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## Atheistic Editor Dared God To Send Earthquake

**I**t was Christmas Eve in 1908, but the citizens of Messina, Italy, were not planning the traditional observances of the birth of Christ, because they were an atheistic community.

In its Christmas issue on the 21st, the town newspaper, *Il Telefono*, blatantly irreligious in tone, had published an ugly parody defying God and daring Him to make Himself known by sending an earthquake.

Now, on the very eve of Christmas, the city council, in the same disparaging mood, passed a series of shockingly disrespectful and irreverent resolutions flouting God. In effect, the resolutions mocked God on behalf of the entire community.

No sooner had the defamatory actions of the town council been accepted by the unprotesting people than distress and panic seemed to enter into all the animals quartered in the town and the outlying districts.

Dogs and donkeys began dashing about in frantic but aimless distress, howling and braying, eyes distended in wild and staring terror. Horses, mules and oxen neighed, bawled and trembled in every limb, pointing their ears forward, and rolling their glaring eyes.

Geese, pigeons and other domestic fowls fluttered wildly in fright. Even wild birds flew screaming through the air in obvious alarm. Fishes in the sea rose to the surface and floated there, alive, but inert. They were caught in large numbers. The wind began to howl; the sea began to toss and roar. Underground noises like the rolling of thunder could be heard. Then, only three hours after the passage of the infamous "Christ-

mas Resolutions" by the city council, came the warning signs of the earthquake the local newspaper had so mockingly dared God to send upon the town. With the first shock of the quake, the frightened people, understanding at last the reason for the animal behaviour exhibited all around them, had time to note that the dashing, cavorting animals suddenly stood stock still, with legs braced far apart. Then, as the surface of the earth heaved like the billows of the sea, buildings shook and swayed, tilted and tumbled, crushing the horrified townspeople as they fled.

The sky let loose a torrent of rain, with thunder and chilling winds. Lightning darted with frightening speed. Ground thunder roared incessantly. The first concussion levelled the strongest buildings. Mountains were thrown down. Level fields were raised up. Streams of water gushed forth from dry rocks. Pools and streams appeared where none had existed before. Olive trees were overturned. Half an olive orchard moved off its owner's acreage.

Chasms opened to swallow people, animals, trees, and rubble. Some of them closed again entombing their victims forever. Roads were cracked and destroyed.

Amidst the crash of falling houses and the flickering flames of the wreckage, the dismal screams of the wretched inhabitants were heard. *The beautiful city of Messina and surrounding districts were destroyed. There were few survivors to tell of the horrors experienced. Seventy-five thousand inhabitants were wiped out!*  
- *The Mighty Hand of God* by Katherine Pollard Carter, Impact Books Inc., 1991



### 'n Gepantserde Bybel

Sonsondergang in die berge van die Noordkus. Skielik verbreek uitroepe, ontploffings, en 'n sarsie koeëls die gespanne kalmte van Pozo Azul in die Colombiaanse staat Bolivar. Guerillas het onverwags 'n paramilitêre groep teëgekom. Jacinto, 'n jong lid van die paramilitêre groep, sien hoe sy vriende in die kruisvuur sterf. Skielik het hy 'n pyn in sy bors gevoel en word hy op die grond neergeveld. 'n Paar minute later was die skermutseling verby. Hy het verward bygekom en die grootste wonderwerk van sy lewe gesien. Die Nuwe Testament wat Geopende Deure maande tevore aan hom gegee het en wat hy altyd in die linkersak van sy uniform gehou het, het gekeer dat die koeël hom in die hart tref! Daardie middag is 76 van Jacinto se paramilitêre kamerade in die konfrontasie dood. "Ek weet dat baie van hulle van Jesus Christus as die enigste Saligmaker gehoor het", het hy gesê. Uit: *Geopende Deure*, September 2007.

# Die Vondeling Vind Medelye

**W**at is 'n vondeling? 'n Vrou se deurklokkie lui. Sy stap om die deur oop te maak. Wat VIND sy op haar stoep? 'n Babatjie in 'n mandjie! Hy is 'n vondeling... sy het hom gevind!

Dit laat my onwilligeurig dink aan Moses. Die koning Farao wou al die pasgebore babatjies, die seuntjies, by geboorte doodmaak. Sy moeder sit hom in 'n mandjie wat met lymgrond en pik bestryk is en wat sy op die Nylrivier plaas. Wat sal tog van hom word? Hy word 'n vondeling! 'n Wonderwerk van God!

Kom ons lees hierdie verhaal saam uit Eksodus: "n Dogter van die farao het afgegaan Nyl toe om te swem, en die jongmeisies wat haar vergesel, het aan die kant van die rivier geloop. Toe sy die mandjie tussen die riete sien, stuur sy haar diensmeisie om dit te gaan haal. Met die oopmaak sien sy dit is 'n seuntjie en hy huil. **Toekry sy hom jammer** (Hebreeus = ghamal, Grieks = splagnizomai) en dink: dit is seker een van die Hebreeuse seuntjies [oor wie die doodsvonnis uitgespreek is deur haar vader, die farao]. Sy [Moses se] suster kom sê toe vir die farao se dogter: 'Mag ek vir u 'n vrou gaan roep, 'n Hebreeuse vrou met 'n pasgebore baba, dat sy die seuntjie vir u kan laat drink?' Die dogter van die farao het haar geantwoord: 'Ja, goed!' Die meisie het toe die seuntjie se ma gaan roep. Toe beveel die farao se dogter die ma: 'Neem hierdie seuntjie en laat hom vir my drink. Ek sal jou daarvoor betaal.' Die vrou het die seuntjie geneem en vir hom gesorg. Toe hy oud genoeg was, het sy hom na die dogter van die farao toe gebring, wat hom as haar eie seun aangeneem het. Sy het hom Moses genoem, 'want,' het sy gesê, 'ek het hom mos uit die water gehaal.'" (Eksodus 2:5-10, NV).

Wat 'n wonderlike plan het God met Moses se lewe gehad! Dit het in drie fases van 40 jaar elk afgespeel - 120 jaar! Van 'n vondeling tot, naas Abraham, die tweede sentrale figuur in die geskiedenis van die volk Israel.

Elke vondeling wat deur God gevind word en wat Hy tot wedergeboorte bring in Jesus Christus, is deur God "uit die water gehaal." En daarom stap Hy met elkeen 'n pad. 'n Lewenspad. Want ons is uit God gebore. Het God jou al gevind? Het jy Hom al gevind? Het jy al Jesus aangeneem as jou Persoonlike Saligmaker? Vra Hom om jou te lei op jou lewenspad. God het 'n plan, 'n doel met elke vondeling, elke kind van God wat uit Hom gebore is.

Weet jy hoe God in Sy hart voel oor Sy kinders wat in pyn en in nood verkeer? Kan 'n mens se tong Sy medelye beskryf? Weet jy hoe Hy oor jou voel?

In Grieks, die taal van die Nuwe Testament, vind ons die woord vir "**innig jammer voel**" wat gebore is uit God se liefde. Die woord is *splagnizomai*. Een kommentator poog om die woord só te verklaar: "Compassion is that drawing and agitation of the innermost parts at the sight of any distressed or miserable object. It causes revolting action in the innermost being to bring deliverance from such unlawful and inhuman misery and suffering. Used nine times of Christ."

Dit beteken Jesus se innerlike, Sy binneste organe het in beroering gekom ten aanskoue van die mens in sy nood. Hy ween selfs saam met diegene, wanneer Hy in die een wat ly, se skoene staan. En dan help Hy! In Matt. 9:36 lees ons: Hy sien 'n groot skare en het **innig jammer** vir hulle gevoel, en Hy het hulle siekes gesond gemaak. Oor nog 'n skare lees ons: "Jesus het Sy dissipels na Hom geroep en gesê: Ek voel **innig jammer** vir die skare, omdat hulle al drie dae by My bly en nik het om te eet nie; en Ek wil hulle nie graag honger wegstuur nie, sodat hulle nie miskien op die pad beswyk nie." Hulle was al drie dae sonder kos! Hy breek en vermeerder die brood vir hulle.

Hy voel **innig jammer** vir die melaatse en genes hom. Jesus het **innig jammer** gevoel vir die weduwe van Naïn toe haar seun gesterf het en Hy het hom opgewek uit die dood! Ek glo Hy het ook gereeld saam met mense in hul nood geween.

