

Bread of Life

MAY 1963



"A mother's prayers bear special weight
with the Father." — M.W.R.

STRAIGHT FROM THE SHOULDER

SUDDENLY

WE HAVE SEEN so many days come and go that it is sometimes hard for us to grasp the fact that there is a day approaching which will be the earth's last. The Bible teaches us that life will be going on as usual. People will be eating and drinking and marrying and pursuing the normal course of life. And then without warning, time's last moment will have passed and we will be suddenly plunged into eternity.

The coming of the Lord is very sure. Peter warns us not to interpret the length of time which has elapsed between the church's beginning and the present as a sign of God's slackness, but rather of His longsuffering. The coming of the Lord is imminent. The book of Revelation closes with Jesus' promise, "Surely I come quickly." The coming of the Lord will be unexpected. It is compared to the coming of a "thief in the night."

Jesus devoted quite a bit of His teaching to dealing with the events of His second advent. He indicates very clearly how important it is to be ready for that day, and makes it plain that there will be many people who, though they think they will be ready, will actually be found waiting. The twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of Matthew contain a whole succession of parables dealing with the subject.

In the parable of the good and evil servant we are warned of the folly of postponing preparation for that day. The judgment meted out to the unready servant is strikingly severe. Then follows the parable of the ten virgins, emphasizing the need for the internal preparation accomplished by the Holy Spirit. We are exhorted to watch lest that day take us unawares. Next follows the parable of the talents, very clearly pointing to the account to be given of the gifts which God has bestowed upon us. Finally, there is the parable of the separation of the sheep and goats, pointing to the necessity of practical righteousness as a necessary preparation for that day.

One of the attitudes held by many Christians is that it is a decision or commitment of the past which determines whether or not a person is ready for His coming. While no one will deny the importance of such commitments as essential turning points in a person's Christian experience, it is interesting to note that Jesus paints a somewhat different picture of what it takes to be ready. Apparently the way we are now living is the factor which determines whether or not we will be ready.

In view of these stern warnings and graphic pictures, one is surprised to learn that there will be many who will not be ready. And yet an appeal to history shows that there have never been more than a seeming handful who have been ready for God's great intrusions into history. One of the cornerstones of Jewish doctrine was the Messianic hope. And yet, with the exception of some obscure shepherds and a few others, the entire nation missed his birth. Despite Jesus' own laborious efforts, even the twelve closest to Him never did quite prepare themselves for the day of His death. The sudden crisis saw them all flee for their lives, and their chief spokesman denied Him. Though He had foretold His resurrection, the third day found them huddled behind locked doors for fear.

The Jewish nation had another chance. They heard His teachings for three years. Peter found repentance, and the disciples had their day of Pentecost. But the second coming is an event for which there will be no second chance. How important it is that we be ready.

An interesting thought is dropped by several writers indicating that we can have a part in bringing about His coming. By our holy lives, Peter says, we can be "hasting the coming of the day of God . . ." The writer of Hebrews puts it this way: ". . . unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

There are apparently several factors which insure that we will be ready at His appearing: a daily personal purification (see I John 3:3), a continual watching and expectancy, and the sort of carefulness which immediately deals with the slightest thing that comes between us and our God or between us and our fellow man. Undoubtedly one of the great secrets of the Christian life is to live every day as if it will be our last. We do not know which one will be.

Bread of Life

VOL. XII

NO. 5

MAY 1963

Published monthly by RIDGEWOOD PENTECOSTAL CHURCH, 457 Harman Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.
Editor: Gordon P. Gardiner. Ass't Editor: Caroline Gardiner. Contributing Editor: Hans R. Waldvogel.
Art Editor: Eleanor Perz. Circulation Manager: Nancy Strano. Photoengraver: Bingham Photoengraving Co. Printed in the U.S.A.

Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y. Address all correspondence to P.O. Box 11, Brooklyn 27, N.Y.
Make all subscriptions payable to Frank G. Posta, Treas.

Annual Subscriptions: United States and Canada \$1.75; Foreign, \$2.00. Single copy—15c.

My Mother

MRS. A. J. GORDON

By Her Daughter HELEN HARRELL

Many years ago I taught a Sunday school class of little girls. On one occasion I asked each child, "Who is the most wonderful woman you know?" Without exception each promptly answered, "My mother."

Mr. Gardiner has asked me to write a simple sketch of my mother's life. If there are any statements here which seem exaggerated, will you kindly be tolerant and attribute them to my being biased by the same filial love that prevailed with my little Sunday school girls so long ago?

