

# Miraculous Supply



**Testimonies from the Spirit World**

**By Maria Fontaine**

# Miraculous Supply

Testimonies from the Spirit World

By Maria Fontaine

Digital Book  
No to be Sold  
Edited by theaudiokey.com  
(Password: thekeys )  
July 2020

# Content

In The Wild West .....	p. 6
Give and It Shall Be Given You .....	p. 11
When I Lost Everything .....	p. 16
“Call Your Daughter” .....	p. 21
When Things really Look Impossible .....	p. 24
Home Soil Like a Foreign Land .....	p. 30
Suddenly I was at Retirement Age .....	p. 32
I Had to Return to My home Country .....	p. 38

## ***Foreword***

I'd like to share with you some testimonies of miraculous supply that have been received from the spirit world. There are many, of course, because Jesus never forsakes His own. These are just a small sample of how the Lord came to the aid of some of His children when they were in dire straits and it looked like there was no possibility of help. I pray that these will be a blessing to you who enjoy testimonies like this.

Maria Fontaine

# In the Wild West

**By Mandy**

Mandy: My family and I were pioneers who set out to make a new life for ourselves in the Wild West. My husband, Jack (or, as his parents called him, Jakob), me, and our four children packed up our personal belongings (which, mind you, weren't that many) and headed out to make a life for ourselves. It's not that we had a bad life in New York, but as Jack always said, "Why settle for less when we can do something better? And to discover that 'something better,' we have to be willing to go on an adventure, even if it's risky!" Jack used that saying in many situations, and to be honest, though it made me worry a fair bit at times, when I took the time to think about it, that was one of his qualities which I loved. I always knew Jack was going to choose the adventurous route. He was definitely not a man to walk beaten paths. In looking back at the times when we were in a fix, there wasn't one time that we didn't get out of it. Things always worked out.

We were both of German descent. Our families had come to the U.S. from Europe years before, persecuted for their faith, but it was that faith that bound us together. I was the weaker member of our team. Jack was a lot stronger than me in vision and adventure, but then one of us needed to be stronger, and he filled that role well. Me? I was the stable one who helped him to keep his feet close enough to earth. And that was also an important role in making our family work.

When we headed out West we had many, many miles ahead of us. We knew it was going to be a long and treacherous trip, so we tried to stock up with as many supplies as our wagon could carry. We'd have to stop along the way to restock, but we were trying to bring everything possible toward what we knew would be necessary to set up our home—tools, dishes, pots and pans, even cloth, not to

mention cash to buy livestock, seed for our crops, etc. We definitely had a plan, and we had done our homework quite well too. We knew what we wanted to do.

Traveling in a caravan with a number of other wagons, most of our journey was what was to be expected—until our well-laid plans began to unravel. We were passing through an unsettled region where we had expected there would be abundant game to supplement our meager food stocks. We were very short on supplies, without the meat we had expected to tide us over, and we were at least a two-week journey from the nearest town. But then we happened upon a pioneer family who had fallen behind their caravan due to problems with their wagon. They had expected to quickly do repairs and then catch up, but the work took longer than expected, so they found themselves stranded. With their water and food all but gone, this family was helpless and desperate. Because our own caravan was in desperate straits and might not make the next town as it was, the majority made the painful decision not to take this family on.

Jack would have nothing of it, though. He had such a heart, my big teddy bear. He told us that we were stopping and helping this family, even if it meant we were unable to continue with our caravan. We'd form a new caravan—just the two of our wagons. We gave the other family water and shared the little food we had, which they were very thankful for, as they knew what it cost us. We spent the night around the campfire talking and fellowshiping, and in getting to know this family we found we had a lot in common with Mark, who was a doctor, and his wife Jane. They too had raised their children in the faith and had similar dreams and goals, so it was a rewarding time.

The next morning we set out with almost no water and food left. Our travels were going to be literally hand to mouth, struggling to survive one day at a time. We had planned to ration what we had as much as possible, but now our supplies

were gone and we weren't sure what we were going to do. We imagined we could find water, though we couldn't be sure. But we still knew we were in a fix, as with our two families totaling 13 people (Mark and Jane had five children), we weren't sure how we were going to survive. We were also in what was considered remote and dangerous territory for white folks to be in on their own—two wagons in a caravan wasn't safe at all!