Ons ken die verhaal van die barmhartige Samaritaan. Ons lees in Lukas 10:33-37a, "Maar 'n sekere Samaritaan wat op reis was, het op hom (wat onder die rowers verval het) afgekom; en toe hy hom sien [vind], het hy **innig jammer** gevoel, en na hom gegaan, sy wonde verbind en olie en wyn daarop gegooi. Hy het hom toe op sy eie pakdier gehelp en hom na 'n herberg geneem en vir hom gesorg. En toe hy die volgende môre weggaan, haal hy twee pennings uit en gee dit aan die eienaar van die herberg en sê vir hom: 'Sorg vir hom, en enige onkoste wat jy nog meer mag hê, sal ek jou betaal as ek terugkom.' Wie dan van hierdie drie, dink jy, was die naaste van hom wat onder die rowers verval het? En hy antwoord: Hy wat barmhartigheid aan hom bewys het."

Toe sê Jesus vir hom: "**Gaan en**

**doen jy net so.**" Iemand wat 'n bidder is vir mense in nood vra vir die Here hoekom daar so min genesings is in die Kerk. Ons kan byvoeg: "Hoekom is daar so min antwoorde vir mense in nood?" En die Here antwoord hom: "Omdat die Kerk sy medelye, **innige jammerte**, compassion (splagnizomai) verloor het."

In Gen. 16 en 21 lees ons die verhaal van Hagar wat in die woestyn Berséba verdwaal het met haar seun, nadat haar meesteres Sarai haar weggejaag het. Sy sit in die hitte van die woestyn met haar seun, sonder kos en sonder water. Die kos het opgeraak en die water in die sak het ook opgeraak. Sy sit hom onder een van die bosse neer sover as mens met 'n boog kan skiet en sê: "Ek wil die dood van die kind nie aansien nie." Sy het haar stem verhef en geween in absolute desperaatheid.

Ek neem aan sy het tot die God van Abram geroep. Sy was oortuig daarvan dat die dood op haar en haar seun wag. En daar verskyn die Engel van die HERE (was dit Jesus Self?) aan haar en sê: "Hagar, slavin van Sarai, waar kom jy vandaan, en waar gaan jy heen?" God het haar gevind in haar nood. Sy was 'n vondeling! God het Sy medelye aan haar bewys. En sy noem die put wat sy sien, wat God geskep het, die "**Put van Lagai-Roi**" wat beteken "die Put van die Lewende wat my sien."

Die God van Abram en Sarai word ook die God van Hagar, die Egiptiese slavin! God sê vir haar, en dit is die moeilikste deel: "Gaan terug na jou meesteres en verneder jou onder haar hande." Dit beteken, gaan versoen jou met haar. Vra om vergifnis vir jou verkeerde gesindheid. Vergewe haar ook dat sy jou sleg behandel het en jou soos 'n hond weggejaag het! Versoen jou ook met Abram en jou seun moet ook met hom versoen.

God herstel verhoudinge tussen mense. Hagar het opgestaan en sy, die vondeling, is met God en haar mense herstel! Sit jy ook in die donker, het jy dwaas opgetree, het jy in 'n storm beland of in die woestyn verdwaal? Het jy dáárom ook van God af weggedwaal? Roep God aan en vra Hom om jou te vergewe, en vergewe al die ander mense wat jou leed aangedoen het.

Jesus het **medelye** (splagnizomai) met jou. Dit beteken om saam met jou te ly. En wanneer jy uiteindelik deur jou smarte gekom het, sê Jesus vir jou ook soos vir die Barmhartige Samaritaan: "Gaan en doen jy net so." Wees barmhartig met ander en help hulle nou in hulle nood, soos jy ook eens gehelp is. Sit jou bagasie neer aan die voete van Jesus. Kom kry heling en troos uit Sy Hand. Dan sal jy ook vind Hy sê vir jou: "Gister is verby! Kyk, Ek maak alles nuut!"

©Dr JJ Venter

## Sit Jou Las by My Voete Neer

As ek kniel voor die Heer, en vir Hom sê: "Ek het so seer! O Heer U weet, ek kan net nie meer." Dan hoor ek hoe sê die liewe Heer: "Kom sit hier by my, bring jou seer, kom sit jou las en pyn hier by My voete neer."

As ek vandag by die Here kla, sal ek sê: "Ek is so jammer om te pla! Maar die las word vir my te swaar om te dra." Dan sê die liewe Heer: "Jy mag maar kla. Jy mag maar aanhou om vir My te vra! Ek sal jou wel die krag gee om jou kruis te dra."

En as ek vanaand my hart leeghuil, vir die Here vra dat my boot op kalm water seil; vir die Here vra vir 'n hoekie om te kan skuil... Sal die Here sê: "Jy sal weer op kalm waters seil. Jy mag maar jou leed op My skouer uithuil. By my is daar rus, 'n plek om te kan skuil."

"Here, my hart is in 'n knoop gebind! Ek is moeg baklei teen hierdie sterke wind! Ek wil tog net weer rus en vrede vind." Die Here sê: "Jy is mos My lieflingkind. Jy is met My anker van liefde gebind! Raak stil. Raak rustig! Jy sal weer vrede vind!"

Dankie, my Heer. Amen.

# GEBED VAN 'N REISIGER

- Coenie de Villiers

*Sny vir my, o Heer, 'n wandelstok of twee uit die woud by Tsitsikamma en loop dan met my mee oor die vlaktes van die Groot Karoo, oor die berge van Natal langs die kus af tot by Vleesbaai tot by die groen van Riversdal*

*Brand die hemel van die Vrystaat in my hart se dagboek in, laat my nooit die lug vergeet nie wat aan die horizon begin.*

*En Heer, is dit dieselfde son wat by my reis se einde skyn? Behou mens steeds die reuk van reën as jou geheue dalk sou kwyn?*

*Want ek vrees mos nie die vreemde nie selfs die afstand laat my koud by U is daar geen leemte nie U bly steeds my behoud. Al reis ek oor die sewe seeë skuif kontinente stil verby, sal ek my voetval op U rig my in die reis verbly.*

*Maar ek vrees tog wel die eensaamheid, ek skrik die groot alleen ... dis dan wanneer U my moet dra want U weet ek gaan daarheen.*

*Laat die sterre dus my kompas wees en U steeds my Ware Noord lei elke voetstap van my reis, o Heer, want dit is soos dit hoort.*



## A UBUNTU E SULE? A RE BOELENG MODIMONG!

(**Is Ubuntu dead? Let us turn back to God!**)



Johan Zerwick  
Sêlē ke 083 458 3837

### DITEMANA

Jona o gana go rongwa ke Modimo. Modimo o a mo otla. Lefoko la Morena le kile la tla kwa go Jona, morwa Amithai, la re: "Tloga ò ye kwa motseng o mogolo wa Ninife, ò o kgalemele ka therò; gonane bosula jwa bone bo tlhatlogetse fa pele ga me." Mme Jona a nanoga, a re o tshabela kwa Tharesise, a tshaba sefatlhego sa Morena; a fologela kwa Jafo, a fitlhela mokoro teng o o yang kwa Tharesise, a ntsha tuelo ya ona, a ba a o palama, a re o ya nabo kwa Tharesise go tshaba sefatlhego sa Morena. Mme Morena a fokisa phefo e kgolo mo lewatleng; ga nna ledimo le legolo mo lewatleng, mokoro wa ba wa batla go robega. Ke fa batsamaisi ba mokoro ba boifa, mongwe le mongwe a goela kwa modimong wa gagwe; ba latlhela dithoto tse di mo mokorong mo lewatleng go imolola mokoro gore o tlhofofale. Jona ene o ne a fologetse mo teng ga mokoro kwa tlase, a robetse, a thulametse (Jona 1:1-5).

Mme morafe wa me o o bidiwang ka fa leineng la me o ikokobetsa, ba rapela, ba batla sefatlhego sa me, ba boa mo ditseleng tsa bone tse di bosula, foo ke tla utlwa ke le kwa legodimong, ke itshwarela

boleo jwa bone, ke alafa lefatshe la bone (2 Ditirafalo 7:14).

### DIKAKANYO

Fa re lebelela se se diragalang mo nageng ya rona le mo ditoropong tsa rona re bona gore re tlhoka go boela Modimong. Ga ke dumele gore dilo tse o di bonang di diragala mo o dulang teng gore di a go kgotsofatsa. Re bona banna ba betsa basadi, re bona bogodu bo a oketsaga. Re bona batsadi ba sa kgathale bana ba bone mme bana ba sa tlottle batsadi ba bone. Mo dikolong re bona morutwana a betsa mme wa morutabana. Bašwa ba goga nyaope, ba dirisa diritibatsi mme ba dira fela jaaka ba rata. Bogwenegwene bo oketsaga ka mokgwa o o atlhamisang molomo.

