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THE SOUND OF REVELATION'S APPROACHING HOOFBEATS

Those of us eagerly awaiting Jesus' appearing did not expect to see so many signs of the coming kingdom of the Antichrist before going home to be with our Saviour. We never anticipated seeing so much vile wickedness and demonic deception before the Rapture.

For that matter, I assumed that the Lord would severely judge America long before now.

"With such failed expectations," one might ask, "why do I believe Jesus will soon appear to take us home? Why do I remain convinced that we live in the season of His return for His Church?"

It's because the world is so very close to the fulfilment of Revelation 6:1-8, and Scripture assures us that we will be with Jesus in heaven before these riders begin their deadly trek across planet Earth.

Can you guess who wrote the following?

"I have heard the distant sound of hoofbeats. I have seen the evil riders on the horizons of our lives. I am still an evangelist whose one goal is to proclaim new life in Christ, but there is serious trouble ahead for our world, for all of us who live in it, and in the four horsemen of the Apocalypse there is both a warning and wisdom for those troubled days ahead."

If these things were true back in 1983 when Billy Graham penned these words, how much more so today? How near must we be to Jesus' appearing?

What sounds do we hear today that point to the nearness of the Lord opening the seal judgments of Revelation 6?

1. THE CLAMOUR OF THE NEW WORLD ORDER ON OUR DOORSTEP

Revelation 6:1-2 tells us about the first seal, the first rider:

"Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, 'Come and see.' And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer."

Many, including me, believe these verses refer to the Antichrist bringing the world together under his rule. The absence of an arrow in the bow points to that absence of force, although he will gather an impressive arsenal of weapons during his campaign.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-8 assures us that the Rapture will happen before this "man of lawlessness" makes his presence known on the world scene. However, we already see the formation of this coming New World Order through the UN and the World Economic Forum (WEF). Without firing a shot, they have gained the allegiance of most world leaders for their Marxist plans to enslave the people of the world.

The globalists no longer hide their intentions. President Biden recently asserted his allegiance to the New World Order. Klaus Schwab, the head of the WEF, recently asked the 2 600 delegates to his annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland, to work aggressively to bring about the communistic, totalitarian agenda advocated by him as well as those in attendance. He opened the meeting by saying that "the future is not just happening; the future is

built by us, by a powerful community, as you here in this room."

In other words, the globalists believe they have the means to reshape the world according to their agenda via the influence they have gained over the global leaders of our day. Can you hear the sound of the first horse getting ready to ride?

2. THE SABRE RATTLING OF NUCLEAR WAR

The second rider is that of war as John describes in Rev. 6:4-5:

"When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, 'Come and see.' Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword."

I'm old enough to remember the Cuban Missile Crisis in the early 1960s. I did not fully understand what was happening at the time, but I sensed the fear. At school, we had drills in which we would hide under our desks (as if that would help in a nuclear conflict). I believe the threat today is at least

equal to that time, if not far greater, but the mainstream media is diverting our attention away from the current and present danger to matters such as Pride Month and the January 6 hearings.

Those who are truly awake today clearly see these looming threats to world peace. Russia repeatedly warns the West and the US of a nuclear attack if they keep supporting Ukraine. However, the Biden administration seems to be doing all it can to provoke Putin into just such an attack by increasing the flow of weapons to Ukraine.

Iran is on the brink of developing its first nuclear weapon, with many believing that Israel will attack Iran before that happens.

China appears intent on attacking Taiwan, and is threatening all-out war against anyone who interferes. President Biden says he will defend Taiwan, which would mean a war with China.

North Korea has stepped up its testing of missiles during the past year and a half, demonstrating that it can hit North

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Kleingelowiges se gebed: “Here, Gee ons meer geloof.”

Hoeveel keer het ons dalk al gevoel om soos die apostels aan die Here te sê: “Gee ons meer geloof.”

Jesus het hulle geantwoord: “As julle **geloof** gehad het soos 'n mosterdsaad, sou julle vir hierdie moerbeiboom sê: Word ontwortel en in die see geplant - en hy sou julle gehoorsaam wees. Pas op vir julle self. En as jou broeder teen jou sondig, bestraf hom; en as hy berou kry, vergewe hom. En as hy sewe maal op 'n dag teen jou sondig en sewe maal op 'n dag na jou terugkom en sê: Ek het berou - moet jy hom vergewe” (Lukas 17:3-6).

Maar wat het hierdie antwoord hulle gebaat? En wat baat dit ons? Het hulle dit ten volle verstaan? Wanneer het hierdie antwoord hulle uiteindelik gebaat?

Jesus gooi nie net woorde in die wind rond nie! En wat van óns in óns krisistye? Hoe moet ons met die Woord omgaan? Hulle moes mosterdsaad-geloof hê, en hulle moes mekaar boonop sewe maal op 'n dag vergewe!

By 'n ander geleentheid het Jesus óók wonderwerke sowel as vergifnis aan **geloof** gekoppel: “Jesus antwoord en sê vir hulle: Julle moet geloof in God hê. Want, voorwaar Ek sê vir julle dat elkeen wat vir hierdie berg sê: Hef jou op en werp jou in die see - en nie in sy hart twyfel nie, maar glo dat wat hy sê, sal gebeur - hy sal verkry net wat hy sê. Daarom sê Ek vir julle: Alles wat julle in die gebed vra, **glo** dat julle dit sal ontvang, en julle sal dit verkry. En wanneer julle staan en bid, **vergeef** as julle iets teen iemand het, sodat julle Vader wat in die hemele is, ook julle jul oortredinge mag vergewe. Maar as julle nie vergewe nie, sal julle Vader wat in die hemele is, ook julle oortredinge nie vergewe nie” (Mark. 11:22-26).

Vanweë die druk van moeilike omstandighede en vervolginge, sowel as die woorde van Jesus in bogenoemde verse, het die apostels gevoel dat hulle méér geloof nodig gehad het. Nie dat hulle nie geloof gehad het nie, maar hulle het toe, nadat hulle alles gehoor en beleef het, **méér geloof** nodig gehad.

'n Engelse vertaling lui: “Increase our faith.” **Vermeerder ons geloof!** Jesus antwoord: “sê vir die moerbeiboom... sê vir die berg... vergewe mekaar... Dan sal God julle ook vergewe en julle gebed

verhoor!” Vir al hierdie dinge, wil Jesus ons dus leer, het ons geloof nodig! **Ons moet dus groei in beide ons geloof en vergewensgesindheid!**

Daar is verskillende maniere hóé ons geloof kan groei en vermeerder kan word. Eerstens deur die Woord: “Die geloof is dus uit die gehoor, en die gehoor is deur die woord van God” (Rom. 10:17). **Ons geloof groei deur die Woord te hoor, te lees en toe te pas.** En verder, selfs deur in die Bybel te lees hoe ander hulle geloof toegepas het.

Kom ons let op Jakobus se voorbeeld. Hy was die halfbroer van Jesus. Hy het later die leier van die Kerk in Jerusalem geword na sy bekering en verbintenis met Jesus. Jesus het ook aan hóm verskyn na Sy opstanding.

Jakobus het die Kerk met wysheid onderrig (Hand. 15), selfs ook deur die Sendbrief (Jakobus) wat hy geskryf het. Jakobus se bynaam was 'Die Regverdige'. Die vierde-eeuse kerkhistorikus, Eusebius, skryf die volgende oor hom: “[Jakobus] het die gewoon-*te gehad om alleen in die Tempel in te gaan, en is gereeld op sy knieë gevind, besig om vergifnis te vra vir die volk, sodat sy knieë hard geword het soos dié van 'n kameel, omdat hy hulle gedurig gebuig het in die aanbidding van God, want hy was baie regverdig en is daarom 'Die Regverdige' genoem.*”

Ons sien ook die tweeledige tema van **geloof** en **vergifnis** in die Sendbrief van Jakobus: “Is daar iemand siek onder julle? Laat hom die ouderlinge van die gemeente inroep, en laat hulle oor hom bid nadat hulle hom in die Naam van die Here met olie gesalf het. En die gebed van die **geloof** sal die kranke red, en die Here sal hom oprig. Selfs as hy sonde gedoen het, sal dit hom **vergewe word**” (Jak. 5:14-15).