LITTLE MARIA HALE was born in Providence, Rhode Island, on August 19, 1842, one of the six children. Her father, Isaac Hale, was a staunch Christian of the early New England type—tall and straight, and somewhat severe in mien. Brought up in the Congregational Church, he was an active and much respected member until something occurred which changed the course of his life. He publicly espoused the cause of Anti-Slavery, so hated by the "respectable" churches of that day. Grandfather Hale even went so far as to cooperate with the "underground railway," sheltering runaway slaves who had escaped from cruel owners in the South. Little Maria sometimes sat on the knee of Wendell Phillips, the great leader, who came frequently to their home. For his "irregular behavior," Grandfather Hale was asked to withdraw his membership from the Congregational Church, which he did, and fellowshipped with the First Baptist Church for the rest of his life.

However, he held no grudges and remained public-spirited, always ready to espouse the cause of the needy.

One of his projects was to collect money from the citizens to purchase a beautiful spot in the heart of the residential area of the city of Providence, afford-



Maria Hale Gordon

ing a wonderful view of the city and its environs. This he called "Prospect Park." It was donated to the city and has afforded rest and pleasure to countless grateful recipients in the more than one hundred years since its dedication.

I was exceedingly fond of this grandfather. Often, when I visited there from my home in Boston, he took special pains to entertain me. Though naturally conventional and somewhat severe and austere, he used to take me to his place of business, and, in his upper private office, he taught me to play chess.

If Grandfather Hale was conventional and austere, his daughter Maria inherited no part of these traits. She was

always gay and lively and full of fun. Very precocious, too, her mother wrote in her diary. At four years of age she, herself, was said to have kept a diary. At one and one-half years she joined in singing "When I can read my title clear" and other hymns—words and music perfectly pronounced and intoned. At five and one-half years she learned to knit stockings. At eleven years of age she taught a small Sunday school class of boys, which she kept until her marriage. Her mother thought she was converted when she was four years old.

No colleges were open to women in her time, but she was extremely ambitious and availed herself of every chance for acquiring some new skill. She learned to play piano and violin, and had a delightful speaking as well as singing voice. On her sixteenth birthday her father gave her a beautiful rosewood Chickering piano, for which she paid by giving piano lessons. That piano, now over one hundred years old, is still going strong in the family summer home in New Hampshire.

In her early years she studied French, German and Latin. Then at sixty she happened to be spending two winters in Sweden with her son, and giving Bible readings for the Eng-



Pastor and Mrs. A. J. Gordon and Their Family

This picture of the Gordon family was taken after the marriage of the oldest daughter, Haley, to Edwin Poteat who therefore is included in the family group. Left to right: Edwin Poteat, Haley, Arthur, A. J. Gordon, Elsie, Theodora, Mrs. A. J. Gordon, Helen, and Ernest. Never before published, this photograph was furnished by John Gordon, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

lish residents. She thought, how stupid it was to live there and not be able to converse with the people about her, so she acquired a good speaking knowledge of that language. Also, she thought more and more how much she had always wanted to understand Greek and be able to read the Blessed Book in its original tongue. So, at sixty, she found herself in a foreign country learning two new foreign languages. This acquisitiveness was always one of her outstanding characteristics.

The home in which she was born and lived until her marriage (and at last reports it is still standing) was not far from Prospect Park, nor, in fact, from Brown University—very convenient for the students to enjoy its hospitality. Among many fortunate partakers of this hospitality was Judson Gordon, a serious and retiring student from what was then far-away New Hampshire. The old law of opposite natures being attracted to one another got to work at once. Maria was beautiful and gay, light-hearted and charming—and Judson was

captivated. But she was not easily nor hastily brought around. She knew in her heart that he was the only one she loved, yet she was reluctant to leave her home and family, friends, and all her happy times, to go to "distant" Boston where Judson had accepted a call to a church. For three weeks before the wedding she did not write to him. He said he was never sure he could get her until he had her at the altar.

But after the wedding vows were said—what an immediate and entire transformation! No interest absorbed her except her husband and the work he was doing for the Lord. How *could* God have accomplished such a miracle? All that interfered with her 100 per cent cooperation with her husband was banished forever. Her very exuberance of life was a tremendous asset to him, so quiet, retiring and self-effacing. Many of his sermons and talks, published at her urgency, might never have otherwise been perpetuated. It really is a remarkable instance of how the Lord can take two characters, entirely different, and mold their

lives together for such service to Him. He told her that she was the most valued treasure that he carried away from the University. In a whimsical way, in writing to her, he described this treasure as seen in a dream, "that people say of her she is wonderfully efficient, and between his hold and her push the result is a pretty strong team. Nay, never man had such a helpmeet, and if she bears many burdens and does much hard work for him, he thanks her in his heart and prays that the Lord will spare her for many years to walk by his side." Later, "O what it is to be joined together in the Lord, to be privileged guests of the constant bridal of the Lamb. How I thank God that you love Him with me! And I do believe that even in Heaven I shall rejoice that these hands were permitted to bury you in death by baptism, and raise you up in the likeness of His resurrection. Bless the Lord!"

