside, I felt the spirit of abandonment as the wind slapped across my cheeks, blowing across the barren landscape into this neglected squatters' village on the fringe of society.

Las Lomas is not far from Chiclayo in distance, but light years away in terms of living conditions. Initially the government had promised to

build and make available some modestly-priced housing with water and electricity. Hyperinflation changed all that. Half of Las Lomas consists of crude, concrete-block houses in varying stages of construction and without utilities. Fifty feet away is where the residents of Las Lomas really live. They have had to construct their own houses, mostly out of *adobes* (mud bricks). The only water comes from a single community spigot.

I learned from a local resident that it was possible to petition the Chiclayo Building and Planning Commission to grant a small parcel of land. Sensing that God was at work, I began and completed the formal request process. We waited to see what the Lord would do.

In October of that year our Mission, *Misión Evangélica Luterana*, was granted a small parcel of land – a tiny lot about 20 x 50 feet. The project of constructing a two-door, one-window, community Bible center began. The lot itself was very dry and rocky ground. We were out there breaking our backs most of the week, week after week, with picks and shovels to level the lot in preparation for constructing a modest facility for ministry. To see the “gringo” laboring in the hot sun and demonstrating love in action and commitment towards the community promoted goodwill among the neighboring people.

In the following months I was active in a variety of ministries, and I continued to be very busy with the construction in Las Lomas with hopes of completing the facility by February 1990.

By April 1990 the provisional Bible Center in Las Lomas was operational. Constructed of some 5,000 adobes, it was roughly the size of a modest two-car garage. There was adequate room for more than fifty visitors. We had more than forty come for the “opening night.” Here we had Bible studies, church services, nutrition classes, and special events, such as evangelistic puppet shows for the youth. I was especially concerned that perhaps as many as 50% of the families were women alone with their children. Food and shelter in this economic environment are often difficult to provide.

Thank God for answering our prayers. Today there is a small but thriving fellowship of believers in Las Lomas, and the Lord continues to work mightily in the midst of his people here.

“They asked only one thing, that we remember the poor, which was actually what I was eager to do.”
Galatians 2:10

BY THE REAR GUARD

Hong Kong

— Alma Hagen

Prayer: For God's direction
regarding a meeting place for
gospel ministry

“We began praying for
an inconspicuous place
with plenty of room.”

After Roy and I worked with Nepalis in India and Nepal for 24 years, our new assignment was Hong Kong. At that time there were 6,000 Nepali soldiers, called Gurkhas, and another 4,000 Nepali family members living there. The Gurkhas were employed as mercenaries of the British government then ruling Hong Kong. The British had signed an agreement with the Hindu Nepali government to prevent anyone from trying to convert the Gurkhas to Christianity. Therefore, whatever we did to contact the Gurkhas and their families could not be openly advertised. There would be no “hanging out the shingle” to announce the work.

We began praying for an inconspicuous place with plenty of room. Norwegian friends suggested we see Sui Pak Yuen in Tanling, Hong Kong. It was a large, beautiful Chinese home with a Mandarin garden, swans in a lily pond, and a typical red Chinese bridge. I asked the Lord for a clear word regarding the house. Was this the place he had chosen for us to begin our work? I felt impressed to read Numbers 10:25: “Then the standard of the camp of Dan, acting as the rear guard of all the camps...” The verse spoke of camps, but I didn’t have a clue what God was saying to us.

Our Christian Gurkha friends came to the place where we were living temporarily while we were looking for a permanent place. When I read aloud the verse the Lord had given me, the men were surprised. “*Didi* (older sister)!” they exclaimed. “You don’t know this, but that house is directly across the road from Pal Mil, the police military, which is the rear guard of all the Gurkha camps!”

It proved to be an ideal location for meeting with the Gurkhas. If we met a Gurkha in any part of Hong Kong, we could ask, “Do you know where Pal Mil is?” Their answer was always, “Yes, of course!” This resulted in the Nepalis finding us easily without our having to “hang out a shingle.”

We lived there for five wonderful years with weekly services in Nepali and many a rice and curry meal. The Lord had truly answered our prayers for just the right spot. To this day we are still in touch with some Gurkha soldiers who became believers in Hong Kong.

DIONICIO DOESN'T GIVE UP Bolivia

— Jacqueline Mikaelson

Radio Television Caranavi (RTC) receives many invitations from listeners throughout Bolivia who want to learn more about Jesus. Often these invitations come from remote and difficult places that require great perseverance to reach. Our RTC worker Dionicio exemplified this perseverance when he traveled to an evangelistic campaign in a city on the border of Bolivia and Peru. When we received this particular invitation at the studio, we were not familiar with the area and it was a long distance away, so the pastor came to Caranavi to accompany Dionicio to this frontier town. The meetings were to last three days, starting on Friday night and continuing through Sunday.

Dionicio and the pastor left Caranavi early on Thursday morning, traveling on the Caranavi Road to La Paz. They soon came upon a landslide but were not overly concerned because generally the landslides can be cleared in a few hours. This one, however, was not cleared for two days, and by then it was already Saturday morning! The pastor knew that the campaign had already started and suggested that Dionicio might want to turn back to Caranavi. Dionicio was not one to turn back, so they continued on and finally arrived in La Paz – but missed the bus going to the town. They took another bus, hoping it would catch up to the first bus so they would be back on track. Unfortunately, the bus they were on did not catch up to the other bus. It stopped for the night in a village on the *altiplano* (high plain) in the middle of nowhere. Not knowing anyone there or where to go, Dionicio and the pastor found a church where they were allowed to spend a cold night sleeping on the wooden benches.

When morning finally came, the pastor once again suggested that Dionicio might as well turn back as now it was already Sunday morning and they still hadn't gotten to the evangelistic meetings. Dionicio decided that as long as they were this close, they might as well keep going. Perhaps they would arrive for the late morning service. A bus came through town and they got on, deciding that it surely would take them to the town near the Peruvian border. The closest they could get was still a four-hour walk to the town!

They finally arrived in the middle of the afternoon. The meetings had ended and the people attending had gone home. Everything was over! Now what were they supposed to do? Dionicio told the pastor to inform the residents of the town that in the evening he was going to preach at the

“For we are his
workmanship, created
in Christ Jesus for good
works, which God
prepared beforehand, that
we should walk in them.”

Ephesians 2:10 ESV

FEED MY LAMBS

Nepal

— Carol Gurung

Prayer: **For opportunities to bear witness of God's love**



Many rural people come to Kathmandu seeking medical treatment

church – even if only two people came. Dionicio believed that the Lord had called him to come to this town; he was not giving up!

That night the church was filled to overflowing. Most attendees were townspeople because the majority of the people attending the campaign had already gone home. As Dionicio shared the message the Lord had given him that night, thirty-five people gave their hearts to the Lord. What a wonderful blessing!

What would have happened if the campaign had started on time? If things had gone as planned? If Dionicio had given up and turned back? And if others hadn't been invited to come? The work would not have been done and the blessing would not have been there. God leads, enables, directs, and equips us for the work he has for us, and he goes with us!

“The human mind plans the way, but the LORD directs the steps” (Prov. 16:9).

“...do you love me more than these?”... “Feed my lambs” (John 21:15).

In repentance, after failing in love and obedience to him, I asked that Jesus would again grant me opportunities to “feed his sheep.” He did that, and more.

Since I was getting an early start to the day, I planned to leave in time to do some photocopying before teaching. Setting some boiled eggs to cool (egg salad later sounded good), I headed out the door. Just beyond our gate, a few curious onlookers stood around a distraught woman rocking her crying son – just a slip of a boy. She described how their family had sold a piece of land so she and her son could come to Kathmandu for medical treatment. After a stay at Patan Hospital, they were healthy and the bill was paid. Just now, though, someone had stolen her money purse, and she didn't have any way to pay for a bus to her home village; they would have to walk for over two days, and her son was crying because he was hungry. I told them to wait there – I'd hurry back. In my kitchen I quickly grabbed the eggs, yogurt, bread, fruit, and bus fare to her home village.

When I returned, the crowd had grown and the woman was telling the group that her neighbors in the village had thought her foolhardy to make the trip – she had never been to Kathmandu and didn't know anyone in the city. To this she had responded that her God was watching over them and would take care of her and her son Samuel on the journey – but now this happened. What would her neighbors say?

“Her son is named Samuel?” The biblical name surprised me, and I realized that the onlookers would probably interpret the obvious gifts in my hands as showing favoritism to people who claim to be Christian. I would need to handle this carefully to avoid reinforcing the “rice Christians” accusation that is so commonly believed. “I brought you food and money for the bus because I follow Jesus and think that is what Jesus would like me to do,” I said. “It is not because you say you are Christian.” The onlookers agreed that I hadn’t already known this about her, and they began to talk with each other excitedly. They had just seen for themselves how this Jesus – that the woman had faith in – did see everything that happened, and right now they had seen Jesus take care of her needs.

Samuel’s mother bubbled over with praise to God; she knew the story would be an encouragement to others in her village church. At prompting and more questions from the group, Samuel’s mother began to give her testimony. Quietly excusing myself, I headed off to school, happy to have shared in meeting their need, and happy that the onlookers had this chance to hear about Jesus. Then it dawned on me: God had answered a prayer of mine, too.

“I brought you food
and money for the bus
because I follow Jesus
and think that is what
Jesus would like
me to do.”

In our first term in La Paz, Bolivia, we were working hard, beginning our ministry with the people in and of the street. But we were longing for the work to be a team effort, with the Lutheran churches in the area becoming involved. There were a few times when church members would come and help, but everyone’s lives were so busy, and it seemed impossible that a regular team could form. So we sent out prayer requests and made it a central focus in our sharing during our first furlough – that God would form a team.

Shortly after we returned to La Paz, we were having our weekly meeting at the church with a group of young men and women who live on the street. A few of them were real hard-core, glue-sniffing addicts. They became quite unruly and some of the college-age young people at the church, who had arrived early for their own youth group, stepped in to help Mike and me with this somewhat scary situation. In that act, the Lord spoke to the hearts of several of the youth to come and serve alongside us. From that core of college youth developed the team, *Amor En Acción* (Love in Action), which grew into a much more complete and full ministry to the

GOD FORMS A TEAM

Bolivia

– Cynthia Fehrenbach

Prayer: For God to form a ministry team to share his love with the street people

GOD'S BLESSING ON THE WHEELCHAIR

Bolivia

— Marge Erickson

Prayer: For God's direction concerning
helping someone in need

“Finally one night
I prayed, ‘Lord, isn’t
there SOMETHING I
can do to make Julia’s
life more bearable?’”

people in and of the street. We came to see great spiritual growth among the college-age youth of at least two Lutheran churches in the area.

Mike and I had been praying for people *our age* to step in and form the team, but God had an even more excellent idea in sending the college-age *bundles of energy* that he did!

One of the most satisfying aspects of missionary life is the lasting bond of friendship that develops between missionaries and their national friends. We were blest with a host of close Bolivian friends, some of whom I am still in contact with now, after more than thirty years since retiring from Bolivia.

One example of this lasting bond of friendship was with Roque and Julia Quispe in the village of Mocomoco. Roque was one of the young men my husband Henrick led to the Lord, and Julia worked for us in our home, so we knew her like a daughter. We were attendants at their wedding. Down through the years, as their three sons were born and grew to adulthood, our friendship continued strong and true.

Then, many years later, Julia was afflicted with severe rheumatism. Before long she was completely crippled and unable to cook their meals or wash their clothes (by hand, of course). Roque took up the tasks as homemaker and lovingly cared for her.

One day our missionary co-workers, Sheldon and Sharon Groff, came home on furlough from Bolivia and brought me a beautiful snapshot of Roque and Julia that had been taken at the wedding of one of their sons. Julia was sitting in a wheelchair that they had rented so she could be present at the wedding. I was extremely happy to get the picture, but soon I began to realize that if they had rented a wheelchair so she could go to the wedding, it meant that all the rest of the time she was confined mostly to her bed or to a chair in their one-room mud hut. This caused me great sadness as I thought about her day after day. Finally one night I prayed, “Lord, isn’t there SOMETHING I can do to make Julia’s life more bearable?” Before long the thought came to me, “Why, I’ve got Henrick’s wheelchair down in the basement – she could use that, BUT how could I ever get it to Bolivia?”

Then I remembered that our good friend, John Mikaelson (also a WMPL missionary), was planning a trip from the U.S. back to Bolivia in the near future. So I telephoned him, sharing my thoughts and my heart’s desire

to somehow get this wheelchair to Julia in Bolivia. He chuckled a bit and said something like this, “Now isn’t this interesting! Because I have a pacemaker now, my doctor has told me that I should use a wheelchair for getting around right after we land at the airport in La Paz and until my heart gets accustomed to the high altitude again. If I could take the wheelchair as my personal property, I could take it all the way to La Paz for *free!*” And that’s exactly what he did! For about eight years Julia was able to sit outside in the sunshine and be a bit more mobile because of the wheelchair, and this brought me great joy. Then the day came when Julia passed away, and she is now rejoicing in the presence of her Lord and Savior where she no longer needs a wheelchair.

Shortly afterwards Roque returned the wheelchair to the Groffs. And, wouldn’t you know, they already knew of someone who needed a wheelchair! So they emailed me the story of their friend Rene, who had been paralyzed as a result of a truck accident and later had to have one leg amputated. He would need the wheelchair as long as he lived. “Let us know what you think,” they wrote. I’m sure you already know that my response would be a hearty “YES, by all means, let Rene use the wheelchair!” How I thank God that this wheelchair is now making a big difference in Rene’s life day by day!

Yes, God answered my prayers regarding how I could help Julia, and also how to get the wheelchair to Bolivia. It also shows one of the very satisfying aspects of missionary life, namely, the close bond that develops between missionaries and their national friends!

It happened nearly every month as I worked to meet the deadline to get the *Fellow Workers* magazine to the printer. The articles were finished, artwork and pictures in place; only the editorial column was still blank. As I took my noon-hour walk around the lake at the nearby park, thoughts and ideas came to mind. When I returned to the office, I started typing on the computer keyboard. Invariably, when I finished putting those ideas into words, they fit just right in the designated column space. Occasionally, only a little paring down and editing was necessary and it was “good to go.”

The Lord is good. He led me to the position and then continued to provide in this very real way.

GOOD TO GO!

Home Office USA

— Ruth Bolson

Prayer: For God to provide ideas and thoughts when needed

GUIDANCE FROM HIS WORD

Central Asia

— Ruth*

Prayer: For God to give a specific promise from his Word during a time of difficulty

“He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.”

Isaiah 40:11 ESV

IRON FLOATS, MONEY IS FOUND, FAITH IS RESTORED

Buryat Republic

— Julie Frank

Prayer: That God would lead a woman to find her lost money and restore her lost faith

Often prayers have to do with God’s guidance.

In 1997 we left our location of service in an evacuation convoy while opposing forces battled over control of the city. We had gone through a number of difficulties during our term, and the trauma of evacuation only added to the emotional turmoil.

During the following year of home leave, I experienced counseling, recuperation, and healing from severe depression. As the year came to a close, we seriously questioned whether we were ready to return with our five children to a still war-torn country. Our dear friends, the Maus, challenged us to ask God for a specific verse from his Word to guide us, so that is what we did.

One morning I awoke with these words on my mind, “He gently leads those with young.” As my husband and I looked together at the verse in Isaiah 40:11 (ESV), “He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young,” we both realized that this was God’s promise to us. He understood and would care for our needs and the needs of our children. On the strength of that promise we returned to our location of service and truly experienced God carrying us close to his heart during the next term!

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1 KJV).

“No, I can’t pray. I’ve lost my faith. I have no hope, no future.” My Buryat friend was extremely depressed. She had come to Christ from a world of shamanism. For nine generations her forebears had been shamans, ending with her grandfather, who commanded his children not to follow in his footsteps. Subsequently, her family bore many tragedies, and she was beset with hardships. She felt Satan was punishing them because the chain of shamans was broken. But now my friend had read the entire Bible – eight times! She read that God visits the sins of the fathers on his descendants to the third and fourth generation (see Exodus 34:7). So, now she believed God was punishing her for the evils of her ancestral shamans. Yes, Satan knows how to twist our minds. Quite by accident – or not! – I

read Ezekiel 18 and told my friend that God reversed himself, and that a righteous child shall not die for the sins of his father (see Ezekiel 18:20).

But what was the cause of her depression now? It was because she thought she had lost all of her savings. She had stashed this in her kitchen, but her son said she should put it in a safer place. Then, several weeks ago, she tried to locate it and could not. She searched her place over and over and over again. Maybe it was stolen by the men who had removed some furniture from her place. The amount was truly not very much, but to her it meant independence and some little comfort in her last years. I suddenly remembered how a man had lost an iron ax head that fell into the Jordan and how Elisha had caused it to rise and float (see 2 Kings 6:1-7). So also could her money again be found. “No, there are physical laws and iron sinks, it does not float; it is not possible,” was her reply. So I prayed silently, “Lord, please, oh please, let her find the money and restore her faith!”

She was not to be consoled, and I left with tears in my eyes that I had not been able to help my friend. I had barely stepped into my apartment when the telephone rang. In great excitement, my friend said that after I left she found her money! And her depressed spirit was gone, replaced again by faith.

“The person who
sins shall die. A child
shall not suffer for the
iniquity of a parent, nor
a parent suffer for the
iniquity of a child; the
righteousness of the
righteous shall be his
own, and the wickedness
of the wicked shall be
his own.”

Ezekiel 18:20

It was market day in Cuenca, our hometown located in the highlands of Ecuador. The streets were alive with the indigenous Quichua Indians in their distinctive ponchos and hats, bustling along, carrying huge bundles on their backs. They were bringing their wares from the surrounding hillsides and beyond, hoping to sell them in the big market square about four blocks from where we lived in the Mission Home.

As my three-year-old daughter Kathy and I walked home from the nearby Bilingual School that morning, we wormed our way in and out of the crowd on the narrow sidewalk. Arriving across the street from the Mission Home, I remembered something that I needed to buy, so we stepped into the little sidewalk store right in front of us. It was crowded, but it took just a minute to pick up the item and pay the clerk. When I turned to take Kathy’s hand again, she was gone!

I dashed outside the store into the crowd. Where was Kathy? I looked up and down the street and around the corner, but with so many people,

LOST AND FOUND: AN EXTRAORDINARY DAY Ecuador

— Carol Rosales

Prayer: For God’s help to find a
lost child



Market square, near the Mission Home of that time in Cuenca

¹ Title to the hymn often sung when sending out missionaries of the WMPL: *How Good Is the God We Adore.* Joseph Hart. Public Domain.

MANAGING AMIDST POVERTY

Bolivia

— Sheldon & Sharon Groff

Prayer: That God would bring only the needy to the house

I couldn't see her anywhere. "Oh God, help me find her," I prayed. I ran home thinking she might have gone there because it was just across the street – but no Kathy!

My husband Ray was there, and both of us ran out and looked up and down the streets trying to figure out which direction she might have taken. We were especially anxious because we had heard recently that men had come up from Guayaquil on the coast to steal children in Cuenca and take them back to work in the banana groves! "Oh God, help us," we prayed. Ray said he would go to the radio station just across the street and ask them to put out a bulletin to help find her.

Having been at the school that morning, I didn't know that María, our maid, had gone to the market. She did not have any idea that Kathy was missing. While there María had come upon a group of Quichua people standing around in a circle looking intently at something. There in the middle of the circle was Kathy!

The next few moments of that day are forever fixed in my mind. I will never forget the look of anguish and desperation on María's face as she came running down the street with Kathy held tightly in her arms! I saw her coming and ran towards her. We both hugged and cried.

"Oh God, thank you for answering prayer!" Sometimes he answers in very extraordinary ways! *How Good Is the God We Adore!*¹

When we were brand new missionaries in Bolivia, we lived in the Mission Home in La Paz for a few months while Nels and Marion Loberg were on home assignment in Canada. The Mission Home had a long history of generous missionaries living there, so many people, being aware of this, would come to the gate asking us for money. For example, they would bring us prescriptions that they couldn't afford to fill, hospital bills that they had to pay before someone could be released from the hospital, utility bills that they had to pay or have their water or electricity cut off, or requests for money to pay for the funeral of a relative who had died.

At first, we believed the requests of everyone who came to our gate. But later on others began to tell us that many of the stories were false and that people were just trying to take advantage of us. We didn't know what to

do. Should we make the sacrifice of giving money to them, or not? We also had to consider that it took a lot of our time to listen to their stories each day. The situation reached such a point of our not even wanting to get out of bed in the morning in order to face all the people coming to the gate to ask us for money. Finally, we prayed and asked the Lord to put angels around the gate, and to bring only those he wanted to send to us. The number of people coming to our gate decreased *dramatically*! After that answer to prayer, we were able to help those people most in need and life became much more manageable.

It was in March of 1992 that we decided to move to Romania as missionaries. We announced our plans in our Sunday school mission class at Vision of Glory Lutheran Church in Plymouth, Minnesota, and Edner Holmen was quick to tell us about the World Mission Prayer League. That's how our interest in WMPL had its start!

We planned to first visit Romania in June to see if it really was as needy medically and spiritually as we had seen on ABC's "20/20" programs about the orphanages. One April Sunday, about a month after mentioning our plans, Eileen Friberg (former missionary to Tanganyika, now Tanzania) asked if we had been able to contact any Romanian Christians. We replied that we had tried, but without any success. She told us, "I pray for missions twice a day. I get a newsletter from this Romanian pastor. I'll see what I can do." Later that same Sunday we received a phone call. "This is Eileen. Pastor Richard Wurmbrand is speaking at Eden Prairie Assemblies of God at six o'clock this evening. Can you be there?"

Pastor Richard Wurmbrand was a Lutheran pastor and spiritual head of the underground church in Romania under the Communists. He had spent fourteen years in a Communist prison because of his faith. The Norwegian Lutheran Church was finally able to obtain his release, and Pastor Wurmbrand and his wife Sabina came to the United States where he testified before the U.S. Congress and later started "Voice of the Martyrs."

We were leading our own church's class for new members at six o'clock that evening, but when our meeting finished we hurried over to Eden Prairie Assemblies of God, where we met Sabina Wurmbrand selling books in the



Bolivian shepherd with his herd of llamas in a vacant lot near the Mission Home in La Paz

MEETING RICHARD USA en route to Romania

— Milt & Linda Hanson

“He replied, ‘I even forgot much of the Bible, but I never forgot 2 Corinthians 4:17,18.’”

lobby. The Wurmbrands’ hosts invited us to have supper with them later that week. We got to hear him speak during that week and, in addition, were able to meet them on other occasions when they came through the Twin Cities.

Pastor Wurmbrand gave us information about Christian contacts in Bucharest for our trip that June. But, more than anything else, the visits we had with the Wurmbrands during those next two years before we moved to Romania taught us much about what it means to be fully committed to Jesus. During one session with pastors, someone asked Pastor Wurmbrand how he managed to endure fourteen years in a Communist prison. He replied, “I even forgot much of the Bible, but I never forgot 2 Corinthians 4:17,18:

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal (KJV).

We learned this and so much more from the Wurmbrands, which we were later able to share with our Romanian friends.

MY PARENTS’ PRAYERS

Pakistan

— Jan Kersgaard

Prayer: That God would use her in his mission

At thirteen years of age, I heard a missionary to New Guinea speak and promised God I would be a missionary – for two years. After nursing, midwifery and Bible school, the Lord led me to Pakistan with World Mission Prayer League. (When I had asked my parents to send me some of their *Santal Missionary* magazines, they had sent me the *Fellow Workers* soon after the two Missions merged.)

I went to Pakistan for one term, then another, and then another. Through many circumstances, the Lord led me to serve in the hospital called Tank. He truly blessed me, and I can’t imagine doing anything else with my life.

After twenty years in Pakistan, I became aware of an amazing answer to prayer. My father wrote and told me that when I was very young, he and Mom had been to a Lutheran Bible Institute Bible conference held at our church. The Bible teacher for the week had challenged parents to commit their children to the Lord and to mission work. That night, my parents had prayed that the Lord would use me in his mission. What an answer to my parents’ prayers! I thank God for answering their prayers, and I thank my parents for their brave prayers and faithfulness to the Lord.

PRAYER AND MY HEART'S NEST

Nepal

— Carol Gurung

Prayer: Of surrender



Top: Author's journal and card

Bottom: Author's bedroom at Mahendra Bhawan Girl's School, Kathmandu

¹ *Candles in the Dark: Letters of Hope and Encouragement* by Amy Carmichael. Dohnavur Fellowship, 1981

I remember things visually. “Picture language” speaks vividly to my heart. At a significant time in my life, a WMPL supporter’s thoughtfulness gave me a tangible symbol and reminder that God does indeed know our thoughts, hear our prayer, and accept our desire to lay what is precious before his throne.

February 27, 1987. I was the new housemother for forty dorm girls, ages 6-9, at a school in Kathmandu, Nepal. On this day I wrote in my journal about the Psalm 84:3 paradox between nests where new life is nurtured and sacrificial altars: “Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, at your altars, O LORD of hosts, my King and my God” (ESV). I committed to God what was in my own heart’s “nest” at the time: (1) my dorm girls, and (2) the willingness for singleness or marriage according to God’s plan. With that prayer I sketched a tree branch holding a nest of birds, adding a quote by Amy Carmichael, “What a God, who out of shade, nest for singing bird hath made.”¹

A couple of weeks later I received mail from someone I didn’t know. She mentioned that this year she felt it would please God for her to write to WMPL workers. I looked at the date on the top: February 27! The date increased my amazement, but even before reading her words, the picture on the card had caught my attention. Two birds sat in a nest on a tree branch – singing. Though more artistic than my journal sketch, it was in essence the same, with one notable difference: the addition of a rainbow.

I wrote to thank the woman for following what she believed to be God’s prompting to write. Some time later my letter to her was returned, unopened. The post office had stamped on the envelope, “no such address.” I tried to trace the woman through WMPL but couldn’t find her; God knows who she is. She never learned of my gratitude, but she brought joy and encouragement to me in a personal way I would treasure.

Future journal entries chronicle God’s activity and answers: (1) Girls in my dorm room left Hinduism and Buddhism to embrace new life in Christ; (2) Marriage also emerged (though it did not look as I had expected) and God has been faithful to us.