We were desperate, but we also knew that we had done the right thing. So, before setting out that day, we all got together to pray, as we had every morning, and committed our travels and care into the Lord's hands. We explained our desperate situation to Him and reminded Him of His promises. After prayer, we received God's peace in our hearts; we knew that we were going to be okay. The thick forest had afforded us some shade up until now, but it also held the potential of harboring Indians waiting to ambush us.

Unbeknownst to us, we were being watched by some Indian scouts as we made our way along the narrow, rutted trail. In this largely untouched expanse, only a few pioneers had tried to live among the Indians. Unlike so many other settlers, these pioneers knew that their very survival depended on building a peaceful, mutual friendship with the Indians. But these Indians—who now moved stealthily through the forest, observing our every action—had no deep-seated hatred of the white men as many of their fellow Indians did. They weren't interested in helping us, but neither were they intent on killing us. They knew we were just passing through their land, but they were watching us, nonetheless, to make sure that we (and any other caravans) didn't stay on their land or become a threat.

When they saw that Mark and Jane's wagon had become stranded, they decided to wait to see what would happen. If the people died, they would have taken the



wagon and horses, and it would have been worth the wait. Then along came our caravan, and they figured that it would help the lone wagon. So they were about to leave when they realized that the caravan had left without them. The Indians were surprised to see that the white people would leave some of their own people behind to die. They were even more surprised to see that one wagon stayed to help the stranded ones.

They watched to see what we would do. They came as close as possible to our camp to hear what we were saying. The main scout had traveled to the white men's outpost many times to trade and had learned enough of our language to understand us as we sat together that first night, talking of our beliefs, our dreams, our goals, what led us to make such a long journey, and of our faith in God. He heard that we were out of food and water. He also heard us pray the next day for God's supply and protection. The Indians were accustomed to praying to their "Great Spirit," so they understood that we were praying to ours.

They continued to follow us the next morning to see how far we would get. We later found that as the scouts sat by their fire that first night, some joked about what things they would choose from our wagons once we had died. But the head scout sat deep in thought. He thought of his children at home and the pain he would feel if he had to watch them die of hunger, unable to do anything to prevent it. Finally he shared with the other scouts all that he'd understood of our fellowship time and that we had prayed to the Great Spirit for help. Something moved deep in his heart, and though he had no desire to have any contact with us, he couldn't shake the feeling that somehow their encounter with us was guided by the Great Spirit.

As we neared the end of the next day and made camp, we were very hungry and thirsty. We hadn't found water, and the smaller children were whimpering and

tired, not to mention hungry. We didn't know what to do. Jack and Mark took the older boys hunting. We were hoping for rabbit or wild fowl for dinner. They weren't going to go too far, so they left us women and children.

To make a long story short, they weren't successful in their hunting. As the scouts watched our pathetic attempts to hunt, they couldn't shake a sense of pity, and finally decided to hunt for some food to give to us. As our men were returning with empty hands, the Indians approached us with game and with some water they had gotten from a hidden spring, and offered it to us!

This was the beginning of a new and different life for us. Our saviors had vanished into the woods after giving us the food, but as the night descended, they joined our campfire. With the chief scout translating, we talked and we began to grow close in mutual respect for each other. The next day they led us to their village. Mark, being a doctor, offered to help in whatever way he could in order to repay them for their kindness.

We didn't go on to the original destination of our dreams, but we—both families—decided to remain with this tribe of Indians, learning their ways and language. We found fertile land near the village, which they graciously offered to us. We eventually built a small schoolhouse, and Jane and I taught the Indian children and our own to read and write. Their elders sometimes took our children into their special “school” to teach them the ways of the forest and to learn their language. Mark opened a small practice in a room attached to their cabin, helping Indians and travelers alike. My Jack opened a small general store, which thrived, because the trail West carried many caravans in need of supplies.

So that's how we got out of a difficult situation. God didn't fail us; He blessed us by opening a different door than the one we thought He would. At first we

thought the Indians were the problem, but they turned out to have the solution we needed.

\* \* \*

## **Give and It Shall Be Given You**

**By George**

My name is George. The story I have come to tell you is one that is not much unlike the stories of you who have dedicated your life to following God—one step at a time.

I was called as a missionary, not to pastor a church or to join a well-established work. I was about 40 when my call came, and it was a call to give away everything I had invested in and dedicate my all—mind, body, and spirit—to serving others. My mission involved the homeless and destitute of America. I was called to reach them with the Lord's love. In time, some of those whom the Lord had used me to reach joined this mission of love.

