

## PART IV

*"For, lo, the winter is past,  
the rain is over and gone;  
the flowers appear on the earth;  
the time of the singing of birds is come,  
and the voice of the turtle  
is heard in our land;*

*The fig tree putteth forth her green figs,  
and the vines with the tender grape  
give a good smell.  
Arise, my love, my fair one,  
and come away..."*

Song of Solomon 2:11-13



# 17

## COUNCILS AND KINGS

After proceeding through customs, I left the port area and headed for a Christian youth hostel in Haifa. I had only enough money left for three nights at the hostel; and so I registered for three nights, and was led to a bunk in a large, airy room.

After unpacking my few possessions, I sat down on the bunk and at once began to feel sorry for myself. Until the Bible classes were to begin in two weeks' time, I had nothing to do and nowhere to go and almost no money left whatsoever. And constantly over the past weeks I had worried about Mike and Joey. I missed them so much, and began even to resent their step-mother, who now was able to care for them in all the ways that I longed to. As I had nothing and there was no clear direction from the Lord, all I did was to sit on the bunk and make myself as gloomy as possible.

Some time passed before there was a soft knock at the door to my room. The director of the youth hostel came in with his wife. "Listen," he said, "we wondered if you'd be interested in helping us out for the next two weeks. One of our assistants is out of the country, and we really need some extra help until she returns. You can move to another room, and we could provide you with room and board and a tiny salary for extras. Is it something you'd be interested in doing?"

Once again I felt a sense of shame rising in my heart, shame at having so easily forgotten the Lord and His hand upon every situation. *What right did I have to feel despondent and forsaken when my life was in His hands?* I gladly accepted their offer, with the knowledge that this was indeed the provision of the Lord for the two weeks that stretched before me.

It was a happy time, and working hard physically helped me to forget the burdens on my heart. One day while I was cleaning the toilets, I had to smile to myself, knowing that the world of "striving for success" that I had left behind, would never understand how I could possibly be happy cleaning bathrooms when all my "higher education" was being "wasted". But to serve the Lord is the greatest joy of all, and when I did all of the menial tasks as unto Him, they became transformed into a service of love.

The time seemed to fly by, and soon I was on my way to Jerusalem for the six-week Bible study, which was attended by twenty people, primarily from Canada, England and the United States. The classes were interesting, including teaching on Jewish history and traditions; Jewish folksongs and dances; and the Jewish festivals in the light of the Gospels. Following the Bible study, we spent time touring Israel, singing and sharing our faith wherever we went. We travelled from one end of the country to the other, re-visiting many of the places Michael, Joey and I had discovered together.

When the six weeks had ended, I was invited to share an apartment with a small group of Believers in the northern Israeli resort town of Nahariya. It is a lovely, tranquil town near the Lebanese border, and my bedroom overlooked the Mediterranean. As I love the sea, it was again evidence of the Father's provision and care.

One day in a time of prayer, the Lord gave to me the following Word:

*"For they will deliver you up to the councils . . .  
And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for My sake, for a  
testimony against them . . .  
But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for  
it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.  
For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in  
you . . .*

Matthew 10:17-20

He underlined it so strongly in my heart that I couldn't ignore it, but it was a puzzle. What in the world did He mean? I had no plans of appearing before any councils and courts! (Did I?)

In September of 1977, my two-year residency permit for Israel was due to expire, and I knew that it would have to be renewed again. One afternoon, as I mentioned this to friends living in Nahariya, I shared the story of all that had happened to me at the immigration centre in Ashdod.

"Didn't they tell you at the airport that they would return your immigration papers to you upon your arrival in Israel?" a friend inquired after I had concluded the story.

"Yes, that is what they had said at the airport on the day of our departure!" I replied. "Well, why don't you go to the office of the Ministry of Immigration in Haifa and request the papers back again?"

I prayed about it, and the Lord confirmed that that is what He wished for me to do. So a few days later I took the bus to Haifa and requested the return of my immigration papers.

Mr. Rozman, the man in charge of immigrants from the United States, referred me to his secretary. First she called the office of immigration in Ashdod to locate a copy of my file. It was not to be found. Then she called Beersheva, and they informed her that the file had been forwarded to Ashdod upon our transfer to the Immigration Centre there. So she re-called Ashdod. They suggested she try the office in Tel Aviv. But it seems that the file was nowhere to be found.

"Well," the secretary informed me, "since the file cannot be located, we'll simply open a new one!" And she left the office to procure the necessary forms.

I knew that right at that moment I was facing a real crossroad in my life. I knew that if the file were never found, I had a chance to live an "ordinary" life in Israel, an opportunity to begin again with no evidence of all that had transpired in Ashdod. I longed for this, and hoped with all my heart that the file had simply disappeared forever. But I sensed that the Scripture the Lord had given me had a purpose, and resigned myself to the Lord's will, whatever it may be (knowing that He was fully aware of my longing for the whole Ashdod incident to be forgotten).

The secretary soon returned with the necessary papers, but just before she sat down to type, she said, "Maybe I'll just call the Jerusalem office of the Jewish Agency to see if they know what's become of your file."

How quickly things happened after that! As soon as my name was mentioned to whomever answered the phone in the Jerusalem office, he began to scream, "What is she doing back in the country? We had orders at the airport not to let her in again. HOW DID SHE GET HERE? What's going on?"

The secretary became frightened by his extreme response, asking me to leave the office as she ran out to call Mr. Rozman to the phone. She hadn't time to notice at all the tears that had begun to slide down my cheeks, as I knew in that moment that the decision had been made.

Mr. Rozman entered the office, and all I heard him say before the door swung shut was, "What's the story on Mrs. Dorflinger?"

After some time, Mr. Rozman came out and sat next to me in the hall. My eyes were still filled with tears, but it could not be helped.

"Dear me," he said kindly, "I have no idea what in the world you have done, but the minute your name was mentioned to the Jerusalem office, they had a fit!" He saw my obvious distress, and reassured me by adding, "Don't worry, we've asked them to forward the file here, and we'll see what can be done. But what in the world is it all about? What have you done to make them so upset?"

"I haven't done anything. Truly. The only reason that they're upset is because I believe in Jesus."

"Is that all? You're quite certain?" he asked incredulously.

"Yes, really, that's all!" I assured him.

"Well, don't be upset. We've sent for the file. Come back to see us in a week or so, and we'll see what can be done about all of this. If that is truly the only problem, surely you'll receive your immigration papers again."

I was grateful for his kindness, and thanked him warmly. I had no idea what the future would bring. But it seemed that my chances for a quiet, unobtrusive life in Israel were quickly slipping away.

When I arrived a week later at the immigration office once again, Mr. Rozman carried in my file, pretending to stagger from the great weight of it. It was rather a large file!

"Listen, my dear, I've read through the file, and it is exactly as you told me. All of the fuss is because of your belief in Jesus, and it seems that it especially upset one man in a key position in the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem. And so that's why such a great fuss was made. But I honestly don't see any reason to deny you your immigration rights because of your personal religious belief!

Let's begin with something practical. In a very few days your residency permit is due to expire. Go tomorrow to the Ministry of Interior in Acco, and simply apply for a renewal of your permit. Don't tell them anything, just fill in the necessary application papers and leave your passport with them in the usual way. And then, if they renew your visa, we'll return your immigration rights as well! But," he continued, "don't get your hopes up, because the Jewish Agency office in Jerusalem has written a letter to the Ministry of Interior, formally requesting them not to renew your residency permit. But let's just wait and see what happens, okay? And as soon as you receive an answer from the Ministry, come right back to see me again."

And so the next day found me at the office of the Ministry of the Interior in Acco, applying for the renewal of my residency permit.

Early in September of 1977, I travelled to visit friends of mine who lived in the heart of downtown Jerusalem, as I wanted so much to be in the capital for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. One morning, after the High Holy Days, the Lord awakened me with the strange instruction to go and visit with the editor of *The Jerusalem Post*, the English daily Israeli paper. This was a great puzzle to me, but a friend agreed to accompany me. We looked up the editor's name in the paper, and proceeded on to the *Jerusalem Post* offices!

When we arrived, I informed the secretary that we wished to speak with the editor. She asked our names, and as soon as my name was mentioned, she exclaimed, "Why, we have a letter about you in today's edition!" and she dashed out the door to take us to see the letter in the newspaper. And, sure enough, there was a letter about me in the paper, that very day! (I had shared with some friends in various countries what was happening with my

residency permit, and this letter was one of many responses that had been sent to *The Jerusalem Post* on my behalf).

*MESSIANIC JEWS*  
*To the Editor of The Jerusalem Post*

Sir,

*We write to you on the matter of our Jewish friend, Eileen Dorflinger, whose status as an immigrant is being questioned because of her belief in Jesus as the Messiah of the Jewish people. We regret this very much and feel that it would be a great loss for Israel if the Messianic Jews should be excluded from their country.*

*According to the 1950 Law of Return, every Jew is granted the right to immigrate to Israel. Discrimination against Eileen Dorflinger would go against the Jewish faith and all the values Israel stands for.*

*During the last year we have lived in Israel. As Christians, we believe in the prophecies of the Old Testament and in their fulfillment in our days. The year in Israel has taught us much about the Jewishness of our faith. This resulted in a great love and respect for the nation of Israel.*

*J. Muller  
W. Muller  
Fjordingby, Norway*

The letter had been written by Jenny and Wolfgang! How amazed I was at the Lord's wisdom and timing! He had sent me to the office of *The Jerusalem Post* on the very day that I was in it! Since my name was therefore known to the secretary, we were ushered into the editor's office with no difficulty.

"Hello," he said "We've received quite a few letters on your behalf. What's the story?" And so I told him all that had happened to me since the children and I had arrived at the immigration centre in Ashdod.

"It's very interesting, but you don't really have a problem until you know whether or not your visa will be renewed. Wait until you hear from the Ministry of Interior on that issue, and when you hear, do come by to see me again."

We thanked him for his time, and left the office. The next day I visited the office of the Ministry of Interior in Jerusalem (my application had been forwarded there) to see if any decision had been made as yet on my visa application. By the third appointment some days later, I was finally informed that no decision had as yet been made, but that my request for an extension would probably be denied. By that time the date for renewal had already passed and my residency permit had expired.

A few days later I shared all that was happening with one of the local Jerusalem pastors. He suggested that I take the problem to the Ecclesiastical Representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to see if there was any way that he could be of help. Since Richard lived in Jerusalem and was there at the time, he offered to accompany me, so after making an appointment we set off together for the Ministry office. The Representative, a forboding-looking man, listened stiffly as I shared my plight with him. The man acted as though I had a good case of the plague, and it was obvious that he didn't want to touch me with a ten-foot pole.

"There's really no way that I can help you," he repeated for the fourth time as he ushered us quickly to the door.

"Whatever shall we do now?" I asked Richard, as we found ourselves back on the sidewalk once again.

"Why don't we just go directly to the Jewish Agency? That's the office where all the trouble started to begin with!" And Richard dashed for a bus. I ran to catch up, feeling terribly frightened at the prospect of confronting the Jewish Agency. "Oh, Lord, please help!" I begged.

We arrived after a short bus ride. Seconds later Richard bumped into someone he knew, asked a few questions, and before we knew what had happened, we found ourselves in the office of the acting head of the entire Agency! It had all happened so quickly, I knew it had to be the hand of the Lord!

Not knowing what else to do, I started to tell him my story. After a few minutes, he interrupted me by saying, "You talk as though you assume that I know something about this case, but I surely do not. I am involved with policy decisions for the entire Agency, and individual cases such as yours are always handled by other offices. But please continue, as I am vitally interested in all you have to say."

At the conclusion of my story, he remarked, "My dear, in your innocence you have hit upon the most sensitive issue in all of Israel. And that is the very question, 'Who is a Jew?' For your sake I almost wish that your mother was a Buddhist, but since she is not, your situation is perfect. Your mother *is* Jewish, which should automatically entitle you to citizenship according to the Law of Return. In addition to that, you have not converted to another faith. And so, my advice to you is simple. Have courage, and fight this in the highest court if necessary. It has gone on long enough that any clerk can arbitrarily decide whether or not someone has the right to be a citizen of Israel. If you take it to court, how can you possibly lose? So be encouraged, and know that I will help you in any way that I can."

After shaking hands in farewell, he concluded by saying, "Personally, I think your beliefs are ridiculous. But that is something that we should discuss over a cup of coffee! It is *not* something that should determine whether or not you are a citizen of Israel! You are certainly entitled to your own personal beliefs!"

I left totally amazed with the door the Lord had opened. He had sent me to the acting head of the very agency that had deported me seven months earlier — and he had encouraged me to fight for citizenship even in the highest court in all the land! Once again I was astonished at how the Lord places such unexpected turns in the pathway He sets before us. A walk in faith can be such an adventure!

The next morning, before dawn, Jesus woke me up. And once again He gave me the Scripture:

*"For they will deliver you up to the councils .  
And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for My sake . . . But  
when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall  
speak . . ."*

Matthew 10:17-19

"But Lord!" I replied immediately, "I'm not appearing before any kings and councils!" His reply was firm. "I want you to speak to Prime Minister Menachem Begin."

I pulled the covers over my head and pretended I hadn't heard. (Those who have tried to hide from the Lord know exactly how successful I was!) As impossible and improbable as it seemed, the Lord's Word is truth; and I knew that somehow I would soon be speaking to Prime Minister Begin. I placed it in the Lord's hands as quickly as I could, knowing that He alone could fulfill it! And then I got on with the day, knowing it was totally out of my control.

That very afternoon, I was sipping tea with a group of Believers when someone casually mentioned, to no one in particular, "Did you know that Prime Minister Begin is having an Open House on Saturday afternoon?" That was only two days away! My heart began to beat rapidly.

"Tell me," I asked, trying to sound as casual as possible. "What does one have to do to go?"

"Well, as far as I know, it's totally opened to the public. All you have to do is to be there!"

Knowing that the information had come my way for the fulfillment of His purposes, I shared with them the burden the Lord had given me to speak with the Prime Minister. "Please pray about it!" I begged them. I surely did not want to see the Prime Minister apart from the will of God!

Saturday morning dawned much too quickly. I knew it was to be the day when I would "appear before kings . ." On my way to the Prime Minister's home, which I learned to my astonishment was only three blocks away from where I was staying, I stopped in at a Christian book shop. At random I picked up a small book entitled *A Word of Hope*, and was amazed as it fell open to the following page:

*"God's Promise"*

*"Show me how much You love me, Lord,  
and save me according to Your promise.  
Then I can answer those who insult me,  
because I trust in Your Word.  
Enable me to speak the true message at all times,  
because my hope is in Your judgments.  
I will always obey Your law,  
for ever and ever!  
I will live in complete freedom,  
because I have tried to obey Your rules.  
I will announce Your commands to kings,  
and I will not be ashamed.  
I find pleasure in obeying Your commandments;  
I will meditate on Your instructions."*

Psalm 119:41-48  
(paraphrased)

It was surely a confirmation, and so I walked slowly towards the Prime Minister's home to find out the time of the Open House. When I arrived, I approached the security guard in the watchtower.

"Please, could you tell me the time of the Open House?" I asked him in English.

"Five o'clock yesterday," was his immediate reply.

"Yesterday!" I exclaimed, filled with disappointment. I must have misunderstood the Lord. As I turned to walk away, Jesus explained gently, "He thinks 'yesterday' means 'today'."

I asked the guard joyfully in Hebrew, "Ha yom?" ("This day?")

"Ken, ken, ha yom!" he replied.

I'm sure he will never dream the world of difference between "yesterday" and "today"!

I returned to my friends' apartment and waited for 5:00 p.m. to draw near. How nervous I felt! Finally it was time to proceed to the Prime Minister's home for the Open House.

Still hoping that perhaps the Lord would change His mind at the last minute, or that I

had been wrong about it all along, I placed a fleece before Him.

"Oh, Lord," I said cajolingly, "if this is not Your will, please let me faint before I pass that bench on the sidewalk in front of me!" As I drew nearer to the bench I walked very slowly, hoping to feel faint at any moment. "Yoo hoo, Lord, this is the bench!" I reminded Him.

Disillusioned, I passed the bench in perfect health. I tried it again with the next bench, in case He hadn't heard me the first time, or had been busy with someone else at that moment. However, I arrived a few minutes later at the Prime Minister's home still feeling well!

A small line had formed, and at exactly 5:00 p.m. the security check began as people were ushered into a small courtyard in the centre of the home. When it was my turn to enter, the first things I noticed were the video tape and television cameras ready to roll the minute the Prime Minister appeared on the scene.

Soon he and his wife arrived and began warmly greeting the guests. Feeling terrified, I placed a final fleece. "Lord, if it is *truly* Your will for me to speak to him, then let him come and shake my hand!" And then I stood as far away as I possibly could. It was God's will, however. All too soon he came over and shook my hand! With a final prayer for His wisdom, I introduced myself.

"Shalom! My name is Eileen Dorflinger," I practically whispered, as the microphone edged closer. "I am a Jewess who has accepted Jesus as the Messiah, and they are trying to deny me the right of citizenship because of my belief."

He turned around and publicly stated, "Is your mother Jewish?" because that is what entitles someone to citizenship according to the Law of Return.

I nodded. "Yes," I answered.

"And your father, too?" he asked.

"Yes," I answered.

"Well, then you certainly have a right to be a citizen of Israel. I would prefer that you would uphold the traditions of your forefathers, but nevertheless, you are still a Jew!" He walked away, and then turned back to add, "If they give you any further trouble, you write me a personal letter."

What an amazing moment it had become, as the leader of the nation of Israel made a public statement that I still had the right to be a citizen of Israel! Filled with wonder, I left the Open House to share the astonishing news with my friends.

The following day, I visited the Ministry of Interior once again, to see if they had as yet made the decision whether or not to renew my visa.

"There has not been a final word as yet, but it looks as though your visa will be denied," I was informed. "Are you planning to appeal it through the Ministry of Interior?" the clerk asked me.

"Do you think it will help?" I inquired.

"Probably not," he replied. "It would probably just take you a long time to get nowhere!"

I thanked him for his help, and left to see the editor of *The Jerusalem Post*.

"It looks as though my visa will be denied," I told him.

"So what now?"

His question startled me. I had come to *him* for direction!

"Why, I don't know!" I replied. "I guess I will take it to court," I murmured, remembering the suggestion of the head of the Jewish Agency, having felt the Lord's confirmation at the time.

"Who is your lawyer?" he asked.

Again I was startled! "Why, I don't know!" I gasped again. "Could you recommend one?" I queried.

He was silent for a long while, and I had the feeling that I had asked a question that

should not be asked of the head of a major newspaper.

"Try Uri Huppert," he offered at last. "I don't know him personally, but I do know of him. Let me know what happens." And with that I was dismissed.

The Lord confirmed it as His choice, and so I made an appointment with him at once. The entire situation was explained to him.

"Go home and type out all the details that you can possibly think of," Uri said. "Anything whatsoever that could be used in the court. Bring it into my office in the morning, and I'll think it over."

The typing took many hours, but by the next morning everything was ready to present to him.

"I'll meet with you again in three days, the day after Simchat Torah," he explained. "Then I'll let you know whether or not I will accept this case."

Once again, I prayerfully placed the situation in Jesus' hands. It looked as though the doors were continuing to open, but I had no idea why the Lord would wish to bring this before the Israeli courts. And so I prayed that His will and His will alone would be accomplished! *Oh Father, close the doors quickly if this is not of You!*

That night I wrote the following letter to Prime Minister Begin:

*Prime Minister Menachem Begin  
Office of the Prime Minister  
Jerusalem, Israel*

*Dear Prime Minister Begin:*

*Two weeks ago I came to your Open House to share that I am a Jewess who has accepted Jesus as the Messiah of our people, and that because of my beliefs, my right to become a citizen of Israel was being questioned. You stated that, as both my parents are Jewish, I, too, am Jewish, and have a right to live as a citizen of Israel. You also stated that if there was any further difficulty, I should write you a personal letter.*

*On Wednesday, 28 September 1977, the Office of the Ministry of Interior in Jerusalem informed me that my application for an A/I visa will be denied because of my belief in Jesus (upon recommendation from the Jewish Agency).*

*I have a great love for Israel and a strong and complete identity with my people. I have not "converted" to any other religion. I have a Master's degree in Social Work, and feel I can contribute to Israeli society. I plan to contest this decision in the High Court if necessary, as my commitment to this land is very real.*

*If there is any way that you can help, it would be greatly appreciated.*

Very sincerely yours,

*Eileen Dorflinger*

The next day, I went off to help a friend move out of a tiny room into a larger apartment. The minute I entered the room she was vacating, I had the distinct impression that the Lord wished for me to rent it! How it astonished me! I had been living in the lovely Nahariya apartment overlooking the sea. Appalled, I glanced at the new home He seemed to be guiding me to. It was a very small furnished apartment, with only one room and an adjoining

bathroom. The walls were a dirty brown, and the only window was shuttered closed. It was dark and dismal and dirty, and on one of Jerusalem's busiest streets. In addition to all of that, I didn't have a penny for rent! But the feeling could not be shaken.

"Joyce, it feels like I'm supposed to rent this!" I exclaimed.

"Super!" she replied. "It hasn't been rented yet, and you can move in tomorrow!"

The rent was astonishingly low, costing only \$35.00 per month. "But I don't even have *that* much!" I moaned. (I was sure that Joyce had even less than I did, which is why I did not hesitate to share my plight with her). "Well, if I have the money by tomorrow morning, I'll know for sure that it was His will," I concluded. "Perhaps it will come in the mail!"

Joyce grinned. "Don't limit Him only to the mail!" she admonished.

After I had finished helping her move, I went off to check the mail. There was not a single letter to be found, and so I returned to my friends' home. A few hours later, Joyce came by. "Here," she said, handing me 650 Israeli shekels. "The Lord directed me to give you the money for one month's rent, as well as enough money to buy some paint for the walls!"

"But Joyce! I didn't think you *had* any money!" I exclaimed.

"I didn't, but my parents just wired me some!" she explained.

"Wow!" It was all I could say. Once again, I praised God for having taught me not to plan my own life — not even one day ahead. As Jesus so wisely admonished:

*"Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. . . ."*

Matthew 6:34

I certainly never dreamed that the very next day I would be moving into my very own room in the heart of Jerusalem!

I painted the room white and hammered open the shutters. Joyce sewed matching pillows, curtains and a bedspread out of some lovely sheets, and within a short time the room looked twice as big and felt like home.

Happily settled, I kept my appointment with Uri Huppert. He explained that his student had researched the Israeli law books on Simchat Torah.

"We discovered that there is no precedent whatsoever in the history of Israel for a case such as yours." He then described a case called "The Father Daniel Case". This involved a Jewish man who became a Dominican monk and then journeyed to Israel requesting citizenship. The court ruled that he had clearly converted to another faith, and could no longer be considered a Jew. My case differed in that I had not converted to another faith, and had an even deeper identification with my Jewish heritage than before.

"I've decided to accept the case," Mr. Huppert declared. "And I want you to know that I am accepting it not just with my head, but with my heart as well." (I had a feeling that his decision was no surprise to the Lord, as He clearly knows the hearts of men!)

"We will take it to the High Court of Justice," Uri continued. He explained that in Israel there were three High Courts. Two were appeal courts, to reverse a decision made in the lower courts. "One is a civil appeal court, and the second is a criminal appeal court," he said. "The court we are appealing to is called the High Court of Justice, and it is a third and very special court that sets a precedent or changes an existing law. You go directly to it, without appealing to a lower court first."

He went on to explain that we would present our case in writing before the court, and the judges would determine whether or not it was something on which they felt they could make a decision. If so, an injunction would be placed against the Ministry of Interior giving them a certain amount of time to explain why they were not recognizing my right to be a citizen of Israel.

"So our job now is to prepare the presentation in writing for the High Court. Once they receive our application, we will request that they issue an order prohibiting the Ministry of Interior from deporting you until such time as a court decision has been made."

After a moment he continued, "Right now your visa has expired, through no fault of your own, and you now have no legal status in Israel. They could deport you and be within their legal rights to do so. My suggestion to you is that you stay away from your Nahariya address and go into hiding for a time. Don't even tell *me* where you will be! Of course, this would only be until the court accepts the case, and then they will forbid the Ministry from deporting you until their decision is forthcoming."

Once again the Lord's wisdom astonished me, and once again I was grateful that I had obeyed Him even though I had not understood at the time. I moved into the little room in Jerusalem, knowing only that it was His will — and two days later the explanation for it arrived! It was to be my "hiding place"! I giggled as I realized that the Lord had found me a "hiding place" in the heart of Jerusalem, only one block away from the Ministry of Interior from whom I was hiding! (How grateful I was that He had shown me long ago that His protection is real, and that I had nothing to fear!)

We set an appointment for early the following week, so that Mr. Huppert could review with me the presentation he would work out for the High Court of Justice.

"One more thing," he added. "The cost for this case before the High Court of Justice will be 35,000 shekels (\$3500.00)." At that moment I had exactly 10 shekels! I looked despairingly at Joyce, who had accompanied me to Mr. Huppert's office that morning.

"Don't worry, she'll have it," Joyce informed my lawyer. I, for one, couldn't imagine how!

At this point, I took the entire situation to the Lord in prayer. I had no natural desire to bring this or any other case before the Israeli courts. My personal hope was simply that the whole matter be forgotten! But step by step, situation by situation, the Lord seemed to be opening the door for this case to reach the court. *Why?* I wondered. And, at each juncture, I gave Him the opportunity to close the door if I was proceeding not according to His will.

By this stage, I had not the money needed for the court application. The funds were needed in their entirety within six days. And so I prayed, "*Dear Father, once again I need Your guidance and direction in this situation. If for Your purposes You wish for this case to proceed to the courts, then I trust that within the six-day period of time the money will somehow be forthcoming. And if it is not Your will, then close the door now, amen.*"

It also seemed important to share the situation with the Believers who were living in Israel. I still did not understand the Lord's purposes in bringing this matter before the courts, but I felt it was important to enlist their prayers and inform others of this situation. So I shared with groups of Believers from one end of the country to the other — in Jaffa, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Beersheva, Haifa, Nahariya, Tiberias, and other parts of the Galilee. And, almost without exception, the Believers felt that I should proceed to the court with the assurance of their support and prayers.

The final confirmation seemed to be the Father's provision, for, within the six-day period of time, the entire amount of money was forthcoming, including the eight-percent tax! And almost all of it came from the Believers in Israel.

When the papers were prepared, I was called into Mr. Huppert's office to sign them before their hand-deliverance to the High Court of Justice. Everything was dated and signed on the fourteenth of October, 1977 — which happened to be my thirty-fourth birthday!

A friend later shared how she had said to the Lord at this time, "But Lord! Esther hasn't a clue as to the significance of all of this! She has no idea what this symbolizes! She has no

understanding of what this represents!" To which the Lord replied, "That's exactly why I've chosen her and not you!"

There are times when ignorance is bliss.

# 18

## ROSES HAVE THORNS

A few days after the application reached the High Court of Justice, Uri received word from the court that we were to appear before three judges on the 17th of November, 1977, and at that time we would be notified whether or not the case would be accepted for a hearing. I felt from the Lord to spend the three days prior to the court appearance in prayer and fasting, and to ask friends to join me in it, to again be certain that the Lord alone would have control of the situation. And I began to pray at once that if this case were not His will, that it would not be accepted by the High Court of Justice. I also notified the Believers throughout the country of the date of the court appearance.

One day,, friends in Jerusalem gave me a greeting card to assure me of their love and prayers and support. On the cover of the card was a very unusual drawing of a rose. The thorns were predominant! Thorns are certainly a part of the rose, but the rose is so fragrant and beautiful that the thorns are hardly noticed at all. But then, some days later, I came across the following poem:

### *THE THORN*

*I stood, a mendicant of God,  
Before His royal throne,  
And begged Him for one priceless gift  
For me to call my own.*

*I took the gift from out His hand,  
But as I would depart,  
I cried, "But Lord, this is a thorn,  
And it has pierced my heart!*

*This is a strange and hurtful gift  
Which Thou hast given me."  
He said, "I love to give good gifts,  
I gave My best to thee."*

*I took it home, and though at first  
The cruel thorn hurt sore,  
As long years passed I grew at last  
To love it more and more.*

*I learned He never gives a thorn*

*Without this added grace;  
He takes the thorn to pin aside  
The veil which hides His face!*

(author unknown)

When the Lord had given me the single rose some months earlier, I had not thought about the thorns at all! I wondered what the Lord meant by this additional teaching on the rose, but I was not to remain in the dark for long. It seemed that, even though almost everyone had agreed with the court case in the beginning, by this point — just a few weeks later — the enemy had begun to sow seeds of discord. Almost everywhere I went I was met by criticism of one sort or another. People managed to criticize almost every aspect of my life and walk with the Lord, and criticism had begun about the court case as well. As a fairly new Believer, I had not experienced this before. It reminded me vaguely of the accusations that had been hurled at me when my school was stolen. But *these* people were followers of Jesus. What in the world made them so critical and so unkind? So judgmental?

I realized all too soon an even deeper need for my "hiding place". My Hale room on King George Street became a real place of refuge against the storm, as criticism continued to rage. The continual condemnation made me feel so alienated and alone. *Why were people judging me so harshly?*

I wrote the following in my journal on the 6th of November:

*"For many days now I have endured the criticisms of so many:  
'She shouldn't say, "The Lord told me," as it causes jealousy.'  
'If she was truly a Believer, she would never have left her children.'  
'How can she not have a job?'  
'She needs a covering.'  
'She must submit to a body of Believers.'  
'She says "Jesus" and not "Yeshua".'  
'She loves publicity and when this is all over, she will be let down.'  
'She is endangering our families and our stay in Israel.'  
'Israel as a nation has so much to deal with. How can she do this to Israel now?'*

*It was truly weighing me down, after hearing so, so much. This morning, when I had had too much, You touched me once again with another glimpse into Your suffering. Oh Jesus, how ever did you endure it all? How often You were criticized and condemned and judged! But how lovingly You always responded! Thank You, my Beloved, for giving me an even closer glimpse into the depth of Your love for us. Pleas.: grant me the same spirit of forgiveness! Help me to realize once again that I need not be right in the eyes of men, as long as I always bring it before Your throne! I understand so much more why You left the multitude for quiet with God. In this quiet place, fill me with Your love for others. Thank You for special friends. Help my discouragement. Enable me to return each critical word with Your love!"*

I tried to sound brave, but it was a very lonely place to be.

A few days later, just one week before the court appearance, I received the following letter from the Prime Minister's office:

*Dear Madam:*

*We wish to notify you that we have just received notification from the*

*Ministry of Interior that it has been decided to respond to your request and to extend your stay in Israel as a Temporary Resident Class A/I, for an additional two years.*

*With all good wishes,*

*Office of the Prime Minister  
Jerusalem*

The following day a registered letter arrived for me from the Ministry of Interior! Inside, I discovered my long-absent passport complete with the new visa, and also an Israeli identity card! I was thrilled, as I assumed that it was no longer necessary at all to appear before the court. Once again, I felt the longings for a quiet, hidden life in Israel!

The next morning I brought the visa and identity card to Uri Huppert's office. I asked friends to pray with me in the meantime, that I would remain faithful to God's will, whatever that might be.

Uri was pleased to see the visa, and requested a day to decide what our course of action would be.

When I met with him again, I knew that the decision he had made was in accordance with the will of the Lord. I listened as Uri explained, "The Ministry of Interior issued this with the hope that it would discourage you from any further action. But in actuality, it serves to strengthen our case before the High Court. The High Court is a very fair court, and by the same token they expect us to appear before them with 'clean hands'. Up until now you had no legal status in Israel, as your visa had long since expired. While it was not your fault, it still made your hands 'dirty' in the eyes of the court, and it probably would have prevented them from accepting the case. The court would rightly reason, 'If you have no legal status in this country, how can you expect us to make a decision?' But now with the return of your papers, our position is greatly strengthened in their eyes."

Uri then asked to see my identity card again. "Look at it closely," he said, as he pointed to a tiny corner of the first page. In minute letters was the expiration date of my identity card! It expired on the same day as my visa, and usually identity cards are not dated in this way!

"So really," Uri continued, "I feel it's still vitally important to go ahead with the court, because in two years you will have to go through it anyway. You have now been given a legal stay of two years, which has greatly strengthened our position, but you still are not recognized as a citizen of Israel!"

"One other thing," he added, pointing to the second page of my identity card. "What does it say?"

I read the word, "Jewish".

"Again, it will help our case before the court!"

I was astonished! The Ministry of Interior knew about my belief in Jesus as the Messiah . . . and yet *they* put down my identification as Jewish!

The Lord was clearly opening the doors for my appearance before the High Court of Justice on November 17th, 1977. The fast was to begin at sundown on November 13th.

Fasting is a special gift the Lord has given us. It is a time set apart, a time of special listening on our part, a time of intercession and acknowledgement of the Lord's sovereignty and presence. This time of fasting was to ascertain the will of the Lord in this situation; to firmly place the decision of the court in His hands; and to request the grace necessary to keep me faithful to His purposes! But often during such times of separation unto Him, the Lord introduces an agenda all His own and quite unexpected! And such happened to me on

the morning of the second day of the fast. I was on my knees praying and waiting before the Lord, when I felt His presence and love. And then He spoke the following to my heart:

*"Very soon your name will become known throughout the world as a result of the court case. I will use this for My secondary purposes. Beginning in February of 1978, I will send you out with a piece of typing paper to My true body of Believers. Wherever you go, I want you to have them sign their name, city and country under the words, 'Israel, we love you'. And then, if you have one sheet of signatures or you have a thousand, I want you to make it into a scroll to present as a visible sign of love to Israel for her thirtieth anniversary from My true Believers. But know that either people will accept this message or they will not, for I am using Israel as a sword to divide the true church from the false. Those who have truly opened their hearts to Me believe in the God of Israel and the Messiah of Israel; and, therefore, it is impossible in these days for them not to share My great burden of love for Israel and for the Jewish people."*

I don't know which part of that message astonished me most! My head buzzed with questions! *How* would my name ever become known throughout the world? And who would I get to sign the scroll? I had only three friends in England, two in Norway, and a few more in the United States! And how would Israel accept the gift? What did the Lord mean by using Israel as a sword of division?

Completely amazed, I put the situation in the Father's hands, knowing that He alone could fulfill it. I knew, too, that the Lord was dealing in a very direct way with my pride. The basic question was, did I love the Lord enough to be willing to look foolish for Him? But deep inside I longed to give myself to the Lord with *all* my heart. And so, I could only look to Him to help me to be obedient; to help me to love Him enough so that I could get my eyes off of myself; to help me to put to rest forever the nagging thought, "But what will people say?"

The next evening, after breaking the fast with friends, the Lord instructed me to stop at a beauty parlour to have my hair washed and set in preparation for the court appearance the following morning. Since I have naturally curly hair, I almost never have my hair professionally set! But I obeyed His instructions.

Later that evening I climbed into bed to read a book by Elizabeth Pritchard that friends had given me the previous day. The title was *For Such a Time*, from the Book of Esther:

*"For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"*

Esther 4:14

Expecting some profound advice from the Lord, I read the following:

*Mrs. Guinness has been described as practical, capable, full of common sense, a person who would stand no nonsense. Yet the discerning would detect the twinkle in her eye and be reassured. John Adams, on the eve of his return to China, was asked to give the students something that would benefit their missionary career. With a smile he said he could do no better than begin with Mrs. Guinness's final words to him when he first left for China. "Feeling the solemnity of the occasion," he said, "I sharpened a pencil and took a notebook*

*to record her farewell advice. Presently she said, "I have one piece of advice to give you which I earnestly hope you will remember all your life." I felt for the pencil; it was all ready. I listened eagerly. "Whatever part of the Mission field you may be in," she said, "always be sure to keep your hair tidy."*

When I had finished reading it, I felt slightly betrayed, and I am sure across my face sat the blankest look I have ever had. Finally Jesus helped me to realize that I had completely missed both His humour and the point — that He was simply showing me how very deeply He was in control of every aspect of my life — including the court appearance the following day!

I woke up the next morning, and smiled a bit as I "tidied" my hair. After breakfast, I hurried to my lawyer's office. He arrived even five minutes later than I, and in an instant he grabbed his black robe and was off. How typical it was of Israel! In the United States, if someone appeared before the Supreme Court, I would picture them at least driving up to the building in a car! But Israel is incredibly informal, and we literally ran to the court, with me desperately trying to keep pace with my lawyer and his student!

We arrived, breathless but on time, at the High Court of Justice, and sat quietly awaiting the arrival of the three judges. I felt the Lord's assurance that all would proceed according to His will, and all fears and doubts were cast aside.

At long last the court was set up and we rose to our feet as the three judges entered the room. The court was called into session, and my name was first on the agenda. My lawyer arose, and a dialogue ensued between my lawyer and the judges. As it was all in Hebrew, the only words I understood were his name and mine! After a few minutes the law student put his hand behind his back with his thumb sticking up, to signify that all was going well! A minute later we were dismissed.

As soon as we left the building, my lawyer explained what had transpired. "They only had one question," Uri said, "and that was whether or not you had been granted a residency visa. When I was able to answer 'yes' to that question, and say that you now had legal status in Israel, they immediately accepted the case for a decision. They have placed an injunction against the Ministry of Interior, giving them two months to come forward and explain why they are not recognizing you as a citizen of Israel." He was greatly encouraged, and I thanked him as we parted company.

The following day, this article appeared in the Israeli press:

*MA'AREEV 18 November, 1977*

***JEWISH GIRL WHO BELIEVES IN JESUS  
HAS RECEIVED AN INJUNCTION  
AGAINST MINISTER OF INTERIOR***

*"Amoz Lavov, reporter, said that Eileen Dorflinger, a Jewish girl who believes in Jesus, yesterday obtained an injunction against the Minister of Interior, demanding that they come forward within sixty days and give reasons why her Israeli citizenship was denied her according to the Law of Return. Moishe Cohen, Shlomo Asher, and Miriam Ben Porot, judges, gave the injunction without it even being necessary for her attorney, Uri Huppert, to put forward the arguments for the complainant. Mr. Huppert relinquished the temporary injunction since in the meantime Eileen Dorflinger has received an identity card, which is limited to 22 September 1979. In her identity card she is identified as 'Jewish'."*

And then, a short time later, articles appeared in many Christian publications, as well as

a newspaper story that went out over the Associated Press throughout the world, with the headlines reading, "CAN A JEW WHO BELIEVES IN JESUS REMAIN A JEW?" For me, all the publicity would have been devastating, if not for the Lord's assurance in advance that He would use it all for His greater purposes. Even though the newspapers immediately interpreted it simply as a fight for my rights, I myself was still not certain of the Lord's purposes in it all.

Some days after the court appearance, I had been invited to join friends from the States who were arriving with a group for a tour of Israel. After meeting them at their hotel in Jerusalem, they invited me to travel with them to the Galilee for the next few days. I love the beauty of the Galilean countryside, and so I was happy to say yes!

We were settled into a kibbutz guest house by the shores of the Sea of Galilee, a tranquil spot to return home to after a busy day of roaming the countryside! However, by the end of the second day, I could sense that trouble was brewing. A Believer had arrived from Haifa and brought with him all of the rumours and criticisms against me. He warned the leaders of the tour not to associate with me, as I was in trouble with the authorities and could, therefore, endanger their welcome in Israel. And then even more terrible things were said! Almost everyone — both the leaders and members of the tour — took his word for it! Almost no one bothered to confirm it with me! I could sense the tension, and most of the tour members stopped speaking with me. Finally, I knew there was nothing for me to do but to leave the tour; and so I left with another friend. It made me identify so closely with the early Jewish Believers, who many times received similar treatment!

I journeyed to a rural village in northern Galilee to spend some days with friends there. Sometime after my arrival there, one of my friends called me over to her. "I was visiting a Christian centre on Mt. Carmel, and as soon as I saw this I knew that Jesus meant for you to have it; so please accept it as a gift from Him!" she said, as she placed a small, delicately carved, white mother-of-pearl cross in the palm of my hand. And at the very centre of the cross was a rose!

As I stood gazing at this tiny cross, it was as though the two aspects of the prophecy given to me so many months before had come together! And the Lord then helped me to understand that when we as followers of Christ come to a fullness in Him, *then it must be at the heart of the cross*. There is no way whatsoever to avoid the cross in the life of faith and still remain true to the calling of God upon our lives. It is impossible to come into a fullness of faith in Christ without accepting the cross as a part of our lives. It is the death to self that each of us must endure that gives us a complete identity with the crucified One whom we must come to love with all our hearts. We must die to ourselves in order to enter into His risen life!

Intellectually, I understood it all in that moment of time, but I had no idea then how far my own life was as yet from being identified with the death and resurrection of Jesus. I was still very, very alive to "self"!

When shopping one day in the large department store near my small apartment in Jerusalem, the Lord prompted me to purchase a beautiful picture of a full-blossomed rose. The petals of the rose blossom and the leaves were covered with dew. I somehow sensed that this was a further lesson in the saga of the rose, but I had no idea what the dew represented. I was soon to learn!

The alienation from Believers in Israel made me long for Mike and Joey even more than before. One night, just before Christmas, I was attending a local Believers' Christmas party when one of them came up to me.

"Do you remember me?" she asked. "I visited you and the children at the Immigration

Centre in Ashdod last fall with my husband." I did vaguely remember the visit, having been grateful at the time that someone had taken the trouble to come and welcome us. "I remember you told us then that your children needed to return to the States so that you would be free to follow the Lord," she continued. "How could you care for them so little?"

Her comment came so unexpectedly, that I had no defenses ready to cover all the deep feelings of anguish that had been hovering so close to the surface for such a long time by then. And so, not having the control to stop, I rushed out of the room weeping.

Friends brought me home, seeing my distress, and offered to stay with me for the night. I thanked them, but said no, it was something I needed to work out myself before the Lord. I then managed to hold back the tears until the moment I stepped into my room and locked the door behind me; and then the flow of tears started again, seemingly never to stop. I cried all through that long and endless night. I cried with a mother's loneliness, and because I had not as yet forgiven the Lord for taking my children from me. I had accepted His will, as I knew better than to turn away from His call on our lives. But I had deep feelings of bitterness and anger that the Lord had asked me to do such a thing. And also I had gnawing doubts (carefully fed by satan, to be sure) of my own ability to love them as a mother. I had stopped remembering all the happy times we had shared together, but remembered instead only the times that I had lost my temper or had been impatient or too tired to listen. And so the Believer's mistaken comment set off a torrent of reproaches and recriminations within myself, directed both against myself and the Lord!

"Oh Lord, how could You have asked such a thing of me? Don't You know how much I love them? Why did you do it to us?"

Finally, after many hours of crying, releasing all the bitterness that had filled my heart, the Lord spoke to me in His calm and quiet way. "You must forgive Me for having taken them, Esther. For you have placed them in My hands indeed, *but only physically*. Emotionally you have not relinquished them to Me at all! And you *must* deal with your bitter feelings against Me! For only then can I truly give you the peace of mind and of heart that Mike and Joey are truly in My care!"

And then I understood that a year earlier I had indeed placed them upon the altar of sacrifice — but only with one hand, while I turned at once and swiftly removed them with the other hand! No wonder I had continued to worry and to fret about them! After more tears, I finally fell to my face in prayer.

"Oh, Father, I do forgive You for having taken my children from me!" (Of course, I was not "forgiving" the Lord as He forgives us for sin, but simply as one friend who has held something in her heart against Another.) "Please help me to place them in Your hands, not just symbolically, but with all of my heart. I can't carry this burden of pain any longer. I need Your help and strength in order to really let go of them. Please help me, Father! Please help me!" And finally, just before dawn, I felt His peace and His strength and His assurance.

That very day, just three days before Christmas, a package arrived in the mail for me from Mike and Joey. Inside were some gifts that they had made, along with a cassette recording sharing their latest greetings and news. How grateful I was to the Lord for the experience He had just brought me through, for by morning I was able to accept the gifts and their messages with *His* love in my heart for them, instead of all the feelings of anguish and resentment that had preceded it!

Their recorded message to me took up about 35 minutes of the tape, and oh, was it wonderful to hear again the sound of their voices! When they had said goodbye, I reached over to turn off the tape. "Don't turn it off," the Lord instructed me. "Keep listening to it!" He said.

And so I kept the tape running. I felt like an idiot, as I couldn't hear a thing! But when I listened closely, I could finally discern the faint ticking of a clock. And then I realized that the

children had finished talking, but had not turned off the tape recorder!

After listening to nothing but the clock for almost ten minutes, suddenly I heard the sound of voices as Joe came home from work! He spoke to Jude for a few minutes, and then I heard him warmly greeting Joey and Michael. "I'll come down and watch television with you both," he then said to them. "Do you want something cold to drink? How was your day?" he asked them, just before the tape clicked off.

The Lord had allowed me to be a "fly on the wall" for a few precious moments, to hear the children and their father and step-mother together as a family, and to know deep within my heart that the Father's love and care was over all. How kind of Him it was! I began to cry, but not the tears of desperation that had slid down my cheeks all the night before. This time they were tears of gratitude for the greatness of the Father's care.

At that moment, the Lord had me glance at the rose covered with dew that was hanging by then on the wall of my room. And then I understood the meaning of the dew, that it is with *tears* that our faith is watered; that it is through the tears of suffering that our love is nourished and enabled to grow!

The next day a friend stopped by to visit, and slipped a piece of paper on to my bookshelf on his way out the door. It was a poem that he had written:

Remember, My Rose, *I* wore *them*, too

*Alone in ashes  
Rooted in dust  
A tribute to her Master's trust*

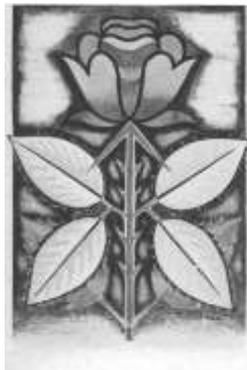
*"Trust on, My Child My  
words are true:*

*I clothe my rose in  
thorns, I do*

*For the careless hands  
would tear at you."*

The thorns could be a protection, too! The rose had much to teach us!

*Beloved Jesus, crowned with thorns, You accepted all from Your Father's hand, the thorns, the cross, and thereby You enabled us to come before His throne. Help us to accept in love each cross you've prepared for us, each crown of thorns, every dew of tears, for in this way we can return love to You ...*



# 19

## ISRAEL, WE LOVE YOU

**B**y early January, I began to have doubts about the love scroll message that the Lord had given me. I just didn't see how it would be possible to obtain more than a sheet full of signatures! One night, I attended a Christian conference in Jerusalem just in time to hear a talk on "The Foolishness of God". The minister explained how simple are the ways of God, and how He delights in things which are impossible to envision with our human eyes. He described how God had asked a mighty army simply to walk around a wall seven times and shout; how He had taken a small boy to slay a giant; and how, when Israel was expecting a mighty warrior, an infant was born in a manger. It helped me to understand that the scroll, in all its simplicity, was just like the Lord! And then, right in the middle of the meeting, a friend slipped a piece of paper into my hand. On it was written the following verse:

*"My beloved spoke, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.*

*For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone;  
the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come,  
and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land;  
the fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape  
give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away."*

Song of Solomon 2:10-14

I recognized it as a challenge from the Lord to put away the doubts and the pride that caused them, and to simply come away with Him with a child's trust.

A few days later I went to talk it over with a friend in the Catholic renewal, Fr. Francis Martin. I trusted his relationship and openness to the Lord and his wonderful appreciation of the Lord's sense of humour, which comes only from a friendship with Him. I told Francis the whole story of the love scroll, and his answer to me was emphatic.

"Yes, it's from the Lord, and you do it!" Then he added, "Just a few words of advice to help you on your way. There will be many times when you will need to get on your face and ask forgiveness of the Lord. But when you have asked for it, *then get up and know that you are forgiven!* And also, my dear, when you are feeling discouraged with yourself, remember one thing — you're not where you used to be, and you're not where you're going to be, either! Because all of us can look back and see areas of our lives that the Lord has transformed, and that gives us courage for the future, too. In His timing and in His way, He will change those things that hold us back from following Him with a total abandonment. I also sense that the Lord will have men of God for you to turn to for advice whenever you

need it. So have courage, kiddo! It will work out!"

How many times in the future the simple things that he told me were to help me not to feel condemned and discouraged!

Toward the end of January I came down with a terrible cold and sore throat and spent a number of days in bed. With nothing else to do, I listened to a tape a friend of mine had dropped off at my apartment some weeks earlier. It turned out to be a teaching on the Book of Esther by the well-known Bible teacher, Derek Prince. It became such a blessing to me that I knew I had come down with a cold just so I would take the time to rest in the Lord and to listen to the message! And I feel to include the teaching as a part of this book, because the points that were made are surely relevant to each of us as members of the body of Christ!