PRAYERS AT THE BORDER

East Asia

— Steve & Debby Holm

Prayer: For God to guide her return
to service in East Asia

Our blessings started thirty-five years ago in Hong Kong, China, with Debby standing at the border of this Communist country. Looking into China, Debby asked the Lord to guide her to return some day to give help to the Chinese people. This had been her thought for years as she grew up in South Minneapolis and prepared to become a Registered Nurse (RN) at Deaconess Hospital. Graduation was the springboard to going to Taiwan Chaiyi Hospital in 1974-1975 to train with a doctor in the surgery department. She had opportunity to learn holistic ways of treating patients, caring for their complete personal needs.

God's guidance for this task continued with her life partner Steve as the Father used the many experiences of our family life to prepare us for cross-cultural service.

The time for service came in answer to prayer in 2004. Three days after our last son graduated from university in Chicago, Debby received a letter asking if she would be interested in going to China on trips for medical assessments. Debby whole-heartedly accepted the invitation. This event started the wheels turning and led to several trips to China, which then developed into the role of being on-site developers for this organization at a local vocational and technical college from 2008-2011.

Those years bloomed into a rose garden, cultivated by God, to give us the most wonderful experience in teaching and reaching out to the local community, medical staff and primary schools in the area. Students, doctors, school officials, and community members have come to know Jesus as their Savior.

As doors closed, our path of service in China changed. We then partnered with another organization and implemented a new plan of action to expand the fundamentals of nursing in the schools and community.

Yes! He is great to show us the way and answers our prayers for his guidance.

SERVE ENTHUSIASTICALLY!

Bolivia

— Marge Erickson

Prayer: For God to show his plan for us

Yes, "IT WAS THE LORD!" who had called Henrick and me to serve him in Bolivia – arriving there in 1948. It was our special privilege to serve him there for twenty-nine wonderful years. We knew we were there because God had called us. He was faithful through those years full of blessings, defeats, struggles, and victories, too!

The years passed quickly, and in 1977 the Lord showed us that our work there was finished, so we prepared to return to the States. We faced the traumatic experience of leaving that land that had been our home all those years – leaving our co-workers and the work to which God had called us. But hardest of all was leaving our Bolivian friends. They had become like family to us. But God did give us the needed grace for those good-byes, too.

In returning to the States, I faced another traumatic experience. We settled into our home, but we surely didn't know what the future held for us. Six or eight months later came one of the most difficult crises I ever faced in my life. I kept thinking to myself: We're not going back! We're not buying supplies to take back, as we usually did on our furloughs! We're not saving up money for our plane tickets! We haven't started making travel plans for our return trip to Bolivia! And this was hard to accept.

Then one day I attended a women's retreat at our home church. The speaker's theme was "Peace." She spoke of peace *with* God and the peace *of* God and how it affects our daily lives. After our noon lunch together, there was a sharing time when women were encouraged to tell of specific experiences of having God's peace. Several friends got up to share, and then my heart went "pitter-patter" and I knew I needed to make a definite decision. God worked mightily in my heart that day, and when I rose to my feet to share, I was able *by the grace of God* to say, "Today God has given me peace in my heart about staying in the States and not returning to Bolivia!" (I'll never forget that moment – it was a victory for the Lord!) It was like a release! It was that peace that passes all understanding.

Somehow, I just knew that we were as much in the center of God's will in remaining in the States NOW as we had been in going to the field in 1948. God showed me that rather than fussing in my spirit about not returning to Bolivia, I should rather be thankful that we had experienced the privilege of serving him there. I needed to focus on Jesus instead of myself!

But the question still remained, "What does the future hold for us?" Many thoughts filled our hearts and minds as we prayed and trusted the Lord. And then, one happy day, part of the answer came as I was reading Joshua 22:1-5. Joshua had called his troops together and was reviewing with them the work they had done, and then he said:

"Several friends got up to share, and then my heart went 'pitter-patter' and I knew I needed to make a definite decision."

“Love the Lord and follow his plan for your lives. Cling to him and serve him enthusiastically.”

Joshua 22:5 TLB

And now the Lord our God has given us success and rest as he promised he would. So go home now to the land given you by the Lord’s servant Moses.... Be sure to continue to obey all the commandments Moses gave you. Love the Lord and follow his plan for your lives. Cling to him and serve him enthusiastically (Joshua 22:4,5 TLB).

Wow!! That was the Lord’s special word of guidance to me, and so, in these years since then, it’s been my sincere desire to serve him *enthusiastically!*

SHARING
Central Asia

— Ruth*

Prayer: **For an opening to share the gospel**

In the country where we work, proselytizing (trying to make someone convert to another religion) is expressly forbidden and openly sharing the gospel is often difficult. Knowing we are surrounded by people who are totally unreached by the good news, we realize that preaching only through our lives and actions is not enough. Yet weeks and months may go by without opportunities to share verbally. One morning I was feeling particularly desperate and prayed specifically for an opening to share. That very night, as we were visiting in someone’s home, our host asked a question that flung the door wide open. In fact, in order to not share the salvation message clearly, I would have had to totally ignore the question, which was impossible!

**SOMEWHERE FOR A
RETIRED NURSE AND
A PLUMBER**
Pakistan

— John (& Ruth) Vibe

“God has made us what we are, and in our union with Christ Jesus he has created us for a life of good deeds, which he has already prepared for us to do” (Ephesians 2:10 GNT).

Four or five years ago we might just as easily have written, “Christian Hospital, Tank, Pakistan,” as our actual address rather than Erin, Ontario. It could just as easily not have happened, but by God’s good grace, it did. Forty some years earlier, when I formally asked her dad for Ruth’s hand in marriage, he said to me, “Are you aware that Ruth’s future plans include going to the mission field?” – and I replied that this had been discussed because I had also been challenged in that direction.

Fran Swenson attended our Luther League for a time back in the early 50's and with vivid clarity shared with us her love for her Lord and her passion for Nepal. I opened a plumbing business and Ruth completed her RN training. We married, raised four children, worked hard to make a go of it, and for a time any thoughts of our actually going to a mission field, if not forgotten, were at least set aside – for life has a way of entangling and closing in on you. We kept contact with WMPL through Fran, following her adventures in Nepal.

Was God setting things in place and prompting us all along? We don't know, but we'd like to think so. As the 20th century wound down, so did our energy and dedication to the family business. In quick succession the following two events took place: We sold the business and the last of our four kids fled the nest (more or less – it really *never* happens completely!).

At this point we typed up a letter to WMPL asking if there might possibly be a spot somewhere for a retired nurse and a plumber. However, we did not send the letter until the sale of our country “retirement” acreage and home. Only then did we begin purposeful praying. The SOLD sign finally went up; we sent the letter and found an absolutely perfect rental home only a kilometer away.

In June 2002 we attended WMPL *Briefing Course* and once again became students. We thought we already knew about world missions, but it was like starting all over again. It soon became clear that the third letter in WMPL is taken very seriously.

Pat Elvis told us that a hospital in Pakistan would be a good fit. It was called Christian Hospital Tank (CHT). We took that word as God's leading and began making preparations to go.

Since then we have made three trips to Pakistan, totaling eighteen months of service to that hospital so strategically located near the Afghanistan border. We know many people prayed specifically for us. We are also certain that others from far back – like our parents – were also praying for us and perhaps were called to leave this earth before they knew their prayers were answered. We are so thankful that he saw fit to let us serve the people at CHT during those years of our lives.



Christian Hospital Tank seeks to provide healing for the many medical and spiritual needs of people living on the frontier

“We thought we already knew about world missions, but it was like starting all over again. It soon became clear that the third letter in WMPL is taken very seriously.”

THAT LAST BUS TO CUENCA

Ecuador

— Josie Pillman

Prayer: For God to direct decision to
go for medical help or stay home

DIRECTION



Village of Nabón, Ecuador

“If you do not want to
be burying your son
next, you had better
catch that last bus
to Cuenca.”

I was at our home in the quaint little country village of Nabón, Ecuador. Our home had running water and a flush toilet. It also had electricity, but just in the evening, provided by a large generator that was turned on at 6 p.m. to provide Nabón with lights for a few hours. The city of Cuenca was a two to 2 1/2 hour bus ride away. On this particular weekend, my husband Paul was far away in Quito, the capital, and didn't plan to come home until Monday evening. The only real medical help in town was a doctor (or more often a “practicing” doctor) who came to Nabón on Sundays. Otherwise, for medical help I needed to go to Cuenca.

I had our four children with me, including David, our youngest, who was 14 months old. David seemed to have a virus that made him vomit. I was trying to control what he ate and keep fluids in him to prevent dehydration. I had no phone or other means of communication with Paul or anyone in Cuenca. The last bus out for the day would be leaving around five. Should I pack up all of the children and go to Cuenca? As I prayed and wondered, I went to the chicken coop and discovered a dead chick. I took the chick out to the field to bury it. As I covered it with soil, I had the very strong impression that the Lord was saying, “If you do not want to be burying your son next, you had better catch that last bus to Cuenca.”

The children and I quickly got ready for the trip, and our helper Rosa, who was so good with the children, said, “I'm coming with you.” She was a great help in getting us to the bus and riding to Cuenca. Then we met Paul at the airport as he was arriving in Cuenca from Quito. With Paul's help I could manage; so we sent Rosa home. We saw a doctor in Cuenca who advised us to keep David hydrated. It was difficult. He continued to vomit.

The following day, David was becoming lethargic, so we brought him to the hospital. The doctor said that David was seriously dehydrated and needed intravenous fluids (I.V.). He was chubby, but they managed to get the I.V. put into the back of his hand. The only diagnosis they could give was that it was in fact a virus which had to run its course. David was so dehydrated that he didn't urinate until Monday evening, after being on I.V. fluids all day. I would try to nurse him, and he would continue to vomit. Finally, on Wednesday morning, he started to keep fluids down. He went home from the hospital on Thursday, looking much thinner, but the Lord

had saved his life. He quickly returned to normal. I still remember that strong impression from the Lord to get into Cuenca. I acknowledge it as wisdom from on high. “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him” (James 1:5 ESV). Thank you, Jesus!

When I was invited to consider the possibility of becoming director of our little fellowship, Cindy and I had a lot of praying to do. It did not seem the most obvious fit. Actually, if we were to make any move at all during that mid-stage of our lives, we had been thinking of Mongolia. (But to be perfectly truthful, *I* had been thinking of Mongolia.)

We began to pray. We prayed around the breakfast table. We prayed in the evening after supper. We prayed at work and prayed at play. We took a focused prayer retreat together for a weekend in Wisconsin. We asked our friends and family to pray with us and for us, too.

All the while, we took special courage from a passage in the book of Proverbs. We have returned to this passage several times throughout our adult lives. We took courage from this passage when we decided to marry. We took courage later when we decided to pursue a missionary career. We took courage here when we responded to the invitation to join our home office staff some years earlier. And now we returned to the passage again.

“The human mind plans the way, but the LORD directs the steps” (Prov. 16:9).

I really like this verse. On the one hand, Solomon reminds us that the “human mind” has serious planning to do. It is right to plan, and as well as we possibly can. There is nothing unspiritual or untrusting about the effort. God seems, in fact, to expect it.

On the other hand, Solomon is perfectly clear about the outer limit of human planning. Human plans are good for approximately six feet, in my case: from my brain to my feet. God expects me to make the very best plans that my brain is capable of mustering. But then he takes my feet in his own hands and promises to graciously direct them.

Do you see how this verse has given us courage through the difficult decisions of our lives? It encourages us to think things through – and then

THE LORD DIRECTS THE STEPS

Home Office USA

– Chuck Lindquist

Prayer: For the Lord’s direction
regarding future assignment

“The verse puts the
heat on: we are to
carefully plan.
And then it takes the
heat off: we are to trust
our steps to God.”

to give up our thinking in surrender to the wonderful direction of God. The verse puts the heat on: we are to carefully plan. And then it takes the heat off: we are to trust our steps to God. It carries both grace and task.

In the end, as most of you know, we decided to accept the gracious invitation of the Home Council to remain in Minneapolis in service to the home office, now as the Prayer League's general director. It hasn't been an easy path, I will admit. And it still does not seem the most perfectly obvious fit. Yet we believe – we still believe – that God himself has directed it.

Mongolia, of course, remains just there – sandwiched between China and Siberia and waiting, perhaps, for our involvement one day. We still pray about the place from time to time. Sometimes, even, we have made very tentative plans. (Yet to remain perfectly frank, *I* have sometimes made tentative plans – and on some days especially.)

But then we look to God to direct our steps. And we continue to find both grace and task.

THE POWER OF A NAME

Ecuador

— Josie Pillman

Prayer: For God's direction to decide
what to name a baby

Our fifth child was expected around Thanksgiving Day. We had three sons and a daughter. The first two boys had their grandfathers' middle names and the third son had his dad's middle name. So, if this was a boy, we prayed about what to use as a middle name.

His first name was to be Joel, meaning Jehovah. As we pondered the name Peter, which means "rock," we began looking up Bible verses with the word "rock" in them. "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I" (Psalm 61:2). "He alone is my rock and my salvation..." (Psalm 62:2,6). "...and the rock was Christ" (1 Corinthians 10:4).

Joel Peter Pillman was born at 2:25 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day. He died three days later of heart problems and was buried in the garden of the Mission Home in Cuenca. The death of a child brings about great grief. Immediately the verses came to mind and gave us a Rock to hold onto – Jehovah, our Rock.

Sixteen months later, we had another son, whom we named Peter Samuel. God, our Rock, heard our prayers for another child.

Soon after Ed committed his life to Christ in the early 1970's and I, Karen, had recommitted my life to him, we began to sense God calling us to the country of Bangladesh to help establish LAMB Integrated Rural Health and Development Project. Because of our adventurous natures, we knew that we could easily run ahead of God. To be sure we were hearing God's voice, we prayed that he would give us a fleece to lay before him. We didn't want anyone to know we were considering such a crazy idea as being missionaries. We decided, through prayer, that if someone came along and asked us if our house was for sale, it would be a sign that God was calling us to at least begin the application process with the World Mission Prayer League (WMPL). From time to time we reminded God about this prayer, continuing to not mention anything to anyone.

It was not long – a month or so – before a knock came at the door. When I opened it a man asked me, “Is your house for sale?” I began to laugh and told him he was an answer to prayer! I can't imagine what he thought, but it turned out that he was a real estate salesperson. I told him that if we decided to sell we might give him a call. Shortly after this we did list our house with him.

Several months later we returned late at night from the WMPL Home Council meeting – in which we had been accepted as missionaries – to find several lights on in the house. We assumed that the house had been shown to some prospective buyers. Early the next morning we received a call with the news that the house had sold. Imagine our delight (and trepidation) at this confirmation coming on the very day we were accepted for full-time service.

The certainty that God had his hand so strongly upon us enabled and encouraged us through some very rough times during our first term.

Arriving in Samburu, Africa, was everything I had anticipated and yet was nothing like what I had expected. My first impression was that our Samburu home was isolated and alone, without neighbors. Then I realized that we were in the middle of a busy community and on a busy path. Perceptions change. Yes, the nearest neighbor is a short walk away, but relatively speaking, that is very close. This is sub-Saharan Africa; anyone within an hour's walk is a neighbor.

THE REAL ESTATE SALESMAN

USA en route to Bangladesh

– Karen Scott

Prayer: That God's calling be made plain

“I began to laugh and told him he was an answer to prayer!”

THE TRUE PATH IN SAMBURULAND

Kenya

– Anita Jackson

“I am the way, and the
truth, and the life.”

John 14:6a ESV

I have also discovered that one really is never alone in Africa. One encounters men and warriors walking on any given path going to check the cattle or to visit a friend. Children are seen on most hillsides tending the goats or calves. Women are met as they walk to the well for water. One seems to never be alone in Africa.

In this dry and, in places, barren land, when looking for a bush large enough to hide behind for a bathroom break, “never alone in Africa” can be a problem. More than once when I’ve felt private, I’ve heard a voice calling: “Anita, what are you doing?” or, “Where are you going?” And, as my tribal ancestors would say, my heartfelt response would be, “*Uffda!*”

Ah, yes. There are also advantages to “never alone in Africa.” As I venture out on my own to visit friends, it has become known that I am a bit direction-illiterate. Honestly, I know where I’m going, but there are a dozen paths breaking off and going to other homesteads in the same general direction, and there are a dozen cow paths which fade into nothingness, and there can be a deep crack or ravine in the earth between me and the homestead which I can see straight ahead in the distance. This means that I need to find the true path that works its way around this uncrossable earth-crack.

It seems to have become a common cry, “Anita, where are you going?” when people see me wandering alone. After telling them my desired destination, they take the opportunity to guide me to the correct path. Honestly, I’ve prayed about this direction-illiteracy, but you know what? It has made me vulnerable, and I need help from the Samburu. Often when people see us, it is with the thought that we come to give them things – food, education, etc. – and our relationships are one-sided because they have nothing to offer us that we need. When people see that I don’t know the right path, they realize that they have something I need. People give me their time as they walk with me to help me stay on the right path. Thus in my “lost-ness” they have given something to me, and we have a relationship. As I’m never alone in Africa, I have little worry about being lost; someone will eventually show me the way, and I may be given an opportunity to visit a new person as I arrive at the wrong homestead.

Last week, after being guided (first by an elderly man and later by three ladies getting water) to the home of a young lady whose baby had just died, the true meaning of “never alone in Africa” became real for me. The

lady in mourning was about seventeen years old. Her young husband had gone to the city (Nairobi) to look for work, and she was living within his family's homestead. As I sat by her, twice she began weeping, and the other ladies of her homestead told her to be still, be quiet, and stop crying. She was alone, without her baby – her only child, without her husband, and without her own parents and family near. Sometimes we can be alone even when surrounded by people.

There are sadness, pain and heavy burdens in this world. Jesus came to live in this world and experience people's pain. Jesus came. He comes now and desires that we never be alone. Jesus will enter our hearts and guide us on his True Path because he is the Way, the Truth and the Life for all people in all situations.

To my friend in mourning, Jesus is calling: "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "...I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (see Matthew 11:28; John 14:6a ESV).

To my friend in mourning, I am here crying with you. Come with me; I will show you the path of Jesus. With Jesus you will never be alone, never alone in Africa again. Jesus is here; he will comfort you. I am here to show you his Path and to walk with you along the journey.

Having completed my opportunity to be a part of Lutheran Youth Encounter's first Cross Fire team, traveling down the east side of Africa beginning in Ethiopia and on to the Republic of South Africa, I worked at the WMPL home office while prayerfully discerning my call. It was *so kind of God* to allow me to be a part of what Paul Lindell called, "the little family on the hill."

I was on my way to my final, "formal" interview with the American Lutheran Church (ALC) Department of World Missions and had been praying and praying to recognize God's "green light" for me. Just the evening before, my heart had been comforted by the *key question* of Jesus' conversation with his disciples one day. He first asked them, "Who do people say that I am?" (Mark 8:27). The twelve gave their answers, and then Jesus turned to them and asked, "But who do you say that I am?" (Mark 8:29). In my heart rang the conviction that *this is the greater question*. While on the



Author walking with Samburu friends

THIS IS THE GREATER QUESTION

Home Office USA

— Char Sunde

Prayer: For direction

WATER IN THE DESERT Pakistan

— Bill Dahl

Prayer: That God would supply a source of water for the hospital



Water pots, Pakistan

bus going through downtown toward the ALC headquarters, we passed a sign board in front of one of the big churches. Guess what it said? Indeed, it said, “Who do you say that I am?” I went into that interview with God’s peace guarding my heart and mind. The answer of my heart to that question has been foundationally influential for me ever since.

Our anticipation of and joy in our arrival at Christian Hospital Tank in the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan were soon overshadowed by an enormous problem. How do you run a hospital without a reliable source of water? In that area the average annual rainfall was less than four inches. The municipal water supply was a mere trickle, which often stopped for days. All the functions of the hospital were jeopardized. Sanitation, sterilization of supplies, patient care, bathing, food preparation, etc., were all extremely difficult.

We had the available water analyzed; it was unfit for human consumption, animal consumption and construction. Yet this was the very water we, our families and our patients depended upon! Needless to say, this required considerable study and effort to try and make this contaminated water into something resembling the safe water supply most of us are accustomed to. In our home, Doris set up large pots: in one she treated the water with rock alum; after settling, the clear water was poured into another pot for boiling, then cooling; and if it was to be used for washing fruits and veggies, iodine drops were added. On a larger scale, we built some 25,000-gallon brick tanks for settling and storage. We purchased rock alum in 200-pound bags and used it to treat the irrigation water that flowed into our compound. After settling it was siphoned into a large sand filter and then used. All this, however, was not without problems, as it still could not reduce the bacteria and viruses. As a result, many of us ended up with intestinal and liver diseases such as infectious hepatitis and amoebic hepatitis. This problem was later overcome when, through much intercessory prayer and the gifts of God’s people, we were able to install a large ultra-violet radiation unit, which greatly improved the patients’ health as well as our own. Through all this, however, our supply of water remained quite inadequate.

In our prayer letters and on our speaking tours in Canada and the USA, we shared with many the critical need for water. People responded as they were able, but we were never able to raise the \$200,000 required to drill a tube-well. About ten years into our stay in Tank, the Lord spoke to me from the Scriptures. I was reading from 2 Kings 3:16-18:

“This is what the LORD says: ‘...Even though you will not see any rain or wind, this stream bed will be filled with water, and you, your livestock, and your pack animals will have plenty to drink.’” And Elisha continued, “But this is an easy thing for the LORD to do; he will also give you victory...” (GNT).

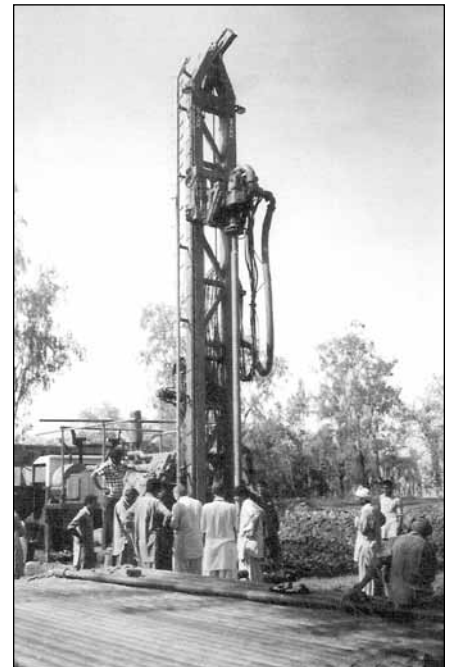
Through reading this passage God showed me that he knew and understood our problems, but he had another agenda. God redirected my concerns to focus on his priority, which was that the Living Water should flow. As we concentrated on this priority, our own struggles for water continued, but our anxieties and worries were gone. With frugal management we had enough.

Just a few weeks before we departed from Pakistan in 1983, I was working in the outpatient department when I was suddenly interrupted by the entrance of a large Dutchman, who said, “I hear you need water; where do you want me to drill the well?” How had he heard? Who had told him? God alone knows. I stepped out of the office and saw a beautiful Ingersoll Rand deep drilling rig, trucks, equipment, and crew all gathered at the gate. They entered and set up camp. In one week they drilled down 780 feet, found a few inches of gravel, and tapped an artesian supply of water that flowed up to the surface. I cupped my hands, drank, praised the Lord and rejoiced. Our prayers for the past eighteen years had been answered. God provided the water, and it was absolutely free! God had kept his promise!

Like this, there have been many answers to prayer throughout our lives. As young people God guided us in our choice of careers, marriage partner, and places of service. It is such a joy to know that God cares about every detail in our lives. Our testimony from childhood to our old age is that God is totally faithful. You and I can rely on his Word and his promises. God satisfies our lives completely and, according to his promise in John 4:14, “...those who drink the water that I will give them will never be thirsty again” (GNT).

“...those who drink the water that I will give them will never be thirsty again.”

John 4:14a GNT



Deep drilling rig arrives unexpectedly at Tank Hospital, Pakistan

WE PRAYED ON THE LAWN OF THE SCHOOL*

Ecuador

— Richard Kryder

Prayer: For God to lead regarding
staffing needs

One day last summer a lady called at the Bilingual School saying she was visiting from Fort Wayne, Indiana, and had a daughter who wanted to return to live in Cuenca if she could find some sort of employment. Would the school be interested in the services of an elementary education graduate with three and a half years of secretarial experience?

I told the mother to have the daughter seek God's direction in the matter, and then I dismissed the question from my mind, thinking that perhaps it was mostly the mother's idea and not the daughter's.

As the opening day of school approached, three of us from our Mission gathered to review the staff needs of the school. We had indicated to all of the WMPL family that no one was obligated to teach in the school who didn't feel that this was the Lord's work for him or her. Two missionaries had responded that they *would* teach if we had to have them, but they really didn't want to do so. We were short one full-time teacher. As the three of us prayed about it on the lawn of the school, we asked the Lord to direct us.

About two hours later, some friends to whom Sam Douglass had introduced me before he left Cuenca came to the school with a special request. A girl from Fort Wayne, Indiana, wanted to come immediately. Did we remember her mother's request earlier that summer, and could we possibly use her services? Within eight days she was in Cuenca and has proven to be a very sensitive and effective teacher in the English part of the bilingual secretarial program. Praise the Lord!

*Excerpt adapted from *Fellow Workers*,
July 1973

WISDOM AND THE GAS PUMP

Mexico

— Dan & Léonie Gómez

Prayer: For God's guidance regarding
the truck's broken gas pump



Highway in Mexico

Many of the prayers sent up on the mission field have to do with vehicles. Friends in our Mission church in Mascareñas were on their way home for a family visit in the heat of summer. Their truck died and they found themselves alone in the desert on a road with little traffic. This Christian brother looked at the truck and figured the problem was the gas pump. While his son continued tinkering, he sat in the truck and asked God for guidance. Then he got out, and suddenly his son said, "Why don't we try to use the pump from the window washer?" They hooked it up and managed to get all the way to their old home town. They continue to share this story of God's provision of wisdom.

The young lad stacks our luggage precariously onto his flimsy hand truck and makes his way across the parking lot, up the stairs, and into the busy train station. This archaic crossroad that once served as the ancient capital is buzzing with activity. It is the National Holiday and thousands of travelers are arriving from and departing to points across “The Middle Kingdom.”

Each day this small boy struggles with men twice his size in an effort to get the work he desperately needs to make ends meet. As an unregistered worker, he is not allowed to enter the terminal building, so my companions purchase a ticket that enables him to accompany us into the “soft seat” departure lounge. He stands quietly as he dutifully oversees the pile of suitcases and makes sure the foreigners who have become his charges are seated and comfortable.

We encourage him to sit with us and rest. We purchase a soda pop for him and we begin to visit via translation provided by our local guide, Stephanie.