Rura go senyegile. Dikereke ga di na batho mme dišebine le ditaverne di tletse ka batho. Batho ga ba tlhole ba na le pelo ya go thusana. Fela mo ngwageng ya 2023 re bona batho ba tlhoka metsi mme baagisane ga ba thusane. Re bona batho ba ba nang le dikoloi ba sa nagane le go tlisetra motsofe wa moagisane sekupu sa metsi mme a ikgela a le mongwe. Borragwebo ba ba nang le dikoloi tsa go laisa metsi ga ba thuse sepe. Ke bona bašwa

le banna ba feta mmemogolo a imelwa ke kgameloa ya metsi. Ruri se re ne re se bitsa ubuntu se sule mo Aforikaborwa. Melao ya naga ga e tlhole e kgathalwa. Batho ba bantsi ba utswa motlakase. Fa ba ba dirang ba ya tirong ba bangwe ba sala ba ba utswetsa. Bopelotelele bo sule. Lerato le tsidifetse. Ke nako gore bana ba Modimo ba tsoge mme ba eme ka maoto. Re ka se lettelele gore lefatshe la Modimo le fetole go nna lefatshe la magodu le le sa bontsheng lerato la Jesu.

Naga ya rona e senyegile fela jaaka naga ya kwa Ninife mo nakong ya ga Jona. Modimo fa a lebelela naga ya rona ya Aforikaborwa ke dumela gore o kopa mongwe le mongwe wa rona go ema la maoto mme re Iwantshe bosula jaaka kwa Ninife. Modimo o ile a raya Jona gore: "Tloga ò ye kwa motseng o mogolo wa Ninife, ò o kgalemele ka therò; gonane bosula jwa bone bo tlhatlogetse fa pele ga me."

Le wena ke go kopa o tloge o eme mme o kgalemele bosula mo motseng wa gago. Se dire jaaka Jona mme o tshabe. Are emaneng nokeng mme re thusane go tokafatsa naga ya rona. Are Iwantshe lefifi le le batlang go

sulafatsa naga le maphelo a rona. A re se dule fela re sa dire sepe. Jona o ne a sia mme a tshaba mme a sa batle go rerela batho ba Ninife mme a sa batle go reetsa taolo ya Morena. A re tsogeng. A re emeng ka maoto. Fa re sa dire sepe re lettelele bosula bo fenyetshiamo le lerato. E rile Jona a sia Modimo o ile a mo thiba ka phefo e kgolo le ka ledimo le legolo mo lewatleng. A re tsogeng mme re Iwantshe lefifi gore Modimo a se re kgalemele pele re ka utlwa go dira thato ya Gagwe. Batho ba ba neng ba palame mokoro le Jona ba ne ba mo kopa gore a rapele Modimo wa gagwe gore a se ba bolaye. Le rona re tshwanetse go tsoga le go phela lerato la Jesu le go phela ubuntu le go tlogela mekgwa ya rona e e sa siamang jaaka 2 Ditirafalo 7:14 e ruta.

### THAPELO

Morena rona re le morafe wa Gagwe o o bidiwang ka fa leineng la Jesu, re a ikokobetsa, re a rapela, re batla sefatlhego sa Gagwe, re boa mo ditseleng tsa rona tse di bosula, re kopa o re itshwarele mme o re thuseng emela kgatlhanong le lefifi, re kopa o utlwe o le kwa legodimong, o itshwarela boleo jwa rona, mme o alafe lefatshe la rona la Aforikaborwa. AMEN.

# Words of Encouragement

**O**ur society is in desperate need of encouraging words. An understanding ear. A warm hug or a sunshine smile. People face many trials and need someone to take the time to listen to them, pray with them, and build them up.

Oftentimes, we need this too. Decide to be the friend who will be Christ's hands and feet and take the first step - find someone to listen to and give them some of your time and counsel. As you water the plants of friendship, you will reap a harvest of deep love and satisfaction. As the famous adage says, "Be the change you want to see."

How can we encourage each other, and why should we do this? In essence, by pointing weary souls to Jesus. Only He has the full knowledge of their environment, the unique challenges they face, their heart's pain and their yearning. Only He has the means and capacity to heal, enrich, support, and guide them in their particular circumstance. Yet, He chooses to work through us as lowly vessels to be conduits of His blessings to others, and in loving others, we feel loved as well.

Let us focus for a moment on Paul's writings on the gifts of the Spirit. In 1 Cor. 12-14, Paul explains these wondrous gifts, indicating that love is the more excellent way, and that these gifts should be other-directed, not

used selfishly or disorderly.

In 1 Cor. 14:1-3, we read, "Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries. But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men." In the final verse, prophecy is described as words of "edification and exhortation and comfort". Let us look at each of these words in closer detail.

## 1. Edification

The Greek word being used here is *oikodomēn*. Mounce indicates that it can refer to a building, construction, or a physical edifice; and by extension, it can refer to building up, edification, strengthening, and developing another person's life through acts and words of love and encouragement (Rom. 14:19). Elsewhere, it is noted that this is the act of increasing the potential of someone, enabling them, and helping them grow.

Interestingly, we find the same word in 1 Cor. 3:9 - "For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building [*oikodomē*]." We can draw several lessons from these passages. **We are God's building, Christ's Body.** We are interdependent and should edify, strengthen, and support each other as a community of belie-

vers, brothers and sisters in Christ. We should stand in unity (1 Cor. 1:10), bless one another (Prov. 11:25), and be loyal to one another (John 15:13). Of course, our love should also extend beyond the church walls, and we should lend a helping hand and an encouraging word to unbelieving friends or strangers.

## 2. Exhortation

The Greek word for exhortation is *paraklēsin*, which means calling to one's aid [it is made up of two words meaning "calling" and "beside", thus someone standing alongside you], an appeal, encouragement, exhortation, comfort, consolation, or edification. This word refers to one called or sent for to assist another, one who pleads the cause of another, one present to render various beneficial service.

This word is very similar to the title by which Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit in John 14, the Paraclete (*Paraklētos*). The Amplified Bible lists several concepts connected to this rich word: "And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper (Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor - Counsellor, Strengthening, Standby), to be with you forever" (John 14:16). Thus, if we encourage one another, we do Christlike work. We perform acts of service. We reassure and strengthen one another. Since Christ is not physically with us, we should perform this labour of love, just as the Spirit is doing. He

was sent to be with believers in the physical absence of Jesus after His resurrection (John 14:16, 18, 26). Let us similarly continue to exhort one another to run the race of faith with sure strides, fixing our eyes on Jesus - the Pioneer and Perfector of our faith (Heb. 12:1-2)!

## 3. Consolation

Found only once in the New Testament, the Greek word, *paramythian*, means consolation or comfort. Oftentimes we have to go through our own struggles and face the fiery furnace of suffering. But there is a powerful hope and we can expect wonderful results: God comforts us in our pain, and then we can use this comfort to comfort others (2 Cor. 1:4)!

With much deeper insight and compassion, we can understand and sympathize with others who need consolation and comfort. We can make them feel safe, and refresh them through the powerful working of the Holy Spirit (Psalm 23:3).

Let us **edify, exhort, and console** one another as we yield to the Spirit to work His gifts through us, and impact the lives of those around us. Let us be channels of hope and aqueducts of blessing to build up (*oikodomē*) the Body of Christ (Eph. 4:12), and in the process we will be touched by God's love and strengthened in our own spiritual walk!

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# Money Matters

If you have lived much life at all, you are probably well aware that putting your trust in the economy, your employer, or your bank account is not a good idea. They are all fair-weather friends. One moment, all is well. The next moment, years of planning and hard work fall apart without warning.

However, God is always faithful. **We can be just as confident He's at work in our lives when everything looks crazy, as when everything looks stable.** We can always trust God to be our supply. The opposite is true as well. Even when things look peaceful and calm, that is not an indication of security. Our security comes from God. It's not at all dependent on what's going on around us.

Whether it is the economy, our finances, our children, or our marriages, we can (and should) trust God with all of it!

When are we secure?

After going through a particularly tough faith test, I noticed something about myself. When my circumstances began to "look" better, I trusted a bit less in God and a bit more in myself. After all, my situation didn't require much faith.

**What a mistake! We are no less dependent on God when things are going well as when they seem like a disaster.**

Good circumstances only provide an illusion of security. That's

when it's easiest to see how things will all work out. But isn't it amazing how quickly we can go running back to God when things look bad again? We quickly realize that God was really our protection all along.

The great news is that for believers, bad circumstances are only an illusion of a lack of security. We have God's Word: He will never leave us, never forsake us. Call on Him!

It doesn't matter how the economy looks, how your prospects seem, or how things are going at work. God will still supply your needs. Just like He promised.