*"In the first chapter of the book of Esther, we find that Vashti was called to appear before the King. When she refused, she was subsequently removed from the throne. Vashti failed. She was set aside. She lost her crown. We never hear of her again. And I believe that is a real warning to the contemporary church. If we don't heed the promptings of the Holy Spirit when He calls us to appear before the King, we lose our crown, we are set aside, and God will raise up another, more worthy. And so Esther took Vashti's place.*

*Esther was prepared by Hegai, the keeper of the women, which is symbolic of our preparation by the Holy Spirit. There was a fairly lengthy process of purification. It took a whole year, and a year embraces all seasons. I think one of the lessons for us is that we must pass the test of every kind of season, of every kind of situation. Nothing is to be omitted.*

*Have you noticed that the preparation was two-fold? There was myrrh, and there were also the beautifying ointments. All through Scripture, myrrh always typifies one thing — suffering. And so we do not need to turn away from suffering, or even feel that God has rejected us. We need to embrace it! You have to suffer if you are going to be beautiful in His eyes! Embrace the suffering, because it will come. Don't misunderstand it, don't reject it, don't fight against it, don't complain about it. I'm deeply impressed by the words of Paul when he said in Philippians Chapter 3: 'That I may know Him, Jesus Christ, and the power of His resurrection . . .' But He didn't stop there! He went on to say: '. . . and the fellowship of His suffering.'*

*Esther 2:15 says: 'Now when the turn of Esther . . . was come to go in unto the king, she required nothing but what Hegai . . . appointed. And Esther obtained favour in the sight of all them that looked upon her...' There is another important lesson. The Holy Spirit will equip you with everything you need. You don't need carnal sources. You don't need to go to the world. The one who was chosen was the one who asked for nothing but what Hegai gave.*

*I want to take now, simply, an application from Esther and her story to the church today. And I want to point out to you nine things about Esther's subsequent behaviour that are characteristic of the church that Jesus Christ is looking for as His bride.*

1. In a moment of tremendous crisis for the Jewish people came Esther's opportunity to prove what it meant to be Queen. *When Mordecai heard about the decree to destroy the Jews, he sent a message to Esther and said, 'It is your responsibility to go and plead with the King for mercy on behalf of your people.' In Chapter 4:14, it shows that she came to the kingdom for a special time, and that was a time of trouble for the Jews. 'For if thou altogether holdest*

*thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy fathers' house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this ...?' And I believe that is true of the church at the close of this age. We also have a special responsibility that is related to the Jewish people.*

2. Esther had not made known her family or her race. *She had an unpublicized kinship with the Jewish people. Their fate was her fate, even though it was not actually known publicly that she was Jewish. And I believe that is true of the church as well. We, too, have an unrecognized kinship with the Jewish people. Our Saviour is a Jew. And we need to see that our fate is not divorced from their fate. We cannot separate ourselves from them. We cannot sit in the King's palace and say it cannot happen to us, because it can. The same satanic forces that want to destroy Israel want to destroy the church. We are intertwined. Our destinies cannot be separated.*

3. She was willing to lay down her life. *She said, 'If I perish, I perish.' And the church at the end of this age must come to the place where it is more important to do the will of God than to stay alive. It says of the overcoming Believers in Revelation 12:11: 'They loved not their lives unto death.' And I interpret that to mean that staying alive was not priority number one. Priority number one was doing the will of God whether it meant living or dying. And I believe we are going to have to come to that same attitude. Esther said, 'I'll go in to appear uninvited before the king, and if it costs me my life, it costs me my life, but I'll go in nonetheless.' I want to tell you that the people that get anywhere with the Lord are people just like that. Many, many times God will allow you to come to the place where it may cost you your life, because He wants to know whether or not you're willing to lay it down. And He doesn't give you any guarantee that you won't have to! In fact, He gives the guarantee that some of us will have to! And Esther is the picture of that for us.*

4. She was called to intercession. *She is a perfect picture of intercession. She had to go in before the king, stand in his presence between him and those who were to be destroyed, and plead on their behalf. That is intercession in its purest form, and I think there is no higher form of Christian service than this. And I believe the church at the close of this age is called to intercession for the nation of Israel.*

5. Her intercession required prayer and fasting. *The fact that Esther ultimately found favour with the king is not divorced from the fact that she had spent three days praying and fasting. There are things in the spiritual realm that do not come merely by prayer. I find something remarkable about the groups that are truly open to the Lord and moving with Him. Three things, actually: first of all, they are deeply concerned about Israel; they are committed to the Lord even unto death; and they are willing to pray and fast. And I see that as three marks of the end-time church.*

6. She put on her royal apparel before she went in to the King. *Esther 5:1: 'Now it came to pass on the third day' (after seventy-two hours of prayer and fasting) 'that Esther put on her royal apparel and stood in the inner court of the king's house . . . I believe that God is waiting for the church to put on her queenly robes, the beauty of holiness, the robes of authority. It is no longer a time to sit in the dust and act like a slave-girl, because God has called us to be a queen, to share the throne, and to share His authority!*

7. She obtained favour in his sight, and the king held out to Esther the

golden sceptre that was in his hand. *We see that Esther found favour before the eyes of the king the first night she went in — that is why she became queen. But now we see her finding favour again. I want to suggest that there is a progression that applies to us. The first time she found favour for her beauty. This time, she found favour for her conduct. And I believe there comes a time when our conduct must commend us to God, to the Lord, to the King. And he reached out the golden sceptre, the emblem of authority and rule. When he held out the sceptre, that was the offer of mercy. And when Esther touched it, she became associated with its authority.*

8. She entered into her royal authority. *'Then said the king unto her, What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what is thy request? It shall be given thee to the half of the kingdom.'* 5:3

9. By her intervention, Esther changed the course of history. *I believe this is the church's responsibility — to change the course of history. We are not supposed to leave the world the way it is. We are not supposed to let the wicked prosper, and all the forces of evil triumph. We are called to the Kingdom for a time like this. And I believe that through our intercession, we can also change the course of history for the nation and the people of Israel, with whom we are one.*

*And all those things, I believe, God is expecting us to do today. And I believe there are just two kinds of Christian groups, each typified by one of the characters in that book. Some will be Vashti and some will be Esther. And in between, I question whether there's anything. God is looking for a Queen. Hallelujah."*

There are so many Christians in the world today who are living complacent, uncommitted lives. And the enemy has so dulled their senses that they are totally unaware that they are in danger of being removed from the throne. But for me, at least, it was a serious lesson not to try to fool the King, but to be certain, step by step and day by day, that I am willing to appear before Him whenever He may call, and to do whatever it is that I am bid to do!

In November, the Ministry of Interior had been given sixty days to come before the court to explain why they were not recognizing me as a citizen of Israel. In January, just one week before their time was up, they requested a postponement of six months. I was summoned to my lawyer's office to discuss it.

"I believe it will be to our advantage to grant the postponement," Uri explained. "If we don't, the court will grant it without us, and it will make it look as though we've got something to hide. We have the advantage now, and if we grant the postponement, I believe we can request some conditions as well." Mr. Huppert knew of my proposed plans to leave the country the following month. "Therefore, we will agree to the postponement as long as *they* will guarantee your right to re-enter the country in May with no difficulties!"

He then suggested that I contact a Mr. Shafat, the attorney representing the Ministry of Interior. "Just go to him and ask if he would be willing to guarantee your right to return to Israel," Uri said.

I made an appointment to meet with Mr. Shafat later that week, but the thought of meeting with the attorney for the opposition was a scary one!

An hour before our scheduled appointment, the Lord guided me to a little coffee shop on Ben Yehuda Street. As soon as I sat down, someone tapped me on the shoulder, saying, "What are you doing here? I thought you were supposed to be at a meeting at the Ministry of Interior!" It was my lawyer!

"I'm supposed to meet with him in an hour! But how did you know about it?" I asked, as

the appointment had been made after I had left Uri's office.

"I was in the Knesset yesterday, and happened to bump into him!" was his startling reply. Just before he walked out the door, Uri called back to me, "By the way, Esther, you can agree with the arrangements he has made!"

The Lord had guided me to the coffee shop, knowing that my lawyer would be there. Since Jesus was in that much control of the situation, what ever in the world was I worried about? And to think that the two lawyers had met in the Parliament just the day before, and I therefore knew in advance that I could accept Mr. Shafat's request for an extension!

Upon arrival, I was immediately ushered into Mr. Shafat's office. "Why is it that you want a postponement?" was my first question.

"Because this is a very, very sensitive issue in Israel. It means, in a sense, defining 'Who is a Jew?' and it is a delicate topic. I can guarantee that if we are forced to give an answer now, it will not be in your favour!" It was then his turn to ask me a question.

"Why is it that, since you now have a visa, you cannot wait two years for this question to be raised?" he asked.

"Look, Mr. Shafat," I replied. "I love Israel. I've come here to spend the rest of my life. What is the point of going to ulpan, studying Hebrew, finding an apartment, making friends, getting a job, and making this my home, if in two years' time I will be asked to leave the country? I'd like to know now what's happening, so I can get on with my life!"

"Well, I can't blame you for that," he commented.

I then explained to him my plans to go to England and the United States in February. "I hope to visit family and friends. If we agree to a postponement, is there any way that you could guarantee my right to return to Israel? There are still orders at the airport to prevent my re-entry into the country!"

"Yes, I'll guarantee it. I'll send a letter to your lawyer with my signature guaranteeing your right to re-enter the country, and will send a copy of the letter to the airport officials and the Ministry of Transportation."

"Fine. Then we can agree to a postponement," I said, grateful that I had known my lawyer's position in advance.

Two days later, a letter was delivered by hand to Mr. Huppert guaranteeing my re-entry to Israel, and the court proceedings were postponed. I knew a copy of that letter had to accompany me whenever I left Israel.

I was scheduled to leave for England on a Monday afternoon during the first week in February, 1978, in order to begin the love scroll there. It seemed like a very unlikely place to me, as I knew so few people there! But in obedience to the Lord I had begun to make the necessary arrangements. The couple that I had stayed with in Belgium had kept in contact with me, and when the wife learned that I would be in England, she planned to fly to London to meet me and to treat me to three days at the Churchill Hotel. Then I would stay with my sister and her husband, who by then had moved from Devon to London, and would see what doors the Lord would open from there. A friend had already arranged to rent my room during the time that I was to be away.

About a week before my departure, I had very little money on hand. The plane ticket one-way to England had not as yet been paid for. And then, the Lord instructed me to buy a suitcase with the little money that I *did* have! He showed me a lovely one with embroidery on the side that had been made in Israel, and so I obeyed Him and purchased it! But when I got it home, it seemed enormous, as I had pitifully few clothes to put in it! (All I owned in the world I had carried to Israel in a small back pack!)

"Whatever will I fill this thing with?" I moaned. But that question was soon to be answered. The very next day, a number of friends stopped by my little room and each

person had something to leave for me, as instructed by the Lord. It was astonishing! In a single day, the Lord filled that suitcase with an entire wardrobe, and even though the clothing had come from a number of different people, everything matched everything else! It was just as well, for the few clothes I had were faded and threadbare.

Toward the end of the week, the postal service in Israel went on strike. I needed to pay for the ticket by Sunday evening at 5:00 p.m. at the very latest, but still no money had arrived. And then I knew that it would not come in the mail! I had lived by faith for quite a while by then; and so I knew that the Lord is seldom early with His provision, but that if it is according to His will, He is seldom late. Usually I had the patience to wait, as I often had to for the rent each month. But I knew by then that this scroll was important to the Lord, and by Saturday I simply couldn't stand the anxiety any longer. Finally I knelt to pray.

"Oh, Father, I know that the money isn't due until tomorrow afternoon at 5:00 p.m. And I know that I don't really need it until then! But Lord, I can't stand the suspense for another minute! Please, please let me know *today* that the money is on its way!"

And then I went through the day expecting it to arrive, somehow, from somewhere, at any moment. But finally, by 10:00 p.m., there was still not a single shekel in sight. A friend was moving into my apartment the very next morning, and so I knew that even without the money to go to England, I would have to move out of my room nonetheless. And so I finished packing and went to sleep, feeling disappointed in spite of myself.

I was awakened from a deep sleep by a loud knocking at the outside door. Glancing at the clock as I grabbed a robe and dashed for the door, I saw that it was 11:30 p.m. I opened it to find a Jewish Believer standing there.

"Sorry to bother you at this hour," he said, "but Fr. Martin asked me to stop by on my way home to tell you that he wants you to meet him tomorrow afternoon at 1:00 p.m., as he has some money to give you — \$250.00, I think it is!"

I thanked him profusely, and went back into the room with tears of joy filling my eyes. The Lord had not let me down. It was *still* Saturday — at least for the remaining 30 minutes! — and the Lord had let me know, just before the day ended, that the money would be there. Oh, how thrilled I was! I still needed an additional \$100.00 in order to purchase the ticket, but by then I had the faith to know that somehow, during the next day, He would provide for that as well.

What happened next is difficult to describe, as the feeling of the presence of the Lord in a deep and powerful way is impossible to transmit on paper. But suddenly I felt His presence in a way that I had never felt it before, as He bid me to turn around and look at the desk in the far corner of the room. I turned around, and there, sitting on the edge of the desk, sat a one-hundred dollar bill.

It had not been there before, and the friend that had come with the news from Fr. Francis had not even stepped into the hallway leading to my room! But because of the deep feeling of the Lord's presence that I had experienced, I knew deep within my heart that there was only one possible explanation for the money that I had just found on the edge of my desk. *It had come directly from the Lord*, just as the manna from heaven that had kept thousands of Israelites alive day by day for forty years. I hardly knew how to react, and could scarcely believe my eyes, but finally I fell to the floor in thanksgiving and also in repentance for the smallness of my faith. Was there anything in all the world that was too hard for the Lord?

In all the years that I have lived by faith since that day, the Lord has never provided in such a direct way again. The funds have always been channeled through His people. But it was a very deep assurance that the Lord will never run out of ideas and ways for caring for His own. Just as He provided the tax money for Peter in the mouth of a fish; and just as the Israelites' clothing didn't wear out for forty years; and just as He fed them each day; so He is

able even in this day to care for the sheep of His pasture. He doesn't *need* other people, but He uses us to give to one another so that He can bless us! *But He is able, if there were not another Believer in all the world, to care for us, all by Himself.* He enables us to help one another because He loves us as His children. And the fact that He uses us becomes an even greater wonder, when we realize that *He doesn't have to.*

While in town the next morning, the Lord prompted me to go to my lawyer's office.

"Goodness!" he exclaimed as soon as I entered the room. "What perfect timing! On the phone this very minute is a reporter from the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz*, and she has questions that only you can answer!" I grinned as he handed over the phone to me. I knew that one day he would recognize the many things that had happened as far more than mere coincidence!

The reporter had heard about the court case, and wanted very much to do an article about it. She was very kind, and I spoke with her on the telephone for almost an hour. She arranged for a photographer to meet me at the airport the following day, so that a picture could accompany the article she wished to write. (The article that later appeared in *Ha'aretz* was very supportive, and was written under the heading: "THE LEDGER IS OPEN AND THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR RECORDS: The innocent sentence about Jesus in a debate between neighbours cost Eileen Dorflinger the loss of rights as a new immigrant and continuing harassment.")

By then, I was almost late for my appointment with Fr. Martin. I wished Uri a warm farewell, and dashed off toward the Old City.

"Wow! That was surely welcome news!" I declared as soon as I spotted Francis.

He laughed. "C'mon, and I'll tell you all about it!" he answered. He then explained that following the prayer meeting on Saturday night, a German woman had come up to him to tell him that she felt from the Lord to give me a gift of \$250.00. We were both amazed that she had come to him with the information, as he was the only person in the entire city who knew that I did not as yet have the money for the air fare to England! And so he knew that the funds needed to get to me at once.

After we had added his money and my money together, and he had added the small amount needed for tax, he said to me, "What time is it, 2:00 p.m.? And you don't need the money until 5:00 p.m., right? What were you worried about? The Lord provided it in *plenty* of time!"

And so, at 5:00 p.m., I arrived at the El Al office with enough money to purchase the ticket to London!

The three days spent in the Churchill Hotel were like a dream. My friend from Belgium was such a gracious hostess, and really treated me like a queen! At the end of the third day, she sent me off in a pre-paid cab to my sister's home, which was just as well, as I would not have had the funds for the cab fare! (It was ironic that with my new clothes and suitcase, and with the address of the Churchill Hotel, I had no difficulty whatsoever receiving a visa at the London airport — while in truth I had even *less* money than I had the previous year when the British custom's official had given me so much trouble!)

Arriving at my sister's flat from the Churchill was like changing from the status of a princess to a pauper. While my sister and her husband were renting a nice flat, it was almost totally unheated; and wintertime in London with no heat can be very cold and damp indeed! I slept snuggled carefully in my sleeping bag, and spent the days wrapped up in a heavy coat and blankets!

I contacted some of the friends I had met on my first trip to England, and through them many doors opened for me to speak at meetings in many parts of the country.

I found many friends of Israel there, and all readily accepted the message to stand by Israel whatever the cost! I often shared the experience I had of weeping at the Western Wall in Jerusalem, and I explained, "Before the time of Jesus, the Gentiles were completely separate from the promises of God, which were made only to the nation of Israel. It wasn't until that shocking day when the sheet came down from heaven that Peter realized that Jesus had come as Saviour to the Gentiles as well! And now, through the love of the Messiah of Israel, we can each stand before the throne of God, cleansed and forgiven. That wall of partition, of separation, for us had been taken down. *But the Jewish people still pray before a wall!* And it is our responsibility to pray with all our hearts that the wall that stands between them and God will soon be spiritually removed so that they, too, can come to know the love of their Messiah whom we each have the privilege to know and to love and to walk with day by day. And I know that through our intercession, through our prayers, stone by stone that wall of separation will come tumbling down!"

Most people were thrilled to sign the love scroll, and many people asked if they could give a financial gift as well for Israel's thirtieth anniversary. Finally I realized that this was indeed the Lord's will, to offer an opportunity for people to show their love for Israel in an even more graphic way. And so I made it clear that people were not to feel pressured to give, that it was simply between themselves and the Lord; and that no one was even to sign the love scroll unless they truly shared the Lord's deep burden of love for the nation of Israel. But, day by day and page by page, the love scroll continued to grow!

After three weeks of speaking in England, I journeyed on to the States to continue the love scroll message there.

My first stop was to a ministry in New York of an acquaintance who had helped to spread the news of my court case to Christian publications a few months earlier. On my first night there, I attended a dinner where people from neighbouring churches had been invited as guests of his ministry. Following the dinner, a very well-known female evangelist gave a message. And then a young man got up and told how his family was in Africa and wanted very much to join him in the States, but that \$10,000 was needed in order for them to do so. He worked for the ministry. When he sat down, the female evangelist stood up again and started asking for pledges of \$1,000 to help this man to bring his family to the States. Whoever raised their hand was called forward, and a "prophecy" was given over him. The prophecies were sickening, as they did nothing but exalt the person who had pledged to give the money! All I could think of was the Scripture in Matthew:

*"Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them; otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.*

*Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.*

*But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:*

*That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret Himself shall reward thee openly."*

Matthew 6:1-4

Then she asked for pledges of \$500, then \$200, then \$100. Finally she said, "Whoever is cheap enough not to have pledged at least \$100 for this worthy cause, then at least leave enough money to cover the cost of your dinner!"

I looked around me, and everyone there, including the members of that ministry, were praying and praising the Lord as if it were something that He had done! I was so horrified that I jumped up from my seat and fled to my room. I had never seen anything like it in all my

life — let alone in the name of Jesus!

I cried out to the Lord, "Lord, is it me? Is there something wrong with me, that I'm the only one who's appalled at such a thing? How in the world can they see that as faith in You, as evidence of Your provision? It's dreadful that they should even do such a thing, but then to dare to attach Your name to it! What's happening?"

I knew that I was over-reacting, but I simply couldn't help it. I had seen too much of the beauty of God's provision to recognize that kind of pressurized double-dealing as having come from God! The Lord knew, of course, that the people who gave the money did so out of love for Him, and surely He would bless them for it. But having been there was like seeing a picture of the wheat and the tares growing together! How lightly people do and say things in the name of the Lord, without understanding at all both His gentleness *and* His severity!

I knew I had to get out of that place as fast as I could, but I didn't have enough money at that point to leave! I had spent the money that I had received from the Lord in England to purchase my ticket to the States, and the last of it had gone for the train ride to this ministry in New York. But right at that very moment, when I was pondering what to do, I was called to the phone.

"Shalom," the voice at the other end answered. "My name is Betsy Rigell. Probably you don't remember me, but you met my husband Sid and me with the tour group in November by Capernaum in Israel! We've tried many times to get in touch with you since, and we're so glad we finally tracked you down! We'd like to welcome you to come and visit us now in Baltimore! If you can pay for the transportation, we'll be happy to reimburse you when you arrive!" Oh, the faithfulness of the Father's care! I made the necessary arrangements, packed my bags, borrowed the money with the promise of a quick return, and took the first train I could get to Baltimore, where I was met at the station by the Rigells.

They welcomed me to share at their little church in the heart of Baltimore, and the love scroll message was warmly received. Later on they shared with me something extra special, that truly marked the beginning of a special friendship between us that has been blessed by the Lord ever since. They told me, "When we saw you in Capernaum, we didn't know anything about you at the time, as we always rode on the other tour bus and so had never had the opportunity to speak with you. But at once the Lord spoke to our hearts, 'She is My servant, and I want you to help her in any way possible!' And so we want you to know that we are here to help you in any way that we can, at any time!"

They then gave me their "Visa" charge card, with an accompanying letter giving me permission to use it, as an extra security for transportation or whatever else I might need on my continued travels around the U.S. with the love scroll message. (The Lord's provision was of course sufficient, and I was able to return it to them at the end of the time, unused, but it was such a precious sign of their love and commitment to help me!)

From then on doors opened rapidly, and I went from one end of the country to the other, sharing the message of the love scroll. When the Lord had initially given me the vision for the love scroll, He had assured me that He would send me to those people who shared His burden of love for Israel; and therefore all the doors that opened were receptive to the message, as the Lord knows the hearts of men! I received such a heartwarming response, and again and again sensed such love in the hearts of His people for Israel! It was a time to be treasured!

In the States there were two large ministries who had the capacity to reach literally millions of Christians with the opportunity to bring a blessing to Israel. I knew from the Lord that I had to go to them both and speak to all people involved in the decision-making process of both ministries, and offer them this opportunity; but I knew from the Lord in advance that they would be closed to it! I didn't understand at all then why it was necessary for me to go!

The Lord then explained that one of them particularly had been given an initial vision to bless Israel, but had gone sadly astray, having been choked by the riches of the world; and that one day both ministries would have to stand before Him and answer to Him why they had squandered literally millions of Christian dollars on fancy buildings and specialized equipment when needs in the world were so great! But that He wanted me once again to give both ministries the opportunity to bring a major blessing to His people.

He then answered me clearly, "If you go, and they refuse this opportunity to bless Israel, then the burden of the millions of people who could have shared in this blessing to Israel will rest on their shoulders. But if you don't share it with them, *then the burden will rest on yours.*"

And so, it seems, I had to go. Sid and Betsy offered to accompany me, and the Lord worked it out for me to speak to the key people in both ministries. At one I was particularly sickened by their interpretation of Christianity, which was nothing more than giving heed to the riches of the world, and made a walk with Christ seem like a fairyland of glitter and gold! The day we were there the leader, who had already refused to allow me to share the love scroll message, spoke about garbage cans decorated like pigs at a new multi-million dollar centre they were just completing. It so astonished me that I lost my natural reserve, stormed up to him after the meeting, and said to him angrily, "If you can use the Lord's time to speak about pigs and waste-paper baskets, than the least you can do is devote the same amount of time to the nation of Israel!" Needless to say, my comment did not endear me to him at all!

At the second ministry, the top leader absolutely refused to see me! I tried desperately to explain to his secretary that I wasn't asking to speak publicly myself. "Please, I'm only asking for five minutes of his time to tell him what is on my heart, to offer this chance to bless the nation of Israel!"

But the secretary said, "I'm sorry, but he knows what this is about, and he does not wish to see you and will not see you, and asks that you leave the premises at once!"

I hung up the phone and began to weep, the same way as I had wept at the Western Wall. I knew I was feeling the sadness of the Lord that the door had been so crudely slammed shut on what could have been a massive blessing for Israel. (He later wrote to me, asking, "Who do you think you are to try and tell me how we should bless Israel?" But yet he had refused to give me even five minutes to explain the situation to him!)

At the *eery moment* of his refusal, an earth tremor hit the entire area, and when I read about the details in the newspaper the following morning, I wasn't even surprised. Usually something like that would have amazed me beyond words, but I had felt too deeply the sadness of the Lord. I had a terrible feeling that neither of the ministries wanted to share with Israel all the money they felt they needed for the maintenance of their own kingdoms. We shook the dust from our feet at both places, and went on our way.

There are many ministries who start out in true humility and with a simple desire and zeal for the things of God. But satan in these days is prowling like a lion, and many of them have become easy prey to his wiles. How can people be so easily fooled into thinking that building huge superstructures is for the glory of God? So much time and energy and effort is squandered in planning and maintaining and expanding such edifices — time and resources that should have been spent on reaching the lost for Christ!

The previous fall the Lord had prompted me to begin work on the book that had been prophesied about in 1975; and so while living in Jerusalem, I had begun to write about the last six months the children and I had spent together, as well as the many lessons of faith that I had learned along the way. I had been welcomed to speak on a Christian radio station in the States, and one day spoke to the director about the book. He himself had been very

disappointed with the way a Christian publishing house had drastically changed his own testimony, and so he offered to try to help me to find a publisher for the book, or to publish it himself if possible.

And so, one day during my travels, I had the time to stop by his office and leave with him the copy of the manuscript as I had written it by then. (In those days, I never dreamed all that would one day be included in this book!) Waiting for me that day was a letter and a gift from someone who had heard me on the radio program somewhere in the States. (She didn't sign her name or give her address!) But inside a small box was a beautiful, tiny silver crown; and along with it she sent the following message, hand-printed in a graceful script:

*"Dear Esther:*

*I am a Gentile Believer and am writing you this letter, I feel, in obedience to the sweet and precious 'quickening' of the Holy Spirit.*

*I listened to the broadcast this morning on which I first heard you and the truths God has quickened to your heart concerning His Jewels — the Jews — The Jewels of God.*

*The King gave Esther the Jewels that she bore upon her heart when she went in unto the King — When He saw her wearing His gift — His precious stones, it was a 'reminder' to Him of His love for her. And just as Esther wore the stones upon her heart when going in unto the Lord — the King — Likewise Aaron bore the names of Israel as they were reflected in the Jewels he wore on the breastplate when he appeared before the Lord.*

*The Lord has 'stirred' my heart to give you a 'gift' He put into my hands a year ago.*

*I give it to you knowing in the sweetest of ways He has fitted it to your heart. It is a crown — not a crown to be worn upon the head but a crown to be worn in your Heart.*

*A year ago the Holy Spirit 'quickened' to my heart some precious truths concerning Esther, and I feel He would have me share with you this lovely pearl —*

*He would desire to impearl into your heart . . .*

*Into my spirit He spoke . . .*

I would desire that you BE my Esther. That I might call upon you to BE and DO my good pleasure. You will say and do the petitions of My heart as your King and GREATEST of LOVES. You will come unto My presence with a heart BOWED Low in the Comely and BEAUTIFUL FEAR of your LORD having made yourself ready to be received by Me that I might HEARTILY grant thy petition. And know this, my Beloved Esther, that you have found favour in Mine eyes — That you might go out in the Name of the LORD THY GOD. And that I HAVE extended to you My Sceptre that it will be a sign unto you that you may stand 'BOLD in My LOVE for you'. It shall also be a sign unto all that you are Coming and Proclaiming in the Blessed Authority of the LORD,

Your

King of Kings

*These words He quickened to me and in a few days following someone put this gift into my hands — A silver CROWN — Redemption.*

*He has now led me to give it to you. A token of His Anointing-Blessing on all you do — As His BELOVED Esther.*

*THE CROWN is His Sceptre  
Extended to you  
TO SPEAK in His Name*

*Esther 5:1-3*

*One of His Handmaidens"*

At once I knew from the Lord that the gift was somehow related to the book, but I couldn't for the life of me imagine how!

That particular radio ministry had a tremendous response to the love scroll message. When I visited them again towards the end of my journey, the secretary was ready to kill me.

"If you step foot in here one more time, it'll be the end of you!" she threatened, not completely jokingly. She then explained that my message on the radio had brought in \$27,000.00 for Israel, all in small donations, and she had to reply to each one of those gifts! I surely didn't blame her for being a little upset! But of course, it was a great blessing, and we were all thrilled!

The many weeks that I spent in the States speaking on behalf of the love scroll also enabled me to spend much time with family and friends.

On my first visit to Marcia's, we arrived at her home in the country late one evening. When we stepped out of the car and glanced at the sky, we were amazed to see a huge, shining cross, standing upright, framed around the moon! But the most astonishing thing about it was that the centre of the cross was far below the moon itself, and so there was no logical explanation for it at all! We knew we simply had to accept it as a sign from the Lord! Surely we felt the stirrings of His love in our hearts as we stood gazing at it, feeling a deep sense of awe. It reminded me of a message on a slip of paper someone had handed to me just before I had left Israel, which said:

*If you carry your cross, not out of compulsion, but out of love for Jesus —  
then it will begin to shine!*

It made me feel so ashamed at my earlier bitterness against the Lord for the cross that He had placed in my life, as every visit that I had with Mike and Joey during those weeks just confirmed the Lord's hand upon their lives.

One day, for example, Joey began to draw for me a lovely picture of the walls of Jerusalem. Michael had always been the "artist" in the family, and so I was astonished to see how beautifully Joey was drawing!

"Joey, where did you learn how to draw?" I asked him, feeling almost like a stranger.

He looked up and grinned. "Oh, Mom, it's a gift from the Lord!" he answered. How that blessed me! He went on to share that he was now the top reader in the top reading class, and how he had won the science fair award. He had always had such difficulties in school before, and so I could see how Jesus was beginning to touch and to heal his little life!

The three of us had many wonderful visits together, and only twice did all the old hopelessness and sadness come welling up again. The first time was during a conversation with Michael, on the day of his seventh birthday.

"Mommy, will we ever live together again?" he queried.

I had learned long ago in my work with children that uncertainty is tremendously hard for children to deal with. They are able to adjust to most situations, as long as they know exactly what to expect. And so I knew that my answer to him had to be an honest one, as sad as it made me feel.

"No, Michael," I said gently. "You and Daddy and Jude and new baby Jonathan and

Joey are a family now. We won't live together again until Jesus comes!" I gathered him in my arms. "You know that I love you, very much, and your Daddy and Jude love you, too. You remember when we were together in Israel, don't you? And how much you missed Daddy and Jude and your grandparents and friends and McDonald's and just everything?" I gave him a hug. "And now, Michael, all you have to miss is me!"

He looked up at me with his clear blue eyes, and said longingly, "Oh, Mommy, but that's like missing a million people!" How well I knew what he meant, and I had no answer. All I could do was to hold him near, for at least a moment.

The second time was with Joey, during my very last week in the States. He had been away visiting Jude's parents, and had therefore missed our last scheduled time together. Unknown to him, I had arranged to stay longer so as to see him the day after he returned home again.

That day, during our last visit together, he confessed, "When I got home last night, I thought I had missed seeing you. I thought you had gone back to Israel without saying goodbye. I cried and cried in my pillow all night!"

We both had tears in our eyes as I drew him close to me. "Joey, please know that I never would have left without saying goodbye to you! I love you! Please always remember that!"

The hardest thing for me to bear was knowing the sadness they still felt. Before we parted, I told them both, "Whenever we feel sad, and miss one another, let's agree to tell it to Jesus. He's the only one who can really help us! And then we can smile again!"

They both nodded. Joey drew close again, and I could tell by the hesitant way he began that he had something special to share.

"Sometimes," he said, "when I'm feeling very sad and lonely Jesus lets me see the angels that are protecting our house. And oh, Mommy, then I feel His love so strongly in my heart!" It touched me too deeply for words, but my own heart sang a psalm of thanksgiving.

All too soon, even our final visit came to a close, and once again I watched until the car had driven out of sight. But this time, unlike a year earlier, I had seen the results of His hands joined in theirs, and it helped to ease the pain.

An incident had happened earlier that week that also helped to ease the sadness. I had been invited to dinner by friends from the church I had attended when Dr. Reid had been the interim pastor. After a traditional New England dinner, the wife commented to me, "You know, I often watched you and your children together at the church. I never saw anyone who enjoyed their children as much as you did. How hard it must have been for you to have had to say goodbye to them!"

After all the months of self-condemnation I had just passed through, her words were like a balm to my wounded heart. I told her how I had convinced myself that I had been a terrible mother!

"That's nonsense, Esther. It's just like the enemy with his ugly lies! You put those kind of thoughts right out of your head! Many of us at the church had often talked about your role as a parent, how we wished we could have your patience and sense of fun! Your relationship to Mike and Joey was a close one, and you know it! So stop being ridiculous!"

How I appreciated her kind words. I knew, of course, that I hadn't *always* been patient; but I also knew that basically what she said was true, and it took a weapon out of satan's hands.

When I returned at last to Ben Gurion airport, I joined the long queue behind the passport control counters. When it was finally my turn to hand over the passport, the airport official looked at it, checked a list, and immediately pressed a buzzer, summoning the airport police.

"We're sorry," they informed me, not unkindly, "but we have orders here to prevent

your entry into the State of Israel! I'm afraid that you'll have to make arrangements to return to the States on the first available flight!"

When I had previously heard that orders had been placed at the airport to prevent me from entering the country, I only half-believed it. But at once I was astonished at the wisdom of the Lord the previous year! *He* must have known about the orders, as He had had me return to Israel through the port of Haifa on the day when the airport had been on strike!

On this particular day, I was very grateful that I had gone to see Attorney Shafat and had obtained the letter that was to be my passport for entry into Israel. I handed over the letter to the police at once.

"Please check this," I said, "as it is a letter from the Ministry of Interior guaranteeing my right to re-enter Israel!"

They led me to a chair in the corner, still on the arrivals side of passport control, and went off to contact Mr. Shafat. It took about two hours. At the end of that time, they apologized to me for the delay, explaining that Attorney Shafat had been difficult to track down by phone, but that everything was set for my entry into Israel. And so I passed through a very empty and quiet arrivals hall to the sunshine of Israel!

When I later reported the incident to Uri, he was furious that the orders had not already been revoked. The Ministry of Interior apologized, assuring us it would be seen to right away!

On one of my first mornings back in my little room, there was an early morning knock on my door. It was a local friend, who gave me the message to phone someone named Ann. I marched off to the public telephones a block away and placed the call.

"Esther!" Ann exclaimed. "You probably don't remember me, but I met you at the church in Worthing, England, when you spoke there in February. The day of your message, the Lord really confirmed it to my heart. So I sent a tape to my mother in New Zealand. It got passed around, and caused such a response that a couple will be flying 23 hours by plane to deliver a gift of \$3,500.00 and love scroll signatures!"

From New Zealand! Was it possible that the love scroll message had travelled to "the uttermost parts of the earth"?

On the afternoon of the eve of Israel's 30th anniversary, my old friend from Connecticut, Jean Donegan, was arriving at the airport — my very first official visitor to Israel! She was bringing with her the funds for the love scroll that had been gathered in the States, along with the thousands of signatures that had arrived since I had left the country. (Sid and Betsy had kindly offered their church premises as the address for all the gifts and signatures to be mailed to.) The cheque that she was bringing was for \$45,000.00! That amount, plus the gifts from England and New Zealand, equalled more than \$50,000.00! Oh, how sadly I had limited the Lord!

I met Jean at the airport, and then we travelled to Tel Aviv to the home of a reporter from the Israeli newspaper, *Ha'aretz*. She had been very interested in my whole story, and was very moved to see the thousands of signatures and the financial gift for Israel's anniversary. She took careful notes, and promised that an article would be forthcoming.

Jean and I then took a shared taxi (sherut) to Jerusalem, and when the driver let us off, I hardly recognized King George Street as home! The entire street was closed off to traffic, and thousands of people filled it in celebration of Israel's thirtieth year as a nation. This country has such joy, in spite of many obstacles and pressures. A holiday here is a real event, and this night was to be no exception! We walked down the street towards my little room with amazement. Everyone was singing and dancing and bonking one another on the head with plastic hammers! (We bought two immediately!) We saw old people dancing with their grandchildren. We saw soldiers stacking their weapons in a huge pile and dancing the hora around them. There was a feeling of unity and love, so typical of Israel at times like this.

Israel is indeed a family, and our hearts overflowed with love for these people and with gratitude to God for enabling us to be a part of this special celebration.

We dropped Jean's suitcase in my room, and went back out (with our hammers) to join the celebration. Finally, at 2:30 a.m., we fell into bed exhausted. The sounds of the merry-makers could still be heard on the streets!

The next morning we were to meet with Israeli friends for a picnic and hike in the foothills surrounding Jerusalem. How beautiful it was, and once again I thought of how blessed I was to be able to live in such a special place! My Israeli friend shared with us as we walked, telling of the struggles of having grown up in Israel. She is the same age as I am, but in her lifetime she has seen and experienced more than I could even imagine! She told of the hardships they endured during the siege of Jerusalem, and during three major wars. The battle for the physical restoration of Israel had been a difficult time.

We found a secluded spot for lunch, with a magnificent view of the sprawling Judean hills. We rested for a few hours, and then hiked back to Jerusalem. We had hiked twelve kilometers without even being aware of it! (To my Israeli friends, that was known as "taking it easy". Like most Jerusalemites, they are very used to walking!)

That evening, we attended a concert held outside of the old city walls, in a park near David's citadel. Ten thousand people were gathered together, yet when the Israeli Philharmonic began to play, not a single sound could be heard. When "*Hatikvah*", the Israeli national anthem was sung, everyone movingly rose to their feet. And when Leontyne Price concluded the evening by singing, "He's got the Whole World in His Hands", surely His presence could be felt by all!

That night, just before I dozed off to sleep, my eye caught the sentence from my Bible: "I will move you to a larger place." The Lord had actually been dealing with me for some time about the need to move, but I had resisted it strongly, as the little room had become such a place of refuge by then, I didn't want to part with it! But the next morning, even before I placed the day in His hands, Jesus instructed me to go to the realty office on the top floor of the building I lived in to inquire about an apartment. "Before breakfast," were His final words. I shared my instructions with Jean, and we hurriedly dressed and headed upstairs. It seemed like a dreadful way to treat a guest, but the Lord's direction there, too, was explicit. She was not here as a guest, but simply to share in my life for two weeks, whatever that might entail!

"Do you have an apartment for rent, furnished if possible?" I begrudgingly asked the realtor. I still hung onto the foolish hope that his answer would be negative. How easily I had forgotten that it is only the Lord's presence that makes a house into a home, and that He sure does bless that which is not of Him. If I disobeyed Him and stayed in my little room, I'm sure it would soon become a very dismal and empty place indeed!

The realtor looked startled. "Well, as a matter of fact, we do have an apartment for rent, as of ten minutes ago!" Jean and I exchanged glances. "A man had an option on a lovely apartment in Ramot Eshkol, and he just called ten minutes ago to request another day to think it over. I just told him that he was taking the chance that it could be rented this morning, but he assured me he was willing to take that risk!" He explained that the apartment was furnished, that I would be able to move into it within two days, and that he would take us to see it if we were interested.

Once again, I was unprepared for the demonstration of the Lord's caring. He knew how I had come to love my little retreat on King George Street, and so He had found a new home for me that was special as well. For, when we arrived at the address, I discovered that it had belonged to friends of mine! I had spent much time there, and already had loved it! It had a living room *and* a bedroom, a little kitchen, heat and hot water, and a telephone! And, through a gift from Sid and Betsy's little church, I already had the first month's rent!

We returned to the centre of town and the lease was signed. That evening, a young Believer stopped by to see us. He asked urgently the minute he stepped into the room, "Does anyone know of a room for rent? I'm really desperate! I've looked everywhere, but there's not a single room to be had! I just don't know what to do!"

"Well, I do happen to know of a room for rent," I told him. "This one!"

"I've always loved this place! I'll take it! Praise the Lord!" How simple things are in the Father's care!

When it was time to move, I cried in spite of myself. I knew it was foolish, for in reality I was leaving a dingy room for a much bigger, light and airy flat; but Jesus had been so close to me there, it felt like leaving part of my heart behind.

The next day, the article appeared in the newspaper under the headline: "WE LOVE YOU, ISRAEL!" Pictured with the article was a copy of the cheque, with the by-line: "*From Believers in Jesus*"! It was truly reason to rejoice.

On our second day in my new flat, the Lord prompted us to proceed to the Prime Minister's office to prepare for the presentation of the love scroll. I couldn't imagine how it would all work out, but with the cheque and signatures in hand, we arrived at the government office buildings. After a security check, the officer in the hallway put us through by phone to the Prime Minister's secretary. I began by explaining that I had a gift that I wanted to present to Prime Minister Begin.

She sounded exasperated. "The Prime Minister is terribly busy trying to run this country, and he certainly can't be interrupted every five minutes. It's impossible!"

I'm sure I would have given up at that very moment, except for the fact that I knew that the Lord had sent us and that therefore the doors would open! Finally I said to her, "Look, could I just show you something? I have a scroll with thousands of signatures expressing love for Israel . . ."

Israelis have a great deal of curiosity, and that did the trick. "Hand the phone back to the security guard, and I'll instruct him to let you in," she said. After a second security check, we were led to the inner offices of the Prime Minister's Bureau. When the secretary began to look through the hundreds of pages of expressions of love for Israel, she seemed very moved. She called over another staff member and then after yet another security check, we were ushered into the office of Dr. Eliahu Ben-Elissar, the Director-General of the Prime Minister's Bureau.

I explained to him, "I am a Jewess who has accepted Jesus as the Messiah." He scowled. "As a result of my belief, my rights were taken from me a year ago, and I am now contesting it in the High Court of Justice." His scowl deepened. "As a result of the court case, Believers in Jesus around the world have heard of the situation. And so it seemed like a wonderful opportunity to show love for Israel in a visible way in honour of Israel's thirtieth year as a nation." I then showed him the scrolls from England, the United States and New Zealand, as well as the cheques which accompanied them. "These people are true friends of Israel," I added. He was deeply touched.

He said finally, "I will have Mr. Begin's Personal Aide call you as soon as possible. May I have your address and telephone number?" I quickly wrote it for him, wondering what he would think if he knew that only three days earlier I didn't even *have* a telephone! No wonder the Lord had me move when He did!

Jean and I left in total amazement. We had arrived at the government offices completely unknown, yet it had taken only minutes for the door to open to the very Director of the Prime Minister's office!

"Well, Esther, that certainly is coming out of hiding!" Jean teased. "The first person to have your new address is the head of the government!"

Jean commented abstractedly on the way home, "I wonder if Jesus' mother called Him a brat when He was a child?"

It seemed like an audacious question to ask, but I said to Jesus, "Well, *did* she?"

The whole day passed and I did not receive an answer; but Jesus kept me *aware* of the fact that I had not received an answer. Finally, that night, when Jean was in another room, I felt both the Lord's presence and His holiness, so that once again I fell to my face. And then, He answered me with great dignity, "My mother may have called me a brat — but *God* was my Father!" Yikes!

"I've noticed one thing in my relationship with You," I told Him much later, when I had recovered my dignity, "and that is the fact that it's no fun to argue with You, because You're *always* right!"

During Jean's last few days in Israel, we toured the Galilee together. She was great fun to take around, as she was as delighted with the Israeli countryside as I had been! I was sad when it was finally time to say goodbye to her at Ben Gurion airport.

A week after Israel's thirtieth anniversary, another holiday was forthcoming for residents of Jerusalem. It was called "Jerusalem Day" and it was a day of celebrations to mark the miracle of Jerusalem as a united city. This year would be the eleventh anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem!

Three days earlier a terrorist bomb had exploded in a Jerusalem bus, and once again innocent lives had been lost. I attended an afternoon memorial service on "Ammunition Hill" for the 181 soldiers killed in the battle for the city during the Six-Day War. Prime Minister Begin referred to the terrorist blast in a brief address on "Ammunition Hill". Noting that terrorists repeatedly strike at civilians rather than at military targets, he said they would not succeed in casting a shadow on the Jerusalem Day celebrations. "Jerusalem will be one, united, liberated, forever!" he declared, echoing the words of the Prophets of long ago.

Twelve thousand people then marched from "Ammunition Hill" via Gethsemane to a sports stadium for a combined service.

Later that afternoon, I met with friends to join the celebrations on Ben Yehuda Street in the centre of Jerusalem. The headlines of *The Jerusalem Post* the next morning read: "HAPPY HAPPENING ON BEN YEHUDA!" The article continued:

*"Jerusalem's Ben Yehuda Street became a temporary pedestrian mall last night as tens of thousands of people poured into the downtown street to witness the Jerusalem Day happening organized by Bezalel Academy. The event, the first of its kind in the city, was a cheerful centerpiece for Jerusalem Day celebrations. Bands, confetti, sidewalk cafes, entertainers, outdoor movies and colourful decorations drew a cross-section of West Jerusalem residents. Strong security checks did not dampen the fun but the dense crowds made it difficult for children to see what was happening."*

Late in the afternoon, a thanksgiving service was held at the Western Wall. Thousands of people gathered there to thank the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob for restoring their city to them as in days of old. At that very moment, two extraordinary miracles occurred.

The first miracle was that it suddenly began to rain. In other parts of the world rain in June is not much of a miracle — but in Jerusalem, rain at that time of year is virtually unheard of! And then, the rain stopped, as a magnificent afternoon rainbow graced the eastern sky. It was a gigantic double rainbow, and it spread from one end of the Western Wall to the other! It could be seen from all parts of the city, and remained in the sky for close

to three hours. Truly it was a gift from God, a sign of His covenant with His ancient people in this thirtieth anniversary year!

It reminded me of the joy that will one day be felt in that city when the wall of separation between the Jewish people and their Messiah is spiritually removed forever. *Hasten that day, O Lord!*

A few days later, I received a telephone call from a Mr. Yachiel Kadishai who introduced himself as Prime Minister Begin's Personal Aide. He invited me to meet him the following afternoon at the Knesset public cafeteria. He assured me that he would leave my name at the security check outside the Knesset, and would meet me in the cafeteria at 1:00 p.m.

The next afternoon I sat in the cafeteria waiting, wondering what the interview would be like! Moments later he arrived and briskly walked to my table. "And so?" he began. He had a friendly, disarming air, and I relaxed immediately.

I began to tell him about the scroll, reaching to uncover it for him.

"Yes, I heard all about you," he interjected. "You're much younger and definitely more beautiful than I had pictured!" How precious he was!

"Come with me," he announced, as soon as I had finished telling him the story of the love scroll. He dashed off through the corridors of the Knesset until we reached the Prime Minister's office within the Knesset building. He then put a phone call through to a Mr. Harry Hurwitz. "Shalom, Harry," he said into the phone. "Come to the Knesset right now if you can! There's a woman here that you simply have to meet! You should spend more time here anyway!" he teased.

"Come with me," he announced again. I ran to catch up! He brought me into the Knesset dining room, reserved for Members of the Israeli parliament. We sat down at a table with the Minister of Health, and tea was ordered. Mr. Kadishai then teased the Minister of Health for eating cake. "What kind of a witness is that, for the Minister of Health to be gorging himself on cake?" He then conceded that the Minister of Health had redeemed himself by drinking prune juice instead of coffee! (I had been terrified of this interview, but by then I was having such a fabulous time that I forgot to be self-conscious at all!)

Mr. Kadishai then told a joke in Hebrew to the Minister of Health, and they both roared. "Did you understand it?" he asked me.

I explained that I hadn't. "Well," he said, "I was talking about the early days of this country when there was no system of garbage collection in Jerusalem. Everyone had instead a garbage pit in the back of their apartment building." Then he continued with the story:

*"One day, Abie was walking by when he saw his friend Isaac digging through his garbage pit.*

*'Isaac, what ever are you doing?'* Abie asked.

*'My suit jacket fell in,'* Isaac answered.

*'But Isaac, surely you won't wear it?'* Abie ventured.

*'Good heavens, no!'* came the indignant reply. *'But I left my sandwich in the coat pocket!'*"

It was humorous, but it was one of those jokes that was not-so-funny as well, as it spoke of trying times in Jerusalem when there was a dire shortage of food and primitive living conditions. But the Jewish people have an ability to interject humour into even the most dreadful circumstances, and it is a big help, to be sure!

A few minutes later, Mr. Hurwitz appeared. "What's happening?" he asked expectantly.

"What is it you wish to tell me?"

"Have some cake first, then I'll tell you," Mr. Kadishai replied.

After Mr. Hurwitz ordered cake and tea, he then asked again, "So what's up?"

"Eat your cake first," Mr. Kadishai answered him. And no matter how many times Mr. Hurwitz asked, Mr. Kadishai refused to tell him until we left the cafeteria and arrived once again in the Prime Minister's office. And then he prompted me to tell the story once again. How it amazed Mr. Hurwitz to see such a visible sign of love for Israel! It was his very first week at his new post in public relations for Israel, and so he was thrilled to see evidence of so much support for Israel.

"Eileen should work for Israel, don't you think?" Mr. Kadishai teased. "But how would it look to have a missionary from Israel?"

Of course, I explained to them that I was *not* a missionary! (In Israel, the term "missionary" has a very negative connotation, as the Jewish people are wary of anything that would make them lose their identity as Jews; and traditional missionaries convert people to a particular Christian denomination. Most people — non-Jewish as well as Jewish — lack the understanding that Christianity *is* Jewish, and therefore a Jewish person who comes to know the love of Jesus does not "convert" to another religion, but merely becomes fulfilled *as a Jew*.)

After I shared with them the love that real Believers have for Israel, Mr. Hurwitz told of an experience he had just prior to his recent emmigration from South Africa.

"One day a group of Christians came to my office. They asked if they could pray for me, explaining that because of Jesus they loved the Jewish people very much. But they *do* love us," he related, his voice filled with wonder. "A year later these same people returned. They handed me a piece of matzah, which they had brought to me 'from my brothers behind the Iron Curtain'. They actually visited Jewish people in Russia and brought back a gift of love from them!" Love speaks more clearly than words ever can.

Two hours had passed by since my arrival at the Knesset, and I knew it was time for me to leave. Both men promised to work out the date of the presentation of the love scroll as soon as possible. I thanked them for their help, and left the Knesset, deeply grateful to the Lord for the time we had spent together.

A few days later, a group of Believers came to visit me from the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. (They were from the U.S. and Australia, and heard about me through Fr. Francis.) The term, Catholic Charismatic Renewal, is used to signify those people within the Catholic church who have opened their hearts and their lives to a direct relationship to Jesus, receiving many of His gifts of the Spirit, as well as His discernment as to which aspects of the Catholic church are merely the traditions of man and not inspired by the Lord and His Word. For example, they come to recognize the Lord's love for all true members of His family, no matter which denomination they might identify themselves with. They also pray directly to Jesus, no longer making confessions to a priest. Nor do they, for the most part, continue in the Catholic tradition of praying to the dead and for the dead, customs which truly have no Scriptural basis whatsoever.

That evening we had a close time of fellowship together. Just before leaving, one of them, a dear servant of the Lord's named Sr. Briege McKenna, felt to pray for me, ending with this word of prophecy:

*"Fear not, My daughter, for even if all forsake you, yet will I not forsake you. I will send you to princes and to people in high places. Waiting will be the most difficult, but you will know the day."*

I never dreamed the ways in which the Lord would one day fulfill that word!

One day shortly thereafter, a friend said to me, "Esther, has the Lord spoken to you about Ireland?"

"What are you talking about?" I asked her, startled.

"Well, I don't know exactly, but I just have the strongest feeling from Him that you're meant to travel to Ireland!"

In a life of faith, there are endless "possibilities"! But I know that we are never meant to act on someone else's word to us, until or unless it is confirmed to us directly by the Lord as well! And so I could do nothing but wait, knowing that if this idea had truly come from Him, all would be revealed in His timing!