However, after 15 years of constant service, I began to notice odd changes in my body, changes which made my life difficult to cope with. I finally went to see a physician, and was diagnosed with advanced arthritis. He told me that the pain would only increase and that my range of movement would become more and more limited.

I had been so busy trying to make a difference in others' lives that I had not thought much about my own, and the rude awakening of this diagnosis left me with many questions and feelings of despair. *Would my Lord leave me comfortless?* I questioned.

Daily I sought His presence before beginning my work, and daily I received confirmations of the need for me to complete the job He had for me. It wasn't a scheduled job with an obvious routine, but it involved heeding His voice, reaching those who looked worthless, but who to Him were precious jewels that needed my care. I was tempted to feel that, after giving my all to Him and doing all that He had asked, I was now being forgotten.

I had no house to call my own. I and a few others from my team had rented a small flat in the middle of the poorest section of the city in order to be closer to those we cared for. We often ate the same donated food we distributed to the homeless. We often took in those who needed shelter from the cold night, and that meant homeless people we hardly knew sleeping wall to wall in our tiny flat.

I chided myself for not being wiser, for not more carefully considering the medical and other financial needs I would have when old age knocked on my door. I don't know how I could have built up personal savings, since I didn't have a salary, but still, I wondered if I should have planned better. I was not a senior yet, but with the debilitating sickness I had, I knew that in a few years not only would I not be able to do as much for others, but I would be in dire need of help.

As I cried out to the Lord amid my confusion, scriptures which so often gave me strength came to mind. "Because he hath set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known My name. He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him, and show him My salvation" (Psa.91:14-16).

I imagined the Psalmist becoming old. I imagined him looking back at the many troubled times he and those he knew had experienced, and I realized that his

faith in God had remained strong, that God had never failed the righteous, and that the same was going to be true for me.

I looked up into the gray winter sky that day and asked God, “Is there anything You want me to do in order for You to be able to care for me as You cared for David, the Psalmist?” The answer came to my heart through the song of a little bird chirping in the nearby tree. Despite the gray winter day, despite the fact that food was surely hard to find for that little bird, it trusted that the Creator would care for it. If that bird could sit and sing and trust, so could I.

The Lord then spoke to my heart, saying, “You are precious, for a man who follows My bidding is worth more than gold. You are priceless to Me. I will be generous in caring for you and will keep you well able to accomplish My work. You have been a faithful and righteous servant and your reward is not only in Heaven, but on Earth as well.” Tears streamed down my face. How could I have doubted it? I knew the Lord would show me what to do. I whistled as I went about the rest of the day’s business with a peace in my heart despite my aching limbs.

The next day, as I was making my daily rounds, I saw a young woman not older than 16 sitting dejectedly on the sidewalk, weeping uncontrollably. As I listened carefully to her story, I found that she had run away from home the previous week because she had discovered she was pregnant. She imagined the horror her parents would feel at hearing of her child being conceived out of wedlock when she was so young. After writing them a short explanatory note, she had preempted their reaction by enacting a quick escape. She obviously felt desolation, remorse, fear, and a deep sadness.

I took my time with this young lady, whose name was Lara. She sensed my honest concern for her, and as we spoke, she understood more about the love of our heavenly Father, of His forgiveness and genuine desire to see that she was happy. I told her that if she would agree, I would go with her to her parents' house and we could talk about it with them together. I told her that if she was rejected, I would see to it that she would be cared for. We talked about how the worst answer she could get was "No, we don't want you to come home." Though I didn't know how I would care for her or how to find her the assistance she would require, God had given me a great deal of faith for others and I knew He wouldn't forsake this young woman in her time of need.

Finally she agreed, trusting that I and her heavenly Father would be there for her if things turned sour. I imagined how her parents might greet her, having not seen her for over a week. Would they be softened or harder still? I prayed that God would touch their hearts, and I encouraged her at every step of the way that God was in control and would work things out for good.

We arrived at her front door, and since she didn't have her key, I let her take her time to muster up the courage to ring the doorbell. It was already supper time, so she was sure her parents would be home. A man with a tear-stained face opened the door. Before she could say a word, she had been scooped up into his arms as he said, "My daughter, my dear, I love you, don't worry," interspersed with sobs. It was a tearful reunion as her mother, upon seeing her, also ran to join in the embrace.