Ons sien verder die voorbeeld van Elía as 'n **man van geloof**: “Elía was 'n mens net soos ons, en hy het ernstig gebid dat dit nie moes reën nie, en dit het op die aarde drie jaar en ses maande lank nie gereën nie; en hy het weer gebid, en die hemel het reën gegee en die aarde het sy vrug laat uitspruit” (Jak. 5:17-18). Versterk bg. voorbeelde ook jou geloof? Kan jy dit ook in jou lewe toepas? Kan jy nou ook met geloof bid? Dan ondervind jy ook 'n dimensie van “**méér geloof.**”



Voorts word daar geskryf oor die gawes van die Heilige Gees (1 Kor. 12:8-11). Een van hierdie nege gawes is **geloof** (vs. 9). Die Heilige Gees deel aan elkeen gawes uit soos Hy wil (vs. 11). Vra die Heilige Gees om ook vir jou meer geloof te gee.

Jesus maak gebruik van 'n besondere begrip om die gelowiges se geloof te laat groei. Jesus noem Sy dissipels “**kleingelowiges.**” Die Griekse woord is **oligopistos**. Hierdie woord word net deur Jesus gebruik, en dit slegs teenoor Sy dissipels - dit kom in geen ander Griekse geskrif van enige ander tyd voor nie. Dit kom net vyf keer voor, en dit in die Evangelies (Matt. 6:30, Matt. 8:26, Luk. 12:28, Matt. 14:31, Matt. 16:8); soms in die konteks van wonderwerke.

Petrus loop op die water, “Maar toe hy die sterk wind sien, het hy bang geword; en toe hy begin sink, roep hy uit en sê: Here, red my! En Jesus het dadelik sy hand uitgesteek en hom gegryp en vir hom gesê: **Kleingelowige, waarom het jy getwyfel?**” (Matt. 14:31). En toe hy in doodsgevaar sink roep hy die kortste gebed uit: “Here, red my!”

Oligopistos. Kleingelowige. Jesus het hierdie woord geskep deur twee woorde saam te voeg: “klein” en “gelowige”. Of wás dit “klein”? Dit het my altyd gepla. Sou Hy hulle verneder, verklein, uitskel? Ek glo nie. En toe ontdek ek die ware betekenis! Iemand skryf só oor die begrip **oligopistos**: “It's Greek to me. Precisely. Jesus took two Greek words and coined a new word by joining them together. **Oligos** means little or few. **Pistos** means faith or trust. **Oligopistos** - “Little faith”. The New Testament tells us that Jesus used this coined word a handful of times, and only when

addressing His disciples.”

Baie welbekende Griekse woordeboeke hou by die betekenis van “kleingelowige” of “Little faith”. Maar toe ontdek ek hierdie verklaring: “the adjective **oligopistos** means not so tuned in, under-informed, or having little reason to be confident or ultimately successful.” 'n Ander mening oor **oligopistos** is: Matt. 8:26 - “little faith”, **oligopistos** Strong's #3640: From **oligos**, “small,” and **pistis**, “faith,” describing a faith that lacks confidence or trusts too little. Jesus used the word in various situations as a tender rebuke or corrective chiding (6:30; 8:26; 14:31; 16:8; Luke 12:28). Another way to term it is “**underdeveloped faith**” as opposed to outright unbelief or distrust (**apistis**). **Ons geloof moet dus groei en ontwikkel van “babageloof” tot volwasse geloof!**

Samevatting:

Soos dit in die begin reeds duidelik geword het: Elke ware gelowige smag na méér geloof. Maar nou verstaan ons: **Ons het reeds 'n mate van geloof, maar ons moet verder groei in hierdie geloof.**

Jesus vul hierdie begrip aan. Soms gaan ons deur moeilike omstandighede, daar kom storms, krisisse, drukgange, versoeking van Satan. En ons geloof kom onder druk. Ons wil tou opgooi en soms is ons in doodsgevaar en ly ons onder vervolging. Soms voel dit ons wil net liever dood wees. Dit is dán dat God ook ons krisis-omstandighede gebruik om ons **geloof te vermeerder en te laat groei.** Want sien, God maak alles Sy dienskneg.

Ons kan egter nie omdraai op ons

Vervolg op p. 3

Kleingelowiges se gebed: “Here, Gee ons meer geloof.”

Vervolg van p. 2

lewenspad nie. In hierdie geloofskrisistyd lê daar net een pad voor: Grawe jou in die Woord en gebed in. Selfs vas en gebed. Vergewe diegene wat teen jou oortree het. Vergewe ook jouself. **Dit is dán dat ons geloof groei van “klein” na groot. Ons groei dan van “baba-geloof” na volwasse geloof wat berge kan verskuif!**

In ons tyd van afsondering, verlig die Heilige Gees ons pad deur die Woord. Soms voel dit of jy nie meer kan bid nie. Bid dan die Woord wat Hy jou gee, en jou geloof sal groei tot volwassenheid!

Paulus skryf aan die Filippense: “...maar in julle belang is dit noodsaakliker dat ek bly lewe. Omdat ek hiervan oortuig is, weet ek dat ek sal bly, ja, vir julle almal behoue sal bly, sodat julle kan **toeneem in geloof**, en blydschap in julle geloof kan hê” (Filippense 1:24-25).

Petrus het in doodsgevaar net één kort gebed gebid: “Here, help my!” Op die dag van Pinkster ontvang Petrus die doop met die Heilige Gees (Hand. 2) en sy geloof kom tot volwassenheid. Kyk ook na die genesing van die kreupelgeborene (Hand. 3:6-7). Petrus sê: “**In die Naam van Jesus Christus, die Nasaréner, staan op en loop! Toe gryp hy hom aan sy regterhand en rig hom op, en onmiddellik het sy voete en enkels sterk geword. En hy het opgespring en gestaan en rondgelopen en saam met hulle in die tempel ingegaan terwyl hy rondloop en spring en God prys. En die hele volk het gesien hoe hy daar**



loop en God prys” (Hand. 3:7-9).

In God se Hand en met Sy genade kan jy dit ook doen! Groei van klein na groot in jou geloof!
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A MODIMO O ITSE GOTLHE? Does God know Everything?

DIKAKANYO

Mo malatsing a re phelang mo go one batho baa kanya ba ka dira dilo tse di sa siamang mme ba akanya gore ga ba bonwe ke ope.

Ke santse ke gopola re le bana mme re iphitlha mme re sa batle gore batsadi ba rona ba re bone fa re dira dilo tse di sa siamang. Akanya fela letsatsi leo la ntlha fa o iphitlha mo morago ga lebota la lesaka mme o goga sekerete eo ya ntlha.

O ne o akanya gore o botlhale mme o sa lemoge gore mosi o tswela godimo mme rraagwe a go bona. Fela jalo le fa batho ba akanya gore ga ba bonwe ke ope, Modimo o bona gotlhe.

Matlhabisaditlhong ke banna ba ba tsietsang basadi ba bone mme ba akanya gore ga ba bonwe ke ope. Fela nnete ke gore Modimo o itse gotlhe mme o bona gotlhe. Fa o dira dilo tse di sa siamang mme o dira dilo tse di sa siamang mo matlhong a Modimo, itse gore Ene o bona gotlhe. Magodu a akanya gore Modimo ga a ba bone.