Some weeks went by before this mystery was to be solved. In June, Fr. Francis was scheduled to leave Jerusalem for his home in Canada, and then to wherever else the Lord opened doors for him. On his last morning in the city, I met with him at 8:00 a.m. so that we could have one last time to speak together before his departure. We had a wonderful talk, and I knew I would miss him and his insights into the ways of God! At 11:00 a.m., many friends gathered to wish him farewell, and just before he stepped into the waiting car, they began to speak about Dublin. Not having any idea at all what they were referring to, I had the strongest sense in the world that I was also meant to go!

"Francis, I have a feeling from the Lord that I'm supposed to come to Dublin!"

And Francis, in his imperturbable way, simply replied, "Great! Plan to come a few days before the general conference. Make the necessary arrangements with Sr. Celine, and we'll see you there! It will be interesting to see what doors the Lord will open!" And with that he waved a last farewell and jumped into the car.

And there I was, making plans to travel to Ireland — and I didn't even know what it was that I would be travelling to! How different a walk in faith is from the ways of the world! Without the Lord, no one would make arrangements to go to another country and not even know *why*! But the evidence of the Lord's will in the matter was truly all the assurance that was needed.

I soon learned that I would be attending the "International Conference on Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church". I made plans with Sr. Celine, and she assured me that someone would meet me at the Dublin airport and that a room would be reserved for me near the conference grounds. A week later, the funds had miraculously been provided, and I found myself viewing the emerald-greenness of Ireland as the plane approached the Dublin airport!

When I arrived at the conference centre, I was taken at once to see Fr. Martin. It was great to see him again!

"Listen," he said, "things will be happening rather quickly. Tomorrow is the last morning of the "Leaders' Conference", and I've made arrangements for you to address the conference at a meeting tomorrow morning before Mass. But it needs the approval of the chairmen of the conference, so you will be meeting with them in an hour. It's quite an amazing door that's opened, kiddo, and we need to rejoice in the Father's love!"

At that time, I didn't understand that I would be addressing the actual *leaders* of the Catholic Renewal from around the world. I assumed instead, that this was a conference for those who were *studying* for leadership positions; and so the next morning I unhesitatingly gave my testimony to the group gathered there, also sharing the centrality of Israel in God's plans and purposes. And then I offered them the opportunity to sign the love scroll. The Lord really graced the time with His presence and love, and following the meeting the members of the "Leaders' Conference" signed the love scroll, adding twenty-nine new countries to it!

It wasn't until after the meeting, that I realized that the men I had just addressed weren't *studying* to be leaders in the Catholic Renewal, they *were* the leaders of the Catholic

Renewal! (The Lord knows me well, and He knew that if I had known that in advance, I never would have had the courage to even open my mouth!)

In the days to follow we had some blessed fellowship together, and I knew it had to be a sign of great changes in the Catholic church if a Jewish woman was welcomed and accepted and allowed to address men of such leadership positions! In the Catholic church untouched by the renewal, it would have been an absolute impossibility.

Following the "Leaders' Conference" was a conference for 5,000 priests, nuns and missionaries. On the morning of their combined Mass, I was invited to lead the procession carrying the host (Eucharistic wafer) to the front of the assembly. Fr. Francis happened to have led the Mass that day, and he teased me later for the horrified and astonished expression on my face as I walked slowly down the aisle bearing the host in my hands! But for a Jewish person in a Catholic setting, it was rather a new experience!

Following this conference was the general conference, which was held at the Royal Dublin Society and was attended by 20,000 people from 80 nations! The conference was an awesome experience for me! I sensed at once the unity and deep commitment that graced the conference, and thanked the Lord many, many times for allowing me to be present.

The conference lasted for three days, and on the final day everyone gathered at the Jumping Enclosure (with a seating capacity to hold the 20,000 participants) for the final Eucharistic ceremony which marked the close of the assembly.

At the end of the Mass, the following telegram was read, conveying the Pope's blessing to the conference:

*"The Holy Father sends greetings of joy and peace to those taking part in the 1978 International Conference on Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church.*

*He gives thanks to God for the Divine graces operative in the lives of so many sons and daughters of the Catholic Church.*

*His Holiness prays that even greater fruits of the Holy Spirit will sustain the Conference participants in genuine sacramental Christian living leading them to increased sensitivity to the immense needs of all Christ's brethren and confirming them in Ecclesiastical unity with the entire Church.*

*He also prays that through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the evangelical witness of all the participants will be perfected so that they may always effectively proclaim in the Christian authenticity of their daily lives that Jesus Christ is Lord.*

*With these sentiments the Holy Father willingly sends his Apostolic Blessing."*

I knew it was an important sign for the Catholic renewal that the Pope recognized the conference and sent His blessing upon it. How everyone cheered after the message was read! And then, the Lord spoke the strangest thing to my heart: "One day I will send you to Rome to see the Pope!" It seemed so outlandish that I mentioned it later to Marcia, and then completely forgot about it.

While the members of the "Leaders' Conference" had been very warm and responsive to my message, Fr. Martin also tried to have the doors open for me to address the conference as a whole with the love scroll message. And there we came up against a bit more of the traditional Catholic attitudes towards Israel and towards people who are not members of the Catholic church; and I had therefore experienced some difficult moments from some of the planners of the conference. Some had been so unpleasant, as a matter of

fact, that I sat in the middle of the closing Mass feeling royally sorry for myself. The satchel containing the love scroll was leaning against the chair next to me, and I said to the Lord, "I quit! Who ever asked for this stupid job anyway? I'm sick of the love scroll, and I don't want to speak on Israel's behalf any longer! Just give me back my children and my dog and leave me alone!"

Someone penetrated my cloud of gloom long enough to tell me, "Excuse me, but I think someone has just run off with your valise!" And, sure enough, I looked up just in time to see someone running away with the love scroll!

What followed next would have made a good scene in a comic movie! It seems that my satchel had been leaning against a wheelchair, and when someone had pushed the wheelchair away, the person sitting next to it thought that the satchel had belonged to the wheelchair. So they grabbed the valise and started running after the wheelchair; and I had to jump up and run after the man who was carrying the valise — all this in front of 20,000 people! I knew it was the Lord's sense of humour, but I was so mad I refused to laugh about it until the next day! But of course it was comical that at the exact minute that I told Him I was sick of the love scroll with all the grief that goes with it, He obligingly had someone run off with it at once!

The closing message of the conference was given by Bishop Dermot O'Mahony, Auxiliary Bishop of Dublin, and portions of it are well worth noting:

*"I really love this last scene in the Gospel story. The risen Lord had told the eleven to meet Him in Galilee. When they arrived He was — so typically — waiting for them. Then He confided to them their final mission:*

*All power in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News to all creation. Baptise them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit. And teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And know that I am with you always; yes, unto the end of time.'* (Mark 16:15, Matthew 28:18-20)

*Here we are — 20,000 of us from literally the ends of the earth almost 2,000 years later — coming together because the same Risen Lord promised that He would meet us here in a very special way. Our Lord must be smiling; indeed, I'm certain He is absolutely thrilled! Here we are giving for Him the best possible answer to those prophets of doom who turn up in every century — and this is particularly true of our own — to proclaim the imminent demise of Christianity and even the death of God. How could they be serious? 'And know that I am with you always, even to the end of time.'*

*If the scene repeats itself, so does the command to go out to the whole world and proclaim the Good News . . . But we need to be authentic. People today have a great horror of the artificial or the false. The great idols of yesterday are ruthlessly shown to have feet of clay today. People want authenticity, truth. We must be credible witnesses to our Risen Lord so that the world will believe that He has sent us. But how?*

*Listen to Our Lord speaking to us again this afternoon some of the key words of His Gospel message: May they all be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us.' John 17:21 The most basic test of authentic witness is — By this shall all men know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another.' Many of us will have experienced the nearness of our Risen Lord during this conference. But such an experience works no magic, produces no cheap grace, is no shortcut to heaven. We can quickly forget all about it unless we take up the hard, painful task of daily*

witnessing to Jesus by our love. Let us make our own the beautiful saying of St. John of the Cross — 'Where you can't find love, put love and then you'll find love'. Someone somewhere is missing out, it could be your husband, your wife, your son, your employer, your next door neighbour — even your Bishop! It could be your home, your office, your presbytery, your factory, your religious community or community council. Where you can't find love, put love! There could be no better way of proving that there is more to the Renewal Movement (and there is) than a hug or arms raised on high or a movement of religious enthusiasm so heavenly as to be no earthly good. Yes, of course we must praise the Lord, we must express our feelings for God, our joy that He exists, our joy because He loves us. It is so good and necessary at times to praise Him — not for what He gives but for His own sake — His glory. But 'not everyone who says Lord, Lord will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in Heaven . . . (Matthew 7:21). And the will of our Father is for us to love as Jesus did. This is the love that transforms the world, that renews the face of the earth; because love and love alone is the supreme gift of the Holy Spirit and the only certain sign of His presence in our lives.

*The Holy Spirit will instruct us how to love and ensure that in every work, every action, every gesture we have the power to witness authentically to the presence of the Risen Lord in our midst. So let us go forth in joy and hope to the whole world and 'proclaim the Good News to all creation.'*"

I sensed in the Catholic Charismatic Believers something very precious, that is too often missing in the Protestant renewal. They have a real sense of the holiness of the Lord and are very much in awe of Him, and this gives a depth to their relationship with the Lord. In addition, the Catholic church has always had a concept of a total commitment to the Lord, and when this is touched by the Holy Spirit, it becomes very beautiful indeed. Often in the Protestant renewal, too much emphasis is placed on the *experience* of God's love and not enough on the cost of discipleship!

At the end of the Mass, hundreds of priests danced off the platform with their arms raised giving praise to God. The conference in general will remain a treasured memory!

One afternoon during the conference, I was standing in line to enter one of the cafeterias that were servicing such an enormous group of people. I began to speak with a priest who was standing behind me in line, and when we introduced one another, the woman standing behind him said in a startled voice, "Did you say Esther Dorflinger?"

"Yes," I answered her.

"Well, isn't that astonishing! I read about you and your case before the court in a Dutch newspaper in January! I cut out the article and placed it in my Bible so as to remember to pray for you every day!"

From that time on, she has been a special encouragement to me and a faithful prayer warrior. But the greatest joy was that she knew the Lord's love for her in such a special way, that He rewarded her faithfulness in prayer by bringing us together in Dublin in a crowd of 20,000 people!

At the end of a week, the conferences were over and I prepared to return to Jerusalem. Deep friendships had been formed, and even my little message continued to spread. I received some time later a post card from a Pakistani priest, on holiday in Rome, who wrote:

*"I remember your life story in Dublin, especially the decision with your two sleeping children. May the Lord bless those who follow Him in Gethsemane*

*and give them the JOY which surpasses all understanding. This morning in a French sermon translated into Italian I spoke about your story to the Franciscan Sisters . . ."*

It had been quite an amazing time!

Upon my return to Israel, the Lord instructed me that the dowels for the love scroll were to be crafted in olive wood. And then, one day in July, He sent me to Bethlehem to find a carpenter!

When I arrived in the centre of Bethlehem, I had no idea in the world where to go nor what to do! But then, the Lord clearly instructed me to walk down one of the roads to the left of Manger Square. When I had walked some distance, He then told me to take a left-hand turn. I then found myself in a very narrow passageway. When I walked to the end of it, there in the corner sat the tiniest carpentry shop I had ever seen! And I knew that the Lord wished for the love scroll to be crafted there.

The carpenter, named Tony, thankfully spoke English, and I was immediately struck by his friendliness and warmth. I described to him what I wanted done, showing him the rolled up pages of the love scroll.

"I'll be happy to do it for you," he assured me. "But you'll have to leave the scroll here for a week, so that I can get the exact measurements. Come back next Monday, and it will be ready for you!"

When I realized that I would have to leave the scroll with him, I had genuine misgivings, as Bethlehem is now an Arab town. How would I dare to leave so many thousands of expressions of love for Israel in an Arab town? I had only to trust that this was indeed where the Lord wanted me to be!

At the end of the week, I ventured off to his shop. Tony proudly showed me the completed scroll. How lovely it looked, and how special it felt as I caressed the olive wood dowel that had been crafted in Bethlehem!

While the last coat of varnish was drying, Tony treated me to a steaming cup of Turkish coffee, as is the Arab custom. He immediately began to speak about Jesus! He was an Arab-Christian, not a Moslem; but like most traditional Christians, he did not know the reality of Jesus' love.

Finally, just before I carried the scroll out of his shop, I asked him if he wished to receive Jesus into his heart. His answer was yes! He quietly prayed, asking forgiveness for his sins, and placed his life in the Saviour's hands. I prayed with him as well, and he felt so deeply Jesus' love for him!

God had promised to honour the love contained within that scroll, and here was some of its first fruit! He had worked with the scroll for a week, and had been touched by the love of Jesus before the scroll even left his shop! How joyfully I will always remember that dear scroll, with the hands that had lovingly crafted it folded in prayer as his heart was renewed!

Early in August I spoke with Mr. Kadishai on the telephone, and we made arrangements for the love scroll to be presented on the 3rd of August, 1978. Ann was to accompany me to the presentation.

With so many hundreds of pages of signatures, the scroll took many, many days to assemble. I jokingly told Ann one evening, following hours of work on it, "Wait and see! I bet we'll get a special stapling award in heaven!"

I wrote the following letter to Mr. Begin to accompany the love scroll:

*"Prime Minister Menachem Begin  
Office of the Prime Minister  
Jerusalem, Israel*

*Dear Prime Minister Begin:*

*In the spring, I spent two-and-a-half months speaking for Israel in the United States and England amongst true Believers in Jesus, both of Jewish and non-Jewish origin. As a result, a portion of this Anniversary gift was flown here from as far away as New Zealand, and people from thirty-two nations are represented on this love scroll! They are true friends as they have a deep and genuine commitment to stand by Israel. They love you and this nation dearly. They continually pray for you and for Israel, and will help in every way that they can.*

*Please accept this as the beginning of a visible gift of love that will continue in the coming months. We stand together with you and with our beloved Israel.*

*Please place each day in the hands of the G-d of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He alone can give the guidance and the strength.*

*Happy Thirtieth Anniversary, Israel!*

*With much love and many prayers,*

*Eileen Dorflinger*

*and friends from many lands"*

In addition, I felt to enclose the following letter, as it was such an encouraging word from a Gentile Believer from the States:

*"Dear Mr. Begin:*

*I am a 'born-again, fundamental, Bible-believing Christian who deeply loves the Jewish people. However, my heart is aching for God's chosen people and I humbly want to offer encouragement to you despite the unChristian behaviour of the top echelon of my government, for which I apologize.*

*Those who profess to be 'born-again' Christians (especially in my government) should be cognizant of what God — in the Holy Bible — emphatically declares is the territory of Israel — and what the Arabs should possess. This is their respective heritage given to them by Almighty God! Nothing or no one shall ever rescind His declaration.*

*Therefore, dear Mr. Begin, DO NOT WAVER. Please refuse to yield the territory which God has given to Israel despite the fact that she appears to be standing alone. Be confident in that knowledge that she is not. Be encouraged by God's assurance of His promise in ISAIAH 54:17 and I quote it as follows:*

**‘NO WEAPON THAT IS FORMED AGAINST THEE SHALL PROSPER: AND EVERY TONGUE THAT SHALL RISE AGAINST THEE IN JUDGEMENT THOU SHALT CONDEMN. THIS IS THE HERITAGE OF THE SERVANTS OF THE LORD, AND THEIR RIGHTEOUSNESS IS OF ME, SAITH THE LORD.’**

*Keep trusting in our Almighty God (see Proverbs 3:5-6).*

**‘TRUST IN THE LORD WITH ALL THINE HEART: AND LEAN NOT**

UNTO THINE OWN UNDERSTANDING.  
IN ALL THY WAYS ACKNOWLEDGE HIM AND HE SHALL  
DIRECT THY PATHS.'

*Please be assured of the prayers, love and support of all true 'born-again' Christians.*

Sincerely and in Christian love,

*Viola Ross  
(Mrs. William M.)*

On the morning of the 3rd of August, Ann and I prayed over the scroll before bringing it to the Prime Minister's office.

*"Dear Jesus, this is a gift that was called forth in Your name to show the love for Israel in the hearts of Your people. They have almost never seen love in Your name, Jesus, but only hatred and bloodshed and persecution. Oh Lord, let this love gift mark the real beginning of their knowledge of You. We ask as it is presented this morning that the power of Your Holy Spirit be present in the room, and that Your love will be deeply felt by every person present. And we pray, too, that when it is later given to Prime Minister Begin, Your love will again shine forth and touch him in a deep and real way. Please let them know clearly that it is Your gift of love to those You have come to redeem."*

When we arrived at the office building, we were ushered into the inner offices of the Prime Minister's Bureau, without even a security check! Mr. Kadashai greeted us with a warm handshake, and then we met together with him, Dr. Ben-Elissar, Mr. Hurwitz, and a good friend of the Prime Minister by the name of Mr. Hecht, founder of the Dagon grainery in Haifa. Ann and I were each given a cup of tea, and then I uncovered the scroll and placed the envelope containing the letters and cheques on the desk.

As they began to look at the scroll filled with so many thousands of signatures expressing love for Israel, we could sense how deeply moved they each were. They identified many of the national flags that Ann and I had lovingly attached to the scroll, and they were amazed to find countries represented that have no official ties with Israel, such as Indonesia and Pakistan. Even Arab Believers from within Israel itself had signed the love scroll! How evident it was that Jesus' love makes artificial barriers simply disappear!

They continued to look through the pages of the scroll and simply did not know how to relate to the love that was shown.

When they read the accompanying letters, I was able to explain to them that there is a difference between those Gentiles who *call* themselves Christians and have hated and persecuted the Jewish people; and those who *truly* have a relationship to Jesus Himself — as the signators on the love scroll — and are therefore committed to stand by Israel whatever the cost!

"They are Israel's *true* friends," I told them. "The people who have done terrible things to the Jewish people in Jesus' name have had nothing to do with Him whatsoever!"

Ann then told them how the message of the love scroll had spread through her to far away New Zealand; and how people there had been so overjoyed with an opportunity to express their love for Israel that a gift had been flown twenty-three hours by plane, arriving just in time for Israel's thirtieth birthday!

The Israeli people are so unused to being loved, they barely knew how to respond. But it was a deeply moving time, with a bond of friendship and understanding that was felt by all.

Ann then took a picture of the presentation, and we received warm handshakes from all. They told us that they would present the gift to Mr. Begin that very day. (If I had insisted, I could have presented the gift directly to Mr. Begin. But I felt from the Lord not to do it, as the gift was not from *me*, and would mean a lot more to him when presented by his closest friends and associates!)

Ann and I returned the following day to the Prime Minister's office. Mr. Kadishai greeted us with a hearty "shalom"!

"Mr. Begin was deeply moved and encouraged by the scroll and the financial gift," he informed us, "and has just dictated a letter to you which will be typed in a few minutes. In the meanwhile, come see the scroll!"

We followed him into his office, and he showed us the cabinet where the scroll would be kept from then on. I presented him with a picture of the scroll, which he has kept on the wall of his office ever since! He shared that they had not realized just how extensive the scroll was until yesterday afternoon when they had spent time really looking through it. "There were so many thousands of signatures, it's really quite amazing!"

For all of you who participated in the love scroll, be encouraged, as your love was deeply felt and warmly received!



ראש הממשלה  
THE PRIME MINISTER

Jerusalem, August 4, 1978

Ms. Eileen Dorflinger  
4 Paran Street  
Apt. 508  
Ramat Eshkol  
Jerusalem

Dear Ms. Dorflinger,

My friends at the office handed me the scroll of names and the cheques that you presented to me on behalf of the thousands of persons who declared their expressions of love for Israel and their desire to assist our welfare funds.

I am most grateful for your efforts and for the wonderful gestures of each and everyone whose name appears on the scroll. In these difficult days it is good to feel the warmth of love and the prayers for our well-being, success and peace.

We are now in our thirtieth anniversary year and, looking back, we are proud of all our accomplishments and conscious of the fact that we have not enjoyed a single day of peace. You know that we want peace, we yearn for peace and we are doing our utmost to achieve peace with security for all our women, men and children. We are confident that, before long, the world will understand the justice of our cause all the better.

We are certain that there are more people who love Israel than who wish us harm and this adds strength to our efforts.

The financial contribution that your friends made will be devoted to urgent welfare causes in accordance with their wishes.

God bless you for your prayers and your good wishes and your deeds.

Sincerely,

  
Menachem Begin



Rainbow at the Western Wall, "Jerusalem Day", June 1978



Presentation of the "Love Scroll" on 3 August, 1978. Harry Hurwitz, Dr. Ben Eliassar, Esther, Yachiel Kadishai, Mr. Hecht.

# 20

## “THOU ART THE SON”

**F**rom my apartment window, I could see off in the distance the new area of Jerusalem called "Ramot", which means "high places". Ramot was snuggled in amongst the Judean hills, and looked especially beautiful in Jerusalem's golden sunsets! One day, shortly after the love scroll presentation, the Lord let me know clearly that I was to leave my furnished apartment and move to a flat in Ramot!

I searched the newspapers, and when I was reading about one particular unfurnished apartment in Ramot, the Lord said, "Call that one and make an appointment to see it."

The next day I ventured out to Ramot with a friend, and after looking through the apartment, I knew from the Lord that He wished for me to rent it! And the very next day He found someone to take over the lease in my old apartment, which was a further confirmation of His will! And so I packed my few possessions, and moved to the new apartment in Ramot.

It took me not long at all to get settled, for I had almost nothing to unpack and nothing to unpack it into! The apartment was *completely* unfurnished; and all I had was a small desk, a borrowed captain's chair and one rug! Whenever I spoke, my voice would echo throughout the empty rooms! There were no closets, no dressers, furniture or appliances; which means that with no stove or refrigerator, my life was quite simple! And, of course, there was no telephone, either. As I had not even a mattress, I had to sleep on a blanket on the stone floor, and many mornings upon awakening I would have difficulty walking due to the cold from the stones.

I felt betrayed by the Lord and very forsaken and forlorn. "Why did You bring me here? What have I done wrong, to deserve a place like this? Who will ever visit me in this forsaken place anyway?" The empty rooms echoed with the sounds of my complaints. And then slowly, He began to answer them. My first visitors happened to be a whole bus-full of American tourists who stopped by to meet me and then prayed for me and my new home. And they were kind not to mention the fact that there was nowhere for anyone to sit! Who would dream that my first guests way out in Ramot would fill a bus?

Then the Lord told me to stop complaining and to take a look around the new section of the city that He had chosen for me to live in. And so I took a long walk around and, as much as I didn't want to give up the glooms, I had to admit that it was one of the loveliest places I had ever seen!

From the rooftop of my building, there was a breathtaking view of Jerusalem across the valley. And when I began to explore the neighbourhood, I was greatly impressed by the way Ramot had been designed.

The whole area had been built after 1967, when Jerusalem was reunited as the capital of Israel. As Ramot is situated on land that was previously used as Jordanian military positions

against Jewish Jerusalem prior to 1967, Ramot was therefore built both as a protection for Jerusalem and to extend the boundaries of the city. From one of the hilltops in Ramot you can see the many surrounding Arab villages and towns that all constitute part of Judea. (Often Judea and Samaria are falsely termed "the west bank" which in actuality means that this part of Israel — that was given to the Jewish people by God — is actually the west bank of the nation of Jordan!) I'm grateful that God has other interpretations, as I live in that part of Israel that I know will never be returned to any Arab nation! People who squabble about Israel and all the land she had "taken" show their ignorance both of the Scriptures and of the size of this tiny place. The so-called "west bank" begins just one hillside out of the centre of Jerusalem! How can people so easily insist that it be given back to nations that have vowed for the destruction of Israel as a nation? From Jerusalem, Jordan now is only one hour away by car, much less by air; Syria is only four hours by car; Lebanon is three-and-one-half hours; and Egypt is now only six hours distance! I wonder how much land they think we can return in order for Israel to even exist as a nation at all? Think of it — if the "west bank" were returned, Jordan would be just a mere ten minutes from the very heart of downtown Jerusalem! How wonderful that our security comes from God, who has promised that we will never leave the land again — no matter how many of the nations of the world are screaming!)

Ramot was designed in quite a lovely way. The parking areas were restricted to the outer fringes of the development, with the centre reserved for pedestrian paths, parks, playgrounds and gardens! I had to admit in spite of myself that I really loved it!

Soon the Lord dealt directly with my empty apartment as well. He said to me, "You had begun to take pleasure in the things around you instead of in Me. You have to realize that you need *nothing* apart from My love!"

In the beginning I had no idea what in the world He was alluding to; but as the weeks wore on, I actually learned to rejoice in my circumstances and truly look to the *Lord* for comfort and not to superficial things! And then when I could honestly be content to live without material comforts, He provided the money for me to purchase a bed, a two-burner stove, and a used refrigerator. But I had learned by then that everything I had belonged to *Him*, not to me, and He was therefore free to do with it what He chose to do!

As is so often true of the Lord's way, He had yet another purpose in moving me to this less-accessible place at that time, as He alone knows the hearts of men. Until that time, there had been a small group of Gentile Believers from the States that had been standing with me and encouraging me in the love scroll and the court case. But somehow, as the months had gone by, they had begun to harbour grudges against me that were never brought to me personally, and which therefore began to grow into something so unreasonable as to be beyond the point of reconciliation!

One day they invited me to lunch, where they presented me with such a list of grievances and misunderstandings that I hardly knew what to do or what to say! One of the couples was especially enraged, and tried to force me to confess to all that they held against me! Many of the things were incidents I barely remembered, and some were statements that I had made that had been taken out of context or simply not understood at all. But it was all so unexpected that I was devastated! They then told me that they were planning to send letters to all the people who knew me in different parts of the world to warn them that I was deceived and to have nothing to do with me! They assured me that the Believers in Israel would hear about it as well.

I went back to my new apartment that night, grateful for its remoteness, and cried out to the Lord. "Oh, Father, how can You let this happen? You know that what they believe isn't true, not the way that they see it! You have to let me defend myself! This is terrible!"

But the Lord's answer to me was very firm. "I will *never* let you defend yourself. I am the

One who vindicates! *I know the truth. You must look right before Me, and that is all that matters*, whatever it is that people may say against you! And I can never vindicate as long as it is still important to you what other men may think! Not only will I not let you defend yourself, but you have to love and forgive those who have spoken so against you!"

At that time, I understood almost nothing of what He was saying to me. I had not in any way come to the place as yet where I cared only to look right before God. I wanted people to accept and to understand me as well, and I had no idea what a great snare to a life of faith that attitude could be!

St. Teresa of Avila seemed so aptly to describe both of the difficulties in my life at that time — the concern for material possessions as well as for my reputation:

*"There is another kind of friendship and peace which Our Lord begins to give to certain persons who would be sorry really to offend Him in any way although they do not flee as often as they might from occasions of falling. They have their set times for prayer; Our Lord grants them tender feelings and tears, and they like to lead good and well-ordered lives. But they would be sorry to give up the pleasures of this world, for they think that these help to make their earthly lives happy. This life brings many changes with it; it will be hard for such persons to continue in virtue for if they do not abandon the pleasures and consolations of the world they will soon falter.*

*There are others who for the Lord's sake have left everything. They have no houses or property; and they do not care for self-indulgence, but in fact lead lives of penance; nor do they care for any worldly things, because the Lord has given them light to see how miserable these are. Yet they attach a great importance to their reputation. They would do nothing that was not as acceptable to men as to the Lord: they are very discreet and prudent. These two ideals are always very difficult to reconcile; and the worst of it is that, without their realizing how imperfect they are, the world's side always gets much more out of such people than does God's. These souls are generally very much distressed if anything is said against them. They do not embrace the Cross, but drag it after them, and so it distresses and wearies them and wears them to pieces. For it is when we love our Cross that it is light to bear; that is certain."*

One day during this trying time I travelled to the Galilee to attend the Galilean Women's meeting, which is held monthly and gives women from all the villages and cities of the Galilee a time for fellowship together. And there one of the women gave me a word of prophecy from the Lord:

*"I challenge you to come away with Me to the High Places. And there I will change you, and will then change you again. Come away, come away with Me!"*

A short time later, I read at the Lord's direction, Hannah Hurnard's wonderful book, *Hind's Feet on High Places*, an allegory about Much-Afraid who, through many trials and much tribulation, was at last able to join the Shepherd on the High Places with a transformed heart! I should have realized that both were a signal from the Lord that difficult times were ahead for me that would one day bear the fruit of a deeper relationship to Him!

Shortly thereafter I walked into the home of friends, and I noticed for the first time the word "Jesus" that they had engraved over the main archway of their home. Entwined around the "J" was a full-blossomed rose. As I gazed at it, the Lord gave me yet another

teaching on the rose, the story that had begun so long ago! He reminded me of the first rose I had received — a single rose, standing by itself — which symbolized that I had come to a certain degree of fullness of faith, *but that I still stood* very much *alone*. But this rose, on the archway of my friends' home, could no longer be separated from Jesus, as they were truly united as one! And then He gave me the understanding that He needed now to teach me a deeper dependency on Him, so that "self" would decrease and He and I could be truly united. How could I even imagine all that the ensuing months would hold for me before that depth of relationship was to become a reality in my life?

Before the court appearance, important papers were needed from the States, so Marcia agreed to come to Israel with the papers and to accompany me to the court appearance, which we learned was to be held on the 17th of November, 1978.

On the morning of her arrival, I went to the Laundromat, and as I was waiting for the clothes to dry, I walked over to the lovely furniture store nearby. When I was still living in my little room in Jerusalem, one day I had stood staring at a beautiful bamboo living room set, when the Lord told me, "One day you will have a home in Jerusalem and that furniture will be in it!" It had seemed impossible at the time, but every so often I would go to the store to gaze at "my" furniture!

On this particular day, for the first time one of the salesladies came up to me. "May I help you?" she asked. I didn't know quite what to say!

"How long does it take to order a set like this?" I asked her, pointing to the bamboo living room set the Lord had promised to me long ago.

"About six months. But just wait a minute, okay?" She went upstairs, and came back a few minutes later. "I just spoke with the manager," she informed me. "We're about to re-do our floor display, and therefore wondered if you'd be interested in purchasing this set now! You can pay for it in three installments if you would like!"

I happened at that moment to have a third of the cost of the set, and I felt the Lord's assurance that He would provide the rest. "Well, okay," I stammered.

"Good! Will you be home in about an hour?"

"Yes," I told her.

"Fine! We'll have it delivered then."

And so I went home, and an hour later the lovely set arrived. It consisted of a comfy sofa, a beautiful bamboo bookcase with glass shelves, and a low, square coffee table with a glass top. After it was unpacked, I put books and plants on the shelves, and then went off to the airport to welcome my very first guest!

It was a great joy to be able to welcome my very best friend to Israel and to have her share in my new life! We had fun exploring Jerusalem and touring the country prior to the date of the court appearance.

In spite of the rumours that were circulating (as my former friends had been true to their threats), my acquaintances in the Galilee had remained faithful friends nonetheless. Therefore, when I received word of the date for the court appearance, a small group of Galilean friends felt committed to appear in the courtroom with me on that day. The night before they all gathered in my home, bringing their own bedding and supplies, and we had a time of prayer and rejoicing. We then left, feeling rather solemn, to the court proceedings the following day.

We rose to our feet as the three judges entered the room. To begin with, the lawyer for the Ministry of Interior was to present his arguments to the court. (Since this is a unique court, the arguments for the opposition and for the defense are given by the attorneys, and it is rare for a witness to be called to the stand.) The Ministry of Interior's advocate rose to his feet, and began vociferously to present his case. He was quite dramatic in his points as to

why I should no longer be considered a Jew according to the Law of Return due to my belief in Jesus! He quoted from many sources, all "proving" that to accept Jesus was to accept the tenets of another religion, foreign to Judaistic tradition and belief. But at one point, one of the three judges asked the question, "*But does Mrs. Dorflinger believe in Jesus as the Son of God?*"

At that moment my lawyer's assistant handed me a slip of paper. "This is the most important question on which rests the entire case. If you answer that you see Jesus as a prophet or as a "good Jewish man", and not as the Son of God, I guarantee you will be granted your citizenship at once!"

But at that moment a strange thing happened to those of us who were in the court room. Each of us understood, by the working of the Holy Spirit within our hearts, that the Lord was not concerned with my citizenship, but that His purpose in my appearance before the High Court of Justice was the answer to that question — did I believe in Jesus as the Son of God?

Under the normal course of events, there would have been no opportunity to deal with it, as my lawyer was supposed to present his arguments to the court on the same day; and the judges would therefore base their decisions on the material presented by both sides. But the arguments presented by the Ministry of Interior were so lengthy and had been researched so carefully that he took up the entire morning. Finally the court adjourned, the judges promising to notify us of the date for the next court appearance, at which time my lawyer would be called upon to present our position.

When we had a time of discussion and prayer following the court session, we were all amazed to discover that the Lord had revealed to each of us within the courtroom the same thing, that His main purpose in this case before the highest court was the answer to the question, "Does Mrs. Dorflinger believe in Jesus as the Son of God?"

We agreed to have some days of prayer and fasting over it, so as to know best how to proceed. And when we then waited before the Lord, we sensed that He did not wish for there to be a second court appearance, but that He wanted us to hand a written statement to the court in answer to that question. We felt very strongly from the Lord that this would be the only possible way of giving a testimony as to the identity of Jesus. It was almost completely certain that under ordinary circumstances I would never be called to the witness stand. And even if I was, the judges could interrupt or stop my statements at their will, so to give an oral testimony of the identity of Jesus would be an impossibility! But a *written* statement would become a permanent part of the court record!

When I discussed this with Uri, he informed me that it was very unusual, but if we insisted, he would submit a request to the court for a written statement to be presented in lieu of a court appearance. And so we knew that we needed to have a written statement ready to hand to the court in case they accepted our request. And we knew that if they *did* accept our request, it would be further confirmation of God's will in the matter!

Earlier, as the court case had progressed, the Ministry of Interior had occasionally asked specific questions having to do with my faith. A young Believer, who had been helping me at the time, consistently advised me to give guarded answers. But I knew that in a sense — even though I could justify it — I was nonetheless denying the Lord in some way! And so I was very grateful for this opportunity to give a clear statement of my beliefs!

One day after Marcia had returned to the States, four of us met in a little village in the Galilee to begin to prepare the statement of Jesus' identity before the court. How clearly and how closely we felt the Lord's presence that morning, and how easily we identified with the early Believers, who also were called to testify in Israel as to the identity of Jesus as the Messiah and the Son of God! As we sat around the table with paper and pencils ready, the Lord prompted one brother to open his Bible. It opened to the following verse in Acts,

Paul's testimony before King Agrippa:

*"I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all things whereof I am accused of the Jews:*

*Especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently.*

*My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews:*

*Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.*

*And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers . . ."*

Acts 26:1-6

We felt such awe at that moment!

In the days that followed, as the statement was prepared and edited, we continued to feel the Lord's blessings, and we understood that to Him, this was an important event. And then, finally, the court statement was ready for presentation.

We had been notified that we were to appear before the court on the 27th of December. When I learned of this, and because so many friends in Jerusalem had forsaken me, I had called Sid and Betsy in the States to ask them if they could possibly come to Israel to be with me for the court appearance.

They sent back a telegram a few days later which read: "Your Christmas presents arriving at Ben Gurion on 26 December at 6:00 p.m." A friend from their congregation in Baltimore was staying with me at the time, and we both wondered, "Whatever can they be sending us? And how will it be arriving by plane?" Until finally the Lord broke through our reverie to tell me, "It's *them*, silly!" (He knows that I haven't a practical bone in my body, and many times He has to help me to figure out the practical complexities of daily living. Ah, such is a dreamer's life!)

And then, just three days before their expected arrival, we were notified that the court had accepted our request for a written statement in lieu of a court appearance, and that the statement needed to be handed to the court by January 1979.

My first thought, of course, was to call Sid and Betsy and to tell them that it was no longer necessary for them to come since there would not be a court appearance. But when I prayed about it with the friend who was staying with me, she and I both felt inexplicably from the Lord that we were to leave things as they were and simply to meet them at the airport on the twenty-sixth!

Christmas that year was a special time of shared fellowship with Believers in the Galilee who had prepared the statement with me and who were determined to stand by me through this time. It was a wonderful Jewish celebration, and we felt privileged to be able to celebrate the birth of our Messiah in the very land to which He came!

And on the evening of the twenty-sixth, we went to the airport to greet Sid and Betsy. They walked out of the terminal building wearing enormous red bows, our Christmas packages indeed!

On the day that they had expected to join me and other friends before the Israeli judges, they trooped off instead to the laundromat! It was rather anti-climactic, to be sure! But as it turns out, their arrival in Israel just at that time was crucial after all, for I was put on trial on the 27th of December, although not in the way that we had envisioned!

On the twenty-seventh, the five people who had been so incensed against me brought all

of their criticisms to a meeting of the "Jerusalem elders". (I'm still not certain who or what they are, but I believe it is a group of primarily Gentile pastors from other countries who meet together to pray and to discuss Christian problems in Jerusalem.) These five people therefore read a prepared letter against me, warning the elders that I was in total deception and operating outside the will of the Lord in the court case as well as in most everything else. And one of the main arguments they gave was that I denied that Jesus is the Son of God!

The strange thing is, that out of this entire group of Christian men in supposed leadership positions, only one person even to this day has ever bothered to come to me to see if all the stories and accusations that they heard about me were true! That man was a Jewish Believer, who left the minute the meeting was over and came directly to my house to corroborate what he had heard. And that, of course, is what the Scriptures command us to do! When I showed him the statement that had been prepared to hand to the court as evidence of my belief in Jesus as the Son of God, he knew that the rumours had been based on simple misunderstandings and distortions of the truth.

The puzzle to me was, that if all of what had been said against me *had* been true (and surely none of us are perfect) then it seems more important than ever that these men of God should have stood with me and tried to help!

Sid and Betsy offered to go to each of the five persons who were the cause of such divisiveness and speak with them; but as they were soon to find out, they were beyond the point of reason! When they later went to some of the elders to ask them why they didn't verify the information for themselves, one of them said, "Well, I prayed, and I was assured it was all true."

I knew that I could not defend myself, but we simply wanted to establish some kind of dialogue so that these differences and misunderstandings could be ironed out! But all Sid and Betsy ever found was one closed door after the other. Oh, how could I have survived if they had not been there at that time to stand with me?

When it was finally time for them to leave, I taped the following message and asked them to take it back to their little Baltimore congregation, "It was wonderful to have Sid and Betsy here at this time. But I had better warn you to start helping them pack, because we're praying them back to Israel!"

And then, shortly afterwards, the Lord confirmed to them that the next fall they were to come to Israel to live for a year in Ramot, "riding circuit" to encourage the Believers here:

*"And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life.*

*And he went from year to year in circuit to Beth-el, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places.*

*And his return was to Ramah, for there was his house."*

I Samuel 7:15-17

They had surely been a great encouragement to me as well as to my friends in the Galilee!

Early in January 1979, we handed to the High Court of Justice our prepared text as to the identity of Jesus as the Son of God and as the Messiah of Israel. For me it was a scary time, because I knew very well that as a result of our strong testimony, my application for citizenship according to the Law of Return would probably be denied, and perhaps I would have to forfeit the right to live in Israel forever. But in some way or another the opportunity to defend or deny the Divinity of Jesus comes to each of us as followers of Him. *How could I deny Him? And what good is citizenship in Israel if I were to forfeit citizenship in heaven?* The Lord had revealed to us so clearly that it was not important to Him whether or not I ever became a citizen of Israel; but what mattered to Him was the answer to that very

question, *"Is Jesus the Son of God and Messiah of Israel?"* I knew that the question had to be answered, and therefore my love for Israel needed to be placed upon the altar. By that time I knew that I loved Jesus (by His grace) too much to deny Him.

The following chapter contains the statement as we presented it to the High Court of Justice. (I deleted only the Hebrew text of the Scriptures.) Some of the statements are in answer to specific questions posed by the Ministry of Interior or within the course of the court proceedings themselves. We knew that our declaration was to clearly establish the identity of Jesus as the Son of God and as the Messiah of Israel based on the Holy Scriptures and *not* upon any church theology or tradition. But we knew we were being given the privilege to answer for ourselves and before Israel:

*"When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am?  
And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some Elijah; and others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.  
He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?"*

Matthew 16:13-15

# 21

## DORFLINGER VS. BURG

**I**n my original statement to the High Court of Justice, I felt that the injustice done to me simply because of my belief in Jesus as the Messiah was sufficient cause for action by the Court. I therefore felt no need within that original statement to clarify and explain.

On 28 November, 1978, before the honoured Court, the Ministry of Interior gave a lengthy discourse describing a belief in Jesus that was very far from my own personal belief in Jesus. Question was also raised at that time concerning Jesus as the Son of God and the significance of baptism.

I therefore offer this statement, as my personal belief now seems central to the questions at hand, and I cannot imagine the High Court of Justice making a decision as important as my right to be a citizen of Israel based on my belief, without an opportunity for that belief to be explained in full.

### DEFENSE DECLARATION

Mrs. E. DORFLINGER vs. Dr. J. BURG, Minister of Interior and Police  
High Court of Justice  
Jerusalem, Israel  
January 1979

#### I

In regard to all things in which I am being accused by the Minister of Interior, I consider myself fortunate, most honoured Court, that I am able to make my defense before you. Especially because this is a fair court and the Judges, with an open mind, have received my request to explain myself, I beg you to read these words patiently.

It is an undisputed fact that I was born a Jewess of Jewish parents and have lived as a Jew from my childhood until now. It is well known that my parents have held leading positions in the Jewish community of the United States.

Three years ago, I, too, thought that the belief in Jesus was foreign to Judaism. My attitudes were formed and inherited from the nearly two-thousand years of religious-orthodox prejudices against Jesus, which even penetrated and possessed the mentality of conservative, reformed and secular Jewry.

From my childhood, I experienced, as a Jewess, the hostility of those who called themselves Christians. I tasted something of the hatred and the prejudice that exist in the hearts of the Gentiles and I became an object of the expression of their anti-Semitism. I was called a "dirty Jew" and a "Christ-killer". As a result of these experiences, the name of

Jesus became associated with fear and anguish of heart in my life, and I grew up with the same negativity and wounds that so many of our people have experienced and still experience today in the diaspora.

Through all of these years, however, God's presence and love were a continuous reality in my life. And yet, although God was real to me in these earlier years of my life, it was only three years ago that I came to know the height, the depth, the breadth and the length of God's love when the love of His Son touched my heart. In this encounter with the love of Jesus, I knew at once that Jesus had no part in all the terrible things that were done in His name to our people.

Two things became clear to me soon after I met Jesus. I understood that I could not rightly discern who He was, neither through the stand of traditional Judaism towards Him nor through the stand of traditional Christianity. God had revealed Him to me in a new light, in the light of the truth.

It is well known that Orthodox Judaism is totally opposed to Jesus as the Messiah. This is evidenced by the name it has given Him in the Talmud, the name Yeshu. This is an acronym formed by the words: "May His name and memory be erased". Sadly enough, this is the name by which all of modern Israel know Him, although the majority of the people do not have any idea that this is not His name or that this is an anathema. This is just an example of the distorted picture that Israel holds of Jesus, even though it is in blindness, and for the most part unintentionally, that most call Him by this name.

On the other hand, traditional Christianity in its practice and in its relationship to Israel, is nearly in total contradiction to the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament. The only true, factual source of what faith in Jesus really is, is to be found in the New Testament. The New Testament states nothing but what Moses and the prophets of Israel said would take place: that the Messiah would come before the destruction of the Second Temple, from the lineage of David; that He would be rejected by the people of Israel and be condemned to death, thus becoming an atonement for sin; and that He would rise on the third day as direct evidence that He is the true Messiah and Son of God.

The belief in Jesus is in no way defined as a new or other "religion" in the New Testament. As a matter of fact, neither the Tanach nor the New Testament describe God as the God of religions. He is the God of the covenants. Throughout the Tanach, God never speaks of giving Israel a religion nor do we ever read of the forming of a Jewish religion. God reveals Himself to Israel through a series of covenants. With the coming of the Messiah, God has made a New Covenant with Israel through His Son according to His promise in Jeremiah 31:30-32:

*'Behold, the days are coming,' declares the Lord, 'when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,' declares the Lord. 'But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,' declares the Lord, 'I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.'*

This new covenant is the culmination of God's continuing revelation to Israel, beginning with the Abrahamic covenant (in Genesis), followed by the Covenant at Mount Sinai (in Exodus) and finally, also ultimately, the New Covenant which He makes with Israel through the Messiah. This is truly God's Judaism!

In the diaspora, the Jewish nation has been defined through Orthodox Judaism. Throughout the generations, rabbis have claimed for themselves the sole authority to

define theological issues and have come up with didactic conclusions which are but the opinions and thoughts of men. Even amongst themselves, there is hardly a point on which they can come to a true agreement.

I feel it is important at this point to question this claim of the rabbis to be the sole authority in defining "Who is a Jew". In examining the continuity of the history of the Jewish people, certain relationships stand out. The Jews are the people of the Bible, the Tanach. The Tanach speaks exclusively about the relationship between God, the people and the land of Israel. The basis of the Zionist call to the Jews is this relationship of the Bible, the people and the land. In the Bible, the exile of the Jewish people from their land is never described as a Godly blessing but, on the contrary, is always defined as a Godly judgment on their sin. The exile of our people from the land of Israel in 70 A.D. and the two thousand years of suffering and persecution which followed can only realistically be seen as God's judgment upon the Jewish people and in no way can the galut be interpreted as the "flowering of Jewish culture and religion." In His chastisement, God remembers mercy towards Israel:

*'For I am with you,' declares the Lord, 'to save you; for I will destroy completely all the nations where I have scattered you, only I will not destroy you completely. But I will chasten you justly, and will by no means leave you unpunished.'*

Jeremiah 30:11

What has happened in and through Rabbinical Judaism is that the rabbis have usurped the authority of God's Word, the Tanach, and have replaced the source itself with countless opinions, interpretations, definitions and conclusions which are totally in disharmony and disagreement with the very teaching of the Tanach. Does not the Tanach say in Deuteronomy 13:1:

*"Whatever I command you, you shall be careful to do; you shall not add nor take away from it."*

Is not Rabbinical Judaism but a great violation of this commandment in its continuous additions to the simple, unleavened Word of God? Have not the rabbis given themselves a liberty which God Himself warned against? Have not the interpretations of the rabbis become the prism through which the Jewish people are forced to approach and understand the Tanach? And has not Orthodox Judaism defined heresy as being that which will not conform to its interpretations, rather than that which will not conform to God's Word?

The main Speaker in the Bible or the Person behind the Word is God Himself for it is always written: "thus saith the Lord ..." or "the Word of the Lord came to me." The Bible calls Israel into a relationship with the living, speaking, holy God, through repentance and obedience. Rabbinical Judaism, on the other hand, says: "thus saith rabbi so and so," and brings a whole nation into a burdensome bondage to the precepts and teachings of man, which has caused severe alienation from God and the rejection of the yoke of Rabbinical Judaism by the greatest majority of modern Israel! Did not the Lord warn us through Isaiah of this sad situation:

*"Then the Lord said, 'Because this people draw near with their words and honour Me with their lips, but remove their hearts far from Me, and their reverence for Me consists of precepts taught by men; therefore behold, I will once again deal marvellously with this people, wondrously marvellous; and the*

*wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the discernment of their discerning men shall be concealed."*

Isaiah 29:13-14

The conflict between God and the Jewish religious institutions began nearly two thousand years ago when Jesus called the nation of Israel to return to a right relationship with God. The New Testament tells of the conflicts between Jesus and those who began these rabbinical traditions and teachings. In the time of Jesus, Judaism was at a crossroads. Jesus called the nation of Israel to return to a God-centered Judaism which the Pharisees had replaced with a religious system that transgressed the commandments of God for the sake of their traditions. They invalidated the Word of God by their doctrines and teachings, to the extent that they said God's Word can only be understood through them!

As I claimed in my petition, the Minister of Interior has indeed based his decision not to grant me Israeli citizenship on alien considerations, which are these very same rabbinical premises, and this Minister is indeed a prisoner of his own religious ideas. His decision was illegal because although the religious group to which he belongs views my beliefs as heretical, "the Law of Return" is a secular law and has to be carried out in a fair, legal and objective way.

It is important to underline here again, that the only true understanding which can be received as legitimate concerning the faith in Jesus, must come from the New Testament alone. All other explanations such as theological creeds came much later in time and were explanations and interpretations given by men, which are not contained in the New Testament itself. These creeds were the basis for the man-made Christian denominations which later followed. The New Testament is simply a document which explains the faith in the Jewish Messiah Jesus. This book was written by faithful Jewish eye-witnesses reporting the exact truth of events which they had seen and experienced.

In the New Testament, Jesus puts the question of His identity before His disciples and asks in Matthew 16:13-17:

*"Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He began asking His disciples, saying, 'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?'"*

*And they said, 'Some say John the Baptist; some Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.'*

*He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' And Simon Peter answered and said, 'Thou art the Messiah, the Son of the living God.' And Jesus answered and said unto him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.'"*

From this text, it is clear that Jesus Himself understood that it is only by Divine revelation that anyone can know and confess that "Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Theology and theological creeds are alien to the pure and simple New Testament faith in Jesus.

The identity of Jesus is not an issue of theological definitions but one of Divine revelation. My understanding of Jesus is not based on theological definitions but on God's revelation to me personally by His Spirit according to His Word. Divine revelation has always been the only true way that the God of Israel communicated to His people throughout the Bible, from beginning to end.

In Isaiah 53, the prophet gives a clear portrayal of the identity of the Messiah in His innocence, rejection, judgment, atoning death and even resurrection from the dead:

*"Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon Him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him. He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hide their face, He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; like a lamb that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth. By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and as for His generation, who considered that He was cut off out of the land of the living, for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due? His grave was assigned to be with wicked men, yet with a rich man in His death; although He has done no violence, nor was there any deceit in His mouth. But the Lord was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; if He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand. As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it, and be satisfied; by His knowledge, the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities. Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, and He will divide the booty with the strong; because He poured out Himself to death, and was murdered with the transgressors; yet He Himself bore the sin of many, and interceded for the transgressors."*

Though this is one of the clearest messianic prophecies in the Tanach, the whole prophecy is preceded by a question which comes as a cry from the heart of the prophet: Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" (Isaiah 53:1) This once again affirms that the identity of the Messiah of Israel can only be known by Divine revelation received by faith.

## II

The second issue under question is baptism. Here again it is essential that we return to the original source, the New Testament, to see what baptism truly is.