Pray this prayer of commitment: God, I give you my work, my



money, my debt, and my ability to earn. I relinquish my trust in the economy, the stock market, and my job. When it's all said and done, You are Lord of all. And so I trust You with everything, believing You are able to supply all my needs according to Your glorious riches in Christ Jesus. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

- Bob Lotich  
[www.seedtime.com](http://www.seedtime.com)

# GOD SOEK 'N MENS...

**D**ONKER ONHEILSWOLKE pak al meer en meer saam oor ons samelewing. Vloedgolwe van misdaad en perversiteit rol oor ons heen en sleur ons mee om ons genade-loos teen die rotse van afvalligheid en goddeloosheid tot sandkorrels te vergruis! Verwoed loop die duivel rond soos 'n brullende leeu en soek wie hy kan verslind (1 Petrus 5:8).

Christen, is jy paraat en opgewasse teen die sielevyand? Is jy LIG vir hierdie wêreld en SOUT van die aarde? Of het jou lig só dof geword dat jy in die skemerte tuis voel soos die wêreldling?

"God deursoek die hart, toets die niere, om aan elkeen te gee na sy weë, volgens die vrug van sy handelinge" (Jer. 17:10). Hy, die Allerhoogste, roep ons tot stilstand en nadenke: "Maar selfs nou nog, spreek die HERE, bekeer julle tot My met julle hele hart, en met vas en geween en rouklag. En skeur julle hart en nie julle klere nie, en bekeer julle tot die HERE julle God; want Hy is genadig en barmhartig, lankmoe-

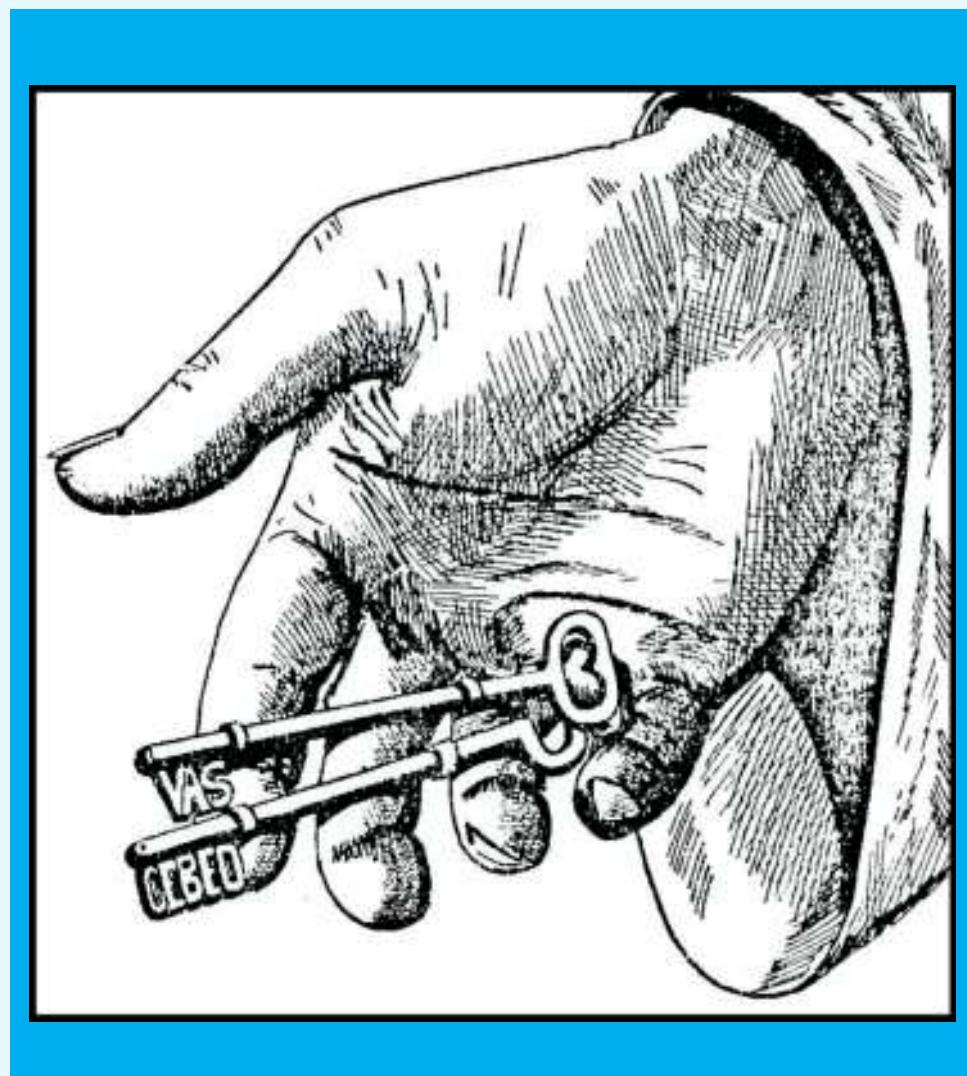
dig en groot van goedertierenheid..." (Joël 2:12-13).

Gryp die verskrikkinge en duister lot van ons dorpe, stede en land jou aan die hart? Luister dan na God se oproep! "**En Ek het onder hulle 'n man gesoek** wat 'n muur kan bou en voor My Aangesig in die bres kan staan vir die land, sodat ek dit nie sou verwoes nie; maar Ek het niemand gevind nie" (Eségiël 22:30).

Mag God ons behoed indien ons nie bereid is om in die bres te staan vir ons dorpe, stede, ons land Suid-Afrika en selfs die hele wêreld nie! Ons versuim sal tot ons eie ondergang lei! Kom elkeen van ons tree elke dag vir ten minste 'n halfuur in vir ons woonplekke en land!

"(As) My volk, oor wie My Naam uitgeroep is, hulle verootmoedig en bid en My Aangesig soek en hulle bekeer van hul verkeerde weë, dan sal Ek uit die hemel hoor en hulle sonde vergewe en hulle land genees" (2 Kron. 7:14).

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## HY SAL GEKNAKTE RIETE NIE AFBREEK NIE...

"n Geknakte riet sal Hy nie afbreek nie, 'n lamppit wat dof brand, sal Hy nie uitdoof nie" (Jes. 42:3). "Die lammers maak Hy bymekaar in Sy arms, en Hy dra hulle teen Sy bors..." (Jes. 40:11).

Ons kind kom terug ná 'n werksonderhoud. Haar gesig is rooi van spanning; die groot bewerasie het nog nie bedaar nie. "As jy voor die grootbase staan, is jy niemand nie, Ma," sê sy. "Hulle wys die stapels aansoeke vir jou - jy's net 'n nommer. Die lewe is hár, Ma!" Jou hart breek vir jou kind. Jy ken haar paar oorwinnings en haar stryd, haar geaardheid, haar drome, haar weerloosheid, en al die seerkry van die verlede. Jy weet: in die groot-

menswêreld staan sy vingeralleen.

God het jou duisend maal liewer as wat ons ons kinders ooit kan hê. Die menswording en kruisdood van Sy Seun Jesus is die bewys van die omvang en die egtheid van Sy liefde.

Jou Hemelse Vader ervaar hoe-genaamd nie dieselfde magte-loosheid as wat óns ervaar wanneer ons kinders swaarkry nie. Hy weet dat jy die gewone probleme van jou tyd gaan teekom: werkskaarste, geldskaarste, gewetenlose optrede, bespotting. Hy weet hoeveel teenkanting jy as geestelike leier gaan ervaar; wat jy gaan oorkom as jy Sy Naam voor die mense sou bely. Hy weet watter

ondersteuningstrukture vanjaar gaan wegval; hoeveel druk daar op jou gaan wees. En Hy kan iets daaromtrent doen!

Aardse ouers moet hul vertrek-kende kinders stilletjies van agter die kantgordyne staan en dophou; hulle kan maar net sug en op hul knieë neersak om die weerlose figuurtjie wat die grootmenslewe moet gaan aandurf, aan God op te dra.

God is anders. Sy Heilige Gees vergesel jou. Sy Heilige Gees bly by jou, daar waar jy as kind van God op die uitslag van die mammogram wag; daar waar jy as 49ste aansoeker vir 'n pos voor jou onderhoud staan en prewel-bid. Sy Heilige Gees sit nie onbetrokke langs jou, asof

julle mekaar van geen kant ken nie. Nee, Hy bly by die geknakte riet as Een vir Wie die herstel van die knakplek saakmaak.

God waak oor jou, al het jy al so dikwels misluk. En in die wagkamer waaruit die vroue geroep word vir die uitslag van hul toetse, druk Hy die verwonde lam met die wild-kloppende hartjie teen Sy bors.