His name is Yang Xing (pronounced Yong Shing). He is twelve years old and works as a porter at the train station in this city that is home to the Eighth Wonder of the World, the Terracotta Warriors. Yang is small for his age. His right ear has a slight deformity, and it appears that he has strabismus of the left eye. We are stunned to hear that his parents have both died. He lives alone in a room that he rents from a farmer on the edge of the city. His daily earnings are usually enough to purchase bottled water and food and pay his rent. He has learned to care for himself. The most he has made in one day is twenty-five yuan – about \$3.75.

Stephanie, a mom herself, asks him why he has not sought help from the social service authorities. He replies that he has tried, but was informed that he is too old. If he were four or five he would likely be eligible, but because he is twelve he must fend for himself. We find this almost unbelievable and wonder if our young friend is not part of some kind of setup. Is he being managed by someone? Is he part of a child labor scam? However, the spirit and demeanor of this unpretentious little guy speaks otherwise. Stephanie seems to know kids. She and her husband have faced the challenges and hardship of raising two children in a country with a rigid one-child policy. She speaks to our doubts by stating that she feels Yang Xing is simply “a poor, but very brave little boy.” I find it difficult to contain my emotions as my tired eyes sting hot with tears.

I notice how clean and well-kempt Yang Xing is as he nurses the bottle of Sprite he seems to be enjoying. Our train is called, and again he leaps

YANG XING, THE GIVER

East Asia

— Rob Lewis



“I have sent a small boy to serve you when you had nothing to offer him. This is where you will find me...”

into action, making sure that the luggage is delivered and safely stowed in our compartment in car number six. Each time our eyes meet he smiles. I tease him by flexing his arm and telling him that he is very strong. His grin grows broader. I'm completely out of local currency – nothing to offer him. My co-workers pay him handsomely and he responds with big hugs for their generosity. Perhaps the extra cash will buy him some time for himself. We all agree that it would be an easy decision to just take him with us, becoming the benevolent benefactors he obviously needs to make his life better. At least it seems that way to us North Americans.

Yang Xing's story can be retold a thousand times in a thousand other locations in a country that often does not have the infrastructure, or in some cases the social will, to make a difference in his life.

As we settle in for the night-long train ride to our next destination, sleep eludes me despite the relaxing, cradling motion of our comfortable sleeping compartment. I lie in my berth thinking about Yang Xing. I ask God why he has allowed us this emotional encounter. His answer comes in a whisper, "You always come as the strong ones, yet I have sent a small boy to serve you when you had nothing to offer him. This is where you will find me, among the poor and the marginalized. Look for me here." Tears flood my eyes again. My mind refuses to release me from thoughts of this "poor, but very brave little boy."

I pray throughout the night thanking God for Yang Xing and asking God to keep him safe. I pray for someone to come into his life who will show him the love and nurturing that a twelve-year-old boy needs. I find consolation in the fact that we are here to observe work being done among people like Yang Xing – those who are short on resources and influence. I also discover that what we give is often returned through what we learn and receive from those who are the recipients of our giving. I am thankful we are partnering with people who care for the poor and forgotten.

As I prepare to return home two weeks later I find it remarkable that in a country with such an amazing history, a booming world-class economy, a vibrant church, breathtaking scenery, deeply rich culture and the grandest of dynasties, a small boy has had the deepest impact on me. God reminds me, "...Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me" (Matthew 25:40).

I thank God for the strength of Yang Xing and what he gave to me.

• • •



Financial Supply

A SPECIAL GIFT TO GET “OUT”

Nepal

— Mary Thoresen

I remember that God always provided for us financially. If we had a month when our income through WMPL was low, we would always get a special gift in the mail – never fail. On one occasion, while living in the difficult location of Jumla, Dave was especially ill, and we needed to get “out” and get to Kathmandu. I was sick, too, and we knew that we needed to get medication, rest and time to recover from our illness. It was the rainy season when the Royal Nepal Airlines flights were almost nonexistent. We heard that there was to be a UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) charter plane flying. It would mean paying a lot more money than the normal airlines – but we needed to leave, so we bought our tickets, trusting things to work out. When we received our statement from WMPL, we saw a gift from a neighboring church of mine. This congregation had never given to us before, and I don’t think they ever gave again, but that particular time they gave enough to cover the flight that they didn’t even know we needed!

A STORY OF WOOD

Central Asia

— Judy Strenge



Wood, a domestic necessity, for sale

One of the members of the WMPL home staff encouraged a women’s group in her church to donate \$1,400 to be used to buy wood that would provide heat in the winter for a group of women here in Central Asia. The money arrived and I purchased two cords of wood each for thirteen women and one cord for one woman – one cord is 128 cubic feet of wood stacked 4 feet deep by 4 feet high by 8 feet long. The wood was purchased in July because that is when it is the cheapest.

I knew that I could not control what these women did with the wood. I am sure some of it was sold to provide food for their families. However, a few months later winter arrived and brought the coldest temperatures we had experienced in twenty years! I believe it was divine intervention that moved these women in the U.S. to send money to be used for such a practical purpose.

A YOUNG WIFE’S FIRST VISIT TO NEPAL

Nepal

— Becky Thorson

I well remember flying into Kathmandu the first time – the green mountains were so beautiful, so exotic and different, so exciting! It was February of 1980, and with high anticipation Steve and I traveled to Nepal for our first experience in the developing world: a three-month medical internship for Steve at Amp Pipal Community Hospital.

While we were not sent or supported by any mission organization, God had provided abundantly for our trip. Our Christian medical fellowship group prayed for us. A Christian organization called MAP, along with the local Rotary Club, provided funds. Gifts also came from friends, family and our local church. We kept very careful records of all we received.

Upon arrival in Nepal we found our way to the United Mission to Nepal (UMN) guest house, where we were welcomed by Carl Johansson, the Mission's executive director (Carl was a good friend of Steve's uncle, Pastor Evald Conrad). We still needed to get to Amp Pipal Hospital, and the folks at UMN planned to send us via a Nepali bus. We'd need to get off at a place called Dumre and meet the Amp Pipal porter, who would walk us eight hours to the hospital. Without our knowing even one word of Nepali to speak, you can imagine our apprehension. What a relief when a very kind woman at the Mission took us under her wing. She tried to get us a spot on a Land Rover taking some Amp Pipal staff directly back to the hospital, but there was no room for us. Then she found a Nepali man named Gopal who worked at Amp Pipal Community Health. He was going back by bus, so she arranged for us to travel with him. That woman, by the way, was Ruthie Overvold, a WMPL missionary to Nepal. Thank God for Ruthie! She packed us lunches, complete with tangerines, and off we went to continue our adventure.

At Dumre, Gopal, Steve and I got off the bus. Our new Nepali friend then found us a jeep – a roofless vehicle with hard benches in the back for passengers. It was a bumpy, crowded ride on less than a road, and still only part way to the hospital. Arriving at Tuturi, we stopped and stayed the night before the long walk.

Next morning, during the five-hour trek up the mountain, I had several first-time experiences: using an Asian toilet (also known as “squatty potty”), walking across a suspension foot bridge (with young boys swinging it to enhance my obvious *enjoyment*), and learning my first Nepali phrase from Gopal: “*kutta dukeko cha*” (“my legs hurt”). It all looked so beautiful and peaceful as we passed the village huts. I recall thinking, “I don't have any culture shock! Had I not seen such things in *National Geographic*?” I was extremely excited that we were finally in Nepal and getting closer to Amp Pipal. Little did I know what was in store for us.



Top: Walking the path
Bottom: Nepali children

“I should have been thankful for God’s provision at this point in time – but I’m afraid that all I could see was what was *not* there.”

Upon arrival at Amp Pipal the team placed us in the “guest house” – basically an empty, very dark, dwelling place. It had a wood stove (which I had no idea how to use), a barely functioning kerosene stove, one kerosene wick lamp and a few candles (there was no electricity from the generator due to a national shortage of kerosene), a few dishes and utensils, and some food such as flour (complete with weevils to be sifted out). The team at the hospital usually took the responsibility of providing for visiting single medical students; however, since they knew I was accompanying Steve, they had felt no burden to extend much care for us. I should have been thankful for God’s provision at this point in time – but I’m afraid that all I could see was what was *not* there.

But for a little advice before leaving our homeland, we had not received any cross-cultural orientation or training, and it didn’t take me more than a few minutes to begin to know what culture shock really is. My expectations were almost 100% different from what I found. I had thought we would be in a real guest house, with meals provided. In my wildest dreams I had not expected to have to cook for ourselves. I had expected the bazaar to actually have some fresh vegetables and fruits, and had imagined meat hanging out in the open. But the only things available in the bazaar were a few tiny potatoes, some rice and lentils – a total lack of everything else.

The team had also expected me to hire a house helper and had one all ready to work for me. I felt offended: “I can do it myself, thank you very much.” After two days of not being able to light the green wood I had naively bought, I was begging for Kiran Maya *didi* (older sister) to come to my rescue. And she did! A cookbook and Nepali dictionary were loaned to us by Cynthia Hale, and we translated some instructions for our *didi*. Kiran Maya could make delicious bread in the wood stove and even more delicious *dal bhat* (rice and lentils the Nepali way).

I had also expected the mission field to be like summer family camp every day – lots of fellowship and mutual support. Well, the team happened to be going through a hard time while we were there. The Nepali church had been threatened. It was a very small group that met at the hospital. The missionaries were not meeting together for fellowship, and we felt we were starving spiritually.

God had provided, though, and I was again to recognize this. For example, my *didi*: I really bonded with Kiran Maya. Without her presence I would have been desolated by loneliness. While Steve was occupied with his internship, I also kept busy writing thank-you notes to donors for the hospital and I did some typing for the business manager.

Sorting out bookkeeping for the expatriate “store” was another task I took up. This “store” for the missionaries was open only once every two weeks. Food items had to be ordered well ahead of time. Items available to us included an unusual macaroni, grotesque sausages, tomato sauce leaking a purple dye, tea sticks (not leaves), kerosene-flavored cooking oil, and disgusting margarine with little pellets of hard fat. There was nice Cream of Wheat for breakfast, but the great consolation was tinned butter from Australia! I felt a little guilty buying this expensive butter, but it was our one treat from the store.

Then Easter came. The team got together for a hymn sing around Cynthia Hale’s piano. It was like water in the desert. We were so starved, and the fellowship was incredibly sweet. The celebration with the Nepali church was special, too – with the Himalayas in the background.

The months passed, Steve completed his internship in Nepal, and we made our way back to the USA praising God for the incredible adventure he had given us. Upon our return we thought all our bills had been paid up. We calculated what we had spent. We had carefully kept track of what we had received for our work, and kept separate anything spent on tours, gifts for others back home, and other “non-mission” expenses. It seemed that we had \$50 left over from donations. We wondered what to do with this money – should we give it back as a missions offering? We decided to wait and see.

The bookkeeping system at Amp Pipal at that time was in quite a mess. It took them months to get all the bills sorted out for any particular month. While we waited, one more bill arrived from Amp Pipal – it was exactly \$50. God had provided to the penny! And here’s the even more amazing blessing: I had included the Australian butter in our mission living expenses, even though I had wondered if it should go into our list of luxuries, so God’s provision had included provision for the butter, too. He is good.

We don’t deserve anything from God but he loves us still. He is faithful and so good. Praise his Name!



The author caring for patients at Amp Pipal Hospital

ALL IN GOD'S TIME

Bolivia

— Nels & Marion Loberg

Prayer: That God would provide the travel funds

“As we prayed, God gave us the assurance that it would be there when needed. We proceeded with our preparations...”

During our first term in Bolivia we both suffered from hepatitis. As a result, we were told by our doctors that we should take an early furlough – more than a year early – because we were having trouble recovering and getting our strength back.

As we began our preparations to return to Canada, the first “obstacle” for us was financial. Where would the money come from for our tickets? As we prayed, God gave us the assurance that it would be there when needed. We proceeded with our preparations, even to making reservations for our flight home. In the last statement received from the home office before we were to leave Bolivia, we were pleased to see that we had the money needed to pay for our flights. The amazing thing to us was the source.

Little did we know just how God would work out our need. He knew exactly when we would need the funds. God started the ball rolling about a year earlier when a college classmate of Marion's had made a covenant with *Steer, Inc.* They agreed to raise a steer and, when sold, give the money to the work of Nels and Marion Loberg in Bolivia. All in God's time!

GOD KNEW THE RENTAL TAX

Nepal

— Steve Thorson

Prayer: For God's provision for rent and housing



Office of our host organization, United Mission to Nepal

In 1992 we returned to Nepal after a home assignment in the U.S. We needed to find a house or apartment with the following very practical requirements: (1) near the hospital, (2) with a well (lots of water shortage otherwise), (3) with a phone already installed (months of delay in getting a phone line would make on-call medical duty impossible from home), (4) separate bedrooms for our teenage daughter and our son, and (5) an extra room for the computer work for the Christian publications project I would be involved with.

There was just such a place, but the rent was more than the amount set for rents by our host organization, the United Mission to Nepal (UMN). We knew that WMPL would ask us to follow UMN's policy, so neither Mission would make allowance for the extra rent. Still, we felt strongly that God wanted us to take this particular house.

We sat down and had our specific covenant prayer with God. We had the audacity to pray: “It's going to be a hard one, God. We need another twenty-five dollars per month to cover the extra rent, and it can't come through WMPL or UMN. So God, please make it clear the amount is for our rent and not some other project or need in Nepal. And God, they need

to send it as a personal gift, and they need to know it cannot be a tax-deductible gift through our Missions.” We didn’t tell anyone about the need except for our parents.

In those days it took two weeks for mail to arrive from the U.S. Two weeks after our prayer, we received a letter from close friends who had visited us in Nepal during our first term. The first time we left for Nepal they had given us a gift toward our plane ticket, but had not felt led by God to give after that. In the letter they wrote something like the following, “Do you have any needs in housing or transportation that your Missions [yes, plural] are not covering? We would like to give something, and by the way, it doesn’t have to be tax-exempt. We don’t see anything in the Bible about gifts to missionaries needing to be tax-deductible.” Wow! Their letter said everything we had asked God to clarify. This was NOT a “hard one” for God!

In the letter our friends asked for the amount we needed. Since they had asked, we informed them of the amount. Our friends began to send their personal gifts every several months, rather than monthly. After many months we calculated that their gifts were almost double the amount we had written about. We didn’t know what to do. Should we ask them to stop for several months, or give it away to other needy people?

Just after we realized this, a big surprise came: a large bill from UMN regarding our rent. It came to our attention that we had miscalculated the total amount we’d need to pay for the house because the higher rent moved it into a higher tax bracket that was payable to the Government of Nepal. The UMN was requesting we pay that extra amount for the tax. When we recalculated this factor, we realized the total needed was exactly the amount our friends had been sending after all!

We were wrong about the amount – but God was not. He knew our real need, not what we thought we needed. Praise God! It’s exciting to covenant with God in this way and see how he provides supernaturally.

The political system in Bangladesh was very unstable during our first term of service. Many countrywide strikes were taking place, interrupting various public services. One such strike stopped all international money from coming into the country. We were able to get by with the kind help



Road scene in Nepal, 1969

“This was NOT a
‘hard one’ for God!”

GOD TOLD HER WE HAD A NEED

Bangladesh

— Karen Scott

GOD'S SUPPLY – ON TIME!

Pakistan

— Ruth Hanson

Prayer: For God's provision of
regular support

GUITARS TO NEPAL

Nepal

— Mary Thoresen



Scenic Nepal

of Norwegian missionaries. We knew that we were going to be short of funds when it came time to pay our Bangladeshi household help, but we were reluctant to ask our missionary friends for too much.

One day my husband Ed went to the post office to collect the in-country mail that was still being delivered. Included was a check for a thousand *taka* (local currency), just enough to get by until the allowance money from WMPL came through! The check was a gift from a Norwegian woman we had met only once before. She reported that as she was praying, God had told her we had a financial need that she was supposed to help meet. Praise the Lord for people who are sensitive to the voice and direction of God.

A story comes to mind that meant so much to me. It was another assurance that I was in God's will.

I did not have monthly support when I went to Pakistan in 1954. A couple of years later, I received a letter from Rev. Leonard Masted. I had been a member of two churches he was pastoring – one was in Minneapolis and the other in Pasadena, California. However, I had never been in the church Pastor Masted was then pastoring. He wrote that one night he couldn't go to sleep. He then asked the Lord what he had for him, and the Lord laid upon his heart the need for my support. He told this to the congregation, and they took on my support. I knew no one there, but even so, the Lord moved them to give.

God gave us a little miracle on the way to Nepal for our first term of service. The day before Dave and I left, we received a letter and a check for two hundred dollars from someone we didn't know. This person had connections with WMPL and also with the Lutheran Brethren Synod, where we had been attending Bible school. When we arrived at the airport, we were told that our two extra bags (two guitars) were going to cost us extra. (Maybe we thought that since our bags were underweight, the extra bags wouldn't matter. I really don't know what we expected.) When it was all added together, we had to pay an additional \$196! We were rejoicing that God had already provided for us. Imagine our extra surprise and blessing, when the flight attendant came around selling headphones to listen to the movie. Wow! So there we were, God not only provided for our needs but also gave us extra for the headphones. That was a wonderful lesson, and a wonderful way to begin our missionary career.

In 1953, to keep reservations for an air flight, the ticket had to be paid ten days before a scheduled flight. It was the eve before the day our ticket to Ecuador had to be paid. We had been preparing for the trip and much was ready, except the money for the ticket. Did the Lord want us to go? We were sure the answer was yes. Here was the first big faith test of our years with the World Mission Prayer League. The Lord says, “In nothing be anxious...” (see Philippians 4:6a ASV).

As we prepared for bed that evening, there was a knock on the door. Here were two dear people from St. Paul’s Lutheran Church on 28th Street in Minneapolis, where John had worked while in seminary. They handed John a check saying that a group from the church had decided they would take on our support. That check was for the amount of \$531. The next day John went to pay for our tickets. The cost came to exactly \$531!

Throughout our thirty-five years with the World Mission Prayer League the Lord has taken care of us in the same manner over and over again. All praise goes to him!

In 1951 Clarence and Helen Hjelmervik, WMPL missionaries in India (on the Nepal border), prayed and fasted for three things: First, for a deeper prayer life; second, that their language teacher would come to know Jesus; third, for financial help.

At about that time our pastor, Rev. H. Albert Larson, who was on the WMPL board, shared at a Sunday evening service about missions. At that service we were led to give one thousand dollars a year to missions. After receiving information from the WMPL office, we were led to give to the Hjelmerviks without knowing anything about them nor their prayer. An old story about it can be found in *Fellow Workers* (November 1973). Also, we have the Hjelmerviks’ first letter telling about their prayer, and that on the 7th or 8th day of praying, the Lord gave them confirmation that their language teacher would soon be saved and that financial help was on the way. When their mail came that day, there was a notice of our first gift to them. We still have that letter.

IN NOTHING BE ANXIOUS

USA en route to Ecuador

— Audrey Johnson

LONG DISTANCE PRAYERS ARE HEARD

Home Office USA

— Edner Holmen

**Prayer: For God’s provision of
financial help**

MANY LETTERS JUST DIDN'T MAKE IT

Bolivia

— Judy Forseth

There was a time when we needed a vehicle but didn't have money for one. When the mail came, there was an envelope that had no letter, just a check. It was for \$3,000 and from Cliff's dad! It was just what we needed to buy a used Suzuki jeep. The amount was right, but the miracle was that it came to us! Many letters just didn't make it. That's why the Mission encouraged donors to send their gifts through the Mission office.

MONTH IN AND MONTH OUT

Kenya

— Mike & Gail Koski

Through the years there have been months of full allowance and months of not so full; however, there have never been "shortages" of what was needed. We have never felt forgotten by the One who sent us out through WMPL. On the contrary, God provides!

In our earliest years with the Mission our monthly allowance was two hundred and seventy-five dollars. Things were much, much cheaper in Kenya at that time. In October of 1973, we were into a three-month language course in Nairobi. We stayed in a newly opened wing of the Anglican guest house and attended Swahili classes next door. God provided for our schooling, our food and lodging, a small birthday gift, a quick trip to the coast (to celebrate our first wedding anniversary), and what was needed to give our tithe to the Lord! We didn't have much change in our pockets – but then, we didn't have need of any more money either.

ONLY ROY AND I KNEW HOW MUCH

India

— Alma Hagen

**Prayer: For God to provide funds
needed for travel**

October 20, 1962, was a day we who lived in India would never forget. It was the day that China invaded India! The Chinese soldiers poured over the border into the North East Frontier Area (NEFA) near Burma and into the Ladakh area near Kashmir and Pakistan in the west. They burst through token resistance and swiftly reached the plains.

With only a few hours' notice, fifteen hundred British and two hundred Americans were ordered to evacuate Assam, a comparatively short distance east of us. Having outrun their supply lines, the Chinese agreed to a cease-fire. But some 10,000 Chinese soldiers still camped eighty miles north of us on the Sikkim-China border. Just south of us, a narrow fifteen-mile neck of land connected Assam and the NEFA with the rest of India. If the Chinese army broke through to that vital area, then Assam and India's big supply of rice and oil would be cut off. There was only one major road from Darjeeling down to that vital link.

A total wartime blackout was ordered for Darjeeling. Windows were covered and the top half of headlights painted black. The seven major boarding schools closed early and made emergency travel plans to transport thousands of students to their homes. Neighbors started digging trenches. Our boys pretended to fight invaders behind every tree.

Early one morning, as I stood gazing at the sunrise on the Himalayas, the Lord spoke very quietly but clearly, “Take the boys home and put them in American schools.” (If the Darjeeling schools didn’t open in the spring, and we traveled at our usual furlough time, the boys would be out of school ten months.) Our fellow workers on the field gave their approval of my leaving early with the boys. Roy would stay on until summer. If we left before Paul’s 12th birthday we would save \$375 by his not needing an adult ticket. We still needed \$600 to purchase the tickets. Only Roy and I knew how much we needed. We prayed.

We sent off a letter to the WMPL office at the end of November, telling of our field’s approval for my taking the boys home early. Before our letter reached Minneapolis, the November monthly accounts were closed. The financial statement and checks crossed our letter in the mail. In the November list of gifts for the field was a \$600 gift especially earmarked “for travel for Hagens” with a note from the treasurer, “I don’t know of any travel plans you have, but we are forwarding this to you anyway.”

Thank You, Father.

It was the summer of 2009, and the young adult mission conference *Urbana* was right around the corner. I had planned to attend *Urbana* during my freshman year of college but was unable to get the time off from work – holiday shifts are mandatory when you are a server. During my senior year of college *Urbana* came and went a second time without me, for the same reason. Finally, when a third opportunity arose, I was no longer working as a server; I was the accounts manager for the World Mission Prayer League – and they were taking a group to *Urbana*! I was pumped for this, except for the fact that I was now married and my husband and I didn’t have much extra cash. We were encouraged to go as a couple but didn’t know how we would be able to afford it. I asked the Lord to show us what

“Early one morning,
as I stood gazing at
the sunrise on the
Himalayas, the Lord
spoke very quietly
but clearly...”

**SIGNED UP FOR URBANA...
FINALLY**
Home Office USA

– Elycia Veit

**Prayer: For God’s direction and
provision**

he wanted us to do and reminded God that if we were both supposed to go he would have to provide for it.

One night at WMPL's young adult prayer meeting, I shared the situation with my friend as we were praying for one another. That is the only person I told about our financial need.

Several weeks later I received \$200 cash in the mail with a letter explaining that this was for my husband and me to go to *Urbana*. Later that night we were both signed up! The Lord truly knows our needs – and desires – and often meets them in miraculous ways.

SNOWMOBILES

Central Asia

– Ruth*

Sometimes God seems to answer even before we think of asking. Our latest assignment has been in a remote mountainous region in the central area of the country. At 9,000 feet elevation, we are snowed in for many months of the year, as the roads become impassable due to heavy snows. When the small plane that is our only access to the outside world was damaged in an accident, our whole team was thinking about how to improve our options for travel. My husband wrote to the director of our organization about investigating the possibility of bringing in snowmobiles. He was interested but cautious because of the high cost of obtaining and bringing in such equipment. Less than three weeks later, the director emailed back, saying that he had received a totally unsolicited phone call from another organization asking if we would be interested in two snowmobiles they would like to donate to us! So now two, almost-new (2007 model) Lynx snowmobiles are here waiting to be used next winter!

STAYING OUT OF THE RED

Home Office Canada

– Jonathan & Marina Aicken

Prayer: For God's provision of a
place to live

We were married during the summer before our last year of college in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Heading into that year things were financially tight. We worked hard all summer and saved up money to cover our tuition, but that's about all. Where would we find the money to live on throughout the year? We believed we were following God's leading in marriage, study and eventual mission. But to be honest, we weren't sure how we'd make ends meet – especially that first year of marriage. Student loans were an option, but because we wanted to go into missions in the near future, we really didn't want to dip any further into debt.

We trusted that if God wanted us to stay out of the red that last year of college, then he'd provide for us, but we weren't sure how. And if God wanted us in mission, we'd have to learn to live simply and stay out of debt, right?

After looking at a couple of apartments, we quickly found out that we couldn't afford anything – not even the tiniest apartment! As we prayed about this, we felt that we should trust God to provide a place to live free of charge. But how? Who would give us a place to stay?

Before the beginning of the fall semester our answer came, but not as expected. A Lutheran school had recently opened up a seniors' assisted living residence on their property just outside the city limits, and we heard that they were looking for someone to live on-site. That person would have to fulfill a few duties in exchange for free room and board. Needless to say, we jumped on the opportunity and quickly moved in. The kitchen had also just opened and was serving three meals a day, so we didn't even get to taste each other's cooking until after being married for over a year!

Between our new living arrangements and other part-time jobs, we finished that final year of college without going into further debt, and within two years were touching down in Mongolia to begin our four-year term with WMPL. God does provide – even if it means having to spend the first year of our married lives living in an old folks' home!

“And if God wanted us in mission, we'd have to learn to live simply and stay out of debt, right?”

When Paul and I were living at the first Mission Home, known as the “Prayer House,” a missionary couple from Alaska, Oscar and Ella Brown, were with us for some months. They served on Little Diomed Island in the Bering Strait, which is ice-bound from October until May. Usually they went to Nome for the summer to work and buy coal, flour and other staples for the long winter ahead.

But in 1940 they came to the Midwest to visit churches and to bring a young Inuit man to Bible school. For luggage they came with only a big duffle bag. When Ella decided to go for a trip to Omaha, where she had worked at Immanuel Hospital, she came to me and asked if she could borrow my suitcase. She was so hesitant, but I said, “Of course you can! You can *have* it if you want it.”

