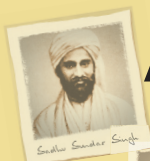


The Voice in the Wilderness

•Spring 2009•
•Free Subscription•



Sundar Singh



Sophie Muller



Charles Bowles



J. Royce Thomason

A special gift for you

This is a unique edition of The Voice in the Wilderness. Enclosed is a removable booklet featuring three challenging stories of lives used of the Lord in eternal ways. (A supplement for this booklet with the testimony of Bro. Royce will be printed in the next edition.) Due to unique circumstances, our printer has provided opportunity to run 800 additional copies of this edition that The Voice in the Wilderness can use in teaching and evangelistic efforts. Therefore, we are publishing these four testimonies in prayer that hearts will be encouraged and challenged for greater obedience in Christ. Pages 1, 2, 3, 4, and pages 29, 30, 31, and 32 can be pulled away leaving the staples to hold your 24 page booklet and biographies. The story of Sophie Muller, Sundar Singh, Charles Bowles and J. Royce Thomason will be a blessing. Please read and ponder what our great God can do through a single life.



"The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight." - Mark 1:3

Contending for American Freedoms • Contending for Fundamental Christianity



The Voice in the Wilderness

PRINTED MISSIONARY

Ronnie and Terry Williamson
Evangelist/Editor
 Steve and Rebekah Lilly
Staff Missionaries

The Voice in the Wilderness is a nonprofit, independent incorporation, founded by Rev. Dr. J. Royce Thomason D.P.D. Ph.D., evangelist and medical missionary. The organization is dedicated to the spreading of the whole gospel to the world, especially in foreign lands. The program consists of building mission stations, supporting American missionaries and native pastors by partnering with the local church in various areas of ministry and preaching Christ to the lost. We are supported by the gifts of those who care. Contributions to The Voice in the Wilderness for projects or to support the ministry of a missionary will be used as indicated by the donor following approved policies and procedures. Gifts are tax deductible and should be made out to The Voice in the Wilderness.

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A fundamental publication, published quarterly in behalf of the work of the Lord and preservation of the liberties of our United States.

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There is no subscription charge; all interested people of good will may have a copy sent regularly to their address simply by requesting it. Address all correspondence to: The Voice in the Wilderness, PO Box 7037, Asheville, NC 28802.

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Nuggets of Gold

- Confessing your sins is no substitute for forsaking them.
- Don't repeat anything you will not sign your name to.
- There are two types of people who say very little: the quiet ones and the gabby ones.
- Some folks seem to think religion is like a parachute - something to grab when an emergency occurs.
- The soul without prayer is like lungs without air.
- Preachers find more sleeping sickness than does the physician.

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MY PERSONAL MESSAGE TO YOU



Dear Friends in Christ,

"Rejoice, rejoice, O Christian, lift up your Voice and sing - Eternal hallelujahs to Jesus Christ the King!" Let it be known "He Lives" and Christ is King and Lord. These are perilous times but our Sovereign reigns. Opportunities abound to share the Good News with multitudes without hope. May God help us to be faithful.

Just in the last six months, The Voice in the Wilderness ministry has represented you, preaching in India, Venezuela, here in the U.S. and, at this writing, a camp meeting in Arkansas. Thank you so very much for praying and giving that we may go with the Gospel. Your partnership is invaluable and deeply appreciated. We usually include an envelope in this edition but due to financial constraints, ask you to please help "The Voice" with your gifts sent to: The Voice in the Wilderness, PO Box 7037, Asheville, NC 28802.

Support at this time is so critical. I know many are sacrificing and we are eternally grateful. Thank you so very much. Above all, please keep praying. God is able!

Happy Trails!

For Christ and Souls,

Ronnie L. Williamson, Isa. 40:31



P.S. I trust the biographies are a blessing. Next issue will contain the testimony of Dr. J. Royce Thomason.

This Tis My Father's Place

This tis my Father's place,
where I go to Him and pray,
To rest and trust His loving grace
Apart from life's earthly way.

The sun did rise again today,
Tho' far away it seemed;
The Blue Ridge took a foggy gray
And danced on early beams.

So peaceful on this sphere of strife
Gentle breezes whisper thru the pine;
Another dawn from night to life
As again He gives a sign.

This Son - He rose, O' great THE DAY!
To you so far may seem
Still TRUTH, the life, He is the way
Amidst your trial and dream.

Lift your head, hold fast the hope
and rest and trust His grace;
Beside still waters, green pastured
slope
This tis my Father's place.

-RLW

NEWS BITS

FROM HERE AND THERE

Bits of News- Terrorist splinter groups have sprung up across Gaza and the West Bank. Judea and Samaria are highly vulnerable targets. Bombings, fires, and murder against Christians continue. The Western media continues to ignore the violence against Christians by Islamic zealots.

. . . A political scientist analyzed ABC, NBC, CBS, and Fox News political polls used from 1997 to 2008. A definite “pro-Democrat bias” was conclusive in the way these polls were used and reported (Media Bias- Martin). George Mason University revealed that ABC, NBC, and CBS skewed the news in favor of Obama. The Washington Post became a de facto member of Obama’s campaign. Beware of the tyrannical media machine. . . Obama again is pro-death. He lifted restrictions on federal funding of embryonic stem-cell research March 9. Between stem-cell, abortion, and sodomy issues, this man is an enemy of all that is sacred.

State Settles “Bride” and “Groom” Lawsuit

– The State of California has agreed to settle a lawsuit filed by a couple whose marriage license was rejected last summer because they identified themselves as “Bride” and “Groom.” The couple is represented by affiliate and staff attorneys with Pacific Justice Institute. Gideon and Rachel Coddington were married just after the state revised its marriage licenses to substitute the words “Party A” and “Party B” for the traditional designations “Bride” and “Groom.” When the Coddingtons jotted an explanatory “Bride” and “Groom” next to their personal information, the State rejected their license, delaying for months their ability to make other legal changes

to reflect their new union. The State insisted that the Coddingtons could only be married as “Party A” and “Party B.”

The same day PJI attorneys filed suit, the State announced that it was nixing the controversial “Party A” and “Party B” marriage forms. The State has now agreed to settle the Coddingtons’ suit by accepting their marriage license and paying attorney’s fees. PJI received invaluable assistance in the case from Walnut Creek affiliate attorneys Steven N.H. Wood and Christopher Schweickert, of the law firm Bergquist, Wood and Anderson, LLP. Steven Wood commented, “The State’s acceptance of the marriage license and agreement to pay our attorney’s fees is a clear victory not only for the Coddingtons, but also for common sense. The State’s previous rejection of the marriage license caused the Coddingtons considerable anguish, as well as financial harm. That has now been remedied.” Kevin Snider, Chief Counsel of Pacific Justice Institute, stated, “In the ongoing battle for traditional marriage, this is a gratifying win. As a decision in the Prop. 8 cases nears, PJI will continue to fight for the right of ordinary citizens to define the most basic institution of marriage. No court or state agency should be allowed to usurp that right.” (PJI)

Ten Electoral Commandments-

The Catholic Bishop of Cuernavaca in the state of Morelos, Mexico is standing his ground in the face of heavy opposition against his “Ten Electoral Commandments,” which state that Catholics should not vote for parties favoring the legalization of abortion, homosexual unions, euthanasia, and pornography, among

THEIR

Voice in the Wilderness



Sadhu Sundar Singh



Sophie Muller

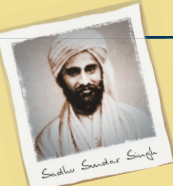


Elder Charles Bowles



J. Royce Thomason

Testimonies of Sadhu Sundar Singh, Sophie Muller,
Charles Bowles, and J. Royce Thomason



Sadhu Sundar Singh

Upon my first visit to India, one of our pastors introduced me to a book entitled, Sadhu Sundar Singh. I did not know what a "Sadhu" was nor had I heard of Sundar Singh. Since that time, I've read three books about the life of Sundar Singh as well as some of his own writings. For the purpose of this publication, I am presenting, based on true accounts, a novel-style account of Sadhu Sundar Singh...

CHAPTER 1

The distant whistle of the train caused Sundar's heart to jump and suddenly his mind raced out of control. Life flashed before him with dizzying recollection. Out of this valley would emerge either Life or Death. In just a few moments, Sundar Singh would either know TRUTH or meet Damnation beneath the grinding steel of a speeding train. No longer would he continue in this uncertainty, hopelessly groping through the dark maze of religion.

At two o'clock in the morning, Sundar rose from his bed and proceeded to take an hour-long ritual bath in cold water. Then he began to meditate. From the depths of despair his cry was, "God, O God, if there is a God, reveal yourself to me. God I will serve you. If there is no God, I will live no longer. I will cast myself beneath the train if I do not receive an answer," Sundar continued to pray. There was no doubt he would end his life if God did not answer. Then it happened. About 4:30 A.M., as that train of destiny approached, Sundar's room was filled with a consuming light. Oh no! The room must be on fire. Sundar focused his eyes upon an image emerging from the glowing cloud that now flooded his room and his heart. This glorious figure stood with a crown of thorns, reaching forth with wounded hands to a hurting Sundar Singh. "I am Christ whom you persecute." Only a few days earlier, Sundar had burned the Bible out of hatred for the preaching of Christ. Now this simply could not be: Christ standing before him with wounded hands and feet, pierced side and crown of thorns. Was this God's answer? Could this be the revelation he had prayed for?

"Believe on Me and you shall live. Reject Me and you shall surely die!" The glorious light of Truth flooded the darkness of error from the soul of young Sundar Singh. No Indian holy man had been able to speak these "words of Life." The Hindu religious books, nor *The Granth*, nor the *Quran* held these transforming Truths. Yet now, in a moment of time, Sundar met "The Way, the TRUTH and the Life."

The Death Train blew a lonesome whistle as it past into the distant early dawn. It claimed no soul on this trip. The Glory Train had arrived instead with life and hope. Young Sundar thought he would be crushed beneath the thundering Ludhiana Express. Hopeless despair had drained all desire to live, yet there is a God in Heaven! He is not a graven image who cannot see or hear or help. God is not the delusion of some chanting mystics mind. Sundar could now testify of the true and living God-Thou art the Christ!

He rose to his feet rushing into his father's bedroom. Startled, Sundar's father, awakening from a deep sleep, tried desperately to sort out his son's jubilant enthusiasm. Repeatedly, Sundar told his father how he had met Christ and given his life to Him.