Dit is wat Hy beloof het. Dit is wat Hy sonder uitsondering sal bly doen.

**Gebed:** Here, in U Teenwoerdigheid vind ek oorlewing.

**Uit:** Beloftes van Reën en Dou, Maretha Maartens, Aktuapers, 1996.

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# Jesus is Coming!

A few days before John F. Kennedy was to be inaugurated as President of the USA, Billy Graham, the well-known Evangelist, invited him to a game of golf. On his way back from the golf course, he turned to Billy Graham and asked him: "Do you really believe that Jesus Christ is coming back to Earth again?" Billy Graham said: "Yes Sir, I do believe," and shared with him the truth of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to Earth.

A thousand days later, President John F. Kennedy was assassinated. At his funeral, Cardinal Cushing read these words to millions of people who were watching television all over the world: "For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with

*them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord for ever. Therefore encourage each other with these words*" (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18).

As we see present global events worsen, ecologists are telling us that the world's ice caps are melting, and floods will inundate New York City and much of the East Coast. We are now living close to the end of the age and the signs of the times indicate this. Have faith and look forward to the promise that the Lord Jesus Christ will come again!

1 Thessalonians 4:16 reminds us that the dead (in Christ) will rise first. "Therefore, if anyone is IN CHRIST, he is a new creation. Old things have passed away. Behold all things have become new" (2 Cor. 5:17).

1 Thessalonians 4:17 tells us that we who are still alive, will be

caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. The phrase "caught up" means to snatch away, to seize. The word "caught up" in Greek, *harpazō*, means "to be snatched away rapidly". In an instant we will be clothed in heavenly bodies (i.e., glorified bodies); 1 Corinthians 15:1-53.

In Revelation 5:9 we read that they sang a new song and the new song is "Worthy is the Lamb" (verse 12).

Sing a new song just where you are right now! Open your heart to the Lord Jesus Christ, accept Him as your personal Saviour, for He is inviting you to come to His Throne of grace!

**PRAY THIS PRAYER:**  
"Thank You Lord Jesus for dying for me, forgive me all my sins and save me. Come and live in me now and throughout eternity."  
- Pastor Bill Marks

## Fruitful in the Old Age

Are you over 80 years old or nearing 80? Listen to this: A 90-year-old man in America asked the Lord to take him home to heaven. "I have finished the assignment You gave me, now I'm ready to go Home...."

"NO!" said the Lord, "I saved your life for these end times. I give you a new assignment. You are going to pray from now on for the spiritual awakening of your country and the world." The man started praying. Some of his family joined him, and then some friends. Today, that man has 1 000 praying partners from all over. Retired? Start praying!!

# Can You Sleep While the Wind Blows?

Years ago, a farmer owned land along the Atlantic sea coast. He constantly advertised for hired hands.

Most people were reluctant to work on farms along the Atlantic. They dreaded the awful storms that raged across the Atlantic, wreaking havoc on the buildings and crops. As the farmer interviewed applicants for the job, he received a steady stream of refusals.

Finally, a short, thin man, well past middle age, approached the farmer.

Are you a good farm hand?" the farmer asked him.  
"Well, I can sleep when the wind blows," answered the little man. Although puzzled by this answer, the farmer, desperate for help, hired him.

The little man worked well around the farm, busy from dawn to dusk, and the farmer felt satisfied with the man's work.

Then one night the wind howled loudly in from offshore. Jumping out of bed, the farmer grabbed a lantern and rushed next door to

the hired hand's sleeping quarters.

He shook the little man and yelled, "Get up! A storm is coming! Tie things down before they blow away!"

The little man rolled over in bed and said firmly, "No sir. I told you, I can sleep when the wind blows."

Enraged by the response, the farmer was tempted to fire him on the spot. Instead, he hurried outside to prepare for the storm.

To his amazement, he discovered that all of the hay-stacks had been covered with tarpaulins. The cows were in the barn, the chickens were in the coops, and the doors were barred. The shutters were tightly secured. Everything was tied down. Nothing could blow away.

The farmer then understood what his hired hand meant, so he returned to his bed to also sleep while the wind blew.

**MORAL OF THE STORY:**  
When you are prepared, spiritually, mentally, and physically, you have nothing to fear.



Can you sleep when the wind blows through your life? The hired hand in the story was able to sleep because he had secured the farm against the storm. We secure ourselves against the storms of life by grounding ourselves in the Word of God. **We don't need to understand, we just need to hold His hand to have peace in the middle of storms.**

**"Therefore, every [one] who hears these words of Mine and does them, I will compare him to a wise man who built his house on the solid rock; and the rain came down, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and they beat against that house, and it did not fall, for it had been founded on the solid rock" (Matt. 7:24-25).**  
- Selected

# HOEKOM GLO EK IN GOD?

**Ek het Hom nodig! So hier is my antwoord...**

**Ek glo in God, want partykeer is die wêreld so ongelooflik wonderlik en dinge werk so goed uit dat my siel uitroep vir iemand om voor dankie te sê.**

**Dan is dit Hy!**

**Ek glo in God, want soms is die berge en die sonsondergang en die wolke en die maan so mooi dat ek iemand nodig het om te prys. Iemand moes dit gemaak het.**

**Dis Hy!**

**Ek glo in God, maar partykeer gebeur goed wat so onbeplan is en so seermaak en dan voel dit vir my asof niemand verstaan nie. Maar dan onthou ek die spykers in Sy hande en die aan die kruis. Dan weet ek iemand huil saam met my.**

**Dis Hy!**

**Ek glo in God, maar partykeer is ek so deurmekaar en die lewe so sinneloos en my drome lyk onbereikbaar. Dan het ek iemand nodig om saam met my die pad te stap en vir my die rigting aan te wys.**

**Dan is Hy daar!**

**Ek glo in God, maar partykeer is ek so dom en ek doen sulke simpel goed. Dan mors sonde my hart en my lewe so op en maak ek ander mense so seer... En dan het ek nodig dat iemand vrede en wysheid bring.**

**Dan is Hy daar!**

**Hy maak heel wat ek verbrou het! Hy bring genade selfs in seer wat ek veroorsaak het!**

**Ek glo in God, want partykeer weet ek niks. Ek het leiding en wysheid nodig in 'n deurmekaar wêreld wat ek nie verstaan nie.**

**Dan skryf Hy vir my in die Bybel en ek lees Sy Woord en hoor Sy Stem en dinge maak weer sin! Ek glo in God, in Jesus, in Sy Gees,**

**want Hy's daar! Heeltyd! Altijd!**

**In alles waardeur ek gaan - maak nie saak hoeveel keer ek dieselfde foute maak nie... Hy is daar! Ek glo in God, want ek sien nie kans om ooit alleen te wees of enigiets alleen te doen nie.**

**As jy kos in die yskas het, klere aan jou lyf, 'n dak oor jou kop - is**

**hy ryker as 75% van alle mense op aarde. As jy geld in die bank het, in jou beursie, en nog kleingeld in 'n bottel, is jy onder die 8% rykste mense op aarde.**

**As jy vanoggend wakker geword het met meer gesondheid as siekte, is jy meer geseënd as die miljoene mense wat nie hierdie week sal oorleef nie.**

**As jy nog nooit in 'n oorlog was nie, nog nooit in die tronk nie, nog nooit gemartel is nie, en nog nooit honger gely het nie, is daar 500 miljoen mense wat slechter af is as jy.**

**As jy 'n kerkdiens kan bywoon sonder enige vrees van aanvalle, arrestasie, marteling of dood, is jy meer geseënd as 3 miljard mense in die wêreld!**

**As albei jou ouers nog lewe en boonop getroud is, is dit 'n uitsondering!**

**As jy jou kop kan optel met 'n glimlag op jou mond en regtig dankbaar is vir jou seëninge, is jy gelukkig, want baie mense kan,**

**maar doen dit nie... As jy hierdie boodskap kan lees, het jy 'n dubbele seën ontvang: iemand het aan jou gedink en jy is voortrek bo miljoene mense wat glad nie kan lees nie.**

**Geniet jou dag, tel jou seëninge, en deel hierdie gedagte met iemand anders, sodat ons almal kan onthou hoe gelukkig en geseënd ons werklik is!!**

**"Die lamp van die liggaam is die oog. As jou oog goed is, sal jou hele liggaam lig hê. Maar as jou oog sleg is, sal jou hele liggaam sonder lig wees. As die lig in jou donker is, hoe donker moet dit dan nie wees nie?" (Matt. 6:22-23).**

#### Gebed:

**Ons Hemelse Vader, help my asseblief om my lewensperspektief te verander. Ek wil graag U Lig vir die wêreld wys. Dankie Here. Amen.**