THE COAL MONEY

Home Office USA

— Margaret Lindell



Early Mission Home, Minneapolis

THE LIMITLESS TREASURES OF HIS GRACE*

Home Office USA

— Paul Lindell



Paul Lindell, WMPL USA General
Director from 1940 to 1974

Well, she brought it back from Omaha, but when she was ready to return to Alaska, she came again and asked: “Do you still mean I can have your suitcase?”

I took a deep breath and said, “Yes, of course!”

“Thank you,” said Ella, “when I get back to Nome, I’ll send you a parka.”

Wow! A warm jacket with fur around the hood – that’s a good trade!

Weeks went by – no parka. Then came a letter. Ella was so sorry. She had not been able to get a parka, so she was sending fifty dollars instead. Wow! I hadn’t seen that much money in a long time. I happily showed it to Paul. His eyes popped! “Fifty dollars! That’s just what we need for coal!” I ended up with no suitcase and no parka, but God gave *me* the money to pay for the coal.

To write thus, from the natural standpoint, is pure unadulterated folly – but the babbling of a fool.

Yesterday morning I gave my last fifteen cents in the collection, so now I am broke again. But I really am getting used to it. It seems like I am always broke, and yet I always have funds when the need arises. Somehow, if I have to catch a train, the money is there. If I have to meet a bill, it gets paid. When I needed new shoes a couple months ago, a fellow gave me a new pair of twelve-dollar shoes which fit me perfectly. When I needed a new suit, I was given seventy dollars with instructions to go and have a tailor make me one for that amount. I did, and now have the best suit I have ever seen. But that wasn’t enough. Another fellow had gotten a suit which was too small for him, and so he passed it on to me after wearing it a couple of times. So now I wear it for everyday, a perfect fit.

One thing I have always wanted to be able to do is to give gifts to others. God somehow sees to it that I get so as to be able to give. When I went up to Camp Emmaus, I went broke. I had enough gas to get there, but no more. One day I got a couple of dollars, and so I took a whole gang fishing. About twenty-five of the kids went. I bought tackle and worms, etc., for them, and we came back with 354 fine sunfish which we had for supper the next night. My two dollars were gone. However, when it came time to go home, I got three dollars, and that brought me home. Next week was Medicine Lake week. During that week I received forty dollars,

and by the end of the week, the Lord had told me to give nearly all of it away. So it goes, on and on. I am convinced that the Lord is looking for co-workers who will be as generous and merciful as he is, and through whom he can dispense the limitless treasures of his grace in Christ Jesus.

It happened in the small mountain village of Mocomoco, Bolivia, where my husband Henrick and I moved in 1959. Our living quarters were on the second floor of the house WMPL owned there. The walls were made of *tapial* (tamped earth) and there was a thatch roof. We lived in a small kitchen, dining/living room, and a bedroom.

Bolivia’s rainy season usually begins about December and lasts until about April. During our first rainy season, we began to realize that the thatch roof on our house was in exceptionally poor condition. One whole upper corner of our bedroom was wet with green mold from rotting thatch. We soon began to feel rain dripping through the ceiling and onto us in bed at night. Several times we got up and moved our bed to a dry place to avoid being dripped on.

After that first rainy season Henrick said to me one day, “Marge, we’ve got to start praying for money so we can put a new corrugated metal roof on the house before the next rainy season comes!” We *did* begin to pray. Praying friends and family at home joined us in prayer so we could purchase the metal roofing and the lumber for the trusses that would hold up the roofing. God showed his faithfulness and funds came so that in his time there was enough for the lumber and the roofing!

Henrick diligently built the trusses on our back patio so they were ready for “roofing day.” Members of the congregation came on the designated day, willing and eager to help. The men climbed ladders and tore off the old thatch, throwing it onto our patio where the women sorted out what they might be able to reuse. Everyone worked steadily and happily, taking time at noon for a tasty meal together. One by one the new trusses were hoisted into place and fastened into the mud walls of the house. Then, sheet after sheet of the metal roofing was fastened to the trusses.

And miracle of miracles, we *did* have a new metal roof before the next rainy season came! *A marvelous answer to prayer!* And we praised God!

*Excerpts from an unpublished letter Paul Lindell wrote to Jonathan Lindell in the 1940’s

THE NEW ROOF

Bolivia

— Marge Erickson

Prayer: For funds to buy a new roof before the rainy season



Entrance to the new Lutheran church building in Mocomoco, 1961

A THOUSAND-DOLLAR ANSWER TO PRAYER USA en route to Bolivia

— Karen Merkel

Prayer: For God's provision for
service in Bolivia

“I told her, ‘I don’t want
to finish high school;
I want to go to the
mission field NOW!’”

In 1957, as a 14-year-old teenager and during my second Saturday in Confirmation, a miracle and a mystery happened in my life. The miracle was that I gave my heart to Jesus and became a Christian. The mystery was that at the same time God called me to be a missionary.

Back then I did not know what a missionary was, did not know how to articulate my missionary calling, and felt too bashful to share this with anyone. I thought people would laugh at me if I told them my little girl’s dream. You see, I was from a very poor and non-church-going family who lived on the “south side of the tracks” in Bismarck, North Dakota. Surely God could not call a person with that kind of background to be a missionary for him!

During the summer of 1958, someone gave me money to go to the Luther League Bible Camp at Garrison, North Dakota. The evening chapel speaker that week was Eleanor Anderson, a Lutheran missionary to Taiwan. I remember very well the first evening she spoke. It was Sunday, and the little chapel at the camp was filled with perhaps 125 young people along with the camp staff. I don’t remember what Eleanor said that evening, but do remember that I was convicted to share my “secret” with her. After the worship service I stayed behind and with some nervousness revealed to her my missionary calling. There was no response of disbelief or look of surprise on her face, only an expression of love, caring and seriousness.

Eleanor invited me to sit down and we talked and talked. I told her, “I don’t want to finish high school; I want to go to the mission field NOW! I also want to go to Tanganyika, Africa, as a missionary.” She gently affirmed my enthusiasm but also set the record straight. I would have to go to college and get training in a specific profession first.

So, some years later, after finishing college and a year in seminary, I was commissioned on March 31, 1968, to serve as a missionary to Uruguay, South America, under the Lutheran Church in America (LCA). However, in 1972 the philosophy of the LCA work in Uruguay changed and much of the ministry closed down. I returned to the U.S., but I knew God was still calling me to serve as a missionary in South America. I contacted the World Mission Prayer League and, in August 1972, I was commissioned to go to Bolivia as a missionary under the WMPL.

Before leaving for Bolivia I visited Minneapolis where the headquarters of the WMPL is located. Eleanor Anderson was studying nearby at Luther

Seminary and invited me to come for a visit. When I arrived I was touched at how humbly Eleanor was living in her one room. I was also impressed at her many books and astounded that a woman her age with so many years of missionary experience felt the need and desire to return to school for more training.

After our visit, in which I shared that I was accepted as a missionary to serve with the World Mission Prayer League in Bolivia, Eleanor said, “Let’s kneel and pray.” After prayer, she got up from her knees, took her checkbook, and began to write. She explained, “When I began to plan to come to the seminary I saved money for my expenses. After I got here God did a wonderful thing for me and I received a scholarship. While praying I felt convicted to give you money for your plane ticket to get to the mission field as soon as possible.”

I had never mentioned to Eleanor the need for money to get to Bolivia, nor did I know how much money would be needed for the plane ticket. Also, I wasn’t yet aware of how God provided travel funds through a faith mission like the WMPL. Under the LCA my travel funds had been provided. Now “praying in” the funds was a new concept for me.

Eleanor wrote out a check for \$1,000 and handed it to me. Feeling dumbfounded, I stuttered and said, “Oh, I... I... I can’t accept that.” She insisted she felt led to give me a check. Then I shared with her, “I’m on my way home to Bismarck, and while there I will pray about this and then I will let you know.” That met with her approval and I returned the check to her.

I did go home and began to pray about it. It then became very clear to me that God wanted to use Eleanor Anderson and her gift of money to get me to the mission field. I wrote to her indicating I could now accept her love gift. A few days later a certified letter came in the mail. Upon opening it I found the \$1,000 check from Eleanor, with a little note wishing me God’s blessings and a reminder to always trust God and always pray. By the end of October 1972, I was off to Bolivia, where I served for nine years under the World Mission Prayer League. The cost of the plane ticket to Bolivia was \$1,000 – exactly what Eleanor had given me.

Eleanor is in heaven now, and I very much look forward to one day seeing my friend who made possible “a thousand-dollar answer to prayer.”

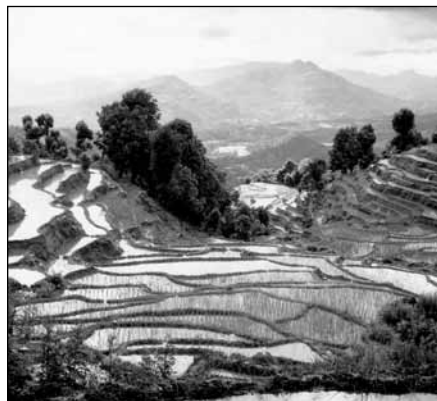
“...with a little note wishing me God’s blessings and a reminder to always trust God and always pray.”

TRUSTING GOD IN STEPS

Nepal

— Steve Thorson

Prayer: For God's provision for support



Terraced hillsides and rice fields, Nepal

During our years of service in Nepal with the World Mission Prayer League, Becky and I have always taken the Mission's financial and non-solicitation policy seriously. We have learned to covenant with God and the other missionaries in WMPL to ask him to provide, and in turn, God asks people to give toward the needs of the Mission, its workers and its projects. Each month the Mission shares its general funds among all those without designated full support. Some months there is not enough to complete the established living allowance, but God provides for our needs in other ways.

In January of 1984 we were preparing to leave for Nepal as full-time missionaries with the Prayer League. Becky and I agreed together to trust God for the future, including our finances. We took that trust in steps. As we prepared to leave we had assumed our monthly allowance would be sent to us at the beginning of the month. However, we found out we would receive our living allowance at the end of the month. We hadn't prepared for this and did not have sufficient funds to live on. We sat down and prayed to God alone and asked him for two hundred dollars immediately. Two days later we received a check in the mail for exactly that amount. At about the same time we had been praying, someone had felt led to send money directly to us as a personal gift. We learned a lot from that simple provision from God before we left for Nepal. During our first year of service, God began providing most of our living allowance as designated gifts, which were different each month. It became exciting to see how God would provide!

...



Healing

ADRIANA'S SLEEP

Bolivia

— Sheldon & Sharon Groff

Prayer: That Adriana would sleep



Sheldon, behind the wheel

AS IF SHE WERE JESUS*

Bolivia

— Corinne Fenner

Prayer: For healing for a little girl



Almer and Corinne Fenner

Roberto and Sandra are friends in La Paz, Bolivia, who studied the Bible with us. Their daughter Adriana has cerebral palsy. When she was about twelve years old, she experienced several months of intense crying and inability to sleep. As a result, her family, who shared the same bedroom, had difficulty sleeping, too. Adriana doesn't have the ability to speak, so she couldn't tell her family what was wrong. Roberto, a medical doctor, had tried everything he could think of to help her but to no avail. He would even give her anesthesia (the same thing given to patients about to have surgery) to help her sleep, but she would wake up again after 15 minutes.

Adriana had never been baptized, so Roberto requested that we and Pastor Julio of *El Redentor* (The Redeemer) Church come over one night to baptize her. The evening Pastor Julio baptized Adriana, we all gathered and prayed for her healing. The next day we received a phone call from Roberto and Sandra, saying that Adriana had slept all through the night and was still soundly asleep at ten o'clock the next morning. They said they had almost called all three of us to come back and pray to wake her up. However, Adriana finally woke up on her own. From that time on, she was able to sleep at night. Whatever the problem was, it was taken care of. Roberto and Sandra consider it a miracle.

When our sister Paulina Apaza was taken to heaven in April her little daughter Lucia was not even one and a half years old. Paulina had begged me to take care of Lucia, but I could not promise to do so. Later, when Lucia's dad realized that he could not work at any job with the little girl along, I offered to take care of her while he worked. Eusebio (the father) didn't accept my offer until October. When he brought Lucia to me, she was very ill.

The doctor said that the main problem for this child was malnutrition. I noted that at twenty-two months, Lucia weighed less than she had weighed at four months of age. Since she resisted my attention, it was neither pleasant, nor easy, to get her to eat. But the Word of God gave us encouragement to care for this little one as if she were Jesus himself. It was a privilege and a blessing to do so. After several weeks of caring for Lucia and feeding her by force, we rejoiced as we saw her expression change from one of constant pain to one of contentment. Now we see her reach for a toy and even smile.

Lucia’s dad brings her around at seven-thirty every morning before he goes off to work making bricks, cutting wood, and planting corn for someone. He comes back for Lucia around six o’clock in the evening. She is always happy to see him come and cries when he leaves her in the morning.

One morning when we were in Tanzania, I woke up feeling terrible (maybe something I ate) and was unable to go to work. I stayed in bed all day until all of a sudden, at about three o’clock in the afternoon, I started to feel better. I realized that would have been six o’clock in the morning back home in Iowa. It became obvious to me that this was when people would be getting up and would begin praying for us. God answered their prayers. While in Tanzania there were times when we could almost tangibly feel in our fingertips the prayers going up for us.

God is great and he does answer prayers!

For about half of our 29 years as missionaries in Bolivia we were stationed on Coaba Farm, located about ninety miles from La Paz. During that time, our co-worker who was in charge of the Coaba dispensary became ill and had to return to the States. Henrick and I were asked to take her work assignment along with our other responsibilities. This was a *very big* assignment since neither of us had any previous medical training. So, we put our hands, weak and trembling as they were, into God’s strong, almighty hands day by day. It was beautiful to see his healing power time after time!

It was early one Sunday morning. Henrick was to be in charge of the worship and communion service in our church in Chejje. There was a knock at our door and there stood Ignacio, the pastor of the small church in Arapa, who quickly explained his dilemma. During the recent fiesta, a drunken lady had fallen on a sharp tin can, which cut a big gash in her head. She was unable to walk the steep trail (one hour and 15 minutes) to come to Coaba for help; so they were asking for someone to come up there to help her.

Since Henrick was already committed to his church responsibilities, I would be the one to go. I immediately gathered my things together (including a gas pressure lantern for light, because I knew it would be very dark inside my patient’s mud house), and Ignacio and I started out.

**Adapted from an unpublished letter from Corinne & Almer Fenner written in Sorata, Bolivia*

FROM IOWA TO TANZANIA

Tanzania

— Barney Granstra

Prayer: Recalls that intercessory prayer is taking place for WMPL workers

GOD HEARD MY HUMBLE PRAYER!

Bolivia

— Marge Erickson

Prayer: That God would heal a serious wound



Coaba Farm and Bible Institute, Bolivia

“At that moment I *knew*
that I needed to pray...”

HIS WONDERS TO PERFORM* Bolivia

— Bob Andrews

Prayer: For God to give life back to a
dying infant

Because it had rained heavily during the night, it was impossible to walk *through* the raging river as we usually did, so we had to go “the long way around” and use the bridge for crossing. We trudged up that very steep trail, stopping many times to catch our breath in that high altitude, and finally arrived at the lady’s house.

I was surprised to see a crowd of people there with her. After Ignacio asked all the people to go outside in the patio, I met the lady, who spoke only Aymara. Ignacio translated into Spanish for me. I looked at the gash and knew it would require stitches. After cutting the hair around the gash, shaving that area and cleaning it as thoroughly as possible, I injected novocaine along both edges of the gash and then proceeded to put in six or seven stitches. After applying sulfa powder and a bandage, I wrapped her whole head with another bandage.

At that moment I *knew* that I needed to pray, so I laid both my hands on her head and prayed thus: “Lord, I thank you for what you’ve helped me to do just now. You know I’ve done the very best I knew how, and right now I ask you to put your healing hand on her head. Spare her from infection, Lord, and may you be glorified. Amen.” Then I left for home.

What a great joy it was about eight or nine days later when she came walking to Coaba to get the stitches removed. There wasn’t one sign of infection! It had healed perfectly! Yes, God had answered my humble prayer!

It was late Sunday afternoon. I had left the house about 4:30 p.m. with Luis, my young Bolivian intern, and Roberto, a faithful church member, to visit around town. We gave out tracts and invited people to go to the evening service. In a number of places we visited the people for longer than I had planned; by 7:15 it was almost dark, and still we hadn’t visited one neighborhood on the “wrong” side of the river.

Before going on with my story, let me say that I hadn’t expected to be in Apolo on Sunday at all. My plane ticket for La Paz was for the Tuesday before, and as coordinator of the work of the Mission and the Bolivian Lutheran Church, I was to attend a meeting of the executive committee of the Mission on Friday and of the council of the National Church on

Saturday. Now it was Sunday, the meetings were over without me, and the plane was still in La Paz for repairs. We had wondered about my going because of a whooping cough epidemic. Our children, in spite of having been inoculated, seemed to be getting it. In fact, by Sunday we knew they had it. So, we prayed that God would send the plane if I should go; and if it came in time for me to get to La Paz for the meetings, I would travel. If not, I would stay, in spite of the need to do some shopping and visit pastors, which I had also planned to do.

Now back to my story. Since it was dark and only 45 minutes until church time, I was just about ready to come home and skip visiting on the other side of the river. But something told me I should go to at least visit Joel's public school teacher. She was recently converted and I wanted to be sure she would be in church for communion service.

Just as we crossed the foot bridge, we met a lady carrying a tiny baby. In the semi-darkness I didn't notice that she was crying. But when I greeted her, she answered, "My baby's dying!" I looked at the baby and saw she was indeed dying. The child had stopped breathing some time before. I knew right away that the epidemic had claimed its first victim in Apolo.

My impulse was to let the mother go on. She even took a few steps on her way, and then, without reasoning why, I said, "*Señora, dame la guagua.*" ("Lady, give me the baby.") I knelt down, prayed, and gave mouth-to-mouth artificial respiration. I had never done it before, nor seen it done, but like most of you I had read an article about it.

At first, nothing seemed to happen. No air went into the baby's lungs. Then I realized that her tongue was in the way, so I put my finger in to hold it back. I could feel the air go in and soon the baby moved. "Thank you, God!" I said in my mind and kept on. Soon the baby started to breathe, very weakly to be sure, but by herself.

By then we had quite a crowd. Someone asked if the baby was baptized, and the mother said, "No." I explained that the Bible said to baptize with water and in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, nothing more. Then I asked the mother if she wanted me to baptize the baby. She quickly, though awestruck, said "Yes."



Bob & Joyce Andrews served in Bolivia from 1957 to 1976 and subsequently in the Home Office USA, where Bob served as General Director from 1986 to 1997

"I knelt down, prayed, and gave mouth-to-mouth artificial respiration. I had never done it before..."

*Adapted excerpt from *World Vision*,
December 1965

¹ Lyrics from the hymn *God Moves in a
Mysterious Way*, originally *Conflict: Light
Shining Out of Darkness*.
William Cowper. Public Domain.

LIGHT AND LIFE IN NAGARKOT Nepal

— Ruthie Overvold

Prayer: For God's healing of a sick
child and marriage reconciliation



After many years serving as a medical
nurse in Nepal, Ruth worked in the
UMN mail room and referred to
herself as being a “mail nurse”

I carried the baby down to the river, and there we baptized her Rogellia Salazar. Everyone was quiet as I prayed, this time out loud, thanking the Lord for the miracle he had wrought and commending the child into his care to take or leave her according to his will.

Up until now (five days later), it has been God's will to leave Rogellia here. I have seen her twice since Sunday night. She is very weak and only three weeks old, so, in spite of the fact that the young dentist who serves as public health officer is doing all he can to treat her, it will take another miracle to keep her here on earth. But we believe in miracles, and we know that “God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform.”¹

Nagarkot has a beautiful full view of Mount Everest on a clear early morning and is located about nine miles outside Kathmandu. A young Tamang woman from Nagarkot had a fight with her husband and in fear left him and went off to stay with some of her relatives in Kathmandu. She told the relatives of her marital problems and hoped that they would be able to help and comfort her. These relatives were *most* helpful. They shared with her their faith in Jesus, who was their Friend and Savior, and the One who had not failed them. They assured her that he would help her, too. She was a needy soul and listened gladly to all they said and accepted Jesus as the answer to all her needs. She returned to Nagarkot, was reconciled with her husband and, with her husband, they began a small fellowship of three believers.

Some of the Christians from one of the churches in Kathmandu decided to visit this small fellowship. On the bus ride to Nagarkot they were part of a thrilling experience which encouraged their faith. There was a very sick child on the bus, who was obviously in much pain and crying loudly through most of the journey. Many passengers on the bus gave advice and suggestions. The Christian believers asked if they could pray to the Living God for this sick child. The mother was ready for anything and said yes. They prayed; the child stopped crying and sat up in the mother's lap asking for food. It was then that the Christian folk took the opportunity to pass out some tracts and explain the power of this Living God.

My wife Shirley and I were teaching in a secondary school in Tanzania. Over a period of about six weeks I developed a harsh, dry cough. It began slowly and kept getting worse as time went on. Finally, one night around midnight, I woke up feeling miserable. I awakened Shirley and told her, “I think we’d better go to Nairobi tomorrow to see a doctor.” That was about a three-hundred-mile trip to the closest hospital. Shirley suggested we look in the book *Where There Is No Doctor*. We could not find anything in there that was of any help, so we PRAYED and went back to sleep.

The next morning my cough was gone! There was no sign of it and I felt fine. There is no question but that God answered our prayers!

A never-to-be-forgotten experience occurred in connection with the illness of my pal, Ingeborg Pederson (now Mrs. Thompson), while we were stationed at Chuma. Miss Pederson became seriously ill, and the doctor at hand was intoxicated about half of the time. We were seven hours from Mocomoco by mule back, where a German doctor was practicing, and a 150-mile truck journey from the hospital in La Paz. As my dear friend’s condition grew more and more serious, I was strongly impressed that God wanted her to be anointed for healing. Hence, a telegram was sent to Pastor Weinhardt at La Paz requesting him to come to Chuma as quickly as possible because of Miss Pederson’s serious condition. It was a long wait, but the Lord kept us trusting him. At long last, the sound of tramping mules upon the cobblestone pavement was heard and I rushed out to meet our guest.

Before he had time to dismount, I exclaimed, “Pastor Weinhardt, God has brought you here that you might anoint Ingeborg.”

He answered, “Do you know that on the entire mule-back trip from Mocomoco to Chuma, a strong impression came over me that Ingeborg should be anointed? But in order that there might be no mistake, I asked the Lord to give his assurance that the impression was from him by moving someone to make such a request upon my arrival at Chuma. And here you come and ask me to anoint her, even before I have time to get down from my mule. Surely God has spoken his will.”

That evening, following the Lord’s Supper, Pastor Weinhardt anointed Miss Pederson and asked the Lord to touch her body. The evening of the

MY COUGH WAS GONE

Tanzania

— Barney Granstra

Prayer: That God would make a harsh cough go away

NEVER TO BE FORGOTTEN*

Bolivia

— Mabel Lund

Prayer: That God would lead Pastor Weinhardt to anoint a sick co-worker



Top: Pastor Willis and Mrs. Ingeborg Thompson (née Pederson) with young Aymara couple for whom they are *padrinos* (wedding sponsors)
Bottom: Weinhardt en route to Chuma

*Adapted excerpt from *World Vision*,
October 1946

NO DIALYSIS **Kenya**

— Barney Granstra

**Prayer: That God would intervene so
Shirley would not need dialysis**

anointing she was too weak to feed herself. The next morning she arose and dressed herself and walked about. The Lord himself had drawn nigh to impart new strength, and shortly after this Miss Pederson was enabled to take the long trip to La Paz.

My wife Shirley had a severe kidney problem in 2002. Her condition indicated a need for dialysis, but that didn't happen, I believe, because of prayer.

Over the years her creatinine level (a measure of kidney function) has been checked often. It has stayed fairly steady over this time; however, about five months ago, her creatinine was above the number that would require dialysis. The doctor said, "We will check again in a month." A month later the number had improved slightly. It was checked again in July, and the number was down to where it had been for years. Her medications have not been changed for years. When her levels began to increase we, along with many friends, began praying, "Please God – no dialysis!" I know the improvement was the result of those prayers!

Shirley and I celebrated our 60th anniversary on June 5, 2009. God has been with us all our lives, and our love is still getting stronger. I have also found that when I have a good relationship with God, my love for Shirley improves.

PRAYERS FOR IONUTI AND MARIA **Romania**

— Milt Hanson

**Prayer: For God's healing for a boy
and a girl**

We were in a poor Roma (Gypsy) village, southeast of Bucharest, Romania, holding a one-day clinic in a church building. Early in the afternoon a grandmother came in carrying her six-year-old grandson Ionuti. He was very agitated, continuously thrashing his arms and legs, and twisting his torso. There was never any eye contact or other response when we talked to him. The boy's grandmother told us that he had been diagnosed with "autism" when the family had taken him to specialists in Bucharest a year or so earlier. He had not, however, received any therapy. I was a little surprised that a Roma family in a village would be given such a modern diagnosis as "autism." I told the grandmother that even in the U.S. there wasn't a very uniformly accepted or successful treatment for autism. While I was talking with her, both in Romanian and also in English with a translator (I really wanted her to understand what I was saying), I had a strong urge to offer to pray for her grandson.

Standing nearby was a big, husky Roma man. He seemed like a very cheerful, positive sort of individual, and I asked him if he would be willing to pray for Ionuti with me. The man said he would be very happy to do so, and the grandmother was approving. It turned out that he was the pastor of that church. We began to pray for Ionuti. I believe I prayed in English. The Romanian pastor obviously prayed in his language. When we finished I didn't observe any difference in Ionuti's behavior. The grandmother seemed to be appreciative, or at least didn't seem to show any negative reaction. I remember thinking that I probably would never know if anything happened as a result of our prayers, but the pastor smiled and, while pointing to his ear, indicated that he had heard God whisper that the Lord would heal the boy.

Later that afternoon I also saw a little girl named Maria, who was about fifteen months old, weighing about fifteen pounds and appearing very frail. She had been born with a chest wall defect involving the pericardial sac around the heart, for which she received reparative surgery at a pediatric hospital in Bucharest. I was surprised to hear that such a surgery could be done in Romania, and also that it was done for a gypsy family. But now Maria's problem was that she just couldn't "turn the corner." She had major difficulty eating and keeping food down. They had tried all kinds of formulas, but she was not gaining weight. Neurologically Maria seemed intact for her age, but her parents carried her because she was so frail. I gave the parents some advice about foods to try and then asked if I could pray for Maria. I knew that her father was one of the church elders.