And now for the second stage of Maria's life as a wife and mother—and partner. Their first home—when he graduated from Newton Theological Seminary—was in Jamaica Plain, a suburb of Boston. Here the first three children were born: Haley, who afterwards married the Rev. Edwin Poteat, a Baptist preacher, later President of Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina. Next Ernest, who was always hampered by ill health, but understood thirteen languages, and was able to translate foreign Christian literature to be used in American publications. He was for twenty years associated with the Sunday School Times, and made great contributions to the Temperance Movement, Biblical Research, and the detection both of apostasy in the evangelical churches and of the insidious invasion of the Roman hierarchy in our national politi-

(Continued on page 7.)

“Is It Well With Thee?”

By ALICE R. FLOWER

This article has been taken from a taped recording of an informal talk given to the mothers of the children in the Cradle Roll and Primary Departments of the Ridgewood Pentecostal Sunday School. It has been abridged and edited, with the author's consent, for publication.—*Editor*.

“Is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband? Is it well with thy child.” II KINGS 4:26

DID YOU ever stop over those three questions? You have the family unit right there. You notice that the wise prophet touches the mother first: “It is well with *thee*?” I believe the mother has the key to the home, more than she realizes.

I often hear mothers say, “If my husband would just cooperate,” or “If we had a little different circumstance,” or “If my husband were a Christian, we could do this or that.” Then I go back into the lives of some of the greatest men that ever lived, that stirred this world for God, that is, in their particular position. Many of them came out of almost sordid surroundings, out of limited finances as far as the home is concerned, but they had a mother. And I don't know any mortal under God's eternal sun that God stands ready to help more than a mother who stands alone with a desire to see God reign in her household. She can have access to all the richness of God's grace because God is concerned about every mother, especially a mother that desires to know and see the grace of God in her home. And you may have a saved husband and you may be together in this blessed way, and yet there are many times that the pivotal situation of the home rests on the mother.

The Shunammite woman to whom Elisha addressed this question, “Is it well with thee?”

is spoken of as being a great woman. Elisha had passed the home where she lived as he went back and forth along the road performing the various ministries that God had called him for. Now we see that she had an open heart, a generous heart. As she noticed Elisha passing by, she invited him to come in and have a sandwich, have a little lunch. Whatever she had she shared.

You know, some people will not show generosity as far as sharing their home and board with people unless they can do it right up to the nth degree, but that isn't true hospitality. True hospitality is sharing what you have with an open heart.

In so many cases today, the thought is, “Well, if we can't afford to take ‘them’ to a good eating house or if we can't get out the best tablecloth and the best silver and all the other trimmings of a splendid meal, we won't have them.” There's a ministry, however, that every wife and mother can have in sharing at times her home in its simplicity with individuals that need to feel once in a while that there is a family circle, that somebody cares for them.

This woman saw the prophet going by, probably saw him weary, so she very kindly invited him in. Now that's the true spirit of Christianlike hospitality. But she didn't stop there. She said to her husband,

“I perceive that this is a man of God.”

If your husbands are saved and you are both walking together, I trust that you know what it is to consult together over your affairs—and that goes into so many things,—financial problems, problems of discipline, problems of entertainment, problems of many kinds. I know some homes, where there is a clash continually because either the husband or the wife is always going off on a tantrum and doing something that the other one doesn't know about, like buying something beyond their means. But it's good to remember that we are partners and ought to consult together about everything—make our choices together.

Let me tell you a little secret—children know when the father and mother are completely united in their purposes, in their consultation together, and in all of the ordering of the home. They also know when there is variance. They know when there's not a united attitude in the matter of discipline. Maybe you've never seen it, but I have—where a child would go from one parent to another to get relieved of a punishment that's been promised by one, and foolishly the other parent would say, “Oh let's let the thing go this time.” Don't you forget it—that child will know where to go the next time trying to get

relieved from punishment. A house divided against itself cannot stand.

To return to the Shunammite—she said, “I think there’s something more we have to do for this man.” You know, the more you give, the more you want to give. The enlargement of our heart always brings a greater enlargement of heart. And don’t say we make ourselves poor that way.

“Let’s have a little closer fellowship with this man of God; let’s build a little chamber on the wall,” she said to her husband, and he seems to be agreed with her. Now notice this: she didn’t get overstuffed furniture. I don’t think she went into a penny of debt to do it. It was very simply furnished. There was a candlestick there, a table, a bed, a chair. And that was it.

Perhaps you say, “My child’s bedroom would have to be more elaborate than that. I wouldn’t put a guest into such a place.” But that woman knew the power of simplicity; she knew that that prophet needed only the essentials. He was a man of God and she was giving him exactly what he needed. The very simplicity of it speaks to me that this woman was a great woman in her understanding.

Little did she know what a blessing that room was going to be to her one day, and oh, how little we know of the reaping that good sowing is going to bring back to us, just as how little we know of the reaping of careless, scanty sowing. He that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully, and he that soweth grudgingly is going to reap the same way. The day was going to come when that room would hold blessing, tremendous blessing for that woman and her whole family.

