

How I Know GOD Answers Prayer

The Personal Testimony of One Life-Time

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Chapter Nine -

TO HIS PRAISE!

"They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness." (Psalm 145:7)

THIS chapter is written more than seven years later than the foregoing, in further testimony and praise.

Returning to Canada at the time of the Great War, we came face to face with a serious financial crisis. Only two ways seemed open to us. One was to lay our affairs frankly before the Board, showing that our salary was quite insufficient, with war conditions and prices, to meet our requirements. The other course was to just go forward, get a suitable home and whatever we required, and trust our Father to supply what was needed above our income. We decided on the latter course.

A dear daughter felt indignant that we should have a salary insufficient for our needs; but we assured her that to trust GOD for what was lacking was not begging. The day came when this child and myself took possession of our new home. As we entered the dining-room we found a large mail from China on the table.

One letter was forwarded from the lady in Australia whose gifts, in the past, seemed always to have met some felt need. Her letter enclosed fifty pounds, with the expressed wish that thirty pounds should be used for work in China, but twenty pounds was to be used to meet some personal need. I handed the letter to my daughter, saying: "Shall we not believe that GOD will undertake for us? It seems to me as if our Father were beside us saying, 'My child, take this hundred dollars as an earnest of what I am going to do for you.'"

Tears stood in her eyes as my daughter gave the letter back, saying: "Mother, we don't trust GOD half enough!"

Were I to attempt to write the history of the months that followed, a long chapter would be required; but my testimony along this line is surely sufficient.

It was on this same furlough that I came to have an enlarged vision of my Heavenly Father's willingness to undertake in what some might term the minor details of everyday life. Missionaries, especially we missionary women, know only too well how we are criticized in the matter of dress, when in the homeland and when traveling. I have had, through the years, not only many amusing but trying experiences in this connection, and I resolved to make the

question of dress a definite matter of prayer. And I rejoice to testify that the result of this decision became a constant source of wonder and praise. Yes, I found the Lord could guide me even in trimming my hat to His glory! That is, so that I could stand up before an audience and not bring discredit to my Master. Praise His name!

"There is nothing too great for His power, And nothing too small for his love!"

At the time of the Great War a son had gone to England with the first Canadian contingent. When this news reached us in China, I began to pray definitely that the Lord would use my son's gifts in the best way for his country's good, but would keep him back from the trenches and from actual warfare. My boy did not know of this prayer.

Some weeks after reaching England he was looking forward to leaving for the trenches in France, when orders came that he was needed in the Orderly Room, and his unit left without him. Months later a call came for volunteers, to fill the great gaps made at the time of the first use of gas. My boy resigned his position, and joined the company of volunteers to be sent to France. Just before they were to leave he was again sent for from Headquarters, and told he was to go to the Canadian Base in France as adjutant.

His duties in this capacity kept him at the Forwarding Base. A year later he again planned to resign, in order to get to the trenches. He had begun making arrangements for this step, when he had a fall from his horse, which caused him to be invalided home to Canada, where he was kept till the close of the war.

It would indeed be difficult to persuade his mother that all this happened by chance; for one day, when in great distress, expecting any day a cable to say he had left for the trenches, I received a most clear assurance from the Lord that he had the boy in His keeping.

After our return to China, when in great trouble, I prayed the Lord to grant me a clear sign of His favor by giving me a certain petition, which affected a child in the homeland. The request was a complicated one, including several definite details. A little more than a month later, a letter reached me from the one for whom I had asked the Lord's favor. She wrote joyously, telling that she had received just what I had asked for, and in every detail as I had prayed.

When my husband resigned the regular field work of Changte, Honan, it became necessary for us to find a home elsewhere. The only suitable place, meeting all our requirements, was on the hills at Kikungshan, South Honan. On going there to get a site for our home, though we looked for more than a week, we could find no place. As we started down the hill, one morning soon after midnight, I was feeling our failure very keenly, for we had given up our old home. When my husband saw how bad I felt, as he told me later, he began to cry earnestly to the Lord to give us a site. And before we reached the station the assurance had come that we would get a place. A friend on the train, traveling third class, saw us getting on the second class, and came in for a few words before getting off the train. When he heard we had failed to get a site, he said:

"I know of a beautiful site which our Mission is reserving for a future missionary. I'll ask them to give it to you."

A few days later the treasurer of this Mission wrote us that they had unanimously and gladly

voted to give us the site.

I am now writing these closing words in our God-given home, built on this beautiful site, one of the most lovely spots to be found in China. So from this quiet mountain retreat, a monument of what GOD can give in answer to prayer, this little book of Prayer Testimonies is sent forth.

As the past has been reviewed, and GOD's wonderful faithfulness recalled, there has come a great sense of regret that I have not trusted GOD more, and asked more of Him, both for my family and the Chinese. Yes, it is truly wonderful! But the wonder is not that GOD can answer prayer, but that He does, when we so imperfectly meet the conditions clearly laid down in His Word.

In recent years I have often tested myself by these conditions, when weeks, and perhaps months, have passed without some answer to prayer, and there has come a conscious spiritual sagging. As the discerning soul can plainly see, all the conditions mentioned in the list below may be included in the one word "Abide."

Conditions of Prevailing Prayer

1. Contrite humility before GOD and forsaking of sin. - 2 Chronicles 7:14
2. Seeking GOD with the whole heart. - Jeremiah 29:12, 13
3. Faith in GOD. - Mark 11:23, 24
4. Obedience. - I John 3:22
5. Dependence on the Holy Spirit. - Romans 8:26
6. Importunity. - Mark 7:24-30; Luke 11:5-10
7. Must ask in accordance with GOD's will. - I John 5:14
8. In Christ's Name. - John 14:13, 14, and many other passages.
9. Must be willing to make amends for wrongs to others. Matthew 5:23, 24

Causes of Failure in Prayer

1. Sin in the heart and life. - Psalm 66:18; Isaiah 59:1,2.
2. Persistent refusal to obey GOD. - Proverbs 1:24-28; Zechariah 7:11, 13.
3. Formalism and hypocrisy. - Isaiah 1:2-15.
4. Unwillingness to forgive others. - Mark 11:25, 26.
5. Wrong motives. - James 4:2, 3.
6. Despising GOD's law. - Amos 2:4
7. Lack of love and mercy. - Proverbs 21:13.

~ end of chapter 9 ~