Batho ba ba tshwarang kopano ya sephiri ba akanya gore ga ba bonwe ke ope mme itse gore

Modimo o itse gotlhe mme o bona gotlhe. Tse wena o akanyang gore o ka di dira mo lefifing le mo sephiring, Modimo o di itse tsotlhe mme o di bona tsotlhe. O ka akanya gore o ga o a bonwa ke ope mme itse gore Modimo o go bone.

Fa wena o leka go loga maano a go dira se se sa siamang itse gore Modimo o go bone mme maano a gago a bonwe.

O tla go athola mme o tla go duelela dilo tse o di dirileng. Se se makatsang ke gore se ga se reye Bakeresete fela mme le batho ba ba sa batleng Modimo le ba ba sa itseng Modimo, Modimo o itse ditiro le dikakanyo tsa gago. Lebelela fela ditemana tse di nopolotsweng tse di re bontshang gore Modimo o itse gotlhe mme o bona gotlhe.

DITEMANA

Se bueng tsa maikgantsho a magolo ka gale; tsa matepe di se ka tsa tswa mo melomong ya lona. Gonne Morena ke Modimo o o itseng tsotlhe; ditiro di tlhatlhojwa ke Ene (1 Samuele 2:3).

Morena, o a ntlhotlhomisa, o a

nkitse. O itse go nna ga me le go nanoga ga me; o tlhaloganya maikaelelo a me o le kgakala. O sekaseka go tsamaya ga me le go lala ga me; mme ditsela tsotlhe tsa me o a di ela tlhoko. Gonne ga go na lefoko lepe - mo lolemeng lwa me le, wena Morena, o sa le tlhaloganyeng gotlhe. O ntikanyeditse kwa morago le kwa pele, o beile seatla sa gago mo go nna. Kitso e, ke a e gakgamalela, e a mpalela; e kwa godimo, ke retelelwa ke go fitlha kwa go yona (Pesalome 139:1-6).

Se re tla itseng ka sona gore re ba boammaaruri, e bile re ka gomotsa dipelo tsa rona fa pele ga ona ka sona, ke fa e re dipelo tsa rona di re athola, re re: Modimo o mogolo go feta dipelo tsa rona, o bile o itse tsotlhe (1 Johane 3:19-20).

A boteng jwa khumo le jwa botlhale le jwa kitso ya Modimo! (Baroma 11:33).

Matlho a Morena a mo mafelong aotlhe, a tlhola ba ba bosula le ba ba molemo (Diane 15:3).

Gonne matlho a Morena a ntse a sekaseka lefatshe lotlhe gore a itshupe a le thata go busa ba ba



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mo ineetseng ka pelo yotlhe. Golo fa o dirile ka bosilo. Gonne go tloga jaanong o tla tsogelwa ke dintwa (2 Ditirafalo 16:9).

Ke ka moo ke reng: O itse ditiro tsa bone; o ba ribegetsa bosigo, mme ba silakanngwe (Jobe 34:25).

Ke itse ditiro tsa gago le lorato le tumelo le tirelo le tshwarelelo ya gago... (Tshenolo 2:19).

THAPELO

Morena re kopa gore o re thuse go se lebale gore o itse gotlhe mme o bona gotlhe. Re thuse gore re se lebale gore Modimo wa rona o itse gotlhe mme o bona gotlhe.

Re tshwarele tse re di dirileng tse di seng tsa lesedi le tse di sa siamang. Ntate wa rona re kopa o re sireletse mo go tse re sa di itseng le tse re sa di boneng. Wena o Modimo wa rona mme re kopa o re bule matlho le ditsebe gore re bone tse di sa siamang le tse di batlang go re tlišetsa mathata. Re go leboga ka o sireletsa bana ba gago ka go laela baengele ba Gago go sireletsa bana ba gago.
AMEN.

THE SOUND OF REVELATION'S APPROACHING HOOFBEATS

Continued from p. 1
America with a nuclear bomb!

When we put these threats together with the words of Revelation 6:8 that tell us war will play a part in killing a fourth of the world's population, it seems likely that perhaps one or more of these threats will happen.

Do these dangers not beg the question regarding the nearness of the Rapture? Could the sabre rattling of Russia, China, and North Korea be the sound of the second horse getting ready to ride?

3. THE VOICES PREDICTING ECONOMIC DEVASTATION BY THE END OF 2022

The words of Revelation 6:5-6 point to economic devastation:

"When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, 'Come and see.' So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, 'A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine.'"

If you think that the world is not on the brink of the conditions described in these verses, you are not paying attention. We are frightfully close!

In the US, the reported inflation rate for May was 8.6%, which is the highest in forty years! For most people, the cost of living is accelerating much, much faster than that. President Biden recently assured us that this high rate of inflation in the US will continue for the foreseeable future.

The voices warning of devastating world food shortages by the end of 2022 are far too many to ignore.

Goya Foods CEO, Bob Unanue, recently told Fox News that the world is on the brink of a food crisis. "We are on the precipice of a global food crisis," he told Maria Bartiromo.

JP Morgan Chase CEO, Jamie Dimon, recently warned about a coming "economic hurricane." He also added this: "It's a hurricane. Right now, it's kind of sunny, things are doing fine, everyone thinks the Fed can handle this... That hurricane is right out there, down the road, coming our way. We just don't

know if it's a minor one or Superstorm Sandy or Andrew or something like that. You better brace yourself."

Rockefeller Foundation's president, Rajiv Shah, described what is soon to unfold as a "massive, immediate food crisis that will strike the entire world, leaving no country untouched."

I have lost count of the many food processing plants that have gone up in flames during the past twelve months.

Why are so many shepherds of our day ignoring the numerous warnings regarding the food catastrophe that's rapidly approaching? Do they not hear the sound of approaching hoofbeats?

4. THE UNHEEDED WARNINGS OF A GLOBAL HOLOCAUST

The result of all these approaching horrors will be a death count higher than anything the world has seen since the Genesis 6 flood. Revelation 6:7-8 describes what the world will experience when Jesus opens the fourth seal.

"When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, 'Come and see.' So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth."

Right now, one-fourth of the world's population would be almost two billion people, and that's just at the beginning of the tribulation woes. A nuclear conflict could possibly kill hundreds of millions and this threat looms as a distinct possibility in the near future.

It's also easy to see how the coming food crises could kill a vast number of people. Africa would likely suffer the most at first, but as the contrived food crisis expands, western nations will soon see the death toll skyrocket.

Those pushing the US Green New Deal and the UN's Agenda 2030 warn that we will feel pain as the world transitions away from fossil fuels.

This most certainly will include mass starvation, as green energy will not suffice to meet the needs of the world's population. It

cannot even come close.

As the number of worldwide abortions approaches 1.7 billion since 1980, it's possible that the death toll during the seal judgments of Revelation 6 will equal the number of abortions in the modern era. When one adds the number of abortions before 1980 and subtracts those missing because of the Rapture, the number of seal judgment deaths may be remarkably close to the abortion toll.

5. GOD IS SOVEREIGN

While it may seem that human actors cause the devastation of the first four seals, we must remember that God is Sovereign over all the affairs of mankind. It's the Lord Who opens the seals and allows the destruction that follows.

Numerous Old Testament prophets warned of these coming judgments under the heading of "the Day of the Lord." The book of Revelation adds details to what God has warned about down through the centuries. There will be a time when God's patience ends and the words of Psalm 75:8-9 come to pass.

6. THE TRUMPET SOUND IS EVER SO CLOSE

While there are many other signs telling us that Jesus' appearing is ever so close, I always come back to the four riders of Revelation 6 whenever I start to wonder if it will happen anytime soon. It's only God's amazing patience that has kept the horsemen of Revelation 6 in their stalls during the four decades since Billy Graham wrote 'Approaching Hoofbeats.'

How much longer will the Lord wait before He catches us up in the air and later opens the seals? Will the Rapture happen in my lifetime? I cannot say, but given the nearness of the coming time of tribulation, I certainly believe it's a valid and reasonable hope - even as I approach seventy years of age.