It is important to understand that when the traditions and teachings of men take hold of a Divine commandment, its meaning and practice are often changed beyond recognition. This is brought out in the Jewish practice of "kashrut", where, upon a simple commandment, was built an enormous edifice of religious practice that has nothing to do with the original commandment in Exodus 23:19:

*"You are not to boil a kid in the milk of its mother."*

From this simple commandment, the orthodox-religious Jews have invented rules concerning two sets of dishes, two sets of pots and pans and intervals of waiting between meat and milk. With all these additions, they have missed the original point in all its clarity and simplicity.

Similarly in baptism, men have taken the simple commandment of Jesus to repent and be immersed in water as an act of obedience and consecration unto God, and they have distorted it beyond recognition. It has been falsely explained as being "an entrance into another religion" and "a sign of membership in a Christian denomination" both by traditional, Orthodox Judaism and by Christianity.

This is clearly not the teaching of the New Testament, as is seen in Peter's call to the nation of Israel:

*"Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Messiah — this Jesus whom you crucified." Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Brethren, what shall we do?' And Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus the Messiah for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children.'"*

Acts 2:36-39

From these verses, we see that baptism is in no way thought as an entry into another religion, but rather as a turning of the heart toward God. This fact is emphasized when we see how the people of Israel responded to John the Baptist:

*"Then Jerusalem was going out to him, and all Judea, and all the district around the Jordan; and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, as they confessed their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, 'You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?'"*

Matthew 3:5-7

It is evident that the whole nation including the religious establishment of the day accepted baptism as a legitimate Jewish expression of repentance.

In my own case, I never interpreted baptism in terms of the traditions of men, neither Jewish nor Christian, but simply as an act of obedience and consecration to God.

And here again, as concerns this issue, the Minister of Interior's viewpoint is clearly influenced by his religious background, a factor which is invalid in his prejudiced interpretation of a secular law, "the Law of Return".

### III

Modern Othodox Judaism states that it cannot accept any claim that God has a Son as being in keeping with its theology. The strong reactions of Orthodox Judaism, which deny the Messiah's identity as the Son of God are not at all founded upon the Holy Scriptures, but rather come as a direct reaction against the claims of Jesus and His followers that He is the Messiah, the Son of the Living God. Based on the fact that Judaism has its origin in the whole Tanach, the Torah, the Prophets and the Writings, which are the true inspired oracles of God, the leaders of Orthodox Judaism have felt a freedom to assert their authority in the establishment of their own religious institutions. By their own power, they have given to themselves and to their teachings an authority which they call Divine. The rabbis have gone so far as assuming that they have the ultimate authority in deciding what is of God and what is not of God. What they classify as being Jewish is of God and what they classify as not being Jewish is not of God. This has given birth to a religion of man, which by

now has grown into full maturity, where traditions and interpretations of men have erected a wall of partition, between God Himself and the revelations of Himself through living oracles on the one hand and the people of Israel, on the other.

This in fact has led to the veiling of the Jewish people, in the sense that they are forced to read God's Word through the spectacles of human wisdom and are restrained and prohibited from reading and seeing the simple Word of God untouched by human hands. What is simple truth as expressed in pure prophecy, looking forward to the coming of God's Messiah, has been wrongly labelled as "Christian", "un-Jewish" and "heretical" by rabbis who have taken a direct stand against Jesus and through this stand have come up with definitions which are un-Biblical, un-Jewish and heretical in the truest sense of these words. What is truly Jewish according to God's definition, because it has its origin with Him in heaven, has been termed "Christian" by rabbinical authorities because it will not conform to the wisdom of man.

Those Scriptures which portray the identity of the Messiah in precise and definite portraits have been categorized as "the standard Christian cliché arguments" by the rabbis, who refuse to explain these Scriptures in any clear, definite way. They argue amongst themselves and never arrive at any specific conclusions which show God's precise fulfillment of these prophecies.

Rabbinical Judaism has become a religion of relativity made up of one rabbi's interpretations versus another rabbi's interpretations. It denies any direct and precise fulfillment of God's holy Word, which guarantees man that God is true and that He perfectly fulfills His promises.

This type of theology is utterly human and must be strongly and openly challenged and refuted, on the grounds of its self-assertion as Divine authority. Orthodox Judaism stands often in direct contradiction to God's Word, the very Word it claims to be founded upon, and it condemns those who refuse to agree with its claims and interpretations, by calling them heretics and even non-Jews. This is an expression of great spiritual arrogance.

I must state that the foundation of my faith is God's Word and my Jewishness is defined not by man but by God and the authority of His Word. *It is here that I wish to assert the Biblical evidence for my faith in Jesus as the Son of God.* The promise of a Messiah whose origin precedes His birth in human form and who, in fact, is the Son of God, is the promise of God to Israel through His prophets and is in truth the Judaism of God par excellence. Let us examine the prophecy of Micah which points to the birth of the Messiah in Bethlehem:

*"But as for you Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you, One will go forth from Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity."*

Micah 5:1

One cannot ignore this important Scripture by saying, as did the Minister of Interior, **that** this is typical of the standard Scriptures always used in Christian arguments. This is a **very** poor refutation which means nothing and disproves nothing. It is not the Christians **who** wrote this Scripture. It was Micah, a prophet of Israel long before the appearance of **Jesus** as a man who spoke this word. These words were not Micah's thoughts; they were **God's** promise of His Messiah King and God's statement of this King's eternal identity. "His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity" — His nature is in fact eternal, **Divine**. This is God's witness of His Messiah and I, a Jewish woman, am uncomplicated **enough** to believe it.

**In** the Second Psalm, the promised King of Israel is prophetically described as both Messiah and Son of God. In this Psalm, God proclaims that He will make His Son the heir of

His whole estate and give Him the world and all of its kingdoms:

*"The kings of the earth take their stand, And  
the rulers take counsel together  
Against the Lord and against His Messiah;"*

Psalm 2:2

*"I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord:  
He said to me, "Thou art My Son,  
Today I have begotten Thee.  
Ask of Me and I will surely give the nations as  
Thine inheritance and the very ends of the earth as  
Thy possessions.""*

Psalm 2:7-8

How can anyone who truly believes in the inspired Word of God deny that God bears witness of His Messiah and King that He is also His Son? What an amazing promise that God Himself will beget a Son and anoint Him as His Messiah! Again, I must affirm that this is God's own witness of His Jewish Messiah, and I, a Jewish woman, am uncomplicated enough to believe it.

When the prophet Isaiah sees this Son coming into the world to sit upon the throne of David and to bring in God's eternal kingdom, the Holy Spirit puts only Divine titles into his mouth:

*"Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a Sign; behold a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel."*

Isaiah 7:14

*"For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest upon His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.*

*There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, to establish and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore.*

*The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this."*

Isaiah 9:5-6

How is it that the Tanach attributes such powerful names to the coming King as "God with us", "Eternal Father" and "Mighty God"? How is it that God's prophet did not consider it blasphemy to describe this Child as "God with us" or "Mighty God"? How is it that God has allowed His prophet such boldness, without asking for his destruction as a false prophet or without being quick to clarify these words so that no man might think that God Himself will visit us in the Messiah? Can this in fact be the God of Israel speaking words which would later contradict rabbinical theology? And can it be that if I should say today that I take God at His Word and believe the very thing He promised, just as a child would believe her father in childlike faith without interpreting his word, that this belief in His Word makes me no longer a Jewess? Can it be possible that believing the God of Israel in preference to the rabbis puts an end to my Jewish identity? Is this not a very dangerous stand to take in

relation to God and to His Word? And if Jewish religious authorities refuse to accept God at His Word, in the simplicity of His promise, is it not challenging God to say of one who has believed Him, that she is no longer a Jewess because she will not submit herself to the teaching of the rabbis? Does not this usurp the authority from God and put man into a position above God Himself? Let us fear the decisions that we are led to take!

Let this suffice in pointing to the Scriptural evidence which show the Messiah as the Son of God, although the list is much more extensive. The question of course follows: "How can it be guaranteed that Jesus is the very Messiah promised?" Here again, I must repeat myself. There is no way of knowing that Jesus is the Son of God and the Messiah of Israel except through faith and by a revelation of His Spirit to us. Yet, God wanting to give a clear witness to Jesus' Messiahship, placed in the Book of Daniel the time-table of His appearing. This is no longer Scripture which permits for any interpretations. In Daniel 9:24-26, God **gives** the specific time of the Messiah's appearance, promises His rejection again and dearly relates that the destruction of the Second Temple and the holy city Jerusalem will follow the appearance and death of the Messiah:

*"Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end to sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy place. So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war, desolations are determined."*

Let us test this Scripture according to Deuteronomy 18:22:

*"When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not come about or come true, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken."*

If this prophecy has not been fulfilled by God, and it is obvious that the time for its prophesied fulfillment goes back nearly two thousand years, then Daniel, who is accepted as an authentic prophet, must be rejected as a false prophet. If, on the other hand, it *has* been fulfilled through the historic coming of Jesus of Nazareth into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey, as the humble King of the Jews (according to the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9\*), on the Sunday before Passover in the year 32 A.D., then God has been vindicated and His Word is true. The historic fact of the destruction of the Second Temple and Jerusalem in the year 70 A.D. is known to all; this is the second part of Daniel's prophecy. Let Rabbinical Judaism be called to the stand and answer, for it has categorically rejected Jesus and has denied that God's Messiah has yet come. I choose to believe God and I cannot accept that by believing that God is true to His Word, I am no longer a Jewess!

Jesus so wonderfully said:

*"You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them, you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life."* John 5:39-40

\* "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, humble, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

His next words are so poignant:

*"I do not receive glory of men."*

John 5:40

I bear witness with this declaration that I believe that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is true and that which He promises in His Word, He fulfills in truth and in fact. I am being denied citizenship today, for believing that which He promises in His Word, He fulfills in truth and fact. I am being denied citizenship today, for believing that Jesus of Nazareth is the literal and true fulfillment of God's promises to Israel. God has said in His Word:

*"God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent; has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken and will He not make it good?"*

Numbers 23:19

Rabbinical, modern Judaism can only deny and offer interpretations but refuses to relate to the specificness of God's Word. God Himself bears witness to Israel through His prophets that Jesus is His Messiah, the King of the Jews. I claim my fidelity to the God of Israel and to the prophets of Israel and my testimony is that God has fulfilled His Word in Jesus of Nazareth, the Word made flesh!

#### IV(a)

It is of the greatest importance in this case, to examine how the New Testament views the nation of Israel and God's relationship to Israel, and then to understand more fully Israel's relationship to the Gentiles. This is the original view and the only legitimate view that can be accepted as the authority for what is the true faith in the Messiah. It must be remembered that the view of the New Testament is the revelation that the first Jewish believers adhered to, and that the recorded testimony of the New Testament is the compiled writings and sermons of the Jewish minority among the nation of Israel who believed that Jesus was the Messiah. It is also important for the honoured Court to understand that it is these original Jewish believers in Jesus to whom I am linked — and not two thousand years of Christianity that often has so greatly deviated from the New Testament and the teachings of Jesus. Those early believers were still considered to be Jews, though they rejected the rabbinical thinking of their time and were being rejected by many rabbis of their day. It is important to note, however, that from the ranks of the priests and Pharisees, many accepted Jesus as being the Messiah:

*"And the word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith."*

Acts 6:7

The phenomenon of Jews believing in Jesus is *not* a new Christian expression of this century, geared toward the Jews in order to make Christianity acceptable to them. It is the very root of the faith that began in the land of Israel. The first community of believers was established on Mount Zion itself. Our present day perspective is so distorted and must be totally readjusted, and the centuries-old question of Jesus and the Jews must be freshly and

objectively examined, even at the expense of badly shaking the edifice of Rabbinical Judaism. This must be done for the sake of the truth, the whole truth.

In the Book of Acts, there are several addresses made to the nation of Israel by the apostles which are very revealing and important for the honoured Court to study. These apostles were Jews themselves and many of them were native Israelis. Simon Peter, an apostle and a close disciple of Jesus, addresses the people of Israel on the Feast of Shavuot with the following words:

*"Men of Judea and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give heed to my words."*

Acts 2:14

He appeals to the people to consider the Scriptures and to recognize that Jesus is the promised Messiah after the seed of David, according to the flesh. He continues with the exhortation:

*"Repent . . . for the promise is for you and your children."*

Acts 2:38-39

The promise of the Messiah was made *only* to the nation of Israel as a nation. In the Book of Romans, chapter 9:4-5, Paul makes this point again while speaking of the Jewish people and the unchangeability of God's promises to them:

*".. . who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the Temple service and the promises, whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Messiah according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen."*

Paul is here stating an eternal truth. God has made His covenants with the nation of Israel only. His promises of ultimate redemption were only to the Jewish people. The early Jewish believers never regarded the belief in Jesus as Messiah as a new faith apart from the Biblical faith of the nation of Israel. It was clear to them from the beginning that not only were they forever linked to the covenants that began with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but that they had finally come to the time of fulfillment of all that God had promised to Israel, specifically through the coming of the Messiah — His eternal redemption and salvation.

In his address to the High Priest in Acts 7, Stephen gives a long discourse on the true Jewish faith and gives a digest of the whole history of God's revelation to His people Israel, beginning with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, continuing through the time of Moses, the wanderings of Israel through the desert and finally leading through the visions of the prophets to the coming of the Messiah Jesus. The purpose of Stephen's defense was to outline and underline the historical continuity in the unfolding, ongoing revelation of God to His people Israel from Abraham until the coming of Jesus. The appearance of Jesus and the messianic fulfillment of God's promises to Israel are seen as the most perfect and final revelation of God of Himself to His people Israel!

#### IV(b)

As our understanding of the New Testament and the Judaism of God increases, the issue of baptism is suddenly revealed through new light, the light of the truth. It becomes clear as our New Testament perspective of Jesus and the apostolic teaching grows, that

never was there in the mind of either the baptizing apostles or the baptized Congregation of Israel, the thought or consideration that they were leaving the Jewish faith through baptism and entering into another religion. The apostles knew of only one God and of one faith. Their revelation of baptism was simply that it was a declaration on the part of the baptized, that he had personally accepted God's New Covenant with Israel and was entering the waters as a sign that his sins were washed away through the atonement of Jesus, which was now accepted on a personal basis. The tradition of "tashlich" in Rabbinical Judaism is reminiscent of baptism in that sins are believed to be buried under the water by an act of the individual Jew. Again, let it be clearly stated that the understanding that baptism is a door of entrance into another religion for the Jew is totally erroneous according to the New Testament.

This understanding of baptism has come as a totally new definition from the side of traditional Christianity which has changed this act into being a sign of entrance into a particular Christian denomination, whether it be Catholic or Protestant. Rabbinical Judaism, in its outright rejection of Jesus, has also claimed that baptism is a stepping into another religion.

It is true that the traditional Christian churches *have* often taken baptism and have used it as an initiation rite into their own man-made denominations to increase their own membership. Many have been blinded to the true intentions of God. Is this not over and over again, a sad repeating occurrence on the part of all builders of religion, whether they be Jewish or Christian, taking the things of God and using them for their own self-glory? I in no way associate myself with man's concepts of baptism. Again, my obedience is to God's source and that is His Word as simply stated in the New Testament!

#### IV(c)

There remains then one more vital question. How then do the Gentiles fit into the picture if the God of Israel has made the New Covenant with the nation of Israel alone according to Jeremiah 31:30-32 (as quoted in section I)? Paul makes the statement in the Letter to the Ephesians while speaking to the Gentiles:

*“. . . remember that you were at that time separate from the Messiah, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world."*

Ephesians 2:12

Here, Paul states the New Testament view of God's relationship to the Gentiles; they are aliens and strangers both in relation to God and to Israel. They are separate from His covenants of grace. What then has happened to bring the Gentiles into a right relationship with the only true God, the God of Israel? The answer to this question is of vital importance!

The answer is found in the Letter to the Romans, chapter 11. Here we are given an allegorical picture of an olive tree — a cultivated olive tree. Paul compares the Gentiles to a wild olive tree. He then says that some branches from the wild olive tree were grafted into the cultivated tree and some of the natural branches have been broken off. In the end of God's dealings, these natural branches will be grafted in again to their own tree:

*"But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, do not be arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you ... And they also, if they do not continue in*

*their unbelief, will be grafted in; for God is able to graft them in again."*

Romans 11:17-18, 23

The picture that the New Testament presents is the following: Though the New Covenant was made only with the nation of Israel, the Gentiles who believe like Ruth the Moabitess have joined themselves individually, not collectively, to the house of Israel. Paul says: "It is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you." (Romans 11:18). A Jew, therefore, who believes, has not joined himself to the Gentiles, rather a Gentile who truly believes has come to recognize and accept the faith of Israel. The Jews who believe are already part of the tree. They do not join themselves to another tree. The Jews who have come to recognize and believe in Jesus as the Messiah, after first being in unbelief, are the natural olive branches that have been broken off and then are again "grafted into their own tree". When a Jew comes to faith in Jesus, the New Testament says that he has come home to his Father's inheritance, to the inheritance of God!

I have not deserted my God or my people. After two thousand years of separation, I have returned spiritually to the King of Israel, Jesus the Messiah — and I have returned physically to the land of Israel, my earthly God-given home, as a true daughter of Abraham. This is God's wonderful truth.

Thank you for opening your hearts and minds to this statement of appeal, most honourable Court. May God's grace and mercy be upon Israel always!

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Author's Note: Please understand that this is a Jewish statement made by Jewish people for Jewish people. Our strong statements against the rabbinical teachings are directed against the small but highly vocal extreme religious fringe group (similar to the Pharisees in Jesus' day) and not against the mainstream of Israeli society.

# 22

## HINDS' FEET

One cold winter's day, I was travelling from Nahariya back home again to Jerusalem. When I reached the Haifa bus station, the Lord prompted me to go to visit the youth hostel where I had worked for a short time in 1977.

"But Lord, it's raining buckets out there!" I told Him, looking at the incredible downpour of rain. "I'll be soaked to the skin in two seconds!" But He persisted.

Even though the youth hostel was just a few blocks from the bus station, it was raining too hard to even consider walking, so I took a taxi and arrived there a few minutes later. When I walked inside, dripping over floors I had once cleaned, I found standing there a Finnish girl named Marja whom I had met previously in Germany at the Easter retreat!

"Oh, Eileen, I prayed that I would see you!" she informed me at once. She then went on to tell me an amazing story. "When I met you in Germany, we talked for only a few minutes. But I remember asking you how you knew something, and your answer to me was, 'Because Jesus told me!' And so I went back to my room that evening, and I said to the Lord, 'Lord, if you speak to Eileen, why don't you speak to me, too?' And, of course, He did, and since then I've had a deeper relationship to Him than I ever imagined! Well, if you remember, I didn't bother to take your address, as I didn't see how I would ever be able to come to Israel. But as you know, in a life of faith there are nothing but *possibilities*, with no impossibilities; so when the Lord made it possible for me to come, I prayed that somehow I would see you, even though I didn't have your address!"

She then explained that she had been in Israel for six months, and that the very next day she would be returning to Finland. And so, instead of continuing on my journey to Jerusalem, I was able to stay over in Haifa and attend a farewell party that was being given in her honour! Neither of us dreamed the greater purposes the Lord would one day have in our friendship, nor the strange places He would one day send us!

Since the time that I had lived on King George Street in the heart of Jewish Jerusalem, I often had attended the Conservative Synagogue, and had actually met there old friends of my parents from their former synagogue in the States. One day I introduced myself to the rabbi, telling him about my case before the High Court due to my belief in Jesus and asking him if perchance he had read about me in the Israeli press. (By then numerous articles had appeared in the Israeli newspapers.)

"No, I haven't read about it. But look, I have a favour to ask," the rabbi responded. "There's someone I would very much like for you to talk to. Are you willing to do it?"

"Yes," I answered, wondering, "Oh, Lord, *whatever* are You getting *me into* now?"

"May I have your telephone number?" he asked. I didn't have a telephone at the time; but it just so happened that for the next two days I would be babysitting for three children

while their parents were out of the city, and was therefore able to offer him their telephone number!

The next afternoon, I received a phone call from someone named Nathan, who introduced himself as a teacher in one of the yeshivas (Orthodox Jewish religious institutions) in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City. "The rabbi called to tell me that you wished to speak to me. Did you hear me speak at the lecture last week, or what?" he asked.

I could tell that the rabbi had told him nothing about me.

"No," I replied.

"Well, look, can you meet me tomorrow night by the palm tree near the Western Wall at 8:30 p.m.?" he asked.

"Okay," I answered him. "But listen," I continued, "I think I'd better tell you something about myself first!" I then told him about the court case and my belief in Jesus, and then commented, "I thought I'd better tell you in advance, to guarantee that I will be able to leave the yeshiva alive!" I was being facetious, of course, but not *completely*, as the American Jewish yeshiva students are the most vehement opposers of Jewish Believers in Jesus.

"Well," he said jokingly, "you can consider yourself safe. We haven't resorted to that *yet!*"

Just before I left home the next evening, the Lord prompted me to take with me a book that had been placed in my hands the previous day.

It was a cold, dismal winter's night in Jerusalem with a strong wind blowing. In order to reach the palm tree by the Western Wall, I had to walk alone at night through the Moslem Quarter of the Old City, when all the shops had been closed. The wind whistled through the narrow alleyways, and it felt like a scene in a terror movie. I was grateful to finally arrive at the Western Wall, and stopped there for a minute to pray, sensing as always the Lord's presence at that place so revered by the Jewish people! I then stood to wait under the palm tree.

A few minutes later, I spotted a lone figure coming down the steps of the Jewish Quarter of the Old City. Nathan greeted me with a cursory nod, and I then followed him back up the stairs and finally into the yeshiva itself. He offered me a cup of coffee before the two of us went into a room off the kitchen to talk. "*Oh, Lord, whatever am I doing here?*" I asked, unable to still the wild thumping of my heart. (There's a "Dry Bones" cartoon portraying a woman walking up to an ultra-orthodox Jewish man and blithely saying to him, "Shalom! I'm from an organization called 'Jews for Jesus!'" The orthodox man looked at her and then replied, "And you're on kamikaze duty, I presume?" I felt rather like that fictitious woman that night!)

Almost at once, Nathan began a tireless discourse on all the reasons why I, as a Jewish woman, should not believe in Jesus as the Messiah. I listened respectfully for over an hour, and then I said, "Well, I very much appreciate your views on the matter. But is it possible to demand equal time? I'd like to tell you, if I may, what my experience has been!"

He consented, and so I simply shared with him my testimony, of how I also had been opposed to belief in Jesus, until the day when I had *met* Him; and how He had subsequently shown me that my faith in Him was but a fulfillment of the Messianic promises to the Jewish people! When I had finished, he said honestly, "Well, surely we're both searching in our own ways for God, but I'm sure that you will eventually reach the same conclusion as I have, that Jesus is not for us as Jews!"

I couldn't help but respect his earnestness, and it had surely been a much more pleasant evening than anything I had envisioned! As I was preparing to leave, the Lord suddenly reminded me of the book that I had hastily stuffed into my handbag at His direction.

"Have you ever seen this?" I asked him, handing him the book. It was entitled *The Fig Tree Blossoms* by Paul Lieberman. He turned pale and didn't say anything for some

minutes. Then he cleared his throat.

"Well," he said, "Paul belongs to a Messianic Jewish congregation in the States that I also used to be a member of at one time. I know him!"

"You mean that you once actually believed in *Jesus*?" was my astonished response

"Yes," he answered.

"Nathan, I don't care what's happened to you since then. But how in the world *can* you deny His love that you once knew?"

His answer was an empty one, even to his own ears. I gave him the book, explaining that I could obtain a copy far more easily than he could. We parted friends, and I pray that he will one day return to Jesus' arms, grateful to the Lord for the time He had given me to reach out to him in Jesus' love.

A week later, I had the privilege to hear Richard Wurmbbrand speak at a meeting in Jerusalem. He had suffered so much for Jesus, and through it he had learned lessons of His love that are unknown to many in the western world.

Following the meeting, a young man tapped me on the shoulder. "You were at the yeshiva last week talking with Nathan!" Startled, I gasped, "But how did you know?"

"I, too, am a Believer in Jesus, and I also attend the yeshiva. I had heard you speak at the Catholic Charismatic prayer meeting a few weeks ago, and when I saw you walk into the yeshiva, I ducked out of sight in case you would recognize me. But I want you to know that I prayed for you the whole time you were there!" How it amazed me! I had felt so frightened and alone that night, but I had known firmly that it was the Lord's will for me to be there. And unknown to me, I had not really been alone at all. Even in an Orthodox yeshiva in the Old City of Jerusalem on a chilly and cheerless winter night, someone had been there to pray!

The young Believer in Jesus finally gained the courage to speak of his beliefs with the rabbi at the yeshiva. He was thrown out immediately, and went through some difficult hours before actually leaving the school, but he was released from the bondage of fear he had been living with for many weeks. He no longer denied his love for Jesus, and it had to make a tremendous difference in his life. So it seems that the Lord had a double reason for sending me there that cold winter's night!

It underlined in my heart the need for us to be obedient to the Lord in the smallest things as well as in the larger things. We'll almost never understand God's reasons at the time of the prompting, but if we recognize His sovereignty and His right to control our lives, then we don't *need* to understand His reasons!

I had no idea why the Lord had prompted me to bring *The Fig Tree Blossoms* with me to the yeshiva that night. But if I had disobeyed Him and not brought it with me, I never would have known that Nathan once believed in Jesus, and therefore would have missed that opportunity to reach out to him in Jesus' love. For without a doubt, Jesus *meant* to challenge him again, to remind him of the relationship that they once had, to help him to know *that he was still loved*.

When the Lord quickens to us a verse from His Word, it's hard to describe *how* He does it, but yet it's quite unmistakably from Him nonetheless! And one day, He strongly quickened to my heart the following Scripture from Jeremiah:

*"Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.*

*Then I said, Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.*

*But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all*

*that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.*

*Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord.*

*Then the Lord put forth His hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put My words in thy mouth.*

*See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.*

*Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Jeremiah, what seest thou? And I said, I see a rod of an almond tree.*

*Then said the Lord unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten My word to perform it."*

Jeremiah 1:4-12

That He meant it for me as well He left me with no doubts. I had no idea where He would be sending me, nor did I have any idea when, nor did I have any idea why. But I had such a clear sensation as I read it that day that the time would come when I would know. It reminded me of the prophecy He had given me through Sr. McKenna, that He "would send me to princes and to people in high places, that the waiting would be the difficult part, *but that I would know the day.*"

What upset me most of all, however, is that He took away from me in that speck of time all of my arguments! "Oh, but Lord, how can I do that? I'm just a new Believer! It's impossible for me to say (or to do) such a thing!" That word in Jeremiah, I'm afraid, was my undoing, because I knew that somehow I could never stand behind those crutches again.

*"Say not, I am a child . . ."*

The court appearance, when the final decision of the High Court of Justice would be handed down, was to be held in March of 1979. The Believers in the Galilee continued to uphold me in prayer, and friends again accompanied me to the courtroom on the day of the court appearance.

We sat in the courtroom expectantly but it was over so quickly that we barely had time to react! The three judges entered the room, and one of them acted as spokesman for the three. He simply announced that due to the fact that I believed in the Divinity of Jesus, the teachings of Paul (who they considered to have gone to the Gentiles) and because I had been baptized, I therefore could no longer be considered a Jew according to the Law of Return. He added that this decision was based solely on the particulars of my individual case, and therefore could not be construed as a judgment on all cases; and he gave the assurance that there were other options available other than the Law of Return to guarantee my residency in Israel. With that we were dismissed, given their findings in writing, asked to pay the court fees, and moments later found ourselves outside the council chambers and into the brightness of the Israeli day!

All of us were greatly disappointed, to be sure, but I don't think we were really surprised, as we knew that our statement to the court would probably jeopardize the possibility of my being granted full Israeli citizenship. (Surely if I had denied Jesus as the Son of God, the court decision on that day would have been a different one. But if that had been the case, I'm sure I would have felt *really* dreadful!)

It's a strange thing, however, for even though we all felt disappointed, we could not help but notice the Lord's presence with each of us in a very special way on that day. And later, as we gathered for a time of quiet prayer, the Lord spoke the following to us through one of

the brothers who had worked hard on the court case from the beginning:

*"It blessed Me that you were faithful to Me and to one another. And, just as Jesus was rejected by Israel the first time, it marked not an end, but a new beginning; in the same way, you are Jewish, Jesus is the Messiah, and the time to favour Zion has come . . ."*

It gave us such an unexpected sense of anticipation!

One of my friends later presented me with a bouquet of roses — a bouquet of roses, on what should have been a despondent day — and this verse from Romans 2:29:

*"But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."*

And through it all, we glimpsed for a moment that Jesus had given us a special privilege in being able to share in His rejection. And of course, as His followers, whatever else could we expect from Israel, until the blindfold is removed from their eyes as well? Do we *want* recognition from man? Or do we want instead to follow in our Saviour's steps?

Early in April, three of us went away for seven days of prayer and fasting at a place on the Mediterranean coastline, between Nahariya and Rosh Hanikra near the Lebanese border, called Achziv. We stayed in little rooms which were hardly more than cells, and in the house above us was truly a den of iniquity. But in that unlikely setting, the Lord met us in such a special way. (And actually, it wasn't *such* an unlikely setting to meet the Lord, as He spent His time with sinners, the very people who need Him the most!)

Fasting is something I've also learned to do only in obedience to the Lord. I've discovered that He is not really pleased by "the works of the flesh", but that it is only obedience that is pleasing to Him! This is clear even in the Old Covenant, as exemplified in the story of Saul. He had been instructed by God through the prophet Samuel to utterly destroy Amalek and all their possessions.

*"But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them . . ."*

*Then came the word of the Lord unto Samuel, saying,*

*It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the Lord all night . . .*

*And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord.*

*And Samuel said, 'What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?...*

*And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag the king of the Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.*

*But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in Gilgal.*

*And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.*

*For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou has rejected the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king."*

I Samuel 15:9-11; 13-14; 20-23

How easily even Believers in this day ignore the promptings of the Lord, deadened to the fact that they are in danger of being removed from the throne.

When I've tried to fast on my own initiative, without His promptings, I simply have been unable to do it! But whenever *He* has called me to fast, He has enabled me to do it, and it has always been an important time of sanctification. But as in all things, we have to learn not to take ourselves too seriously, either, and to always be ready for His unexpected flashes of humour! One evening, for example, He prompted me to fast for no ostensible reason. (I have always fasted the Jewish way, from sunset to sunset.) I was travelling within Israel the next day, and when I reached Haifa the Lord again prompted me to go to the youth hostel, and there to break my fast! It hadn't seemed to me like a very long time to fast, but I went on to the youth hostel. When I arrived, I was welcomed and then told, "It's great that you came just now! We've been fasting, and we're just breaking it now with a special thanksgiving dinner, so maybe you'll be able to join us!"

"Well," I said, "That is rather amazing, since I also happen to be breaking a fast at this moment!" I told them, smiling to myself as I realized the Lord had instructed me to fast just so He could give me the special treat of breaking it with them!

At this particular time of fasting in Achziv, we brought with us only matzot and wine, as we felt each afternoon to celebrate communion together. We spent each morning in time alone with the Lord; in the afternoons we came together to pray and to share communion; and then in the evenings we shared with one another whatever it was that the Lord placed on our hearts. We went presumably to pray and to seek the Lord for some direction for me, as my citizenship had been denied and we needed to ascertain from the Lord what steps should be taken next. That was our agenda, but it turned out that the Lord never dealt with it directly at all! Instead, He had us read together Andrew Murray's beautiful book, *Humility: The Beauty of Holiness*, and He began to work deeply within each one of us to show the areas that needed to be dealt with by His chastening hand. And then one evening, He gave us the following word:

*"Soon there will be an outpouring of the Spirit of My Holiness upon Israel. Each one of you will have a part in it, but only when 'self' has been firmly dealt with by Me . . ."*

The week culminated on Palm Sunday, which speaks so beautifully of both the humility and the majesty of Jesus, Israel's King. When it was finally time to pack up and go back to our everyday walk with Him, it was hard to leave, for we had felt His holiness and His presence in such a special way. But we knew that we would be taking with us, at least a promise of glorious things to come . . .

Since the Lord had given no direct answer to our request for direction for me, after discussing it with Uri I went to the office of the Ministry of Interior and applied for permanent residency, which was one of the other possibilities for my staying in Israel that the judge had alluded to. Once again, my residency permit was due to expire in September on Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year.

At about that time, two young women named Carol and Doris came to share my apartment with me in Ramot. One I was certain from the Lord that I was to invite, but the other I was certain from the Lord that I was *not* to invite, but I invited her anyway. All of my

life I've battled with a poor self-image, which was why criticism from others was a weapon satan could use against me so successfully. I often did alright by myself, but especially before people with a very strong personality, I found it difficult to say anything contrary to them! The person I knew I was *not* to invite was an acquaintance of close friends of mine in the States; and even though the Lord's direction had been clear, when she asked me about coming to stay with me in Israel, I said "yes" because I felt obligated in a way to my American friends who knew her.

It should have been a harsh warning to me of how easily at that point I could let go of the Lord's direction in my life to win the approval of others! But of course, if I had been discerning enough for that, I would no doubt also have been discerning enough not to let her step foot into my house! As it turns out, she had been deeply involved in the occult before she came to know the Lord. After she experienced Jesus' love, she accepted it, but she was never delivered from all the darkness that had control of her life. And the spiritual realm that followed her was like a dark cloud of oppression, soon to be unleashed against me. (I understand all of this in retrospect, of course!)

On Easter Sunday, together with some other friends, we all celebrated that day together first on the Mount of Olives and then in my apartment in Ramot that the three of us by then were sharing. One brother had placed a word for each of us at random on our dinner plates at the table. Most of the others received words of encouragement, but my little slip of paper contained the following:

*"If you wish  
to serve others,  
you must be  
prepared for others  
to serve you  
by correcting and  
admonishing you."*

The two girls had been criticizing me quite steadily all along, but everyone agreed at once that it was exactly what I needed and that I had to learn to accept their admonishments as evidence of their caring for me!

On the 27th of May, I ventured off to a monastery called "John in the Wilderness". The monastery was in a remote setting, snuggled in amongst the Judean hills not far from the village of Ein Kerem, the birthplace of John the Baptist. When I arrived, the French Catholic community who was there at the time welcomed me warmly. They did not usually receive guests, but they had prayed and felt that I could join them there for the ten days that I had requested. They showed me to a small but lovely room past the kitchen, with its own private entrance on the side of the monastery. There was no electricity, of course, but it was a lovely place and I was grateful for their hospitality.

It had been quite a hike from the last bus stop in a nearby moshav, and I was starving by the time dinner was served! I knew nothing of the French country custom of serving one course at a time in the same bowl. So when they brought to the table an enormous salad, I assumed that the salad would constitute their entire meal, and therefore I accepted even their third offer for more! But then three courses followed, one at a time and all eaten in the same bowl, and by the end of the meal I was so full I could hardly move! But the funny thing is that the only brother who could speak English had gone away for some days, and there was no way I could convince the rest that I wasn't mad about salad and didn't want three servings with every meal!

On my first day of prayer at the monastery, the Lord reminded me of the challenge He had given me, to "come away with Him to the High Places, and that there He would change

me and change me again". Then He gave me the following Scripture:

*"For who is God, save the Lord?  
and who is a rock, save our God?  
God is my strength and power;  
and He maketh my way perfect.  
He maketh my feet like hinds' feet:  
and setteth me upon my high places . . ."*

II Samuel 22:32-34

It seemed like a promise that would be fulfilled only in the great and distant future, and that the task of changing me was the issue that was at hand.

There is a plaque in a sweet little alcove by the side of the monastery which reads:

*". . . John was in the wilderness until the day of his showing unto Israel . . ."*

Luke 1:80

*"Each service in the kingdom of God in which we communicate with our fellow man requires first a period of preparation in the quietness and loneliness in which God communicates with us."*

And then, when I randomly picked a word from a small box near the entrance to the dining room, it said:

*"Humiliation is the only ladder to honour in God's kingdom."*

Oh, dear, so many dismal confirmations!

The monastery is truly located in a wilderness, and that is exactly the feeling I had the entire time I was there, that the Lord had brought me to a desert place, to a wilderness, at great distance from Himself as well as from the forms of civilization that I was used to. And there, He began to work upon my heart.

He first showed me, clearly, directly and unmistakably just how wretched and hopeless and sinful and ugly I really was when compared to the glory of His majesty. It astonished me to the depth of my being, and beneath His scrutiny all the smug feelings of self-complacency, all the assurances of self-worth as a human being, all of them, all of them, fell away as ashes at His feet. And then, to place agony upon agony, He showed me not only how completely wretched and rotten I truly was, *but that I was helpless to do anything about it myself.*

He stripped me bare of all feelings of self-righteousness, of all distorted views of myself as a good, honest, decent human being; and showed me to the core what I really was — rotten, selfish, proud and always at odds with the workings of the Lord within my life.

God wasn't being unkind to me, as I see it now, for there is not one of us, when confronted by His holiness, who can fall back on anything worthy within himself that can in any way compare. We could do nothing but echo the words of Isaiah:

*"Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips,  
and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen  
the King, the Lord of hosts."*

Isaiah 6:5

And God shows us, each and every one of us that truly follows Him, that in us is not one good thing.

*"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags . . ."*

Isaiah 64:5

*"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me: but how to perform that which is good I find not.*

*For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do . . .*

*For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:*

*But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*

*O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"*

Romans 7:18-19; 22-24

He *has* to reveal this to us, to enable us to understand how desperately we need His help and His grace! Our true righteousness and worth comes when we have become sanctified as vessels for His use.

The most excruciating lesson of all was when He helped me to understand that I was helpless to do anything whatsoever to change the rottenness that was me. It took away from me the very last shred of self-importance. And it made me know, in a new and deeper way than I ever dreamed possible, *that I needed Him and His grace in my life more than I ever imagined, that without Him, I would not even make it through a single day.* All I could do was to cry out to Him, to beg Him to bring about those changes in my life that would make me a presentable and clean vessel for His use. But He felt very, very far away.

It was an agonizing ten days, and I could but cry out to the Lord as David had in the 51st Psalm:

*"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.*

*Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned . . .*

*Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow...*

*Hide Thy face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.*

*Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.*

*Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation; and uphold me with Thy free Spirit. Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways: and sinners shall be converted unto Thee . . .*

*For Thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: Thou delightest not in burnt offering.*

*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise."*

Psalm 51:1-4; 7; 9-13; 16-17

*I longed to be totally, completely free of the putridness of "self" that had been exposed to me beneath His scrutiny, but I sensed that I had such a terribly long way to go, and that brought me even deeper into despair. And then I understood for the first time, that the greatest gift that God can give to us, is not all the outward evidences of the *power* of God that people are continually clamouring for — but the greatest gift is God, Himself, within us, through us, with us, for us, in every moment of our lives. *That* is what we should seek for, yearn for, pray for and humble ourselves to receive!*

And that deeper unification with the Lord is what was described by Andrew Murray in *The Full Blessing of Pentecost* which the Lord had instructed me to take with me to this time in the Judean hills:

*"To know the all of Christ, and to understand how intensely and ;low completely and how really Christ is prepared to be everything in us, is the secret of true sanctification. He that discerns the will of God in this principle and from the heart yields himself to its operation has found the pathway to the full blessing of Pentecost.*

*How little it is understood in the Church that the one and only thing that I have to do without ceasing is to keep my soul in its nothingness and dependence silent and open before God, that He may be free to work in me; that faith as the willing acceptance and expectation of God's working, receives all and can achieve all.*

*Even in me God shall be all.*

*No movement of our time, no word of our lips, no movement of our heart, no satisfying of the needs of our physical life, should there be that is not the expression of the will, the glory, the power of God. Only the man who discerns this and consents to it, who desires and seeks after it, who believes and appropriates it, can rightly understand what the fullness of the Spirit must effect, and why it is necessary that we should forsake everything if we desire to obtain it. God must not be merely something, not merely much, but literally, all."*

When I returned home following my ten days wilderness experience, I walked through the door and at once could sense that there was a spiritual change. I could feel it in every fibre of my being that something had happened during my days away, that Doris and Carol had formed an alliance against me. I had never walked into such an unwelcoming feeling in all my life! And the feelings of alienation and oppression grew more and more as the days passed by. It seems that they had decided that even my very salvation was questionable, and therefore they felt a need to argue with almost every single statement I made or with anything I did! It made the tension in that apartment almost unbearable for me, and I still can remember clearly the way I would feel every time I returned home following a trip to town. When I would begin to climb the steps to the apartment, I would dread opening the door only to be confronted by hostility and rejection all over again. Whenever I would complain to them about their attitude towards me (and eventually the oppression became so bad I became powerless even to complain), they would remind me of the word I had received on

Easter Sunday, that I needed only to accept their comments and rejections as from the Father's hand!

There were a few times when the Lord confirmed His presence with me, although those times were rare, which made each one of them like a special treasure. One day, for example, an eight-year-old Believer named Samuel from the north of Israel had come to visit me. He had a child's openness towards God, and I always enjoyed his visits! One day we were together in Jerusalem's main department store when I spotted a beautiful set of dishes from England, covered with the red flowers that I love so much, the same flowers that carpet the Israeli hillsides in the spring. I had precisely the amount of money that was needed to purchase the dishes, and I knew clearly that it was the Lord's will for me to have them.

Both Doris and Carol had forgotten at once that they were guests in my home, and demanded instead to have an equal share in all decisions that were made. (I think they would have been quite happy to have my apartment all to themselves!) Even though I was charging them no rent, as I trusted the Lord for His provision each month, they still felt they had a right also to control every purchase that I made! And so I knew that if I obeyed the Lord and purchased the dishes, I would be criticized at once for having spent such a large sum of money on such an expensive set of dishes when I could have purchased a far more economical set! (Looking back, it's a puzzle why I tolerated it at all, but I've always had difficulties dealing with domineering people, and the oppression of satan only made me more ineffectual in coping with it!)

But the dishes were so lovely, I just knew that they were a gift from the Lord! So I bought them and Samuel and I staggered home with the heavy box. And, as I had expected, the criticisms began as soon as the box was opened. But this time the Lord provided a consolation for my obedience to Him! Samuel sometime later went over to a small heart-shaped dish I keep on the coffee table, and when he lifted the lid, he exclaimed, "Esther, come here quickly! Look at this!"

Inside the dish he found a wad of money that must have been left there at one time or another as a gift by one of my guests. And it was for the *exact amount* that I had just paid for the dishes! It didn't quell their criticisms, to be sure, but it was such a comfort to me and confirmation of the Father's love!

Whenever unjust criticisms were levied against me — which was almost all the time — the Lord would never allow me to defend myself. They then interpreted my lack of response as cowardly weakness, which encouraged them to criticize all the more! Oh, the many nights when I would close the door to my room feeling all the loneliness and alienation, and pour out my heart to the Lord! "Oh, Father, I *can't* keep forgiving them, I can't! I can't take it any longer! Oh, please, help me out of this mess!" But His answer always remained the same, that I would forgive them a *million* times if I needed to!

There was one particular issue that was a cause of tension between us. I had invited them initially to stay with me for a period of six months, for I knew that in November Sid and Betsy would be coming to stay with me for a year. But somehow they wanted so desperately to have a home that they kept trying to convince me that Sid and Betsy should stay in an apartment someplace else to enable them to continue to live in my home!

Along with other friends, they also criticized greatly the portion of the book I had written thus far, until they all convinced me that it was just vain of me to have written it at all. And so I placed the manuscript on the top shelf of my closet, and placed the entire concept of a book, along with the prophecy, upon the altar of sacrifice.

Their antagonistic feelings towards me developed so far that eventually, if they were having a discussion and I would enter the living room, they would simply get up and continue the discussion in their own room behind closed doors. Oh, how terrible it felt!

Through it all, it was clear that the Lord was dealing with the sins in my life that were preventing me from a deeper commitment to Him.

When we first come to know the Lord, we receive His cleansing and forgiveness for our sins and begin a new life with Him with the slate of sin wiped clean through the blood of His sacrifice. This enables us to then have a personal relationship with God, as our state of sin had separated us from Him prior to that time. But it is *not* something that magically turns us into perfect people! As time goes on, we notice that there are still areas of sin in our lives that keep cropping up — surely not obvious and major sins like adultery, lust and so on — but "the little foxes that spoil the vines" of contentiousness, jealousy, anger, depression, aggression, and so forth. The Lord then begins a much deeper work as He seeks to uproot the core of the sinfulness itself. For example, He had *forgiven* me for my pride, but now He wished to transform it into genuine humility!

*"He humbled Himself to the manger,  
And even to Calvary's tree; But I am so  
proud and unwilling,  
His humble disciple to be.*

*He yielded His will to the Father,  
And chose to abide in the Light; But I prefer  
wrestling to resting,  
And try by myself to do right.*

*Lord, break me, then cleanse me and fill me And  
keep me abiding in Thee;  
That fellowship may be unbroken,  
And Thy Name be hallowed in me."*

Roy Hession  
The Calvary Road

That it was a deeper work of God that was beginning in my life was further confirmed to me by one of the friends who had spent the time of fasting with me, as he handed me this word:

**"LORD JESUS CHRIST,**

*I humble myself beneath all the sin and guilt of my self-love, my hardheartedness, my bitterness, my lovelessness, my inability to forgive, and my not wanting to forgive. From now on I don't want to have anything more to do with these sins. I stand in faith upon the fact that You have redeemed me to love, to the love that flows from Your heart and that no longer lives for itself.*

*Lord Jesus Christ, my Saviour and Redeemer, today I give myself to You anew. I want to strive towards this goal with all determination. I want to thank You each time You lead me into situations where I am treated unjustly or others make life difficult for me. For only out of repentance over my failures can I receive true love from You.*

*I will not stop praying until this love becomes my own — at any cost. Others must be able to see by my life what Your redemption can accomplish — to Your glory. O Lord, You are Love Eternal and You can and will make me able to reflect Your love. This I believe in Your name.*

*AMEN."*

It helped me to understand that the unjust criticisms that I continued to receive had been ordered *first of all* by *Him*.

One day in the beginning of August, I had been invited to a Believers' meeting in Tiberias to read to them the statement that we had handed to the High Court of Justice. I felt a joy about doing this, as the Galilean Believers had been so faithful to stand with me in spite of the months of criticism coming forth from Jerusalem. But as soon as I walked into the room where the meeting was to be held, my heart sank to my toes. Sitting there was a Christian brother from the States, who has a very harsh way about him, supposing himself to be something of a prophet, but lacking in any way the humility of Jesus that would have to be a Believing "prophet's" hallmark. And seated with him was a Jewish Believer from Jerusalem who had been one of the most outspoken people against me in the country, especially following the court decision. When I saw them together, I had the terrible, unmistakable feeling, that if I read the court statement that night, I might not have a single friend left by the time I had finished. It was not the Lord's openness and love that I felt that evening, but only the critical presence of the enemy.

The leader of the group opened with prayer, we sang some songs together, and then I was invited to read our defense to the High Court of Justice.

I stood up and began to read; but if the statement is heard without the grace of the Holy Spirit, then the enemy can twist it unbelievably, and that is just what satan was doing that night. As I read certain passages, the two people that I mentioned openly snickered and made innumerable derogatory statements. I faced such a dilemma, as I wanted more than anything just to sit down and forget the whole thing!

As I was reading, I began to review in my own mind, step by step and situation by situation, the Lord's confirmations in this case before the highest court. I reviewed them one by one — all the things mentioned in this book and the dozens that weren't mentioned — and finally, by the time I had reached the eighteenth page, I knew in my own heart that, no *matter what anyone else said in the world*, our testimony to the court was from God and I was not going to deny it nor apologize for it! And so I read the statement through to the end, knowing in my heart what was soon to follow, but knowing as well that I was going to be okay. I had made my own commitment before the Lord.

And, true to expectation, as soon as I sat down, the American Christian brother stood up. He began with a prayer, and then said, "God help me if I'm wrong, but I want to say that this statement is nothing but an arrogant bit of self-glorification, and I want to say that I BELIEVE IT HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH GOD WHATSOEVER! I have heard many of the comments and criticisms in Jerusalem, and it is with deep concerns that I am here. I believe that this sister has acted completely according to the flesh, and was wrong in not beforehand consulting with any of the Christians in Israel who have now been so deeply affected by the court decision." And he continued in similar fashion for over half an hour more, tom; the court statement to shreds and me alms with it.

As he was ranting, many thoughts were going through my mind. First of all, I knew that he was wrong for having given heed to rumours without first following the Scriptural commandment to bring all of them in private first to me. (Even to this day he has never had the humility to come to me to discuss this issue nor the terrible things he has spoken against me.) And of course, I *had* brought the court case before almost every group in the country, and they had all given their initial approval. (The ironic thing was that when he himself had come over with a tour group in 1977, I had shared with all of them the court situation. And in front of the entire group, he had prayed for me, stating that he believed firmly that it was of God and he offered his most sincere blessings upon it!) But inside I felt at peace, which had to be the beginning evidence of God's deeper dealings in my life. I had made the decision for

myself that night, that whatever anyone else might say, I knew it was the Holy Spirit who had enabled us to write that testimony before it was presented to the courts.

Since this brother is a speaker with much charisma, most of the Believers accepted all that he said that night, and since that time many of them have never spoken to me again. And even one of the friends who helped to write the defense statement has had serious doubts about the validity of the entire court case since that time.

After the meeting, the American came up to me, saying, "Sorry, but I had to say what's on my heart. Hope you don't mind!"

There were so many comments I could have made, including punching him in the teeth, but all I said was, "Well, actually, I did bring the court case to most of the Believers in Israel in the beginning, and as a matter of fact, you were one of the first people I had brought it to! And you gave your whole-hearted blessing on it!" But he hadn't, of course, remembered it at all. It was the only thing that involved him directly and therefore the only comment I felt at liberty to make.

Two weeks later, on the 19th of August, 1979, I received word from the Ministry of Interior that my application for permanent residence had been denied and that I needed to get my affairs in order to be prepared to leave the country no later than 22 September, 1979, Rosh Hashanah, which was the day that my residency permit was due to expire.

It came like a shock, as I had trusted so firmly in the Father's love and His ability to enable me to stay in Israel, especially since I had been faithful to him in our testimony before the court. I couldn't imagine having to leave Israel in disgrace, never being allowed to return again, not even for a visit! And to make matters worse, the next day I received a letter from a sister in the Lord from England. There was a portion in her letter that seemed so clearly to underline the fact that I might have to be prepared to leave Israel *forever*.