A couple of tearful minutes later they noticed me standing outside, grinning from ear to ear with tears streaming down my face too, as I praised God in my heart for His answers to prayer. They invited me in, and as mother and daughter spent some time speaking together in private, the father offered me a hot drink.

Unbeknownst to me, he observed how I had to carefully sit down and the effort it took me to simply hold a cup of tea. He asked me what I did, and I explained my work to him. Soon Lara and her mother joined us and a hot meal was set before us.

After supper, I bid Lara farewell with a few words of counsel and encouragement. As I was leaving, her father told me, “I know you are in pain. There is no way to hide it from me. The acute arthritis you are experiencing will only cause continuing deterioration to your joints, you know.” I looked down to hide my tears. I knew too well that what he said was true. He continued. “I’m a doctor, and I specialize in cases like yours. Please tell me you will accept my assistance free of charge. We could try some therapy options, and if your situation continues to deteriorate, I have friends who could work out professional care for you no matter where you are.”

I felt relief and joy—my Father had not forgotten me! My Father Who owned the cattle on a thousand hills was watching my back while I cared for His children. Gratitude filled my heart. When I thanked Lara’s father, he answered, “This is the very least I can do for someone who cares enough to reach out to those in need. You are a great man, and I’m proud to be of assistance to the man who has brought my daughter back to me.” I gave credit where it was due—to our Lord.

Then began a beautiful chapter of my life in which I was able to continue much of my work. I trained others to help. I received the care I needed, and I also brought this kind doctor and his family into a deeper and fuller connection with our Savior. I never forgot how He cares for His Own.

\* \* \*

# When I Lost Everything

By Gary

I'm Gary, and I want to tell you something about starting over. There are two ways to look at starting over. One way is with a head full of despairing questions, a heart full of regret and loss, and a soul full of inner turmoil. The second way is with a spirit full of adventurous hope, which inspires faith like that of a little child. When I lost everything and had to start over, I chose the latter.

When I was a child, my grandfather had often told me stories of what it was like to lose everything. I learned from him that being faced with starting over is an opportunity and not an excuse for giving up.

With a wife and three children and a fourth one on the way, I realized that the fascinating stories that I had been told so many years earlier were now more significant than ever.

Sitting on a park bench one cold autumn day, I pondered the story of Grandfather's best friend who sadly chose the harder way when he was faced with starting over. That was such a sad story, and Grandfather could never get through that one without shedding some tears. I'll get into that a bit later.

I was an accountant and had just been told by my boss that, with the economy being what it was, I was being laid off and I had lost most company benefits. Prior to this moment I had so carefully planned out my future, down to the finer details of what college I wanted to provide for my eldest teenage son, to the vacation spots Charlotte and I wanted to take our family to once our baby girl—yet to be born—was five years old.



With my last paycheck in hand, a heavy heart, and tear-filled eyes, I humbly bowed my head in prayer and asked God that day for the grace to choose to see this moment as an opportunity and not as an excuse for giving up. During those quiet moments while I sat and waited for God's peace to fill my soul, I was not disappointed.

I had so many unanswered questions, so much uncertainty, so many fears I had to consciously resist—fears that sought to poison my spirit and drown out the voices of hope and courage. But the words from a familiar hymn began to fill my mind. I saw myself as a young boy alongside my mother, singing these words from our hymn book. I loved to look up and see the beautiful glow on my mother's face while she sang this song. I knew she believed every word:

A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;  
Our helper He, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing.  
Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing;  
Were not the right Man on our side, the Man of God's Own choosing.

“Lord,” I prayed, “thank You for being on my side.”

The Prince of Darkness grim, we tremble not for him;  
His rage we can endure, for lo, his doom is sure,  
One little word shall fell him.

“Jesus,” I repeated over and over, and thanked God for such a powerful name.

The circumstances that had led to my difficult plight were far out of my control, but what was within my control was the ability to seek God's face and to find His opportunity in it. I determined that no matter how rough the following months or years would be, I would find His opportunity.

As I got home, Charlotte kissed me and asked how my day at work went. I smiled and said, “Fine, dear. How are you feeling?”

I could see the tiredness and strain in Charlotte’s eyes.

“Please sit down, dear. I can serve the plates,” I told her, as I gave her a hug and thanked her for cooking such a delicious meal.