We were standing out in the churchyard because I wanted to get out of the very noisy church hall and have a really good listen to Maria's heart. I know that it is not my emotions or eloquence or anything else that results in answered prayer, and so I just prayed out of obedience. Following our prayer, I considered how nice it would be if I could get some follow-up, but thought it unlikely that I would ever see or hear of these people again.

A few months later a Roma couple was standing at the front desk of the permanent clinic, and I had the feeling that I knew the man from somewhere. He smiled as though he knew me. After giving the help that the wife needed, I asked the man what he did for a living. When he told me that he was a pastor, I recognized him and exclaimed, "We prayed for Ionuti together!"



Author examining a child in Romania

"I know that it is not my emotions or eloquence or anything else that results in answered prayer, and so I just prayed out of obedience."

SO ARE MY WAYS HIGHER THAN YOUR WAYS Nepal

— Joyce Ruohoniemi



Ruohoniemi home (right, front) in Jhimruk, 1991

Then I asked him how Ionuti was, and immediately, with a big smile, the pastor said, “*Dumnezeu l-a vindicat!*” (“God healed him!”) I asked if he could talk. The pastor looked at his wife as though to ask something like “He can talk, can’t he?” and then looked at me nodding, “A little,” and then added, “He is very calm!”

I then went on to ask him about Maria. At first he didn’t seem to know whom I was talking about, so I explained about the little girl who had had an operation on her chest. The pastor looked at his wife again and then at me, and they both said, with a very certain look, “She’s normal,” like there wasn’t any question. She was so normal that they had almost forgotten everything the girl and her parents had gone through.

So, it was a very happy end to the visit. I haven’t had any further feedback about any of them, but on this particular day they left full of smiles and appreciation.

The Lord God, Maker of heaven and earth, our Savior and King, always hears us when we speak with him. But God’s answers are not always what we expect or want. Many times during our family’s years in Nepal we had experienced healing of bodily ills, deliverance from fear and anxiety, protection in times of trouble, and mending of relationships. So it was natural when my husband was diagnosed with cancer that we should rally friends and family as well as the Mission family and local Nepali congregations to pray for his healing. With great faith he declared he would live to see his “children’s children,” the first of whom was expected later that year. But the disease was not halted and continued its relentless invasion of my husband’s body. Five months after his initial surgery for removal of a mole, he was dead, and our devastated family began the painful journey through grief and doubt. He did not live to see the weddings of five of his six children nor the 22 beautiful grandchildren who followed through the years.

It took a long time for some of us to trust God again. Could God have had our best interests at heart when he allowed the removal of that strong, positive spiritual influence and love in all our lives?

Through the years some of us have come to see the truth of Isaiah’s words from the Lord:

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts (Isaiah 55:8,9).

One of the ways God’s thoughts are higher than ours is that he will use circumstances and people we could not have imagined to bring others to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ and save them from the destruction to come.

So we continue to pray for things great and small and trust the wisdom and sovereignty of our Lord God.

“Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10).

“The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (James 5:16b KJV).

“There’s definitely something there in your esophagus (throat) and I urge you to see the doctor!” exclaimed the sonogram technician.

It started the previous year. A sore spot grew in my throat, and I had increasing difficulty swallowing. Could it be cancer? Then in January I traveled to Helsinki, Finland, to get a new visa. Between trips to the Russian Embassy, getting a tooth fixed, and feeling dog tired, I didn’t get to see a doctor.

On the night of Tuesday, March 20, I could hardly swallow, and the sore spot in my throat was very painful. In the morning, I called a Buryat friend, Galina, who is a retired medical doctor, and told her that I had decided to go to the hospital to get it analyzed. Irina, a young half-Buryat woman, came with me to the hospital to interpret for me.

We waited for the doctor, who said that I needed to have an exploratory procedure done. It consisted of feeding a tube with an imaging device through my mouth and down my throat. We made an appointment for the following Saturday. Yulia, another Buryat friend who is a nurse, offered to come with me on Saturday.

THE SORE SPOT

Buryat Republic

— Julie Frank

Prayer: For forbearance to undergo a medical procedure

“During the early morning hours, I had the distinct sensation that something grabbed the sore spot and tore it away.”

People told me that the procedure was “gruesome.” “You feel gagged.” “The worst experience I ever had.” Before going to bed, I asked the Lord to give me forbearance to undergo the procedure on Saturday.

During the early morning hours, I had the distinct sensation that something grabbed the sore spot and tore it away. When I awakened later that morning, the sore spot was gone, and all pain and difficulty in swallowing were gone as well.

Later, Yulia told me she had prayed that “the Lord be my doctor and treat me.” Irina’s whole family prayed that I “be healed.” Galina prayed, too – “for a miracle!”

• • •



Protection

A WINTER MORNING IN DERA ISMAIL KHAN Pakistan

— Ruby Patzold



The Patzold Family: Ruby, Carol, Patsy, Leonard and Stevie

It was a chilly winter morning in Dera Ismail Khan (DIK), in the then North West Frontier Province of Pakistan, but even winter mornings were seldom down to freezing. Only our 110-degree Fahrenheit summer months helped us appreciate the few winter weeks when we could wear sweaters and even shiver when the temperature inside our 100-year-old bungalow dropped to 50 degrees Fahrenheit.

When our little Patsy and Stevie were three and four years old, they loved getting out early to play in the sand box, ride tricycles, give each other rides in the little red wagon, catch frogs from the irrigation ditch, make mud cakes, and enjoy “helping” our old *mali* (gardener), whom they dearly loved. He was like a gracious grandpa, who taught them to catch butterflies and how to communicate in Urdu. Allah Buksh was his name. He sometimes harvested wild honey from the Mission compound trees and fed it to Stevie and Patsy.

“Mommie, Mommie,” they shouted as they ran to the bungalow door. “See what we found under the flower pots!” Each of them was proudly showing off the stiff, cold scorpions that they had picked up by their tails. Thankfully, the dangerous little critters were too cold to move, or to sting! Only God’s goodness kept them from the scorpion’s poisonous sting, and also from the snakes which occasionally made their way into our bungalow.

ANGELS IN DISGUISE Bolivia

— Jacqueline Mikaelsen

Prayer: For God’s protection over
Radio Caranavi

Back in the 1970’s, Bolivia was controlled by a political dictatorship. At this time Radio Caranavi was one of the first radio stations in the country. Because of the influence and power that having control of a radio station could be, the army in Caranavi was ready to move in and take it over. As they made their plans to take the station away from the missionaries, these same missionaries were praying about the situation and asking for the Lord’s protection. Unbeknownst to the praying missionaries, the Bolivian army marched toward Radio Hill to take over the station. But as they came close to the hill, they stopped in their tracks. There on the hill were hundreds of soldiers standing to defend the radio station. There was no way that they could even begin to take over the station, as they were far too outnumbered. They returned to their barracks. The next day, when the commander of the army saw the missionary, he wanted to know where

they had gained the help of so many soldiers! God surely had protected Radio Hill with his angels disguised as soldiers! This story has circulated for years among the people and army base in Caranavi.

There were many times during my years of service in Mexico when “coincidences” happened that were far too real to be only coincidences. One of those occurred when we had just returned from our missionary field conference in the mountains northeast of Mexico City. The following weekend, a lady believer from the Mazatlán congregation accompanied me to visit a group of believers in the state capital city – about a three-hour drive away. On the return trip we had a flat tire. I tried to get the tire off, but my wrench was stripped and it was impossible to do anything. We were in a rural area and on the only West Coast highway to the U.S. border – a road also used by many drug dealers. For that reason, most travelers do not dare to stop and help anyone. So we prayed. About fifteen minutes later, a pickup drove past and then stopped. Who could it be? None other than Dan and Léonie Gómez – our co-workers! They had stayed a few days in Mexico City, one night at my house in Mazatlán, and now were on their way to the border. We had a good visit and a wonderful testimony to give at church that afternoon!

At a time during the turbulent years following the fall of the Communist regime, my husband regularly traveled from the city where we lived to outlying villages where he was working on a well installation project. Armed bandits had established checkpoints at various points along the road where they would regularly stop vehicles in order to rob them. After several hair-raising experiences of being stopped at gunpoint by men demanding gasoline from the truck, my husband had finally had enough and asked God to clear the road. He prayed against the principalities and powers causing lawlessness and robbery and asked God for safe travel. The next time he went out – the checkpoints were all gone! The local warlord had come through the area with his men and chased out the bandits, burning their posts to the ground. That was the last time my husband was held up by armed robbers!

ANGELS ON THE HIGHWAY

Mexico

– Jan Tollefson

Prayer: For help and protection



Jan traveled many miles while serving in Mexico

BANDITS ALONG THE ROAD

Central Asia

– Ruth*

Prayer: That God would clear the road of armed bandits

PROTECTION

BLINDING THE ANGRY CROWD

Bolivia

— Jacqueline Mikaelson

Prayer: **For God's protection over
Radio Television Caranavi**



RTC overlooks the city of Caranavi, Bolivia

“We certainly were
in the midst of a very
serious problem and
there was nothing that
we could do but PRAY.”

Over the years there has been a lot of political unrest in Caranavi, Bolivia. The leaders of one particular political party especially wanted to take control. They wanted to take over the mayor's office and get rid of anything that stood in their way – no matter what the cost to others. High on their list was the destruction of Radio Television Caranavi because RTC spoke the truth of what was happening, which they did not like.

One night this group had a meeting. They were drinking and devising their plans to destroy RTC, the lives of all of us who worked there, as well as to destroy the mayor's office and then take over the city. We received a phone call early in the morning from a neighbor who was very concerned for our safety because he had heard them talking and planning during the night. We knew this group “meant business” because the day before, while protesting in the plaza, they had whipped and burned an effigy of the mayor and made threats to take over. We certainly were in the midst of a very serious problem and there was nothing that we could do but PRAY.

In the morning the group's leaders, along with hundreds of angry followers, gathered together to march out, with machetes in hand, to take over. Their plan was to first march by the RTC building and burn it down and then go to the mayor's office and take it over. No one was going to stand in their way! Paul stood on the corner of the plaza and watched as the marchers moved toward Radio Television Caranavi. They came near, but did not stop, and continued to go right past! They marched toward the mayor's office, and once again continued to march right past it! They ended up several blocks away from their planned destinations. At this point nothing happened, so the gathering just dissolved without further incident. We had no idea why the demonstrators marched right by RTC and then the mayor's office – but God did! Through prayer the battle was won!

It would have been interesting to see the true spiritual battle taking place, but all we observed was what we saw with human eyes. This quote from Oswald Chambers, speaking on prayer, came to mind: “We have not the remotest conception of what is done by our prayers, nor have we the right to try and examine and understand it; all we know is that Jesus Christ laid all stress on prayer!”¹

¹ *Oswald Chambers: The Best from All His Books*. Oswald Chambers. Harry Verploegh, ed. Nashville: Oliver-Nelson Books, 1987

Accidents do happen. There are some crazy drivers out there. Sometimes we take risks that we should not take – driving late at night or in hazardous, dark, rainy, foggy conditions. Sometimes the conditions of the vehicles we drive are challenging, too!

It happened that we needed to move building supplies from Nairobi to Samburu District during the beginning of the Samburu ministry. WMPL purchased two pre-fab houses in Nairobi. We tried to hire local haulers to move the supplies, but they were reluctant to drive in the “northern frontier.” WMPL purchased a reconditioned Bedford army truck – what a beast! It did not have power steering but did have plenty of power. A local driver was hired but lasted only one trip because our location was too remote and the vehicle too hard to drive. Bob Ward and Mike got drivers’ licenses to drive this machine. What stories we could share about those two-day trips to and from town! I will share just one.

We always liked to travel with one or two helpers in case of any difficulties along the way. These were the days before cell phones and GPS. This trip all of my helpers decided to stay at Karatina along the way. On the other side of Karatina is a long, downhill escarpment section for several miles. Halfway down this stretch I came upon a serious road accident. I saw bodies covered up on the pavement. As I slowed the truck’s descent, I was motioned to get off the road. Then I noticed a person urgently pointing underneath our truck. Stopping and getting out of the truck to look at what had caught his attention, I discovered the steering tie rod had broken, turned around, and was gouging the front tire. Had I continued, I would have had a front tire blowout while traveling down a long, curving road without any steering capability. Does God answer prayers for safety? Surely, he does!

It was a beautiful day in Cuenca, Ecuador, and my students from the MK (missionary kids) school had just finished a swimming lesson taught by one of the moms at a nearby private pool. The students had gone inside to get dressed, and I decided to swim one more lap. I was surprised when I got to the far end of the pool to see Johnny practicing the “dead man’s float.” Suddenly I realized that he wasn’t practicing! I called for Alice to come and help. She and two men came running. By God’s grace, the two

DANGEROUS ROADS

Kenya

– Mike Koski

Prayer: For safety

“As I slowed the truck’s descent, I was motioned to get off the road. Then I noticed a person urgently pointing underneath our truck.”

DEAD MAN’S FLOAT

Ecuador

– Carol Lackey

Prayer: Intercession for missionary children

“Lois... had been working in the kitchen that afternoon when she had a strong feeling that she needed to pray for the MKs.”

men were doctors who had been relaxing by the pool. They pulled Johnny out and worked on him for a while, until we rejoiced to see him cough and begin breathing again.

Later, when we brought Johnny home, we heard the other part of the story. Lois, Johnny’s mom, had been working in the kitchen that afternoon when she had a strong feeling that she needed to pray for the MKs. We praised God for his prompting and for his intervention for Johnny. Lois found out later that friends at Lutheran Bible Institute had chosen Lois’ family as their prayer focus that week. How thankful they were to be especially covered in prayer! What a joy it was to see Johnny come to school the next day with his usual big smile and the twinkle back in his eyes.

ESCAPE ON THE ROOFTOPS

Bolivia

— Jacqueline Mikaelsen



Lidio in RTC studio, 1992

Lidio and Oscar, our Radio Television Caranavi (RTC) reporters, were doing a news report with the mayor and a few councilmen at the mayor’s building in Caranavi, Bolivia. The political situation was unstable and things did not look good. At the same time, hundreds of people from the Syndicated Federation of Country Workers were gathered outside the building and stirring up trouble. Real danger was imminent as the troublemakers forced their way through the doors in the lower part of the building and started to break up the furniture to use as weapons against those who were inside. We saw what was about to happen and the danger that the people were in. Quickly we planned a distraction in order to allow the reporters and the others to escape. We set off an explosion at the far end of the plaza, on the side opposite the mayor’s office. While everyone looked that way and tried to see what was happening, Lidio, Oscar, the mayor and the others made their escape. First Lidio threw the video camera down to one of our other workers, who was there ready to catch it. Then the men crawled out onto a balcony, climbed up the limbs of a tree that hung over the roof, and got themselves onto the roof of the building. Running away quickly to escape, they even jumped from rooftop to rooftop until they came to a ladder that we had set up, ready to help them to the ground. No one in the angered crowd realized how they got away! Praise God for his protection!

“What is that metal strap hanging down on the other side?” This was the question a man asked me as I came out of the café where we had just had a second cup of coffee that morning. I walked around the pickup saying, “It is nothing important,” thinking it was an extra strap that had broken on a previous trip. However, as I looked closer, I realized it was the strap that holds up the fiberglass auxiliary gas tank, and that the tank was riding on the exhaust pipe which had kept it from falling completely out of its place.

For a long time we had felt God calling us to visit the Pelechuco area, about two hundred miles north of La Paz. We had been much in prayer as we knew that not only were there some serious problems in the congregations we would be visiting, but part of the time we would be in the area known as the center of witchcraft for all of Bolivia and we would be attacked by forces of the enemy. In one village, close to where we planned to go, some other missionaries had been told not to come back. There were three people with me on this trip: Pastor Abdón Mendoza, a Quechua speaker from the Apolo area who had planted the seed of God’s Word among the Quechua-speaking people of Agua Blanca; his son René; and Marion Heaslip, working in Quechua literature with the Wycliffe Bible Translators.

Two days earlier we had left La Paz for what we expected to be a day’s drive. We were headed to the area farthest away, the village of Agua Blanca, where we planned to spend the weekend. We intended to visit other places on the way back. About halfway to our destination, the front wheel bearing burned out. As we looked at the wheel, set at an odd angle, the remark was made, “God must be going to do something great on this trip because Satan does not want us to get to our destination.”

We set to work to remove the bearing, but it was fused to the spindle. After working for several hours, during which we had gone to a village and borrowed some tools, we gave up. We got the number of the bearing from the other wheel, then started walking toward Chaguaya, a village about five miles down the road, expecting to catch a late-night ride back to La Paz. We arrived about nine o’clock, only to find that the road was closed and no vehicles would be leaving until four o’clock the next morning. Looking around, we found a room in which to rest and caught the bus the next day.

It was rather a mad scramble to find the parts and buy the tools needed to cut the bearing off the axle and catch the bus again at one-thirty in the

GOD CARRIED US THROUGH*

Bolivia

— Nels Loberg



Characteristic scene, rural Bolivia

“God must be going to do something great on this trip because Satan does not want us to get to our destination.”

“As I listened to all that bitterness come out, I prayed that God would use us to help this brother who was so bitter.... I saw a miracle that night...”

afternoon. But here we saw God at work. We got everything done and were back at the pickup about six o'clock in the evening.

On arriving back at the site, we set to work even though it was already turning dark. After about three hours working by flashlight, the wheel was on and the truck was rolling again. As it was quite late, we decided to sleep in the vehicle and leave the next morning at daybreak.

Leaving there, we went back to the village of Chaguaya to return the tools we had borrowed. While there we decided to have a Bolivian breakfast – bread and coffee – so we would not have to stop later. After we got rolling, we realized that we had not filled our thermos bottle, so we stopped in Escoma to do that and to have a second breakfast. That was when we discovered the broken gas tank strap.

With very little to work with it took some time, but the tank was secured in its place and we were again on our way.

Upon reaching Agua Blanca, the believers quickly gathered around and received us warmly. God blessed the services that were held during the next three days. Disputes were settled, people were reunited in the faith, and new believers found Christ as their Savior.

We left Agua Blanca about noon on Monday. Marion was the only one who knew the road beyond Agua Blanca, so she was our guide. What she did not know was that, since she had last been there, they had built a new road and had all but abandoned the old one. After leveling out a couple of rock slides a little so that we could cross them, we arrived at Kalaya.

Kalaya is only about five kilometers from the famous witch center. Here we wanted to visit a believer who Marion knew was being attacked by Satan's workers. We did not find him, but learned that he was up in the mine and would not be back for several days. A few other believers gathered, so we had a service with them that night. The next morning we had breakfast with his family before going on to Charazani.

In Charazani the man we wanted to visit was in his field all day and would not be back at his house until late afternoon, so we visited with some friends from another mission during the day.

As we were driving out to Angel's house, we met him walking toward town. When we stopped and he saw us, he lit into us with all the bitterness

that was in his heart from an encounter with another missionary six years earlier. As I listened to all that bitterness come out, I prayed that God would use us to help this brother who was so bitter. As he started to wind down, I spoke to him, asking for forgiveness if I had ever hurt him and on behalf of the other missionaries that had done so. I saw a miracle that night as he was released from his bitterness. Both Abdón and I talked to him some more there on the road. All of a sudden he stopped and invited us to come to his house. We gladly accepted. We spent three hours visiting him and his family, sharing the Word and letting him talk about all his problems.

As we were leaving this man who had been so bitter against all foreigners, he invited us to come back the next time we are in the area.

Yes, Satan knew what could transpire on this trip, and he tried twice to stop us – but our God is stronger and overruled. He again showed us his faithfulness and carried us through to do the task he had prepared for us.

**Adapted excerpt from *Fellow Workers*,
March 1992*

Manuel Jesus Marca had asked my husband Paul to reserve a Christmas movie to be shown in the little town of San Juan, Ecuador, at Christmas time. He would also have a few short films at the beginning to arouse interest and curiosity in what was to follow.

After much prayer and preparation had been done, Paul drove to the country site and parked. He set up a sheet over the side of the jeep, aimed the projector at it, and began the first little “teaser.” As the film rolled, Paul began to see flickers of something in the light of the projector. He heard Manuel yell at him, telling him to leave, and also heard him exclaim, “God will protect us!” It began to dawn upon Paul that sod clumps were being thrown at the projector and the car. Collecting his things Paul hopped into the car and drove away, not wanting to be an irritant or to cause more anger among the people.

When Paul got back to Cuenca to assess the damage, he discovered the borrowed jeep had most of its windows smashed out and the reel was broken on the projector. Paul, however, was uninjured. He later learned from Juan Marca that a drunken man had been swinging a machete above his head, but it had never touched anyone. What an example of God’s protection!

GOD WILL PROTECT US!

Ecuador

— Josie Pillman

**Prayer: For God’s protection at an
evangelistic outreach**

HE CARES ENOUGH

Central Asia

— Kirsti*

Prayer: For God to help in the return
of a lost hat

It was hot. Not just hot, but VERY HOT. About 120°F. It was September 2001. Our two-year-old daughter, four-month-old son and I were evacuated out of the capital city of our host country to the neighboring country after some foreigners and local people had been taken hostage. Although not directly associated with those kidnapped, the authorities were scrutinizing our organization and the stress was immense. My husband Dave was on the security team and was amongst those on our team who needed to stay in the host country. There was tremendous uncertainty as over one hundred of us waited in the heat of the neighboring nation, waiting to see what would happen and not seeing any positive outcome on the horizon.

It was on an outing with the kids that I realized I had left our daughter's hat in the rickshaw (three-person motorbike/taxi). My emotions were raw and I was upset. I did not have the energy to go shopping for another one, and it was truly too hot to be out without a head covering. I remember saying in my mind, "God, please help me get the hat back." The chances of this were slim, as there are hundreds of rickshaws and I was not likely to see this driver again.

After three weeks of uncertainty, we decided that I would take the kids and go visit my parents in Ethiopia. Before leaving, Dave decided to surprise us and come for two days to say good-bye. On his trip out, he and a co-worker traveling with him were in a serious car accident. Only by God's grace were they not injured beyond a concussion.

It was the day after Dave arrived at our location that our organization was expelled from our host country. This was devastating and hard to comprehend. Our team members were all gathered, discussing the overwhelming consequences of this and praying for our local colleagues, when we got a phone call suggesting we turn on the television. It was September 11, 2001. Immediately we knew that life was about to change around the world, and we were not in a safe place for Westerners.

We quickly made arrangements to leave the country. This was what we needed to do, but our hearts hurt for all our national co-workers and friends who did not have that option.

We were doing some last-minute things in a different part of town from where we had been staying. A rickshaw drove around the corner where we were standing. As he passed by us, all I saw was a hand sticking out, handing us a hat.

It was our daughter's hat!

At that moment, I knew that if God cares enough about a hat, then he cares enough about us, our future, and those we love in the place we serve.

Our God *is* a Great God.

Throughout our years working in this country, we have had many people praying constantly and specifically for our protection. We have experienced many instances of God protecting us, but the most dramatic occurred in the spring of 2008. We had been living in a city with a high incidence of crime, particularly kidnapping, and the security threats were raised. Our plan was to start a project in a remote location several hours' drive from the city, considered to be a safer area. My husband had been regularly traveling to the area with co-workers in order to set up an office and a place for us to live. Though we had been regularly monitoring the security situation, we obviously could not be aware of all the issues. One morning as he was loading the truck with supplies needed to do the work on the office, we received a call from an agency that monitored security for the area. A phone call had just been intercepted outlining a plan to kidnap two foreigners who had been seen often traveling on the road to that particular area. The security agency called to warn us, as we were the only foreigners they knew of who traveled in that direction. Needless to say, that trip was canceled! This warning led us to re-evaluate our plans, and eventually to relocate altogether.

A once-in-a-lifetime visit with the King of Norway! As we sat around our table, Pastor Stoa of Seattle was describing his personal visit with His Majesty, but soon he would have another amazing tale to tell. The Stoas had come for a quick visit to Darjeeling. Now it was time to drive them down the mountain, a 2 1/2 hour drive to Bagdogra, Darjeeling's nearest airport. From there they would fly to Calcutta to catch an international flight. International tickets were not easily changed back then. They HAD to make their connections.

But we had a big problem. Before the Stoas could leave, Communist extremists had called for a total strike, a *hartal*, throughout Darjeeling

NEEDLESS TO SAY, THAT TRIP WAS CANCELED!

Central Asia

— Ruth*

POLICE AND THE PUNKHABARI SHORTCUT

India

— Alma Hagen

Prayer: That God would protect them on a journey to the airport during uprisings



Martha Rai, a graduate of the very first class at Darjeeling Hills Bible School

District. All shops were closed. NO vehicles were allowed on the streets, not even bicycles. Vehicles violating previous *hartals* had been burned. How were we to get the Stoas to the airport? All we could do was pray and commit the whole situation to the Lord. The Lord reminded us that if he could open the eyes of the blind, he could shut the eyes of those who see. We thanked God for his protection and started off in our jeep early in the morning.

We had gone about four miles from Darjeeling to Ghoom without incident, when suddenly a police jeep pulled out right in front of us from the Kalimpong Road and drove ahead of us down the road toward Bagdogra. We tailgated in hot pursuit, speeding on the few straight stretches and slowing down for the many sharp curves. In a number of places, Communist strikers had lowered barriers across the road, preventing any traffic from passing, but when the strikers saw the police jeep approach, they hurriedly lifted the barrier and let both the police and us pass through.

At one point the police jeep ahead suddenly swung off the main road and took off down the Punkhabari Road, a narrow gravel shortcut to Bagdogra Airport. We followed, whipping back and forth, down seven steep hairpin curves. Soon we reached the plains and were cruising through flat tea gardens. We arrived at Bagdogra Airport in good time for the Stoas to catch their plane. I stayed in a local hotel that evening, before venturing back to Darjeeling the next day after the *hartal* was finished. I thanked God for answering prayer.

Do angels drive jeeps? They can! Does God answer prayer? He can – and HE DOES!

SAUL'S BORING FOR WATER

Bangladesh

— Christian Vestergaard

As a new believer with no Christian neighbors in his village, Saul* often felt alone when persecution came his way. Saul's two uncles, and probably just about everybody else in his village, were more than a little upset about his believing in *Isa* (Jesus). The uncles had not only approved of but also encouraged their sons in various attempts to give Saul and his family trouble for turning from the family's beliefs. Their actions included making a picnic lunch from Saul's goat, refusing to interact with Saul's elderly mother, threatening to violate his sisters, pelting their roof at night, stealing chickens, and threatening to beat up Saul and his brother.