"Oh no, it has come to pass," thought Sundar's father. Some time ago a great sadhu had prophesied that young Sundar would become either a great person or a mad man. Now it had come true. Sundar's father attempted to calm the boy. "You are confused, something dreadful has happened to your mind. Go back to sleep and rest. Possibly you will get better." Sundar tried to explain, but his father would not listen. However, this first encounter with rejection would not in anyway diminish this miraculous event for Sundar Singh. Power and peace from above had raptured this young man into the newness of life. He would never ever be the same.

CHAPTER 2

The farther Sundar walked, the greater the pain. A Presbyterian Mission was yet a few miles away. He must make it to the Mission. Each step became increasingly

difficult, but Sundar knew help was very near. Pastor and Mrs. Uppal welcomed the very ill young man into their home. It was so comforting to see smiling faces and hear the reassuring words of these dear people. Sundar did his best to briefly explain how enraged his father had become. He had been ordered to leave. At this point, Sundar began to have violent attacks of pain and bleeding from the nose. Pastor Uppal sent an urgent request to the hospital for help. Mrs. Uppal did her best to comfort Sundar.

When the hospital dispenser arrived and saw the desperate situation, he refused to treat Sundar. "This young man has been poisoned. He is going to die."

Had the Death Angel arrived? Poisoned by his family and thrust out into the cold jungle, Sundar wrestled in his soul—it was more than a battle of physical life and death. Drifting between the conscious and unconscious, his mind flashed in rapid succession memories of his family—the anger of his father during those final days, the hurt in his mother's eyes. Then came the bribes and threats. It seemed everyone was intent on persuading Sundar to renounce this Christ. Violent pain and the vomiting of blood coupled with continued flashbacks ravaged the body and mind of the young Sundar Singh. Repeatedly from amid fits of anguish he would cry out "I will follow Jesus!" "I will follow Jesus!"

The morning sun gently pushed back night's veil of darkness with its warm rays of dawn's new day. It seemed impossible. The doctor returned to witness a corpse, but rather found Sundar Singh had revived, was even sitting, enjoying the refreshing sunlight penetrating his room window. Heaven's spotlight seems to focus the doctor's eyes upon the miraculous. Years later, Sundar would learn that this doctor, who would now silently turn and walk away, began to read the Bible which led to his belief in Christ. Not only did a young convert emerge from the "valley of the shadow of death," but another was led forth from darkness into light.

For Sundar Singh this is the way it would be. From the intense to the miraculous, story after story would unfold confirming the power of the one true and living Saviour. Yes, he would follow Jesus. Even though Sundar's earthly father made final attempts to lure the young son from Jesus Christ, there was no turning back. At age 16, when legally Sundar could accept responsibility for his faith in Christ, he took a dramatic step. The waters stirred with resounding witness as Sundar Singh was baptized. Buried in the likeness of His (Christ's Death) raised in the likeness of His resurrection, Sundar came forth to walk in the Spirit and live to the glory of His wonderful Saviour and Lord.

CHAPTER 3

Hot tears coursed their way down the cheeks of Sundar Singh. From his baptism until now, the Lord had revealed His goodness in so many ways. Surprisingly, many had opened a door of welcome to this shy, young preacher of Christ. Clothed only in a yellow saffron robe and a thin shawl, Sundar was often mistaken for a Hindu sadhu. Yet when he began to teach Christ, his audience would respond with mixed reaction.

As he sat refreshed by the shade of a tree after many grueling miles, his emotions came flooding to the surface. Even though rejected by his family, he had such peace now. Yes, it was a peace that passes all understanding. Looking up through tears of joy, Sundar realized someone was standing over him. At first he was startled. "I mean you no harm. A few days ago I heard you speak of Christ. Never before have words touched my heart in such a way. When I heard you speak, a mob had gathered. They were angry that you dared teach from the Bible in their village. They had hate in their hearts and wanted to kill you. But as they approached to do you evil, fear seized them all. A mighty host stood about you to protect you and your enemies fled away."

The tears of joy surfaced once again as Sundar Singh now shared the story of Truth, love, and grace as a small group of hungry listeners gathered. This sadhu was different. His saffron robe was clean. An attractive, tall, young man with only the clothes on his back and Bible in hand commanded a lot of attention. Many were amazed at the powerful words he spoke. No other sadhu had such words.

From village to village he traveled. Sometimes cold and hungry, but never without the peace of God. Showers of blessings were always welcome, but the liquid kind seemed always to make life a bit tedious. After a good soaking, Sundar found an abandoned

hut and collapsed inside with exhaustion. The morning sun not only brought warmth to a chilled traveler but horror to his still drowsy eyes. A cold visitor had joined him during the night to share a little body heat. There beside him was coiled a huge cobra. One lightning fast strike would mean certain death! Sundar's heart pounded so loudly he knew the cobra would be awakened. Easing to his feet without arousing his deadly hut-mate, Sundar rushed from the hut as fast as his feet would go. Once outside, it suddenly occurred to him that his shawl had been left as cobra bedding. On cold nights that shawl provided his only protection. "Dear Lord, I must have my shawl." Peering back into the hut he saw that huge black cobra curled up on his much needed shawl. One wrong move would mean death. Carefully, so carefully, he pulled the shawl from underneath the weight of the deadly creature. The snake simply rolled over and continued its morning snooze.

CHAPTER 4

The scissors came closer and closer to his head. Out of the corner of his eye and next to his throat the cut was made. Sundar gasp for air. "Are you alright? Sundar, can you hear me?" The Lord brought Sundar Singh and S.E. Stokes together in Sabathu. As a wealthy American who left all, coming to India to be a witness, Stokes and Sundar had immediately developed a strong friendship. Sundar had become very ill and Stokes took his sick young friend to the home of a European family. There Sundar could get the medical attention needed. Along with good food and a warm bed, he soon recovered.

"It's encouraging to see you up and about," Stokes told Sundar. "We should be back on the road soon. There is a hospital for leprosy patients I would like to visit when you feel up to travel. By the way, while you were ill you kept talking about scissors, cutting with scissors. What was that all about?"

Sundar proceeded to tell Stokes the story of his conversion and rejection by his family. How his family tried to poison and kill him. The final act that brought about Sher Singh's wrath was when his young son took a pair of scissors and cut off his hair.

The sacred book, the Granth, instructed the devout Sikh never to cut his hair. The Kev was worn tied in a knob on top of the head. The long hair was the crowning glory of distinction. This was the outstanding trait of a Sikh in the Punjab. His bracelet, shorts, comb and dagger were nothing without the Kev. The untrimmed beard and long hair were never to be cut. Sher Singh, Sundar's father, went into a rage when Sundar took the scissors and cut off his hair. This was the final act to convince all of his family that he had denounced the Sikh religion and would follow Jesus Christ no matter the cost! The attempt on his life, as well as intense persecution, came as a result of this single act.

With each passing day Sundar grew stronger. The time came for Sundar and Stokes to set out for the leprosy hospital. They left behind a precious gift. Salvation had come to their European host. Again the Lord had turned suffering into salvation.

Together Stokes and Sundar ministered to the sick and dying. The Lord used them to take the gospel into some very difficult situations. But the day came that their paths parted. Sundar had a tremendous burden to carry the gospel into the Himalayas and beyond. At nineteen years old, he had no idea how many souls without Christ lived beyond that giant wall of ice and rock. Yet he knew the command had been issued to GO into this snow-bound superstitious land where the Dalai Lama and his priesthood reigned unopposed.

CHAPTER 5

So it was in the summer of 1910 Sundar Singh set out on his first missionary journey to Tibet. Along the narrow, slippery mountain trails, Sundar gained a vantage point as he could see vast areas where the name of Jesus had never been heard. With his Bible in hand, this son of India, clothed in the saffron robe of the sadhu, focused himself on the towering gray mass that seemed to bar the way of the gospel. Rising above the clouds in dazzling whiteness, the Himalayan range appeared as a transformed angel of light just daring anyone fool enough to come. "Come to the hearts of those frozen in the stone cold tombs of darkness. Tread upon these lofty heights, and I will strike you down." This is the domain of the devil and demons. For centuries, attempts were made

to penetrate a land that had remained isolated from the world. The teeming millions of India were held back by the mighty Himalayan range while hordes of humanity in China's huge cities were cut off by the hundreds of miles of bleak windswept plateau. Some who had attempted and failed to bring the gospel to this formidable land referred to this place as "the seat of Satan himself." The lamas continued to chant their prayers and beat their gongs. From the lamaseries, religious enslavement revolved with the priesthood maintaining its control of both nomad and villager alike. It seemed nothing nor no one could break the reign of Dalai Lama, their god and king.

Sundar Singh had met some of these secluded and superstitious people. When the snows would melt and trade routes would briefly open, many of the vigorous, inquisitive and very dirty mountain folk would descend to barter their wares. As they moved along the mountain pass, they would chant through rosaries in hope to gain a better life in their next reincarnation. Periodically, they would twirl their prayer-wheels producing prayers for added spiritual bonus points. Moving up and down the trails, they occupied travel time with these repetitive rituals. Then as the snows returned, Tibetan traders would ascend to their mountain fortress.

A pleasant surprise awaited the nineteen-year-old Sundar Singh at the border to Tibet. Two Moravian missionaries were living there with hopes of taking the gospel to the Tibetan people. Sundar spent a brief period with them to learn some of the language and customs of Tibet. A young believer from the area became Sundar's traveling companion when he set out across the border. This proved to be an invaluable contact.

Opposition to the presence of two Christian missionaries was surprisingly minimal. Initially, the challenge came in an unanticipated fashion. The odors were almost unbearable. Evidently, the Tibetans never washed! The body odors, dirty hands, just simply dirty people, were almost more than Sundar could handle. The Tibetans would rub rancid butter on their skin for protection against the cold. The odor from their bodies would literally overpower and engage the gag mechanism. It was almost impossible to get close enough for conversation. At times, it was unbelievably torturous to simply breathe. Then to complicate the situation, there was the food! The tea was terrible and was prepared with salt in it. The food was almost indigestible. Even though Sundar and his missionary friend only stayed a few weeks, physically the experience was quite traumatic!

Incredibly, the head lama of one lamasery allowed them to witness and listened attentively to their message. It was, however, apparent that the resistance was intentional. All had been warned that a foreign power was coming to destroy their religion. Instruction and plans had been given to resist with all their might.

Sadhu Sundar Singh would journey from village to village and into the towns of India preaching the message of Jesus Christ to all who would hear. Yet, in his heart, he waited for the melting snow when once again he would trek the passes to bring deliverance from the seat of Satan.

CHAPTER 6

Quietly along the borders of Tibet, Moravian missionaries labored faithfully winning souls to Christ. They had even translated the Bible into Tibetan. The assistance given to Sundar Singh by his Moravian brothers was invaluable. These pioneer giants had given their all to take the gospel to this forbidden land. They were a great encouragement to the young Sadhu as he journeyed even deeper into this mysterious land.