*"My dear Esther,*

*I should have written sooner but I am afraid I put it off and I feel I must submit to yourself what I feel the Lord has laid on my heart for you. Shortly after I received your letter I came to the Father about the matter of your permanent residence in Israel. Esther, I just couldn't ask God to let you stay. All I could do was cry. I sobbed before God for you, because I believe God just showed me how much He loved you and how precious you are to Him and He sees in you someone who has been willing to really enter into the rejection of His own dear Son. I felt that God's heart was so full of love and gratitude and affection for you, that it just broke my heart to see God's love for you.*

*I felt God was looking for someone to really follow in Jesus' footsteps by one of His people from the Jewish nation to be willing to be rejected as Jesus was and to be put out of the city. I believe God is looking for one of His own people who will enter into Jesus' suffering so as to be put away from Israel and to really lay down his life in intercession for His people from the place of rejection, so that the Holy Spirit can pray through such a one — that such a one may stand in the gap for his own people that God may see of the fruit of his travail and be satisfied — that many more Jewish people may come to Jesus as Messiah. Now I am not saying this is you, but I felt God sees such a one in your heart."*

When I brought it tearfully before the Lord, He didn't give me a direct answer as to whether or not it was His will for me to remain in Israel. He simply guided me to the following passage in *Hinds' Feet on High Places*:

" . . . By now they had ascended far higher than ever before. Indeed, if only the path they were following would begin to ascend, they could not doubt that they would soon be approaching the real High Places, where no enemies could follow and where the healing streams flowed.

Now instead of that the path was leading them down into a valley as low as the Valley of Humiliation itself. All the height which they had gained after their long and toilsome journey must now be lost and they would have to begin all over again, just as though they had never made a start so long ago and endured so many difficulties and tests.

`. . . Will you bear this too, Much-Afraid? Will you suffer yourself to lose or to be deprived of all that you have gained on this journey to the High Places? Will you go down this path of forgiveness into the Valley of Loss, just because it is the way that I have chosen for you? Will you still trust and still love me?'

. . . It had opened her eyes to the fact that right down in the depths of her own heart she really had but one passionate desire, not for the things which the Shepherd had promised, but for Himself . . ."

As I read it, I realized at once that Israel had claimed too large a portion of my heart, that Jesus had to be my first and *only* love, and that, if He willed it, *I had to be willing to give up Israel forever*. Everything that I loved about that dear land tugged at my heartstrings that night, but compared to Joey and Mike, nothing else in all the world could possibly cause as much pain. And so, reminiscent of that night three years earlier when they had been placed there, Israel joined Mike and Joey upon the altar.

When I told Doris and Carol the news from the office of the Ministry of Interior, they at once demurely informed me that it surely must at last be a sign to me that I had been mistaken about the court case! And soon thereafter, they began to make plans to use my apartment after I had left the country. And most of my council of friends (the small group who had helped me to write the court statement and the few in the Galilee who remained friends even after the night in Tiberias), also confirmed that I should accept it as God's will as there seemed to be no other alternative. There were only two people in the entire country, one friend in Nahariya and another in Rehovot, who it seemed still even *wanted* me to remain in Israel!

With the negative court decision, the stories and accusations that were being levied against me amongst the local body of Believers were very impressive indeed. The same held true for many Jewish Believers in the States, who, without understanding any of the details of the case, blamed me for closing doors on all Jewish Believers being recognized as citizens forever. It was odd, because in actuality the court decision had really changed almost nothing at all, except that it made Jesus a more open issue before Israel. Even prior to the court case, if someone announced on arrival in Israel that they were Jewish and believed in Jesus, **thy could practically guarantee that they would be** on the next plane back to where they had come from! The only one who truly decides whether or not we have a right to stay in Israel *is the Lord God*. *He* is the one who can enable us to stay in Israel if it be His will, and when it is *His* will, *there is no man in all the world* who can *close that door!*

"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? . . .

Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*

*As it is written,*

*For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*

*Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.*

*For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,*

*Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord . . ."*

Romans 8:31-32; 34-39

We only have to read in the Acts of the Apostles to discover the reaction of the religious leaders of Israel to the first Jewish Believers and then to understand that for us in these days the situation is far more tolerable than it was for them! I surely wasn't stoned to death as Stephen had been! But Jesus has given us the sure promise that we will be given the utter privilege to make up for the sufferings that He lacked. And so instead of a defeat, the court decision is rather a reason to rejoice!

*"And when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.*

*And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.*

*And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ."*

Acts 5:40-42

One day I was supposed to meet in a Jerusalem hotel the founder of the Christian radio station from the States that had brought forth such a blessing for the love scroll. While awaiting his arrival, I happened to sit together with two Believers from the United States. And they said to me, "We're certainly upset over all the difficulties that Esther Dorflinger has caused. It's hardly imaginable that she can even be saved, after all the things we've heard about her! It's a disgusting thing that she has done, and she's set a negative precedent for us all."

And so I asked them, "Do you know any of the details of the court case?"

"No, only the decision by the court. But that's enough!"

"Have you spoken about it with Esther herself?" I asked, finding it *very* hard not to laugh.

"No, what's the point of it?" they queried.

"The point of it is, that before we have the right to judge someone else, the Scriptures tell us that *first* we must bring it to the person we have things against! You have such strong opinions about someone you wouldn't even recognize if you saw her!" And by then, I *did* laugh. But the same holds true for 99% of the people who have held such hostile opinions, as only a handful even until now have come to *me* with their comments — at least knowingly, that is!

In the midst of all the turmoil and conflicting advice, I went to Uri Huppert's office to discuss the situation with him and to inform him of the latest development.

"My advice to you, Eileen, is that we re-apply to the High Court of Justice once again, this time not for citizenship according to the Law of Return, but for permanent residency. I believe very strongly that the court will rule in your favour, as even in the judges' statement they openly alluded to the fact that other options were available! Because I assure you, if we don't apply to the court and you leave the country on the twenty-second of September, it will be the very last time the Ministry of Interior will *ever* let you enter Israel again. You're not exactly one of their favourite people, you know!"

He then pointed out the fact that, even though I had applied for the visa in March, they had waited until almost the end of August to give me the orders to leave the country, no doubt to try to prevent any further court action.

It was indeed certain that the time was running short. I told him I would think it over and return to his office the following week with my decision as to whether or not to re-apply to the High Court of Justice.

When I returned home, I told Doris and Carol the advice that my attorney had given. They disagreed with it at once!

A few days later we all journeyed to a Believers' conference in northern Israel. It was being led by the American brother who had spoken so harshly against me in Tiberias, but my Galilean friends (the few that I still had) felt very strongly that I should attend the conference, and so I did.

However, it became evident right away that I had been excluded from their "inner circle" of friends. And then, on the second day of the conference, I was called to one of the Believer's homes, to find all of my old friends sitting around in a circle waiting for my arrival. Doris and Carol were there too, of course. What they all had to say hurt so deeply that it was only with the greatest restraint that I kept from sobbing openly. But I simply refused to let them see just how cutting their words were to me! But here they were, the last few friends that I had, the ones who had shared the whole court case with me, telling me that they had consulted with the American brother, and that they felt, as had been confirmed by Carol and Doris, that there were serious questions about my walk with the Lord; and that they therefore felt that under no circumstances should I apply to the court again. What they were saying basically was that if I left the country it would be the best thing; and it seemed like not a one of them would really miss me at all! All I could do was to numbly listen to all of their comments and advice.

"I'll think over all you said. Thank you!" was all that I could manage to say and I walked outside again. I took a long walk through the woods, and when I sat down to rest on a carpet of fragrant pine needles, all the bottled up tears came flooding out. I felt so betrayed and alone, and the oppression of satan was so great and so intense during those days that I truly didn't know which way to turn.

The tears didn't seem to have helped, as I still felt such a pain within my heart. But I returned to the conference centre, packed up my few things, and left for home.

When I returned to the apartment, I found a letter waiting for me from a friend in the States, Karen Kolbinsky, who so often and in many ways has brought the Lord's encouragement to me.

*"... One morning, when I was praying, the Lord spoke to my heart with a song. These are the words that I found to express (the best way I could) the lesson He was teaching me.*

*When you are burdened, troubled by life,  
Weary from the toil and care  
Just look to Jesus. He is there through all the strife  
Nothing is too hard for Him to share.*

*As your enemies surround you lift your eyes  
up to the sky  
You'll see the eagle and the dove  
For them, no mountain is too high  
Through your faith you'll find the wings of prayer To  
God they'll draw you nigh  
And every trial serves to strengthen you to fly.  
Through all the tears, through the darkness and the pain  
There's still a ray of hope shining bright  
Jesus has promised He'd complete the work in You  
Through Him you'll find the victory of flight."*

And also, from another faithful friend and correspondent, Jean Watts, came the following verse:

*"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not  
unto thine own understanding.  
In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy  
paths . . ."*

Proverbs 3:5-6

Both were reminders of the Lord's sovereign hand upon my life, and I knew that somehow, He would bring me through this dark and dreary time.

Doris and Carol returned home the next evening from the conference, and the following morning I had my appointment with Uri where he was expecting to receive my final decision. Because the counsel of friends had been so strong, and because the oppression of satan had been so great, I left with a friend named Peter for my lawyer's office to tell him to forget the whole court application, that I was simply going to leave things as they were and just plan to leave the country in three weeks' time.

When Peter and I arrived at the office, Uri began to describe his plans for applying to the court once again. And before I had a chance to say a single word, deeply within my heart the Lord's instructions were given: "*Go ahead with the application to the High Court of Justice.*"

When Uri had finished describing the legal procedures he hoped to take, I said, "Would you excuse Peter and me for a few minutes?" Peter and I walked out of his office.

As soon as we reached the street, Peter said at once, "Before you say anything, I have to tell you that the Lord has confirmed to me that you are to go ahead and apply to the court!"

"Peter, He's told me the same thing!" We looked at each other, knowing what would be awaiting us when we returned to my apartment with a decision contrary to the advice I had been given. But at that moment, when confronted with the Lord's clear direction, their reactions seemed irrelevant.

"C'mon, Peter, let's tell Uri to go ahead with it, then!"

And so once again, Uri sent an application to the High Court of Justice, asking them to rule on whether or not I could receive permission to remain in Israel as a permanent resident; and asking them, if they accepted the case, to place an injunction against the Ministry of Interior forbidding them to deport me until a court decision would be forthcoming. I knew that if they refused to accept the case, all hope was gone.

When we returned home with the news, both Carol and Doris and the other friends who had gathered there were tremendously upset that I had acted contrary to their advice, and

Doris spread the news rapidly amongst the last of my friends. But that night, just before turning out the light, I read the following passage from *A Table in the Wilderness* by Watchman Nee:

*"Sound doctrine can inflate us, making us proud of our knowledge or our opinions. Or we can forget the truth by having it knocked out of us by skilled argument or third-degree methods. But vision is revolutionary. Beside it everything else becomes small. Once see the Lord and we shall never forget Him. With the attacks of satan increasing and the counsel of friends failing us, it is only the inner knowledge of God that will make us stand in the testing time . . .*

*There is a great deal of reason in what you say — but I know my God. That is enough . . ."*

It helped me to know that in spite of what anyone else might say, I could depend on what the Lord had given me.

In the days that followed, the criticism became so adverse and the feelings of tension and alienation so great that I again fled the apartment, this time going to a small retreat centre on the shores of the Sea of Galilee called "Peniel", the place where Jacob wrestled with the angel.

I told them that I went ostensibly to be certain from the Lord that I had made the right decision; but I also left to get away from all the adverse criticism into some place where I could breathe freely once again!

To sit there in the stillness of the evening, to listen to the lulling sound of the crickets, to watch the beauty of the sunset over the distant hills reflected in the water of the Sea — it was a blessing of His love.

It was a quiet time, and still the enemy raged; but in the midst of it, the Lord gave me two very clear instructions: one, I was to immediately inform Doris and Carol that they were to leave my apartment within two weeks (the exact time that had been pre-arranged when they had first arrived) to enable me to get things ready for Sid and Betsy's arrival. And, two, to take a six-day land-rover tour of the Sinai that I had been reading about, before the last two-thirds of it was returned to Egypt. So I left Peniel still in a turmoil, but grateful for the Lord's clear answers on these two issues.

On my first evening at home, I told Doris and Carol that I wished for them to leave the apartment in two weeks' time, as had originally been arranged. They immediately left the room and withdrew into their own bedroom to discuss the matter.

A few hours later Carol came out to tell me coldly, "We will be moving out tomorrow morning."

And when they left the next morning, with all of their things, there was not a single "thank you for your hospitality"; but only one parting remark: "We both have serious question as to your salvation." And with that, they flounced out of my house.

(In all fairness to them both, I have to add at this point that a year or two later, they each came to me to apologize. And I still think if I had been obedient to the Lord and had *not* invited Carol, that perhaps Doris and I might have had a chance to become friends. But yet, as terrible a time as it was, the Lord knows all things; and surely He used it for His greater purposes in my life, for it helped to emphasize how desperately in need I was of the grace of *His* love in my life.)

When in the midst of a dark and trying time, a time of chastening and testing, it's impossible to understand that in the Father's timing there will be an end to it. But *He* sees

the end, and also the fruit that He will one day glean from the pruned and tended vines! Just prior to my departure for the Israeli resort town of Eilat, where I would meet up with the Sinai tour group, this Word arrived in the mail from a friend in Ireland:

*"Yet Thou in Thy manifold mercies forsookest them not in the wilderness: the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to show them light, and the way wherein they should go. Thou gayest also Thy good spirit to instruct them, and withheldst not Thy manna from their mouth, and gayest them water for their thirst . . ."*

Nehemiah 9:19-20

I couldn't know it at the time, but it was a beginning sign to me that the dark and testing time would soon be over.

The six-hour bus ride to Eilat was a beautiful time, as we passed by the Dead Sea and the historic site of Masada.

The next morning I joined up with the tour at the "Neot Hakikar" offices in Eilat along with the eleven others who would be taking the tour as well. We left at noon, and soon turned off the main road and into the wilderness of Sinai and through one of the many wadis that cut their way through the mountains. The Sinai has a stark and awesome beauty to it, and for the days that we meandered through, I was thrilled as every turn in the bend offered new vistas. We found many evidences as we travelled of Israel's love for this ancient place. In just the few years that the Sinai had been in Israeli hands, they had made small parks, as well as cultural centres for the Bedouins, and my heart ached along with the rest of Israel that this hauntingly beautiful place would soon be back in Egyptian hands.

Following Sadat's historic visit to Jerusalem (on the very week of my first court appearance) the Israelis had become more and more skeptical of the Egyptians' intentions, and feeling was strong that they would now gain by "peace" what they had been unable to gain by war. Israel would have to return an area of land six times the size of Israel itself, with the only oil fields in Israeli possession, and the disassembling of a large military air force base. To such a small nation, it was a great loss, not to mention the memory of the lives that were taken in the battles for Sinai as well as Israel's historic ties to this area. And so for all of us, this trip to the Sinai was tinged with nostalgia and sadness that soon the Israeli flag would no longer be flying there.

The tour leaders knew the Sinai incredibly well, and the tour itself was a delight! In the middle of the wilderness they managed to cook the most scrumptious meals and to show us such delightful places! I loved going to sleep each night blanketed under the myriad numbers of desert stars, to awaken each morning to the brilliant Sinai sunshine to begin another day of exploration.

On the second-to-the-last day of the trip, we approached the huge mount that is believed to be the Mt. Sinai from the days of Moses. We camped that night near the base of the mountain, and at 3:00 a.m. we began the long trek up the winding camel path (but minus the camels) to reach the summit in time for the sunrise. In the hours of climbing, the Lord reminded me of the program I had seen on American television in 1976 that had moved me so deeply on the night when I had met God the Father in such an awesome way. And somehow, in the stillness of the morning light, He placed the hint of a promise within my heart.

To stand at the top of Mt. Sinai and to see the sunlight dispelling the shadows of dawn was a moment never to be forgotten. I stood there and simply bowed my head in thanksgiving to the Lord for having brought me to that time and to that place.

When the sun was shining brightly in the sky above, we began our descent from the top of Mt. Sinai to the monastery far below. When we had covered about half the distance, just before stopping for a much-needed rest, we spotted a little table set up near the hikers' path, and there some Christian literature was being offered by the Evangelical Sisterhood of Mary.

I picked up one of the pamphlets that they had available, and when we sat down to rest, I read the following:

*"After forty years of such chastening in the desert, God appeared to Moses in the burning bush at the foot of Mt. Sinai. He revealed to him His plan, which stood behind these difficult and seemingly meaningless paths. He gave to Moses the mighty commission to lead His people out of Egypt, out of their slavery. It was a commission that went against common sense. Indeed, it was dangerous for Moses to return to Egypt, and in addition to this, he had lost all favour with his people.*

*Moses, filled with doubts and fears, felt utterly incapable of fulfilling this task, of leading his people out of Pharaoh's slavery. The Lord, however, spoke majestic words of promise: 'I will be with you!' and 'I have sent you!' (Exodus 3:12). Now He could send Moses and use him, for Moses had experienced the holiness of God. At God's command Moses took off his shoes, sensing that he was standing upon holy ground. The presence of the living God was here; He was speaking.*

*Now the Lord could act and do wonderful things through Moses, who no longer hindered God's mighty acts with his self-importance. With great signs and wonders Moses delivered his people out of Pharaoh's power and led them to Mount Sinai, just as the Lord had commanded him.*

*The greater the commissions of God and the more far-reaching their effects, the longer the time of preparation and the deeper the humiliations must be which lead to this goal."*

It came again, just for a moment, a fleeting hint of something one day to come. What could it mean?

On our final night the land-rover let us off by the edge of the Red Sea with instructions to hike to a certain point some kilometers distance. (The land-rover would travel by land and meet us from the other side, as there was no access except by foot at the place where we were.) The walk along the edge of the Red Sea was breathtakingly beautiful, and when we arrived at the designated spot, the tour guides gave each of us snorkels to enable us to view the coral reefs.

I had never done any snorkeling before, and so I surely didn't know what to expect! But as soon as I stuck my head under the water, I was transported into a new and wonderful world, something far too beautiful to be real at all! I could have stayed under the water forever! Some of the fish were so exquisitely coloured, and to watch them darting in and out amongst the beauty of the coral reefs — oh, it was simply too much to bear! Once again I wondered to myself, "If God loves us so much, to place such heavenly beauty upon this earth, what oh what will *heaven* ever be like?" My heart was filled with awe. How in the world do people ever doubt the existence of our God?

I read four chapters in my Bible every day, three passages in the Old Testament (including a psalm) and one passage in the New Testament. The exact Scriptures depend upon which portion of the Bible the Lord is having me read at the time. And because *He* chooses, there are often many surprises, as I discovered that night as I turned to the psalm I was to read:

*"Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation;*

that I may see the good of Thy nation, that I may glory with Thine inheritance.

*Our fathers understood not Thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of Thy mercies; but provoked Him at the sea, even at the Red Sea.*

Nevertheless He saved them for His name's sake ..."

Psalm 106:4-5, 7-8

Oh, how I longed through His intervention to be a part of the rejoicing of Israel, to be a part of that nation! And how uncertain things still were! But that Scripture renewed the hope within my heart.

Sleeping that night under the stars by the banks of the Red Sea was an experience too wonderful for words. It had been a fantastic six days, and I was so grateful to the Lord for having given me that opportunity before Sinai was no longer in Israeli hands.

Jewish humour is part of the secret of our survival, and I remembered two stories amongst many that are often told in Israel about the Sinai, which show as well how the Biblical stories are an integral part of Israeli life! (It's something to be remembered that when Israeli children study history in school, *their history is the Bible.*)

One story depicts two Israeli soldiers in their jeep heading back to Eilat and then home through the huge expanses of the Sinai wilderness following Israel's victory against Egypt. Every few minutes, one of the Israeli soldiers would check his compass. Then they would drive on a little further, and he would check his compass once again. Finally his companion said to him, "For heaven's sake, what on earth are you doing? You're checking your compass every six minutes. Are you crazy or something?"

"Look, I'm not taking any chances," the other Israeli soldier replied. "Last time it took our people forty years to find their way out of here!"

And the other story had to do with a foreigner who didn't believe that God had actually parted the waters of the Red Sea. The dubious person commented to an Israeli, "I'm sure God didn't actually *part* the waters of the Red Sea. There was probably only a foot of water, and that's how the nation of Israel was able to cross!"

So the Israeli nodded and said, "Okay, I'll accept that. Then it was even a *greater* miracle that the entire Egyptian army drowned in only a foot of water!"

We arrived back in Eilat at 5:00 p.m. on the 17th of September, and I checked into a small hotel to take a shower and to feel like a human being again after six dusty days in the Sinai! And then the next morning I took the long trip back up to Jerusalem. I love the first glimpse of Jerusalem coming up through the Judean wilderness, perched so majestically upon the distant hills! It's especially breathtaking just at dusk, when the lights of the city can be seen twinkling far off in the distance.

The very next day Uri was notified that the court had accepted the case for a decision, and had given the Ministry of Interior two months to come forward and explain why they weren't recognizing me as a permanent resident; and they also forbade them from deporting me until their decision was forthcoming. It happened just three days before my deportation orders would have gone into effect! But other than Peter in Rehovot and one friend in Nahariya, there was no one left in all of Israel with whom to share the news (other than Israeli friends in Jerusalem).

That night, I read the following psalm:

*"O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise, even with my glory. Awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early. I will praise Thee, O Lord, among the people: and I will sing praises unto Thee among the nations. For Thy mercy is great above the heavens: and Thy glory above all the earth; that Thy beloved may be delivered: save with Thy right hand, and answer me. Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man. Through God we shall do valiantly: for He it is that shall tread down our enemies . . ."*

Psalm 108:1-6; 12-13

Again, it seemed to be a sign, a new year's promise, that these difficult days would soon be drawing to a close. It was a lonely time in a way, but it was also a relief that my home was becoming a home again, that I could open the door and breathe freely, that I could begin to put my life back in order once more. And when this letter arrived from a friend in the States, it seemed to arrive with the faint hope that the Lord would still use me to bring His love to others.

*"Little friend, we may wish that all would come to know Him, but the truth is that only a few will find the narrow way and without witnessing there wouldn't be those few. What a tremendous responsibility the Father has given men. We feel so unqualified to save the world, but with the help of the Holy Spirit, we may save one at a time. You may plant the seed and another might harvest it, but without workers there would be no harvest. May God be pleased with your work and stars be added to your crown in Heaven, even if you receive no praise on earth. The harvest is white for the harvesting but the workers are so few . . ."*

And so it seemed that all was going well. The court had accepted the case. There were signs that better days were ahead. I was free in my own home at last. But then, on the first of October, the Lord turned everything upside down all over again! When I awakened that morning, His instruction to me was clear: *"Now I want you to withdraw the case from the court."*

Just when I had hopes that all would work out at last, that I would be able to stay in Israel after all! But I knew that it didn't need to make sense to me why He would have me apply and then why He would have me cancel the application! The Lord wasn't asking me to *understand* His direction, He was simply asking me to obey it. And so after breakfast, I took the bus to town to Uri's office.

He greeted me with a warm "shalom"! He's such a dear man! "Look, Uri, I don't know how to explain this to you, but I've had firm orders from the Lord that now He wants me to withdraw this case from the court. I don't understand it at all, but all I can do is to tell you that I wish to have the case withdrawn from the court!"

Like most regular Israelis, even if they say they are not religious (which in Israel denotes religious extremism) they have a knowledge of and a faith in God, and so he didn't argue with me nor question my advice. All he replied was, "Look, let me make a suggestion to you. If this is your decision, and you really wish for me to withdraw the case from before the High Court, let me just suggest one thing. Take a week. Go home. Get your things in order and your suitcases packed. And then come back to my office next week at the same time and

bring with you a letter officially asking me to withdraw the case from the court; and then I will proceed with it from there. But I promise you that when the Ministry of Interior finds out that you are withdrawing the case, they will give you approximately five minutes to get yourself out of the country! As far as they're concerned, you're public enemy number one! And so take a week, get your affairs in order, and I'll see you next Sunday in my office at 10:00 a.m.! In the meanwhile, I won't say a word to them about it."

It was a strange week. I moved from the larger bedroom I had been occupying to the smaller bedroom in the rear of the apartment, to prepare for Sid and Betsy's arrival in November. And I went through the time aware, each and every second, that what might be my last week in Israel forever was slowly slipping away. I cried as I wrote the letter officially asking Uri to withdraw the case from the court, but I sealed it and proceeded to his office on Sunday morning to keep our appointment together.

I arrived promptly at 10:00 a.m., but Uri was nowhere to be found. I chatted with his secretary for a few minutes and sat down to wait.

He arrived almost an hour later with the most exultant look on his face, which I thought rather inappropriate for what might be my very last day in Israel forever! But as soon as he sat down behind his desk, he exclaimed, "I just have to believe in God!" He then went on to tell me, "I was called unexpectedly to the offices of the Ministry of Interior this morning. All the higher-ups were there, and they began by welcoming me with a cup of coffee. Think of it, a cup of coffee! And then they said to me, "We were very shocked and surprised by your client's re-application to the court. We never dreamed that she would in any way try to reverse or to change the previous court decision.""

Uri and I both grinned at one another. Then he continued, 'You are aware of the fact, I'm sure, that Dr. Burg is now the chief negotiator with Egypt.' I nodded. 'Well, if Mrs. Dorflinger would be willing to withdraw her case from the court, we will give her permission to remain in Israel. There's no way at this time that Dr. Burg can handle both Mrs. Dorflinger and Egypt!'

Of course, I knew at that very moment that you were sitting in my office with a letter in your hand requesting permission to withdraw the case from the court. So I said to them, 'Well, I think we can convince her. I'll try my best and will let you know!'"

And then he concluded by saying, "I'm so happy that God had given *me* the wisdom to tell you to wait a week before notifying the court and the Ministry of Interior! For if you had done it last week, surely you wouldn't be in Israel today!" *Oh, Father! How astonishing You are, how wondrous are Your ways!*

**THE LORD HAD DONE IT! So easily, so simply, HE WORKED IT OUT FOR ME TO HAVE PERMISSION TO STAY IN ISRAEL!!**



Esther with Joey and Michael, October 1979

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# 23

## “PEOPLE IN HIGH PLACES”

**I**t was on the 7th of October, 1979, that I was given the gift of another year in Jerusalem, at the beginning of the festival of Succoth. Early the following week came the joyous celebration of Simchat Torah, the "rejoicing in the Law". Throughout the streets of Jerusalem, men and boys dance and sing with the Torah scrolls (the Old Testament) in their arms in thanksgiving to God for having given His Word to us.

I went with my Israeli friends to their synagogue to celebrate, and as theirs is rather progressive, women were also allowed to carry the revered scrolls. After some time of rejoicing, one of the men placed a Torah scroll in my arms! It was the first time I had held one since my thirteenth birthday, and I felt deeply moved and humbled by this additional evidence of the Father's care. I should have been banned from Israel forever, yet here I was, in Jerusalem, dancing with the Word of God in my arms, in celebration with His people!

When I thought of Dr. Burg, I had to giggle. He would absolutely faint from horror if he had seen me then, dancing with the Torah! The Lord has incredible "chutzpah", to be sure! ("Chutzpah" is an Israeli word that really has no direct translation into English, but means something like "audacity")

A few days later, I was showing a friend from Australia around the Galilee. As we were sitting by the shores of the Sea of Galilee one languid afternoon, the Lord instructed me that in three days' time He wanted me to fly to the States to join Joey for his twelfth birthday celebration so that he would know in a special way the Lord's love for *him!* (I had been with Michael for his birthday for the previous two years, but had not been in the States in November for Joey's.) It was astonishing but *very* welcome news, to be sure!

The next day, *the exact amount of money arrived* for a round-trip ticket to New York, and two days later I was on my way! I had made arrangements to visit with Mike and Joey on the weekend, and to travel first to visit in Baltimore with Sid and Betsy.

Sid and Betsy were quite shocked at my arrival in the U.S., as they were at that very time packing and planning for their proposed visit to my home in Israel! It was such a joy to see them again, however, and that evening, as tired as I was from the agonies of jet-lag, they convinced me to accompany them to their church for the evening service.

A Christian brother was visiting from another part of the country, and after he had given a message to the congregation, he came over to pray for me. It had been such a long time since I had been ministered to in love that it brought tears to my eyes. And then, some minutes after he had prayed, the Lord instructed him to turn over my hand! And when he did, the palm of my right hand filled with oil. The oil had such a beautiful fragrance to it, like nothing I had ever smelled before. There was so much oil in my palm that members of the congregation were able to dip their fingers in it! And then the Lord instructed him that the oil was to anoint me for some special missions He was about to send me on. And so the

brother obediently took my hand, placed it on my forehead, and blessed me in the name of Jesus for whatever work would lie ahead!

When I returned home with Sid and Betsy that night, we marvelled over the sign of God's presence that we had witnessed. I truly didn't know quite how to react to it all! But deep within my heart, I knew it was the Lord's answer to all of those months of criticism that I had received from Believers in Israel. His answer to me that night was clearly that, even though *they* had rejected me as belonging to Him, *He was still with me*. It had been a long, long time since I had seen His love for me in such a tangible way, and I was deeply grateful. It gave me hope that the time of testing might be over, at least for a while. I went to sleep that night filled with the comfort that only the knowledge of His love can bring, vaguely wondering what the "special missions" would be.

On Monday evening, Sid and Betsy were departing for Israel with a tour group that they were helping to lead, and then they were planning simply to stay with me in Ramot for the next year. They urged me to meet them on Monday afternoon at J.F.K. airport in New York to greet the tour members, all of whom had been looking forward to seeing me in Israel! So we made arrangements to meet in the airport on Monday afternoon.

I then flew to Connecticut to the home of my old friend Alease, who used to be our next-door neighbour in the last apartment that Mike and Joey and I had lived in prior to our move to Israel. It seemed strange to pass by our old apartment each day, as it had been such a happy home for the three of us.

The boys and I had a wonderful reunion, and I was so grateful as always to the Lord for the deep bond that He has given us and kept for us, so that there are no feelings of strangeness when we see one another. It's always as though we had been together just the day before! And that's a special gift, I know. It was marvellous to be able to celebrate Joey's birthday with him — surely it was a special birthday gift from the Lord to us all! And then, on our second day together, the most touching and beautiful thing happened.

Michael and Joey both knelt and gave their lives to Jesus! They had believed in Him before, and had been clearly aware of His love in their lives, but they had never before said those precious words, "Jesus, I give my life to You, to do with it as You please. Please forgive me for my sins, and make me a new person in You ..." It was the most wonderful moment of my life, and once again I felt so grateful that the Lord had helped me with His strength not to turn my back on His call upon my life. For if He had allowed us to be together for the next hundred years, I could not have asked for anything more than that they belong to Him! And now I know that we'll have eternity to share together!

I told them later that day, "Just think, now we'll be together so long, I'm sure that after the first thousand years we'll be *sick* of one another!" For a parent, who could ask for more than the promise of eternity with those we love the most?

On Sunday evening Joey and Mike returned home, as they had school the following day, and we made plans to visit once again the next weekend.

On Monday morning, before preparing to leave for the airport, I woke up and began to read my Bible, as I always do in the early morning hours. I had been reading in Acts at the time, and when I turned to the 23rd chapter, all of a sudden the Lord strongly underlined the following verse in my heart:

*"And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer,  
Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness  
also at Rome . . ."*

Acts 23:11

Since I *had* testified of Him *in Jerusalem*, it really made me catch my breath. And then

the Lord spoke softly and clearly to my heart: "I am sending you to Rome to see the Pope ..."

"Oh, no!" I moaned, and pulled the covers over my head. It was such an outlandish request, that there was nothing in all my experience to draw from to help me to know at all how to react! And so I simply said to Him, when I could face it again, "Lord, this one You're going to have to confirm! Good grief!" By then I was quite sure of His direction most of the time, and it had been a long time since I had needed to ask for confirmations. But this was rather an exceptional situation!

A few hours later I was in the Connecticut airport in the bathroom about to catch the flight to J. F. K. The cleaning lady admired my coat, and I told her that I had purchased it in Jerusalem. That opened the door for me to share with her about the Lord's love for her. Her heart was so open, and within ten minutes, she bowed her head and gave her life to Jesus! Her heart had been prepared ever since her husband's unexpected death three years earlier, and the Lord simply had me there to answer the questions that had burned in her heart. Then she said to me, "*I'm a Roman Catholic*, and I never knew that Jesus' love was real until now!"

At that moment I felt the Lord's firmness, as He said to me, "There's your confirmation. Now make plans to travel to Rome!" There certainly could not be a more priceless confirmation in all the world than for another life to be opened to His love — and I knew the fact that she was a Catholic was no mistake!

Just before the plane landed in New York, as I was mulling over His astonishing instruction, the Lord said to me, "And Sid and Betsy are to go with you to Rome." The arguments immediately rose up in my mind. They were on their way to Israel! How could I ask them to accompany me on such a ridiculous and impossible-sounding mission? I don't even want to tell anyone that *I'm* going! But of course, I knew that it was only the voice of pride. I had learned at the Connecticut airport that with the type of ticket I had back to Israel, it would cost me an additional \$75.00 for a stop-over in Europe. Therefore I said to the Lord, "If somehow you provide the \$75.00 before I see Sid and Betsy, then I'll really know that all of this is truly willed by You." (That kind of a "test" is not something that I would usually try, nor recommend, except in rather extreme circumstances!)

When I arrived at last at the EL AL terminal at J.F.K., I immediately spotted Dorothy and Beth, two friends from the fellowship in Pennsylvania I had visited in 1977.

"What are you doing here?" they both exclaimed. "You're supposed to be in Israel!" And so I told them the story of Joey's birthday surprise, and they rejoiced with me when I also told them of the boys' salvation.

Dorothy then said, handing me an envelope she had pulled from her handbag, "Well, my dear, since this is where we are meant to meet, I'll give this to you here instead of in Israel!" When I later peeked inside, it was a gift of precisely and exactly \$75.00. So off I went in search of Sid and Betsy!

When I located them in all the hustle and bustle, they were extremely busy helping the tour members to locate their baggage and to arrange everything with everybody. And so I said to them with an edge of panic in my voice, "Listen, I'm sorry to be a pest, but I just *have* to speak with you alone for just five minutes!" I could tell they were both clearly annoyed by my persistence, but it couldn't be helped.

At last they agreed to come with me, but only for five minutes. When finally together, there was nothing to do but simply tell the story as quickly as possible. And so I said to them, all in one breath, "The-Lord-awakened-me-this-morning-and-gave-me-the-Scripture-from-Acts 23:11, and-then-told-me-that-I-have-to-go-to-Rome-to-see-the-Pope-and-you-have-to-come-with-me!" (How incredible it must have sounded to them!)

The Lord powerfully confirmed it to Sid at that very moment, but Betsy received no confirmation from Him, and the doubts began flooding in again. But somehow I sensed that

if this was truly from the Lord, all three of us would have His confirmation before they left the airport that day.

A short while later, we sang the song "Stand by Israel", which has a haunting melody:

*"Because we love the Lord, we love Israel,  
Because His Word is true, His people must survive.  
Like the sands upon the shore, and the stars in  
the heavens, a nation that will not die.*

*Chorus:  
The time has come to stand by God's people. The  
time is now to make your voices heard. Oh  
stand by Israel, children of God,  
Stand by Israel.*

*It's written in God's Word to stand by Israel. Her  
future is secure, the promises are clear. The  
apple of His eye, Jacob's children,  
The fruit of His blessed vine.*

*Oh Christian, have you heard the cry of Israel? She  
needs you as her friend in her time of need.  
The battle lines are drawn; where are you standing? Oh,  
stand by Israel."*

It reminded Betsy of the many experiences the three of us had shared together. I could tell by the tears in her eyes that the Lord had confirmed it to her as well. Just prior to their departure to Israel, we made hurried plans to meet in Rome on Monday, 19 November, 1979.

After I had waved to the last of the tour as they disappeared through passport control, I then went on to catch a plane to Pennsylvania to spend the week with Marcia and her family. Her home way out in the country is always so warm and welcoming, filled with an assortment of dogs, cats and people, but most especially with love. I arrived still amazed at the door that He seemed to be opening, but sensed from Him that I was not to tell Marcia about it. (Because, as it turned out, He wanted to tell her about it Himself!)

"Oh, Marcia" I said, when we had settled down with a cup of coffee at the dining room table. "The Lord gave me the most extraordinary instruction this morning! How I wish I could tell you about it!"

She asked me how things were in Israel, and then said, "Have you heard much news about the Pope's visit to the States?" I should have been suspicious, of course, for in all the years that we've been friends, we have never discussed the news!

"No, I haven't heard much about it," I replied. I could feel the warmth in my face, and knew I must be the colour of crimson. I almost never blush, but I simply couldn't help it!

Finally Marcia laughed and said, "So you're going to Rome to see the Pope?"

"YIKES! How did you know that?" I shrieked, almost too flabbergasted for words!

"Well, don't you remember how you told me last year that the Lord said one day He would be sending you to see the Pope?" I had forgotten completely about it! "When you mentioned the 'amazing instruction' you had received this morning, Jesus just told me that was it! Weren't you at all suspicious when I mentioned the news? The look on your face was magnificent!" And she laughed again.

It was such a relief that she knew it as well, so that I at least had a chance to talk about it!

How hard it would have been to spend a whole week with my closest friend and not be able to open my mouth about something as astonishing as that!

While visiting her, we took a trip to the neighbouring town of Chambersburg to a Christian book shop, and while there the Lord instructed me to buy a huge scrapbook to begin to record the journal of my trip to Rome. On the front cover was an enormous rose and under it were written the words, "*He has made everything beautiful . . .*" And there, too, I found a lovely card. The rose on the front had a single drop of dew on one of its velvety petals, and on the card it was written: "A friend is someone who knows you're not perfect, *but loves you anyway.*" Through these things, I could sense that indeed a new chapter was beginning in my walk with the Lord, that the dismal days of 1979 would be behind me now. And I understood then, too, that all of those who had been so ready to criticize and condemn *hadn't really been friends at all.*

At the end of the week, I travelled back to Connecticut to spend another weekend with Mike and Joey at Alease's home. Her hospitality to the three of us has always been so gracious! She gave me my very own set of keys to both her home and her car, and whenever I visited with the children she always gave me the use of her car! It was so kind of her, and it enabled Joey and Mike and me to do lots of fun things together!

The time went by much too quickly, and once again I stood waving as the boys drove off in their father's car. But this time, all of the Lord's strength disappeared, and I wept with all the sadness and loneliness that I had in my heart as a result of our enforced separation. I believe the Lord's allowing me to feel the cost of following Him once again was purposeful, as it was an important balance to the awesome events that were soon to follow.

When I arrived in Rome, I was quickly able to locate a place for us to stay at a convent guest-house not too far from St. Peter's square. Then I returned to the airport to await the arrival of Sid and Betsy. We were each a little in shock at finding ourselves in Rome!

On our first day there, we went to the Vatican to find out how to procure an audience with the Pope. We were informed at once that an audience is held every Wednesday morning, and we were directed to the office to apply for the entrance ticket.

We picked up the tickets on the day of the audience and proceeded to the hall at the Vatican that was built for that purpose. Of course, I had great expectations of seeing the Pope, and so I was a little devastated to discover that 30,000 people accompanied us to the audience hall that day! The hall was so vast and the Pope so far away that it was impossible to even *see* him without standing upon someone else's head! We left feeling discouraged, to put it mildly.

The next day we were able to locate my only friend in Rome, a Believer named Leo whom I had met the previous year at the Dublin conference. Even though I remembered only his first name, we were able to track him down through Vatican radio, where he worked as a reporter. He gave us a marvellous tour of Rome! But his news was none too reassuring when I informed him that I had come to Rome to see the Pope. "You know," he said, "about 800 million Catholics would like to see him as well! But it's next to impossible!" I later wrote a letter to the Pope in care of his personal secretary, but Leo informed me that it was futile, as he receives on an average of 3,000 letters per day, few of which ever reach him personally. And so it seemed that the Lord had brought us all the way to Rome to a door that was completely closed!

To make matters worse, at the end of a week we had almost run out of money. When we prayed about it, we all felt that Sid and Betsy were to return to Jerusalem, but that I was to remain in Rome for an additional two weeks. They then promised to wire me money from Jerusalem to enable me to pay for the additional room and board at the guest house. And so, a few days later, I wished them a sad farewell at the Italian airport. I couldn't quite face

being alone in Rome, which I found to be quite oppressive, so that day I took a train ride to Naples just to get out of the city.

That evening I returned to Rome and attended a meeting of the Catholic Renewal, and was overjoyed to find there some of the people I had met upon addressing the "Leaders' Conference" in Dublin in 1978. (I even discovered that Angela, a friend of mine from Jerusalem, was now living in Rome!) As a result, I was invited to share with the group that night and a number of doors opened for me to speak in various meetings throughout the city. Every once in a while I would mention to someone that the Lord had sent me to Rome to see the Pope. And I would always meet with the same dubious answers. "Well, we've lived here in Rome for some years ourselves, and it hasn't quite worked out for *us* to see him, but we'll pray for you!"

During the days of waiting in Rome, the Lord had some work to do within my own heart. In my own pride and arrogance, I assumed the Lord was sending me to Rome to "tell off" the Pope. But in the days that followed, the Lord made me realize that this particular Pope was not *personally* responsible for centuries of dreadful church history, especially against the Jewish people, and that I had to accept him as a brother and in love. I then read the book, *Man from a Far Country* by Mary Craig, and was especially touched by his work in Poland as the Cardinal of Cracow, by his humility and genuine concern for the Polish people. Just prior to his historic visit to Rome when he was soon to be elected Pope, he left Cracow, saying urgently to his friends, "My friends, pray for me." And later, when learning of his election as Pope, with sadness that he would not be returning to Poland, one of his closest friends commented:

*"It is a heavy and terrifying burden they have placed on his shoulders. It is cold up there on the mountain. With all our hearts we wish him the strength to bear the cold, knowing as we do that he will not only be cold but alone. May God always be near him . . ."*

And the Lord reminded me as well of how He had chosen Pope John XXIII, who had been just a simple peasant, to bring the life of His love to the Catholic Church. And so, through it all, my heart was softening.

The Lord also had me read *The Cost of Discipleship* by Dietrich Bonhoeffer during that time, a tremendously helpful and instructive book, and these passages especially spoke to me in the time and in the situation in which I found myself:

*"When Christ calls a man, He bids him come and die"*

*"We can only achieve perfect liberty and enjoy fellowship with Jesus when His command, His call to absolute discipleship, is appreciated in its entirety. Only the man who follows the command of Jesus single-mindedly, and unresistingly lets His yoke rest upon him, finds His burden easy, and under its gentle pressure receives the power to persevere in the right way . . ."*

*Jesus asks nothing of us without giving us the strength to perform it . . . And if we answer the call to discipleship, where will it lead us? What decisions and partings will it demand? To answer this question we shall have to go to Him, for only He knows the answer. Only Jesus Christ, who bids us follow Him knows the journey's end. But we do know that it will be a road of boundless mercy. Discipleship means joy."*

*"If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself"*

*"To deny oneself is to be aware only of Christ and no more of self, to see only Him who goes before and no more the road which is too hard for us. Once more, all that self-denial can say is: 'He leads the way, keep close to Him'. To endure the cross is not a tragedy; it is the suffering which is the fruit of an exclusive allegiance to Jesus Christ . . .*

*As we embark upon discipleship we surrender ourselves to Christ in union with His death — we give over our lives to death. Thus it begins; the cross is not the terrible end to an otherwise God-fearing and happy life, but it meets us at the beginning of our communion with Christ.*

*Suffering, then, is the badge of discipleship. To bear the cross proves to be the only way of triumphing over suffering . . ."*

Bonhoeffer included the following quote from Luther:

*". . . Discipleship is not limited to what you can comprehend — it must transcend all comprehension. Plunge into the deep water beyond your own comprehension, and I will help you to comprehend even as I do. Bewilderment is the true comprehension. Not to know where you are going is the true knowledge. My comprehension transcends yours. Thus Abraham went forth from his father and not knowing whither he went. He trusted himself to My knowledge, and cared not for his own, and thus he took the right road and came to his journey's end. Behold, that is the way of the cross. You cannot find it yourself, so you must let Me lead you as though you were a blind man. Wherefore it is not you, no man, no living creature, but I myself, who instruct you by My word and Spirit in the way you should go. Not the work which you choose, not the suffering you devise, but the road which is clean contrary to all that you choose or contrive or desire — that is the road you must take. If you do that, there is the acceptable time and there your Master is come."*

And then, when I read the following description of Bonhoeffer, I knew just how far down the road I needed yet to travel:

*"... humble-minded as he was, he saw the truth, and spoke it with complete absence of fear . . ."*

On the last week of my stay in Rome, at the Lord's direction, I proceeded to the office of the American Bishop to Rome, to apply for a ticket to the front section of the audience hall for the next Wednesday morning's papal audience. I had a nice talk with him, and returned the next morning to learn that my application had been approved and the ticket was waiting for me.

I was scheduled to leave Rome on the 6th of December, but on the morning of the fifth, one month to the day when the Lord had instructed me to go to Rome, He awakened me with the instruction to write a letter directly to the Pope, that it was to be written *directly* to him, and not to the English department nor to the Polish department nor to his personal secretary, which were some of the usual channels. It seemed impossible that he would ever receive it, but I obeyed the Lord, asking permission to use the convent's typewriter. In the final paragraph I said to him:

*"Traditionally there has been tension between Israel and the Vatican, but there must be a common bond of understanding in our love for Jesus which transforms religious differences into a union of love in Jesus' name."*

The purpose of the letter was primarily to encourage him, as the spiritual head of 800 million Catholics, to receive on behalf of the Catholic church the blessing that comes with standing with Israel. For surely a blessing *would* come if the Vatican were to recognize the right given by God of the Jewish people to possess the land of their forefathers!

I dutifully completed the letter and placed it in my handbag, and then took a walk to the bank. But as I neared the bank (which it turns out was on strike that day), the Lord firmly propelled me to the audience hall again!

When I arrived, with my ticket from the Bishop's office, I was directed to the front entrance to the hall, and the Lord then guided me to a seat that was still miraculously empty in the very front row of the enormous hall. But the seat was way over on the right hand side, and the Pope always walks down the centre aisle; and so it still seemed impossible to see him, as there were walls which prevented people from going to him! But I sensed clearly from the Lord simply to stay where I was.

As it was still early, I left my coat on my seat, asking the people on either side of me to reserve the seat for me, and I walked back outside and around the front of the building to the public toilets. While there I knelt on the floor, and cried out to the Lord from the bottom of my heart, "Oh, Father, I beg of You, please don't let me spoil Your plans! Please, *please* keep me faithful to Your purposes!"

By the time I had reached the forward entrance again, I found the doors to be tightly shut, and an Italian guard was gesticulating wildly for me to proceed to the rear of the building. And so I gesticulated wildly back, flashing my entrance ticket and trying to explain to him that both my seat and my coat were inside! And finally, he opened the door and let me back in, which I know had to be the Father's hand.

That morning the Pope gave a message in five languages, sharing about his trip to Turkey, and mentioning how he had spoken to the Jewish leaders while there. (The Lord kept assuring me that he did have a special burden for the Jewish people!)

After the Pope had completed his message, he spent a few minutes speaking with the Cardinals who had been sitting on the platform with him. He then left the platform and walked over to pray for a small group of crippled and retarded children who were sitting in a special section in the front over to my right. And then, some minutes later, the Pope came over and was standing right in front of me!

I told him at once that I was a Jewish Believer in Jesus from Jerusalem. He immediately took my hand in his and said warmly, "May the Lord bless you and bless your people Israel!" We spoke together for some minutes, and I tried to tell him of the importance of the Catholic Church's recognition of Israel and of their special responsibility to stand in love with the Jewish people. At the end he placed his hands upon my head and prayed for me and for Israel, and just before he walked away he noticed the letter in my hand! I had been holding it all the while, but had been too astonished to remember it at all! But finally he said, "Is that a letter for me?"

"Yes," I answered.

And so he took it, promising me that he would read it.

When he walked away I began to cry, knowing that God alone had just made the impossible happen. I had actually met the Pope!

As soon as I left the audience hall I dashed to the telegraph office to place a collect call to Sid and Betsy in Jerusalem. As soon as I heard their voices on the other end of the line, I screamed, "I saw him! I saw him! I saw him!" And again, I couldn't help but cry. I couldn't wait to return home to Jerusalem the next day to tell them the whole story! I was so surprised and amazed! (I was so surprised and amazed that the Lord finally said to me, with a hint of annoyance in His voice, "Why were you so surprised? I *sent* you to Rome to see the Pope!")

I was supposed to meet Leo at 6:00 p.m. for a cup of coffee before the Catholic Charismatic meeting that evening. When I arrived he said to me a bit patronizingly, "So, Esther, and how are your plans coming for seeing the Pope?"

I looked at him and grinned, and said casually, "Well, as a matter of fact, I met with him this afternoon!" Oh, was it fun to see the look of amazement on his face! (When I told him the full story, he explained to me that when the Pope had placed his hands upon my head and prayed, that he had given me the Papal blessing, which was an honour to receive!)

I shared the news with one of the leaders of the prayer group whom I had met in Dublin, and he said, "Please, tell the story to the group tonight! I know it will be a tremendous encouragement to them all! Living here in Rome, we know just how impossible it is to see the Pope!" And so I told the story, even though it was a communion service and therefore not usually open for sharing. And all there were encouraged!

In all the excitement, I had forgotten until that night that the money that Sid and Betsy had wired me had not as yet arrived, as the banks had subsequently gone on strike. And so I still did not have enough money to cover the cost of my room and board! But my heart was too filled with amazement and joy to let it worry me, and I dropped off to sleep.

The next morning, I was to meet Angela in the city for breakfast, as my plane did not leave for Israel until late in the afternoon. It had been such a blessing to see her again in Rome, and we had a great chat together. And of course, she was also amazed by the story of my visit to the Pope! And then, just before we parted, she slipped an envelope into my hand. "Here," she said, "the Lord told me to give this to you!" And inside was a gift of \$200.00, just the amount I needed to pay for the three weeks' stay at the convent guest house!

I returned to my room and packed, and then met another friend, Fr. Celestine, at the railway station. He was a priest from the United States and had been so kind to me during my time in Rome. I had met him in quite an astonishing way! On the first night I had attended a meeting of the Catholic Renewal, I had no idea exactly where the church was located. I saw a man standing in a little book shop on a busy street, and the Lord said, "Go ahead and ask him for directions." So I said, "I'm sorry to bother you, sir, but do you happen to know where St. Sylvester's might be?"