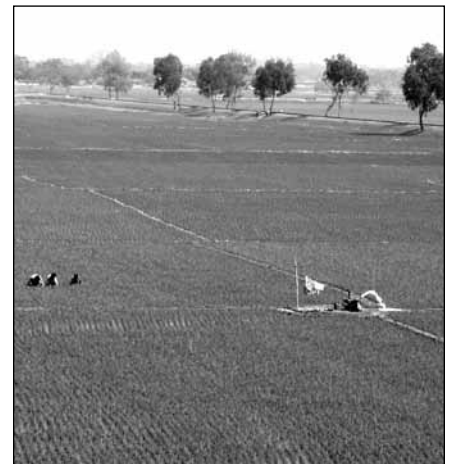
On one particular occasion, Saul came to ask for a loan so he could get his boring cleaned up. Most farmers have access to a boring, which is a 30 ft. x 2 in. metal pipe that has been sunk into the ground until only the top four inches are visible. Depending on the weather, rice needs to be irrigated every five to ten days using water from the boring. When the fields are dry the farmer carries his pump to the boring, attaches it to the pipe, and pumps water into canals or directly onto his fields. However, two of Saul's cousins had put dirt, brick chips and sticks down the metal pipe. Saul requested the loan because he needed professional help to get it cleaned out and had to replace a part. About a week later Saul came back to tell me that his cousins had been back and filled his boring again. I did not want to give Saul any charity, but it was also easy to see that the profit from his crop was fast dwindling with every additional expense. I gave Saul more money, we prayed, and the rice got water once again.

Saul had wanted to be reconciled to his extended family and he, along with his siblings and mother, continued to pray that their neighbors would come to know Isa the way they do. (Saul's father died before Saul became a believer.) In discussions Saul would often say things like, "If only I can get an opportunity to talk to this uncle, he will understand that I do respect him," or "If only I can get an opportunity to talk to that relative, he will know that I have not shown disrespect to the prophet."

When Saul came a third time requesting help with the boring, we decided that it was no longer best for Saul to seek my help. Instead, we prayed that God would intervene, and Saul prayed for his relatives as he had done before.

Two days later Saul told me that the two uncles who had encouraged the sabotage had gotten into a quarrel the previous day. One of the uncles had forbidden the other access to his fields. The only alternative was to get permission from Saul to walk on paths on Saul's property. When one of the cousins had contacted Saul to get this permission, Saul asked to talk to his uncle. The uncle eventually agreed that Saul could call him on his mobile phone. Saul used the opportunity to express respect for his uncle and give him permission to walk across his property. With this event the cousins no longer had support or encouragement to sabotage Saul. God had put an end to Saul's having to constantly clean out his boring – and, more importantly, had provided the opportunity for a conversation with his uncle.

"Saul had wanted to be reconciled to his extended family and he, along with his siblings and mother, continued to pray that their neighbors would come to know Isa the way they do."



Rice needs to be irrigated regularly using a boring and pump

*name changed for privacy

THE COLLIE

Bolivia

— Jacqueline Mikaelson

“They were met by a group of drunken gang members who wanted to grab the camera and beat them up.”

At Radio Television Caranavi (RTC) we decided to make a documentary on the drug, alcohol and prostitution problem among the youth in Caranavi. So many new bars had opened that even the municipality had no idea how many there were, and the related problems had increased greatly. We wanted to collect as much information as we could to present to the public over our radio and television stations. We wanted to encourage the municipality to close these places down and to pass laws regulating this kind of activity. We knew that we were doing extremely dangerous work.

One Sunday Vitalio, an RTC worker, went out from late evening until sunrise to do reporting and filming for the documentary concerning these issues. Knowing it was dangerous to be alone, he took his older son with him. It is during this time of night that many gangs, robbers and drunks are out and about. Around midnight Vitalio and his son were met by a large collie dog, which was not threatening to them but rather walked up and gently put Vitalio’s hand in its mouth. The dog was one that neither of them had ever seen before, but was very large and friendly and seemed to want to stay with them. So that’s what the dog did; it followed along with Vitalio and his son for the night. As they were heading to one place to do some filming, they were met by a group of drunken gang members who wanted to grab the camera and beat them up. But as the gang members tried to get close to them, the dog jumped out and frightened them away. This was how their night continued, with the dog going with them and watching out and protecting them. As it grew closer to morning, Vitalio’s son told his dad that he thought they should take the dog home and at least feed it for all the help it had been to them during the night. They agreed to do that, but as they turned around to get the dog, they couldn’t see it anywhere. It had disappeared!

THE HONEST TAXI DRIVER*

Nepal

— Alma Hagen

Prayer: Thanking God that he will work for good even when a handbag is lost

It was *gone*! Eileen spun around in stunned dismay. She scanned every chair, lifted and shook her coat again and again. It was simply not there!

“I had it in the taxi! I must have left it...”

She shut her eyes and shook her head in disbelief. Her mind began itemizing the contents of the big, plain, brown handbag – which was missing.

“My Bible! My passport and the permission to stay in Nepal! The checkbook and all the cash I just got to pay for the shipment of wax from India!” Her voice grew softer with each word.

“The address book!” – so valuable to anyone far from home.

“Th...thank you, Father. Thank you. You allowed this to happen. You are love. You will keep your promise that all things work together for good to those who love you.” Her praise was quiet but deliberate.

We had been learning to thank God for all things, according to First Thessalonians 5:18: “In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you” (KJV).

It was soon time for our weekly praise and prayer meeting. Before leaving home, Eileen left the phone number where she could be reached and started off for the meeting. We sang psalms of praise, loving and worshiping the Lord, who alone is worthy of all our adoration. We had been singing and praising for nearly half an hour when the phone jangled an interruption.

We simultaneously thought, “The bag!”

Sure enough! The landlady of the place where Eileen got out of the taxi was on the line. A taxi driver was asking if the *missahib* (female master) was there. We hopped into the jeep and tore down the road to where the taxi was waiting. Praise and thanksgiving bubbled from our lips, but the unforgettable experience was not over yet.

As we drove up to the taxi, a tiny little driver, beaming from ear to ear, introduced us to the vehicle owner. “I have locked up your bag for safety,” he explained. “We are honest!” We gratefully agreed.

The driver explained that after he had dropped off Eileen, he had gone straight to the owner’s home. She was his last passenger that evening. As he dusted out the seat and floor, his hand fell on the bag, which he promptly took to his employer to be locked up safely. They both came along to meet Eileen. Anyone who knows taxi drivers in the Orient knows that such things are unheard of!

We piled into the jeep again to follow the taxi back to the owner’s house. We bounced along behind the tail lights down the narrow winding lanes until they came to a stop. The driver hopped out and walked up to the jeep



Streets of Kathmandu, 1971

“...it is exciting to know the true God! He is love. He hears us when we pray. *You* are an answer to our prayer.”

**Adapted excerpt from
Fellow Workers, March 1973*

THE MISSING TUNNEL
Bolivia

— Jacqueline Mikaelsen

**Prayer: For protection from any
danger on the road while traveling**

door, adjusting his snug Nepali cap a little higher and beaming a boyish smile. We started talking with him.

“You know, younger brother, it is exciting to know the true God! He is love. He hears us when we pray. *You* are an answer to our prayer.”

He laughed.

“Have you ever heard of the Lord Jesus Christ?”

“No, I haven’t.”

“He is wonderful to know because he is the true God. He never deceives us! He never fails us. He forgives our sins.”

A pale shaft of light from a shuttered window fell on his face as he listened intently. We shared more of the Lord of lords and then invited him to join us for worship some Sunday morning. Eileen left a special gift for the driver, thanked him again, and we sped back to the praise fellowship.

The next Sunday morning at the close of the church service someone stepped up, dressed in a brand new blue shirt, with the same ear-to-ear smile. It was the taxi driver! Christmas Day he was there, too!

Over the years we have seen God’s faithfulness to us and the work at Radio Television Caranavi. We have seen God open new doors and areas in ministry, such as adding Christian television to the radio station in 1997. Through an opportunity that we never expected, we were able to find and buy a used TV transmitter and equipment in the U.S. and have it shipped to Bolivia. After a time, we finally got it released from customs in Bolivia, loaded it all on top of and into our Toyota jeep, and were ready to drive from La Paz down to Caranavi on that famous and dangerous road. As we always do, we prayed and asked the Lord to protect us from any danger on the road as we traveled. Although we were heavily weighted down with our precious cargo, we felt God’s peace as we drove along.

After a few hours of travel, we were stopped by a landslide that needed to be cleared away from the road. While we waited, Paul met a Bolivian friend who was also traveling to Caranavi and was on a bus behind us. The two of them visited for awhile, and by the time the road was cleared evening had settled in and we were able to continue our trip to Caranavi.

Having traveled the road so many times before, we have learned all of the landmarks along the way. At one point there is a place where we cross a bridge and less than a minute afterwards go through a tunnel that takes a sharp turn to the left. As we crossed that bridge, we expected to drive through the tunnel – but we never did! When we arrived later that evening in Caranavi, we talked about the fact that we hadn't driven through that tunnel in the road. We wondered what changes had been made on the road in the few days since we had last traveled it on our way to La Paz. We thought that the tunnel had been removed because there was an electrification project going into the area, and perhaps the electrical poles were too long to go through the tunnel so the road had been changed.

The next day the friend Paul had chatted with the night before came to visit. Paul was eager to ask him about the tunnel. We knew that his bus had been just a short distance behind us on the road; he would have noticed how things were as he got to the tunnel and would have seen any changes made to the road. Our friend's reply surprised us. He said that there was a terrible traffic jam at the tunnel. Traffic had been backed up on both sides, and it took almost three hours to sort it all out and get through the tunnel. Paul and I stood in amazement, knowing that we had never gone through the tunnel. We had never even seen any other vehicles around us. God had us bypass the tunnel!

We may never know what might have happened to us at that tunnel, and we can't explain what God does for us at times – but we do know that he watches over, protects and takes care of us.

“The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and delivers them” (Psalm 34:7 ESV).

Several believers had accompanied me to show a film in the village of El Castillo, just outside the city of Mazatlán, Mexico. The service ended about 8:30 in the evening, and we began the drive back to the city. A divided four-lane highway goes through the village, and shortly after I entered my lane of traffic a pickup with two men in it drove alongside my car. They began to make threats and maintained their speed equal to mine. We drove up a hill, after which I knew there was a return lane. Knowing that it would



That famous and dangerous road from La Paz to Caranavi

THERE WAS A REASON

Mexico

— Jan Tollefson

Prayer: For safety

“Immediately she got out of bed and prayed on her knees for our safety!”

be quite dark from then on into the city, I told the others that I was going to go back to El Castillo. As I made the U-turn, to my surprise, the pickup followed me, driving in the outside emergency lane! When a truck appeared in the inside lane, they tried to force me into an accident with the truck. I was able to use the brake and stayed behind them at a short distance. I then drove down into the village and stopped in front of a believer’s home. The pursuers drove on for a short distance and stopped for a few minutes. Then they made a U-turn and began the return trip to Mazatlán. However, they stopped up on the hill and turned on their caution lights.

Along with the believers from the home where we had stopped, we formed a prayer circle and prayed. After a bit, the pursuers left.

A neighbor offered to drive into Mazatlán in his vehicle to see if they might be waiting along the way. They returned and said that they had not seen any sign of them. So we piled into the car and, to my surprise, the car would not start! The men checked things out and couldn’t find the problem. So we decided to take the last bus into Mazatlán and leave the car there. When the bus made its first stop in the city, the men in the pickup were waiting there for my car, apparently, and when they saw us on the bus, they took off in a big cloud of dust.

Well, the next day a mechanic friend went out to El Castillo to check out the problem with my car and, lo and behold, it started right off! He said, “There was no reason for your car not to start.” However, we knew that there *was* a reason, and the Lord had stalled the motor.

Later on in the week, as I was visiting in the village, one of the believers told me she had left the church early because she didn’t feel well. She went to bed, but had a vision (or dream?) of us in the car. She knew that there was some kind of trouble. But then she saw an angel hovering over us! Immediately she got out of bed and prayed on her knees for our safety!

So, the angel of the Lord *does* encamp around us – and delivers us!

WHAT WE DIDN’T KNOW

Bolivia

— Jacqueline Mikaelsen

We were working at Radio Caranavi in the 1970’s when a coup took place in the government and Hugo Banzer took over as dictator. We remember the day that Banzer flew by helicopter into Caranavi and delivered a speech to the people. It was quite a big event at that time.

It was almost thirty years later, when we were working at RTC (Radio Television Caranavi), that we visited with Nicolas, a man we had known for years who worked on behalf of the National Lutheran Church as district president. Nicolas asked Paul if he knew what really happened back in the 70's, the day that President Banzer visited Caranavi. Paul told him that he remembered the day but knew nothing beyond what he had seen happening. Nicolas then proceeded to tell us the "real story."

As a Christian now, Nicolas felt compelled to tell us about the events of that day. Bolivia was having great problems at that time and there were many groups against the president. One of those groups, which Nicolas was a part of, was in Caranavi. The day that President Banzer flew into Caranavi there was a three-fold plan set in motion. The first part of the plan was to assassinate President Banzer; second, the country people would take over the army base; and third, they would take over Radio Caranavi, where we were working as WMPL missionaries. The first group had hired two professional sharpshooters to take out the helicopter as it landed in Caranavi. The second group was to go into the army base and overtake it with the help of many of their sons who were there because of mandatory conscription. The third group, including Nicolas, was to come up Radio Hill and take over the radio station from the back side.

None of the three plans was ever enacted because each one was foiled in one way or another. Nicolas told us that the two men who were going to shoot the helicopter down failed because they arrived too late to Caranavi. The second group, those going to take over the army base, could not do it because they were met on the road coming into Caranavi by a large group of soldiers. And the third group, of which Nicolas was the leader, never made it to Radio Hill to take over the radio station because they got lost among the hills and valleys! Nicolas said that it was "impossible" that he never made it to Radio Hill because he grew up in the area and knew the countryside like the back of his hand. He was amazed at what had transpired that day and that their plans to "take over" never were accomplished.

Sometimes we never know how God has protected and taken care of us, and then at times we get a "glimpse" of what God has done.

• • •

"Sometimes we never know how God has protected and taken care of us, and then at times we get a 'glimpse' of what God has done."



Provision

A BUNDLE ON UHURU HIGHWAY Kenya

— Mike & Gail Koski

Prior to departure for our first missionary assignment, we packed and sent off two 55-gallon drums of the things we thought we would need at our new home in Kalemie, Zaire. The shipping route had those drums travel by rail across war-torn Angola. That they were waiting for us in Kalemie, safe and sound, when we arrived was a miracle in itself. After only a few months in Zaire, we (the Folkerts and Koskis) had to leave that country. It seemed best to return to Kenya where we had done our Swahili language studies. So we packed up our two barrels and sent them off by boat and rail to Nairobi via Dar es Salaam. This time it seemed to take forever for those barrels to arrive. In fact, we began to receive correspondence from the shipping company indicating there was a problem that would require us to pay an exorbitant fee to secure final release of the shipment. But those letters never clearly explained what the problem was or where our barrels were.

In the midst of this dilemma, we began to wonder if the contents of those drums were really so necessary after all. We were managing fine without them. Then, one day as Mike was walking along the busiest street in Nairobi, Uhuru Highway, he came across a bundle of papers lying on the sidewalk. As he leaned over to pick up the parcel, he was dumbfounded to see our shipping documents for the barrels! What are the “chances” of this? He immediately notified the shippers, who were amazed and not a little embarrassed by his discovery. When our shipment finally arrived, the company substantially reduced the amount due and gave us a great wall map of East Africa. Only the Lord could have led Mike to those lost papers along the roadside in downtown Nairobi.

A CROCK-POT MIRACLE Ecuador

— Kristin McWeeny

**Prayer: For God’s provision when
needing to offer hospitality but
having so little to give**

Mishel was a member of our *Iglesia Paz de Dios* (Peace of God Church) youth group, a faithful, sweet young Christian who was often hindered from attending events by her stepfather, a practicing *bruja* (witch). Sunday afternoon activities were especially hard for her to attend, for while she, her mother and her siblings were free to go to church services in the morning by leaving before the stepfather awoke, once they arrived home at midday he would not allow them to return to church.

One Sunday, knowing we had a special afternoon youth event planned, I arranged with Mishel’s mother for Mishel to come to my home for lunch after the regular morning worship service so she could go back to church

with me in the afternoon. As Mishel and I began the 20-minute walk to my home, Gonzalo and his four siblings, also part of the youth group, asked where we were going and consequently decided that coming to my house for lunch was a good idea for them, too, saving them the bus fare to and from their home some distance away.

I smiled, at least outwardly, as I pondered how I would feed everyone. Before leaving for church, I had carefully cubed half a pound of beef and placed it with other ingredients in a one-quart crock-pot. That, served with a few noodles, was the right amount of beef stroganoff for two people, I knew, but seven? And six of them hungry teenagers? “*Lord, what will I do?*” I prayed as we walked.

When we reached the apartment, I welcomed everybody inside. Ecuadorian girls are trained from an early age to work in the kitchen, so there was no shortage of help offered. They set the table and scrounged up enough seats for everyone while I put a pot of water on to boil and scrutinized the meager contents of my tiny kitchen. Aside from the paltry amount of stroganoff, there was very little on hand: no bread, no rice, no other meat to serve, only a little milk, a small, specially purchased container of imported sour cream for the stroganoff, and my ever-present container of raw carrot sticks. To my relief, I discovered several packages of noodles in the cupboard. When the water boiled, I dumped them all in, figuring we could at least fill our stomachs with that.

When the noodles were ready, I set the tiny crock of stroganoff in the middle of the round kitchen table and called everyone to come and eat. They laughed at the bowl of raw carrot sticks – Ecuadorians eat only cooked carrots but had become used to *hermana* Cristina’s odd North American ways. They sniffed the sour cream, never having seen such a thing, and wondered how it was eaten. We thanked God for the food, asked his blessing on the meal, then sat down.

After piling generous portions of noodles on all seven plates, I proceeded to dip a large soup ladle (my only scoop) into the tiny crock-pot. I filled it with stroganoff and poured beef and gravy onto the first plate of noodles, dipped it in the crock again and ladled it on the second plate, then the third. Hardly believing what was happening, I kept on dipping and ladling until all seven plates were full of noodles and stroganoff. Only then did I look back into the little crock. It was empty.

A FAITH BUILDER FOR OUR FRIENDS

USA from South Asia

– Brian & Barb*

Prayer: For God's provision of a
home and car

“They wondered how they would find such things for us – where even to start! They began to pray along with us.”

The young people never thought about it and never realized the miracle God had just done through the prayers of his people and a tiny crock-pot. They just followed my example and put sour cream on top of the stroganoff. The responses came quickly: “Umm! This is really good!”

Oh God, you are really good! Thank you! May I never doubt your provision again.

Our first tumultuous, four-year term was drawing to a close as 1995 began. It was time for home assignment. Once we had decided on our location for that year, we began to pray about some big home assignment needs, such as a place to live and a vehicle to drive.

Our dear friends, Steve and Twany, contacted us a few months before home assignment asking how they could help as we returned to the U.S. They were thinking about maybe stocking a pantry or buying some cleaning supplies to get us started. They were a bit overwhelmed when we told them we would need a place to live and a vehicle to use for our year in the States. That was more than they had bargained for! They wondered how they would find such things for us – where even to start! They began to pray along with us.

Just a few days later, the person in charge of church properties stopped Twany at the church and asked, “Do Brian and Barb need a place to stay when they come back? You know, the church just bought some property and there is a house on it. Maybe we could fix it up.”

Twany was astounded and quickly contacted us. She had found a place for us to live without even having to look for it!

Later that same week, a family from church contacted Twany and asked, “Do Brian and Barb need a car? We are thinking of buying a new one and they could use our old one for the next year.”

Steve and Twany were very excited and encouraged – God had answered both major prayer requests almost immediately with no effort from them! We were excited as well and were reminded of God's deep, caring love for us. His way of providing for us on that home assignment was a real faith builder for us – and for Steve and Twany, too.

I remember a time during the early years when no funds had come from the States for purchasing groceries for the orphanage in Bolivia. However, God is not limited. He would show us his faithfulness through the people to whom we had come to share Jesus' love.

One day Luis Yana, a member of the Chejje congregation, came to the orphanage carrying a large gunnysack full of fresh green peas that he had just picked from his field. As he stood at my door greeting me, my mind was filled with thoughts of what I should say to him. How could I explain? If I told him we didn't have any money to pay for the peas, would that let God down? Luis smiled at me and said, "Señorita, do you not want my humble gift?"

Gift? Had I heard correctly? So I asked him, "Luis, what are you saying?"

He replied, "Señorita, I have come with this gift for you if you will be so kind as to accept it." My heart filled with joy as the tears rolled down my cheeks. What he was giving me was a *huge* gift, for he had labored and struggled in the field an entire year over his crop. And the money from the sale of those peas (their best cash crop) could have probably bought a sack of sugar and a sweater, both for him and his wife Modesta. I was speechless at his liberality, astounded at God's provision for us.

All through that month friends from the village came almost daily with gifts of eggs, potatoes and corn. They were giving of their livelihood with love, and God was showing me what it meant to *really* trust him and to bring my needs *to him alone* in prayer.

It was a warm and dry Saturday afternoon. The streets were quiet as I worked in the back yard of our little home on the outskirts of Quilanga, a small, rural town in southern Ecuador. We rented a single-story, concrete block house from local people, the Granda family. I was working in the region as an evangelist as well as an ophthalmic assistant, serving in a small Mission ocular care clinic in another town half an hour away by car.

Late that sleepy afternoon I became aware of increasing commotion at the bottom of the street that led down the hill beside our home and out to the fields. The unusual activity caught my curiosity, so I took a walk down the road toward it. By asking various bystanders, I gathered the cause of the commotion was what happened to Mr. Granda (Senior) and his horse.

A HUGE, HUMBLE GIFT OF FRESH GREEN PEAS*

Bolivia

— Florence Dickson

Prayer: For God to provide food for the orphanage

**Adapted excerpt from *Fellow Workers*, April 1979*

A MAN, HIS HORSE AND THE MYSTERIOUS HELPER

Ecuador

— Christopher McWeeny



Mr. Granda, his wife and grandson, loading their horse with harvested coffee beans, Quilanga 2001

Apparently the old farmer, our landlady's father, was walking back up the steep trail from his fields. Getting impatient with his faithful packhorse, Mr. Granda had positioned himself behind his hard-working companion to goad it on; however, the horse responded by kicking him in the shin, breaking his leg.

While standing among the gathering crowd, I watched several men carry Mr. Granda in a makeshift blanket-stretcher up from the steep narrow trail and onto the road. He was brought to his son's home, a house with a small shop located directly in front of our own house. I followed the group, then returned to inform Kristin and our two children, now standing outside our front door, about what had happened. Then I went back to see what, in fact, was the damage Mr. Granda had suffered and what might need to be done.

Upon entering the dimly-lit and sparsely-furnished dining/family room of this economically poor rural family, I encountered the room packed with hot sweaty farmers and other locals gathering around the injured man. He was laid on a rough wooden dining room table and was, understandably, in great pain. As I looked down from his face and torso to his leg, I saw his trousers had already been pulled back to reveal a broken lower leg with shattered bone protruding through an open wound. As I took in the severity of Mr. Granda's condition, I also became aware that many in the room were gazing at me expectantly.

Yikes! I realized I was now on the stage and had to perform. I had some training in eye care for assisting in the ocular clinic, but I was no orthopedic surgeon! Above the murmur of many voices in the room, someone said Mr. Granda should receive an injection for pain, but as there was no doctor staffing the small government clinic in the town on weekends, someone would need to purchase the needle and anesthetic from the local pharmacy and inject it. I thought quickly, excused myself, and rushed across the road to our home. Not being trained in injections I thought I'd better let them figure that one out – I had another matter to look after. Shuffling through shelves of books in my little office library, I found what I was looking for: an old St. John Ambulance first aid book I had brought to Ecuador. It was from a short course I had taken more than ten years previously. I knew I'd need to immobilize the leg before Mr. Granda was taken anywhere else and wanted to check the best way to do it with our few resources at home. My children still remember me quickly heading out the back door of our house with tools in hand and seeing me saw frantically at some boards

in order to make a splint. Kristin located some sheets to rip into strips to secure the leg to it. As I headed back across the street with these supplies, Kristin and the children prayed for God's help.

Getting back to the little room full of onlookers, I began to place the splint on the man's leg and tie it up. But something unexpected happened. I became aware of a lady I did not recognize standing across the table from me. She appeared about 60 years old, modestly but nicely dressed for our rural town, with reading glasses strung around her neck. She came up to Mr. Granda with a syringe and injected him with the anesthetic, which quickly brought some relief to him. Then the woman assisted me in immobilizing his broken leg.

I don't recall the woman talking very much, or even at all. She just helped out with peaceful confidence. I wondered how I might have done it all alone and was very grateful; however, I was not given an opportunity to tell her so.

While we finished splinting the leg, an excited discussion quickly arose among the farmers about transporting the patient to a hospital. The few locals who had a vehicle in the vicinity were unwilling to drive Mr. Granda all the way to the city hospital two hours away. There is no "Good Samaritan" law in Ecuador, and if he had died while in their vehicle, they would have been responsible! The local health subcenter had an ambulance but no one to drive it. Somehow, during the heated argumentation, the woman who had assisted me quietly exited the scene without notice.

Inevitably I was the one who drove Mr. Granda and several family members to the hospital after putting down the back seat and setting down a foam mattress for him to lie on. The two-hour drive on the winding roads was far from smooth. After arriving at the hospital and making sure things were arranged and all right with them, I got in the car and drove home, returning rather late that night. In the days that followed Kristin and I began to inquire around town about the lady who had helped Mr. Granda and me so well. We figured it wouldn't be difficult: in a town as tiny as Quilanga everyone knows just about everyone. But no one knew who this visitor had been. The woman had simply appeared at a crucial moment of need and then disappeared. *Thank you, God, for providing that helper, whoever she was.*

A PLUMBER NEEDED

Home Office Canada

— Wanda Manson

Prayer: For God's help with a plumbing problem

“I realized that if God can provide a plumber on a holiday when I hadn't even asked for one, then he could take care of me wherever I am.”