Having survived the steep treacherous ascent, Sundar sensed something unlike anything experienced on his first visit just across the border. Now deeper into the heart of this strange world, the mountain people became very hostile. It seems as if demonic voices whisper from the prayer flags that flap and flutter in the steady wind. A chill is in the air as the eerie chanting, chanting, chanting, goes round and round with the incessant whirl of prayer wheels. Stopping periodically, Sundar attempted to engage passing villagers. Suddenly, out of the corner of his eye, there they were. As a lion from the jungle they pounced, and with vicious hate beat the young preacher unconscious.

"What is that? Where are those moanings, and growls, and strange sounds coming from?" Then he realized! Rousing out of unconsciousness, he lay

bloody—covered with leeches just outside the village. From the darkness of the jungle came those horrid growls, and the moaning was his own body crying out from the pain inflicted by his attackers. He just knew shortly it would all be over. The next time he opens his eyes, it will be in the presence of Jesus!

It was like a cool refreshing bath. The pain was gone and Sundar momentarily forgot the savagery of those intent on taking his life. God always provides! Incredibly, two believers had come to the rescue of the lone, wounded missionary. Even in this land of spiritual darkness and superstition, God had His own. These secret disciples plucked the battered brother from the jaws of death and nursed him to full recovery. Days had past as Sundar lie unconscious, cared for by the fervent prayers and healing hands of these dear brothers. Incredibly, the morning Sundar roused from his deep repair, recovery was complete.

Villagers pointed and whispered, “Holy man, Holy man” as the Sadhu walked through the village heading ever deeper into this hostile place. They could not believe Sundar was alive. “To live is Christ, to die is gain.” The need was desperate, and he was compelled to go on further with the message of deliverance. Some would listen to this strange traveler out of curiosity. Sometime later he met a man on the trail who decided to accompany him more for physical safety than any other reason.

The weather suddenly turned bad. Howling winds swept down, and the two were battered by blizzard conditions. Struggling for their very lives, they came upon a man lying in the snow close to death. “Help me carry this man down the mountain,” Sundar said to his traveling companion. “We can’t leave him here!”

“You are crazy! We barely have strength to save ourselves. Stay and help this fool if you want.” At that, Sundar Singh was abandoned to the snow and a half frozen stranger, both clinging to life on a steep mountain path.

“I cannot leave this fellow to perish alone in this storm.” Plodding step by step with this heavy burden upon his shoulders, Sundar began the long slippery descent. Falling several times, the man remained unconscious as yet the young Samaritan stumbles beneath this almost lifeless stranger’s body. Although the temperature was now brutally cold, Sundar was sweating profusely with heart pounding as he was barely able to take another step.

There he was—dead in the snow! The traveling companion who had forsaken the poor missionary to selfishly save his own life became the one to die alone. He left Sundar and the stranger to die. Thinking of himself only, he now lay frozen in the drifting snow. Staggering into the village, amazingly both Sundar and the heavy stranger he carried on his back had survived. The very exertion of his selfless act had not only kept the Sadhu from freezing, but generated life-giving heat into the half frozen body he carried on his back. His willingness to risk his own life saved not only his but that of another.

“He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.”

Sundar’s head slammed against the rock-hard wall as he plunged to the bottom of the well. With a bone-crushing jolt, he landed in a tangled heap. Excruciating pain—his entire body convulsed heaving to regain breath and life.

For a moment, the pitiful preacher could not move arm or leg. Then through the dim light that faintly shimmered down from above, Sundar saw a mangled bone lying across his chest. Involuntarily a scream erupted from his gasping lungs, a silent scream, for there was not enough wind in him to produce much of a sound. Sundar thought momentarily that his leg had been severed in the fall. “I can’t breathe, I can’t breathe.” He tried desperately but to no avail.

Was it only minutes or hours? It was so dark Sundar Singh was not sure whether his eyes were open or shut. He was certain of the pain and AIR he needed. AIR, he just could not get enough air! As his level of consciousness rose, Sundar became aware of the horrible stench. He gagged violently and vomited, which sent knife-piercing pain throughout his chest. “Oh dear God, what is this? Where am I? Oh God, oh dear Lord, help me!” How anyone could subject another to such agony is incomprehensible. Sundar Singh had enraged the lamas so with the preaching of Jesus that they had seized the gospel preaching Sadhu and condemned him to death. Even

though the Buddhist lamas vowed off violence, they had their way of tortuous execution that appeased their twisted minds. It was known as “THE WELL.”

The condemned were cast into this deep well to die a torturous death. The fall itself often inflicted injuries that produced a slow agonizing demise. The well reeked with the putrid flesh of former victims. Bodies covered the bottom of this damp, dark pit. The air, what little there was, hung thick with the stench of rot and death. By the way, the lama accepts no responsibility for this wretched death. The pitiful soul was thrown into the deep, dark pit, an iron lid locking in place over the well, and they had nothing else to do with the matter. It was all now “THE WELL.” They were innocent.

Death was near. Possibly two days had passed and Sundar could barely remain conscious for more than a few minutes. He could not breathe; the odor was so overpowering. He saw light faintly once again around one side of the iron lid. It must be the third day. One arm may be broken, but he could move his legs. He managed to stand several times; but immediately became violently sick, thus collapsing!

Regaining consciousness once again, Sundar could hear movement from above. The iron lid was opening! Again, faint light slithered down the deep shaft. Then a voice said, “I will help you,” and with that a rope was lowered with a loop firmly tied in the end.

Fresh air, fresh air—I can breathe! The next thing Sundar knew was he could breathe. The iron cover was back on the well, locking in place and his rescuers were gone.

Word soon reached the head lama that Sadhu Sundar Singh was alive and again preaching. The lama was furious. “How can this be? There is only one key to ‘THE WELL’S’ lock, and I still have it in my possession.” The lama raged on about this Sadhu. “There must be a superior power at work. How can this be?”

CHAPTER 7

Every breath, every step of life’s journey confirmed for Sundar Singh the Almighty hand of God in his efforts to carry the gospel light to those who are in great darkness. A passerby stared at the Sadhu as he chuckled out loud. Sundar sat alone in the cool shade musing over his memory of the head lama’s rage. “That poor blind man,” Sundar thought to himself. The lama was furious when he found the key to the well hanging in its customary place. Yes, that poor lama was certain someone had stolen the key and helped Sundar escape “The Well.” Then to his consternation, there it was, hanging on his own belt. The lama was embarrassed, outraged, totally confused. When Sundar realized he had a spectator, he laughed the more. The onlooker darted off down the dusty path, thinking surely this Sadhu had suffered heatstroke.

It became a common occurrence to see someone running from the presence of this strange preacher. Some stayed to listen and some ran away. The power of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ often had that kind of effect. Deadly anger could also result. That thought once again was made so real as Sundar stood before a large crowd telling of Jesus who saves. His attention fell on a man standing in the back weeping. Later, Sundar had opportunity to speak to this man privately. With deep brokenness, the weeping man trusted Christ as his Saviour. “I pray to the one true living God — Lord Jesus Christ, forgive this wretched sinner and save my soul!” Sundar learned that this man’s son had become a Christian many years ago. He had banished his son, never to see the boy again. Much like Sundar Singh, the young believer traveled preaching of his faith in Jesus Christ. Sundar came to learn that this man’s son had been arrested by the head lama and sentenced to a horrible death. The executioners sewed the young man in a wet yak skin and left him in the hot sun to be crushed to death by the slowly shrinking material. Witnesses reported him singing and praying until the breath of life was literally squeezed out of his body. The lama’s chief secretary trusted Christ after reading the martyred preacher’s New Testament. Sundar Singh wept tears of joy as this father told the story of a son’s lasting witness. Once again, a new convert’s testimony of great grace and mercy proved the love of an almighty God. The head lama could not win this war. Even if he murdered the preachers that came with the gospel, their blood would perpetually water the Word of Life planted in the hearts of Tibet and the entire world. Now this father sprang forth in faith along with many others through his son’s sacrifice. Sundar Singh had given all on the altar — “I die daily.” He knew full well

that at any moment he, too, could **SOW** in blood!

Satan is the deceiver and so subtle that each and every believer must rely fully upon the whole armor of God in order to stand against the wiles of the devil. Sundar knew this well. He had come under demonic attack on numerous occasions. Often these testings were in the midst of great spiritual victory. It seemed the mind and emotions became the primary front. Spiritual ecstasy, a distinct elevation above all that is worldly, resulted during several periods of fasting and prayer.

The Sadhu entered into a 40 day fast. Jesus had begun His ministry in this fashion. Perhaps Sundar could obtain an even greater level of surrender and death to self if he, like his Master, prayed and fasted. Sundar Singh must decrease — Christ must increase. Day by day his journey from hunger to intense pain to extreme weakness carried the young preacher ever deeper — far beyond self. From the acutely physical, he emerged into an intense spiritual awareness. Great joy and peace flowed from the very presence of the Saviour. At this point, the body was so weak he could not even move his arms and legs. Yet, the spirit soared among the glorious, “Am I dying Lord? I must be stepping from time into the eternal.” Standing on the heavenly, all was beyond description. All doubt and fear fled away with the revelation that the Lord had even greater things in store for this tender life.

Sundar Singh believed it to be 40 days. The bamboo cutters who found the Sadhu near death in the jungle said it was 20 days. Some would use this discrepancy in attempt to discredit the preacher’s testimony. Whether 20 or 40, it was without question the Lord’s plan and provision that Sundar survive. For over a week, his rescuers could only give him small amounts of liquids until he gained enough strength to handle food. In time, he fully recovered but was never the same. The story traveled quickly among the villagers. Next to his conversion, no single event had such spiritual significance. Power with God means power among men. No one disputed the amazing influence Sadhu Sundar Singh had had thus far, yet his witness now elevated to new heights.

Beware, lest ye be deceived. The believer is not of the world but is indeed in the world. Take up the cross, die to self and be assured hell will spare not in its attempt to defeat. Sundar knew this well. Verbal and physical attacks, as well as imprisonments, escalated. Yet the most challenging theatre of conflict was in the mind and on the emotions. Satan would whisper fiery darts, subtly perverting truth, trying to plant doubt and fear. Sometimes he appeared as an Angel of Light, blinding light, but not divine light. This light stirred the flesh. The experience, the experience, the experience. Lights, voices, music and a tantalizing surge of emotion. So clever the attack, but the Holy from within bears witness and leads in all truth. “Lo, I am with you always ... I will never leave you or forsake you ... Here is the way of escape.” The Sadhu now saw the real battle, not of flesh and blood, but spiritual. Most believers never move beyond this world, the temporal and earthly. Prayers and ministry remain tied and bound to a walk of sight with rare glimpses of the heavenly. The Sadhu had stepped beyond into the true light to **WALK IN THE SPIRIT**. So obvious was this to all who met Sundar Singh. Still there was a distinct humility and simplicity to this strange disciple.