Once in bed with Charlotte, I held her close and told her that God was giving us an opportunity. I told her of my talk with my boss over lunch, the last paycheck he’d handed me, and my afternoon at the park.

Charlotte cried in my arms that night. I reassured her that I would be willing to do anything and work at any job, no matter how difficult, in order to provide for my family—while at the same time I would be watching for God’s opportunity.

I took on any job that I could find. At times I worked days and nights, holding two to three part-time jobs. Some jobs were temporary, but through them God provided our bare necessities.

Going from custodial work in an office building to janitorial work at a school and a trash collector at other times definitely had its moments of discouragement. It wasn’t easy. If it hadn’t been for the reassurance of God’s love and care for me, I don’t think I could have survived those months.

Seven months and five days after my afternoon in the park, I met Larry Johnson.

“Gary, can I speak to you for a moment?” asked Mr. Johnson, who I had briefly met during a school function.

“Of course, Mr. Johnson. How are you doing today?” I politely asked, trying not to act surprised at a bank owner addressing me.

“I hear you used to be an accountant, but you were laid off.”

“Yes, that’s correct.”

“I’ve been keeping tabs on you. Remember the lost \$20 bill you found in the meeting hall after our parent-teacher meeting, which you turned in to the moderator?”

I nodded.

“That was mine,” he said seriously.

“I’m glad you got it back,” I told him sincerely.

“So am I,” he said with a smile. “I left it on purpose. You see, I need a man I can trust on my team. Recently I had to fire my personal assistant for stealing from me,” he lamented.

“I’m sorry to hear that, Mr. Johnson.”

“Please call me Larry. You seem to be a hard-working man, Gary. You often go above and beyond the call of duty, even with the most menial tasks. You’re never late and you’re a man of your word. You’re friendly and personable and someone people can trust. Your accounting skills could be useful to me, and I’m sure you could develop any new skills you would need. Gary, I would like to offer you the job of being my personal assistant.”

Larry became more than my boss; he became a lifelong friend. He had two children the same ages as my eldest two, and they became the best of friends. His wife and Charlotte immediately connected and would often spend hours talking together over tea.

Some time later, exhausted after a game of tennis on a Sunday afternoon, Larry asked me, “So tell me, Gary, what was it like? I never asked you what it was like for you when you lost your job.”

I told Larry about my afternoon at the park and all that I’d experienced. I told him about the choice that was presented to me on that day—to wait and believe in God’s opportunity or to excuse myself and give up on life.

I went on to tell him the details of all that passed through my mind that afternoon in the park:

“I reflected on the sad story my grandfather often told me of his best friend, Charlie. Both Charlie and my grandfather were farmers. One year there was a field fire and they both lost everything. It took my grandfather several years to get his crops back in shape. Charlie chose not to start over. He drowned his sorrows and despair in drink. His wife left him soon after, taking their only child with her. My grandfather tried to help his dear friend Charlie, but the poison of doubt and fear had taken its toll on him. He died a drunk.”

I went on to tell Larry, “I love Charlotte and my kids, and I knew how much it would hurt them if I gave up on life. Sure, I could have made excuses. I could have dwelt on my plight. There were many days when I hated the work I was doing—the stench of the garbage, the filthy school bathrooms. What kept me going was the hope that someday I would find God’s opportunity, and I knew it would be worth waiting for.”

Larry put his hand on my shoulder and thanked me for sharing my story with him. He then confided in me that he had been drifting away from God and he wanted to find his way back to Him. We bowed our heads and I prayed for Larry. That was the day I knew that meeting Larry was God’s opportunity—not only an

opportunity to have a better-paying job, or to make a lifelong friend, but an opportunity to let God use me to bring Larry back to Him.

Starting over really is a wonderful vehicle toward finding God's opportunities!

\* \* \*

## **Call Your Daughter**

**By Obaachan**

“Obaachan, you should tell your daughter to come home.” Akemi said this nearly every time she visited me. She was concerned about me and my health, and to tell the truth, I was concerned too. I had been diagnosed with diabetes a few months earlier, and Akemi had started her campaign for me to call my daughter home at that time.

But I shook my head. “She’s doing such important work there in Indonesia with her school and orphanage. I couldn’t ask her to come.” I glanced at my wall, which was a collage of pictures of Indonesian children with dazzling smiles, and of my daughter, Chie, with them.