Should I quit my job? Will God take care of me? Can I trust him? These were questions running through my mind as I was considering joining WMPL and going wherever God called. And then...

It was a holiday weekend and I was doing stuff around the house. The bathtub tap had been dripping, and I decided it was time to take care of it. I turned off the water and began to take the tap apart, but it was stuck. After about ten minutes of fighting with it, I decided I'd have to call a plumber for help. Since it was a holiday and I wasn't going to pay double time just to fix a leaky tap, I decided that this could wait for another day. Unfortunately, I discovered that I had actually accomplished something in those ten minutes of “plumbing” because once the water was turned back on, the tap was no longer dripping but flowing quite freely. Now what? Frustrated, I sat down at the kitchen table and prayed, “God, please help!” I was thinking that with God's help I could get the tap unstuck and finish the job myself, but instead, about 30 seconds later the phone rang. It was a friend, a rather handy one at that, and he was wondering if he could borrow my computer that afternoon. Smiling, I told him I thought we could arrange something!

While considering the day's events, I realized that if God can provide a plumber on a holiday when I hadn't even asked for one, then he could take care of me wherever I am. Within a couple of months I had resigned from my job, sold my house, and was on my way to Minneapolis to join the WMPL USA staff in the business office there. And God has continued to provide.

A SCHOOL IS BIRTHED

Ecuador

— Carol Rosales

Prayer: For God to provide a school teacher

It was never in Ray's mind to do any kind of institutional ministry in connection with our mission work when we went to Cuenca, Ecuador, in 1952. But, during the years of 1956 and 1957, when the John Johnson family was also on the field, we began to think and pray seriously about the education of our children who were now of school age. It seemed hopeless at times, when no one seemed to be hearing the call.

At the same time, an Ecuadorian Protestant, Ligia Gonzalez, had been coming to our house every Saturday for prayer for her many needs. One urgent need was the education of her youngest daughter, who was in the public school but was being taught Roman Catholic practices. She begged us to open an evangelical school.

While we were praying, the Lord was working in the heart of Betsy Schott. She had received the call to go to Ecuador to teach, and she was burdened not only for the missionary children but for the Ecuadorian children as well. Betsy arrived in August of 1958 and by October had started an English kindergarten in the back room of our house. She had five students: Gloria and Linda Johnson, Becky Rosales, Hanne Jorgensen (Danish) and Rosita Gonzalez, Ligia's daughter.

The phenomenal growth of the Bilingual School, tested (in the early days of the Mission's work) by the threat of excommunication of the parents by the Catholic Church, can only be God's direct answer to prayer. Today, more than fifty-five years later, the school has twelve grades with 1,400 students, totally owned and run by Christian Ecuadorians.

I was fairly new on the mission field when Paul and I were dorm parents for John, Sarah and James Molskness in the Mission Home in Cuenca. I wanted to be a good dorm mom and was also busy with our 22-month-old son Justo. In addition, I was learning a new language and culture, which included trying to enjoy having the help of a maid who worked for us every weekday except Thursday. Our second child was due soon, and we had worked it out to have the baby born right there in the Mission Home with an Ecuadorian doctor attending.

I was anxious about how things were going to go and prayed that I would be in labor at an opportune time. For me it felt best not to have the maid there during delivery, but I also knew we had responsibilities for the Molskness children. Here came the answer to prayer! Five days before my due date, on a Thursday, I went into labor. The doctor was at the Bilingual School next door. He checked me out and hurried to his home for the birthing equipment. The Molskness children were in school and it was the maid's day off. Jessica Ann Pillman was born at 11:03 a.m., giving me time to clean up before welcoming the children and first visitors. Perfect timing, and God's perfect answer to prayer!

“It seemed hopeless at times, when no one seemed to be hearing the call.”

A TIME TO BE BORN Ecuador

— Josie Pillman

Prayer: For a safe and timely birth



Back row: Justo, Paul, Josie, John
In front: Sarah, James

A WASHING MACHINE JUST FOR THE ASKING*

Bolivia

— Florence Dickson

Prayer: For a washing machine for the orphanage



Orphanage laundry area at Coaba Farm

“If you believe so wholeheartedly in these guidelines, why don’t you have a washing machine?”

*Adapted excerpt from *Fellow Workers*,
April 1979

One way of getting strength for today is by remembering God’s faithfulness in the past.

When I was a new, young missionary in Bolivia, there were some simple guidelines that my co-workers and I agreed to follow. (These guidelines, and others that have been added down through the years, are now printed in the *WMPL Handbook*.) They became a way of life for me that worked then, and they steady me as I think of the future. They include these:

1. We were to bring our needs to God in prayer.
2. No funds were to be solicited.
3. At no time were we to go into debt.
4. Money given for a specific purpose was to be used only in that way.
5. Each day we would trust God to use us and what he had entrusted into our care for the advancement of his kingdom.

Under these principles I enjoyed the challenge of walking with God. Now that I am retired, they continue to encourage and bless me.

At one of the first missionary conferences I attended in Bolivia, we were discussing the above-mentioned guidelines about praying for what we needed, and I expressed my convictions that I believed wholeheartedly in them. As we were leaving the conference hall that day, one of my co-workers said to me, “If you believe so wholeheartedly in these guidelines, why don’t you have a washing machine?” I stopped dead in my tracks! Why, I hadn’t even thought of asking God for a washing machine!

You see, I was in charge of our orphanage on Coaba Farm. For a year or more I had been getting up early and washing clothes by hand while the children slept. My co-worker challenged me, “Let’s try out these principles that you believe in about bringing our needs to God in prayer and not soliciting funds. We will tell no one. It’ll be just the two of us asking God for a washing machine for the orphanage.”

We did, and just three weeks later there was a washing machine at the orphanage! How stupid I had been, working away so hard, when God was wanting to give me a washing machine *just for the asking!*

I had worked in Central Asia for seven years, seconded to an organization that works only in that particular country. I worked only in health-related projects because I am a registered nurse (RN) by training. When I returned to Asia after a year of home assignment, I found that the “Community Health Worker Teaching Project” that I had been leading was now being terminated. Therefore, the first three months after my return were spent in the emotional process of closing the project.

Since I no longer had an assignment after the project closure, I was asked to help in the headquarters (HQ) for the summer. Many expatriates were out of town to attend meetings, on home assignment, or taking vacation while their children were out of school, so my working in HQ would provide the necessary presence of another foreigner. One of my responsibilities included working in a hygiene education and water sanitation project for about eight months until it, too, was closed.

Before starting work in HQ, my understanding was that I would be in the logistics office organizing travel for people. However, during my first week on the job, I learned that we had lost the contract for the house we were currently using as our HQ. Fortunately, the rental of another house for the purpose of a new location had already been arranged. Nevertheless, this meant that I had to supervise the remodeling of the new location as well as the move. Great! With no exception, all of the people who would normally oversee this procedure were out of country for at least three months. I had no remodeling experience speaking English, much less another language. Working closely with our general services manager (a local), my vocabulary grew in the area of building and remodeling. Not only did my vocabulary increase, but also my “know-how” of remodeling considerations.

During my second week on the job, I was informed that I was the only team representative in the country and that it was my responsibility to organize the annual team conference. And, by the way, I soon discovered the person who had agreed to come and speak had canceled. I had only eight weeks to find someone else! Then I remembered that I had seen Pat Elvis during my home assignment and she had offered to speak on her “Livin’ Forgiveness” series. At the time I had mumbled something back about speakers having already been chosen and lined up about two years in advance. Now I contacted Pat, who immediately agreed to come. We began frequent email correspondence as I made all of her in-country arrangements for travel, meetings, accommodations, and scheduling.

ALL COULD HAVE GONE WRONG

Central Asia

— Judy Strenge

Prayer: For God’s provision when stretched

“It could have been a setup for failure, but God intervened in every detail...”



A common scene in Central Asia

It was a busy time while organizing the remodeling, getting ready for the HQ move, and also planning the team conference. I asked for prayer in our weekly team meetings for all that needed to be done. By the end of October we could see how God answered those prayers in incredible ways. The remodeling turned out well, and in general people were happy with the result. We moved into the new location ahead of schedule, even during the month of Ramadan. We were thankful for safety and travel mercies for all – and the team conference was reported as one of the best ever!

I marveled at God and felt a real sense of his working things out well, especially when everything could have easily gone wrong. It could have been a setup for failure, but God intervened in every detail and I just rode the crest of the wave for those two months.

APPLE PIE AND DOUGHNUTS*

Bolivia

— Mildred Hasselquist Tengbom



City of La Paz, Bolivia

The men (Ernest Weinhardt and John Carlsen) through the months had been eating Bolivian food mostly. Eating habits are not easily changed, and they found themselves longing for American food. One Sunday afternoon, as Carlsen left the house to go on a walk, he jokingly said to Weinhardt, “I’ll bring back some apple pie and doughnuts, and we’ll have coffee when I return.”

As he walked down the street he heard a voice call, “Mr. Carlsen!” He looked up. There in the window above him stood the wife of the American Consul. “Come in, Mr. Carlsen,” she invited. “How would you like a piece of apple pie?”

When she brought it to him, Carlsen hesitated for a moment and then asked, “Would you mind if I took it home and shared it with my friend?”

“Why, no, no!” she assured him. “But I have more. Let me get you another piece.” She hustled off to her kitchen. When she came back, in addition to the pie, she was carrying a bulging paper bag. “Here are some doughnuts you might enjoy as well,” she said.

Carlsen hurried home, clutching his treasure. “Ernie!” he called out even before he had the door pushed open. “Ernie, put on the coffee! Here are the doughnuts and the apple pie the Lord provided.”

*Adapted excerpt from *The Spirit of God Was Moving*, copyright © 1985, World Mission Prayer League, pp.42,43

We were in language school, and our tuition and rent were due. Those were the days when our monthly allowance was one hundred and forty-five dollars. Language school tuition was fifty dollars.

The mail came that day. It included an envelope from our home congregation with the pictorial directory. It had been shipped by boat and had taken about three months to get to us. Before we left we had tried to get the missions committee to support para-church ministries like WMPL, but we were told they supported only ELC missionaries. Much to our surprise, when we opened the pictorial directory there was a check from the church. It was just the right amount to pay our rent and tuition! It reminds me of the verse, “Before they call I will answer, while they are yet speaking I will hear” (Isaiah 65:24).

We have a great God who has promised to supply all our needs, and he does it all the time!

A few years ago, I witnessed one of the most astounding answers to prayer I have ever seen. It was prayer for something very simple – a lost wristwatch. Does God care for simple things like these? I have come to believe that he does.

We were on vacation as a family in the Boundary Waters Canoe Wilderness Area of northern Minnesota. Ben Sollie was along – the son of one of our missionary families. Ben and our son Nathan have been close friends (and avid canoeists) since childhood.

At one campsite, just near shore, Ben somehow dropped his favorite wristwatch into the lake. It was a buckle and band sort of watch. It came loose from his wrist, fell into the lake, and Ben watched it sink away into the water. I watched it, too. If I were a betting man, I would have laid money that the watch was gone forever.

But we prayed.

We prayed together a simple, child-like sort of prayer – something like, “*Dear God, please help us to recover that wristwatch. Ben really likes it.*”

BEFORE YOU CALL, I WILL ANSWER

Bolivia

— Judy Forseth

BEN’S WATCH **Home Office USA**

— Chuck Lindquist

**Prayer: For God to help recover a
lost wristwatch**

“God can honor simple strategies for action in ways that we might think unimaginable.”

**CHILDREN PRAY
FOR RASCAL**
Central Asia

— Ruth*

**Prayer: For God to enable their
father to bring the dog back**

“Timmy and Daniel decided to pray that their dad would bring their dog Rascal back with him. My heart sank!”

The watch didn’t rise right out of the water – though God could have answered that way. It would hardly have been more surprising than the answer we saw before our eyes. I fastened a treble fishing hook onto the end of a line and lowered it hopefully into the water. I lowered it to the bottom where I supposed the watch might be. I lowered it once. And then, of course, I raised the line again. And one of the trebles was hooked right through the first hole of the watchband. Ben and Nathan were astounded. So was I. (But I tried to act as though I saw that sort of thing all the time.)

We learned something about prayer that day. Nothing is too trivial for God’s caring attention. Nothing is too outlandish to lay before him. And God can honor simple strategies for action in ways that we might think unimaginable. It was important, after all, to fasten a hook and lower the line into the water, however preposterous it seemed. But God was ready to fasten the hook to the watch.

It is especially encouraging when we see God teaching our children to pray! One instance of this was in 1998, when we returned to our country of service after our home leave. We had been evacuated the year before because of fierce fighting in our city, and it had been traumatic. Our children had left their friends, home, belongings, and pets behind, not knowing whether they would ever see them again.

When we returned to the region, I waited with the children in a neighboring country while my husband traveled to our former home, packed up our belongings, and shipped them to our new home in another city. We had no idea what he would find of our former things.

One evening during family devotions, the book we were reading challenged us to “pray for something only God can do.” As each one of us thought about what to pray for, Timmy and Daniel decided to pray that their dad would bring their dog Rascal back with him. My heart sank! I wasn’t sure if he would even find the dog, but was quite sure that he wouldn’t bring the pet with him on the plane! What a celebration we had when my husband returned – and sure enough, he had Rascal with him!

Our good friend Chita tells the story of God’s provision of more than the necessities of life. Her family lives in Mascareñas, Mexico, where they had “homesteaded,” we might say. As a group several families had moved out there onto a government land grant. They had suffered much, but at the time of her story they had shelter and enough tortillas and beans to survive.

On this particular day Chita was with her six children when one of the younger ones said, “Mama, I wish we could have just a little bread.”

Chita was thinking about this when her neighbor came running in the door, very excited. “There’s a missionary in a car down the street giving out bags of bread, and I told him to save you two bags because you have six children!”

Chita’s eyes sparkle when she tells this story, and she says, “God answered my prayer before I even asked.”

Our two teenage sons, Claire and Luther, were ready to begin their sophomore year of high school. Since there wasn’t a high school for missionary children at that time in Bolivia, the Lord guided us to send them back to the States to attend Augustana Academy, a fine Lutheran boarding school in Canton, South Dakota, where many missionary kids attended.

They were met at the airport at Mason City, Iowa, by their grandparents, who lovingly cared for them until school started in September. The two grandmas had bought new summer shirts, trousers and other clothing for them so they were all ready to start school.

They got settled in the boys’ dorm, began their classes, made new friends, and took part in activities. Soon fall and colder weather came so the short-sleeved shirts weren’t warm enough. One day during their typing class their teacher asked Claire and Luther if they’d like to come over to her house that evening. Of course, their first thought was, “I wonder what we’ve done wrong...” They went and were warmly welcomed by the Abrahamsons. After a short chat, Mrs. Abrahamson went to another room and came out with an armful of beautiful winter clothing that their son had outgrown. She smilingly laid the clothes down in front of them and said they were welcome to these clothes if they wanted them. There were flannel shirts, warm sweaters and other clothing. They took them all, expressing their gratitude, and then went back to their dorm.

CHITA’S DAILY BREAD

Mexico

— Dan & Léonie Gómez

Prayer: For bread for the children

CLOTHES FOR WINTER

USA from Bolivia

— Marge Erickson

Prayer: For God’s provision of winter clothes

“But if God so clothes the
grass of the field... will
he not much more clothe
you – you of little faith?

Therefore do not worry,
saying, ‘What will we eat?’
or ‘What will we drink?’
or ‘What will we wear?’...
indeed your heavenly
Father knows that you need
all these things.”

Matthew 6:30-32

In their next letter to us, in telling of this experience, they said, "...and we just knew God had answered our prayer because the night before we had asked him to send us some winter clothes!"

What an encouragement this was to them! (And to us as parents, who were separated from them by thousands of miles!) Oh yes, God hears and answers the specific prayers of missionary children!

COLOR COORDINATING

USA from Bolivia

— Judy Forseth

I remember how God provided for us on our first furlough. We had rented a house but needed furniture. We decided to go to garage sales but had forgotten what colors the walls were in the house. We looked only for items that we thought we would need. As it turned out, the rugs and clock we bought matched the bedspread and the wall colors. The couch (after we got it scrubbed) went well with the color of the walls in the living room, and the tablecloth someone gave us also matched. None of it was planned, but God did a great job of color coordinating!

COMFORT AND REASSURANCE FOR A PRISONER

Pakistan

— Pat Lelvis

Prayer: For a persecuted believer

Recently we were encouraged to pray for a man we shall call SM. He was in prison for his faith and likely to be executed. As I prayed for him, I thought of a verse in Hebrews, "Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured" (Hebrews 13:3).

I thought about what I would want to have happen if I were in prison. I would hope most of all that my faith wouldn't fail, that I wouldn't deny my Lord. Then I remembered that twice in the book of Acts it speaks of the Lord or an angel appearing to Paul when he was a prisoner and reassuring him (see Acts 16:25-34; 27:23-38). I prayed that the same Lord Jesus would appear to SM, giving him comfort and reassurance.

I was overjoyed when I read the following report concerning him: "Praise for the wonderful encounters with his Master that SM had while in prison, which changed him from a man pleading to be released to a bold witness — ready to live or die for his Master."

Praise God!

Several years ago I was working in the Minneapolis home office in a ministry that was way outside my comfort zone. I had been approached to work in the business office and at first I refused. I was quite sure that this was not part of my giftedness. Finally, it became obvious to me that to continue to refuse was tantamount to disobedience to God. If I believed that “my God supplies all my needs,” this would certainly have to qualify.

Therefore, I began working in the business office and actually found that I enjoyed the data-entry part of the job. Things would soon change, however, when the business manager submitted her resignation with an actual date of departure. As the days and months went by, we in the office and as a membership prayed for a replacement, but no one was identified and no one stepped forward.

It came to the last month or so before her departure and it seemed that the task was going to fall to me. However, it was confirmed in my heart and in the hearts of others that I really didn’t have the skills for the job. Did God not see this need? I remember putting my head down and praying for the strength to get through the day when the current business manager would be gone and I would have to shut the door to the business office, lock it, and try to figure out what was going on. I prayed that I wouldn’t make a mess of it too badly, and especially that I wouldn’t put any of our projects or overseas people in financial jeopardy!

The very next day, after this time of prayer, we learned of a woman from Canada who had the skills and desire to work in the U.S. home office as the business manager. I knew that God had answered that prayer, not just for WMPL but also for me personally. Even now, tears come to my eyes remembering that answer. And the fact that it was such a joy to work with that sister in Christ was an added blessing!

For many years Paul flew his small Beechcraft Bonanza airplane around Bolivia helping with emergency medical flights. After one terrible bus accident on the Caranavi Road, Paul was asked to help transport the worst of the injured people in his plane to La Paz, where they would get medical attention. Because the plane was small, the back seats were taken out, making it possible for a man with a broken back to be strapped into the

DID GOD NOT SEE THIS NEED? **Home Office USA**

— Leslie Urie

Prayer: For God’s provision of personnel



WMPL Home Office workers provide essential services to send and care for those serving overseas (such as in this frontier region) and mobilize prayer for the spread of the gospel

“As the days and months went by, we in the office and as a membership prayed for a replacement, but no one was identified...”

EMERGENCY MEDICAL FLIGHT **Bolivia**

— Jacqueline Mikaelson

“He was able to catch the word ‘*drowning!*’”

back on a stretcher and a woman with a broken neck strapped onto a board and then tied into the front seat of the plane. This allowed no room for any medical personnel, so Paul was on his own with the patients. He knew that the flight to La Paz would take about an hour and radioed ahead to let the airport know he was coming with emergency medical patients so that they would have an ambulance ready to take his passengers to the hospital.

The flight was going well, and Paul continued talking with the woman to keep her alert until she could get the medical care she needed. All of a sudden, Paul looked over at the woman and could tell that she was trying to talk to him but could not get the words out. He was able to catch the word “*drowning!*” What was Paul to do? He had his hands on the controls of the plane and could not move from his position while flying through the mountains to La Paz. But God’s presence is always with us! Suddenly the airplane hit an air pocket, which caused the plane to drop hundreds of feet rapidly, which helped the woman to vomit out liquid that had started to fill her throat and mouth. After that the woman was fine and could breathe again! God knew the situation and he took care of the problem. The flight ended safely in La Paz, where the patients got immediate medical attention.

GOD PROVIDES FOR HEIDE’S BURN

Bolivia

— Judy Forseth

One time when our daughter was about 1 1/2 years old, she suffered a terrible burn. The washtub was in the kitchen. We had to heat water on the stove and pour it into the tub. The boiling hot water had been poured into the tub, but before I could run the cold water and pour it in, Heide and her brother Kermit came running into the kitchen to take their baths. Heide stepped right in and sat down. Oh, how horribly she was burned!

We laid her on our bed and ran across the street to the country clinic. We were blessed that the doctor and nurses were actually there, and they were sober! They came and dressed her wounds. We had to take her to La Paz immediately. Our son Victor was just a small baby. I couldn’t hold him and comfort Heide, too. We put the portable baby crib in the back of the pickup and laid our precious Heide in it. Kermit and I sat on the wheel wells; fortunately the truck box was covered. I ran to a Bolivian neighbor’s house and asked if she would ride in the cab and take care of Victor. She very willingly did it.

When we got to the hospital (a Sunday), we told the doctor what treatment the Bolivian doctor had done. The American doctor said he wouldn't take the bandages off until the next day, when their anesthetist would be there. It turned out that Heide also had tonsillitis. We're thankful that she healed without complications.

In 1992 I was preaching in a church in Darjeeling when I felt excruciating chest pain. I turned aside and prayed silently. The pain was gone. I continued preaching. After the worship service I had to speak at the Sunday school seminar organized at the church, and I forgot about the pain. Darjeeling is a mountainous town. Up and down I walked back home. The pain was gone, but I felt tired.

Monday came. At four o'clock in the afternoon a group of men from church called for prayer. I prepared to go. Arun, my wife, said since I was not well I should not go. I said, "The Lord waits for us." I walked to church. Tuesday I was forced to stay in bed. Wednesday we called a doctor. He came, checked and said something was wrong in my lung. Thursday morning the doctor came again and told my wife I was having a heart attack. I was rushed down to Siliguri to a nursing home. Doctors there were concerned for me. I was in the hospital for three weeks.

The doctors advised me to go to a heart center in Delhi for more extensive evaluation, and treatment if required. Arun and I went by train to Delhi. We went to a top heart hospital in the city. The hospital was almost comparable to a hospital in the States. I had no idea what the cost would be in such a place. All I had was 20,000 rupees (now worth about \$435). The head doctor interviewed me at the hospital office. I saw him take a green card from his drawer and he began to ask my name, profession, and so on. I gave him my name and told him, "I am a missionary." He then pulled out his drawer and got a blue card and filled it out. He had written *free* on the card.

I had a series of tests, and the bill for each test would run into several hundred rupees. After all the tests were done and entered into the computer, the final bill came to *zero* rupees. Several more tests were done, running several thousand rupees each, and the final bill was again *zero*. Talk about answered prayers!

GOD'S BLUE CARD

India

— Theodore Manaen



Top: Author with Sunday school children on Christmas Day, 1994

Bottom: Author in India, 1987

HE REALLY WANTED ME BACK IN PAKISTAN*

USA en route to Pakistan

— Margaret Skyberg



Author in Pakistan, 1969

*Adapted excerpt from *World Vision*,
March 1958

JESUS IN THE MOSQUE

Kenya

— Julia Harrington Leiyoole

Prayer: For God to make hearts receptive

Believe me, I had not prayed that the tests would be free. The Lord answers prayers in amazing ways – sometimes even those that are not prayed. Two decades have gone by and my heart is working still. Do you know why? The Lord healed it. “Thank you, Father. Thank you, Jesus.”

One September it seemed that my passport had been lost for a time in the office of the Consul General of Pakistan in New York. I was in the passport office there, waiting for someone who was to be my witness as I applied for a new passport.

When a long time had passed and no one had come, I went and sat in the waiting room at a spot where I could still see the door and watch for him. Although I did not feel at all like reading, I took out my New Testament. It opened to the eighteenth chapter of the book of Luke, and I started to read. By the time I got as far as Luke 18:24, I began to really pay attention to what I was reading, rather than to the door. Then, verse 27 spoke to me just as though it were a person saying, “The things which are impossible with men are possible with God” (see Luke 18:27 ASV). I got right up, went back into the office, and got into the line in front of one of the windows. As I waited, I got out my letter from the Consul General of Pakistan saying my other passport had been lost. When my turn came, I handed it to the man and asked him what he could do to help me.

He took one look at the letter and said, “Oh, you don’t need this anymore. They have found your passport.” He sent me to another window where he said they could give me more information about it. The man had said enough to set my heart to singing! After making two telephone calls and getting all the needed information, I had such a sense of the Lord’s presence that I almost forgot how tired I was. He had undertaken so marvelously that I knew he really wanted me back in Pakistan. It was a wonderful seal, too, for the whole of my new term.

The Lord led me to the coastal city of southern Kenya known as Msambweni. It is an idyllic-looking beach area with a large tourism trade just one hour north. It is also home to over 26,000 heroin addicts. I went to begin an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting group in Msambweni. God had a bigger vision, however, and soon I was leading heroin addicts through a recovery program. It took place in a predominantly Muslim community

where there were no other missionaries or Caucasians. The tribal group, known as the Digos, are not generally open to outsiders. This is not a place that welcomes Christian evangelism.

This is where the Lord said to me, “I will make my name known here and I will work through you, Julia.”

I began daily Narcotics Anonymous meetings in the midst of this Islamic village, where I was welcomed and accepted. One day, after about two months, I was on my way to a meeting when I heard the *Imam* (leader of the Muslim mosque) speaking in the local mosque. A volunteer asked me if I understood what he was saying, and I told him I did not. He explained that the Imam was telling the people, “God has sent a white woman to teach your children about drugs. Send your children to this woman.”

I wanted to shout, “Yes, Lord!”

It felt just like Jesus was speaking in their temple. He spoke through their leaders; they told their people to send their children to this Christian white woman who believes in Jesus and teaches spirituality. I never could have planned for this to happen, and I praise God that I was able to be part of his working. I had asked for prayer for months prior to going to Msambweni. I asked for prayer for open hearts and acceptance; I asked for prayer for the addicts and the community. These prayers were answered tenfold and made this work possible.

Visas are one thing that we in WMPL are often asked to pray about. We had been praying for our son Ben’s visa because he was to be a teacher at the boarding school where our youngest son Daniel was attending. As weeks passed with no word on his visa, we had to give up hope that Ben would be able to come early to visit us at our home. Instead, we hoped that he would at least be able to arrive in time for the beginning of the school year.