The miracles continued. Sundar’s father came to know the Christ his son so faithfully preached. “You are no longer my son; I reject you as if you had never been born, leave my house and dare never to return!” Sundar had never seen such rage in his father as when those words were spoken. Now the Lord Jesus had taken the rage away and placed love in the heart of Sundar’s father.

The amazing story of Sadhu Sundar Singh moved beyond India, Tibet, and Nepal circling the globe to Europe, England and even America. Sher Singh paid Sundar’s passage to carry the gospel to the West.

A young teenage lady wanted to hear Singh preach when he visited Europe. The opportunity came for Corrie Ten Boon to not only hear but meet the Sadhu. Corrie questioned Sundar Singh about her personal relationship with Christ. “I’ve never performed a miracle nor had a vision of any kind, but you’ve seen the Lord do all these wonderful things. Why have I not experienced these things?”

“Corrie, you have heard and believed. You are the miracle. God has a plan for your

life and a plan for mine.”

Sundar Singh was deeply upset by the western materialism and much of what he saw in the churches. Even Tibet would be a welcomed sight after his burdensome visit West.

CHAPTER 8

The razor sharp ice propelled by the gusting Himalayan winds pelted the lone Sadhu mercilessly. Sudden storms like this often caught travelers unprepared. Sundar had started early hoping to reach the village where he would rest and recover from his travels for a few days before returning to Tibet's high plateau on another missionary tour. At this 7,000 feet elevation, the weather had turned deadly. The narrow path left him vulnerable to the blinding ice and snow hurled at the poor preacher by the passing storm. Buffeted by an unexpected blast of wind, Sundar Singh lost his footing, falling, slipping, and sliding over a snow-covered ledge. Everything seemed slow motion until with a bone jarring jolt he landed with a tremendous thud. How long he was unconscious no one knows.

Opening his eyes, he beheld a fearful sight. At first, man or beast, he was not certain. Lifting the shivering Sundar from the snow, this creature-man carried the bruised traveler to a secluded cave hidden deep in the mountainside. The next few days were beyond belief, even for the Sadhu. From the time he was rescued from the icy snows until his departure from this secret hiding place beneath the Himalayas, Sundar's ears were filled with the most beautiful, heart-stirring prayers imaginable. From the lips and out of the soul of this unknown man came words of intercession and prayer even the Sadhu had never heard. During his sojourn here, Sundar Singh would learn how this Maharishi came to India as a missionary to preach Christ to the lost masses of the great subcontinent. The seemingly impossible task and tremendous burden to reach so many perishing souls had driven this aged warrior of the cross to a sequestered ministry of prayer. Day and night this man of God lived in intercession for the lost souls of India, as well as other nations around the world. It appeared the Lord sustained this amazing individual with an unusual variety of herbs and berries that grew along the mountainside of his lofty retreat. In God's design, this diet provided the exact nourishment needed to survive at this cold, hostile elevation.

So this would be how Sadhu Sundar Singh would learn of this holy man of God, called to a life of intercession. Yes, every call of God upon an individual's life is unique. We cannot always explain it in terms of this world nor should we try to put it into a formula for others to replicate. Christ calls and we are to follow. The Maharishi had a life and ministry that many would term supernatural. In his isolated existence, he knew of events and people that could only be known through the Lord. Sundar Singh was clearly reminded that our lives have purpose and it is the individual's duty, by God's grace, to faithfully carry out the Father's will. Sundar Singh left the holy man and his cave-home burning to "know Jesus more intimately and make Him known."

Spring was returning to the mountains as Tibet waited for the preacher to again climb the passes to carry the light of Jesus Christ. A chilling breeze gently reminded Sundar of the brutal cold that awaited trekkers at 16,000, even 19,000 feet elevation. The Himalayas were fraught with dangers of all sorts. Yet, the cry of lost souls descended across the plateau into his heart.

It was now late July 1929. Newspapers reported everything imaginable. Some said robbers had murdered the Sadhu on a mountain pass. Many of his friends thought Sundar died in a cholera epidemic that hit the Ganges Valley. His body would have been thrown in the river with no record of his death. Others even speculated that he had retreated to a secret cave like the Maharishi to spend the remainder of his days in prayer.

One thing was certain. Several months before his disappearance, Sundar Singh had visited friends and written letters in preparation for a return missions trip to Tibet. The merchant trader had contacted Sundar indicating the time of departure for their trip back into the mountains. His last personal contact before returning to Tibet was with the superintendent of the leprosy work. Indications were projected for a return home to India in June. A search party spent a month looking for the missing Sadhu. No one along the trade route had seen him. The tall, bearded preacher

dressed in his saffron robe had simply vanished. Sundar Singh would not have wanted his death to distract from the life in Christ he had so fervently preached. His Lord had taken him through the final valley and given Sadhu Sundar Singh the mountain. His final letter quoted Acts 20:24 “. . . none of these move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.”

Rudyard Kipling told of the old lama, thirsting, searching across the burning plains of India asking one everlasting question: “Where is the river of which I have heard? Where is the river whose waters can cleanse from sin and satisfy the thirst of my soul?” Sundar Singh drank deeply, freely of the Water of Life and gave all to carry the Water of Life to the thirsting multitudes of India, Tibet and yea the world.



Sophie Muller

A group of Indians sat around the dying embers of a fire in the middle of a big clay cabin in the interior of Colombia. They were having a pow-wow about the origin of a white woman who traveled their rivers and taught in their villages.

“She’s a witch doctor,” said one.

“No, she isn’t,” came from several. “She wants only to help us.”

“But all witch doctors talk about the unseen world. How could she know so much about it?”

“From her black book! She says it’s the book of Dios.”

“Oh, that’s Yapericoli, the Great Spirit! Remember what our old witch doctor used to tell us? He said once he had died and entered the presence of Yapericoli in a city of dazzling lights.”

Most of them did not remember, but one older man joined in.

“Yes. And our witch doctor could never forget what Yapericoli told him with all those lights shining around him.”

Every ear was attuned to the speaker.

“Yapericoli promised him that some day he would send his sister down to our river with a message for all our people.”

Gasps of surprise around the campfire. “You don’t suppose...?”

The Indians were quickly putting two and two together. This white woman who was teaching them seemed to fit right into that picture.

“Yapericoli’s sister?”

“Why else does she think of us and want to help us?”

“Who else would know so much about the Great Chief and tell us things we didn’t know about him?”

“Isn’t the white sister telling us of Heaven and how to get there?”

“Didn’t she come from a distant land?”

“Didn’t she show us the little black book, the message from our Great Chief?”

Then, silence for several moments.

“But how can we really know she’s Yapericoli’s sister?”

No immediate answer to that one. Then an idea struck one of the men.

If she’s really Yapericoli’s sister, she cannot die! So even if she would take

poison, she cannot die. There's only one way to find out. Some day we must give her poison with her food, and if she doesn't die, then she is Yapericoli's sister!

Grunts of approval and of disapproval. Most were not so sure. Yet the reasoning could hardly be disputed.

The "white sister" continued her travels from village to village, but began to notice that, in this village, a few Indians who had seemed interested and friendly before were now withdrawing from her and staying aloof. One of the more friendly women quietly and matter-of-factly tried one day to tell her something.

"Someone is going to poison you!"

The "white sister" only smiled. What a thing to say of such harmless-looking people! She must be trying to frighten her. How could anyone in that village be capable of murder? Did the woman have some ulterior motive? Did she want her to leave? Her high cheek bones, black, mischievous eyes and furtive glances gave her the appearance of a sorceress. But this was no cause for alarm. The white teacher often walked in and out of villages where there were witch doctors. So she promptly dismissed the whole incident from her mind.

Weeks passed. Then one day, when the "white sister" was back in the village of the discussion, one man decided it was time to make the test. It had been postponed long enough. They just had to know.

After an evening meeting, when everyone was off for a belated evening meal, the hungry "white sister" was given a bowl of soup. The broth itself looked strange. More than that, a few turtle feet, nails and all, were bobbing around on top of it. Just the looks of it made her nauseous, but she was accustomed to eating whatever they brought her, so she ate it for lack of other food.

Shortly after consuming it, while still sitting in her hammock, the "white sister" was seized with the most excruciating abdominal pains she had ever experienced. They continued for several minutes.

Off in the corner of the palm-leaf hut they had assigned to her was a large old gourd intended for heavy drinking during fiestas. She reached it just in time to deposit the contents of her stomach in the empty gourd shell. She staggered back to her hammock and lay panting, too weak to change to her pajamas. The pains gradually subsided, and she fell asleep.

At daylight, the "white sister" awoke and got up to empty the gourd before the Indians would come in. But the gourd was completely empty! Beside it lay a large rooster, stone dead. She quickly picked it up by the legs and shoved it out through a space in the palm-leaf wall so the Indians would not blame her for its death.

She spoke to no one about the incident. Nor did it ever occur to her to connect it with what the old woman had told her about the poisoning. She blamed the nausea on her revulsion at the appearance of the soup. Only five years later did the man confess that he had given the "white sister" enough poison in that turtle soup to kill five men.

As a young woman, studying advanced art, Sophie Muller accepted Jesus as her personal Saviour and surrendered her life to Christ. In 1944, Sophie accepted God's call, and ventured to Colombia as an artist for *Brown Gold* magazine. Sophie had hoped to enter into the jungles with a missionary couple, but through God's leading, she walked through the jungle doors alone. Sophie would soon learn that God was guiding her every footstep after surviving the Indians' poison test. God allowed her to live through this wretched experience to see Indians believe in the one true God.

Battling jungle life along with opposition from government officials and her own people's apprehension about a lone woman missionary, she began her work with the Curipaco tribe. It was through these first fruits that God gave Sophie specific jungle methods to spread the gospel. Traveling from tribe to tribe, she would begin by learning the language. Next, she would translate books of the Bible and instructional materials for the villages, and would teach them how to read their language. This remarkable ministry did not follow the world's book of "this is how it should be done," but in contrast her ministry was through the leading of "His Voice." Sophie plunged through the jungles as a single, American woman, not knowing the language or culture. Through might and miracle, the Lord gave victory over the powers of darkness and demon possession of the Indians. Sophie found that through literacy, Christ and His salvation could be given to the Indians. As her work progressed, NEWS spread through the jungle grapevine by the new believers. Soon other tribes were "ripe unto harvest" when she arrived. Sophie "unleashed the sharp, two-edged 'Sword of the Spirit'," with thought-provoking questions throughout the selected verses to be memorized. Sophie said, "Some people say that it cramps the Holy Spirit to have everything written down in order for the services, but I know that it really cramps the Devil." As a result, she translated hymns and leader books that included order of services, how to conduct baptisms, funerals, the Lord's Supper, etc. Sophie diligently translated these booklets into the many tribal languages with the help of a few willing bilingual believers. The modern conveniences of publishing were not available at the time; therefore, Sophie made duplicate copies with her hand-turn mimeograph. After twenty years of jungle work, three different translated New Testaments were complete, two others had been started, and 200 churches were established and under leadership of the indigenous pastors.