“And I suppose there’s no way she could possibly make money there to send to you!” Akemi said in a huff.

I frowned at her and put on my stern grandmother voice. “Akemi-chan, I’m just fine here. But thank you for being concerned.” Akemi finished her visit without further comment about how my daughter should be here, but I knew she would mention it again the next time I saw her. Many of my neighbors thought the same way. Shouldn’t a dutiful daughter care for her mother when she was getting old?

I had done well on my pension until I had become sick and the hospital bills began to drain my retirement fund. My husband had provided well for us, and we had been able to set aside a fund to help in case of emergencies. This fund became more important when, shortly after he passed on to Heaven, the company he had worked for failed in an economic downturn and it was discovered that two executives had fled, taking the company's entire pension fund with them.

When I feel the weight of a problem on my mind, I like to clean. I can't feel comfortable praying in a dirty house. So I brought out my cleaning supplies and scrubbed my tiny cottage, the places that I was still flexible enough to reach, from top to bottom. Then I settled into my *zabuton* (a sitting cushion) to pray.

"Lord," I said, "first, I want to thank You for my daughter. You sent her to my husband and me when we were just about to give up on having children of our own. She was the most precious gift. When my husband died, it was difficult for Chie. She became an atheist, but in her heart she knew You were there. I prayed many times, as You remember, for her to return to You. You showed me the verse about those who forsake father and mother to follow You. I told You that if she would be happy in Your service, You could take her anywhere—and You did. She looks radiant now and she is helping many people. Thank You for that.

"Now, this is my problem. I'm sick, and I'm running out of money for doctors and medicine. My neighbors and friends want me to send for my daughter, but I want her to stay where she is, serving You. You know what I need, so I'm not worried. Well, maybe just a *little* worried. But You will always provide because You promised to in Your Word."

I sat quietly and the Lord spoke to my heart. "Call your daughter."

“But I told You, that’s not what I want to do. She’ll worry.”

“Call your daughter.”

“Humph.” I got out my phone book and opened it. It opened to my daughter’s phone number.

I gave her number to the long-distance operator; I had never phoned her before. She had always phoned me.

“Hello?” It was my daughter.

“Chie-chan? This is mother. ...”

“Mom? Really? Oh, it’s wonderful to hear from you! Are you well? I was just going to call you. Makoto and I have the most wonderful news! We’re going to have twins!”

We were soon discussing all those things mothers do: about the pregnancy, the due date, and doctors in the area. Then my daughter said, “We want to have the babies in Japan because the clinics are better. The staff here can take care of things for a few months.”

“Then you’ll stay with me,” I said, and it was arranged.

This was the first step of a whole new life for me. When my daughter came home, she told me about the dentists who provide free service to the orphanage and school, and about the dance instructor who gives free classes to the children, and many more interesting details. Then she invited me to join her in Indonesia. I went straight to my prayer *zabuton* and told the Lord that if He wanted me to serve Him in Indonesia, he had to heal my diabetes. The next checkup at the hospital showed that the Lord did just that!

At 60, my life began anew.

\* \* \*

## **When Things Really Look Impossible**

**By Gregory Hansing**

Gregory Hansing: There are times in life when things really do look impossible. Perhaps you grew up in an era and society where businesses, government, and other organizations provide pensions or social security for the elderly. This can be a good thing. But I do not come from such an age.

I come from a time when family was meant to take care of the aged. There were no nursing homes to go to, no government funds to pay for medical care. There were only families, and if one's family had moved away or become infirm and unable to take care of their elderly, the elderly were in dire straits. An elderly person could die feeling dejected, unloved, and uncared for.

Christianity was the salvation of many in my day, not only the salvation of the soul, not only the source of joy of spirit and peace of mind during the trying days of one's Earth life, but also the salvation of those who found themselves without family to care for them in times of need. Christianity brought with it a social understanding of the needs of others—their neighbors.

I wanted to begin my story with this background, to help you to understand more about what I'm going to tell you. Now let me introduce myself. I'm Dr. Gregory Hansing of a small town in the northern part of France that bordered on Germany. I lived during the latter part of the 1800s and early 1900s. I was a doctor of medicine. We weren't wealthy, but my family was sufficiently comfortable due to my practice. That is, until we fell on hard times during the



second decade of the 1900s. The war stripped us. We lost lands, two sons, three sons-in-law, and because I had helped care for soldiers on both sides of the conflict, we lost prestige.