The day came when the prophet felt concerned that there should be some return to her for

all her kindness to him. And the servant of the prophet had a wise thought. He said, “She hasn’t any child.” (No doubt her heart longed for a son.) And the prophet said, “All right. That’s what she’ll have.” You remember how the child came, and how, when the child was grown, he went out with his father into the field of the reapers and evidently had a sunstroke. The child was picked up and was carried to his mother and sat on her knees and died.

And what did she do? She carried the child right to the chamber that she had made for the man of God. She laid him on the bed; then she shut the door. (What a lot could be said about committal to God by this action.) The best place she knew, next to God, to place the child’s body was in that room where the prophet stayed. The prophet was out on a mission, and so she said, “Saddle an ass quick and let me get on my way as quickly as I can.” She was going to go right to headquarters. That showed remarkable faith. In those lands decomposition starts in very quickly, and that is why usually they bury a body the very day it dies. But this woman could risk putting her boy there in the room and shutting the door and obeying this particular pressure that the Spirit of God put upon her because of the faith that was in her heart.

You remember that as she was preparing to leave she was questioned by her husband. She knew her husband would hinder her from going, and so she simply said, “It shall be well.” Here was a time when she had to battle through *alone with God*. And these times do come to all of us, to us mothers. She saddled the ass and said to her servant, “Drive, and go forward; slack not thy riding for me.” She came to the man of God to mount Carmel. The man of God saw her afar off, and

sensing that something was wrong, he sent his servant to ask her, “Is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband?”

I’d like to press that second question for just a little moment before I go any farther. Wife—mother—are you the strength to your husband that you ought to be? A wife has so much to do with strengthening the fiber of her husband’s faith. When pressure comes in the home or when there are problems to be met, don’t you be the prophet of evil. You speak the word of faith. Do that. You saddle the ass of faith and go on the way expecting victory, just like this woman did.

“Is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband?” And then he came to the question, “Is it well with the child?”

Listen, the wellness of your child doesn’t depend on how much lemon pie you give it. The biggest thing that you can give your child is constant faith in God. You have a good church. You get good preaching. You have a good Sunday school, no doubt. There are only a comparatively few hours that a child is in the church, but that child is in the home hour after hour, and the atmosphere of your home is registering in his mind and heart. When things come up that are trying and overwhelming and you feel irritated, nobody feels your irritation more than your child. Do you know that? If it’s well with you, it’s going to be well with your child. If it’s well with you, it’s going to be well with your husband. And the remarkable thing is that those three things really tie together, but the prophet knew which question to put first: “Is it well with *thee*?”

Well, this woman went right up to the man of God, and Gehazi came up to push her away—to discourage her. We, too,

are going to have discouragements.

But the prophet said, "Let her alone." Then he told Gehazi to take his staff and go back there quick, and to lay it upon the face of the child. But the woman said, "No."

Now here is a lesson for us: there's a place for intercession. How many of you have teenage children? We know that some teen-age children, and even some under teen-age, can get pretty difficult these days. Perhaps your child is going to need more than just a bit of encouragement and ordinary discipline. It may take some tears and intercessory prayer.

So back the prophet went to the room and opened the door. Then we have a perfect picture of Holy Ghost intercession. It says that he identified himself completely with the need of the child. He stretched himself upon the dead body in which decomposition had set in. He put his eyes upon the child's eyes, his mouth upon the child's mouth. Of course, he was crying to God. Nothing happened the first time. He got up and walked from the chamber, and returning, again he put himself on the need. Whenever there's an outpouring of the Spirit, it's always because somebody prevailed in prayer and stretched himself across the need. It will work in your home if there's a need there. It will work in any situation, but it requires identifying yourself with the need.

Then you will remember that Elisha laid down again upon the child the third time and victory came.

Victory came in the very place where the woman had considered someone else—the very room. The chamber in the wall became the very place of victory, and the prophet picked the child up alive and carried him down to his mother.

All she could say was, "It's

well with me. It's well with my husband. It's well with the child. Once more we're a living unit, a family unit with the blessings of God upon it."

God grant it may be well with you and well with your husband and well with your child, and don't forget that the key to this wellness is in the mother's hand, far beyond what many mothers realize.

MY MOTHER

(Continued from page 4.)

cal life. The third child, Elsie, married George Richter, a businessman.

After three years in Jamaica Plain, the young preacher was called to Clarendon Street Church, Boston, and thither Mrs. Gordon came to 182 West Brookline Street, where she resided for over fifty years—until her death. This house was a continuous mecca for down-and-outers, poor students, returned missionaries, and Christian workers, in fact, for everyone who needed a helping hand in distress. More often than not there were other guests present, as Father, who was Chairman of the Foreign Mission Board, used to invite the returning missionaries to our home.