The Indians across Colombia were changed so drastically that the government began to suspect Sophie of performing her own witchcraft. Because she did not want the harassment to affect other missionaries, she left New Tribes Mission and became independent. Although doors seemed to be closing at this point, a contact of Sophie's led her to meet with the Major General of the Security Department of Colombia. He was sympathetic toward Sophie's work and made it possible for her to continue teaching the Indians.

In her last years, Sophie was completely cut off from entering Colombia, because of armed revolutionaries who are still in control of a large portion of the jungles today. Nevertheless, by the time of her death, she had made alphabets and translated Bibles or at least a portion of eleven tribal languages. Word of Life (the ministry which Sophie was saved under) founded the Sophie Muller Bible Institute on the Venezuelan-Colombian border to continue the training of Indian believers.

Here is a woman whose service for the Lord may not be recognized worldwide, nor appears in history books, yet, truly, she will receive the crown for the thousands of lives that she influenced for Christ and the priceless hours she spent translating the Scriptures, for some 55 years. God tremendously worked through the life of Sophie Muller to "Shake The Wilderness" of the Colombian and Venezuelan Indians. *His Voice Shakes The Wilderness* is a first-hand perspective told by Sophie Muller, of her struggles and blessings as a jungle missionary to the Indian tribes. To receive a copy of this autobiography, please write:



The Voice in the Wilderness
PO Box 7037
Asheville, NC 28802



Charles Bowles

Charles Bowles

“Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?” Fire fell as the piercing question was proposed and the eternal subject expounded from Holy writ. Every man was riveted with fixed attention to hear the heavenly message. With surprisingly subdued tones, the message was conveyed swiftly to the heart by the Holy Spirit’s convicting power. A battle was raging, but most in that congregation were simply unaware. Born in Boston, Charles Bowles would know prejudice and privations such as most white men never saw. His African father and mulatto mother started their family when war was being waged on many fronts. It was 1761 when this tiny newborn first opened his eyes to this sin filled world. Truly a colorful world of heated issues and red, hot-blooded men who dared to risk all. His mother’s father was no stranger to this world of challenges. Colonel Morgan was a celebrated officer in the American army. Charles would follow grandfather’s footsteps and serve in the army during the Revolutionary War.

CHAPTER 1

Often from the lashing winds of storm and adversity comes strength and determination. An example is the life of Charles Bowles. A black man not only in a white man’s world but destined to be a leader among white men.

As a golden sunset settled over the green mountains of Vermont, the elder stood and proceeded to lift praises to His sovereign God and King for choosing such an unworthy vessel. “O my dear brothers and sisters, how could such a one as I ever harvest for you the manifold gleanings for the hungry souls of sinners from the graciousness of our loving Lord? How could such a one as I bring forth the treasure and priceless gems of eternal value to the impoverished of spirit and despite of heart? I pray our great God to receive praise and honor and glory this hour from this man of clay whom He so mercifully saved.”

The elder, so humble, recounted his childhood to manhood to servanthood continually praising Jesus along the way! Born the son of a servant, his father was African, his mother the daughter of celebrated Col. Morgan, an officer in the Rifle Corps of the American army during the Revolutionary struggle for Independence. Spending only a brief portion of infancy with his father, Charles lived in Lunenburg, Mass., till age 12 when his guardian, Mr. Jones, died. Now living with the family of a Tory, Charles developed his own opinions of “the divine right of kings,” and by the age of 14 was serving the Colonial army as an officer’s waiter. For two years he remained looking for the opportunity to join the American army to defend the holy cause of liberty. As a mere boy, he was exposed to horrors that not even the eyes of men should behold. The mangled carnage of war upon fields of blood demanded immeasurable courage from the young lad. From the shadows of death to his declaration of independence, Charles was forged by many a fiery trial.

The British defeated and the army disbanded, Charles marched on to New Hampshire to marriage and a farmer’s life. Attempting to settle down with his new wife, Mary Corliss Bowles, his cousin and granddaughter of Colonel Morgan, Charles found himself engaged in another war. Once he had fought with musket and bayonets the forces of an earthly king. Now the fortress of his heart was being bombarded by holy conviction as he lived in open rebellion against the throne of heaven. The siege of his soul continued night and day as Charles tried to resist. “Over and over I heard the Holy Spirit’s cry of charge as mercy and love repeatedly rushed my resistance. The all-powerful artillery of God’s truth exposed my helpless, hopeless condition lost forever

without ‘So Great Salvation.’ But Hallelujah what a Saviour, victory came. Hell’s gates trembled, darkness crumbled and beneath the crimson flow my sinful soul was set free.”

Elder Bowles was baptized and united with the Calvinistic Baptist Church of Wentworth, New Hampshire. Even though victory had come to the sin-torn soul of Charles Bowles, a new war must be fought. He now carried the banner of the King of Kings into battle against the forces of Hell. With congregationalism the controlling power in the state, Elder Bowles as a Baptist faced much persecution. But on this night the war plunged to a new level of hatred. Heaven’s banner unfurled the color of truth. “Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free.”

What color was Elder Charles Bowles? Many a folk in Hinesburg, Vermont, knew what color or at least they soon learned. That wooden horse standing outside the meeting hall is colored hate and prejudice. It was painted by the brush of Hell, stroked by the wicked hand of vile whiskey-soaked, oath-uttering sinners. It’s strange how some hate goodness so. And these men surely hated Elder Bowles. They promised him a ride on the rail and afterward a humiliating dunk in the pond if he didn’t leave town.

While they were disguising themselves for the devilish deed, the elder was on his knees in a distant grove praying for his Lord’s power and presence to clothe him in the gospel armor. So the hour came, and the preacher entered the pulpit and the angry mob gathered in seats waiting as the predator for his prey. Yet, Elder Bowles said, “God will take care of me, and I shall do my duty though the enemy trample me under their feet.” On his sable brow, God has lit up a calm and dignified serenity, expressive of the holy trust that pervades his soul. With that confidence, he announced the sermon text: “Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?” Without question, divine power settled over that gathering as every man was riveted to the message. In climax to this awesome exhibition of conviction, the preacher announced the avowed intentions of some present and said, “I shall make no resistance at all; I am all ready, but, before starting, I have one request to make. I wish you to put one of your most resolute men forward, because I have another subject from God to preach on the way; and we will have music as we go along, glory be to God! Yes, we will have music, glory be to God!” The trust and power with which the elder spoke those words jolted the audience like an electric shock. Paralyzed, those intent on carrying out their act of hate began to cry, “What shall we do to be saved?”

The once hated elder who was to be ridden out on a rail and dunked in the pond now dunks many of those very men who became Christians in the waters of baptism. Shouts of joy echoed over the hillside as a great multitude watched the results of heaven’s triumph. The men who once hated this preacher now knew him as a friend and beloved servant of Jesus. What color was Elder Charles Bowles? The colors of love; the color of power with God and power with man.

CHAPTER 2

“A fight you want—a fight you will get,” and on no few occasions, in the thick of it all, was to be found Elder Bowles. He had entered a warfare that knew no retreat. From Rhode Island, friends of Elder Bowles recount one such story:

In a certain town, a hall had been fitted up by an irreligious man for the accommodation of that class of people who have their brains in their heels. Those whose god dwells in their stomachs and whose zeal is drawn from the demijon, who meet in the night to celebrate the orgies of Bacchus, worships by copious offerings of gold and wealth. On the death of the owner, his widow mined to overthrow the altar and the tables of the moneychangers and drive them from the temple, which they desecrated. But this could not be done without offending the worshippers of the heathen god. He rallied his devotees to the rescue of his broken altars and his former temple of worship, for when the first meeting was held for the purpose of dedicating it to the worship of

the Christian's God, Bacchus assembled his worshippers from his various altars, their faces burning with zeal and hearts filled with the spirit of their mission, they seized the minister, dragged him to a pump, and drenched him with water until he left the place. Soon after, Elder Bowles received an invitation to attend a meeting in the hall. He was informed of the character of the place and his probable reception. But always ready, like Paul, to preach the gospel to barbarians as well as Jews, he accepted the invitation. He had entered on a warfare that knew no defeat, no retreat—his motto was onward. The time of meeting arrived and a large concourse of people assembled. Elder Bowles had not come unarmed to throw himself into the dangerous breach; but had chosen his weapons from the best arsenal in the world. He had gone to the armory of Heaven and selected the old and tried armor of Paul; and he came forth having his loins girt about with Truth; on his black chest shone the breastplate of righteousness; his feet were well encased with a preparation of the gospel of peace; and over his head he held the shield of faith. On his brow rested the helmet of salvation, and in his hand glittered the sword of the spirit; the whole having been newly burnished by praying always with all prayer. The mob came too, with their hearts nerved with the dark spirit of the pit, bent on deeds of violence. But they knew not the power of that Mighty One, who had commissioned this dark son of Ham to sound his gospel to dying men.

They vainly supposed that all they would have to do would be to enter the town, seize him and bear him away. But this work, which was so easily planned, was not so easily done. Brother Bowles requested the brethren to take their stand around him and lift their hearts in silent prayer to Daniel's God for deliverance. And when the mob entered, there stood that adamant breastwork of prayer girt around the object of their fury. Elder Bowles was sending his well tempered blade deep into the hearts of his enemies, while he was defended by a claim of prayers into whose embrace it was dangerous for a mob to enter. They saw at a glance the weapons that they must meet, and their faces blanched, their eyes quailed, their hearts faltered, and their arms were palsied. After hesitating a moment, they retired from the presence of him who had power with God. Concluding the service, and taking tea with the family, the Elder took his cane and his overcoat and passed out into the street. There the mob had gathered. Yet they opened to the right and the left, as though held in awe by an unseen hand, and he passed on, none daring to do him harm.