**[Hierdie boodskap is uit 'n baie ou koerant uitgeskeur en dis so waar! Moet hom nie vir jouself hou nie, stuur aan en laat almal hul seëninge raaksien!]**

## Tien Belofte...

**[Ek het nog nooit die "Tien Gebooie" só mooi gehoor nie!]**

#### Eerste belofte:

**As Ek die eerste plek in jou lewe inneem, sal jy geen ander gode wil dien nie, want Ek sal die ereplek in jou lewe hê!**

#### Tweede belofte:

**As Ek in jou hart woon, sal dit nie nodig wees om gesnede beeld van My te maak nie, want jy sal self My beeld dra!**

#### Derde belofte:

**As jy My liefhet, sal My Naam nooit 'n vloekwoord oor jou lippe kan wees nie, maar in alle omstandighede deur jou eerbiedig en gerespekteer word!**

#### Vierde belofte:

**As Ek die ereplek in jou lewe het, sal die rusdag die hoogtepunt van die week vir jou wees. Dit sal vir jou 'n vreugde wees om in die gemeenskap van die gelowiges My te aanbid. 'n Dag om na uit te sien, nie om teen op te sien nie!**

#### Vyfde belofte:

**As Ek in jou lewe is, sal dit vir jou 'n voorreg wees om jou ouers te eer en lief te hê. Dit sal nie vir jou moeilik wees nie, want agter hulle sal jy My sien wat hulle vir jou uitgekies het!**

#### Sesde belofte:

**As jy My liefde jou eie gemaak het, sal jy nooit iemand wil seermaak of haat nie, wat nog te sê doodmaak!**

#### Sewende belofte:

**As jy My liefhet, sal dit nie moeilik wees om aan jou lewensmaat getrouw te wees nie. As Ek 'n plek in jou huwelik het, sal julle vir mekaar lief wees en julle geluk sal ek in My Hande bewaar en vashou!**

#### Agtste belofte:

**As Ek op die troon van jou lewe sit, sal jy daagliks vra: "Aan wie en waar kan ek aan 'n ander iets gee?" En jy sal nooit iets van 'n ander wil neem nie.**

#### Negende belofte:

**As Ek in jou lewe is, sal dit nie meer vir jou lekker wees om van 'n ander kwaad te praat nie. Deur My Gees sal jy 'n mens wees wat van 'n ander niks sal sê as dit nie iets goeds is nie!**

#### Tiende belofte:

**As jy één met My is, sal My Gees jou tevredenhed gee om vergeenoegd te wees met wat jy het, met die besef dat God gee soos wat jy nodig het en wat Hy gee, gee Hy altyd genoeg sodat jy niks sal kortkom nie!**

## The Story of Cyprian

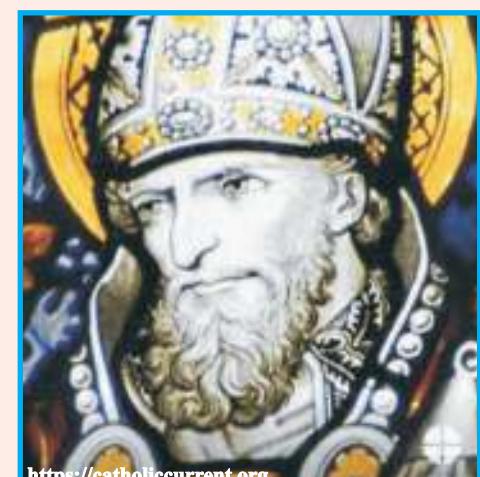
**"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you" (Ezekiel 36:26 NKJV).**

Cyprian was a wealthy nobleman who lived during the third century. He had a golden and bejewelled chariot, wore fancy clothes studded with diamonds and precious stones, and lived a debauched life.

Cyprian wrote a letter to one of the Christian theologians of his time, saying he couldn't possibly imagine how he could change his life. The long-standing habits, tastes, and desires that he had developed, the sins he clung onto - how could he possibly give those things up? How could he ever become like the Christians he saw?

To him it seemed totally impossible. But by the divine power and grace of God, things that seem totally impossible can happen, and so Cyprian was transformed. God reached down and took out Cyprian's stony heart and placed within him a heart that was tuned to loving God and singing His praises.

Cyprian was so totally transformed that he went on to become one of the great Chris-



tian leaders of the Early Church.

We may not understand how our old natures, habits, and sins can be completely turned around. But the good news is that we don't have to understand. We just have to trust in Jesus and be born again.

All kinds of people have experienced the regenerating power of God and enjoy a new life in Jesus. And we can experience it too!

So what now? Pray for those you know who don't yet know Jesus. Ask God to soften their hearts and step into their life. Even if they think change is impossible for them, be persistent in your prayers for them.

# MANY YEARS ... MANY MIRACLES

by Dr Bibi Bosch

We sometimes look for what we term as "big miracles" - someone walking from their wheelchair, or blind eyes opening. However, God does a myriad of miracles for us from day to day, and they are all "big".

On 8 January 2023, God did another miracle for me. Since my current computer is no longer worth the effort and money to repair, I need a new computer - one that can edit videos. Through two friends, God provided two-thirds of what is needed.

Then a friend, Rita, asked emphatically that the Lord will lead me to only the very best computer for what I need to do. She also prayed for other needs.

Within 18 hours of Rita's prayer, the Lord performed the miracle that she had asked for! I was busy telling a married couple why I have not yet responded to their invitation to help them in their ministry. I was busy with a project involving about 3 to 10 million people who will receive my translated books in a restricted nation. This was taking all my time at present. I told them how the enemy tried to stop me via my computer that broke. He responded by saying he was going to buy me a new computer! When I mentioned the specifications of what I needed, he raised the bar to something even better! Are we sometimes awestruck because we do not really expect the miracle, even though we had asked for it?

For the past 45 years, I have said "yes" to the call of God on my life as a career missionary. The first thing that I was worried about, was, "But who will support me financially?" This was my question at the age of 18 in 1976, while brushing my teeth just before leaving for the weekly prayer meeting at church. While waiting for that prayer meeting to start, I read the next portion of Scripture from where I usually would be reading. God was answering my question from Luke 22:35, "*Then Jesus asked them, 'When I sent you without purse, bag or sandals, did you lack anything?'* 'Nothing,' they answered."

The Lord was putting my mind at ease, that I had nothing to worry about - as a loving Father, He would provide. And after 35 years (out of 45) on the mission field, He is still doing this,

regardless of on which continent I am working. And He is still providing for me, like He did yesterday with the computer. Please allow me to tell you some of these miracles that I experienced along the way - miracles of provision from the Father's loving Hand.

Until now, the Lord has been raising people to stand with me while I am in the mission field, and I am extremely grateful for their faithfulness in helping me - they are investors in the Kingdom of God! Throughout the past 35 years, whether out on the mission field or even working from home during Covid lockdowns, the Lord showed me His immense faithfulness and love via one miracle at a time. Some regularly gave me clothing, while others provided supplements, meals, car tyres, medication, maintenance services, accommodation, furniture, a holiday, flight tickets, and even two computers. **I honour and thank Him for His generous provision!**

In 1981, I was asked by a friend whether I wanted to buy their car. When I prayed about this, I had peace about buying it, but I still needed an extra R440, over and above what I had saved over years until then. An acquaintance called me to ask if I will type her a big table stretching over two A3-pages. After doing the work, she asked what I needed, because, "I don't want to give you something that you do not need." She did not wait for a reply, and the next day, she dropped a bouquet of flowers, a card and a concert ticket. I was grateful, but my heart dropped into my shoes. My friends encouraged me to ask the Lord to tell her that I needed R440, but I hesitated. Without any contact between her and me or any of my colleagues on the field, the next day she dropped an envelope containing exactly R440!

Just before returning to the mission field after a period of time out at home, I arrived at work for my last day. I thanked God for His provision during my lengthy time at home, and unwisely added, "Father, I trust that You will provide for me on the mission field, just like You did here." The Lord rebuked me, "I do not provide for you because you are working for Me, but because of My intense love for you as your loving Father." I asked the Lord for His forgiveness.

One sunny day in 1978, I read the portion about the crows providing meat for Elijah at the brook of Kidron. A thought dropped into my heart that God will use "crows" to provide for me. Thus, His provision will come via unlikely sources or origins.

That afternoon, during my daily walk in our neighbourhood in Windhoek, Namibia, I saw a lady whom I knew, but had last seen her four years prior in South Africa. We started talking, and the next day she fetched me with her car, took me to a pharmacy, and told me to choose anything that I needed, and with that, a most beautiful coat that she had in her home. The Lord truly sent a "crow" to provide!