We finally received an email from the school. They were informing us of different options being considered for beginning the school year since the visas for eight new staff members were taking much longer than expected. They were looking at the possibility of parents covering for teachers or having only a partial opening of classes.

“I had asked for prayer
for months prior to
going to Msambweni.”

JUST ASK GOD

Central Asia

— Ruth*

Prayer: That God would provide
needed visas

During the summer break, our son Daniel had been reading about J.O. Fraser, a missionary to China. He was struck by Fraser's teaching on prayer. Daniel decided to pray as Fraser suggested: just ask God once, and then believe that he has answered. The next day the school secretary sent an email with the news that the visas had been approved!

JUST BECAUSE I LOVE YOU

Home Office USA

— Elycia Veit

I have always been someone who loves to be organized. If all of the contraptions for organization didn't cost so much, I would have them all. My birthday was coming up, and I kept hinting to my husband that the one thing I would really like was a file cabinet. Not just any file cabinet... but a white wood cabinet. My poor husband searched all over the Twin Cities but could not find a white wood file cabinet for our home. I later showed him several options I had found online, but they were priced at about three hundred dollars. Knowing how much I really wanted one, he told me I could get whichever one I liked. But I could not justify spending that amount of money on a file cabinet!

I continued to peruse a few web sites that sold used furniture to see if I could find anything similar, but came up with nothing. Meanwhile, a missionary family on home assignment was returning to Minneapolis with several items that had been donated to them by a friend who worked in an office supply store. They dropped off the floor mats and filing cabinet at the business office to see if they could be of use. We don't turn down free furniture! The business manager and I worked on putting the beautiful white wood file cabinet together. We put it in the office for several days, but then the business manager said, "It really doesn't go very well in here and there's no good spot for it. Would you like it in your apartment?" Boy, oh boy, would I ever! It was exactly what I was looking for. The Lord gave me a beautiful white wood file cabinet, not necessarily because I needed it, but I felt like he said, "Just because I love you."

KNOCK AND THE DOOR WILL BE OPENED TO YOU

Romania

— Milt Hanson

**Prayer: For God's provision for a
medical clinic**

After Linda and I finished our work with World Vision in Romania in late 1997, we founded the "Open Door Medical Foundation" after Revelation 3:8, "Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut" (NASB). We then bought a piece of land in Romania and planned to construct a building in partnership with Campus Crusade for Christ, International, with whom we shared the same missionary vision for Romania.

We drew up plans together, hired an architect, and were both working to obtain the necessary approvals. Neither organization had anywhere near the necessary funds to begin construction. The Romanian bureaucracy was very slow in granting approvals for building projects, and we wouldn't pay bribes; we were trusting God to provide for this project in his time and according to his will.

One Wednesday afternoon Dave, the head of Campus Crusade ministry in Romania, called and said that he needed to talk to us. He came right over to our apartment with a different look on his face, and I sensed that something important had happened. He told us that a major supporter had decided to provide the necessary funding for a building for them, with the understanding that it was for Campus Crusade alone and not shared with any other ministries or for any other purpose.

We realized that Campus Crusade needed to accept this offer for their building, but we were left with all kinds of questions. It had seemed like such a good idea to share the building with our Campus Crusade friends. Dave, Linda and I prayed together; I wept, and for the next 2 1/2 weeks I lost a lot of sleep. Linda and I really didn't know what to do. We were nowhere near the funding necessary even for a smaller building, but even more than that I wondered why God was not letting the shared project happen. I had many nights of only a few hours' sleep, while wrestling with God and myself over this difficult and major turn of events.

Two and a half weeks later, during the middle of the night, I heard the words "Luke 11:8" – not the exact words of the verse, just "Luke 11:8." I repeated it to myself several times, not wanting to wake up in the morning and be unable to remember the words. When I awoke the next morning, I immediately heard "Luke 11:8" again. Going to my Bible I read, "I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, at least because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs."

I kept reading. The following verse says, "So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the *door will be opened* for you" (Luke 11:9, emphasis mine). The name of our foundation is "*Open Door* Medical Foundation." These were the exact Bible verses I needed to hear! No, it wasn't because I had somehow disobeyed God; no,

"I had many nights of only a few hours' sleep, while wrestling with God and myself over this difficult and major turn of events."

we weren't being punished; and yes, the answer is to keep knocking and to keep praying that God would provide everything necessary for the clinic.

Linda and I sat down and designed a two-story building considerably smaller than the proposed building with Campus Crusade. In time, with much prayer, persistence and patience, we saw God provide the funding and the necessary permits and approvals. By late April 2002, we were able to open the clinic and begin to see patients. In that same week Linda and I also received our *dreptul de practica libera* (licenses to practice medicine) in Romania, seven years and nine months after arriving in Romania in July 1994 – God's perfect timing.

KRISHNA COMES WITH QUESTIONS Nepal

— Miriam Ramse



Rural Nepal

Krishna, a young man from the rural hills of Nepal, walked ten hours through several villages in order to get to the educational center where he would soon be taking his high school graduation exams. He rented a small room outside of the main bazaar area, as he planned to spend the two weeks prior to the exams studying. While walking on the path past our house on his way to the bazaar, he happened to glance up to see our two light-haired children playing in the front yard. His mind immediately clicked with the possibility that perhaps he could practice his English – especially in preparation for the English exam he would soon be taking.

He turned onto the path leading to our house and introduced himself to the children. In the meantime, I joined them and found that he was very interested in finding out more about us, where we came from, and what we were doing in the area. His next inquiry led to a discussion about religion. He had heard of the Bible, but had never had the opportunity to see one or read one. He had once heard a story that was very similar to the Good Samaritan story of the Bible. And he was interested in hearing more about the One who delivers mankind from the great pit, which he had described in his story. I invited him inside and turned to the Gospel of John and let him read for himself the words of Jesus. He was immediately filled with a real sense of joy upon discovering such words of truth and peace. He questioned why he and his family had never heard this before.

Every afternoon he returned for a visit to practice his English and to read the Book. When the time came for him to return home, a Nepali Bible was made

available to him. Krishna was anxious to share this news with his family and village. He expressed doubt about the older people being open to this news, but he was excited about the possibility of sharing with the young people.

We prayed and waited to hear from him. Some months later, a letter did come; we were thrilled to hear about his continued joy and newfound faith. We have not heard from him again, but we continue to believe that God is working in and through him with the Good News.

This was such an encouragement to our family, to know that God used our children – just playing in the yard – as an opportunity to fill the emptiness and spiritual longings of this young man.

It was August 1970 in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), and a terrible civil war, raging since March, was tearing up the country. People were fleeing the country and crossing over into India by the millions. We lived in the village of Uzirpur, far in the interior of Rajshahi District on the banks of the Atrai River. Some Christian families from one of the closest towns, seeing the death, destruction and devastation that were taking place in the cities, came to our home for refuge.

Our marketplace across the river, usually teeming with people buying and selling on the weekly market day, was almost nonexistent. And due to our isolated location, there was no other place to buy food.

We had, as usual, bought a large amount of rice – barrels and barrels full – soon after the harvest when the price was low. Then, during the year, our workers and friends at the Mission (who did not have the resources to take advantage of the good prices) were able to buy from us when they needed it at that same low price. Therefore we had plenty of rice on hand to carry us all through those terrible months of the war. We also had a cow that provided us with milk and chickens that laid eggs. Our Santal friends were very resourceful. They knew about edible leaves and weeds that made a nice curry to go with the rice. We had jackfruit and papaya trees, which provided wonderful fruit. Right next door was a large grove of fabulous mango trees whose owners had fled to India, so we feasted on mangos for a long time that summer.

MARGARET'S CAKE

Bangladesh

– Lois Ottesen

**Prayer: For God to provide some
flour for a cake**

“It may seem foolish, in the middle of a war, to pray for something as insignificant as flour...”

At this time we had five daughters, ages one to twelve. It was soon going to be our Margaret’s 13th birthday. In spite of the war, we tried to live as normally as possible. We wanted to have a birthday celebration, and of course that meant a birthday cake. The only problem was, we had no flour – and how can you make a cake with no flour? I began to pray for flour. It may seem foolish, in the middle of a war, to pray for something as insignificant as flour for a birthday cake, but I continued to ask God to provide it.

One day we noticed a cloud of dust in the distance and soon realized that a jeep was coming down our dirt road. Who was it? Were soldiers coming to shoot us? The jeep pulled up, and to our surprise a foreigner stepped out, came to our door, and introduced himself as a fellow American from the U.S. Consulate in Dhaka, the capital city. He said that they had heard about some Americans still living in the interior, and he came to see if we were all right. He had come most of the way in a helicopter and then somehow got hold of a jeep. What a joy for us to have news of the country outside of our little compound at Uzirpur! He also told us the good news that our closest American friends, missionaries at the Khanjanpur Mission station some thirty miles away, were all safe. After a very nice visit he needed to be on his way, but before leaving he brought a box in from his jeep that had been sent to us by those missionary friends at Khanjanpur.

What do you suppose was in that box?

I opened it with great anticipation. There was an American-made cake mix. God sent not only the flour that I had prayed for – he sent the whole cake!

This is one of my favorite answers to prayer, not only showing that our God is a God of great miracles but also demonstrating his love and care for us in the little things of life as well.

What a mighty God we serve!

MISSING MY MOM

Bangladesh

– Melissa Jore

“As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you...” (Isaiah 66:13).

Josh and I were called to Bangladesh for four years after our first year of marriage. I enjoyed being a “stay-at-home” missionary as I served from my home while Josh worked at LAMB Hospital as the project services manager. I love being a wife, mother and keeper of the home. I find it very fulfilling and rewarding in so many ways!

Living in another culture can often bring unexpected daily challenges. There were times when we found humor in the unexpected, such as having

our table come crashing onto my leg as our family was eating lunch. The termites had been at it again! But then there were some days that felt so overwhelming that a fog of discouragement would set in.

I remember one such day during our first term of service in Bangladesh. I don't remember the actual events of the day that made me feel so discouraged, but by the end of the day I felt like a failure as a wife and mother. I longed to sit down with a cup of tea and talk the day's events over with my mom, but we were halfway around the world from each other! Well, since that wasn't possible, I wished to be able to have a long phone call with my mom. But I wasn't able to reach Mom that day – sometimes it is difficult for international calls to get through.

It was a tough day and my heart ached for my mom's touch, yet through that pain of missing my mom, I felt God calling me back to him. He wanted me to turn to him first; he wanted me to put my whole trust in him as he alone could fully meet my needs! And so I did that night, by God's grace.

“Weeping may last for the night, But a shout of joy comes in the morning” (Psalm 30:5b NASB).

The next day, God helped me to wake up with courage to face things afresh with caring for Melody, our almost two-year-old daughter, and working on normal daily tasks. Later on that morning my husband Josh gave me a call from work and said, “I totally forgot to tell you yesterday that you got a package. It is in my office if you would like to come down and get it – or you can wait until I bring it home at lunchtime.”

I was so excited that I quickly put Melody in her stroller and got the package in a matter of minutes. Inside the package was a lovely, encouraging letter from my mom, as well as a book she sent, full of encouragement to wives and mothers. What a delight! God is so good! Here he saw my needs and he already had guided and protected the package from my mom – not all packages are able to come through the mail in a developing country. God also knew the time when I would most be blessed by the arrival of the package, blessed because of surrendering my cares to him and seeing in a tangible way his great care for me through the care of my own mom.

What a merciful, loving Heavenly Father we have!

“Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you” (1 Peter 5:7).



LAMB Hospital, Bangladesh

“...through that pain of missing my mom, I felt God calling me back to him.”

RAIN FOR KENYA

Kenya

— Drew Bayless

Prayer: For God to provide rain on
the land and living water for the soul



Samburuland, Kenya

THE FORD Home Office USA

— Theodore Manaen

Prayer: For God's provision
of a vehicle

October 13, 2009: It has been almost three years since this area of Kenya has had a solid rainfall. The sustenance of life for the Samburu is their cattle, goats and camels. Without adequate rain the livestock are not able to graze properly; thus the people are not able to get adequate milk and meat from their animals. Livestock have been dying, and reports of elderly people dying have been circulating as well.

Please pray for water to rain on the land and for the living water of Christ to quench the spiritual thirst of many of our brothers and sisters here in northern Kenya.

October 16: Thank you for your prayers. It has rained here in Arsim the past two evenings, and it is raining now as I write. God certainly does listen and respond to our prayers! A rainbow came out on Wednesday afternoon after our first rain shower, less than 24 hours after I sent out requests for prayer.

October 29: Thank God for the healthy portion of rain that has fallen on northern Kenya this past week.

After my wife Arun and I arrived in the U.S. in 1972 and settled down, I began to receive several invitations to speak at different churches and groups. We didn't have a car, so people would come to pick us up. One such friend spoke words of wisdom and said, "Theodore, you need a car. It's not convenient to pick you up every time." I told him I'd been praying for a vehicle. He assured me he would also pray for a vehicle for me. I think this good man prayed desperately for a vehicle for me.

After some months this gentleman came and told the office that he would like to donate his vehicle for my use. It was a Ford Mustang and was in good shape. The Lord God answers prayer in amazing ways. I drove this car for many years.

During the summer of 1992 we were set to travel from Dhaka, Bangladesh, to New Delhi, India, to attend our youngest son Micah’s graduation from Woodstock International School in Mussoorie – a school located in the Himalayan Mountains north of Delhi. Several family members were with us: Kyle and Lois with their children Kristen and Jesse, Kent and Shelly with their son Matthew, and our daughter Sara.

On the way to the airport Ed’s passport and air ticket were lost. Panic! How would Ed make the pre-graduation festivities that parents were supposed to attend? Would he even make it to the graduation itself? So many thoughts went through our minds as we left him behind and flew on to Kolkata.

That same night at about eleven o’clock, we were asleep in the Baptist guest house in Kolkata when a knock came at my door – it was Ed! In answer to heartfelt prayer, Ed was able to file a case with the police (needed in order to get a new passport) and get a new passport from the American Embassy. He was also able to get an Indian visa stamped in that new passport. Through the help of a woman employee of Biman Airlines, Ed was able to get a ticket as he stood in line for the last flight of the day to our location in India. For those of you familiar with the difficulty in getting even one of these items accomplished in a day, you would recognize that to get all this done in only one day was truly a miracle. All ten of us were able to get air tickets from Kolkata to New Delhi for the following day. This was another answer to prayer, since we had originally planned to travel by train but a countrywide strike kept that from happening. Ed was subsequently able to get the lost tickets refunded. God is truly a God of miracles.

One of the reasons Paul and I had traveled from Bolivia to the United States in the summer of 2009 was to find a way to repair our 10 kW Gates Harris radio transmitter. We had used the transmitter at the radio station for the past eighteen years and had not done any type of major repairs on it. We knew that it was in desperate need of attention to bring it back to full power. We put a specific prayer request in the WMPL newsletter asking for a technician who knew something about Gates Harris transmitters and could come to Bolivia for short-term mission work to fix our transmitter. We knew that it would take a miracle to find someone so specific to do the work, but with God all things are possible.

**THE LOST TICKET
AND PASSPORT**
Bangladesh

— Karen Scott

**Prayer: For God’s provision of a
replacement passport, visa and tickets**

THE RADIO TECH
Bolivia

— Jacqueline Mikaelson

**Prayer: For God’s provision of a
radio technician**

“We knew that it would take a miracle to find someone so specific to do the work, but with God all things are possible.”

THE TRANSMISSION AND GOD’S PROVISION

Mexico

— Léonie Gómez

Meanwhile, in North Dakota, Darline received the newsletter. Our request caught Darline’s attention and she showed it to her husband Bill. Bill had just retired from working for thirty years as a technician at a public radio station in North Dakota. Now, after retirement, he and Darline were interested in doing short-term mission trips. However, Bill always felt that the mission work would be largely activities for his wife and he would just travel along. This job was something that he could do on the mission field! Bill contacted Paul asking if he could be of help. Without a doubt the call was specifically for him; he was God’s answer to prayer for our need. Not only was Bill a radio technician, but he had worked with Gates Harris transmitters and knew them well. Even better, Bill and Darline could travel to Bolivia right away and help us out. Praise God!

The timing was perfect. Bill was able to get the exact parts needed for the transmitter directly from Gates Harris through the radio station where he had previously worked. Soon Bill and Darline packed their suitcases, including the needed parts and equipment, and were on their way to Bolivia. An amazing answer to prayer!

Within a week, the radio transmitter was fixed and working at 100% power again. The radio signal of Radio Caranavi is heard throughout Bolivia, and right away we started to get phone calls from all over the country telling us how well the radio transmission was coming in once again. An additional proof of this came when our radio worker Dionicio traveled on an evangelistic trip into a very remote area four hundred miles away, where the only radio station that can be heard is Radio Caranavi. The people there were very excited because they could hear the Christian radio station clearly again.

Yes, God answers specific prayer!

The Mexico field is very spread out, with many miles of rough terrain between the Puebla region, the Mazatlán region and the Nogales area, where Dan and I were stationed. We had been in central Mexico and were on our way back to Nogales. We were in the mountains when suddenly our old camper van, which had served us valiantly, refused to go another foot. The *Angeles Verdes* (Green Angels – mechanics who patrol Mexico’s

better highways) gave us the bad news: “Your transmission is shot,” and the good news: “There is a mechanic in Ixtlán del Río who can fix it.”

The small town of Ixtlán del Río has one main street, an old hotel with saggy beds, and (such a blessing!) a bank with a bank machine. For three days we stayed in the “Saggy Bed Hotel” visiting the bank machine every morning to take out the daily quota from our two bank accounts. Three days later, our van was working and we started the twenty-hour drive back to Nogales. Our bank accounts were no longer giving out money, and our pockets were looking pretty bare.

We had tough decisions to make along the way: take the quota (toll) highway, which costs money but is faster, or take the regular highway and buy more gas. We juggled the two and decided to take the quota in the mountains and the regular where it was flat.

We were eventually down to ten U.S. dollars – which we spent on gas. With great thanksgiving and very little gas in our tank, we arrived in Nogales, checked our pockets, and found 25 cents remaining. Our allowance arrived three days later.

Praise *Jehovah Jireh* (God Our Provider)!

In March of 1992 Linda and I felt called to serve in Romania. We had learned about the World Mission Prayer League through Edner Holmen, a member of our home congregation. We approached WMPL, and after about six months of consultation and prayer, the Council decided to open a new field: Romania.

We prepared ourselves with Bible and missiology classes. By late June 1994 we had accumulated a great deal of medical supplies, which, together with our personal stuff, were enough to fill twenty-two feet of a forty-foot container to transport through a shipping company out of Chicago. Edner also helped us pack the biggest truck that U-Haul rents, which Linda and I drove to Chicago and combined its contents with the items in the shipping container. Included in our things was my NordicTrack cross-country ski machine, which I thoroughly enjoyed (I used to be in an amateur cross-country ski league). I wouldn’t be seeing it again until late September when the container would arrive in Romania.

“We were in the mountains when suddenly our old camper van, which had served us valiantly, refused to go another foot.”

THE TRIP TO BUCHAREST USA en route to Romania

— Milt Hanson

Prayer: For God’s provision in various ways for the outgoing trip to Romania



Parliament Palace, Bucharest

After a visit with family members in France, we were finally on our way to our new home in Bucharest. It was then that I realized we had a big problem. We would have to change trains in Bern, Switzerland, on our way to Munich. Years earlier, when participating in ski races, I had traveled everywhere by train and remembered the station in Bern. It was huge, with at least 20 tracks and platforms, with some in a different section of the station than the rest. How were the two of us going to move all of our stuff from one track to the next? We had an hour between trains, but we couldn't just haul some of the boxes to another track, leave them unattended, and make a trip for the rest. We prayed.

Our train pulled into the station at Bern and stopped on track 17. We got off the train, and Linda watched the luggage while I checked the board to see which track we would need to be at for our next train connection. It said "Track 17"; so we just sat on a bench on the platform with all of our boxes in front of us. We waited and prayed, thanking God and praying that we'd be able to get all of our things to the right car, number 11, in time. An hour later the train to Munich pulled in and slowly came to a halt. We watched with amazement as car number 11 pulled up and the door to that car stopped exactly in front of our luggage, not ten feet away!

This was not nearly as dramatic a miracle as many others, but it still was a BIG help to us that day. We recall telling one another that God was giving us this miracle to let us know that he indeed cares for us and that we needed to remember this in the future when there would be greater challenges and obstacles.

In Budapest, two days later, we had nearly the same experience when the train dropped us off on track 7 and the next train to Bucharest was waiting for us on track 8, just on the other side of the same platform.

Dan, a friend from Campus Crusade, met us in Bucharest and brought us to the apartment that would be our home for the next five weeks while the owners were in the United States. When we arrived at the apartment about one o'clock in the morning and unlocked the door, there in the hallway, just beyond the kitchen, was a NordicTrack ski machine. It had to be the only NordicTrack ski machine in the whole country. I exclaimed, "*Jehovah Jireh!*" (God Our Provider)

Although we realized that God understood the need for a reliable daily water supply for the hospital, God wanted us to understand that the *real* need for our Muslim Pashtun patients was to have the Scriptures in their own language. The Pakistani Pashtun number more than 23 million souls and speak Pashto. The WMPL Pakistan Field Conference established the “Pashto Project” for that specific purpose. Colleagues in the Danish Pathan [Pashtun] Mission (DPM) shared this concern. Prayer letters were sent out, and when on tours at home we presented this challenge at numerous meetings and church services. God’s people responded prayerfully and financially.

Pastor Jens Enevoldsen of the DPM, a Pashto scholar and academic, had university colleagues who specialized in this language. When Pastor Jens shared his desire to have the New Testament translated into Pashto, his colleagues replied that such an important task should be undertaken only by those whose mother tongue is Pashto. They willingly offered their services. In less than one year the translation was completed. This was then recorded onto sixteen cassette tapes. Subsequently these were copied and shared with other hospitals, given to colporteurs for their ministry, and then used to produce a series of fifty-two Bible-reading radio programs that were broadcast by Far East Broadcasting Company throughout the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent and the Middle East. In 1991 the New Testament was published by the Pakistan and United Bible Societies. As of 2009 the entire New Testament as well as portions of the Old Testament are available for downloading on the internet.

The story of God and Islam goes back to Abraham. When Abraham had a son by Hagar, God told him to name the boy “Ishmael,” which means, “God hears.” This was a prophetic promise (see Genesis 16:7-11). Later, after Isaac was born, Hagar and Ishmael were sent away into the desert. Near death, as Ishmael was crying, *God heard* and provided a well of water in the desert (see Genesis 21:14-19). Today Ishmael’s children, the Muslims, are crying in the desert. But God hears and is opening their eyes to see the well of living water that is freely available in Christ Jesus. Thank God for this wonderful answer to prayer.

“...but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life” (John 4:14 NASB).

THE WELL OF LIVING WATER

Pakistan

— Bill Dahl

Prayer: For God to enable the translation of the Scriptures into the local language



Scriptures for the Pashtun people

**TOGETHER WE
SHALL MAKE IT**
India

— Mildred Hasselquist Tengbom



Tibetan border area

“You already have done something for me. You care for my people.”

I sloshed through the rain along a rocky Himalayan trail. I was weary and weak, having just suffered through a bout of amoebic dysentery (an “internal landslide,” as my mountain friends describe the malady). An emergency had summoned me to the town of Darjeeling, fifteen miles away. Rain ran down my forehead and into my eyes. My clothing was soaked, and with each step my feet went *squish* inside my wet shoes.

The sight of a little wayside inn just ahead cheered me. I ducked under its overhanging thatched roof and collapsed on a crude, wooden bench. Before I had a chance to say anything, the innkeeper gave me a huge mug of hot, sweet tea. I put my coins on the table in payment, but he waved them aside. The men in the shop had stopped talking when I came in, but when they resumed their conversation, it was about my colleague and me and the work we were doing in their village. Then one turned to me and began questioning. Why was I out on such a dismal day? Where was I going?

I told them my story. They clicked their tongues in sympathy. I had done well to come so far, they said. The road ahead was not steep. I had been over the worst part. I would be able to make it. So they encouraged and supported me. Not a little cheered and strengthened, I arose to go. Then one of the men came over and picked up my little suitcase.

“I will go with you the rest of the way and carry your case,” he said quietly. “You are tired and ill, and I will help you.”

“But if you carry my case,” I protested, “what can I do for you?”

He smiled. “You already have done something for me. You care for my people.” He smiled again. “Come, let us go. Together we shall make it.”

As we stepped into the rain, I forgot my weakness and drew strength from my unschooled mountain brother who walked beside me. Together we shall make it. This is the way the role of the missionary has changed.

No longer is he or she the sun-helmeted, white foreigner striding ahead while a coolie pants along behind, carrying the load. Nor is he or she the white missionary sitting behind the desk while the brown or black worker stands at the gate, waiting to be called.

Indeed, the roles have been reversed in many places, so it is the brown or the black person who leads and the white one who follows. But relationships are harmonious and reflect the Spirit of Christ when the two walk side by side. Together we shall make it.

...



Epilogue

You have been reading stories about the wonderful faithfulness of God. He has rescued and saved us, healed and restored us, encouraged and provided for so many of us for so many years. As Elijah discovered long ago, he provides for his servants faithfully... *even food from ravens* (1 Kings 17:4-6).

Sometimes, of course, he does not: you have read a story or two like this, as well. Sometimes we pray and are not healed. Sometimes we remain discouraged. Sometimes we ask for God's provision and continue to experience need. Yet God remains faithful! In stories like these we learn with St. Paul to "be content with whatever [we] have" (Philippians 4:11).

In all of these stories, I suppose, you may have presumed that the narrative had mostly to do with *others*. You don't see your name in the list of contributors, probably. Most of the stories are set far away or in another time. They don't seem much about you!

Here, however, I will want to correct you.

These are stories about God and his faithfulness – your God and mine. The stories arise from your own family – your own sisters and brothers around the world. And in this way, these are *your* stories, too. The God that stands behind them stands behind you.

There is a chapter in this story for Elijah and his ravens, certainly. There are chapters for the church and its missionaries, here and there around the world. And there is a chapter in this story that is reserved for you.

It will be about God's rescue plan for the nations of the world, like all of his wonderful stories. It will be about his faithfulness and grace. It will be about God's gracious calling, his dependable provision – and sometimes "food from ravens."

All of God's stories are like that – even when it seems they are not. This, you will discover, is the plot for your story, too.

Chuck Lindquist, Director

Minneapolis, June 29, 2015

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