Here were born three children: Arthur, who became a Baptist preacher; Helen, who married a businessman, Eustice Harrell; and twelve years later Theodora Livingstone, who arrived when the family circle seemed to be complete. She married a lawyer, Robert Hall. Named THEODORA, which means "Gift of God," and LIVINGSTONE for the Livingstone Inland Mission, her family used to call her "Little Congo." Her heart has always been in missionary work. The November issue of *BREAD OF LIFE* gives an interesting report, with pictures, on Tortola, a mission which she founded

and which work is now so ably carried on by the Gordon McKinnons.

Until Theodora, the last of our family, arrived it was my privilege to occupy a little cot beside Mother's—about one and one-half feet away. How well I remember the terrible dreams I used to have and how, in my fright, I would quietly call Mother. Immediately a soft, warm hand stretched across the gulf between our two beds and, presto, the fright disappeared at once. She never tried to withdraw her hand until I was entirely satisfied to have it so. Many times, in the years that followed, I recalled those experiences as I read Isaiah 41:13, "I, the Lord thy God, will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, 'Fear not, I will help thee.'" How the human hand can transmit one's personality into the life of another!

Through all our developing years Mother never failed to gather us about her from nine to ten each Sunday morning to teach us the Sunday school lesson. Never shall I forget when she taught us of the Crucifixion how the tears filled her eyes and ran down her cheeks. How could one help being permanently impressed? When I was little, she generally read to me on my retiring, and she gave me my first piano lessons. In after years she told me she was determined that no one should say she neglected the Christian training of her children for outside activities.

Our table conversation was one of her concerns. Many times, when we have been guests, I have had her nudge me and whisper, "Helen, pay for your meal." In other words, "Your hostess is very kind in her hospitality. Don't just sit back and do nothing, but exert yourself to be agreeable and entertaining." And don't think she neglected our table conversation in our own home. When

it would get too silly or frivolous, she would say, "Now, let each one tell something he or she has learned today." Forthwith we would start going around, each contributing some bit of wisdom. Gossip was something always taboo, and to this day when I indulge in such weakness, I feel a twinge of conscience that dates back to childhood training. No bickering or disputing was ever tolerated. How many times I have had to say meekly to an opponent, "Excuse me, but I think I was mistaken." Another caution was, "Don't spend the meal time talking about the food."

All the family discipline fell to Mother. My beloved father, the saint, was serene, benign, and lived above the clouds. He never commented on wrong in any of us. She, herself, never indulged in unkind remarks about anyone, and made it a principle if she had to correct any of us to add to the correction some commendation as, "Your room looked like a whirlwind area when you left this morning, but you, yourself, looked immaculate."

It would be hard to do justice to her in commenting on her unselfishness. Unselfish with her time, unselfish with her interest and sympathy, unselfish with her means. Even though her personal expenditures were frugal, there never was any withholding when it came to others in need.

Another trait, truly remarkable, was that I never heard her say she didn't feel well. Long before Mrs. Eddy appeared on the scene, if anyone commented on her not being well (for instance, during her last years she had recurrent laryngitis, and would lose her voice every fall), she would say, "Oh, let's not say anything about it." And only once do I remember her involuntarily taking to her bed—at the time of the birth of her last child.

As an illustration of her selfishness, her dressmaker once told me, with some amusement, about her instructions as to how she wanted a dress made. "I don't want anyone to say, 'What a pretty dress Mrs. Gordon has on.' Just make it up-to-date enough not to be archaic and ordinary enough not to attract attention." How different from the gay days of her youth!

The first part of her married life passed all too soon. The young fledglings gradually emerged from this era of their training and left her free for more activity in Father's ministry. Although I cannot remember when she did not teach a Sunday school class, act as president of the Fatherless and Widows Society and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, in the early days as she presided I do remember that I used to sit on her lap.

And now we come to the latter stages of her life with Father. I do not say it was the most important nor yet the most far-reaching—God alone knows about that. When a mother raises a group of children to love the Lord and work for His glory, there is no prophesying how far-reaching that work can be.

She lived, roughly speaking, for seventy-eight years. The first twenty-five years took her nearly through the births of her children and many outside activities. The next, the most strenuous years, she gave most of her time to Father's work. The last twenty-five years were her widowhood.

In 1874 Dwight L. Moody held a great revival in Boston, with audiences as large as 5,000 to 7,000. He erected a large tent in a vacant lot near our church and used the church for overflow and inquirers. Here Mother came every day, working side by side with Father. She learned for the first time

the unspeakable joy of leading striving souls out of darkness into the marvelous light of the gospel. She seemed especially successful with drunkards—perhaps that is the reason she devoted so much of her time later to the W.C.T.U.—she was president of the Massachusetts branch for nearly twenty years, three times hostess to the National and once to the World meeting, with Miss Frances Willard and Lady Henry Somerset among her guests. The Fatherless and Widows Society was founded to aid those who had known better days, but now needed help. Father felt the need of starting a temporary home where down-and-outers could work for a night's lodging and breakfast and have a gospel witness withal. She gave a whole winter to raising the funds for this, laboring through ice and snow and many other discouragements. This was the forerunner of the modern Rescue Mission, and is still holding the gospel light in its original home. Then the Missionary Training School, which later became Gordon College, was started—at first held in the church. This was to train for Christian work many competent and dedicated Christians who had not been able to receive preliminary training at theological seminaries. It was unendowed—a faith venture. The expenses were "prayed down" every month. Mother was not only treasurer but a Bible teacher there.