Even though my hearing has diminished some with age, I hear the sounds of approaching hoofbeats on the pavement. But what I anticipate next is the sound of the trumpet and my departure from Earth to the place that Jesus is preparing for me and for all those who know Him as their Saviour!
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(JUNE 17, 2022).

'I felt as though Jesus Himself had come to Visit Me'

The former televangelist, Jim Bakker, in his autobiography 'I Was Wrong', tells of his descend into ignominy, impoverishment and imprisonment for accounting fraud. He lost his freedom, his sanity, his dignity, his confidence in his faith and, eventually, even his wife. Inmate 07407-058, one-time friend and advisor of presidents, had hit rock bottom.

At his very lowest point, a prison official told him, 'Billy Graham is here to see you!' He thought, 'Billy Graham has come here... to this place... to see me?' When he walked into the room, Billy Graham turned towards him and opened his arms wide.

At that moment, Jim Bakker felt total acceptance and love: 'I will never forget that the man who had just been voted one of the most influential men in the world and who has ministered to millions of people took time out of his busy schedule to come minister to one prisoner.' Jim describes how in the midst of his depression, flu, filth and hopelessness, Billy Graham's visit refreshed his heart and boosted his spirit. *'I felt as though Jesus Himself had come to visit me.'*

- Jim Bakker, 'I Was Wrong' (Thomas Nelson, 2010), pp.282-284.

How the Apostles Died

1. **Matthew:** Suffered martyrdom in Ethiopia, killed by a sword wound.

2. **Mark:** Died in Alexandria, Egypt, after being dragged by Horses through the streets until he was dead.

3. **Luke:** Was hanged in Greece as a result of his tremendous preaching to the lost.

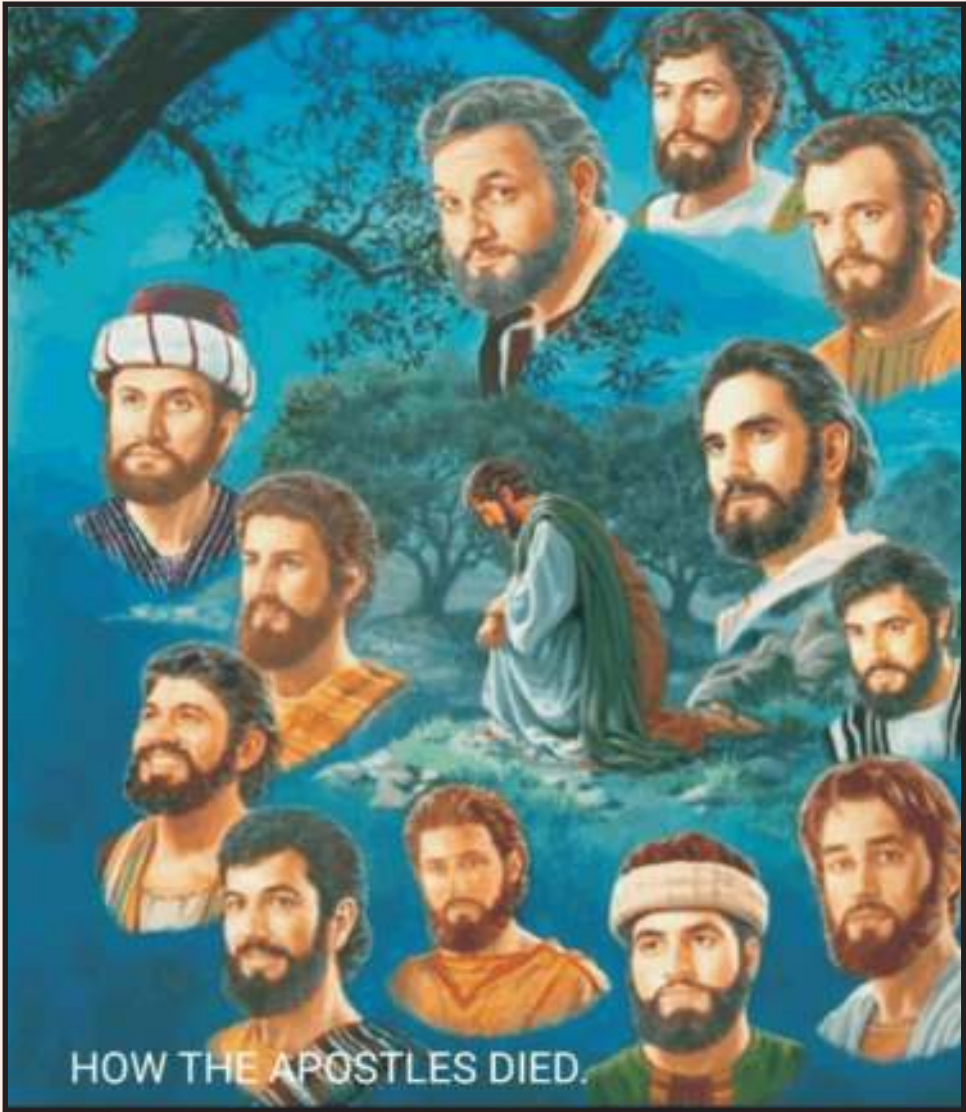
4. **John:** Faced martyrdom when he was boiled in a huge basin of boiling oil during a wave of persecution in Rome. However, he was miraculously delivered from death. John was then sentenced to the mines on the prison Island of Patmos.
- He wrote his prophetic Book of Revelation on Patmos. The apostle John was later freed and returned to serve as Bishop of Edessa in modern Turkey. He died as an old man, the only apostle to die peacefully.
5. **Peter:** He was crucified upside down on an X-shaped cross. According to Church tradition it was because he told his tormentors that he felt unworthy to die In the same way that Jesus Christ had died.

6. **James:** The leader of the Church in Jerusalem, was thrown over a hundred feet down from the southeast pinnacle of the Temple when he refused to deny his faith in Christ. When they discovered that he survived the fall, his enemies beat James to death with a fuller's club. This
- was the same pinnacle where Satan had taken Jesus during the Temptation.
7. **James (The Son of Zebedee):** was a fisherman by trade when Jesus called him to a lifetime of ministry. As a strong leader of the Church, James was beheaded at Jerusalem. The Roman officer who guarded James watched amazed as James defended his faith at his trial. Later, the officer walked beside James to the place of execution. Overcome by conviction, he declared his new faith to the judge and knelt beside James to accept beheading as a Christian.

8. **Bartholomew:** Also known as Nathaniel, was a missionary to Asia. He witnessed for our Lord in present-day Turkey. Bartholomew was martyred for his preaching in Armenia, where he was flayed to death by a whip.

9. **Andrew:** Was crucified on an X-shaped cross in Patras, Greece. After being whipped severely by seven soldiers they tied his body to the cross with cords to prolong his agony. His followers reported that, when he was led toward the cross, Andrew saluted it in these words: "I have long desired and expected this happy hour! The cross has been consecrated by the body of Christ hanging on it." He continued to preach to his tormentors for two days until he expired.

10. **Thomas:** Was stabbed with a spear in India during one of his missionary trips to establish the



- Church in the Sub-continent.
11. **Jude:** Was killed with arrows when he refused to deny his faith in Christ.
12. **Matthias:** The apostle chosen to replace the traitor Judas Iscariot, was stoned and then beheaded.
13. **Paul:** Was tortured and then beheaded by the evil Emperor
- Nero at Rome in A.D. 67.
- Paul endured a lengthy imprisonment, which allowed him to write his many epistles to the churches he had formed throughout the Roman Empire.
- These letters, which taught many of the foundational Doctrines of Christianity, form a large portion of the New Testament.
- Selected

SPREEK WOORDE WAT HEELHEID BEVORDER

“Deur jou woorde en dade word jy gevang” (Spreuke 6:3a, Die Boodskap).