He looked startled, but not only did he speak English, he replied, "Well, come along, as I happen to be going there myself!"

On my last day in Rome we had a cup of coffee together before he helped me on to the airport bus, and then he paid for my bus ticket! And it wasn't until that moment that I realized that I had not enough money for the bus! But the Lord takes care of all things, if only we let Him.

As soon as the plane took off, I settled back against the seat, feeling tired and grateful that the seat next to me was vacant. I was really looking forward to the three hours of rest that this plane trip would give me, after such full and emotion-packed days! But then I overheard the man sitting behind me mention to his travelling companion, "I happen to be Roman Catholic myself!" And at once, the Lord said to me, "I want you to share with him!"

My immediate reaction was rebellion. "After all I've done for You, how can You ask even more of me? I'm tired, and I don't feel like talking to anyone! I deserve a rest, and I'm going to take it!" (Sounds terrible, doesn't it? But oh, how often we do it!) I had forgotten by then, of course, that I hadn't done a thing, except to stand in one place while the Lord brought the Pope to me!

A few minutes later the Lord played back to me all of my comments — with the whines included — and I could hear just how selfish and childish I sounded. "Oh, Lord, I'm sorry," I giggled, and I turned around to the unsuspecting man sitting behind me. I knew the Lord

wanted me to talk with him about Jesus, so I got right to the point, as I have never been very comfortable with small-talk.

"Hi," I said to him, and then I grinned. "If I told you that I was a Jewish woman who believed in Jesus from Jerusalem who had just been to see the Pope, what would you say?"

"Wow!" was his reply, and then he moved up to fill the vacant seat next to mine. "That sounds *very* interesting. Please tell me about it!"

And so I shared with him for the next two hours, first of how Jesus had touched and changed my life, then some of the lessons He had taught me, and finally the story of my visit with the Pope. And in the end I said to him, "I'm sure that Jesus purposefully had me here today, at this very time and in this very place, and do you want to know why? Because He loves *you*, and He wants you to know it!"

He then explained to me that his wife had recently also had an experience of Jesus' love, had joined a prayer group in the Catholic Renewal, and had been praying for him. "And tonight, I promise you when I have some time to myself, that I'll put my life in Jesus' hands as well."

When he returned to his seat once again, I could do nothing but offer praises in my heart to the Lord for touching and opening that man's heart and life to His love. And I thanked Him, with all my heart, for overruling my own self-centeredness and for making me willing to again be the vessel of that love! Oh . . . to be rid of this rotten flesh at last!

If nothing else had happened, it would have been special enough just to see the evidence of the Lord's love for that man. But it just so happens that the Lord had a much greater door waiting to open, depending only on that one tiny step of obedience! One circumstance then led to another, with a more amazing result than anything I could have ever imagined! And it subsequently became the deepest lesson I have ever received that we have no right to question His authority upon our lives nor to say "no" to the promptings of His love within our hearts. (I had met many Christians who took very lightly their relationship with the Lord, having no idea that by allowing themselves to always be talked out of obedience, they were also talking themselves out of heaven!)

And so this is what transpired. When the man I had witnessed to returned to his seat, he mentioned to the man he was travelling with, "That woman lives in Jerusalem, and has the most interesting story to tell!"

It just so happens that sitting behind *him* was a real Believer who was planning to join up with a Christian tour group in Jerusalem, and she had been praying, "Oh, Lord, find me a 'guardian angel' to help me to get to Jerusalem!" When she later overheard the man in front of her mention that the woman sitting in front of *him* was from Jerusalem, she stopped me as we were getting off the plane. "Do you mind if I travel with you to Jerusalem?" she asked. And of course, I welcomed her to join me.

After gathering our luggage, we walked outside of the terminal and were greeted by Sid and Betsy. The four of us shared a sherut back to Jerusalem, and all the way there I gave them the details of my meeting with the Pope. When we reached Patti's hotel in the city, she said to me, "Esther, I'm here to join a Christian tour, and we would love to have you come and speak to our group tomorrow night. Would you be able to do it?" My natural reaction would be to decline, as it was to be my first Shabbat back in Israel! But *very* firmly, the Lord said, "Tell her you'll go!" And so we made arrangements to meet at the hotel the following evening.

Oh, how close I came, how *really* close, to missing the Lord's greater purposes!

The next evening, Sid and Betsy and I travelled to the hotel to meet the tour, which was hosted by a Christian brother from Washington D.C. by the name of Dr. Clifton Robinson. He had been a missionary in India for many years, and at once I could appreciate the Lord's deep calling on his life and his humility before God.

I shared my testimony that night, and then, just privately over dinner, I felt from the Lord to share with Dr. Robinson about my meeting with the Pope. When I had finished, he said to me, "You know, I have a very strong feeling from the Lord that He wants you to attend the Presidential Prayer Breakfast in Washington in February 1980. Would you be available if the Lord works it out?" I had no idea in the world what he was talking about, but again the Lord said to me, "*Tell him you'll go!*"

And so I replied, "Yes, I'll be happy to attend if it all works out! Thank you so much!" And I gave him my address and the telephone number. He promised to keep me informed, and we then bid the tour and Patti and Dr. Robinson "Shabbat shalom" and returned to Ramot.

Later that night I said to Sid and Betsy, when I remembered it, "What was he talking about, anyway? The president of *what?*"

Sid replied, "Well, I must say I wondered how you had managed to give him such a casual reply! I never dreamed you didn't have a clue as to what he was talking about!" And they both laughed. They went on to explain to me that the Presidential Prayer Breakfast was held at the opening of Congress every year in Washington D.C., and was traditionally attended by the President of the United States and politicians from many nations who gathered together for a time of prayer.

I nearly fainted! The thought of clutzy me attending days of formal meetings in Washington with politicians was unthinkable! This was happening just the day after I had returned from Rome after having seen the Pope! I hoped with all my heart that it was just a test, that the Lord simply wanted to know if I was *willing* to attend the meetings but that I wouldn't really have to go! And so when I prayed that night, I said to Him, "Oh Lord, this is just a test, right? You just want to see if I'd be willing to go, right? But I don't really have to do it, do I?" But His answer to me didn't exactly leave me feeling reassured. He simply said, "*If this is My will, I will fulfill it!*"

The next day when a friend came to visit, she threw a bag at me, saying, "This is my very favourite dress, and I didn't really want to give it to you, but the Lord told me to, so here it is!" When I opened the bag, inside I saw the loveliest white dress, and with a sinking heart, I knew that *if I* attended the Presidential Prayer Breakfast, that dress would be the perfect thing to wear!

"Oh, no!" I screamed. "What if I really have to go to this breakfast? How ever will I do it? I'm sure I'll end up knocking over a table or spilling the water or something even more dreadful than that! He can't send me, He just can't!"

Later when I tried on the white dress (it fit perfectly) everyone then made me eat spaghetti-with-tomato-sauce while wearing it just to practice, as they decided if I could manage to eat spaghetti in a white dress, I'd survive anything! We all had a good laugh, but I had a dreadful feeling that I might soon be thankful to my mother for every lesson in etiquette that she ever gave me.

At that time I had been reading Charles Colson's book, *Born Again*, and every so often I had commented to Sid and Betsy, "I don't know why, but the Lord keeps making this book seem so *familiar*. It's the strangest feeling!" Perhaps it was because he was speaking about all of the people that I might soon be meeting.

Three days later we received a telephone call from Dr. Robinson. One of the tour members had fallen and broken her hip and would need to remain in Hadassah Hospital for at least two weeks. Her husband wished to remain in Israel to keep her company. And so he asked, "Do you know of any place where he could stay for this time that you could recommend to us?"

I thought about it for half a second, and then replied, "Well, why not welcome him to stay with us?" as I knew that it would be a simple matter for me to move out of my bedroom

to sleep on a mattress on the living room floor for the two weeks' time. Dr. Robinson was very grateful, and that afternoon Rufus Yoder came to stay with us. We often went together to visit his wife Berla at Hadassah Hospital. She was one of the most cheerful patients I had ever seen!

As this put us in contact once again with Dr. Robinson, I said to him, "You know, when you mentioned the Presidential Prayer Breakfast to me that evening in the hotel, I had no idea in the world what you were talking about! But I'm terrified at the prospect of going!"

"Well," he answered, "it actually seems impossible for you to obtain an invitation. They have already been given out, and it is done so carefully that they only invite those people who they know in advance will be able to attend. And in addition, you have to be known in some way to the core group in Washington! So I don't see how an invitation will ever be forthcoming! But I feel this very strongly from the Lord, and so we will see what we will see!" He promised to keep me informed as to how things were developing.

Some days after he had returned to the States, I wrote him a letter as to Berla's progress, and then I closed by saying, "As to the Prayer Breakfast, there seems no possibility of making it this time!" But perhaps that was just wishful thinking on my part.

One morning, I went with Peter to pay a visit to Uri again. While we were sitting in his office having a pleasant talk, the Lord said, "I want you to tell him about your visit to Rome!"

"But Lord, he's going to think I'm crazy!"

"Tell him," the Lord replied.

So I cleared my throat, shrugged my shoulders, and said, "Uri, guess what? I've just been to Rome to see the Pope!" It sounded ridiculous even to me! But he, in fact, didn't seem surprised at all! He brightened up at once and replied, "That's great! And when you saw him, did you tell him that your lawyer's name was Huppert?"

Peter and I exchanged glances. It sounded like he was crazy!

"What?" I asked dumbly.

"When you saw the Pope, did you tell him my name?" Uri repeated.

"Well, I don't know exactly how I could have worked *that* into the conversation — 'By the way, my lawyer's name is Huppert!' What ever made you ask that?" He laughed at the incredulous look on both our faces.

"Do you remember how I told you that I grew up in Poland?" I nodded. "Well, it just so happens that my family and the Pope's family grew up together! And, as a matter of fact, my cousin is one of his closest friends. They see each other every few days in Rome even now!"

"You're kidding!" we both exclaimed. "Wow!" "That's fantastic!"

He went on to tell us that the Pope had known from God while still a Cardinal in Cracow that he was soon to be elected Pope, and had told Uri's family about this sense that he had. And so when the new Pope had been elected, Uri and all his family expected their old friend to be chosen! When someone else was henceforth elected instead, they were all greatly surprised. But then that Pope died a month later, and his cousin's friend was elected to take his place! How astonishing that Uri had known that he was going to be elected Pope before most of the world had known it!

"When in Poland, he worked for the anti-Nazi underground and helped to save many Jewish lives," Uri went on to tell us. (And so that explained the Lord's special love for him!) "And when he was elected Pope, the first audience he gave to anyone in the world was to my cousin and his family, in honour of their friendship throughout the years!" And he later showed us a picture of his cousin with Pope John Paul II.

I looked at him in utter amazement, and I said slowly, "Do you mean to tell me that the Lord sent me all the way to Rome — just to meet your cousin's best friend?" What an astonishing bit of news we received that day!

I later read a *Reader's Digest* article called "Nine Days that Moved the World", describing John Paul's historic visit to Poland; and it also confirmed his special love for the Jewish people:

*"On the day of his homecoming, John Paul II made the first pilgrimage of any Pope to the Nazi death factories. It was a sorrowful journey to the grimmest spot on earth.*

*The most moving moment was the Mass in the death-haunted railyards of Birkenau, concelebrated with priests who had been prisoners in the concentration camps. It was here that four million people were herded from the cattle cars to the gas chambers. Here one million people, singing sad hymns, formed the Pope's congregation...*

*"It is impossible merely to visit (Auschwitz)," said the Pope, who was involved in the anti-Nazi underground and aided Jewish refugees. "It is necessary to think with fear of how far hatred can go, how far man's destruction of man can go, how far cruelty can go . . ."*

But the Lord's surprises were not over as yet. A few days later I went to my mail box on an ordinary morning, and when I began to leaf through the letters, one caught my eye and left me powerless to do anything but to stare at it for at least ten minutes, not knowing what to do with it at all! It was a letter clearly addressed to me *in my own handwriting* and I simply didn't remember ever having seen it before in all my life! I stood staring at it, trying in some way to dredge up a memory of where it could possibly have come from, but I could find no explanation for it at all! I was actually afraid to open it! What in the world could be inside? Think how you would feel if one day you received a letter from yourself that you could not remember ever having seen before?

Finally I sat down on a bench in the court yard next to the entrance to my apartment building, and gingerly opened it. And inside was the greatest surprise of all!

As it turns out, the letter had been sent to me by one of the Sisters of Zion whom I had met during my visit to Rome. She had asked for my address following my last meeting, and had handed me a slip of paper to write the address on. The "slip of paper" had actually been an envelope, which explained how a letter arrived addressed in my own handwriting to myself! This is what she wrote:

*Dear Esther,*

*A few days after your departure from Rome I happened to pass Felici's — the official Vatican photographer. There was the picture of you speaking to the Holy Father. Here are the two I ordered for you and if you would like to have other copies or larger ones please let me know.*

*So I am glad I asked you for your address at the prayer meeting Thursday night at St. Sylvester. The witness you gave at the Sunday and Thursday meetings was a great inspiration of faith to many and no doubt you gave courage and hope to the young people as well as others who heard you.*

*May you continue on the journey praising and loving the Lord Jesus. May He always give you the strength to proclaim His love for you.*

*Sincerely,*

*Sr. Evaleen*

And inside, with her letter, were the pictures of my meeting with the Pope. I was so



Betsy and I at St. Peter's Square, Vatican City, Rome

At the first Audience we attended, the Pope was very far away!



5 December, 1979, Rome

astonished and amazed all I could do was weep!

When I had actually seen the Pope, I had later thought to myself, "There were no *witnesses* that I actually saw him. Who in the world is going to believe me? Anyone can say they'd been to Rome and seen the Pope!" But the Lord, in His infinite wisdom had it already all worked out. One of the very few people in the whole city of Rome who had my address happened to find the picture of my meeting with the Pope! And that there was even a picture to find was too much of a miracle for my head to comprehend! Oh, the enormity of the Father's grace and wisdom, and the delights of His humour, too! For surely that letter caught my attention like no other I had ever received before!

On the Saturday before Christmas, I received a telephone call. "Shalom, Esther, this is Russell Moore speaking. Do you remember me?" And of course, I did. He had been part of the Bible study and witnessing team that I had joined upon my return to Israel in 1977. I had not heard from him since that time, but I was overjoyed to find that he was now in Israel!

"How long will you be here? And when can you come for a visit?" I asked him.

"I'm travelling with a friend of mine from my Bible College in Alabama, his name's Harold. We're in Nahariya now, but we'll be coming to Jerusalem on the 22nd of December, and so we'll come to see you then! But some things have happened to me since the last time I saw you, and I think I'd better tell you about them!"

He then went on to tell me that a year earlier he began to have pain in his right leg. A malignant tumour had been discovered, which eventually caused him such pain that he had the leg amputated.

"I was planning to come to Israel in the fall, when they discovered that the cancer had spread to my lungs. And so I knew I wanted to come here one more time before I went home to be with the Lord!"

I was deeply moved by what he said. Russell and Harold arrived a week later, and when Russell walked in the door tears filled my eyes. He had lost much weight and walked with a cane due to his false leg. All of his hair had fallen out due to the chemotherapy, and his skin was a sickly grey colour. And to complicate matters, he had great difficulty in breathing due to the tumours on his lungs. But the tears were not for any of those reasons, but rather because I had never felt the love of Jesus through any other person in all my life as I did through Russell when he walked through the door that afternoon!

Our visit together was a memorable time, and when he and Harold left some time later, Sid and Betsy and I could do nothing but sit down and reflect on what had happened, as it had been an experience too deep for words. It was as though Russell's entrance into our lives had whisked away all the props that we had been leaning on. Because the secret of Russell was that he knew that he had very little time left, and therefore *that there was nothing more important in all the world than to share the love of Jesus in the little time that he did still have*. When he walked out of our home, we realized that the time is short for us as well. And everything else apart from sharing Jesus' love that we had felt to be so important was shown for just what it was — *nothing*.

"Oh Lord," I cried to Him in my heart. "Help me not any longer to be distracted from the real task at hand! For what can be more important for *any* of us than to share Your love? What else will really matter when we stand before You one day, than what we've done out of love for You in obedience to the promptings of Your love for others within our hearts?"

The next morning, just after breakfast, the Lord gave me a rather startling instruction. "I want you to call Mr. Kadishai in the Prime Minister's office and make an appointment for him to meet Russell." I don't know why, but it was a very difficult thing for me to do! But finally I took myself firmly in hand and simply put the call through. And dear Mr. Kadishai came to the phone at once.

"Eileen, how've you been? Why didn't I hear from you until now?" He's such a treasure!

I returned greetings to him, and then said, praying with all my might, "Mr. Kadishai, do you remember the talk we had when I told you the difference between so-called Christians who have persecuted our people and those that truly *belong* to Jesus and therefore share His love for the nation of Israel and for the Jewish people?"

"Yes, surely I remember it," he told me.

"Well, yesterday a young man came to visit me from the States, a *true* Believer in Jesus. He's only twenty-three years old, and he's dying of cancer. And he loves Israel so much that he wanted to come here one more time before he died!" And then in obedience to the Lord, I continued, "Would it be possible for him to meet you, to just have an opportunity to express that love?"

Dear Mr. Kadishai welcomed him at once. "Of course! Bring him today if you would like!"

"I haven't spoken to Russell about this as yet, so I don't think we could manage it for today. But would it be possible to come sometime tomorrow? And would it be alright if he brings a friend with him?" And so we arranged for the three of us to meet him at his office at 12:00 noon on 24 December, 1979, just before Christmas Eve.

When I called Russell and Harold to tell them the news, they were both amazed and very blessed, and the next morning the three of us proceeded to the office of the Prime Minister. Mr. Kadishai had left our names at the reception desk, and so we were ushered right into the inner offices without even a need for a security check!

As soon as Mr. Kadishai and Russell spotted one another, a bond was established at once, and they sat down and shared together for the next hour and one half! I know that the Lord granted Harold and me a special privilege that day, just to be there to see the Lord's love reaching out through dear Russell in such a precious way.

The next day, we had a Christmas dinner at home for a number of local friends, and of course Russell and Harold had been invited to join us. And then, after dinner, they both left us with a Christmas message never to be forgotten by a single one of us. And so I'll let Russell and Harold speak for themselves, as their testimonies also give the details of our visit to the Prime Minister's office. Because Russell had such a difficulty in breathing, the little that he told us was truly a gift of love, for it took much effort for him to speak to us. It was *truly* an afternoon never to be forgotten, speaking in such a clear way the true essence of Christmas.

Russell Moore  
Christmas Day 1979  
Jerusalem, Israel

About two years ago I had the privilege of coming to Israel with a group of students, among whom was Esther Dorflinger. We spent three weeks in Jerusalem studying and then the next three weeks we went out to share in parks and shopping centres all over Israel. I never will forget that summer and God's work in the hearts of people. Ever since that time I've had a real desire to work with Jewish people and to be a blessing to Israel. So at the end of 1977, I started making plans to go back to Israel in 1978 to work on a kibbutz that a friend of mine had gone to.

I was in Bible School, and at the end of the semester, in May, I began to have a little pain in my leg. I went to the Doctor, and he thought it was simply a calcium deposit and gave me a prescription to help with it. I took the medication for a few months and meanwhile continued to plan for my trip to Israel. The Lord was bringing in the money and everything! And all the time I prayed for God to heal my knee. I realized that God was the only one who



Russell Moore and Mr. Kadaishai reading the Holy Scriptures.  
Office of the Prime Minister, Jerusalem 24 December, 1979



*Notice the picture of the "Love Scroll" on the wall in Mr. Kadishai's office.*



*Mr. Kadishai, Russell and Harold.*



*Russell and I. It was such a blessed day!*

can heal anybody. No medicine or anyone can heal. Health is from God.

July 17th came, and I had hoped to go stand-by to London and then stand-by from London to Israel. Well, the flight was full and so that day I went to the doctor. He x-rayed my leg, and he said, "Russell, it looks like there's something wrong with the bone. We need to put you in the hospital." So I said, "Praise the Lord!"

So I went into the hospital. That Friday they did a bone scan, and on Saturday they read it and said it looked like a malignant tumour, at the head of the fibula, and they wanted to take it out. That Monday, a week from when I had been supposed to leave for Israel, they removed it. They found out it was osteogenic sarcoma, which is cancer of the bone. They sent me to a hospital in Maryland for testing. They couldn't find cancer anywhere else, but they wanted to amputate my leg. I said, "No way!" I didn't want my leg amputated! So they treated me with Leatril from August of 1978 until January of 1979.

The first of this year I started having pain in my leg again and it got to be kind of bad and there was a little bit of swelling. I went to the doctor again, the one who had done the surgery. He x-rayed it and said, "Well, Russ, it looks like it's returned." A Christian friend of ours, a doctor, told us of two places where we ought to go, and I chose seeing a doctor in San Diego. After treating me for a while she recommended me to a man who treated osteogenic sarcoma quite a bit and was doing a study on it in Houston. I was in Houston from March of 1979 until July of 1979, and all this time the Christian doctor had thousands of people praying for me.

They were doing the best they could to save my leg. Finally it just got to the point that the tumour was growing so rapidly on my leg that it was just incredible how swollen my knee was. So finally, about the 1st of July, we decided we were going to have to do something because my body was becoming resistant to the medicine. It was breaking the tumour down but it wasn't doing it fast enough. It was growing too fast and it could have spread somewhere else in my body, and so we made the decision to amputate my leg. So on July 16th I had the amputation.

If you can ever imagine someone praising God for that, I did, because I had lived with such pain for months! Before the amputation, all I could do was just sit on a couch with my leg up on a pillow, and a lot of days I thought, "God, why don't You just kill me," because the pain was so great. I kept a little pad with me all the time telling me what time I last took the pill for pain. And I would sleep an hour or so at night, and then wake up, and perhaps sleep another hour. This went on the whole time I was in Houston, so when I lost my leg, *finally there was no more pain.*

There's a Scripture that I wanted to share with you. It's Psalm 90 and it says:

*"Return, O Lord, how long? And let it repent Thee concerning Thy servants. Make us glad according to the days wherein Thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil."*

Psalm 90:13, 15

And you know, I saw God fulfill that verse, from the day that I lost my leg. I claim that verse, and I also claim that verse in Job where it says, "God blessed the latter end of Job's trial more than the first." God just really fulfilled it. I have to say that the last few months, since July, have been the happiest days of my life.

But I had some more things happen. In October I went for an x-ray. I was supposed to have an annual x-ray anyway. With this type of cancer, often it spreads to the lungs. So I had an x-ray, and the x-ray looked pretty good. I had another x-ray two weeks later, because I was still having chest pains and things, and in two week's time tumours *had quadrupled in*

*my lungs*. The doctors told me around the first of November that if it didn't stop in two weeks that I wouldn't have any more lungs left. All the doctors could do was to give me chemotherapy, which I was very much opposed to. But I allowed it, and I've had two treatments now, and miraculously God has helped! Two of the tumours shrank, and there was a blocked airway, and it's not blocked any more. At one time I had to go to the hospital at 1:00 in the morning. After I had spoken that night about Jesus and given my testimony, my lung filled up with fluid, and now it no longer does that. They had taken the fluid out and put some stuff in called tetracycline. But I give God all the glory. He's in medicine. God uses medicine. But if He doesn't make it work, it doesn't work!

All this time I kept thinking, "I might go soon to be with the Lord. Boy, if the Lord's going to take me home, I want to go to Israel first. I want to go to Israel around Christmas time." So I started talking about it and kicking around the idea.

I was in the hospital for three weeks, and about two weeks ago, on Monday, I was still weak from the chemotherapy, but I was still hoping to go to Israel maybe the next Friday. I talked to Christian friends and they didn't think I should go. The next day the doctor came in and said, "Russell, when do you want to get out?" Even though I was still weak and stuff and my blood count was a little low, he said, "It looks like you can go home." So on Thursday they let me out of the hospital.

I began to phone at once to see if I could make reservations to come to Israel. Would you believe that I booked a flight for the next Sunday? The next day my doctors both agreed to allow me to go, as long as from Tuesday until that Sunday I would take it easy and recuperate! You wouldn't believe that Tuesday I was so sick and weak that I couldn't eat any food, and God just miraculously helped! I had a couple of uncles who came to see me, and they were so jolly and everything, and my appetite came back, and God just so gloriously arranged this whole trip!

I just want to close with another interesting thing that God allowed yesterday. Esther was talking to the Prime Minister's top aide about me, Mr. Kadishai, about the fact that I could possibly have terminal cancer but wanted to come to Israel anyway. And so he wanted to see me, and so we went to see him yesterday.

We spent about an hour and a half with him. Mr. Kadishai and I talked about the Bible. I shared with him something I had prepared as an introduction to Romans 10 about how special Israel is to God, all the covenants that God had made with Israel, and then about the fact that Jesus confined His earthly ministry to the Jewish people. I then shared how it says that the Jews will remain in unbelief until all the elect Gentiles were added in. And so he read that, and we had a great time together.

We laughed and talked and even read together the Scriptures in Hebrew. He tried to give us everything. He gave me a book called *White Nights* that Mr. Begin had written about his time in prison in Russia. And then he said, "I want Mr. Begin to autograph this for you." So he went in and he had Mr. Begin sign it.

Finally we were getting ready to leave. We had taken up well over an hour of his time. He never told us to leave or anything, but we just realized that he was a busy man. He gave Harold a book also and autographed it. He kept the little study I had made up, and I told him, "I want you to read Romans 10, and if you do this study will give you a good understanding of it."

As we were leaving he walked across the room into another office, and when he came back *he had Mr. Begin with him*. And so we walked over and Mr. Begin shook our hands. He told Harold, "God bless you, young man!" And he told me, "God be with you, my son." That happened just yesterday! And we also met Dr. Ben-Elissar, who is now the Ambassador to Egypt, when he came in for a minute. It was just amazing how God worked everything out like that!

Harold  
Christmas Day  
Jerusalem, Israel

I'll tell you some of my testimony, and how I met Russell, and why I'm here with him. I'll have to tell you a little bit about my background in order for you to understand that. I want to thank you for sharing your home and your time with Russell and me. It's a special day, and it's *really* a special day to me, because it's only the second Christmas I've had in the last eleven years as a free man. I spent over nine years in prison. And of course Christmas time in prison is not a happy time because most of the guards are off being with their families and they lock you in your cells. You're just given a meal and that's about it. I used to hate Christmas, and I used to say, "Any day but Christmas . . .!" It's kind of funny that now it's so special. I've really enjoyed the last two. And I wanted to be with my mother today, but I thought that being with Russell was far more important, and she agreed.

I guess in my life I've had just about any opportunity anyone could have had. In high school I was an all-state athlete and had scholarships to 150 colleges, and I married a Christian girl that I had gone to high school with. Of course, I wasn't a Christian, and I resented that in her and everything she stood for. I was in my senior year of college in North Carolina when we separated and divorced. Later I started hanging around night clubs drinking, and it wasn't long before hanging around that type of setting that I met two men. We were in Atlanta, Georgia, one night, and they were on drugs, one was heavily on drugs, and we were drinking. I was a block and a half away and they went into a place to rob it. An innocent bystander tried to kill one of them and they killed him, but they didn't know it. They knew they had shot him, but they didn't know he had died. They came back to my car, and they said, "Drive! Drive! We shot a man!" We went from there to Greensboro, North Carolina, where we were living. It was 350 miles away.

The next time I saw these men it was a year later, and they took the witness stand against me. We'd been charged with armed robbery and murder. They were given three years, and I was given a life sentence. They put me in a small cell, 8 ft. by 10 ft. I can't tell you how much I've enjoyed this meal today, because you don't really know what it means to have a meal and sit with people until you're put in a small 8 by 10 ft. cell for two years with no window. Every Friday at 1:00 p.m. they'd allow me to come out and take a shower and go right back to the cell.

Then later I lost my last appeal and went to Georgia State Penitentiary. For the first five years I was so ashamed of where I was that I didn't let my family know that I was there. They had been unable to find me for five years, so naturally I never received a letter nor wrote one during that time.

I got in trouble one day and they put me on death row, where they house the inmates who are waiting to be electrocuted. And they told me, "As long as you're in prison, you're going to stay on death row!"

I was there about four months, and I said, "Well, this is it. There's no reason to live." Of course, I didn't believe in Jesus Christ. I didn't believe He existed. I can remember a guy coming to the cell at death row to tell me about Jesus. And I said, "Just a minute," and I reached in. *he commode and took cups of water* to and threw them in his *face*. *is\_ face\_ 13 s\_ how* violent I'd become. Finally I decided to take my own life, and I tried to get poison from the guy that fed me, another inmate. And one day he told me, "I can't get it." So there I was, and I said, "So what am I going to do now?"

I remember so well lying in that bed day after day after day, never coming out of the cell. And there was a word that was scratched in the wall. It was on a metal wall, and it was very crudely done, and the word was "help". It was as if you had a pin and tried to scratch the

word "help" in a metal wall. It would be very hard to do. As I lay there I looked at that word, and I could picture a man standing on that bed and writing it just before they put him in the electric chair, which sat right in front of our cells. And I could just picture someone doing that in a plea for help. And one night, I'll never forget it, I got on my knees for the first time in my life. Now I didn't believe in God, and the prayer that I prayed that night, I wasn't asking, I was challenging God. "If you are real, if you are God, take my life now or free me, because I can't take it any longer."

I didn't expect anything to happen. I was in desperation and I prayed. But two weeks later they apologized to me. The warden said, "There's been a mistake, you never should have been put on death row. We're going to make you a state trustee." Becoming a state trustee is like all of a sudden being made governor of a state to a man in prison. And I was allowed to leave death row and go to the trustee building. I was allowed to do work around the institution, drive trucks and things like that, and I thought, "Well, I'll escape!"

I'd been there just a few days, and they said, "You have a visitor." And I said, "I don't want to see anyone." You see, no one knew where I was, and so I thought it was some guard coming to harass me or something. But they made me go. And as I turned the corner, there stood my brother! He's a year and eight months older than I am. A neighbour had seen my picture in a detective magazine, because it was a capital case, and that's how he found me after five years.

Before he left that day he told me about a friend of mine, a high school teammate of mine, who had been a war hero in Vietnam. He had lived next door to me all my life, and I didn't even know he had gone to Vietnam! He'd lost an arm, an eye, two-thirds of his face had been blown away, his nose, his mouth, his teeth. Both legs had been blown up. I hadn't known it! My brother was sharing this with me, and before he left, he said, "Harold, he's a preacher now. He's preaching the gospel all over the world, and he wants to see you."

I didn't want to see anyone. I was so ashamed for anyone to see me in prison clothes. But he did come to see me. And the day he walked through those prison doors I'll never forget as long as I live. He had on a Marine uniform, a patch over his left eye, his left arm was missing; but under his right arm he had a Bible. He had had 25 plastic surgery operations to build back just his face alone. I walked up to him and I didn't know who he was. It's like you grow up with someone all your life, and all of a sudden you look at him and say, "Well, who is this?" But he was smiling. And he knelt in front of everybody in that prison, and he prayed with me. He looked at me and he said, "Harold, how are you fixed with God?"

I was ashamed to tell him that I didn't know God. Every day I said that God didn't exist. There can't be a God. This is hell. They threaten me with hell, yet this is it. But yet I couldn't tell him that.

He gave me that Bible. He spent the day with me, and that evening as he started to leave, I'll never forget what he did. His right hand had also been injured, and it was sort of crippled. And he took a pen, and he scratched down four verses of Scripture: I John 1:9; I Peter 2:24; Romans 6:23; and Rev. 3:20. He handed the paper to me and he gave me a cassette of his testimony telling how he was wounded in Vietnam and how he had found Christ. He said, "Will you promise me that you'll listen to this tape and read these verses?" I said, "I promise you I will." And there I stood with a Bible in my hand and everyone looking at me. But I was too ashamed to say no to him.

He walked to the door, and the guard was holding the door opened. He stopped and he turned and he looked at me and he said, "Harold, I love you. And God loves you, and He's going to help you." That day was the first day in five years anyone had said, "I love you." I hadn't heard those words in five years! After going to my cell and being locked up, I played that cassette several times and opened the Bible for the first time in my life and read those verses. I did this several times, and it was about 3:00 in the morning when I got on my knees

and prayed and asked Christ to come into my life.

You know, it's not easy being a Christian in prison. I had a life sentence, and I was reminded each day that I'd be there for the rest of my life. I started a Bible study. The most frightening thing is to start a Bible study and to have someone come up to you and to say, "Would you pray with me to receive Christ?" I didn't know how to pray. I had used the Lieutenant's cassette that night to play to some of the inmates and one of them said, "Please pray with me." And I tell you, that's the most joyous thing in the entire world, to be a part of leading someone else into a personal relationship to Jesus Christ. I didn't know how to walk the Christian life. I didn't have anyone to have fellowship with, no one to go to. I just read the Bible. I didn't really understand what I was reading, but I was determined to learn.

About a year later, one day the warden called me into his office. He said, "You've been chosen to go out and to speak to the high schools in the area." That had never been done before! He said, "You'll have to wear your prison uniform, but I want you to go to all the high schools. I'll send a guard with you. And I want you to share with them about prison life. I want you to share with them about the danger of drugs." He wasn't a Christian, but I knew it was an excellent opportunity to tell them about Jesus. I had never witnessed like that before, and first I said no because I was ashamed to be seen with prison clothes on. But then I agreed to do it, and within a year and a half I spoke to 15,000 kids. And as I stood there with my prison clothes on, I tell you that God really used me. I received hundreds of letters from those little boys and girls.

I remember so well that in February 1976, I received a letter from a 16-year-old girl. She told me that she was a drug addict and that she was dating a married man. She wrote, "The day you were visiting my school they took you away before I could talk to you. You're the only person on earth that I trust, there's no one else. Please help me." I said to myself, "Where are the Christians? The teachers? The parents? That she would write me, a man doomed to die in prison, and say she would trust no one else?" I communicated with her, and six months later I received a letter . . . She told me that she was no longer on drugs, she was no longer seeing the married man, and that she was a Christian going to church every Sunday. I got on my knees in that cell, and I said, "God, if I'm ever free from here, I'll serve You, and I dedicate my life to helping young people." And let me tell you, if you mean that, if you pray that prayer and you mean it, God will use you. The only ability that He's concerned about is your availability. If in your heart you mean it, God will use you. I'm a living example of that!

I was interviewed by the parole board in 1977, and they said, "You might be here for another 37 years. We don't believe in this jailhouse religion." I'd been there nine years at the time. I told that man, "If the Lord wants me to stay, I'm willing to stay. But sir, if God wants me free, I'm free. You can't stop Him!"

Two weeks later I was freed! I made parole! I immediately asked God to do two things. I asked Him to let me work with youth and to surround me with Christians. I didn't want to go back to the environment I had lived in.

Last January I enrolled in Bible College in Birmingham, Alabama. While I was there, I heard about Russell. My professor asked me to pray for him. He told me that Russell was in Houston, that he was going to be operated on, that he had cancer. I had a prison ministry by then. I went back to the prison where I did nine years 25 times in 15 months. And I had people praying for Russell. Christians behind bars were praying for him. I can remember signing a card to send to him in the hospital. I kept hearing people telling me about him, and I just kept listening.

I met Russell in September. He'd lost his leg, and I looked at him, and I couldn't believe what I was seeing. It wasn't what I had pictured. Everyone at the school was lifted up by this man, including the president. He'd limp around. He'd received his new leg and he didn't

know how to walk too well, and he was still sick. But there he was, carrying his books, dragging around going to classes, smiling, witnessing to people, and I got to know him. The day that I met him was special. We just sort of formed a bond. He had heard about me as well, and he said, "You understand me, and I understand you." And we became friends.

He asked me about coming to the Holy Land with him, and I told him that I had come the previous March. I was here and I stood in the Garden Tomb. A year earlier I had been in prison, and they had said, "You'll die here. You'll never be free again." And yet, there I was in the Garden Tomb. I'll never forget that day. I prayed that day and I thanked God for my freedom. I thanked Him that He is a God of love and that He can do anything that He wants to do.

I shared this with Russell, and he said, "Well, I've got to go back." At that time he didn't know that he had cancer of the lungs. Well, I couldn't go. I wanted to spend Christmas with my family, and I told him that.

He went into the hospital the next day, had the x-rays, and found out he had cancer. First they told him that if they didn't stop it he'd die. A while later he was sitting in my living room. And of course, no one wants to talk about death, but Russell and I understood one another. I looked at him and I said, "Russell, how long do you think you have?" He had just left the doctor's that day. He looked at me and he said, "Well, if they don't stop the growth, I don't have very long, brother." And I said to him, "What do you want to do? In life, right now, what do you really want to do, Russell?" He looked at me, and I'll never forget what he said. "There are three things I'd like to do. Number one, I'd like to go back to college and make up all the work I've missed. I'm really behind in my studies, and I want to catch up. Number two, I want to go into a prison with you. I'd like to go into the prison where you were and speak to those men. And number three, I'd like to go to Israel before I die. I have a burden for the people there. I want to witness to them." Well, I couldn't believe it, that a man would make such a statement!

I asked the president of the college about letting Russell speak to the student body. And he let Russell get up in front of the entire student body, and that college will never be the same because of it. He challenged them. And so many of those kids have said, "I'm dedicating my life to serving the Lord because of Russell!"

One night a man called and asked me to speak at his church. I asked him, "Well, can I bring a friend?" He agreed, and so I brought Russell. And that night, when he got up to speak — that church will never be the same, either.

He almost died that night, and early the next morning they put him in the hospital; and he stayed there until he got out last week to come to Israel. I would visit him all the time. I didn't go home for Thanksgiving. I stayed with Russell. I'd watch him lying there, and I never saw anyone with such courage. He'd witness to the nurses. He'd witness to the doctors. Everyone that came in to his room! He'd witness to the other patients. And he kept telling me, "Let's go to the Holy Land, Harold!" I thought the man was dying and that he'd never make it there, and so I said, "Sure, man, we're going," because I didn't think I'd have to go. But I couldn't say no to him. And he kept telling me, "Brother, we're going!"

One day I came to the door, and he said, "Hold it, you can't come in!" His white cell count was down to 800, and of course he was susceptible to infection, so they let no one in the room. But through the doorway he said, "Hey, brother, pray with me. Pray that this white cell count will double. I believe that He'll do it! The Lord will help!" If it had gotten any lower, he would have died.

The next morning he called me and said, "It's tripled!" It didn't double, it had tripled! He kept improving, and a few days later he called me and said, "Are you ready?" I said, "Ready for what?" He said, "Well, I'm going to EL AL to make reservations, and we're leaving for Israel. We're leaving on the 16th of December!"

I had told my mother and my brothers and my whole family that were coming home for Christmas that I'd be there as well. I really couldn't believe it! "There's only one thing you have to do," he went on to tell me. "You've got to meet with my doctor. I've chosen you as the person to go with me to Israel." So I went to meet his doctor, and he shared with me everything I needed to know about Russell's condition. He told me exactly what I would be facing. He looked at me and he said, "I want to ask you just one question. Are you ready to go into another country and have someone die in your arms? I'm not telling you that Russell's going to die. But let me tell you, it's out of my hands. It's in God's hands. I've done all that I can do." And so I told him, "Yes, sir, I'm prepared." The doctor then said, "Well, you're the man to go with him, then!" He showed me how to administer the injections (that had to be given every six hours) and what to give and what to do.

Everybody said, "You're crazy to do this!" The entire college said, "You can't do it! We won't be a part of financing this trip, because we can't be a part of this. If you went over there and something happened, we'd feel guilty!" Everyone tried to talk me out of it. The doctor told me, "They're going to call me a quack doctor and they're going to call you an idiot. I'm prepared. Are you?" And I said, "Yes". And I called my mother to tell her that I wouldn't be coming home. I figured that she'd be upset. She told me, "Listen, serving the Lord is the greatest thing anyone can do. Don't come home for Christmas. You go. You be with him. You come home whenever you can. I'll pray for you!"

So Russell and I left on our way to Israel. You're looking at Russell now, but let me tell you, he gets along a lot better than he did. The day we left he could hardly walk. I thought I was crazy! On the way to the airport he was smiling all the way, and so weak he couldn't walk. We got on the plane in Birmingham, and his Mom and Dad were there to see us off. And you've got to know that they're special people. His mother's one of the finest Christian ladies on this earth. They wanted him to come, because they knew it was what he wanted, even knowing that they might never see him again.

In New York EL AL was waiting for us with a wheelchair and someone there to be nice to us, and we got special attention. They left a seat vacant between us for Russell's leg, and we were placed right next to the bathroom on the plane where he could go in for his shots. Everything worked out just great.

In Israel we rented a car, and we picked up people and started witnessing to them as we drove around. We got to Haifa and the medication ran out. We had doubled the dosage because Russell was exerting himself so, and we ran out. And we had trouble communicating with the druggist. Russell went ten hours without an injection. It got so that he wouldn't respond when I'd talk to him, and I knew that if he didn't have a shot he'd die.

The Lord really taught me something through this. I went over and knelt by that bed and prayed like I'd never prayed in my life. But then we managed to call a doctor, and he said, "I'll be right there." The doctor started quizzing me, and I told him everything, and then he looked at Russell and he immediately gave him a shot. He then went down to the druggist and got us all the medication we needed. You wouldn't believe how God just stepped in and took over. And we've been able to travel around and witness to people ever since.

And then yesterday we had the opportunity that Esther set up to go to Mr. Kadishai and witness to him. And you know, I wasn't really surprised, I'll be honest with you, because so much has happened in my life. I had given up even being free again. I'd thrown in the towel. I knew that I might never breathe another breath of fresh air. When you lose hope you've lost everything. I had given up before, and then I saw what God did, time and time again. I know that God can heal Russell. I know that. And I know that it's His will for me to be here with him. And yesterday I knew it was God's will to use Esther, because He uses people.

I sat there and watched Mr. Kadishai, and that man was really touched by Russell. He

pulled that chair up and looked, and he just lit up. I could just see him thinking, admiring him. And ole Russell, he was just sitting there witnessing to him, and Mr. Kadishai was just witnessing back to him. Esther and I just sat there looking at them, and she'd look at me and smile.

The man wanted to do something special. And he got up and took that Scroll that Esther had given. He was proud to show that to us. There was a picture on the wall of it. You see, that meant something to him. It's on his wall! There were no other pictures there except political things.

And he was proud to bring Mr. Begin out to us. He brought him to us! After an hour-and-one-half, we had said, "We know you're busy," and of course the phones were ringing and everything. And he said, "Well, I am," and he went to get the book signed for Russell. And he told Mr. Begin something about us. I don't know what he told him. But Mr. Begin came out of the office and walked up, and I'll never forget it, he shook my hand and looked at me, and he said, "God bless you, young man." And he really gripped my hand when he shook it. And then he said to Russell, "May God be with you, my son," and he touched him.

I had wanted to share one thing with Mr. Kadishai. But every time I started to tell him about Russell he'd get up and run, like he had something to do, because he was under conviction. I wanted to tell him one thing about Russell, and he wouldn't let me finish. So Esther said, "Tell him, tell him now." As we started to walk out, I said, "Sir, just one thing. One day I looked at Russell and I said, 'Russell, if you had four days to live, would you still want to go to Israel? If you knew you were going to die?' And Russell said, 'Yeah, that's where I would want to die.'" And I told Mr. Kadishai that standing there. He reached over and grabbed Russell. He was under conviction. The seed of love has been planted. That's all we can do. You know, *we* can't save anyone. I just praise Him for it. And I thank God for Russell.

And I know that we're going to make it back to the United States. You see, most people didn't think Russell would. They thought he'd come back in my arms. But he's healthier today than before we left. And I can't wait to get off that plane. His mother will be there. I want her to see him, not dragging off that plane, but walking up to her. I just thank the Lord for him and he's really blessed my life. Lying in bed each night and waking me up at 3:00 in the morning to give him his shots and his witnessing to everybody. It's really been something in my life that I'll never forget. I wish that everybody in the United States could have been with me. And I can't wait to tell them that they were wrong. Because if you're in God's will, that's the most precious thing in the entire world. If you're in His will, you can never go wrong. And the hands that held this man have never dropped anybody.

You know, one day we were driving down the street shortly after Russell knew that he might die. He looked at me and he said, "Brother, don't be so sad. Going to heaven isn't the worst thing that can happen to you! Look at it this way! I don't mind going there before you. Suppose you get too big a head and get out of fellowship? I can say, 'Get him, Lord!' And he said, "Another thing, suppose you have a flat tire one day. I can send a couple of angels down to take care of you!" That's the attitude he has and that's the attitude that's changed so many people's lives in the last two months. I wish you could see the lives he's touched. God has really used him. He's used him more than anyone I've known in just a short time. It's a great God that we serve, I'll tell you. And I think that both of us are living proof that God can use anybody. And the most un-Christian philosophy in the world today is for someone to believe that somebody can't be changed.

You know, people say, "I'm a Christian. I've been born again. I believe." But do they really believe? I mean, do they *really* believe? God can do *anything*. But you've got to believe it can happen! I've seen it happen with this man's life. And I thank Him for putting me

scheduled to begin, I received a reply to my letter from Dr. Robinson. He wrote the following:

*My dear Esther:*

*Your card and note, sent on the 23rd, was the first to "fall out" of a pack of mail held for us over the Holiday Season. I hasten to reply.*

*I am sure you must know that you have been in our hearts and prayers ever since we met you in Jerusalem and you shared your faith with us. Thank you so much for all you are — and for all you have done for our special friends, the Yoders. We have been regularly in touch with our travel representatives and they have been giving us such fine reports of the love and care you have extended Berla and Rufus. There is no way we can say thank you, truly, for your outpoured love has meant much to all of us in this rugged experience. Yet we know that even in this God is working out His eternal purpose. Amen.*

*Please remember us with our very best to Betsy and Sid Rigell. They seemed to so perfectly complement your own personality as well as faith and resolve. I praise God for them and their leading to be with you at this exciting time in your own developing vision and ministry.*

*Seldom have I felt the pressure of the Spirit to compare with that which I sensed in the "need" for you to be at the National Prayer Breakfast this year. So far I have not been able to get an opening, although two senators on the Committee are working with me on it. But I am confident that if it be His will we will know in time. I will alert you by cable immediately I know. It is true that there seems to be no possibility of making it this time. Yet, He knows all about that, too! Amen.*

*In the meantime, keep us in your hearts, and pray that His will be done.*

*Blessings.*

*In Christian bonds,*

*Clifton J. Robinson*

It seemed quite incredible to me that two *senators* were working with him on my invitation! It seemed like a dream! But then, on 23 January 1980, I received orders from the Lord that on the 27th of January I was to travel in faith to the United States, and that I needed to send a telegram to Dr. Robinson informing him of my intentions. The Lord further confirmed that upon my arrival in the States I was to proceed at once to Russell's home in Alabama, as he had so wanted me to come and visit him. And so I dutifully dispatched the telegram to Dr. Robinson, and the next day the following telegram arrived in reply:

***"WELCOME KINDLY GIVE FLIGHT ARRIVAL TIME SO WE MAY MEET  
YOUR PLANE STILL BELIEVING GOD FOR YOUR ADMISSION TO  
PRESIDENTIAL PRAYER BREAKFAST BLESSINGS  
DR CLIFF ROBINSON"***

Just fifteen days before the National Breakfast, and still the door had not opened as yet! When I arrived in Birmingham, Russell and his dear mother met me at the airport. I can't even imagine what a tremendous effort it took for him, as by then he was so very, very ill. I spent five days with the Moore family, and learned first hand what incredible faith his

parents have. Russell could no longer sleep through the night, as he coughed continually and spit up blood. His mother stayed with him all through the long night hours, and God alone gave her the strength to endure the sufferings of her son. And through it all, Russell's concern was only for others.

When I called Dr. Robinson, he explained that my willingness to come to America had been like taking a step of faith into the waters, for the Red Sea had parted! Moments after my telegram had arrived and he had replied to it, he had received notification that I had obtained an official international invitation and that I would represent Israel at the National Prayer Breakfast on 7 February, 1980. I knew the Lord would reward his faith and perseverance.

Russell and I had many hours to speak together, as by the second day he was too ill to leave his room. A number of times he mentioned a woman that he very much wanted me to meet in Washington. Her name is Marian Johnson, and Russell affectionately called her his "guardian angel". It was amazing how the Lord eventually dealt with his request!

No one in his family, nor anyone else who came to visit him during his illness, could get over Russell's lack of concern for himself. He was so willing to suffer for Jesus, as long as he could continue to touch hearts with Jesus' love! And many, many hearts had been touched, including my own. The day before I was scheduled to leave, he gave me the last of his money and sent me off with his mother to purchase a camera to take with me to the Presidential Breakfast. I'll never forget, for as long as I live, his courage and self-sacrificing love, nor the sense I had of the tender place the Lord has reserved for him in His heart.

On the 1st of February, I left Russell's to spend three days in Nashville, Tennessee, to visit a woman by the name of Marie Rice. Marie is really a treasure, and her openness and constant awareness of the Lord in her life is a delight. She had been on the carnival route before the Lord touched her life. And when He did, she said to Him, "Father, send me to those people whom no one else wants!" And so He took her at her word, and many prostitutes, drug addicts and criminals have come to know the Lord simply because Marie cared and was willing to bring them the love and the light of the Lord.

I had not really known her very well before this visit, but friends had felt very strongly that perhaps she was to write the book of the story of my walk with the Lord. I was very hesitant to remove the book from the altar, where it had been firmly placed at the insistence of friends in Israel so many months earlier. But the Lord gave us both a peace about it and an assurance that the book *was* to be taken down from the altar. As I live by faith, I felt very concerned about making a profit on the testimony of the Lord's love in my life, and therefore did not feel comfortable with the usual manner of book promotion and distribution. But that night as we prayed, the Lord assured us that He would provide the funds for the book to be printed and distributed, and therefore that I would be free to give it away without charge! And this, to me, was a great reassurance that the initial prophecy concerning a book had been from the Lord after all.

That night I unburdened my heart to Marie about Russell, as it had been such an agony to hear him suffering all through the long nights. We cried out to the the Lord to have mercy on him, and then, very gently, Marie said to me, "The Lord's going to heal Russell by taking him home. And that's the greatest healing of all!" We both cried, but after a short time we felt a wonderful sense of the Lord's peace.

The next day, we attended a Christian women's meeting together. Marie was to be the speaker, and it was such a joy to hear her share. The leader of the meeting knew nothing about me, of course, but as soon as the meeting was over, she said to me, "Listen, as soon as you walked in the door, the Lord told me that this was to be given to you!" And then she took from around her neck a chain, and dangling from the end of the chain *was a tiny silver crown*, identical to the one I had received at the radio station in 1978! It was an undeniable

confirmation of the Lord's will for the book to proceed, and I was so touched by His love that all I could manage to say was, "Thank you!"