Twice Father was called on preaching tours to the British Isles, and Mother accompanied him, often speaking, even in Mildmay Hall, the largest gathering place in London. At a World's Missionary Conference, held at Carnegie Hall, New York, she introduced all the missionaries. The building was crowded, with such celebrities in the boxes as Helen Gould and John D. Rockefeller.

Mrs. Gordon's great sorrow came in 1895, after her husband's death from pneumonia. At seventy she had a slight stroke, but due to her dear Lord's healing mercies, she recovered completely, with no trace of lameness. This experience, however, was an indication to her that God was putting the final seal upon her outside activities. She developed a cataract on each eye. So she had to resign herself to ever-increasing blindness. Her faithful and constant companion was her daughter Theodora. In her closing years, as all through her life, she was never heard to complain—always grateful, so often remarking, "I feel so blest in my children," or "Isn't this a beautiful home?"

One can visualize her at the piano, trying to accompany herself as she sang:

*I'm waiting for Thee, Lord,
Thy beauty to see, Lord,
I'm waiting for Thee,
For Thy coming again.
Thou'rt gone over there, Lord,
A place to prepare, Lord,
Thy glory I'll share
At Thy coming again.*

*For those gone before, Lord,
Thy love we adore, Lord,
We'll meet them once more
At Thy coming again.
Thy blood was the sign, Lord,
That marked them as Thine, Lord,
And brightly they'll shine
At Thy coming again.*

Soon she was too weak to sit at the piano, and she had to take to her bed. Gradually the sweet life ebbed away, and we felt that it was as she wanted it. She went to join her loved ones on January 20, 1921. They buried her in Forest Hills. On her tombstone was carved "I shall be satisfied when I awake in His likeness." And now she rests peacefully beside her husband, "Until the Day dawns, and the shadows flee away."

GATHERED FRAGMENTS



THE COVER PHOTO of this issue of BREAD OF LIFE is a picture of *Albina J. Hoover Lehr*, mother of Harriet Lehr and Sarah Lehr Kennedy (Mrs. E. B.) whose remarkable testimonies of healing have appeared in BREAD OF LIFE (Jan. '56). In connection with her own healing Mrs. Kennedy also told of her mother's healing, and in another issue (Feb. '53) briefly related how her mother was delivered from a terrible case of eczema by praising the Lord.

This mother's faith was especially tried in the seventeen-year affliction of her daughter Harriet, a hopeless invalid suffering from inflammation of the spine, but never once during that long, hard battle did she waver for one moment that God would deliver her—and His—child. She was fully persuaded that what God had promised He was not only able but also would perform. And although the "vision" tarried, it did come and Mother Lehr's faith along with that of others was rewarded. Harriet was raised up and lived a normal, well life for over thirty years.

The full story connected with the quotation from Martha W. Robinson which accompanies Mrs. Lehr's picture may be found in *Radiant Glory*, available from our office (\$4.95 plus 25c mailing charges). Of course, the reason that "a mother's prayers bear special weight with the Father" is that by the very nature of the case they are usually prayers of faith—the only

kind of prayer which has promise of answer.

* * *

My Mother is the second article by Helen Harrell to appear in BREAD OF LIFE. (The first was one about her father, April, 1962.) When we asked Mrs. Harrell if she minded if we told our readers that she will be ninety on her next birthday, she replied, "Oh, no. The Lord has been so good to me all my life." We feel very fortunate to have been able to secure this article, especially in view of the fact that to our knowledge it is the first biographical sketch of Mrs. A. J. Gordon ever to be published.

* * *

Pastor Hans Waldvogel is currently in Kirchheim, Germany, where he and the assembly are celebrating the tenth anniversary of the ministry there of *Walter and Bertha Waldvogel*. Following this conference, Pastor Waldvogel will go to Vienna, God willing, for two weeks' meetings with *F. Krameric*.

* * *

The story of Elizabeth Henning, "*Captain Courageous*," has attracted attention in far-off places. Recently a subscription for BREAD OF LIFE came from someone in Norway, unknown to us, who in some way had secured a copy of the paper with the first installment of this testimony and did not want to miss getting the rest of it. This issue carries the final installment.