Stormie Omartian sê: Vroeg in my wandel met die Here het ek baie negatief gepraat. ‘Ek is ‘n mislukking,’ ‘Ek is lelik,’ ‘Niks loop ooit reg nie.’

Toe het die Heilige Gees met my gepraat: “Die tong het mag oor dood en oor lewe...” (Spreuke 18:21 NLV).

Ek het van kindsbeen af ‘n spraakprobleem gehad en is dwarsdeur my skoolloopbaan daaroor gespot. Toe ek oud genoeg was om professionele hulp te kon bekostig, het ek met ‘n spraakterapeut begin werk. Ek het dag vir dag, jaar na jaar

geoefen, maar net ‘n klein verbetering ervaar. Met elke toespraak wat ek gelewer het, het ek steeds halfpad deur my stem verloor. “Ek sal nooit reg kan praat nie” het ek gehuil.

Toe ek egter daardie woorde gesê het, het die Here vir my gesê: “Jy bring dood oor jou situasie omdat jy nie die waarheid praat nie. Praat dit wat jy weet die waarheid in my Woord is: “Die mense wat hinkel, sal maklik kan praat” (Jesaja 32:4 NLV). “Ek het my woorde in jou mond gesit...” (Jesaja 51:16 NLV).

Kort daarna, toe ek gevra is om ‘n toespraak by ‘n Damesoggend te lewer, het ek my vrese na God toe geneem en Sy waarheid gespreek, in plaas daarvan om my eie negatiewe opinies te lug.

My praatjie het só goed afgeloop dat ‘n hele nuwe Bediening daaruit ontstaan het!

Die Bybel sê: “...as jy gevang is deur wat jy sê, vir jouself ‘n strik gestel het, dan moet jy gou iets daaraan doen...” (Spreuke 6:2-3 NLV). Dit sluit die manier wat jy met jouself praat, in.

Vee woorde van hopeloosheid, twyfel en negatiwiteit uit jou woordeskat uit. Dit mag dalk onskadelik klink, maar dit affekteer jou liggaam en siel. Spreek woorde wat die heelheid wat jy begeer, reflekteer.

Sielskos: 2 Kon. 7-9; Matt. 18:10-20; Ps. 80:12-19; Spr. 13:13-16.

- Oorgeneem

Hoopgee-mens

Ons is almal maar net voetslaners op die reis na môre.

Elkeen met sy eie bagasie, uitgetrapte gister-skoene en ‘n padkaart van hoop.

Here, ek wil graag iemand wees wat veldblomliefde vir ander pluk,

slukke lewenswater uitdeel en ander help om te bly loop na die lig...

Te bly glo aan U Altyd-by-ons-Lig!

Met Wie Praat God?

Coenie Burger vertel 'n baie mooi storie. Hy vertel dat hulle naby 'n kanaal in die Boland grootgeword het. As kinders het hulle papierbootjies gemaak waarmee hulle in die kanaal gespeel het. Die speletjie het daaroor gegaan dat jou bootjie sonder jou hulp die vinnigste van punt A na punt B moes vaar.

Daar was een groot probleem: Hoe hou jy jou hande van jou bootjie af as hy iewers in die riete of agter 'n stuk hout vashaak? Wie ook al sy bootjie losmaak, word gediskwalifiseer. Dan vertel hy hoe jy dan maar 'n rukkiewegag het totdat almal vooruit gehardloop het, en dan stilletjies jou vasgevalde bootjie teruggehelp het in die stroom. 'n Mens kan eenvoudig nie jou hande van jou bootjie afhou nie. Dit is dan jou eie skepping, gemaak met jou eie hande!

En dan vra hy die vraag: Hoe moet God dit regkry om Sy hande van ons af te hou wanneer ons iewers vasval? Hy kry dit nie reg nie! Hy't ons aanmeekaargeweef in die moederskoot. Hy het ons gemaak. Hy gee so baie vir ons om dat Hy ons nie kan uitlos nie; ook nie as ons vasgehaak het in sonde nie!

Dis God se hart om ons te help om heeltyd op die stroom van Sy wil te vaar. In ons harte moet daar egter 'n soortgelyke begeerte wees. En dit wil vir my voorkom asof die intensiteit van daardie begeerte bepaal hoe suksesvol ons op die stroom van God se wil sal bly, al dan nie.

Oral Roberts is nie 'n bekende in Suid-Afrika nie, maar in die VSA is hy 'n alombekende evangelis. Hy het tot in sy tagtigs die Evangelie van kuslyn tot kuslyn en van staat tot staat verkondig. Hy was 'n merkwaardige man wat in geloof 'n Christelike Universiteit tot stand gebring het waar studente in 58 beroepsrigtings opgelei word om vanuit hulle verhouding met God en vanuit die Woord, hul beroep te beoefen.

Oral Roberts se bedieningsverhaal gryp 'n mens aan die hart. As jongman het hy 'n mentor gesoek; iemand wat hom kon

begelei om sy roeping met verantwoordelikheid uit te leef.

Hy vra toe 'n man vir wie hy baie respek gehad het om hom op sy geloofspad te begelei. Die persoon stem toe in op voorwaarde dat hulle eers saam gaan swem. Hy het dit nogal vreemd gevind, maar ingestem.

Hulle het 'n rukkiewegag toe hy naby sy mentor kom en dié hom gryp en sy kop onder die water druk. Oral Roberts het geskop, gespartel en gespook. Sy lange het begin brand en eers toe hy slap word, het die ouer man hom toegelaat om asem te skep. Toe hy opkom en hygend na asem snak, was hy so kwaad dat hy nie geweet het of hy moet asemhaal, hoes of raas nie!

Rustig vra die ouer man: “Het jy na asem gesmag?” “Natuurlik het ek na asem gesmag, wat dink jy?” het hy geantwoord. “Wel,” het die man geantwoord, “ek sal jou mentor wees as jy bereid is om vir die res van jou lewe só na God te smag soos jy nou na asem gesmag het. Dan sal niks jou ontbreek nie.”

'n Mens lees iets van hierdie verlange na God in Psalm 63. Dawid is in die woestyn van Juda, waar hy na God se teenwoordigheid smag: “*Ek soek U, o God, my God, ek dors na U; ek smag na U soos in 'n dor en droë land, 'n land sonder water*” (v. 2).

Min mense het 'n smagting na God. 'n Mens kan so maklik voel jy faal omdat jy nie 'n smagting na God het nie. Dit is egter nie iets wat jy uit jouself tot stand kan bring nie. 'n Mens kan nie 'n smagting na God opklits nie. Daar is ook nie 'n resep vir 'n verlange na God nie. Jy kan nie 'n klomp goed bymekaargooi en dan het jy hierdie smagting na God nie. Ons moet vir Góð vra om ons hierdie smagting na Hom te gee.

Indien jy een of twee maal gebid het vir 'n diep verlange na God en daar het nog niks in jou geesteslewe verander nie, verwys ek jou graag na die weduwee in Lukas 18:1-8. Jesus vertel Self van die weduwee wat by die regter kom en dan vir hom vra om in haar

saak aan haar reg te doen. Die regter steur hom egter nie aan haar nie.

Dag vir dag kom sy terug om keer op keer te vra dat hy aan haar reg betoon. Uiteindelik dink die regter by homself: “*Vir God het ek wel geen eerbied nie, en aan 'n mens steur ek my nie, maar aangesien hierdie weduwee so aanhou om my lastig te val, sal ek haar in haar regsaak help, anders kom klap sy my op die ou end ook nog*” (v. 4-5). Dan beklemtoon Jesus dat as 'n onregverdige regter uiteindelik toegee aan die versoek van 'n kermende weduwee, hoeveel te meer sal God aan Sy kinders reg doen as hulle dag en nag tot Hom roep. Moenie ophou vra vir 'n smagting na God en die vermoë om Sy Stem te onderskei voordat Hy dit aan jou gegee het nie.