CHAPTER 3

Icy winds cuts at his face. Like a razor sharp sword, winter ripped at the lone preacher atop his faithful horse. Penniless and hungry, the two had plodded all day through the brutal New England snow. Charles began thinking of supper and shelter by a warm fire. But he did not know where to find such a haven. Soon he knew the situation would be desperate. So this dark son of Africa did the only thing he knew to do. Holding tight to the reins of his shivering mount, he knelt in the cold snow and sought help from above. Back in the saddle, the elder loosed the reins and rode on into the night. Strangely, his horse passed up several houses, finally turning into a farm where he stopped at the barn as if this had been their destination all along. By lamplight one could see the family inside gathering around the evening meal. After a gentle knock at the door, the half frozen preacher was invited in to warm himself by the fire. On the opposite side of the room, a child, possibly five or six years of age, began to weep ever so sorrowfully. The mother took the little girl into another room, apparently to prevent disturbing their guest. Ever so quickly they both returned with the mother boisterously exclaiming, "Who are you? Where are you going? Are you hungry?" Without opportunity to respond, Charles found himself at the family table enjoying a wonderful meal along with an invitation to stay the night. Now this family did not know they were entertaining a preacher.

After several neighbors came in, Charles learned that a Methodist circuit preacher

had an appointment to preach that night in this family's home. The hour grew late, but the minister did not arrive. Finally, the husband requested Elder Bowles to preach. To his knowledge, no one in the place knew he was a preacher. Obviously, this was a divine appointment and could not be refused. After reading the Scriptures and making some introductory remarks, the circuit preacher arrived. At the insistence of the Methodist brother, Charles Bowles stood with open Bible in hand and expounded to this small gathering the wonderful words of Life. The mighty power of the gospel moved upon the hearts of those precious few, and several were converted on that cold New England night. As a result, a glorious revival commenced in that community.

Soon after his public profession, Charles had been baptized in the Calvinistic Baptist Church of Wentworth, New Hampshire. At that time, the Baptists were persecuted and even called heretics due to the all-controlling influence of Congregationalism. Yet, it was obvious the spirit and power of the gospel was evident in the Baptists.

With joy, Charles ministered in neighboring towns and villages. He labored faithfully for the salvation of lost souls and gained considerable respect among fellow preachers. However, Charles saw some disturbing trends among the Baptists. They were all too ready in their preaching to expose the errors of Congregationalism, yet unwilling to recognize their own error. Soon the persecuted became the persecutor. The Baptists now used their power to manipulate and control. Charles prayed for divine guidance. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Error could not stand against liberating power of the gospel. A new era had dawned in America, and Charles knew he "must seek some more congenial soil, where the free showers of heaven might water the tender plant of gospel grace." He turned to the authority of God's Holy Word, immersing himself in study to be approved. He yielded to a complete examination of Christian doctrine giving the Holy Spirit absolute control of his heart and mind to lead in all truth. With humble dependence upon God's Word, divine wisdom came. Burning deep within was the pure motive to promote this Glory of God and win the lost with the message of Jesus Christ. He found freshness among new converts. There was a difference in the fellowship with those who had this breath of heaven upon their soul and those self-righteous politicians posturing for positions of power. The Lord was gracious, and revival fires burned. He met Elder Colby in Gloucester, Rhode Island. Together they preached and many souls came to Christ. Both men were earnest, faithful servants with a fearless spirit and fire in their souls.

Through fellowship with men like Elder Colby, along with his intense study and this period of revival, Charles Bowles withdrew from the Calvinistic Baptists and identified his interest with the young fledgling group of Free Will Baptists in the area. At this time, he was led to sound the note of Free Grace and Free Salvation among the Green Mountains of Vermont.

From 1808 on, Elder Bowles experienced the "unmistakable manifestations of Divine power and blessing attending his labors." On July 24, 1816, he preached in Huntington, Vermont, for the first time. Brother Charles commenced the message by reading a portion of this hymn:

"With love and pity I look round, Upon my fellow clay;
See men reject the gospel sound,
Great God! What shall I say?"

The preaching of Free Grace and Salvation yielded the conversion of almost one hundred souls in that Green Mountain village. A church was organized with this name of Free Will Baptist. The Sword of the Lord Foundation published *Profiles in Evangelism* by Dr. Fred Barlow. In that book, Barlow writes about Evangelist Jacob Knapp (1779-1874). A quote from Dr. Frank G. Beardsley is given that is quite interesting:

"...aside from the Separate Baptists and Free Will Baptists, the Baptists as a class did not favor special efforts to promote revivals of religion. Since that would have been an interference with the operation of divine sovereignty it was considered presumptuous

to undertake anything of the kind. The salvation of sinners was determined by God's elective grace and was to be accomplished independently of all human agency... The strength of the church, therefore, was to "sit still" This was largely the attitude taken by the Baptists when Elder Knapp began his labors."

Elder Bowles also recognized this error and knew the message of So Great Salvation must be preached to Whosoever Will! "Sit still" nothing! Revival fire burned in his soul, and he "could not stay!"

Indeed it would be presumptuous, yes preposterous, for this one of African descent, saved from the chains of sin and darkness of night to "sit still" with the glorious truth and power of Jesus Christ shut up in his heart. He must, for he was commanded, do no less than GO!

CHAPTER 4

Ready to preach, pray or die! Elder Bowles indeed faced the urgency of all three on numerous occasions. The former two took with glorious results when in the town of Richmond, Vermont.

A certain gentleman from New York had taken the night's lodging in the tavern. The landlord informed his guest that a colored man was to preach near by and invited the traveler to attend the meeting. The fancy New Yorker promptly laughed, "It will be a borrowed sermon. I have no time for such." However, the tavern keeper pressed his guest the more until finally - "I will go on one condition. I will give the colored preacher the sermon text and he must preach on it then and there." That evening, at the appointed place, the surprise text was placed on the desk and the two men were seated. When Elder Bowles came to give greetings, he read the note requesting him to preach from Proverbs 30:18 & 19. "There be three things which are too wonderful for me, yea, four which I know not: The way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship in the midst of the sea; and the way of a man with a maid." Now Elder Nathaniel Bowles, a white man who had labored with Elder Charles Bowles in many meetings, was present on this occasion, so Bro. Charles requested Nathaniel to conduct the hymn and lead in prayer. Bro. Nathaniel read two long hymns and made a long prayer giving Elder Charles time to prepare his subject. Whether preparation was needed or not, Heaven came down with divine results. The preacher announced the text and spoke for a few moments upon the literal meaning. Then he commenced to make spiritual application. "The Spirit lifted the big gates of glory, and the power rolled through the congregation; the gentleman who gave the text was cut to the heart, and soon after converted to God."

So it was time and time again. The preaching was simple and practical. Elder Charles Bowles never attempted to make any display of ignorance or learning, but always endeavored to get at the plain import of the subject and urge its claims home upon the attention of his hearers.

The gentleman from New York who supposed that Elder Bowles "declaimed borrowed sermons," found in the pulpit a man preaching from no ordinary book. A man saved by grace and anointed to preach out of the depths of his own experience what God can do for any lost soul. There was no theological quackery in this place. The congregation beheld a flaming herald of salvation deliver the thrilling, powerful truth of God's Word.

CHAPTER 5

Black as he was, the people flocked to hear this anointed servant preach. The Lord blessed as the Word flowed from the black fountain, and many were converted as powerful conviction fell upon sinful hearts. Yet the old backslidden, cold professors and unconverted assailed him with their weapons as only they could use. "We will not hear a 'nigger' preach." So vile, so mean can people be toward another. Even some little aristocrats in their country villages, who imitate the city purse-proud nabobs, turn up their noses at a colored minister; when at the

same time, in point of intelligence and good manners, the Negro is far their superior. One of the codfish aristocrats in the shape of a member of a certain church, invited the [preachers] to tea. One particular preacher was escorted into a back kitchen to a table to sit by himself while the family ate in another room.

Shame on such nuisances of Christianity. They are a stench in the nostrils of religion to say nothing of our Lord.

“O! If poor sinners did but know,
How much for them I undergo,
They would not treat me with contempt,
Nor curse me, when I cry Repent.”

But no matter the opposition, Elder Bowles was sure to overcome by earnest prayers and faithful preaching. Stubborn hearts and even outright enemies often became friends of the colored man and far more importantly, friend of his Master. “It was common to hear the groans of the mourner around the temple gates of Zion, and the shout of the old saints from the camp of Israel.” Admittedly, times came when the powers of darkness were overwhelming. The clouds of opposition veiled the light, but the Elder’s friends would lift him up to the throne by faith and prayer. Then the light would break into his soul, and the Elder rising upon His wing would sing:

“I love the Lord, he heard my cry,
And pitied every groan,
Long as I live, when trouble’s nigh,
I’ll hasten to His throne.”

A favorite place for the Elder was a silent grove, where bowed before his Heavenly Master he poured out his soul in earnest supplication. Amidst all his trials and discouragement, this was that quiet place where the gospel armor was newly burnished and prepared for heavenly warfare. Constant communion with God, directed by the Holy Spirit, through His Holy Word by prayer was a must. Yes, it must so be for His honor and glory and for the good of poor erring man. Time and again this proved true. One example was Rhode Island Corners.

“The power of the Lord came down in a wonderful manner; some poor souls began to cry for mercy, and one poor soul found salvation through the blood of the Redeemer; backsliders began to tremble and weep like Peter as the dear compassionate Jesus looked on them, as He did on [Peter]. I began to hear the inhabitants shout from top of the Rock, and my cry was, Lord roll on the mighty power of thy salvation. I felt that the Lord heard my cry.”

It never failed when Elder Bowles saw the power of God, the forces of Hell were sure to raise their vile heads. Souls were being saved, saints revived, and Satan was sure to come round. The preacher knew to keep vigil lest the enemy creep in unawares and attempt to snatch victory away.

“But a great trial came on my mind on account of some difficulties I saw beginning to get in the church. I began to get down at the foot of the Throne and beg for Zion, and glory to God, He heard my cry, and granted deliverance and kept out the trouble. Though Satan came among us in the form of a little opposition, God overruled it!”

CHAPTER 6

“Elder Bowles never labored long in a place, unless he saw some open manifestations of Divine power in the conversion of his fellow men. He was constantly on the wing, from one appointment to another...” The daily trials could only be met by constant communion with his God. Men like Bro. Bowles were holy, devoted preachers of the gospel. Often their very lives were in peril in an effort to simply deliver the goodnews to the next lost soul. Our present life of ease with all the advantages was clearly unknown. They did not even have opportunity to enjoy the literary advantages of their own day.