Through that woman's obedience to the Lord yet another miracle occurred! I had arrived in the States with a one-way ticket and with enough money to travel to Russell's home and then on to Nashville, but as yet did not have the money needed to make the flight to Washington. I was expected there in just three days!

The offering plate was sitting on a table not too far from me, and I noticed that the leader of the meeting put a cheque into it, and a few minutes later she took the cheque out, ripped it up, and replaced it with another cheque. And then, a few minutes later, she took *that*-cheque out, ripped it up as well, and replaced it with yet another cheque! Finally she explained to us, at the end of the meeting, "Since Marie is the speaker, the Lord prompted me to give her a gift of \$100.00. And so I wrote out a cheque and placed it in the offering plate. But then He kept telling me to give you a gift as well! But it seemed unfair to give you a cheque that was larger than the speaker's, so I wrote the second cheque out for less than He told me to. But He kept *insisting* that you need \$200.00, so I wrote out yet another cheque!"

I gave her a big hug, and told her the story of how such a miraculous door had opened for me to receive an invitation to the Presidential Prayer Breakfast, but that I did not even have the money needed for the air-fare to Washington! Through her obedience, I was now able to attend.

When I returned with Marie to her apartment, she said to me, "The Lord has told me to have a look in your suitcase. So open it up, okay?" I gave her rather a peculiar look, but I dragged the suitcase out and opened it up. She pulled out my dresses (the few that I had) and she said to me, "Were you planning to wear *these* to Washington?"

"Yes," I answered.

"They're dreadful!" she exclaimed to me in her unabashedly direct way. "You can't possibly wear these things — not to Washington!"

And then such an amazing thing happened, which helped me to understand exactly what Jesus meant when He said:

*"And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:*

*And yeti say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.*

*Wherefore if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?"*

Matthew 6:28-30

For Marie then proceeded to pull out of her closet some of the loveliest clothes I had ever seen. "Go ahead, try them on!" she insisted. And when I did, *every single dress fit as though it had been tailored for me alone.*

She then explained, "A wealthy friend of mine gave them to me a few weeks ago, and I know that they are meant for you!" And so I re-packed my suitcase with all of the lovely things she had given me, including an exquisite sable jacket! Just three days before the Breakfast, the Lord had provided me with just the wardrobe that I would need to wear! It seemed like a fairy-tale come true, like a re-enactment of Cinderella, and I knew that indeed I would be going with the Prince!

I left for Washington with a beautiful new wardrobe, an airline ticket in my pocket, and

exactly \$20.00 to my name! It was indeed another obvious touch of the Lord's humour to send me dressed like a princess but almost penniless to such a prestigious event! There was no doubt that He did this to keep my feet firmly on the ground.

When I arrived in Washington D.C., I was met at the airport by Clifton's wife, Betty, and had been welcomed to stay in their home during the conference. I called Russell's home immediately, to learn that the day after I left he had been transferred to the hospital.

"Hello, Russ!" I said when I called his room at the hospital. I then told him the story of the Lord's provision for the clothing and promised to call again after the Prayer Breakfast to tell him all the news.

"I'm still praying for you," he told me, but his voice sounded weak and far away.

Betty informed me that there would be three days of meetings, beginning the next morning with a luncheon called "Lunch with the Vice President". The conference was to be held at the Washington Hilton, and when I arrived the next morning I was led to the official reception room for international guests, called the Stateroom, where I was greeted with a cup of coffee. I was later presented with a folder containing letters of greeting and a completely individualized itinerary for the three days, including all the tickets, dinner reservations and invitations that would be needed. Attending the three days of meetings were politicians and dignitaries from over 100 nations, many of whom had a deep love for Jesus.

The purpose of the National Prayer Breakfast was described in an introductory leaflet:

BRIEFING — on the National Prayer Breakfast  
and a fellowship of men and women around the world

*In 1942, in the midst of some deep struggles taking place among many of the responsible leaders of our country, there became an awareness that there needed to be a greater closeness in relationships in order to better work together for the right solutions facing the nation and people everywhere. Out of some of these personal and collective struggles, a few men began gathering to talk and to pray together. That was over 30 years ago, and still today, Members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives meet privately on an off-the-record basis to talk, think and pray together, each week when Congress is in session. These small gatherings have fostered literally scores of meetings of this kind, not only in our Nation's Capitol, but in many Parliaments around the world.*

*It is very important to recognize that what has developed through the years is not a new religious body or organization, but really a family of friends. This idea grows on a people-to-people basis through a common commitment to Christ and the things He taught — building relationships with God, with families, and with each other. Out of the friendships, a mutual concern and for one another, along with a greater understanding has developed, despite deep differences in thought and background.*

*An interesting thing happened in 1953 when the men involved with the Senate and House breakfast groups invited President Dwight Eisenhower to join them on a private basis to share with them the fellowship and friendship they were enjoying together in Christ. It was out of the warmth and spirit of that first meeting that the National Prayer Breakfast has grown. Now each year at the opening of Congress, Members of the Senate and House of Representatives invite responsible leaders from practically every nation to*

*come and participate. Invitations have gone out regardless of national, religious, economic or political background, with the sincere desire for all people from every nation of the world to recognize the importance and the potential for good of meeting together through the power of God to become of one heart and one mind. And to realize through the unity of the Spirit, that even though there are differing views on how to approach our common personal and world situations and problems, there is genuine hope through the power of God . . ."*

The first event on the agenda was "Lunch with the Vice-President". Just prior to the luncheon, I spoke to an elderly man from Canada about the reality of the love of Jesus. And after the meal was concluded, I had the wonderful opportunity to pray for him as he gave his life to the Lord!

When the luncheon began, I sat down at the table to which I had been assigned. Introductions started. Sitting at my table were four members of the British Parliament and other dignitaries, as one by one titles of responsibility were given. I kept saying to myself, "What in the world am I going to say? What am I going to say?" But the Lord had dealt with me long ago never to apologize for serving Him, that it was the greatest privilege of all; and He reminded me of this that day.

When it was finally my turn to introduce myself, I said, "My name is Esther Dorflinger, I'm a Jewish Believer in Jesus from Jerusalem, Israel, and I am a servant of the King." All agreed that to serve the Lord was more important than anything.

The luncheon was delicious, Vice-President Mondale gave a warm note of welcome, and a bond of fellowship was felt by everyone. It amazed me to be there, but what amazed me most of all was that the Lord had given me the grace to be gracious and lovely and not at all intimidated! He had simply shown me that people in political circles, whose lives are very much in the public eye, can be just as lonely and in need of His love as anyone else! And sometimes the pressures of public life are even greater and therefore the needs even deeper! Sensing His love for the people there helped me not to be self-conscious or awkward and I felt far from my usual bungling self. And the clothing that the Lord had provided was truly in His wisdom also, as I simply looked just like everybody else!

I shook hands with Mr. Mondale as he was leaving the room, and he was quite startled to realize that I was representing Israel, as it was the first time someone from Israel had attended the meetings. (It's ironic that Israel is not considered a "Christian" country, when Christianity in its entirety is Jewish and all the writers of the Bible were members of the nation of Israel!)

During the afternoon, as I was back in the Stateroom sipping a cup of coffee, a Jewish woman walked up to me, and commented that she was glad to see that her people were represented at this meeting. She was not a part of the conference, but lived in Washington and happened to pass by! I explained to her that I was a Jewish Believer in Jesus, and it turns out that the Lord had been deeply touching her heart for a long time. She and I then spent an hour speaking together, and then she, too, gave her life to the Messiah of Israel! It was a wonderful gift from the Father's hand.

That evening I was invited to a dinner at the hotel hosted by Dr. and Mrs. Robinson. As I reached the reception table, I was informed that the dinner would cost \$50.00. That morning in obedience to the Lord I had spent \$15.00 to get my hair washed and set, and therefore had only \$5.00 left! Oh, *Lord, whatever shall I do?* As it was a formal evening, I was wearing a long black skirt, a lovely beaded sweater, and my sable jacket. Who would believe that I only had five dollars to my name in all the world? I gave her my name, still not knowing quite how to handle it, and she exclaimed at once, "Oh, Mrs. Dorflinger! Someone

has treated you to this dinner, and it's been paid for already!" And so I asked myself for the umpteenth time, "Why do I ever worry? Why do I do it? Why?"

That evening Dr. Robinson invited me to give my testimony, and the eighty guests all signed the love scroll. I also had the opportunity to meet Senator Frank Carlson, such a dear man, who began the prayer breakfasts in the time of Eisenhower.

The next morning, bright and early, was the National Prayer Breakfast itself. Three thousand guests attended, from over 100 nations, including President and Mrs. Jimmy Carter. Until that time, the Lord had made my being there seem quite natural, as only He has a way of doing. But at the moment that I sat down at the table, He took away that sense, and at once I was filled with amazement and awe. How could I be seated for breakfast in the same room as the President of the United States of America? And with politicians from all over the world? It seemed so impossible and improbable at that moment that I hardly could believe I was really there at all.

On the program itself was the following quote from Abraham Lincoln:

*"Being a humble instrument in the hands of our heavenly Father, I desire that all my words and acts may be according to His will: and that it may be so, I give thanks to the Almighty, and seek His aid."*

Also quoted was Proverbs 3:5-6:

*"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.  
In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."*

For breakfast we were served a delicious quiche lorraine, and I ate the meal as if in a dream. Following the breakfast and the final cup of coffee we all rose to sing the beautiful hymn, "Amazing Grace", and then the main message was given by U.S. Representative Guy Vander Jagt. It was a deep call to commitment, and very moving. President Carter then addressed the assembly as well.

As I looked around the room and realized that these people had taken time out from their busy lives simply to gather together to praise the Lord and to have some days of fellowship in Him, it made me proud to be part of a free and democratic society, a place where such a thing was possible; and I could sense that the Lord was pleased as well. It gave me such a sense that He has His people *everywhere*, and those in leadership and political positions need our special love and our prayers.

At the close of the Prayer Breakfast, we all rose and solemnly sang together "Hallelujah", and the presence of the Lord could be felt in a deep way by everyone. It was a special moment to all of us and to Jesus as well.

Following the Prayer Breakfast, the assembly broke up into smaller groups of a few hundred each to attend "National Leadership Seminars". Mark Hatfield, in his letter of welcome to the participants, said:

*"We welcome you with great enthusiasm to this leadership seminar. Many of us in the U.S. Congress have encouraged this gathering which truly represents a world-wide family centered in Jesus Christ. You will be hearing remarks from some wonderful men and women who represent many states and nations. Each one will be sharing thoughts about his own experiences in life and how the Spirit of God has been working in his family, community, or nation. . . . We are grateful that you are able to join with us this morning. We hope you will be encouraged and strengthened as you join with people throughout the world*

*who are taking seriously the first and greatest commandment: 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.'*"

Each of the speakers brought a blessing, but I especially loved the message delivered by Arthur Blessitt, who in obedience to the Lord has carried a genuine cross throughout the world. His words were deeply challenging, and I loved as well his description of his visit to Israel. He told how people had so discouraged him from going there with his cross, but that in Israel he had received a warm and gracious welcome from the Israelis and had even been invited by the Commander of the Northern Forces to speak with hundreds of Israeli soldiers!

Towards the end of the meeting, I began to feel extremely anxious. I knew that it had been the Lord through His sovereign power who had enabled me to attend this special assembly. I knew that with all of His provisions, for the invitation, for the clothing, that He must have had some special purpose in mind! And so fear began to rise in my heart that in some way I had failed Him, that perhaps I should have done something, and that I had missed His promptings. I was assailed by questions and doubts, so that it was impossible to even concentrate on the final message. And then, finally, I realized that I was being simply ridiculous. It was not my responsibility to do anything! The Lord had invited me, and so it was *His* responsibility to open doors if He wanted any doors to be opened! And besides, I knew that fear and doubt were not of God, and that I really had nothing to worry about at all. So I asked the Lord to forgive me for all the needless fuss and bother, and I took a deep breath, placed the whole burden back in His hands, and relaxed. And at that moment, the Lord said to me, "*Put your hand in the air!*" At that exact *moment!*

And one split-second later, the Senator in charge of the meeting announced, "We have a few minutes left. Is there anyone who would like to give a brief testimony?"

Everything happened so fast that it by-passed my conscious mind completely, which is just as well, for if the Lord had given me time to think about it, I never would have had the courage to do a thing! But the Lord's command had startled me so, that as soon as he made the invitation for someone to share, my hand shot up in the air. And as it turns out, I was the only person who had raised their hand! And a minute later I was standing behind the podium! I was so shocked I said to the Senator, "You mean that I can *talk?*" He nodded encouragingly and adjusted the microphone.

I looked out at the prestigious gathering, and prayed like I had never prayed before

I shared my testimony with the politicians there that day, telling of how Jesus had touched my life; asked me to place even my children in His hands; taught me the meaning of a total commitment to Him; and helped me to understand that centuries of persecution in the name of Christianity against the Jewish people had nothing to do with Him. And then I told as well how Jesus had taught me that He was the fulfillment of the Messianic promises made to the Jewish people, and that the people who believed and accepted the Messiah of Israel and the God of Israel could no longer separate themselves from Israel nor from the fate of the Jewish people. I shared as well how the Lord had shown me that the modern-day nation of Israel was the fulfillment of Biblical prophecies, the actual key to the last days, and that it was God Himself who had granted that land to the Jewish people. And I concluded by saying, "And even the fate of nations depends on obedience to God's call to bless the Jewish people and the nation of Israel, in accordance with God's promise to Abraham, ". . . And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee . . . and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

I used to read about "knees knocking together", believing it to be just a figure of speech. But when I sat back down at my place at the table, my knees were literally *knocking*

together! I was devastated that I had actually spoken to a group such as that, and would have burst into tears if I had been by myself. I was a wreck! I had no way of knowing, of course, that as I was speaking the Lord was deeply anointing the words with His presence and love.

Following the meeting, many people came up to me to thank me for my testimony, to tell me that it meant very much to them, and to share how deeply the Lord's love had been felt. And one man came up to me with tears in his eyes and gave me a hug before saying movingly, "I'm a Palestinian Arab, and since I have come to know the love of Jesus, I want to tell you that I love you *and I love Israel as well*. I'm an Arab without a country, and you're a Jew without a passport — *but together we'll share a better land*." *It was a beautiful moment in God's kingdom.*

After a luncheon held for the International Guests, I attended an afternoon Seminar for Women. As soon as I sat down at one of the tables, I noticed that the woman to my right immediately got tears in her eyes! She had heard me speak in the Leadership Seminar, and had wanted very much to talk with me. However, there were so many people speaking to me then that she had given up and had simply prayed that somehow the Lord would make it possible! And then He brought me to the same Seminar to a seat right next to hers! How He delights to honour even the tiniest requests in His children's hearts! He even worked it out for the two of us to steal away following the meeting for an hour of quiet sharing and prayer.

During the Seminar itself, we sat together around large tables, and at the end of the meeting we were instructed to spend some time just sharing with one another. At our table we began with introductions, and surely I had to be the least-known woman there. But as soon as I gave my name, most of the women exclaimed, "Oh, we heard about you at lunch today! Please share your story with us as well!" I never imagined that the participants from the morning seminar would have told others about me, but through it the Lord worked it out for me to speak once again!

That evening I attended a dinner held at the Crystal Ballroom in the Washington Hilton with the Robinsons. The dinner was an enormous affair hosted by Doug Coe and Dick Halverson, two of the core members of the Washington group. It was an interesting evening, and once again I was grateful to the Lord for having provided me with clothing appropriate to such a gala affair.

The next morning the Congressional Wives' Prayer Group had invited the International Women Guests to a luncheon at Fellowship House. (I had read about Fellowship House in Chuck Colson's book, as in it he describes this lovely centre for fellowship and prayer.) Before the luncheon, each of the women guests were given a few minutes to tell of what God was doing in political circles in their countries of origin, and it was a tremendous encouragement to hear of the many ways God had been touching lives of politicians in many nations.

The members of the Congressional Wives' Prayer Group were gracious hostesses, and the luncheon was a huge success.

I had left the Robinson's home that morning, bringing my baggage with me to Fellowship House, as from there I had been invited to join Patti (from the airplane) and her husband for some days in their home. As Patti was a member of the core group of Washington Believers, we stayed on until most of the other international guests had left. And then Barbara, the hostess at Fellowship House, came up to me and said, "Esther, we've heard *so* much about you these past few days, of the blessing of the Lord's love that you've brought. And so we wondered if you would be kind enough to share with us as well this afternoon. The members of the Congressional Wives' Prayer Group are gathered together in the living room expectantly, if you would please come to speak to us!" Again amazement filled my heart, as the Lord set before me yet another open door.

I shared a great deal with them that afternoon — far more than there had been time for in the earlier meetings. I told them my entire testimony, and about my visit to Rome, and about Russell's visit to the Prime Minister, and I even passed the pictures around for them to see. And as I spoke, the Lord touched their hearts so deeply with His love for *them* that everyone was crying. Finally Barbara said to me tearfully, "You might as well close in prayer, because you're the only one who can!"

After the meeting they all signed the love scroll sheets that had been placed on the grand piano, and many said that they had been praying for a touch of God's love like they had received that day for years. It was overwhelmingly beautiful, as seeing the gentleness of God's love touching another's heart is far more precious than gold!

I left Fellowship House with my baggage for Patti's home still in a daze. The Lord had by then opened the door for me to speak four times in just three days! And none of it but none of it would have happened if I had not obeyed the Lord *and spoken with the man sitting behind me on the plane that day*. It was a very humbling thought!

Patti and her husband and I had a cozy dinner that evening, and a nice time of talking together in front of their fireplace. And then it finally occurred to me that I had left my sable jacket hanging in the closet at Fellowship House! I had completely forgotten about the fact that I even *owned* one, and I had to laugh at myself! It seems that Cinderellas don't turn into princesses quite so easily! Patti and I were planning to attend a meeting there the following night, so I called Barbara and told her I would pick up the jacket then. (They *had* noticed it!)

On the morning of the 9th of February, two days after the National Prayer Breakfast itself, the Lord awakened me gently by saying, "Out of all the people in the world, I *especially* chose *Russell to bring My love to the leaders of Israel . . .*"

Later that day I called his room in the hospital to tell him all the news, as the Breakfast had meant very much to him. A strange voice answered the phone, and when I asked for Russell, she informed me that he was no longer there. When I later called him home, his mother answered the phone.

"Hi there! This is Esther calling! I wanted to tell Russell about the Presidential Prayer Breakfast, as it was just so fantastic! How's he doing?" I asked, as soon as I heard her voice.

"Oh, dear," she said. "Nobody's told you, I guess, but Russell died on the 7th of February, on the day of the Prayer Breakfast! I was with him until the end, and he was so happy to know he would soon be with Jesus." Her voice caught. "But the funeral isn't until tomorrow afternoon, and so if it's at all possible, please try very hard to come! It would be a comfort to us if you could be with us." I told her I would try, and hung up the phone. Even though the Lord had given me advanced preparation, I couldn't help but cry, as I would miss Russell Moore.

I knew that with \$5.00 I would never make it to Birmingham, Alabama, but the Lord takes care of all things. Patti and her husband bought the ticket for me!

That evening Patti and I went to Fellowship House for a meeting of Washington businessmen. I felt very relaxed, as it seemed quite impossible that I would be sharing again! But as soon as Patti introduced me to the leader of the meeting, he exclaimed, "Esther Dorflinger! Wow, that's terrific! I have three of your tapes at home from radio broadcasts! You just *have* to say a few words to the group here tonight!"

The main speaker was a Jewish man from England, extremely wealthy and a member of the British Parliament. But he spoke so compellingly of the call of the gospel, using such superb British English, that it reminded me so much of what Paul must have sounded like. I was very impressed!

I shared my testimony to the group there that night, collected my sable jacket from the closet, bid Barbara farewell, and returned home with Patti. And the next morning I caught the flight to Birmingham, in time for Russell's funeral.

For the very first time I experienced the mixed grief of a Believer's funeral — the deep joy of knowing that he was now completely healed, without pain, and with Jesus, his Beloved; and the sadness because of a sense of personal loss. It was so different from the hopelessness and fear I had felt at the one Jewish funeral I had attended as a child, for in Jesus we have eternal hope! The service was held at Russell's Bible College, and many people attended. His parents had a deeper sense of the impact Russell's faith had on so many lives.

Because the Prayer Breakfast had meant so much to Russell, after the funeral his parents asked me to tell about it to all the family that had gathered. And so I told the whole story, and when I mentioned Fellowship House, Russell's aunt from Florida looked startled. "While you were there, did you notice the portrait in the living room?" she asked me.

"Yes," I answered her. "As a matter of fact, I stood right under the portrait as I told Russell's story to the Congressional Wives!"

"Well," she replied, "that's a portrait of my mother, Marian Johnson, as she was one of the founders of Fellowship House!" I had told Russell's story right under the portrait of the very woman he had wanted me to meet! And a number of weeks earlier, Marian had enlisted the prayers of some of the Believers in Washington and at Fellowship House for Russell! No one realized at the time that the Russell of whom I was speaking was the very same Russell that they had been praying for! It was astonishing news, and brought a special comfort to us all.

The Lord sent me in Rome, Jerusalem, and Washington D.C. to "people in high places" indeed ... but Russell had made it to the highest place of all.

*"For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him . . ."*



With Senator Frank Carlson  
(founder of the National Prayer Breakfast during Eisenhower's presidency).



National Prayer Breakfast, February 1980  
Dr. Clifton J. Robinson with Sen. Carlson

## PART V

*"Come, my beloved,  
let us go forth into the field;  
let us lodge in the villages.*

*Let us get up early to the vineyards;  
let us see if the vine flourish,  
whether the tender grape appear,  
and the pomegranates bud forth:  
there will I give thee my loves..."*

*Song of Solomon 7:11-12*



# 24

## WATCHMEN

Both in 1978 and again following the Presidential Prayer Breakfast, I spent a great deal of time speaking in various Christian meetings, groups, and organizations in the U.S.A.. And since that time, I have travelled throughout most of the world. I have therefore been able to see, with an over-all perspective, some of the deceptions that the Scriptures warn us will be prevalent in these days.

*"For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows.*

*Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for My name's sake.*

*And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another. And many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many.*

*And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved . . .*

*For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect . . ."*

Matthew 24:7-13, 24

My first shock came in seeing the casual way that many Believers took their relationship with the Lord. They would pray while lying around on the floor, and many have told me how they loved to pray and to speak to the Lord while taking a shower or a bath — or even while on the toilet! But where in all this casualness is any sense of the holiness of the Lord, any sense of His majesty? When any guest comes to our home, do we immediately strip off our clothes and bring him into the shower to talk with us? How much less would we do it for a king; but yet people so lightly treat the very King of Kings Himself!

Perhaps some of the problem of this concept of God came when the Hebrew word "Brit", meaning "Covenant", was changed by the Gentile churches into the term "Testament". The change in terminology made it seem as though the Old Testament was no longer relevant, and somehow inferior to the new Christian religion which they had adopted for their own. But by dismissing the Old Testament so easily, they therefore missed the astonishing number of clues given in the Old Covenant as to the true nature of God! And the New Covenant, the "Brit Chadasha", is a *fulfillment* of the covenant God established with the Jewish people, and not a substitute for it!

Jesus enabled the Gentiles to come into the covenants God had established with Israel

and thereby brought them for the first time into communion with Himself. And it is important that we feel the Lord's friendship and love and care for us. *But He is still holy and worthy of respect.* He is the same God as represented in the Old Covenant, who stopped the mouths of His prophets, who caused Moses to remove his shoes, whose presence brought many on their faces before Him. And Jesus reiterated again and again that He had come to fulfill the will of His Father. He was the very *Son*, and yet He treated God His Father with the respect that is due His Name!

There are a number of false teachings in these days which are not so easy to discern as most have in them some Scriptural basis before being taken to extremes. But I feel from the Lord that I am simply to mention some of the most common, to enable those of you who are truly seeking a right relationship to the Lord, to be freed of these hindrances; and to enable you to bring these things before Him in repentance and prayer if there is a need in your lives to do so. When the Lord shows us some areas of our lives that need changing, He does it not to accuse us, but rather to help and to free us! As you read this list, know therefore that it is not placed here to make anyone feel condemned, but simply to help people to re-evaluate where they are in relationship to the Lord, and to be free of those things that will be damaging to that relationship.

1. *Once Saved, Always Saved:* The *principle* behind this teaching is sound. If once we truly place our lives in the Lord's hands, as Paul says:

*"For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord . . ."*

Romans 8:38-39

But this is true only for people who are truly seeking to fulfill *God's* purposes in their lives and have forsaken the call and the pleasures of the world. The misuse of this principle comes in when it is applied simply to the act of salvation itself. It makes people believe that asking for forgiveness of sins is some magical panacea that therefore automatically entitles them entrance to heaven no matter what they do with their lives from then on! And this is false!

*"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."*

Matthew 7:13-14

2. *Irrevocable Call of God:* Similar to the one just listed, this theory speaks of men of God who have truly been called by God in the beginning, and insists that whatever these men may do with their lives from then on, that God will still use them. I have seen men who indeed began with God and who then fell deeply into sin and yet continued to minister and to preach. God still loves them and reaches out to them, but be *certain* that it is not *God* who is using them, for sin and God cannot and will not have fellowship together!

*"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."*

*Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?*

*Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.*

*A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.*

*Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.*

*Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them . . ."*

Matthew 7:15-20

3 *.Sovereign and Permissive Will:* This doctrine insists that God has a sovereign will for each of our lives, but when we don't meet up to His standards, we then enter into His "permissive will". To adhere to this philosophy allows and even encourages disobedience, picturing God as some tolerant and good-hearted old gentleman who basically understands our human frailty and therefore lets us do pretty much as we want to. It is, of course, a deception, for the Lord has *one* will for us, and if we disobey Him, we then purposefully place ourselves out of His will! And He does not bless disobedience!

Another aspect of this doctrine can best be described in this way: One day a critical acquaintance said of my trip to Rome, "God never asked her to travel to Rome at all. She did it out of her own need for attention, and God just decided to bless it." Neither aspect of this false way of teaching comes even close to understanding the Divine nature of God!

4 *.Prosperity Teachings:* Christians are taught that through faith, anything is possible to them, which of course in principle is true — or rather, nothing is impossible for *God*. But then this truth is falsely applied to the world of material possessions. People are taught to "claim" for themselves the best house in town, and if they pray believing, they will receive it! And the "proof" is, of course, that most of the time these people do indeed receive exactly what it is that they have "claimed". (I even read in a so-called Christian book where "Christians" have threatened people in their town by saying, "If we want your house, God will give it to us!") What they don't understand, however, is that they have received these things through the power of satan and not through the power of God. For anyone familiar with the Gospels, it is clear over and over again that it is impossible to love God and money; that it is satan who promises us the kingdoms of this world; and that we cannot have both fellowship with worldly pleasures and the kingdom of God as well!

*"No-man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot love God and mammon."*

Matthew 6:24

There are times in the lives of people who have deeply committed their lives to the Lord and His will that the Lord will prosper them; but God is able to do this only with people whose hearts are right and who have placed the Lord first in their lives. In this as in all things, there is a fine balance between truth and deception.

5 *.Mountaintop Lining:* This concept of a Christian walk is very similar to the one mentioned above, but simply carries over into all aspects of life. In this type of false Christianity, Believers spend their time praising the Lord, and claiming and expecting only the best of everything in terms of material possessions, health and a life of ease free from the

troubles and difficulties that beset the world as a whole. They seldom even consider leaving the mountaintops to come down to the world of need, nor do they wish to come close at all to the cross and all that it implies. How far it is from the reality of a deep walk in fellowship with Christ and His sufferings!

*"Have you no wounds? No crown of thorns upon your head? No cross to bear? For these gain entrance to Heaven's gates, and you'll need them once you're there . . ."*

*"And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me . . ."*

Matthew 10:38

*"Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.  
For whoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it.  
For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"*

Matthew 16:24-26

6. *Discipleship*: In this teaching, Christians are told that they need to be under the care of leaders and teachers and must therefore submit to the advice and teachings of those who are set up in authority over them. And again a sound principle is taken to a dangerous extreme, *as there is no one in the world who is meant to substitute in our lives for the Lord.*

Satan has used this principle very successfully for centuries within the Catholic Church, where a whole hierarchy — from the Pope all the way down to the parish priest — kept people from a direct relationship to the Lord. People even prayed to dead saints to intercede for them, all of this instituted by Satan to keep people from any concept that a direct relationship to Jesus Christ was possible. And now, in the Protestant renewal, often the same thing is happening all over again, and many people are brought into bondage to others.

We need shepherds to care for us, to be sure! But a true shepherd has the humility to say to the flock in his care, "Come, let us seek the Lord together" and doesn't presume upon himself to replace or substitute for God in someone's life.

*"But Jesus called them unto Him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.  
But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister\*;  
And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:  
Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life as a ransom for many."*

\*servant

Matthew 20:25-28

*"But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ: and all ye are brethren."*

*And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.*

*Neither be ye called masters\*: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant."*

\*leaders

Matthew 23:8-11

Often this is brought into the marriage situation as well, where women are told from Paul's teachings to submit to their husbands. But it also says that husbands are to honour their wives, and a husband who is truly walking in the humility of Christ will know and respect his wife's relationship to the Lord as well, understanding that they can learn from one another and grow together in their relationship to the Lord.

One other aspect of this teaching insists that people should submit to their pastors even if the pastors do not have a personal relationship to God, and that God will honour that submission. Wow! How in the world is that person going to help us to know the Lord if he himself isn't a true shepherd of the King? Why do people insist on things such as these that can bring only discouragement and frustration to themselves and to others?

7. *Inner Healing/Community Building:* Both of these are needed in our lives to a real extent. God's healing work continues within us all of our lives; and we need to stand together in love and in union with brothers and sisters in Christ. But the danger comes when either of these principles are taken to extreme. Many months of "inner healing" counseling causes deep introspection and therefore gets the focus off the Lord and completely on self. And it is a trap! The same holds true for building of communities — satan uses it so that the community members are *continually* dealing with one another! And in the complexity of human relationships, problems of interrelationships will be never-ending. And again, people are thereby distracted from the real command to share the gospel and to be *primarily* concerned with their relationship to Jesus Christ!

8. *Kingdom Builders:* Many, many churches (especially in the United States) have fallen for this one! It is impossible for a true servant of the Lord to have a huge following, to have hundreds of people looking to *him* for direction and advice; because our responsibility is to bring people to the foot of the cross, into a firm relationship to Jesus Christ, and then to trust the Lord's hand upon their lives. And by the same token, millions and millions of dollars have been spent in these last days on enormous church edifices — fancy churches, community buildings, church halls, media centres, elaborate equipment — all in the belief that this is to the glory of God! Of course, it's necessary and right to have a building in which to meet and to pray and to share fellowship with one another. But when this need is carried to extremes, the focus of concern is subtly changed from the Lord to worldly matters. People involved in these enormous projects don't realize at all just how much of their time, effort and finances have gone into these projects, time and energy that could have and should have been used much more wisely!

*"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:*

*But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:*

*For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also . . ."*

Matthew 6:19-21

*"He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh His glory that sent him, the same is true and no unrighteousness is in him."*

John 7:18

Many of these theories, of course, are thriving in countries where Christianity is easy and comfortable, and where there is a minimum of suffering or persecution. In these circumstances satan has a much easier time in convincing Christians to forsake the gospel call for all kinds of secondary purposes!

The Scripture in Matthew chapter 6 reminds me in a roundabout way of Arthur Blessitt's comment at the National Prayer Breakfast in 1980. He told how he had visited a pastor friend of his in Florida, and had said to him, "C'mon, let's go to your church and pray!" The pastor had hemmed and hawed, and then finally explained that the church was locked and the burglar alarm would go off if he entered it then. And Arthur had said to him, "You mean to tell me that *burglars* and *thieves* might break into your church?" The pastor had nodded in affirmation. "Wow, that's fantastic!" Arthur had exclaimed. "Just have a deacon or two hiding under the pews to share the gospel with 'em!"

The Lord who created the mountains and the seas, the hills and the valleys, the flowers and the birds — does He really need glory from a building made by man?

9. *Looking to the Gifts and not the Fruit of the Holy Spirit:* There is a great emphasis in churches in the West, but especially in England and the U.S., on looking more to the visible evidences of God's power than to God Himself. Many people insist that being baptized in the Holy Spirit must be evidenced by speaking in tongues, gifts of healing, and other outward manifestations of the power of God. But they forget *that it is through the Holy Spirit that we come into communion with the Lord Himself*, and that is to be the most treasured gift of all! In My *Utmost for His Highest*, Oswald Chambers explains it this way:

*"'He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire.' John does not speak of the baptism of the Holy Ghost as an experience, but as a work performed by Jesus Christ. 'He shall baptize you.' The only conscious experience those who are baptized with the Holy Ghost ever have is a sense of absolute unworthiness.*

*I indeed was this and that; but He came, and a marvelous thing happened . . ."*

Paul explained that even in his day the visible gifts of the Holy Spirit such as speaking in tongues were not for everybody, but that if people were to clamour for gifts, they should at least desire the greater gifts!

*"He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself, but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.*

*I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.*

*Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you? So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to understand, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air.*

*Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.*

*I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all:  
Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding,  
that by my voice I might teach others, than ten thousand words in an unknown  
tongue . . ."*

I Corinthians 14:4-6, 9, 12, 18-19

*"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.*

*And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing.*

*And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing.*

*Love never faileth: but where there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.*

*And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love . . ."*

I Corinthians 13:1-3, 8, 13

Many times people insist that speaking in tongues must be evident in order to "prove" that a person has been baptized in the Holy Spirit. People become so insistent that these gifts be manifested that they often receive substitutes from satan without even being aware of it! Many times such insistence on the evidence of visual "power" opens the door for satan's imitations (such as "leg growing", being "slain in the spirit", and even gifts of tongues) of the true power, glory and majesty of God! That gifts of healing and of tongues can come from God as well is certainly evident. But the purpose of *God's* gifts are to further His kingdom and not just to "show His power," which He does not need to do! When the apostles received gifts of healing, they didn't heal one another, but brought these gifts to the unsaved! And so much of the "Holy Spirit" movement becomes tragically introspective, keeping all of the "gifts" for themselves and forgetting the deeper things of the Spirit and the call to obedience and evangelism!

There is a great danger as well when these theories are applied at random in all circumstances and for every situation. Some of the most pathetic Christians I've ever seen are those who, in this day, insist on the gifts of healing operating all the time and for everyone in any circumstance! This teaching can get so extreme that it even views the medical profession (men and women who have devoted their lives to helping mankind) as enemies of God! With insisting that God wishes for everyone to live in perfect health, many people have been prayed over for healing without it being the Lord's will at that time. And God cannot and will not bless that which is not of Him! It is a deception of satan that has caused countless Christians to turn away from the Lord in disappointment when the healing was not forthcoming. But the fault was not with God, but with the people who had prayed indiscriminately according to the desires of the flesh and not according to the Father's will! When people pray for another person, they need *always* to pray in the wisdom of the Lord. It is the Lord *alone* who knows what is best for His children, what may be needed by Him to fulfill His greater purposes in that person's life!

When people pray *in the Lord's name* for someone to be healed and that person is *not* healed, the person who was prayed for often feels rejected by the Lord. And often he is blamed by the Christians who prayed for him for having some "unconfessed sin" in his life

which prevented the healing. Or else he is accused by them of not having enough faith and therefore preventing the healing power of God! Many times the damage done to that person's relationship to the Lord is irreparable! I wonder why people feel that God's power is shown more greatly by healing than by enabling us to overcome in times of stress? The lesson of Russell — a dying young man whom He chose to bring His love to the leaders of Israel — speaks for itself.

The full gifts of the Spirit — the true gifts of God — could never be granted to a Church which is concerned only with the superficialities of life and not at all prepared to lay down their lives for the Lord. If they *truly* received the fullness of the Holy Spirit, as did the apostles, would they also be willing to accept the beatings, rejections, imprisonments, persecutions, and martyrdoms that accompanied them? Would they be willing to forsake everything of this world to bring the gospel and the gifts to the perishing?

*"Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered . . ."*

Hebrews 5:8

If Jesus had brought physical healing forever, then sickness would simply have disappeared long ago! But what He brought us was a glimpse of things to come on that glorious day when Heaven and Earth become one!

Without a doubt there are gifts of tongues operating in these days that are genuine gifts of the Holy Spirit. And there are also innumerable times when through prayer physical healing has been granted. But there are also times when the Lord chooses *not* to heal, in order to teach us the deeper lessons of perseverance and faith! And there are also many times when He heals through the medical profession. We simply need to pray in the wisdom of the Lord, and to leave the choice with Him!

10. *Deliverance Ministries*: People who have been involved in the occult before having come to know the Lord, need to be delivered from the powers of darkness that formerly had control over their lives; and there are other circumstances as well when people need to be freed from satan's clutches. But in these days people have developed what is called "deliverance ministries" where deliverances are not directed at the unsaved (or at the newly saved who may be in need of them) but at true Believers in Jesus! And this is a deception in and of itself! For if someone *truly* belongs to Jesus, and is following His leading in their lives, *then it is absolutely impossible for them to also be possessed by demons!* Believing that true Believers can be demon-possessed gives satan great glory, as it shows him to be stronger than even the Lord! For how is it possible, *if we truly trust in the Lord's sovereignty and in His power over satan and his kingdom*, to believe that satan can inhabit that which truly belongs to God? It is *God* who is strongest, and therefore a true Believer in Jesus *cannot be possessed by demons!* We can be *oppressed* by satan, and need prayer for that, to *be sure*; but we can never be *possessed* by him if we truly belong to the Lord and live our lives in accordance with His will!

Many of the pastors involved in this type of ministry pray continually against satan in everyone's lives, not realizing at all that it does nothing but to glorify satan himself! We are to give glory to the *Lord* in our ministries, and anything which changes that focus is not of Him!

Again, it is taking a simple truth and carrying it to a dangerous extreme. Often these ministries are accompanied by "signs and wonders", and because things *happen*, people somehow always assume that it happens by the power of God! But the fruit of it is what must be always looked at. Does it give glory to God? Or to satan? And what is the Scriptural basis for it? Nowhere but nowhere does it say that true disciples of Jesus can also be

possessed by devils! If this would be so, then the Lord is not who He says that He is!

*"Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven.*

*Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then I will profess unto them, I never knew you, depart from Me, ye that work iniquity."*

Matthew 7:21-23

*11. Rapture:* This theory can only be heard in nations where Christianity is comfortable and where there is a minimum of persecution and difficulty. It teaches that before the time of the tribulation (or even in the middle of it) the church is going to be magically snatched away and saved from the difficult time that lies ahead. This belief is one that the adherents to it will argue the most vehemently and it is not so easy to "prove or disprove". But yet the whole history of the Bible, from one end to the other, shows us clearly, again and again and again, that to be chosen by God is *always* the pathway of greatest suffering. We can see it in the lives of almost all the people He used — in the lives of Abraham, Moses and the prophets; in the sufferings of Israel; in the death of His very own beloved Son; in the martyrdom and imprisonment of the apostles and early disciples. There is an illusive something in the hearts of the people who accept this doctrine that makes them feel that even though this is the standard that has been set for us, it won't happen to *them*. Perhaps it's an arrogance; but surely it's a lack of love, for *in love we long to share in the sufferings* of our *Beloved*. Whatever the reason, the fruit of it is that people are unprepared for the difficulties soon to come upon us, and therefore it will be almost impossible for them to stand in the testing time.

*"And ye shall be hated of all men for My name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."*

Matthew 10:22

*"And he that overcometh and keepeth My works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations."*

Revelation 2:26

*"And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled."*

Revelation 6:9-11

*"And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? And whence came they?"*

*And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of the great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."*

Revelation 7:13-14

*"Remember the word that I said unto you, the servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you . . ."*

John 15:20

12. *Lost Tribes of Israel:* This theory is becoming more prevalent than I can even believe, and it rests upon the false premise that of the original twelve tribes of Israel, only two remained and that therefore the Anglo-Saxons are the missing ten tribes of Israel! They then naturally impute all of the promises that God made to Israel to themselves, and completely disregard the regathering of the Jewish people in Israel today from all the tribes and nations! There is no Scriptural basis for this at all, and the dangers of spiritual arrogance are inherent in the acceptance of such a teaching!

13. *Spiritual Israel:* In this teaching, all of the Biblical promises of this day are no longer for "natural" Israel, which they believe has been forsaken by God, but are instead for the Church, which has now supposedly become "spiritual" Israel. This philosophy is evident even in some of the Christian Bible translations, which list all of the curses as being for natural Israel, but the blessings and promises for the Church. But Paul warns the Gentiles clearly not to become arrogant, that God has never forsaken the nation of Israel, and that the Gentiles who have believed in Jesus actually then become part through the promise of natural Israel!

*"And Abram said, Behold, to me Thou hast given no seed . . .  
And He brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and He said unto him, So shall thy seed be."*

Genesis 15:3,5

*"And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, And said, By Myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:  
That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gates of his enemies;  
And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed . . ."*

Genesis 22:15-18

*"Behold, I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in Mine anger, and in My fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely:  
And they shall be My people, and I shall be their God:  
And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear Me forever, for the good of them, and for their children after them:"*

*And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Me.*

*Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with My whole heart and with My whole soul."*

Jeremiah 32:37-41

*"He is the Lord our God: His judgments are in all the earth.  
He hath remembered His covenant for ever, the word which He  
commanded to a thousand generations.*

*Which covenant He made with Abraham, and His oath unto Isaac;  
And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an  
everlasting covenant:*

*Saying, Unto thee will I give the Land of Canaan, the lot of your  
inheritance."*

Psalm 105:7-11

*"I say then, Hath God cast away His people? God forbid, For I also am an  
Israelite, of the seed of Abraham. . .*

*God hath not cast away His people which He foreknew . . . God forbid: but rather  
through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to  
jealousy.*

*Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the  
riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fullness?*

*For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the  
branches.*

*And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert  
grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive  
tree;*

*Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but  
the root thee.*

*Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.*

*Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not  
high-minded, but fear:*

*For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not  
thee.*

*Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but  
toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in His goodness: otherwise thou also  
shalt be cut off.*

*And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able  
to graft them in again.*

*For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted  
contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the  
natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?*

*For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should  
be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the  
fullness of the Gentiles be come in.*

*And so all Israel shall be saved."*

Romans 11:1-2a, 11-12, 16-26

All of these are false teachings, and I'm sure that when people who are open to the Lord get led astray into one or more of these, that He tries in many ways to show them their error and to call them back to a right walk with Him. But many people refuse to heed the warnings. Why, I wonder? Perhaps it is pride, an inability to humble oneself before God, and to say: "Yes, I am wrong about this. Help me, Father!" Or perhaps they care more for the approval of man than for the approval of God.

Perhaps some of you reading this may also be caught up in one or more of these false teachings or deceptions. What was your reaction as you read what I've written? Anger? Resistance? Belligerence? Defensiveness? Pride? I wonder why? For if we are open to the Lord and yearn to walk in His humility, then we know that we have to *often* re-assess our priorities, to often re-evaluate where we are in our commitment to placing Him first in our lives! And if we are in any form of teaching that puts any priority whatsoever before a deeply obedient and committed life of faith with the Lord, then it *needs* to be re-assessed and changed! It is something far too serious to take lightly. We need to humble ourselves and recognize that we can make mistakes — but we don't have to remain in them!

For those of you who have just placed your lives in the Lord's hand, or do not even know the Lord at all, don't be frightened by all of this. The Lord is a faithful Shepherd, and will keep you close to His side as long as you carefully keep your eyes upon Him and His will for your lives. We are children of a loving Father, and He will show us when we turn to the right or to the left and will challenge us to return to the fold.

*"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."*

II Peter 3:17-18

We need to be rooted in a body of Believers with a shepherd; grounded in the Word of God; not fearful but wary.

*"Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.*

*Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.*

*For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.*

*But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation . . . by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.*

*Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.*

*And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;*

*And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.*

*Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, support the weak, be patient toward all men.*

*See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.*

*Rejoice evermore.*

*Pray without ceasing.*

*In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*

*Quench not the Spirit.*

*Despise not prophesyings.*

*Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.*

*Abstain from all appearance of evil.*

*And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it."*

I Thessalonians 5:5-24

# 25 TO THE UTTERMOST PARTS

**D**uring the winter of 1979-1980, I received an unmistakable challenge from the Lord. I was reading Corrie Ten Boom's book, *Tramp for the Lord*, a treasure of a book which tells of her adventures in obedience as the Lord's call on her life took her from one end of the earth to the other. (It's a sequel to her first book, *The Hiding Place*, which is a painfully beautiful testimony of Christian courage and sacrificial love during the devastating time of Hitler.) When I read the following passage, the Lord underlined it within my heart:

*"As God's love, the fruit of the Holy Spirit, was poured out into my heart, I set out again on my journeys, a tramp for the Lord . . ."*

It was a challenge from Him, I realized at once, and I was left with the distinct impression that soon I also would be travelling to distant lands. I had no idea whatsoever where I would be going or when this "journey" would commence, but the challenge from the Lord was impossible to miss!

When the Lord speaks to us in such a way, sometimes the "call" can be forgotten in the press and rush of daily events. But when it is truly God-given, He doesn't often let us forget that call for long! Something soon begins to stir within our hearts — a call to adventure, a deep sense of expectation — which hopefully finds a responsive chord from within us. It is often followed by an impatience on our part, an elusive thing that makes us long to get started, even though we may as yet have no idea where it is that we are heading!

It was only a short time thereafter that the Lord confirmed this challenge as I read the following passages from God's Fellow Workers, *Helpful Thoughts* from Hudson Taylor:

"Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature ..."Mark 16:15

*The Lord Jesus commands me, commands you, my brother, and you, my sister, "Go," says He, "go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Shall we tell Him that we have purchased five yoke of oxen or have married or are engaged in other and more interesting pursuits, and cannot go?*

"In these things I delight, saith the Lord." Jeremiah 9:24

*We serve a glorious Master, and the best part of our service is that which we cannot record — the joy and gladness that whole-hearted service brings to the very heart of God Himself. How imperfectly some of us have appreciated the privilege of giving pleasure to our Father and to our Saviour, and to the gracious Spirit who condescends to help our infirmities.*

"For me to live is Christ." Philippians 1:21

*Has Christ become to us such a living, bright reality that no post of duty shall be irksome, that as His witnesses we can return to the quiet home-side, or to the distant service, with heart more than glad, more than satisfied, even it may be when stripped of earthly friends and treasures?*

"Behold, I have set before thee an open door." Revelation 3:8

*Let but devoted labourers be found, who will prove faithful to God, and there is no reason to fear that God will not prove faithful to them. He will set before them an open door, and will esteem them of more value than the sparrows and the lilies that He clothes and feeds. He will be with them in danger, in difficulty, in perplexity.*

"Let me glean and gather after the reapers." Ruth 2:7

*Let us all leave the fatherland of the world, or at least become strangers and pilgrims in it. Where the need is greatest let us be found gladly obeying the Master's command. For it is in the harvest field, it is among the reapers, that we shall find Him . . .*

The mystery was solved some weeks later, and for me it could not have been more astonishing! One day shortly after Russell's funeral, I was again visiting with Marie in Nashville, Tennessee. Late one afternoon we sat together in an Italian restaurant eating pizza. To this day neither one of us can remember exactly what happened, but we both left the restaurant that day knowing from the Lord that in September of 1980 I would be travelling to the U.S.S.R.! (It's a good idea never to eat pizza with Marie!) It amazed me even more than the Presidential Prayer Breakfast or my visit with the Pope!

I had no idea where to begin to obtain a visa to that distant land, nor did I have any idea in the world why the Lord would be sending me there. It seemed to me the opposite of logic (so often the Lord's way), as from a Soviet perspective I had to be the worst possible combination of circumstances! I'm Jewish, I believe in Jesus, and I come from both Israel and the United States, the two nations that the Soviet government hates above all others! But the Lord's call was clear, and I knew that He expected me to take that first step of faith into the water and to apply for a visa to the Soviet Union!

Before leaving Marie's en route to Washington D.C. to apply for the visa, I joined her in an outreach ministry to a local corrections centre. I had never been inside a prison before, and so had only a vague idea of what to expect. But I remember being struck at once by the feeling of finality when the iron gates clinked firmly shut behind us. When I met the men imprisoned there and saw the conditions in which they were living, I could not comprehend what it must feel like for them to know that years of their lives — for some of them *all* of their lives — would be spent within the confines of that institution! It was a horrible realization even for me, and I knew that I would be free to walk out through those gates again that evening!

I told my testimony that night, and I believe that what I shared about Mike and Joey touched them the most deeply, as so many of them also had to be separated from children and families for long periods of time. I emphasized to them that it is Jesus alone who can care for those that we love, if we but place our lives in His capable hands!

Ministering with us that evening were two gospel singers, and I especially enjoyed one of their songs. It was an answer to the ridiculous theory of evolution, the antipathy of the

miracle of creation, espousing instead that we evolved naturally from apes! (I wonder if it makes the Lord want to laugh or to cry?) Their jingle went something like this:

*"Maybe your great-grandmother swung by her tail from a tree, But  
if life was formed when the sun hit the scum, then tell me —Where  
did the sun and the scum come from?  
The rumours aren't true — God isn't dead — He's not even sick!"*

At the conclusion of the meeting, it was a very moving moment when all of the inmates signed the love scroll for Israel. One of the prisoners commented to me later, "I would say that you can find Christ faster in prison than anywhere else, because at least the people in prison know that they have sinned. Sometimes it is hard at church to convince people of their sinfulness before God! But in prison, we *know* we have sinned. And perhaps then the Lord's forgiveness means even more!"

How strongly I sensed that evening that only through Jesus Christ could those men ever *truly* be free. And how I prayed for them, for God loves them very much! How wonderful that even if we have ruined our opportunities in our earthly life, He still provides us the opportunity for heaven!

A few days later, I arrived in Washington D.C. with a friend. Having no idea even where to begin, we stopped in a small coffee shop. While sipping a steaming cup of coffee, I glanced abstractedly down at the place mat under the coffee cup. I then noticed with much amazement that on the small map of the area printed on the mat was the location of the Russian Consulate, which happened to be just a few blocks away! And so we simply followed the map directly to the Consulate door!