God sal Hom nie onttrek aan mense wat graag in voortdurende kommunikasie met Hom wil leef nie. Jy hoef nie geleerd, groot of

belangrik te wees om te kwalifiseer vir 'n besoek van die Almagtige nie.

Miskien het dit tyd geword om jouself te dissiplineer om heel eerste aan God te dink wanneer jy wakker word in die oggend. Kry vir jou 'n item, 'n deuntjie wat jou wakker lui of enige ander vorm van assosiasie wat jou aan God sal laat dink.

Voordat jou kop in hoogste versnelling wegtrek om jou besige skedule vir die dag deur te werk, lê nog vir 'n oomblik stil en sê: “Goeiemôre, Here, vandag wil ek graag in U Teenwoordigheid funksioneer. Hou my heeltyd bewus van U Teenwoordigheid. Stel my in staat om heeldag van U bewus te bly, ongeag omstandighede en gebeure.” Bid 'n soortgelyke gebed elke dag!

Uit: *Hoe Hoor Ons God Se Stem?* - Elza Meyer, CUM, 2007.

Hartsverlange

**Ag Here, my God,
ek wil só graag
dat my hele
lewe
my hele
menswees
'n HALLELUJA
vir
U
sal wees!**

**MAAR
ek besef terdeë
my onvermoë daartoe...
Leer U my
help my
stel my in staat
om U te aanbid
met die
skoonheid
reinheid
opregheid
van 'n
helige lewenswandel
welbehaaglik voor U!**

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GELOOF IS 'N VALSKERM

"Roep my aan in die dag van benoudheid. Ek sal jou uithelp en jy moet My eer" (Ps. 50:15).

Dalk het ek ingedommel. Die motor het die pad verlaat. Ek is deur die voorruit geslinger. Dae lank het ek geval. Toe ek my bewussyn herwin, het die dokter my die waarheid vertel en ek het nog verder getuimel. Voortaan sou ek al sukkelende met 'n kunsarm en 'n kunsbeen oor die weg moes kom.

Terwyl ek daar in die hospitaal gelê het, was alles om my donker. Die enigste ligstraal was 'n opgewekte verpleegster. Sy het vir my gesê: "Jy moet jou valskerm gebruik." My valskerm... só het sy my geloof genoem.

Ek het sinies geglimlag. Sy het nie geweet ek het daardie valskerm reeds in die asblik gegooi nie. Sy het egter nie moed opgegee nie en daaglik oor die yster-

tralis rondom my bed geloer en my aan die woorde van Psalm 50:15 herinner.

Soos Humpty Dumpty het ek na my plek tussen al die skerwe begin soek. Op 'n dag kon ek dit nie langer verduur nie. Ek het die "valskerm" se koord getrek en geroep: "O, God!"

Eensklaps het my valskerm oopgevou! My geloof het uit sy plooië gekom. Ek kon voel hoe God my op Sy hande dra. My hele lewe het verander. Selfs my vrou en kinders het dit opgemerk. Voorheen het ek net in die breedte en die hoogte geleef, maar nou het daar diepte gekom. Miskien het 'n mens krukke nodig om God tegemoet te loop.

Die hoop op 'n lewende Here Jesus Christus stoot 'n mens vorentoe in en deur die lewe. Dit keer dat jy jou blind staar teen jou omstandighede en in wanhoop



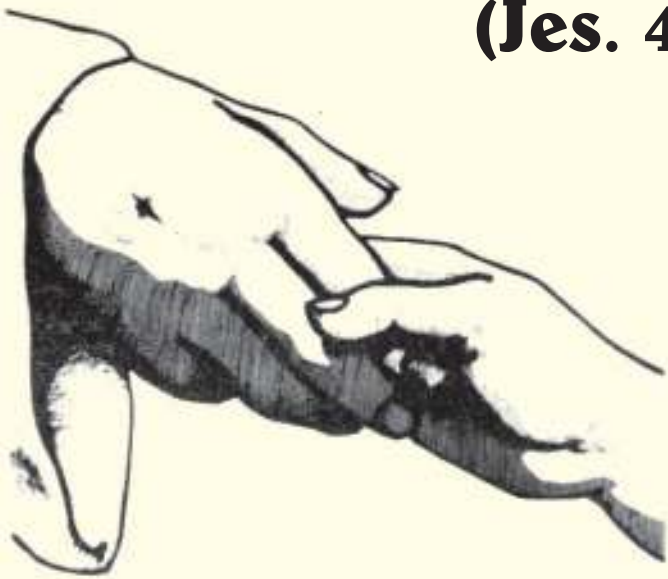
versink.

Natuurlik word die seile van my lewenskip uitmekaar gewaai en steier ek van bakboord na stuurboord. Maar ek het hoop as anker van my siel, 'n anker wat seker en vas is. My gebede is die kreu-

nende ankertoue van my dobberende skip wat aan die hawepunt geheg is. Daarom is dit so belangrik om altyd te bly glo en hoop!

[Uit: *Hoop het Vleuels*, Leon Oosthuizen, Lux Verbi.BM, 2005].

"Ek is die Here jou God, Ek vat jou hand" (Jes. 41:13).



Wat 'n pragtige belofte om elke dag mee te begin - Ek is die Here jou God, Ek vat jou hand. Is daar groter trooswoorde as juis hierdie vier?

Kom ons luister na Sy Stem: "Is daar 'n tekort aan een of ander noodsaaklikheid in jou lewe? Ek vat jou hand – niks sal jou ontbreek nie. Is jy uitgeput en moeg na siel en liggaam? Ek vat jou hand en lei jou na waters waar rus is - Ek verkwik jou siel. Sit jy vasgevang in die diepste duisternis? Moenie bang wees nie – kyk, Ek is met

jou. Ek vat jou hand. Ek vertroos jou. Hier is My stok en My staf, gebruik dit, en Ek sal jou uit die duisternis in die lig inlei. Is jou hart in stukke gebreek en sit jy bedroef en moedeloos langs die pad, glad nie lus om een tree verder te gee op jou lewenspad nie? Kom, vat My hand.

Vir geen oomblik sal Ek jou begewe of verlaat nie – Ek vat jou hand en stap saam met jou die onbekende toekoms in.

Die son sal jou bedags nie steek nie, nog die maan by nag, want Ek is elke oomblik aan jou sy. Kyk, Ek vat jou hand!" Vat my hand, Heer, en hou dit styf vas!

Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can.
- John Wesley



DIE LEWE IS SOOS 'N SKILDERY WAT GESKETS WORD DEUR DIE LYNE VAN HOOP. VEE DIE FOUTE UIT MET VERDRAAGSAAMHEID, DOOP DIE KWAS IN GEDULD EN VERF DIT MET TEERHEID EN LIEFDE.

GENIET DIE DAG MET LIEFDE UIT GOD SE HAND!



The Uncommon Love of God

Imagine living such a godly life that the Creator of the Universe takes special notice of you! Job and Cornelius were two such men whose devotion got God's attention - yet both experienced what it was like to be despised and rejected by men (Job 1-42, Acts 10-11).

Job's rejection came after all-manner of destruction had overtaken this once wealthy and honoured man. Cornelius' rejection had been lifelong because he was a Gentile. Yet God took notice of them and even set things in motion to redeem them to a place of acceptance and honour.

Everyone envied Job. He seemed to have it all: money, family, friends - plus he loved God. In Job 1:1 he is described as *"blameless - a man of complete integrity. He feared God and stayed away from evil."* Yet when calamity struck him and his household, people mocked him. Friends even said that only the wicked experienced such turmoil.

Job was grieved by such accusations, and he longed to be understood! In Job 19:23, he said,

"Oh, that my words could be recorded..." He did not know that those very words would be part of God's written Word - giving hope to generations regarding how a righteous man endures trials!