When I left for my first long-term assignment overseas in 1993, I started praying for a computer for the purposes of teaching notes. Without him knowing about this need, the Lord used a man to give me R3 000 toward this purpose. When I arrived in England, adding the money that I had earned to the gift of R3 000, I could buy a new but dead computer without any software. In faith, I bought the computer, trusting the Lord for the £64 (Sterling Pounds) for the software. That same week, a Danish colleague received a cheque from Canada and instantly knew this was not "her money", so she asked the Lord who this was for. He showed her that I needed that money. She confided in a close friend to hear whether I needed money, and how much. Her cheque from Canada was for exactly £64!

We did not grow up in an affluent family - we did not have it broad. I think that sometimes we then do not expect or ask for any luxuries, not even from God. But God, Who knows our most intimate thoughts, delights in providing some treats. While working in Manila, Philippines, I walked into my room after lunch, and had a craving for rusks - a South African snack of hard-baked bread that one can dip into coffee. I knew that I would not find it anywhere outside of South Africa, and told myself to just do without it.

Fifteen minutes later, a South African friend who lived 45 minutes' drive away, called to ask, "Do you like rusks?" Wow! She was baking them and I came to her mind. God is awesome in His care!

Many years later, on a pineapple farm in southern Philippines, I opened the fridge. I thought about having heavy bread, but in the Philippines, the normal man in the street eats a sweet light-weight bread. Instead of asking my Father in faith for heavy bread, I shoved this craving as an impossibility. That very next morning, I needed to go and meet a missionary in town. At the end of my conversation and then 45 minutes of e-mailing, she put a big, heavy, home-baked bread, fresh from the oven, in front of me and said it was mine! This lady asked me whether I had butter at home, and I replied that I had margarine. She returned with a huge lump of real butter. Within 24 hours, the Lord gave me what I had craved for, and butter, even if it was not a life-or-death situation at all!

One day, in the far north-west of the Philippines, I sat in a lounge, waiting for my host. I noticed that one button of my blouse had gone loose. I wondered where I would ever find an olive-green portion of thread to secure the button. Without even asking, my Father had already put the exact length of olive-green thread on the floor, less than one meter away - right in front of me! I believe that He sends angels, and He provides even before we can ask!

Sometimes supporters can, out of necessity no longer support me, and then, before I can pray about it, the Lord raises someone else to provide, without me telling any human being about it.

One church asked me recently to clarify why they need to continue supporting me every month. I wrote the letter in trepidation, but left the outcome to the Lord. Instead of dropping me, they increased their monthly support. I can also tell you about telephone booths that worked without any money for an hour when I needed to urgently consult with my mother about a problem, about how He miraculously provided friends, as well as train tickets and two telephone tickets from complete strangers in France, as well as many other miracles, but this article needs to suffice. God is good... all the time!

All honour and glory to the Lord Who is our generous Provider! He loves us unconditionally! He is the God of miracles - big and small!

# WALKING INTO 2023 WITH JESUS

**M**oses required from the Lord, "Teach us to number our days, so we may gain a heart of wisdom" (Psalm 90:12).

Time is a gift we receive from a good, gracious, loving, Heavenly Father. If we want to walk in His ways this new year, we need to learn to use our time wisely.

Ephesians 5:15-16 states in the AMPLIFIED BIBLE, "Therefore see that you walk carefully [living life with honour, purpose, and courage; shunning those who tolerate and enable evil], not as the unwise, but as wise [sensible, intelligent, discerning people], making the very most of your time [on Earth, recognizing and taking advantage of each opportunity and using it with wisdom and diligence], because the days are [filled with] evil."

We CAN experience joy, even when hardships face us, or the world deteriorates around us. We can only experience this kind of joy by "looking to Jesus, the Founder and Perfecter of our faith, Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2). Jesus

knew that the pain and suffering of the Cross would lead to our redemption and spiritual freedom. His joy can become ours when we seek Resurrection power and embrace Christ fully! We can manage our circumstances because in doing so we get to know the God who mercifully ordains them for our joy.

Christ's love and our faith in Him enables us to overcome doubts, temptations, difficulties and to be victorious! "This is the love of God; that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are NOT burdensome. For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world - our faith" (1 John 5:3-4).

We are never alone. Christ's eyes are always on us. In 1908, Minnie Louise Haskins wrote a poem called the "Gate of the Year" which has become famous. I would like to quote the following part - "And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year: 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.' And he replied: 'Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God. THAT shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.'"

Thank You, Precious Jesus, that we can place our hands into Your beautiful, nail-scarred Hands as we walk into and through this new year. Thank You that You keep us safe, secure, and even joyful when our trust is in You. Please help us to focus on You, on Heaven and Eternity where You are preparing a place for us, to live with You forever and ever. We love and worship and adore You, King of kings, our Good Shepherd and Saviour!

- Gillian Myrtle Grimm-Turunen

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I am called by my second name Myrtle/Myrt or Myrtti. I was born in a semi-desert region in South Africa, in Salt Lake, Northern Cape, close to Douglas and Kimberley, on 25 August 1948. I attended Grahamstown Teacher's Training College (PTC and IST) and I taught in quite a few South African Government schools and married a German engineer in Kimberley where our eldest son was born. Later we moved to Natal where our daughter was born and where we got involved in missionary work. Unfortunately, my husband died but, as a widow, I continued working for 14 years as a missionary teacher, while also

assisting to establish two big mission schools in KwaZulu Natal and lecturing teachers in training at a Christian Teacher's Training College.

Afterwards I moved to George where I helped our church establish care centres for street kids, and where we fed, clothed, and evangelized them. Once my kids were independent, I longed to return to mission work, so I joined NICS [Network of International Christian Schools] whose head office is in Southaven, Mississippi.

I travelled world-wide as a missionary teacher to assist various schools and churches in teaching and conducting Children's Church and Adult Sunday School classes, addressing Youth groups, presenting sermons and Bible Studies, visiting & encouraging the elderly at Old Age and Alzheimer's Homes, helping at summer camps, encouraging war vets at Rehab centres, being an advisor for new missionaries and facilitating women's Bible studies and teaching in school classes in many states and countries, I later married my Finnish husband who is also passionate about Jesus and spreading the Gospel.

## U ken vir my... (Psalm 139)

**H**ere, U ken vir my. U, wat die hemel met U eie Hand afgemeet het. U wat die blokkie getrek het en ingekleur het, die wolkies soos watte gevou en teen die blou neergesit het... U wat afgebuk het, en die sterretjies een vir een op hulle plekke gaan neersit het. U wat vir die son sy hoekie gegee het en elke ooggend stil aan hom raak en sag vir hom sê hy moet lig maak. U wat die maan soos 'n legkaart aangeklaarsit het, en sommer vir die mooi vir elke stukkie 'n kans gee om te skyn... elke aand. U wat die aarde se hoekies geteken het, en binne-in daardie hoekies met U eie Hande die hopies berge neergesit het... een vir een vir een. U wat sorgvuldig die sandkorrels afgetel het sodat dit vir die see 'n heining kan maak. U wat 'n streep trek in die sand en vir die branders sê op watter plekkie dit maar mag breek. U wat groter is as die see en die hemel en die berge... U wat U hand lig vir die storm en kyk hoe dit stil-stil rustig raak en gaan lê... U ken vir my.

**U ken vir my, Here.** U wat groot en wys en magtig is, U ken vir my. U

weet nie net van my nie. U neem nie net kennis van my nie. U stap nie net toevallig verby my en sien my so in die verbygaan raak nie. U ken vir my. U ken my naam. U ken my hart wat ek partymaal so diep in my lyf gaan wegsteek. U ken my bang en my trane en my bly en my stukkies hoop. U weet van elke stukkie pad wat onder my voete lê. U ken my dink, nog voordat my mond dit hardop kan sê. U ken vir my.

U ken vir my, Here. Toe ek nog maar 'n gedagte in die hemel was, het U al stil geglimlag oor my, my menswees opgewonde bymekaar begin sit... stukkie vir stukkie aangeklaars. En toe het U U asem deur my geblaas, sommer so sag, en my voete stil-versigtig op die paadjie gesit, die paadjie wat U wou hê ek op moes loop. U blywees het in my oë gelag. Dit is vir my wonderlik dat U my so lief het, Here! Dat U my gemaak en gevorm het, met soveel erns, soveel teerheid, soveel versigtigheid, soveel liefde, soveel vreugde...