The Russian Consulate had a foreboding feeling to it, but I entered the front door and walked over to the woman seated behind a glass partition. "I would like to apply for a visa to the Soviet Union in September," I informed her, having no idea exactly what to expect.

She gazed at me unsmilingly, and then replied, "It's extremely difficult to obtain a Soviet visa. You must first of all contact a man by the name of Mr. G. who is in charge of our visa service. He is very difficult to reach even by telephone and lives in another city."

It was a dilemma, as on the following day I was scheduled to travel to New Orleans and from there to take a cargo ship back to the port of Ashdod in Israel. And so I knew that I didn't have time to locate the official she was referring to! But yet I had been so certain of the Lord's direction in all of this!

"Would you like me to give you a card with Mr. G.'s telephone number and address?" she asked me impatiently.

"Yes, thank you," I answered, wondering how it would help to have the information when I had no time available to contact him! She pulled a card from her desk drawer, and began to hand it over to me when all at once she exclaimed, "Oh my goodness, here he is!" And at that very moment, Mr. G. walked through the Consulate door!

I recognized the Lord's timing at once, and in an undefinable way, I sensed that I could somehow trust Mr. G. even though he was employed by the Soviet Union!

"May I help you?" he asked warmly. I couldn't help but notice the tiny cross that he wore around his neck.

"Yes," I answered, "I would like to apply for a visa to the Soviet Union in September of 1980."

"Why, that's a *wonderful* month to go!" he exclaimed. "The prices will have gone down after the Olympics, and autumn in the Soviet Union is beautiful! Just send me three photographs, a copy of your passport, the cities you'd like to visit and the dates, and I'll get you a visa, no problem!" And so I sent him the information that he requested and awaited the news from Moscow as to whether or not my visa application would be approved.

The Lord's hand was operating in such a sovereign way that it all had a touch of unreality to it, which was soon to become the hallmark of my Soviet experiences!

We had to dash across the city upon leaving the Russian Consulate, for by an odd quirk I was due at 12:30 p.m. to address the prayer meeting at the Department of State. I had never before in my life been either to the Soviet Consulate nor to the State Department, and recognized it as the Lord's sense of humour that both visits should occur on the very same day! (Knowing that they are both involved in espionage work against one another, I felt a little guilty in spite of myself!)

I had been invited to the Department of State as a result of my sharing at the Congressional Wives prayer meeting, and was greatly impressed by the bond of fellowship that I found in this prayer group as well. I shared my testimony that afternoon, speaking strongly about our responsibility as Believers in the Messiah of Israel to stand with that nation. The response was heartwarming.

Following the prayer meeting a gentleman came up to shake my hand. "I work for the F.B.I. (Federal Bureau of Investigation)," he informed me, and my thoughts raced back to the Russian Consulate. But of course, he had only come forward to thank me for my message and not to grill me on my reasons for having just been to the Russian Consulate!

The journey by sea from New Orleans to Ashdod was scheduled to take about 14 days, but we hit a storm in the mid-Atlantic and needed to detour, which extended the voyage by an additional three days. I adore travelling by sea, and also very much appreciate the simplicity of travel on a cargo vessel. There were only four passengers in addition to myself, and no entertainment. The meals were marvellous, and my life had been so unscheduled in the previous months that the concept of three regular meals a day was somehow a comfort to me! I loved the long lazy days on the upper deck when the weather permitted, studying the Bible or gazing out at the great expanses of ocean.

The crossing was not totally idyllic, however. First of all, while in the States I had come across some teachings, and following the intensity of the Presidential Prayer Breakfast my natural "spiritual guard" had relaxed sufficiently for me to succumb to them. I was told by some very forceful individuals that I needed to "claim" for myself all the gifts of the Holy Spirit. They gave me huge lists of Scriptures, instructing me to claim them all for myself and to recite them aloud to the Lord each and every day. And so every single day of the Atlantic crossing found me pacing around my little cabin, claiming this thing and claiming that thing as my "right" as a follower of Jesus. The Lord kept His distance during that time, to be sure, but I was too busy involved in my endless "claiming" to really notice Him very much at all!

But one night, as I was standing on the aft deck, totally alone and watching the sun slip over the far horizon, I suddenly felt the presence and the holiness of the Lord, in an awesome and powerful way. He said to me, (and I could sense the disappointment in His voice), "Why are you so busy asking for this and asking for that? Do you no longer trust My judgment and care for you as My daughter? I have given you the gift of My *love*. *It is the greatest gift of them all*, but yet it seems that for you it is not quite enough. It seems that you are interested in the more 'visible' gifts, the very things that would bring attention to you as a person, *instead of My love, which can only be a reflection of My glory*."

I could feel in every fibre of my being that I had been engaged in a shameful pursuit, that I was willfully spurning the wonderful gift that He *had* given me, for something that could glorify me in the eyes of man. Oh, how incredibly the Lord is able in a single moment to put everything in its proper perspective, and to show our vanity for just what it is! Right there on the stern of the ship I fell to the floor weeping, feeling the shame of it so clearly, and feeling also so grieved for having wounded His heart through my own callousness and insensitivity. "Oh, Father, please forgive me for having taken so lightly the gift of Your love! Forgive me

for having clamoured for other things; and help me from now on to simply entrust my life more completely to You, to simply be open and available to be used as Your vessel, *and to leave the choices for what that will entail to Your great wisdom.*"

As William Temple so aptly said:

*"When we pray, 'Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire', we had better know what we are about. He will not carry us to easy triumphs and gratifying successes . . . He may take us through loneliness, desertion by friends, apparent desertion even by God; that was the way Christ went to the Father. He may drive us into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. He may lead us from the Mount of Transfiguration (if He ever lets us climb it) to the hill that is called the Place of a Skull. For if we invoke Him, it must be to help us in doing God's will, not ours. We cannot call upon the*

*Creator Spirit, by whose aid  
The world's foundations first were laid  
in order to use omnipotence for the supply of our futile pleasures or the success of our futile plans. If we invoke Him, we must be ready for the glorious pain of being caught by His power out of our petty orbit into the eternal purposes of the Almighty, in whose onward sweep our lives are as a speck of dust. The soul that is filled with the Spirit must have become purged of all pride or love of ease, all self-complacence and self-reliance; but that soul has found the only real dignity, and only lasting joy. Come then, Great Spirit, come. Convict the world; and convict my timid soul."*

It's an odd thing when something like that happens, for we know without a doubt that the Lord has indeed forgiven us, but yet it is something that we can never quite forget. Perhaps that memory is what keeps us faithful the next time, or even the time after that.

The other complication on the otherwise blissful journey had to do with one of the other passengers on board the ship. One of my fellow-passengers was a Christian, but the other three were Jewish. There was an elderly Jewish couple on a retirement trip to Israel, and a Jewish school teacher named Jan who had recently been widowed. When the three of them found out that I was a Jewess who believed in Jesus, each of them reacted in an extreme way. The elderly couple simply stopped talking to me, and on a small ship this was incredibly noticeable! For example, often in the evenings we would play "Scrabble" with the Captain. But whenever I would enter the area to join the game, the Jewish couple would immediately rise and leave the room! The other Jewish woman dealt with it by arguing with me vociferously during every meal! Many times I would return to my cabin in despair. "Lord, why is this happening? Why are You allowing it? What should I do?"

And He would always answer me, "Be firm and don't waver. She is simply trying to see if you will back down or if she can talk you out of your beliefs, for she is desperately looking for something that she can really trust in. Be faithful to the Truth, and you will see My grace!"

And then, after every meal, I would have to appease the galley steward, who would become dreadfully upset by the way Jan spoke to me about my faith during mealtimes. I would try to explain to him how the Jewish people had been hurt and hated and killed in Jesus' name, but he would continue to say to me nevertheless, "But why do you take it? Why do you let her talk to you that way? Why don't you just sock her in the jaw?" And he would roll his eyes in mock exasperation.

This went on every single day for each of the 17 days of our crossing! The only pleasant conversation Jan and I ever had was held one evening when we discussed how our fathers had both sung to us the same old Yiddish lullaby.

When the day finally arrived when we were scheduled to dock in the Ashdod port, I went

early in the morning to the top deck to catch the first glimpse of the Israeli coast. As we drew nearer, unexpectedly I burst into tears, as every inch of the Ashdod coastline brought back one memory or another of my time together with Michael and Joey in 1976. It was unbelievably painful, and finally I just couldn't bear to look. Just as I was turning to go back down to my cabin, I spotted Jan making her way up to the deck. When she stood next to me some minutes later I noticed that she had tears in her eyes.

"Esther," she said to me quietly, "when we approached the coast of Israel, I turned on the radio, and do you know what came on right away? It was the very same Yiddish lullaby that we had talked about!" And when she shared that, we both knew that it was the Messiah of Israel who was softening her heart. In the two days that followed, He completely melted all of her reserves, and for Jan the questions of her lifetime were answered at last. It was beautiful to see, and made all those terrible mealtimes worth it by far! And it was a reminder, albeit a gentle one, of the greatness and the tenderness of His love, a love before which no heart can stand, the *very love that I had almost spurned*.

The Lord let me know upon my return to Israel that I would be travelling not just to the Soviet Union, but to Australia and New Zealand as well. It did not seem to me to be a very direct route, but in faith I contacted a friend in Australia and another in New Zealand, telling them both that I would be able to come to their respective countries in July and August and would be willing to speak wherever the Lord opened a door. I then ordered a one-way ticket to Australia in obedience to the Lord. But it seemed like such a great amount of money to spend to travel such a terribly long distance, and I could only hang on in faith that I had not heard wrongly from the Lord. But as always, He is so faithful to bless our obedience! Two weeks later my Australian visa arrived in the mail, and at the very moment that I was showing it to friends, the doorbell rang and the postman delivered a telegram to me from friends in Australia welcoming me there!

The itinerary the Lord had confirmed by then was for me to travel first to England, then to Norway, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and on to the U.S.S.R. with a stop-over in Tokyo, Japan. After three weeks in the Soviet Union, I would then travel by train from Moscow through Romania and Bulgaria to Greece.

Late one night, Sid, Betsy and I received a phone call from a mutual friend. He was lost having tried in vain to locate our apartment and asked that we meet him at the telephone booth from where he had placed the call. We found him at last and guided him back to the correct address, and while we were sitting together over a cup of tea, I casually mentioned to him the fact that I would soon be going to the Soviet Union. Having met him on a dark, windy night at a phone booth already felt like something out of the spy movies, but then when he heard the news of my proposed trip, he gave me the briefing that I needed in order to know what to expect upon my arrival in the U.S.S.R.! Although he said nothing about it, we could tell that he himself had travelled more than once to Eastern-bloc countries.

"The Soviet Union has a system of espionage that is completely foreign to Western comprehension," he told us that night. "They place it as the highest priority, and all that you've heard thus far — which no doubt to you has seemed like an exaggeration — is indubitably not even half the story. But what is important for you to know is that the tourist hotels are very carefully watched by the KGB (the Soviet secret service). For example, on every floor a woman is designated to pass out the keys, but the primary responsibility of these 'key ladies' is to watch carefully the behaviour of the tourists on her floor and to report at once anything unusual or suspicious to the KGB. And in this way they can keep accurate tabs on when you leave and when you return and who you are seen with. In addition, the hotel rooms will be bugged by the KGB, and as far-fetched as it sounds, you will do well to believe that I'm telling you the truth! So therefore say nothing whatsoever of importance

while in your hotel room. Wait until you are outside on the street. If in an emergency you must say something, then go into the bathroom and run the water, as that will momentarily break the bugging apparatus. But the wisest move of all is simply to save the important conversations for someplace other than the hotels. Be wary also of the cab drivers, especially the black cabs that surround the tourist hotels. They also are KGB agents, and will know at once where you are going and this also will be reported. My suggestion is that you take public transportation whenever possible! I would also recommend that if you plan to contact people, you need to be aware that this is strictly forbidden by the Soviet regime. There is nothing that makes them more frantic and paranoid than for a Soviet citizen to have any contact with someone from the West. So if you need to call someone before visiting them, avoid using hotel telephones but use one on the street some distance from the hotel."

It all seemed too outlandish to possibly be true. But some days later I was visiting with my lawyer in his office, and when I mentioned to him as well of my proposed trip to the U.S.S.R., he told me almost verbatim the same information that our other friend had given me! When I heard it for the second time, again from someone I trusted and respected, I knew that I had to take it seriously. I recognized it at last as the Lord's preparation for this trip behind the Iron Curtain. At the Lord's direction, I had told Mr. G. in a phone conversation before I left the States that I very much disliked travelling with a tour group and therefore preferred to travel to the U.S.S.R. by myself. And finally I understood it, for if I was alone I would be free of the constant pressure of worrying about what I was saying while in the hotel rooms. And also while I was back in the room, I would be free to be open and listening to the Lord. I also later learned that the tour groups are kept under very careful tabs, and it would therefore have been extremely difficult for me to leave the group without arousing suspicions. An individual visa such as the one I requested is usually almost impossible to obtain, but the Lord we serve is Lord of all!

Some days later, I was speaking with a tour group in the basement of a Jerusalem hotel in a small room behind the bar when a Norwegian couple, by the name of Oddrun and Carl, came in to listen. Oddrun, ill with cancer, had come to ask for prayer from the tour leader. They had read about me in a Norwegian magazine some years earlier, and after the meeting they invited me to visit them in Norway when I arrived there the following month. Another purposeful thread had been added to the Weaver's cloth, as you'll soon see!

On the 8th of June, 1980, I said a sad farewell to the small group of friends who had come to the airport to see me off. I knew that it would be many weeks before I would see them again! I arrived in London, and had some wonderful visits with old friends around the London area, and also spoke at a dear church in Birmingham, the heart of the industrial midlands. At the end of the week I took the ferry from Harwich, England, to Oslo, Norway, and met a very precious and dedicated Believer on board from Gambia, who was studying at a Bible school in England so as to be better prepared to bring the Word to his people. His faith strengthened mine, which at the very beginning of such a long and uncertain journey was wavering quite a bit!

I had been invited in Norway to speak at the summer meeting of a group called "The Word and Israel", and would spend a week first with Jenny and Wolfgang. They had been such a great comfort and help to me during the saddest six months of my life, and it was so kind of the Lord to enable us four years later to share some happier times!

One evening Jenny and I visited Oddrun and Carl, the couple I had met in the Jerusalem hotel. Earlier that day they had bumped into some friends that they had not seen for a number of years, and felt to invite them to join us that evening as well. As soon as they arrived, Kris introduced himself as a physicist at the university. I was not expecting his next statement, and I really think my heart skipped a beat or two, as he explained, "My primary

work, however, as a Christian is to try to free the Soviet Jews . . ."

He was amazed when I told him of my planned trip to the Soviet Union in September. The six of us spoke together for many hours, and the next day Jenny and I were invited to meet with Kris in his office at the university. There he had files of many Jewish families in the U.S.S.R. who have been persecuted because of their applications for visas to Israel. He told us that he knew personally many of the Jewish families. "Many are scientists," he told us, "who lost their jobs shortly after applying to leave Russia for Israel. They have formed an underground university which is attended by many scientists from the West, and that is how I have come to know many of these people." He then gave me the address of a family to visit in Moscow, in Leningrad and in Kiev, three of the cities I had planned to visit. He explained that these families were persecuted and under the surveillance of the KGB. "Don't try to hide your going to these homes," he said, "because the KGB will know anyway where you are. Just go! But — and this is vitally important — have friends form a prayer chain against the power of the KGB for each and every day of your visit there, and they will therefore be prevented by the Lord from doing anything to you or to the families you visit!" It was tremendously important advice!

It was the first hint I had that I would be visiting Jewish people in the U.S.S.R., and not Believers! It surprised me very much! Kris also handed me a picture of a woman by the name of Ida Nudel, who is revered by the "refuseniks" in Russia because of her bravery and selflessness. She was forced to serve four years of "internal exile" for displaying a banner on her balcony asking for a visa to Israel. I took the picture and the address, feeling a special bond with Kris who has been so faithful to the commandment to bless God's chosen people.

There are times in a life of faith when the Lord's provision comes in a way so touching it is almost overwhelming. On the "midsummer night" — so lovely! — I met a Believer who had served the Lord for many years in Korea. He helped me with contacts and recommended a place to stay in Tokyo, and also gave me a large map of Leningrad. Living beneath his modest apartment in a small flat was his wife's aunt, a blind woman close to 100 years old. She asked Jenny to write her name on the love scroll for her, telling of her great love for the Jewish people and for the nation of Israel. She then felt her way over to her desk, reached into the drawer, and took out some money, asking Jenny how much it was. Then she placed it in my hand. "It is for you," she said. Her response to my tearful thank you is ageless from Believers' lips: "Don't thank me. It's from the Lord!" And so it was.

My time at the "Word and Israel" conference the following week was a special blessing. And my friend Marja from Finland (who I had last seen at the Haifa youth hostel) was able to be there, too! I was encouraged to see much love for Israel from the people attending the conference.

Early in July I left Norway for the United States, especially grateful for the time I had spent together with Jenny and Wolfgang. Upon arriving in the States, I learned at once that my visa for Russia had been approved and that the tickets were waiting for me in Mr. G.'s office. Also waiting for me in the U.S. was a letter from Karen Kolbinsky, who shared with me about her meeting with Richard Wurmbbrand. And then she wrote:

*"As I was praying for you today, I sensed from the Lord that He was going to send you behind the Iron Curtain — to the Jews and to the Brethren — to minister to them and to be ministered to by their perfect faith. If it is Him, it will come to pass. Please let me know when it does!"*

It was an amazing confirmation to me, as I had told her nothing of my intentions to travel to the Soviet Union!

Also waiting for me on my first day back in the States was the \$1,800.00 I needed for my three weeks of travel through Russia, including air fare from Tokyo to Moscow; train fare from Moscow to Bucharest; and all hotel accommodations and internal transportation.

I later arrived at Mr. G.'s home, still astonished at the ease with which the Lord had opened the door for my entrance visa to the U.S.S.R.! Mr. G. gave me a great deal of helpful advice to ease my adjustment to the Soviet mode of travel, carefully explaining the "Intourist" voucher system. He also assured me that he had worked it out for me to travel anywhere I wanted to go in the Soviet Union as well as to all of Eastern Europe! I couldn't help but wonder how he had managed it.

While in the States, I had planned to visit first with Michael and Joey in Connecticut, and then with my sister and brother-in-law in Minnesota and finally with my parents in Arizona before my departure for Australia from San Francisco. I arrived in Connecticut only to discover that Mike and Joey's father had mixed up the dates and that the boys were in a different part of the country visiting relatives! He informed me that they would be available the following weekend, however. Because of my non-refundable budget fare to Australia, I could not change my departure date from the States. So naturally I decided instead to cancel the visits with my parents and sister, which would then enable me to have a four-day visit with Joey and Michael. When I called my sister Goldie to explain the situation to her, she exclaimed, "But you have to come! We've advertised at the Congregation that you were going to speak on Friday night for ages now. Please come — even if it's only for one day!"

I brought it before the Lord, certain that He would tell me still to cancel the visit and to stay with the children. Instead, He clearly confirmed that it was His will for me to go to Minneapolis and Arizona! With a sinking heart, I realized that I would then be left with only one day, Thursday, to be with Joey and Mike! I was devastated, having already forgotten that our walk with the Lord does not consist of only a single commitment but of continual submission to His will and continual reaffirmation that He is first in our lives.

Our one day together was a special time, and the Lord really graced it with His presence and love. We had so much to tell one another! They had made prior arrangements for me to watch their baseball game on Saturday, and they had also planned things for us to do on each of the four days we were to have been together. It was so hard to have to tell them that we would be together for only this one day. My heart ached with love for them, but I had no answer for their disappointment except for tears.

The next morning, a dreary and drizzly day, I sadly boarded the plane for the beginning of a journey that would take me far from Connecticut. As the plane took off, the Lord said gently, "There's sunshine above the clouds, you know . ." But I felt too sorry for myself then to accept the word of hope He was offering me! But the Lord once again put everything in its proper perspective. En route to Minneapolis, I read of a Believer in Russia who was imprisoned and separated from her children for fourteen years. With His grace I was finally able to see that even one day together could be a special gift from His hand. And, to be sure, above the clouds the sunshine was waiting!

In Minneapolis, Goldie met me at the airport, and it was wonderful to see her again. When we climbed into the car, I was astonished to see a plain metal band around her wrist, engraved in the following way:

Ida Nudel  
21/6/1978

She was wearing on her wrist the same name as the picture of the woman that Kris had given me! Goldie had no idea why I was so astonished, and calmly explained to me that the Jewish community and all the members of the Messianic Congregation were wearing them, as a symbol of their unity with the Soviet Jews who had been refused exit visas to Israel.

When I spoke that night at the congregation, and told them about my proposed journey to the Soviet Union in September, we were all amazed at how closely bonded the Lord had kept us during the five years they had stood with me in prayer.

The next morning, as I prayed before speaking to the Congregation again, the Lord told me to read to them the following passage from the Scriptures:

*"By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.*

*We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.*

*For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion.*

*How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?*

*If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.*

*If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy . . ."*

Psalm 137:1-6

The Lord then had me ask them, "How can you sing God's praises in a foreign land? For centuries our people have lived with the hope of the return to the land of promise. And here, in our lifetime, for the first time in almost two thousand years, there is a nation that is set apart as a homeland, a God-given homeland, for the Jewish people. It is our common heritage, given to us by the Almighty God. And so what are you doing here in the land of our dispersion?"

It was a challenge to them, a call from the Lord to return home to Zion, and He anointed it so deeply that everyone began to weep. And in the midst of their lament, an elderly Jewish man, the father of one of the members of the Congregation, touched me on the shoulder. We went out into the hall to talk, and he ended up giving his heart and his life to the Messiah of Israel! How thankful I was at that moment that I had heeded the Lord instead of my own natural longings to be with Joey and Michael at their baseball game! For now someone else will be welcomed in Heaven, and the Messianic Jewish Congregation had been challenged to come home to Israel!

Just before I left, the leader of the Congregation gave me his band with Ida's name engraved upon it. "Bring it to Russia with you," he instructed me.

The Lord had yet another surprise in store! One hour before my departure from Minneapolis, the Lord provided the money for my sister, Goldie, to fly with me to our parents' home in Arizona! It was the first time we had been together as a family for many years, and it was a very special surprise for my parents! We had a good visit. I was able to share with my parents all about my visit to Rome, and about the National Prayer Breakfast, and about my upcoming trip to the Soviet Union. My father's family had come from the Ukraine, in villages very close to Kiev, so my dad was especially interested in that part of my journey. On my last morning there, they told me again that I'm crazy and a traitor to Judaism (yep, they're still Jewish parents!) but I know that many seeds were planted.

The following day I boarded the plane that would take me on my way to "the uttermost parts of the earth . . ."

When I travel for the Lord, He often sends me with a one-way ticket, and almost always without enough money to get to the next country, and with the firm admonition that He alone is to know of my financial need. He gave me the understanding that if I am in His will then He *must* provide the money for me to get to the place He wants me to be! One day when I was somewhere penniless and besought the Lord for help, He teasingly informed

me, "If I *don't* provide the money for you to get to the next place, then it simply means that this is where I want you to spend the rest of your life, so what are you worried about?"

I arrived in Sydney, Australia, with my usual one-way ticket, and the sum of \$20.00 in my pocket! One of the Believer's in Sydney was supposed to meet me at the airport, but it soon became evident that no one was there to meet me at all! I called the telephone number I had been given, and was greeted by a recording, telling me that no one was at home and to leave a message at the sound of the "beep". So I lamely said, "This is Esther, and I'm here! I'll call back later."

At that point, I said to the Lord, "Great, so what do I do now? Here I am, almost as far from home as I can get, there's no one here to meet me, and I have almost no money whatsoever and no ticket out of here!"

I expected some practical advice, some hope of assistance, but instead He replied to me, most unexpectedly, "You're going to buy an apartment in Jerusalem . . ." It didn't seem at that point that I would ever even *see* Jerusalem again for the rest of my life, so I did not know how to relate to that bit of impossible and improbable sounding information at all!

I inquired at the tourist information desk, and they suggested that I could take the airport bus into Sydney, and if I still was not able to reach my friends, there would be a youth hostel where I could find very cheap accommodation. So an hour later I found myself at the address they had suggested. It was in the heart of "King's Cross", a notoriously bad part of town. The bus let me off in front of a dilapidated building, where I enquired about a place to stay. "There are no single rooms, you must sleep in the dormitory, and you have to help with the cleaning if you wish to stay here," was the brusque reply.

At that point a wonderful sense of expectancy began to awaken within my heart. I had travelled for the Lord often enough to know that if things were going that badly, it could only be due to satan's anger over the special things that were soon to transpire. So I grinned and began to really praise the Lord! And, sure enough, I soon was rescued from King's Cross, spoke to many meetings in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne, and was greatly blessed by the warmth that I felt in the welcome of His love from so many hearts.

In New Zealand, a startlingly beautiful country, I spoke on the national radio station, on a Christian radio station in Christchurch in the South Island, and to thirty meetings in twenty-two days! I also spent an hour with Yacov Morris, the Israeli Ambassador to New Zealand. He was very moved when he saw the New Zealand Believers' heartwarming response to the love scroll. So many thousands of signatures!

At one point in the conversation, he presented me with the following problem: "Let's say that in the middle of the desert there was a gentleman and a Jew, both about to die of dehydration, and they had one glass of water between them. The gentleman would share it, and they both would die; and the Jewish man would drink it, so that one person would live. As a Jewish Believer in Jesus, what would you do?"

It was an odd thing, but at that moment I had no answer for him whatsoever. But the following week, the Lord prompted me to write a letter to him, telling him how much I enjoyed our visit together, and then saying:

*"You remember the conversation we had concerning the gentleman and the Jew? Well, since the time of our meeting together, the Lord has given me the answer! The gentleman would share the water, and both would die. The Jew would drink it to enable one to live. But I would be able to give the glass of water away, for the Lord would keep me alive without it!"*

Following so many busy weeks, the Lord gave me a five-day "stop-over" rest in Honolulu en route to Japan. His gracious provision amazed me, and it was a joy to spend days of quiet and to be renewed by His gentle love.

One afternoon in Waikiki, the Lord instructed me to sign up for an afternoon "luau", a Polynesian feast held in a cove some distance to the city. I obeyed Him very dubiously, and the following day I boarded a bus headed for "Paradise Cove". As soon as I was seated, a young woman sat next to me, telling me at once that she was Armenian. We spent the rest of the afternoon together.

While at the "luau", the master of ceremonies asked the audience what country each person was from. And so I raised my hand, announcing that I was from Israel. But a short time later, it got me in trouble! After some Polynesian music, they announced an accelerated course in Polynesian dancing, asking for volunteers from the audience. When very few volunteered, the master of ceremonies yelled, "Where's that one from Israel? Come on up here!" And he propelled me on to the stage. I knew that the Lord had gotten me into this, and I surely did not appreciate one bit His sense of humour at that moment! I later was awarded a certificate certifying that "Esther Dorflinger has successfully completed an accelerated course in Polynesian dancing at the Paradise Cove Luau." Good grief!

But even in that, the Lord had a greater purpose in mind. The Armenian girl met me later that evening for a cup of coffee at my small hotel, and told me the story of how eight years earlier she also had known the Lord in a personal way. "But I asked Him to do something in my life, and when He showed me that it was not in His will, I walked away from Him and have been waiting ever since."

I smiled at her. "Well, you know, you might just as well give up and return to Him, for the Lord cannot and will not bless something that is not of Him! He still loves you, and I'm sure He sent me to that luau just so that I could tell you that! But don't think for a minute that you can be more stubborn than He can be! Just give up, and return to Him, for His love for you is everlasting! But he cannot agree to something that would be against His greater purposes in your life!" And so after such a very long time, she returned to the Shepherd's fold. And as much as I hate to admit it, even being forced to dance the "hula" was worth it just to see her joy!

My stay in Tokyo was brief, and all too soon I found myself boarding an Aeroflot plane en route to Moscow!

# My 26

## “THE OLD COUNTRY”

On my grandfather's side of the family were Jewish immigrants from the Ukraine. My grandfather was a little wisp of a man with a great droopy moustache named Joseph Korsunsky, one of the kindest, gentlest men I have ever met. My grandmother Rose was a large woman, very domineering, with an iron will. I heard often their reminiscences of the "old country", and as a child with a vivid imagination, I tried to picture for myself what life in their little villages could have been like. Most of their friends were from the "old country" as well, and many times I would go with my grandmother and her Ukrainian and Russian friends to the Jewish market in New York. It was teeming with life, and to a small child from a quiet New England town, it was always a great adventure!

They had left the Soviet Union for the United States in 1902 or thereabouts, and later brought up six children in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. Their first home was so close to the railroad tracks that the walls would rattle as the trains would go roaring by!

It seems odd, so many years later, to be on my way to the "old country" myself, to the place where part of my family had lived so many years before. (My mother's grandparents had come from Austria and Poland). My thoughts raced back to those childhood years as the plane took off from Tokyo's Narita airport en route to Moscow.

The Lord had made it clear to me that my job was not to bring Bibles into Russia, other than my own Bible which is allowed for personal use. So when I arrived at the customs desk at the Moscow airport, I had only a few things in my possession that would have negative consequences if they were discovered. I have two U.S. passports, one containing all of my Israeli visas and the other for travel to the rest of the world, as many countries especially behind the Iron Curtain have no diplomatic relations with Israel and I would not be allowed in. Therefore, the passport containing the Israeli visas had been carefully hidden, and I also hid the addresses of the Jewish families and Ida Nudel's bracelet and picture.

After my visa was approved, I was directed to the airport police and told to open my suitcase. I had never before been faced with a responsibility such as when preparing for this trip behind the Iron Curtain. I knew that if I had arrived in Russia outside the will of God, that even the lives of the people I was to visit could be in danger. It was a sobering thought, and as the search through my luggage began, the reality of it really hit home. My heart began to race, and I inwardly cried out to the Lord to protect the lives he had entrusted me with. "Please, oh God, don't let them find the addresses or the bracelet!" Every single thing that I owned was checked by them, *except for the three articles in which the documents were hidden!*

Shortly after the search, I was guided to the black car that "Intourist" provided and was whisked through the streets of Moscow to the hotel I had been assigned to. There was such a dark and oppressive feeling to this capital city, and the city itself seemed so

overwhelmingly huge! Everywhere were pictures and statues of Lenin, so exalted in place of God.

I had a happy surprise awaiting me when I arrived at the hotel — Mr. G. was there to greet me! Circumstances had brought him to Moscow at the same time that I was there! There's no way to describe how thrilled I was to see him! He helped me so much to get used to the formalities of Russian travel. He showed me the intricacies of dining in a Russian hotel (they usually have nothing available that's listed on the menu), and he helped me to get oriented in just so many ways! It was truly the hand of the Lord, and I was sorry to have to say goodbye to him as I left two days later on my way to Leningrad!

It was in Leningrad that I was to visit the first family on my list. I knew not to take cabs near the hotel to the address, so with the help of the map provided in Norway, I was on my own! It took me many hours to finally locate the apartment, and on the way I knew that I was seeing a part of Soviet life that tourists seldom do. There is no way I could ever describe the harshness of life behind the Iron Curtain. The grocery stores everywhere were practically empty, with almost nothing available except for cabbages, potatoes, and the kind of apples that usually would be left on the ground for the birds to eat! People were forced to wait in long lines to purchase "luxuries" such as tomatoes, and even the department stores had only dismal displays of merchandise. Most of the apartment buildings were in terrible condition. Every single thing in the Soviet Union is owned by the State, and there is almost no private enterprise allowed except for things such as the sale of flowers. (People are able to sell their own home-grown flowers, and they would stand out in the cold so pitifully long just to sell a handful!)

There was also such a fear in the people. They were forbidden to talk with foreigners, and they were unable to trust even their neighbours, for there are so many informers! It was heartbreaking to see such an oppressed people, and to know that they had no hope.

When I finally located Ida and Aba Taratuta's apartment, I knocked on the door but no one answered! It was discouraging after having searched for their home almost the entire day. When I prayed, I simply felt to drop a note in their mailbox informing them that I would return the following day at 11:00 a.m.

The next morning Ida greeted my knock, and gave me such a warm welcome to their small apartment! Ida explained that her husband would not be home for at least two weeks. "He is a scientist," she explained, "but as soon as we applied for visas to Israel, he was fired from his job. For a long time he was unable to obtain work, but now he is working on the construction of a building quite a distance from Leningrad, so he is only able to return home for a short visit every few weeks."

She went on to explain that they were very fearful for their son, as he was 18 years old and could be arrested any time due to his refusal to join the Soviet army because of his application for a visa to Israel. I don't think that we in the West can really fully understand what kind of anguish that must be for a mother to bear, as it simply has never been a part of our experiences!

She later asked if I had noticed that only cabbages were available in the shops, and then said that in the winter time it would be even worse. Much of the food had been used for the Olympics, and what was left then would feed the tourists and the elite in the Soviet system of government.

Ida was amazed to learn that I had come from Israel, and we spoke together for quite a long time. I told her much about life in the land she was willing to risk everything to return to! For sixty years the Soviet government has tried systematically to stamp out any trace of religion and belief in God, and many families like Ida and Aba grew up knowing nothing about Judaism except that they were discriminated against because they were Jews. They could barely remember the traditions of their parents or grandparents. But yet, through the

miraculous hand of God, even under such oppression, they found an awakening to Judaism within their hearts, which was strong enough to make them willing to risk everything to return to Israel, their homeland.

Ida tenderly told me that Aba was a Hebrew teacher and that the traditions of old, the very heritage of the Jewish people, were coming to life within them.

She told me how their apartment had been searched in the spring, and that the police had taken the Hebrew books but not the English ones, so they still had the Holy Scriptures. She also explained that in a way it was almost a relief to be known by the State as Jews wanting to leave the country, because it gave them a certain amount of freedom to be Jews that they didn't have before. She felt that, because they had already been "refuseniks" for eight long years, they were being used as examples to discourage others from applying for exit visas. "But," she added, *"we still have hope."* *"Such a contrast to the rest of the people in that oppressive nation!*

I encouraged her in the love of God for them, and shared many of the miracles that have occurred in Israel in the past 32 years. I also shared with her about Jesus, explaining how I had come to realize that He was the fulfillment of all of the Messianic promises God had made to our people. She was very amazed, and had never heard of such belief before! I also told her of the great love that all true followers of Jesus have for Israel and the Jewish people, and she seemed deeply moved.

Ida served me biscuits and tea, and gave me a beautiful wooden spoon that had been hand-crafted in a distant Ukrainian village. We discovered that her grandparents had grown up in the same town that my grandmother had come from!

After leaving her home after our visit together, I purchased in the "Beriozka" tourist-only gift shop a wooden dish exactly like hers, so that I will be able to serve biscuits to her from it when the day arrives and I can welcome them to Jerusalem. My heart was filled with awe as I realized that the Lord had enabled me to bring His love to such a brave Jewish woman in the Soviet Union! It was a blessed time.

My next stop was the Ukrainian city of Kiev. Many things there brought back childhood memories, from times spent with my Ukrainian grandparents. Some of the villages looked so unchanged by time, I could almost visualize what their lives must have been like.

In Kiev I was to visit a scientist by the name of Vladimir Kislik. Each day I faithfully journeyed to his apartment, but there was never a response to my knocking. On Saturday, my very last day in the city, I woke up fully expecting the Lord to send me immediately to his home again. But He told me instead to go shopping! As a matter of fact, the Lord did not tell me to head for Vladimir's home until 3:00 in the afternoon! This astonished me, since my train was due to leave for Odessa at 10:00 that same night, and at 7:00 p.m. I had an appointment to meet Sasha, a young Russian who had shared a meal with me at the hotel. But I knew from long experience that the Lord's timing is always perfect!

I arrived and knocked expectantly on the door, and was very surprised when there was still no answer! Because I knew the Lord had told me to go at that time! Just as I turned to leave, the door to the rickety elevator opened, and a couple knocked on an apartment door at the end of the small hall. A woman answered, and spotting me standing by Vladimir's door, she enquired where I was from. I felt from the Lord to tell her the truth. "Israel," I replied, and tears welled in her eyes as she quickly beckoned me to come inside.

I loved her, even though she couldn't speak English and I couldn't speak Yiddish or Russian, but we could speak with our hearts! She immediately phoned for someone to come who could speak English. She kept offering me things to eat, and kept reassuring me, "English is coming, English is coming!"

A short time later, a lovely young Jewish girl by the name of Natasha arrived to translate for us. She explained to me that I was at the home of her aunt Shoshanna, who that very



Changing of the guard at Lenin's Tomb, Red Square, Moscow



Landmark on Red Square (This former church is now a "museum")

week was leaving the Soviet Union to join her sister in Massachusetts. And in the Lord's timing, I arrived at the very moment that a farewell party had been planned for her! Almost at once the doorbell began to ring, as one Jewish family after the other filed into Shoshanna's miniscule flat.

Natasha explained that all the people were so touched that God would send them someone from Israel that they were all almost speechless. She said that they had heard only bad propaganda on Soviet television against Israel, and that they all longed to hear the truth. Many of them had applied for visas to Israel, including Natasha and her parents, and the love that they all expressed for little Israel kept bringing tears to my eyes. I told them everything I could think of about Israel, difficulties included. I told them of the hush that falls over the city as Jerusalem comes to rest for the Sabbath. I told them of the joyous celebrations for Simchat Torah, Purim, Chanukah, and Succot, and the solemnity of the Passover and Rosh Hashanah, and how the whole nation comes to a standstill for a day of prayer and fasting on Yom Kippur. "It's a hard place to live in some ways," I told them, "but it's home!" And we all shed some tears together.

Many of them had already faced separation from relatives, and I sensed again the fear-mixed-with-sadness-and-hope that has been a part of our common heritage for a long, long time. They explained to me that Vladimir, the scientist I had hoped to visit, had been arrested when he had attended the Olympic games in Moscow in August. At that time the authorities sent him to a mental hospital so that he would not "cause trouble" during the games, and when I left the U.S.S.R. he had not as yet been released.

I shared with them about their Messiah, too, and, as with so many people in Israel, I found an eagerness in their hearts to know of His love.

Shoshanna gave me a beautiful red cloth, which has an honoured place in my home, and she picked for me some red tomatoes from her small balcony. I couldn't have been more deeply touched if she had given me the most valued jewels in all the world, for a red tomato in Russia is truly a gift of love!

How close we all felt that afternoon, and it was with tears that we finally took leave of one another. I'll remember that afternoon forever. How wonderful of the Lord to have sent me to Shoshanna's home, just in time to meet so many people and to give them hope in the love of the God of Israel, who has not forsaken His people.

I returned to the hotel, where Sasha was waiting to meet me. I had only a short time until my departure for the train station, and I felt so deeply the Lord's love for him. And so I talked to him about Jesus and all He had to offer for the lost and discouraged. In time, Sasha asked me to write for him a prayer, so that he could give his life to Jesus and find forgiveness and new life. "Then I'll translate it into Russian. I want to be sure that I understand every word before I say it!" he told me. And then he said, "My mother was a Christian, and has always prayed for me." Even so far away, it made me think at once of Michael and Joey.

I knew that Sasha would need to depend upon Jesus very much in the time ahead, for his whole nation and all of his acquaintances would be opposed to his beliefs. "But I am not afraid to believe," he said, and I know that Jesus will be there to give him the courage that he will need.

When I arrived at the train station, an "Intourist" agent was there to meet me to help me to the train. I know that it is the Soviet's method of keeping tabs on the foreigners in their country, but their travel service is really incredibly effective!

The agent was so open and warmhearted, and I kept sensing from the Lord to share with him, even though he was an Intourist agent! And so I did, and it turns out that he had spoken to Believers before, and confessed that he had been searching for more meaning to life. I laughingly told him that I was sure that he'd keep meeting Believers, too, as it was clear that the Lord was reaching out in love to *him*. He asked me if I had anything in English to

read. I had given all of my books to Ida, and had only one English book left. As I handed it to him, he exclaimed joyfully, "A New Testament! Thank you so much!" I promised him my prayers, and boarded the train.

I visited Odessa on the Black Sea, and I have never seen such crowded beaches in all my life. People were actually lying head to toe on every available inch of sand! The sea was so icy cold that I could only run into the water, giggle, and run out again!

It was in Odessa that I met the only Believer that I was to come in contact with on this sojourn in the Soviet Union. I was on a ferry one afternoon when suddenly I just had to find a toilet! I therefore got off the ferry at the very next stop. I had not planned to disembark there at all, but I began to search for the public facilities, which in the Soviet Union are very scarce!

As I madly dashed inside, I spotted a small, deformed man quietly sweeping the pathway beside the building. As soon as I stepped outside again, the Lord said, "Give him a package of gum . . .", an item that is very scarce in the Soviet Union. By then he was sitting on his overturned bucket, and when I tapped him on the shoulder, he turned to me the most radiant smile I had ever seen. He was just bursting with the love of the Lord, and I learned a lesson that day that has been etched into my heart. He expressed to me his joy in the beauty of the park that he cleans, and when I left he was sitting blissfully on his upturned bucket with the package of gum in his hands. He was old and stooped from hard work, sweeping beside the toilets in an oppressive, anti-God nation. The question is: Is Jesus' love enough for us, too? Could we see His provision and care in a single stick of gum, and be secure in His love? Even if we had little else? Have we yet realized that we need little apart from His love?

Next I visited the city of Volgograd, the former Stalingrad. The entire city had been devastated by the Nazis during World War II, and the Soviets built an enormous war memorial there. For some reason the Soviet government keeps the memory of the war very much alive, and the expenditure on such enormous edifices must be impressive indeed!

I had only one night in Moscow before my departure by train for Romania. I therefore went immediately to the home of Victor and Irina Brailovsky, and was very thankful to find them both at home. They, too, had been "refuseniks" for many years, but they seemed to have real hope in God. Victor immediately described to me an experience he had had in the spring. "I was arrested, and had to stand trial," he said, "and even the judges can't understand why the trial just stopped and I was freed! It was truly a miracle!" They read the Holy Scriptures, and Victor had heard that there were Jewish people who had accepted Jesus as the fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies.

Once again I was deeply encouraged and impressed by the faith that was evident in the Jewish families I had met. Irina described an experience she had endured in April. "The house was searched. The police simply arrived with the proper papers, and began going through everything. They were about to take a tape of Israeli music, and I said to them, 'Why do you want that? It isn't anti-Soviet! Here, I'll play it for you!' The second song was about Israel, and the Soviet official grabbed the tape immediately, saying, 'It speaks about Israel, so that's anti-Soviet!'"

Irina is a gentle, unassuming woman, but she has courage that can come only from God. Her answer to the Soviet official follows: "Israel is a tiny nation with a population of only three million people, and they are not afraid to play Soviet music. Why is a country the size and strength of this one so afraid of Israel?" The official took the tape, but had no answer to give her.

While there, the Lord prompted me to show them the bracelet G oldie's pastor had given me, engraved with the name of Ida Nudel. It encouraged them both. They knew Ida and knew that some of her closest friends would soon be making the long trek north to visit

her. "Let them bring it to her," Victor suggested. "She's been depressed lately, and I know that it will encourage her to know that people in the West have not stopped caring." And so I left the bracelet with them.

I promised to visit Victor's father, step-mother and brother in Israel, and before leaving I took pictures of them and the rest of their family to bring with me to their relatives in Israel. Victor had one request of items to bring if I returned to Russia again. "Please bring us Hebrew newspapers!" he asked. Oh God, how much we take for granted!

All too soon my time in the Soviet Union came to an end, and I found myself on a train speeding towards the Romanian border. In the middle of the night I was awakened by the Soviet border guards, who had boarded the train to check our visas and luggage. The one who searched my compartment spoke English, so I talked with him quite a bit as he went through my possessions. He took every single thing out of my wallet to have it checked, except for the Israeli visa that was hidden in a zippered compartment! Then, he asked me unexpectedly, "Would you come with me into the office to sign a book telling of your impressions of the Soviet Union?" I could almost picture it in the guide books: "Never Go Off With Soviet Officials!" But we serve a Lord far removed from the fears of men, and I knew He wanted me to go. I stepped off the train at 2:00 a.m., and followed the Soviet official across the dark tracks.

Once inside the office, I told him what I wanted to write in the book, and he agreed that it would be fine! And so I wrote the following:

*"I was very impressed by the care that 'Intourist' has given, and found the cities of the U.S.S.R. to be very beautiful. Thank you, Russia, for a very special time! Two things saddened me very much, however. One was that there was so little food on the shelves for the Russian people to eat. And, most of all, I feel a great sadness that God has been forgotten."*

The Lord touched the heart of the Soviet guard that night, and he felt so moved he gave me a book and autographed it with the inscription, "From your Soviet friend." As we walked back across the tracks, I spoke to him of God's love, and have remembered him often since then. I then climbed on board the train, and soon crossed the border into Romania. But a portion of my heart remained behind with all of the people I had the privilege to meet.

On the train, I met three Romanians, and I shared with them about the Lord for many hours. We had a lovely time together, and I pray that soon their lives will bear testimony of His love. I felt especially close to one of the three, a young girl by the name of Doina. When we arrived at the station in Bucharest, she helped me with train reservations on to Greece. An odd thing happened next! I almost missed saying goodbye to Doina, as she was leaving by train for her home in another part of Romania. I finally located her just seconds before the train began to move, and we hugged each other sadly. We waved to one another until the train was out of sight, and I cried with the finality I sensed in the separation, not quite understanding the anguish I felt. I had felt the same deep ache in my heart when leaving those I had met within the U.S.S.R. It reminded me very much of a portion of a letter I had received, which had echoed my own anguish of heart, both for those in oppressed nations and for the complacency of much of the Western Church.

*". . . People don't realize the seriousness of the condition of the world and how incredible the suffering is of people who are under the heavy yoke of oppression. The world is filled with selfishness and mirth and greed on one hand and poverty and grief and misery on the other. People are refusing to see the reality of it and turn to the Lord. Even many professing Christians just continue to eat, drink and be merry, and close their eyes to anyone else's need*

*and pain. It's difficult at times to understand how we go on so long in complacency — building our own little worlds — while the Kingdom of God is stirring in our midst to come forth in all its fullness. It's because we're so full, I guess. There's so much and there is no price to pay to be a Christian in a country like America where it's popular. As long as you don't talk about death or suffering you can make it as a Christian here.*

*It's because of the love and forgiveness and grace of God that gave His own Son for me that I am indebted to spread the gospel. That's the greatest joy to me in the world. I just want to bring glory to Him by doing the good works He calls us to, so others will see HIM in my life. So often I've brought shame to Him by my disobedience and inconsistency. He said that we are to be living epistles and that we are the light of the world. We need to let that light shine so men can see our good works and glorify our Father which is in heaven. They can't see our Father! They can only see us. We see our Father and hear His voice because He lives in us! Who else is going to show Him to the world? . . ."*

The train journey from Bucharest through Bulgaria to Greece took two days. By that time I had almost no money left whatsoever, and therefore could only afford a coach seat. And so I endured the journey in a small compartment with seven other people, their luggage, smoking, drinking and a pen of chickens. I had to sit up for the entire journey, and could afford to buy only a loaf of bread to eat along the way. While travelling through Bulgaria I could really feel the oppression of that little-known Communist nation. Passing through Greece en route to Athens, we stopped at the city of Thessalonica, which made me think about the rough pathways Paul tread on his journeys for the Lord.

When I arrived in Athens, I did not even have the \$95.00 it would take to return to Israel by sea! I placed some frantic calls to a friend in Israel for help, but I was unable to get through. (I later learned I had the wrong number!) But after some time, when nothing I tried seemed to be working, I finally realized that I had totally forgotten the Lord! It hadn't even occurred to me to ask *Him* what to do, or to recognize that He might have me stranded in Greece for a reason! So I placed the burden at His feet, and His reply to my query was, "Call Marcia."

Marcia and I have been friends for eighteen years, and it has been a special friendship in many ways. The Lord has seen us through a great deal! But the United States surely seemed a long way from Athens, and it seemed much more logical to me to contact someone in Israel for help! But I've learned long ago that the Lord is seldom logical or practical according to our human standards! And He never has been! (What's logical about having a small boy slay a giant? Or expecting that 3 million people would survive surrounded by 20 million Arabs who have threatened to destroy them?)

And so I placed a collect call to the States, and one minute later Marcia answered the phone. She was rather shocked to learn that I was stranded in Athens, and probably even more shocked that I had the Lord's certainty that she could help me from such a great distance. But she told me to call back in three hours and she would see what she could do. The next sequence of events had surely been ordered by the Father's hand!

Marcia hung up the phone and took the long drive from her country home to the small Pennsylvania town near which she and her family lived. While driving she began to sneeze and sneeze and sneeze, so many times that she had to stop at a neighbour's house for an emergency use of their toilet. She then sat down with the neighbour for a cup of coffee, and happened to mention the phone call from me that had just arrived from Greece. To which the neighbour exclaimed, "You won't believe this, but just this morning I received in the

mail a publication from a ministry called 'American Mission to the Greeks', and if I remember correctly, they have a home office in Tennessee. If you call the office in Tennessee, I bet they can help you to know what to do!"

When I called Marcia again at the end of three hours, I was astonished to learn that she had an address to give me in Athens. "They will help you out temporarily," she informed me, "and they have offered us the use of their bank account number to enable me to wire to you the money that you will need." And so once again, the Lord surely knew what He was doing when He overrode my objections in His direction to call Marcia.

I arrived at the Mission in Athens, and they were so kind and willing to be of help! While there I asked if anyone knew of a convent where I could stay until the money arrived, as usually they offer cheap accommodations. One of the Mission's secretaries, Nellie, made a phone call, and then said, "It's settled! I just called my sister to ask her, and she agreed that you're to come home and stay with us!"

I have met thousands of people on my journeys for the Lord, but every once in a while I have met people, like Sid and Betsy and Jenny and Wolfgang and Marja, who I know are meant by *the Lord* to become special friends. And so it was with Nellie and her sister Sophia. Their father had been an evangelist in Greece, and from both of their parents they inherited a deep love for the Jewish people. The five days that I spent with them were like heaven, as they treated me with such love and care that I felt like a princess! I knew without a doubt that it had been the Lord's purpose to keep me stranded in Athens until we met.

When I returned to Israel at last, money was waiting for me, and I was able to return to Marcia \$600.00 for the \$450.00 she had sent to me.

Once home again in Jerusalem, my trip to the Soviet Union seemed more like a dream. It was good to be home.



Passover Celebration in Moscow, 1974



Scientific Seminar held in the Brailovsky's home, 1977  
Werner Broun, photographer.