“Captain Courageous”

The Testimony of Elizabeth Henning

ELIZABETH HENNING began at once to make good the promise she had made to the Lord when her father died, to care for her mother and her three younger sisters. After she resigned from the Salvation Army, for six years she was employed in a health resort on an island in the North Sea. For the next seven or eight years she served in various places, among these a home for blind children in Stuttgart and a shelter for unmarried mothers in the same city. As might be expected, wherever she worked she held positions of responsibility.

During these years she had numerous contacts with some of the outstanding spiritual leaders of Germany such as Pastor Paul and “Father” Stanger. The ministry of these and other brethren was a great blessing to her. More often, however, Sister Elizabeth found herself in places where she had no real fellowship or spiritual food. The inevitable result was that to some extent she cooled off in her spiritual ardor, for as she tersely commented, “The devil is very busy.”

Meanwhile, Gertrude had become a nurse deaconess in the Methodist church. In 1921 there came a call for volunteers from the nurse deaconesses in Germany to help in the Bethany Deaconness Hospital of Brooklyn. (This hospital was operated in connection with the German Methodist church and therefore drew recruits from Germany.) Gertrude felt she



Elizabeth Henning

1882-1962

should go to America. For one thing she could help support her mother better by the higher wages she could earn here. Elizabeth strongly protested, but Gertrude came. Then she began to urge Elizabeth to come and about two years later sent her the fare.

Elizabeth did not want to come to the United States. “Forty-one is a little too late to go to another country. If you don’t know the language, it is not easy,” she said. By this time, however, she was willing to consider the proposition, for she was suffering from the inflation in Germany. No longer was she able to support her mother. Therefore she put out a fleece to know the will of the Lord about her going to America. This fleece the Lord answered in such an unbelievable and unmistakable way that she knew she had to go to America and so came in 1923.

After coming to this country, Elizabeth Henning held various nursing positions, and finally assisted in giving intestinal baths in the Professional Building in downtown Brooklyn. As she was a personal friend of her employer and his wife, Miss Henning went to live in their home. These people were prominent members in their church, but they were unconverted and worldly. They went to the movies, and the opera, and invited Elizabeth and Gertrude to go with them. And on Sundays, after a hard long week, they all felt justified in going to some park or woods or to the beach for relaxation. The fact is that there was so little spiritual food to be had in their church when they did attend that they did not feel they were missing much when they stayed away and sought other refreshing.

“If you don’t stay by the fire, you get cold, and then it is very easy to drift away from the Lord,” remarked Sister Elizabeth. “But the Lord has wonderful ways of working,” as she recalled how God not only restored her but led her on into a deeper fellowship with Himself than she had ever known before. God brought a man all the way from China to New York to accomplish this.

Sister Elizabeth’s employer and his wife had met Hermann Becker, famous German missionary to China, had told him that if he ever came to America, he was welcome to stay in their home. Accepting their warm

invitation, he and his wife came to their home one night in 1925. Mr. Becker had already become acquainted with Hans Waldvogel who had just come to minister in Brooklyn at a German Pentecostal mission on Patchen Avenue.

Doubtless sensing the low spiritual pulse of the household, Mr. Becker asked them a pointed question: "How is it with you folks? Are you following the Lord?"

"Mr. K- answered as if there were nothing in the way," recalled Sister Elizabeth, "but I could not do that, for I had known the Lord in a deeper way. So I said, 'No, I have drifted away!'"

"Would you like to start again?"

"Yes."

"If you want to go to a place where you will really hear the gospel, you must go to Patchen Avenue. That is the only place in Brooklyn where you will find food for your soul."

The next Sunday Sister Elizabeth and her friends tried to locate this mission but could not find it. They tried again the following Sunday, with no better results. After a few weeks they learned that the people who had been at Patchen Avenue were now in an upstairs hall on Cornelia Street. Therefore they went up one Monday evening and were greeted by one of the brethren. Elizabeth Henning and her sister wanted to stay for the prayer meeting that evening, but Mr. K-, not wanting to be recognized, immediately ran down the stairs so quickly and violently that his wife and friends thought he would break his leg. Naturally the others followed him.

The following Sunday, however, the four of them returned to the Ridgewood Pentecostal Church for the morning service. The Henning sisters sensed immediately that God was in the place, for a holy hush came upon

them; and when they heard the preaching, they knew that here the gospel of Jesus Christ was being proclaimed in truth and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Sister Elizabeth was convinced and ere long she and her sister were brought back to the fold by the Good Shepherd who had sought and found His straying sheep.

Their friends, Mr. and Mrs. K-, continued to attend the services for quite a while, but they were not willing to pay the price to follow the Lord. One day after returning from one of the meetings, the wife remarked, "I would never want to belong to those people. Never! I couldn't do that. But I know that those people are really sincere and mean it with their whole heart. Such people will never be lost."