In the midst of his hurt, Job had faith rise up in him as he proclaimed *"my Redeemer lives..."* (verse 25). Job knew that one day he would stand before a Righteous Judge - and I believe that thought gave him hope. How amazing that he had such hope before experiencing a breakthrough! He even prayed for the friends who accused him before anything became better for him!

Another man of great renown, Cornelius, lived at the time of the Apostle Peter and the early Christian Church. Cornelius was a Roman army captain of the Italian Regiment. He is described as a *"devout, God-fearing man, as was everyone in his household. He gave generously to the poor and prayed regularly to God"* (Acts 10:1-2).

Cornelius' servants described him as one *"well respected by all*

the Jews" (verse 22). Yet Cornelius had become accustomed to being kept at arm's length, never fully embraced by God's chosen people. But God wanted to change that.

As Cornelius prayed one day, an angel appeared to him, saying, *"Your prayers and gifts to the poor have been received by God as an offering!"* (verse 4). The angel instructed Cornelius to send men to Joppa and summon Peter. Meanwhile, God worked in Peter's heart. Through a vision, God instructed Peter to *"not call something unclean if God has made it clean"* (verse 15).

So, as Cornelius' three men arrived at the home where Peter was staying, God furthermore instructed Peter: *"Get up, go downstairs and go with them without hesitation. Don't worry, for I have sent them"* (verse 20). This was a very big step for Peter.

Peter told them, *"You know it is against our laws for a Jewish man to enter a Gentile home like this or to associate with you. But God has shown me that I should no*

longer think of anyone as impure or unclean" (verse 28). And after hearing Cornelius share why he sent for him, Peter replied: *"I see very clearly that God shows no favouritism. In every nation he accepts those who fear him and do what is right"* (verses 34-35). This encounter helped open a door to greater fellowship between the entire family of God.

Dear Father, we know that Jesus too was despised and rejected by men. Help us to not show favouritism, but to see others as You see them. Your Word tells us that the world will recognize us as Christians by our love for one another. So, thank You for helping us love in a greater way! In Jesus' Name, we pray. Amen!

*** 000 000 000 ***

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MARTHA

Martha, a poorly dressed lady with a look of defeat on her face, walked into a grocery store. She approached the owner of the store in a most humble manner and asked if he would give her a few groceries on credit.

She softly explained that her husband was very ill and unable to work. They had seven children and they needed food.

The grocer scoffed at her and requested that she leave his store at once.

In desperation, she pleaded: 'Please, sir! I will bring you the money just as soon as I can.'

The grocer told her he could not give her credit, since she did not have a charge account at his store.

A well-dressed stranger standing beside the counter, overheard the conversation between the two. He walked forward and told the grocer that he would pay for whatever she needed for her family.

The grocer said in a very reluctant

voice, 'Do you have a grocery list?'

Martha replied, 'Yes sir.' 'OK' he said, 'put your grocery list on the scales and whatever your grocery list weighs, I will give you that amount in groceries.'

Martha hesitated a moment with a bowed head, then she reached into her purse and took out a piece of paper and scribbled something on it. She then laid the piece of paper on the scale carefully with her head still bowed.

The eyes of the grocer showed amazement when the scales went down and stayed down.

The grocer, staring at the scales, turned slowly to the stranger and said begrudgingly, 'I can't believe it.'

The stranger smiled and the grocer started putting the groceries on the other side of the scales. The scale did not balance so he continued to put more and more groceries on them until the scales would hold no more.

The grocer stood there in utter



frustration. Finally, he grabbed the piece of paper from the scales and looked at it in great amazement.

It was not a grocery list, it was a prayer, which said: 'Dear Lord, you know my needs and I am leaving this in Your hands.'

The grocer gave her the groceries that he had gathered and stood in stunned silence.

Martha thanked him and left the store. The stranger handed a gold

coin to the grocer and said: "The Creator knows how much a prayer weighs."

Dear Reader, trust God to know your very own needs, that He heals the sick, provides food for the hungry and clothes and shelter for those who don't have what they need.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and believe that He will never fail you because He is LOVE!
- Selected

“Jesu, Lover of My Soul”

I am sure that none of us would have liked to have lived two hundred years ago, when the brothers John and Charles Wesley were born.

England was in a terrible state at that time. In the towns it was not safe to go out after dark. It was before the days of the police, and the few old night watchmen were quite unable to deal with the highwaymen and ruffians who walked the streets, attacking and robbing, and sometimes murdering those they came across. The curfew bell rang at sunset, and, after that, no decent person cared to be out.

There were no restrictions whatever as to the sale of intoxicating drinks, and in London every gin shop invited the passer-by to “come in and get drunk for a penny, or dead drunk for two-pence.” Of course drunkenness and immorality were rampant. The magistrates tried to keep order by inflicting very heavy penalties, but even these did not stop crime. Hanging was the punishment for even small offences, such as stealing 5s., robbing a hen roost, or writing a threatening letter. One morning twenty young thieves were hanged in Newgate. Even children were hanged. We read of one little lad of nine who was executed in this way for some small offence.

In the country villages there was hardly anyone who could read or write. There were no schools, except a few Grammar Schools founded by Edward VI and Queen Elizabeth.

The amusements of the people were cruel and debasing; bull-baiting, bear-baiting, and cock-shying, were some of the scenes they delighted in. On Shrove Tuesday cocks were tied to a stake and battered to death, as people nowadays play for coconuts. On holidays the public were allowed to go through Bethlehem Hospital in London, on paying 2d., and amuse themselves by teasing the lunatics.

In the Church, matters were in a very low state. The clergy frequently did not live in their parishes, and the services were neglected, and the people unvisited and uncared for. **It was a time of almost universal darkness and degradation.**

It was then that John and Charles Wesley were born, and they “changed the face of all England.” I quote from a most interesting account of the Wesley family, by Lady M'Dougall, in her delightful book, *Songs of the Church*. She

says: **“If ever a woman might rejoice that she has brought sons into the world, that woman was Susanna Wesley! Her sons, John and Charles, changed the face of England. They were the channel through which God's blessing flowed to the ends of the earth. Through them came revival to the Church of Christ. Hospitals, churches, the visitation of men and women in prison, missions to the heathen, the doing away of the slave trade, all these were the blessed results of their lives and work.”**

The father of John and Charles Wesley was the Rev. Samuel Wesley, Rector of Epworth, in Lincolnshire. There, on a very small income, these two godly parents brought up their large family of nineteen children, ten of whom (three sons and seven daughters) lived to grow up. John was born on June 17, 1703. Charles was born four years later, on December 18, 1707.

Susanna Wesley was always most anxious for the spiritual welfare of her children. It was her habit to have one or more of them in her room each evening for a quiet talk and prayer. “On Thursday I talk with Jacky, and on Saturday with Charles.” The children loved these quiet times with mother; and who can tell the results of that holy mother's teaching and prayers?

Soon after the family had gone to live at Epworth Rectory the house caught on fire. It was near midnight on February 9, 1709. The Rector, his wife, seven children, and the maid, all got safely out of the burning house; but one child - a lovely boy six years old - lay sleeping, unconscious of his danger. His father tried to rescue him, but he was thrice driven back by the flames. Finding he could not help him, the father knelt in the hall, and in an agony of prayer, commended his soul to God. Meanwhile the child awoke, and seeing the room full of light and thinking the morning had come, called to the maid to get him up. But presently he saw streaks of fire running along the top of the room. He jumped out of bed and ran to the door, but all he saw was a roaring sea of flames. Climbing on a box by the window, he was seen from the garden below. “I will run and bring a ladder,” said one, but there was no time. So one man (a light one) stood on another man's shoulders, and, the house being low, they managed to reach the child and lift him down. The next moment, the burning roof fell in. **The child thus marvellously saved from a fearful death was none other than John Wesley.** He

never forgot his deliverance, and under one of his portraits he had a picture drawn of a house in flames, with the motto, “Is not this a brand plucked out of the burning?”