U ken vir my, Here. Nog voordat

my voete hulle eie paadjie begin stap het, het U al elke dag van my lewe in U Hemelse Dagboek neergeskryf. Nie net 'n datum en 'n jaar nie, Here. Elke stukkie lag borrel in U boek, elke stukkie bang word dag vir dag toegevou in U liefde, elke traan word in U Dagboek se bekertjie opgevang en getel. Want U weet hoeveel trane my oë kan huil, Here. U ken my. U weet hoeveel borrel-laggies nodig gaan wees om my wêreldjie 'n beter plek te maak. U weet hoeveel bang hierdie hart kan hanteer. Elke dag is in U Dagboek opgeteken, met sorg nagegaan, stil beplan... tot op die laaste bladsy.

Ja, Here, U ken my. U weet ook van die laaste bladsy in my Hemelse Dagboek. Ek dink U het geglimlag toe U daardie datum neergeskryf het... die dag wat ek vir altyd se altyd by U gaan wees.

Dit maak my hart bly om te weet U ken my. **Die God van hemel en aarde... ken vir my.** U is die God wat nie net elke dag se lewe in 'n Dagboek beplan en neergeskryf het nie. Nee. U is die God wat elke

dag saam met my loop tot wanneer ek en U by die laaste bladsy kom. U is die God wat glimlag wanneer die lag uit my lyf uitborrel. U is die God wat stil-stil langs my sit wanneer die verlang te veel word vir my hart om te dra. U is die God wat sag aan my raak wanneer die seer by my oë wil uitloop. U is die God wat my styn teen U vashou en stil vir my sê: "Moenie bang wees nie, Ek is hier, hier by jou."

En wanneer my wêreldjie onderstebo draai, Here, wanneer alles om my verander en dit vir my voel asof die bladsye in U Hemelse Dagboek skeur en vorniel en te vinnig begin blaai, is dit U wat my hand vat en saam met my loop... die onbekende in. Ek ken nie die pad wat mōre onder my voete gaan lê nie, Here. Maar ek weet U ken vir my. U, die God wat die hemel en die aarde gemaak het, en vir die storm beveel om eenkant toe te staan en rustig te raak. **U ken vir my.** In U hande is ek veilig en geborge en beskut. Altyd. En dis vir my genoeg. Amen.

Katrienkie@2021

# Die Nuwe Eienaar

'n Man sit een aand rustig in sy gemakstoel in die sitkamer en koerant lees. Aandete was reeds verby, die kinders gebad en in die bed en sy vrou elders in die huis besig.

Die volgende oomblik is daar 'n klop aan die deur en toe hy oopmaak, staan Jesus voor hom. Hy was baie bly om Jesus te sien, nooi Hom vriendelik in en vra Hom om te sit.

Terwyl hulle nog gesels, is daar weer 'n klop aan die deur. Die man maak die deur oop en voor hom staan die duivel. Die man sê toe dat hy Jesus as Gas het en dat die duivel dadelik moet weggaan. Met dié maak hy die deur toe.

Na 'n rukkie is daar weer 'n klop aan die deur. Weer staan die duivel voor die deur. Die man vra hom weer om weg te gaan, maar die duivel probeer met mag die deur oopstoot om in te kom.

Na 'n redelike gespoek, kry die man dit reg om die deur toe te druk en hy kom sit weer.

Skaars het hy gesit of daar is weer 'n geklop en weer is dit die duivel. Hierdie keer is hy en die man behoorlik in 'n stoeigeveg betrokke. Uiteindelik slaag die man tog daarin om die duivel te oorwin en die deur toe te druk.

Gehawend, vol knoppe en skrape en uitasem val hy in sy stoel neer.

"Jesus, ek verstaan dit nie. U sien hoe ek sukkel om die duivel uit die huis te hou, ek

het gebid en gevra dat U my moet kom help en U sit net hier en doen niks!" laat die man verontwaardig hoor.

"Maar Ek is net 'n gas in jou huis. Dit sal mos nie goeie maniere wees as Ek blant sou inmeng wanneer jy gaste ontvang nie," antwoord Jesus kalm.

Die man vertel toe vir Jesus dat hy baie las het van die duivel wat net altyd in sy huis wil inkom en dat hy al baie beserings opgedoen het in sy pogings om die duivel uit te hou. Dit was dan ook die rede waarom hy so ernstig gebed het dat Jesus tot sy redding moes kom. Hy wou toe by Jesus weet wat hy kan doen om hierdie aanslae permanent af te weer.

"Dis baie maklik," antwoord Jesus. "Gee jou huis vir My!" Die man was baie verbaas en ontsteld. "En wat dan van my en my vrou en my kinders? Waar moet ons dan heen-gaan?"

"Nee, jy verstaan nie mooi nie," antwoord Jesus. "Ek het net gesê jy moet jou huis vir My gee. Ek het nie gesê dat julle moet weggaan nie. Al wat verander, is dat Ek dan die nuwe Eienaar van die huis word. Jy en jou gesin bly nog steeds hier en gaan aan met julle lewens soos gewoonlik. Niks behalwe eienaarskap gaan verander nie!"

Die man oordink die aanbod 'n rukkie en stem toe in. Met dié is daar weer 'n geklop aan die deur. Die man wil opstaan, maar Jesus keer hom.

"Nee, nee, onthou Ek is nou die Eienaar van die huis. Ek sal die deur oopmaak."

Jesus maak toe die deur oop en voor Hom staan die duivel en 'n klomp van sy demone gereed om met mag en geweld die huis binne te storm. Toe hulle Jesus sien, deins hulle terug.

"Waar is die eienaar van die huis?" wil die duivel weet.

"Jy praat met die nuwe Eienaar van hierdie huis. Van hierdie oomblik af is nie jy of een van jou demone hier welkom nie.

Maak dat julle wegkom! Ek wil julle nooit meer hier sien nie!"

Verward en hals-oor-kop is die spul toe daar weg en het nie meer probeer om daardie huis te beset nie! Daarvoor was die nuwe Eienaar net een te veel vir hulle!

"Hy wat voor God kniel, kan voor enigeen staan."

*Ps. 127:1 As die HERE die huis nie bou nie, tevergeefs werk die wat daaraan bou; as die HERE die stad nie bewaar nie, tevergeefs waak die wagter.*  
- Oorgeneem

## Terug na die Gesin!

"Alles het verander," sê die dertigjarige televisieheld. "Wat my lam maak, is die oudmodiese definisies van die woord 'gesin'. Gesinne bestaan nie meer uit 'n pa en 'n ma in 'n eerste huwelik nie. Dit bestaan uit enkelouers en hul kinders, saamwoongesinne, hersaamgestelde gesinne, kruiskulturele gesinne met aangenome kinders uit ander wêreldstreke; jy kry nooit-getroude moeders, pa's wat kinders grootmaak."

In hierdie verandering lê 'n groot deel van die droefheid van ons bestaan. God se volmaakte plan vir die mens was om in 'n eenmalige huwelik met iemand van die teenoorgestelde geslag saam te leef. Sy plan was dat die huwelik vir altyd sou wees en dat kinders sou weet: as ek trou, is dit ook vir altyd. Elkeen wat op die allerpynlikste manier ontdek het hoe minderwaardig die mens se variasies op hierdie Goddelike plan is, sal weet dat God alleen jou ná die skending van Sy plan kan help om op te staan, te oorleef en 'n nuwe lewe te begin. Maar jy wat getroud is, weet jy hoeveel duisternis jy in jou huis toelaat wanneer jy woorde soos 'skei,' 'ons pas nie by mekaar nie...' en 'ek is nie meer lief vir jou nie...' begin gebruik? Ons maak ons lewe uitsigloos wanneer ons nie aan ons huwelike werk nie. Ons open die vensters vir uitsigloosheid en verdriet wanneer ons ophou om vir ons huwelik, ons lewensmaat en ons toekoms as getroudes te bid.

Ons definisies van die 'nuwe gesin' is patetiese nooddefinisies. God beveel ons om mekaar binne die gesin innig lief te hê. Só maak duisternis plek vir lig. Gebed: Here, seën my lewensmaat.  
- Oorgeneem

*Jer. 20:11*

★★★ B&B  *Uit die Hand*

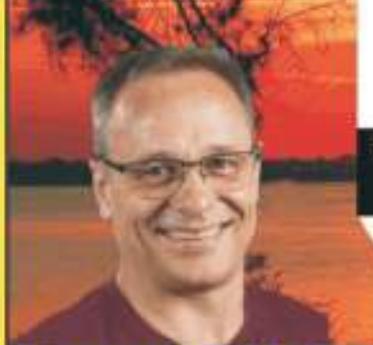
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SONDAE OM 09:30  
WYNNESTRATAAT 18 POTCHEFSTROOM

**Pastoor Johan Nortje 083 280 8971**