"As we continued to attend the services, we got light on water baptism," Sister Elizabeth testified, "and when we took that step, there came a clear-cut separation with our friends. You see, he had been really saved at one time, but loved the world. With the world, he was worldly, and with the children of God, he acted like a child of God, but that doesn't go together. Now he had been convicted as he had attended the meetings, but he was gospel hardened. And when we announced that we were going to be baptized, it was as if all hell let loose. I could not repeat what he said."

The sequel to this man's violent opposition and rejection was that about twenty years later he called for Pastor Waldvogel. By that time he had lost his wife, his wealth, his business, his health. Now he wanted to come to the Lord and in spite of the fact that he was paralyzed on one side he wanted to be baptized in water. And throughout his remaining days the Henning sisters went regularly to care for him.

Throughout the year following her restoration to the Lord, Sister Elizabeth steadily grew in the grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. And she served the Lord faithfully in prayer, in ministering to the material needs of saints and sinners, and in witnessing and dealing with the lost. In her work she met many wealthy and prominent people but without fear or favor she declared unto them their need of salvation. In 1949 and again in 1955 she went to Germany where she sought to win her lost relatives to the Lord. On these visits she did much personal work at the altar services in the meetings conducted by Pastor Waldvogel. Often when seekers did not break through to salvation she told them bluntly that there must be something they were unwilling to confess. How it rejoiced her heart to see them finally come to the Lord.

To the very end of her life she maintained her interest in the unsaved. Just before she was "promoted to Glory" (December 13th, 1962) one of her last instructions to her sister was that after her death she should write her unsaved loved ones that unless they turned to the Lord as she had written and repeatedly urged them, they would be eternally lost.

One of Captain Courageous' favorite songs, which at her request was sung at her funeral, very well expresses her testimony and life of service:

*Where the night of sin lies darkly,
And afar the wand'ers roam,
I must keep the watchfire burning
That will guide the weary home;
'Tis my Lord who loves the sinsick
That has made this duty mine;
He has given to my keeping
This fair gleam of light divine.*

*I'm a watchman in the night,
I'm a keeper of a light;
For the wanderer's returning
I must keep the watchfire burning.
I'm the watchman, I'm a watchman
in the night.*

Preparation for His Coming

WHEN THE MOTHER of Frances Ridley Havergal lay dying, she called her little daughter to her one day and told her she wished her to pray this prayer: "Dear Jesus, prepare me for that which You know I must be prepared for." She knew that only the divine Savior could comfort and care for her precious child when she was gone.

Before Jesus returned to heaven, He gave His dear disciples a similar instruction. As they walked with Him in the way, He talked to them of the time just before His coming back to earth again; also of the signs, both in the heavens and on the earth, that would precede His coming. He told them plainly that men's hearts would fail them for fear and for the things which would take place upon the earth. He warned them lest their hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and the cares of this life, for as a snare, He said, it would come upon all. So He gave them and to all of us the only means by which we could prepare our hearts and be ready. His words are found in Luke 21:36:

"Watch and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the son of man."

To some, this admonition, to "watch and pray always," might seem beyond their power to obey, but to those who love Jesus, it is quite simple and very delightful. We hear one ask, "Must I utter petitions to God incessantly? That would be impossible for me."

To this we reply, "The uttering of petitions to God is only one form of prayer. There are many other aspects of prayer that the child of God engages in. His very love for Jesus draws his soul out in adoration and worship in the singing of spiritual songs unto the Lord, in longing and desire to know Him better, in deep humiliation and contrition for his own utter unworthiness. As one has beautifully described it, 'Prayer is so simple. It is like quietly opening a door and slipping into the very presence of God: there in the stillness to listen to His voice; perhaps to petition, or only to listen; it matters not. Just to be there in His presence is prayer.'"

Nor can we fail to "watch," as Jesus said, to be alert to the imminence of His coming, knowing that *this* may be the day, the "Glad Day," when He shall appear!

Let us order our lives as did the young university student who determined in his freshman year that he would be the valedictorian for his class upon graduation. He placed a large "V" over the door where he could plainly see it, going out or coming in. The goal that it represented held him to his studies as nothing else could do, when he was tempted to waste hours in frivolities with his fellow students. It inspired him to walk circumspectly, as one who should be worthy of such an honor when it would be his, and in the end it was his because he had purposed in his heart and had prepared his life to receive it.

For well over fifty years now, the faithful Holy Spirit has been reminding His true church, "Jesus is coming soon. Get ready." We haven't much time left—only enough to prepare, for we hear "His stately steppings" as His coming draweth nigh. Let us use the precious moments left us to purify our hearts and to make our garments white by the washing of the water of the Word.

"We know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as He is pure." "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

What joy will be ours when the marriage of the Lamb is come and His wife hath made herself ready. To her will be granted that she shall be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white—for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints (Revelation 19:7, 8).

One more verse in John's epistle, chapter 2, verse 28, adds a beautiful capstone to our preparation for His coming:

"And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming." These words come as a holy benediction from the beloved Apostle John—"He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world."

—HELEN WANNENMACHER