It is interesting to read of the two brothers, John and Charles, going to Oxford at an early age, and - grieved at the careless lives of other young men - forming themselves, with a few more, into a little band, pledged to live pure lives, to attend Holy Communion frequently, to visit the poor, the sick, and the prisoners in the jail; to fast, and pray, and study God's Word. They were nicknamed “The Holy Club,” and “Methodists,” but they persevered in spite of much ridicule and persecution; and their influence spread.

From Oxford, Charles returned home to visit his dying father, who laid his hand upon his son's head and said: “Be steady. The Christian faith will surely revive in this kingdom. You shall see it, though I shall not.”

That same year, John and Charles sailed for Georgia, a colony in North America, hoping to be missionaries to the Indians. A great storm arose and broke over the ship. The English were full of fear, but the Moravian Christians who were on board were calm and helpful to all. John Wesley was greatly impressed by their fearlessness and courage and felt, “These people have something to which I, as yet, have not attained.”

On their return to England, the brothers associated themselves a great deal with the Moravian Christians, from whom they learned the way of God more perfectly. They began at once to travel from place to place, preaching the necessity of repentance towards God and of faith in Jesus Christ. Their plain speaking was not liked by some of the bishops and clergy, and by 1738 most of the pulpits within the English Church were closed to them. Then they preached in the fields, the streets, the jails, anywhere and everywhere, and the poorer people heard them gladly.

It is impossible to describe the wonderful labours, journeys, and life of John Wesley. For nearly fifty years he travelled, for the most part on horseback, all over England, north, south, east, and west. Eight thousand miles per year was his usual record, and he preached on an average one thousand times a year; that is about three times every day. He visited Cornwall thirty-one times; and every part of the United Kingdom is described in his



John Wesley

journal - Northumberland, Yorkshire, Lancashire, Berkshire, and London. He also visited Ireland, Scotland, the Channel Isles, and Holland. He preached to the multitudes who gathered, “Christ crucified,” and proved Him to be “the power of God unto salvation” to countless precious souls.

“Brutal, ignorant, corrupt,” such is the description of the beginning of the eighteenth century, when John and Charles Wesley were born, but by the grace of God, when they died a glorious national reformation had been effected, and the whole Church of Christ had been revived and refreshed.

There is one fact regarding these brothers that is of great interest. Both were ordained clergymen of the Church of England, and although, through the jealousy of the bishops and clergy, they were both soon excluded from their pulpits, yet John and Charles Wesley never left the Church of England. In 1790, only one year before the death of John Wesley, he wrote: “I declare once more that I live and die a member of the Church of England, and that men who regard my judgment and advice, will never separate from it.”

For several years Charles Wesley united with his brother John in his great work of preaching the Gospel, but after his marriage in 1749, he travelled less and resided at Bristol for some years.

During the last part of his life, his home was in Great Chesterfield Street, Marylebone, London. Charles Wesley died on March 29, 1788, at the age of eighty-one, and was buried in Marylebone Churchyard, for he too had said: “I have lived and I die in the communion of the Church of England, and I will be buried in the churchyard of my parish church.”

A few days before Charles Wesley died, he called his wife to his bedside and asked her to write at

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“Jesu, Lover of My Soul”

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his dictation. These were the lines he gave her. For fifty years Jesus Christ had been the subject of his sermons and his songs, and he may be said to have died with a hymn to Christ upon his lips:

"In age and
feebleness extreme,
Who shall a sinful
worm redeem?
Jesus, my only hope
Thou art
Strength of my failing
flesh and heart,
O could I catch a smile
from Thee,
And drop
into eternity."

Three years after the death of his brother Charles, John passed to his reward, on March 2, 1791, in the eighty-eighth year of his age.

In 1876 a monument was placed in Westminster Abbey to the memory of the Wesleys, with this inscription:

JOHN WESLEY, M.A.
BORN JUNE 17, 1703. DIED
MARCH 2, 1791.
CHARLES WESLEY, M.A.
BORN DECEMBER 18, 1707. DIED
MARCH 29, 1788.

"I LOOK UPON ALL THE WORLD
AS MY PARISH."
"GOD BURIES HIS WORKMEN,
BUT CARRIES ON HIS WORK."

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Charles Wesley will always be known as the sweet singer of Methodism. As a hymn writer, he was unique. In his early years he wrote hymns daily, and he continued writing all throughout his life. He is said to have written no less than 6 500 hymns, and nearly all rise to the highest degree of excellence. His hymns were the expressions of his heart. They

show his strong belief in God and his earnest desire for the salvation of his fellow-men. No other verses equal them for simplicity, purity, and power.

Charles Wesley wrote his hymns at all times and in all places - on the road, on horseback, on a stage coach, in a boat. Some thought struck him, and, with his divine gift, he immortalized it in a hymn.

He wrote that sweet child's hymn, the first prayer lisped by so many baby lips: "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild." He wrote the Christmas hymn without which no Christmas Service would be complete: "Hark! the herald angels sing." He gave us that solemn Advent hymn: "Lo, He comes with clouds descending." And also the glad triumphant Easter one: "Christ the Lord is risen today! Hallelujah!" And also one of our best Ascension hymns: "Rejoice, the Lord is King." "Come, O Thou Traveller Unknown," has been thought by some to be Charles Wesley's finest poem. Dr. Watts said he would willingly sacrifice all his writings if he might have composed that one hymn.

But the masterpiece of all Charles Wesley's hymns, the most priceless and precious one of all is, "Jesu, Lover of my Soul." The Rev. Henry Ward Beecher said of it: "I would rather have written this hymn than have the fame of all the kings that ever sat on the earth." As long as the English language remains will this tenderest and finest of all heart-hymns shed the fragrance of the Name of Jesus far and wide, and help trembling souls to trust in Him. There is no hymn that is more often whispered into the dying ear. Millions of anxious souls have breathed this prayer when coming to the Saviour for the first time; and this hymn has been the means of

enabling them to find in Christ their Refuge and their Friend. We can have no better wish than that this precious hymn of Charles Wesley's may be our song all through the land of our pilgrimage and our glorious Death-song at the last.

The circumstance of the writing of this hymn is interesting. The story goes that Charles Wesley was roused from his sleep one night by a terrible storm. Being unable to rest he got up, put on his dressing-gown, and, opening his casement window stood looking out upon the stormy scene.

Suddenly a bird, exhausted by the wind, and hotly pursued by a hawk, flew through the open window right into Charles Wesley's breast for protection. Having saved the bird and placed it in security, he turned to his desk and wrote this immortal hymn, so realistic and descriptive of the fear and intense longing of the anxious soul to find safety and rest.

It is the prayer of the individual soul for support to the Saviour Himself; the call, as of a drowning



Charles Wesley

man, that insists on being heard, and that can take no refusal; the cry of the terrified, and frail, and helpless bird, pursued by the cruel hawk, that is eager for its life.

Dear friends, are you "Safe in the arms of Jesus"? Have you "hidden" yourselves in Him? Oh, that these questions may go straight home to your hearts. If you are not in Christ, may God the Holy Spirit awaken you to see your danger. Read the hymn, and then sing it on your knees, as your closing prayer.

GOD WIL JOU SEËN!

Ontvang Sy **vrede**,
want hy is die Prins van vrede;
wysheid, want Hy is die Raadsman;
hoop, want Hy is die Alfa en die Omega;
rus, want Hy is die Goeie Herder;
waarheid, want Hy is die Woord van God;
moed, want Hy is die Almagtige God;
reiniging, want Hy is die Lam van God;
geregtigheid, want Hy is die Regverdige.

- Hoop vir Vandag, Roy Lessin, Christian Art Gifts, RSA, 2012

Jer. 20:11

★★★**B&B** Uit die Hand

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