It is intimated by some, without foundation in truth, that those holy men, opposed education, and gloried in ministerial ignorance. They did not glory in ignorance; nei-

ther did they depend on education simply in its power and accomplishment, refined elegance, to confound the wise of this world, and carry conviction to the hardened heart of man. They doubtless improved their opportunities as best they could, considering the advantages of their times, in the infant state of the [churches]. And if they opposed anything of an educational character in the ministry, it was the arrogance and conceit fostered in the character of the men who attempted to lord it over God's heritage, and whose interest in the work of the ministry, was controlled by worldly selfishness, rather than God's glory and the salvation of men. For it must be remembered, that what those good men lacked in Academic and Collegiate literary endowments, they enjoyed in a clear practical knowledge of human nature, and with discriminating minds, enlightened by the power of the glorious gospel, and with consciences that would not justify them in compromising God's truth for worldly popularity.

Whether laboring among the churches, or with his family on the Huntington farm, the elder's heart belonged to the Lord. His greatest effort was to the prosperity of Zion, and the salvation of lost souls. Even when his body felt worn down, the Lord gave strength equal to the day. "Not by might, nor by power but by my spirit saith the Lord." Yes, it was the spirit of the Lord in the heart of this colored man that made infidelity wince under the power of the Almighty's truth.

"Although Elder Bowles was a colored man, his manly bearing, his noble spirit, and his amiable Christian character, so greatly endeared him to the people of Vermont, he was warmly recognized as a brother. And as Vermont as a State is identified with the American confederacy, in the great political and ecclesiastical interest of the American nation, God only knows how far the influence of that man has been felt in revolutionizing the public sentiment of the State against the abomination of American slavery.

CHAPTER 7

"On the 22nd of May, 1834, he broke up housekeeping. By a letter to one of his friends, it seems that it was a solemn time with him. He had lived in Huntington about twenty years with some of his children and grandchildren. And although he was a faithful and laborious minister, doing the work of an evangelist, he was an affectionate father, and as a citizen and neighbor he was much respected. Many of his friends in Huntington, were warmly attached to him, but he felt it to be duty to go, and he could not confer with flesh and blood, in his own rest and ease, thus went to Rutland. On the evening of the 29th, he enjoyed an interesting prayer meeting. He spent several days in the place holding meetings, and visiting; at first nothing appeared encouraging, but soon there appeared a giving way, and one evening twenty persons came forward for prayers. Then the waters of free salvation began to rise, the cloud began to break, the cry began to be heard in all directions. Through the months of June and July, the elder's soul seemed to be in a constant travail for Zion in that community. In one meeting he says to a friend in a letter, 'We are having a wonderful time in this place; last evening the power of the Lord came down in great majesty-many cried for mercy — the struggle lasted some two hours —at last victory turned on Zion's side. Glory to God.' During the remainder of the year, the Elder attended several protracted meetings in Rutland county. In all of them the power of the great head of Zion was more or less manifested. During the years 1835 and 1836, he found a home wherever duty called him to labor as an evangelist.

"1836, was the winding up of his long and faithful labors in Vermont. For thirty years he had been familiar with the mountains, rivers and valleys of the State. He had traveled thousands of miles, enduring midsummer's heat and the peaking storms of winter, he had wept in many a family circle over the erring wanderer, and the returning penitent prodigal.

"Sometime during the latter part of 1837, Rev. Charles Bowles 2nd, son of Elder Bowles, then Pastor of the Presbyterian church in Hopkinton, New York, came into

Vermont to visit his father and friends. Seeing the great good affected by his father's labors in the Eastern States, he urgently solicited him to visit Northern New York, and spend some time as an evangelist. After making it a subject of inquiry and prayer to the Lord, he made up his mind to go, and after making suitable arrangements, as to his temporal affairs, he bid adieu for the present, to his friends in Vermont, and turned away from the Green Mountains with deep feelings, to occupy a new field of gospel labor. He crossed the beautiful Champlain and trod the soil of the Empire State, with a solemn cry in his soul to God to accompany him on his route. Like old Eleasar, he begged for Divine Assistance to bless him in his journey, and crown his labors with success. In passing on the turnpike by way of the Chataguay woods, he came in the evening to a shanty of wood-cutters, and asked a lodging among them; although a rude set of wicked men, they not only opened their cabin to him, but their hearts were open to give him a cordial welcome. There in that lonely spot, among strangers, the man of God rested his body, while his soul travailed in pain for them to enjoy the blessing of saving grace. In the morning before he left, he bowed at mercy's altar to lift the voice of prayer in their behalf. Its influence had not effect only in Heaven, but in those wicked hearts; several of them were deeply effected and promised him that they would seek the Saviour and give their hearts to him, which they afterwards did, and it produced a change; the sound of the woodsman's axe in its deep echo in the forest, mingled with the deep toned echo of his voice, in praise to the great Immanuel, opened a new era in the scene in the history of that forest living. It seemed quite providential for Elder Bowles, that his journey to New York lay through the long pathway of the Chataguay, and that poor hut of the woodsman laid on that route."

CHAPTER 8

"Being a colored man drew much attention and created much interest among the people. From meeting to meeting, multitudes came out to hear the word dispensed by one of the disenfranchised race of Ham. Still, all else appeared discouraging. A powerful sectarian influence sought to crush everything deviating from the sectarian track of ages, as sectarian bigotry and superstition always does, without hearing or investigating. But this hard master whose sting is in his creed, had now assailed the wrong man. He might have looked on this dark son of Africa, and, backed up by all the mountain of prejudice hanging over him like a millstone, and imagined him an easy prey. But he was as much mistaken, as was [Apolion] when he met Christian in the Valley of Humiliation. Brother Bowles was too old a soldier to be easily vanquished; his weapons were not carnal; he like young David, had slain his Lion and Bear in Vermont; he was ready to meet the uncircumcised destroyer of God's holy vineyard. His faith was to be brought into action, and his confidence in his God encouraged him to hope.

"But in such an emergency, he went not to councils or synods, but he went to the great head of the church, and in answer to prayer God was pleased to encourage his heart, in a singular dream at brother Merrit Howard's. He dreamed that he was in the barn where Brother Howard was threshing grain; that he heard a rustling in the hay, and putting his hand in, took out a squirrel, and then another, and continued to do so until he took out twenty. He interpreted this dream as an omen of the organization of a church of twenty members, and thus predicted it to Brother Howard, and told Brother Howard that he would be a deacon in the church by the representation of the first squirrel he took out. He labored on until a number professed religion, and others were reclaimed, and prepared to form a church. The modern Sanballats, Tobiahs, and Geshems, appeared in opposition to the works, but the walls of God's spiritual Jerusalem must go up in the name of the Lord. On the 20th of January 1839, he met the brethren at the school-house. Brother Howard and his wife, with some others from the Methodist church came forward and united with the church. Elder Bowles was partially blind, and the brother

who took down the names reported nineteen; Elder Bowles was so influenced by his dream of twenty squirrels, that he exclaimed there is one more, and in his characteristic manner, he said, "You, dear creature, if you are in the house, come right forward." A young man at the back part of the congregation rose up and acknowledged that he had been sitting trembling under the cross, and gave in his name. The church was then organized, and Brother Howard was chosen deacon, according to the interpretation of the dream. The church adopted a covenant and a plan for a regular Monthly meeting and agreed to walk in gospel order in mutual fellowship, and confidence as a living branch in Christ as the vine.

"It will be important here to mention, he had become quite blind in his natural sight, but his spiritual discernment was clear, his memory was good, and he had the Bible well stored in his mind; it was his study in which he took delight. He would name the chapter and verse as his text and repeat it; he would name the number of a hymn in the book, and repeat it with as much precision as he could with sight, and the book before him. On being introduced to a brother or sister, he would take the tone of their voice in his mind, and ever afterward recognize them by their voice whether in or out of meeting, and call them by name. As a fact on this point, we give an instance, while he was holding meeting in Pierpont: Elder William Whitfield a licensed minister, then living in Lawrence, (a brother that Elder Bowles had never seen, but only heard his voice,) came into the Howard schoolhouse while Elder Bowles was preaching; after sermon, several brethren and sisters spoke in exhortation. Elder Whitfield, as an entire stranger in the meeting, rose up and began to speak; as soon as he had done speaking, Elder Bowles exclaimed, 'Brother Whitfield, will you come forward and close the meeting?' He knew Brother Whitfield readily by his voice, though he did not know until then that he was in the town. It was a great consolation to him and his brethren, that he loved the blessed gospel and loved to preach it, although deprived of that important faculty, the power of sight. Thank God, he had the consolation to know that in the heavenly paradise, the sight will be restored and the enjoyment of life and love will fill the soul with infinite joy.

"The subjects of temperance, missions, and anti-slavery came up for consideration, and it was recommended to the delegates to lay it before the several churches, calling for an expression of sentiment of the subject. Thus Elder Bowles had lived to see the day when the poor colored man in chains, with whom he was in part nationally identified, pitied by those whom he had been the instrument in leading to the cross of the compassionate Redeemer, to obtain pardon from sin, and the slavery of Satan. Much was accomplished in cooperation with the friends of the African in annihilating the spirit of unholy prejudice existing against the colored race.

"Elder Bowles had now arrived to his eighty-second year of age, and some over forty of his ministry. The giant frame and powerful lungs, that had sent forth such mighty sounds of gospel salvation, that so often shook the Babel of darkness, began to fail, like the mighty Oak that had breasted the storm and the tempest. He had some temporal means, by way of his annual pension from the government, an amount of which with some present from brethren, was sufficient to make him comfortable. In company with one of his daughters, he went to Malone to spend his last days. He bought a small farm of a Mr. Hildreth, and went to housekeeping with his daughter Eunice. He continued to preach with the church, as his age, and feeble health would permit. He doubtless felt to say with the Poet:

Happy if with my latest breath,
I may but gasp his name,
Preach him to all, and cry in death,
Behold, behold the Lamb.

Elder Bundy led Elder Bowles into the pulpit; it was an interesting, affecting and solemn sight; blind and borned down by the weight of eight-two years, yet bearing up a spirit

full of hope. The scene drew tears from many eyes in the congregation. They were tears of affection and Christian sympathy; but many of those who wept, wept not as those who weep without hope. Thank God, they knew by experience, that arm on which he leaned. He rose up and with a strong voice gave out the 820th hymn in the Christian Melody. He named the number, and distinctly repeated the hymn:

And let this feeble body fail,
And let it faint and die,
My soul shall quit this mournful vale,
And soar to worlds on high.

Shall gain the disembodied saints,
And find its long sought rest,
That only bliss for which it pants,
In the Redeemer's breast.

In hope of that Immortal Crown,
I now the cross sustain,
And gladly wander up and down,
And smite, and toil, and pain.

I suffer on my three score years,
'Til my deliverer come,
And wipe away his servant's tears,
And take his exile home.

O, what hath Jesus bought for me,
Before my ravished eyes,
Rivers of life Divine I see,
And trees of paradise.

I see a world of spirits bright,
Who taste the pleasures there,
They all are robed in spotless white,
And conquering palms they bear.

O, what are all my sufferings here,
If Lord thou count me meet,
With that enraptured host to appear,
And worship at thy feet.

Give joy or grief, give ease or pain,
Take life or friends away,
But let me find them all again,
In that Eternal day."

After prayer, he rose up and named the first chapter of Romans and sixteenth verse, *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation, unto every one that believeth.*

"Although Elder Bowles greatly desired to preach at this session of the yearly meeting, to leave a dying testimony his anxiety of mind was more than his bodily strength. He was notable to finish his sermon, and he called upon Elder Bundy who sat by him in the pulpit, to address the people. It is said to have been an unusually solemn and weeping time. His voice had become much broken by age and long use; still his soul seemed to dive into the deep fountains of God's infinite love. The sympathy and love of every Christian heart in that meeting seemed to flow on holy harmony, in the great channel of gospel liberty. A remark has been made that it seemed like a little Heaven on the earth.

"Elder Bowles was led back to Brother Whitney's, where many of the brethren and sisters flocked in to take the last earthly look of one about to put off the holy armor. Elder Whitfield remarked to him on shaking his hand, he hoped to meet him again on earth. He feelingly exclaimed: 'No, never, Brother Whitfield, in this world, but I hope we shall meet in Heaven.' He was fully conscious that his barque was nearing the port of endless bliss. By faith he could look to God and exclaim with good old Simeon, 'Now Lord, lettest thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy great salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people.' His son, Charles was with him during the last of his sickness; and when he could leave his father's bed, he filled some of the appointments made by the Elder before his illness.

"A few days before his death, by his request Deacon Carlton McEwen of Lawrenceville, his old friend, was sent for and came speedily to his bedside. He was perfectly conscious of the close of his earthly life. But he had no fear to tread the banks of Jordan. The religion that had borne him on amidst scoffs, and tumult, and toil, and life, for forty years, that had been his comfort and consolation in the silent grove, and his joy in the pulpit, now shone forth in his struggle of disease and death, he could reach out

and take hold on the Infinite hand that had lifted him over many a billow in life, and although there were moments when the power of his disease overturned the throne of reason, the genius of Heaven, the power of religion, would right it up again, and thus alternately his disorder and religion would triumph over the poor body, and often he would exclaim, ‘Glory to God, I am almost home. Bless the Lord my soul is happy!’ He could realize the sentiment of the Poet:

What’s this that steals upon my frame?
Is it death? Is it death?
Which soon will quench this vital flame,
Is it death? Is it death?
If this be death, I soon shall be
From every pain and sorrow free,—
I shall the King of Glory see,
All is well! All is well!

“How true is the language of the poet in reference to the situation of the dying saint in the last great struggle in life!

Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are.
While on his breast I lean my head
And breathe my life out sweetly’ there.

“On being asked if he had any fears of death, he replied with his characteristic earnestness: ‘No, glory to God, all is well.’ He lingered until the 16th of March, 1843, when the manly form that had stood on many a hard fought battle-field, both in carnal and spiritual warfare - that had faced so many dangers unharmed, and breasted so many storms in the Redeemer’s cause, gave way before the last conqueror, and yielded itself to the cold sepulchral stillness of the tomb. And that spirit whose moral power had held in awe the excited and maddened mob—had won so many victories over the powers of darkness—had been instrumental in extending the cause of truth to thousands of impenitent hearts—and cheering on their way by the faltering ranks of the great Immanuel’s army—bid adieu to its earthly tenement, and conveyed by bright seraphic messengers, winged its flight to the courts above. Such was the triumphant death of this old soldier of the cross.

“The funeral services were attended on the 18th, and although a violent snow storm was raging, a good number of people came together, to pay a last tribute of respect to his memory, and consign his mortal remains to its final resting place. The sermon was preached by Elder William Warner, of New Hampshire. And thus the good and useful man, passed from earth to heaven, and hundreds could apply the language of the Poet:

How blest the righteous when he dies,
When sinks a weary soul to rest,
How mildly beams the closing eye,
How gently heaves the expiring breath.

Of his family of several children, we cannot learn that but three survived him, viz: Charles, Deborah and Eunice. His son Charles, a Presbyterian minister, late of Pitcairn, St. Lawrence County, N.Y., died in the fall of 1850, at Pitcairn.”

MINISTRIES OF THE VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS

*Preaching, Missions Training, Aquila/Priscilla Ministry,
The Voice in the Wilderness Publication,
CrossVue School of Missions*

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FACTS ABOUT THE VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS

The Voice in the Wilderness is dedicated to the spreading of the whole Gospel to the world, especially in foreign lands. Founded by medical missionary Dr. J. Royce Thomason, The Voice in the Wilderness has contended for Fundamental Christianity and American Freedom for over 60 years.

The Voice in the Wilderness publication is a fundamental magazine, published quarterly in behalf of the work of the Lord and preservation of the liberties of our United States. Evangelist Ronnie Williamson, for over 30 years, has preached The Word of God and since 1996 used *The Voice in the Wilderness* publication as a powerful tool contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

Because we are fundamental and Bible believing, we use only the King James Bible for English speaking peoples.

Our desire is to help the local church in revivals, evangelism, and missions conferences as an extension of the pastor's pulpit ministry.

The Voice in the Wilderness believes that His commission will be complete through the New Testament church, whether in the United States or abroad.

APM is a local church ministry dedicated to assisting the pastor in equipping workers for service.

CrossVue School of Missions was established to assist those already on the mission field as well as those who have a desire to go.

This is a "by faith" mission, daily trusting God to burden hearts to support financially so that this gospel work around the world can continue.

Our work is world-wide. We are engaged evangelistically in many different countries such as India and Venezuela.

CLUB MIT

(MISSIONARY-IN-TRAINING)

For All Boys & Girls
Engaging children in being a steadfast
 worker for Christ, *Encouraging* them to
 be a boy or girl pleasing to the Lord, and
Equipping them to be a missionary every
 day . . . through lessons from the Apostle
 Paul's missionary helpers, Aquila &
 Priscilla.



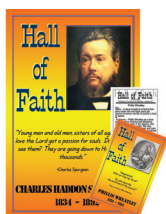
Lessons from Aquila and Priscilla

God has made four seasons for us to enjoy-Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter. The nice thing about the Spring season is that we are able to plant flowers and vegetables and watch them grow.

In the last Club MIT lesson, we asked you to make a promise to God. How are you doing with those promises? If you are continuing with those promises, then you are growing in God. 2 Peter 3:18 says, "But grow in **grace**, and in the **knowledge** of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." A simple definition for **grace** is:

God's Riches At Christ's Expense.

Do you know that you are saved? If not, you cannot have God's riches. The word **knowledge** means "understanding." Do you understand the Bible? Sometimes it can be hard to understand. Ask your parents, grandparents or pastor to help you understand the harder parts of the Bible. When you are faithful to study God's Word, then you are growing in God.



Club MIT Member...
 WE NEED TO HEAR FROM YOU!
 Write us soon and ask for your next
 Hall of Faith card. When you collect all
 12, you will be given the high honor of
Halieus (fishers of men).

BITS AND PIECES

Boy's

Boy's Bits

Coconut Head- You will need a coconut, flower pot, marker, soil, grass seed and water. Cut the top of the coconut off and remove all the white from the inside. Use the marker to draw a face on the coconut. Fill it with soil, pressing gently down. Spread grass seed when the soil is almost to the top and put a little soil on top. Water and put into a dark place. When you see green shoots start to come, put in lighted place and water when it looks dry.

Girl's

PRISCILLA'S PIECES

Capture the lovely scents of Spring - Pick a rose and pull apart all of the petals from the stem. Throw the stem away. Layer the petals in a jar and sprinkle salt throughout. Keep the jar closed tight until the petals have completely dried. When the petals have dried, open the jar and smell the sweet scents of spring. You can wrap the petals in a thin cloth to make your own fragrant sachet.

Take the Bible Scholar Challenge!

Unscramble the following words used in Aquila's Bible lesson. Use the circled letters to complete the sentence at the bottom.

cegra _____

paetsdanrgn _____

chseri _____

vSuoria _____

ruo _____

reundsdnat _____

rdoW _____

thafulf _____

wtcah _____

rignsp _____

ible _____

_____ !

Write TODAY for your next *Hall of Faith* card!

Cut here and give this page to a young person.

(News Bits continued from page IV)

other policies. Bishop Florencio Olvera is distributing a pamphlet to all of the parishes of the diocese which contains the "commandments" as well as principles to follow in deciding on who to vote for in Mexico's coming mid-term elections. Although Olvera does not explicitly name any political parties, the state's Federal Elections Institute official, Dagoberto Santos Trigo, is urging federal officials to fine him for violating Mexico's constitution, which forbids the involvement of the clergy in politics. He has also been denounced by homosexual groups, as well as a representative of the Social Democratic Party (PSD), which promotes many of the measures condemned by Olvera. [It is a sad day in America when members of Bible-believing churches claiming Christ as Saviour voted for a man who supports pro-Abortion, pro-Homosexual, pro-perversion legislation. How can a Christian, whether Democrat, Republican, or Independent, vote for a candidate so blatantly anti-Bible and opposed to all sacred and Godly? Even this Catholic understands this!] He urged people to pray "for those who promote abortion, euthanasia, and don't let yourself be fooled, and tell them: I respect you as people, but your actions are evil,

they are not of Christ." www.irnnews.com 4/6/09

"Global Plan for Recovery and Reform"- President Obama, while at the G 20 Summit in London, endorsed the IMF surveillance of US economy, the creation of a Financial Stability Board, a new global currency, warming



treaty, and fulfillment of the UN's Millennium Development Goals. The new global currency, called Special Drawing Rights, was the idea of billionaire George Soros. This would be the way the US would provide foreign aid to the rest of the world. As a result of the promises that Obama made at the Summit, the American taxpayer would be paying in the trillions of dollars. www.irnnews.com 4/6/09 {Editor: Did you notice the key words while you were reading - global and UN. LOOK OUT, the one world government is coming. LOOK UP, your redemption draweth nigh!}

MEMORIAL GIFTS

Received by The Voice in the Wilderness

Given in Memory of: DR. J. ROYCE THOMASON

By: Sis. Bullard

We would like to express our thanks to those who have given a memorial gift to The Voice in the Wilderness, Inc. Ministry. These names will be added to a plaque and displayed in our office. If you would like to honor a loved one, please send a Remembrance Memorial Gift or a Living Memorial Gift with the person's name (legibly printed). Your gift will be listed in an upcoming issue of this publication.

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