It seemed as if my Christian faith had backfired. There was nowhere to turn. My health was broken, my daughters were widowed, my grandchildren were fatherless.

My wife was ill and much of my attention went to caring for her. We were destitute, and I felt as if the God of the Christian faith had deserted me and my family.

One day, in a fit of rage I nearly threw out my Bible. It had always been more of a family heirloom, not a book I would sit and read. The only scriptures I or my family ever heard were at church on Sunday. We tried to obey the church rules of loving God and our neighbors as ourselves, as well as the Ten Commandments. But look at the predicament we were in: two elderly people, three daughters, two daughters-in-law, ten grandchildren, and me the only male breadwinner.

Caring for soldiers from both sides of the conflict had turned our neighbors against us. Living what we had been taught brought on trouble. It felt like we were no longer standing on the Rock, as we had been taught in church; it felt as though we were floundering on shifting sands. The foundation of our lives was crumbling, and we were fast falling into poverty.

All we had left was a modest house on a small piece of property, a cow, some goats, chickens, pigs, and a garden plot. But we knew these things would not provide for our large family for long.

No one would seek my medical care because they considered me a traitor, a collaborator. I'm not sure who they felt I was betraying. After all, I took care of

people on both sides of the border. I cared for all who came—those who were wounded, ill, and delirious with fear. I did what I had to do; I cared for my “neighbors,” all of those in need who arrived at my doorstep.

But the result was that at the end of the war we were abandoned—abandoned by fellow countrymen, abandoned by the neighbors living in our area, abandoned by the church, and abandoned by God, or so it seemed to me. As time went on, we were then seemingly abandoned by our daughters. Our daughters-in-law with their children went to live with their families, and two of our daughters went to live with the families of their deceased husbands. I was left with my sick wife, one daughter, and three grandchildren, no practice, and failing health.

It took a lot for God to bring me to my knees. I felt forsaken. After all, hadn't I served Him well by caring for others in the community? Then when the war came, hadn't I continued to serve Him well by caring for all who came to me, no matter what their allegiance? Didn't I obey His commandment to love my neighbor? So where was He now when I needed Him? One thing I know for sure, I was not on my knees in humble obeisance. I was angry.

My wife and daughter didn't know I was angry. I held my anger within. It was killing me. There was not only the poverty tearing me down and the lack of respect or help from our neighbors eating at me; my anger against God was the deadliest force in my life at that time.

Then I changed. What came over me? God's love quite simply broke through at the bedside of my dying wife. She held my hand and quietly whispered, “Gregory, I want you to come and be with me forever in the land beyond.” And then she passed away. It was that simple. It was as if she held out her hand from the other

side of the veil and asked me to come and join her. My wife had believed in the afterlife. I had not. She saw my unbelief and reached out to help me.

I'm pretty sure if she had tried to talk to me earlier, I would not have listened. But something about her hand reaching out to me as she took her last breath broke through the hard shell around my heart. She reached me. I trembled and sobbed. I sobbed for days. My daughter, Ann, was surprised at how little I tried to control my emotions at times. I didn't hide them. She was unaccustomed to seeing me so open about my feelings and my love for my wife and family. She probably thought it was due to my weakened health.

Maybe God used my weakened health to break down my barriers. But what reached my heart and broke through the thick shell was the strong faith in God that my wife showed to me during her final moments. She had suffered, and yet she still believed. I found it nearly unfathomable.

I had a choice set before me: succumb to the depression that was fighting to take over my life and spirit, or cry out to God to forgive me. I didn't fully understand what He should forgive me for. After all, I had been obedient to His commandments. But I knew I could not and would not give in to depression. So I walked into a nearby wood and called out to God, "Forgive me!" And that was that. I changed.

I humbled myself before God, and Jesus Christ took full control of my life from that point. I walked back into my house a changed man. I was no longer pale and stooped, I was upright and chipper. My daughter must have thought she was dreaming when she saw me. She said I looked nearly ten years younger. But that's how fully my spirit had changed.

Health poured back into my body. The bitterness was gone, and in its place came the restorative healing power of God's love. I was full of life, of joy, and of a desire to continue to help others. I was full of forgiveness for others. I forgot how my neighbors had turned away from me. That heirloom Bible became more to me than any medical manual. Reading it became my source of spiritual strength and nourishment.

One day I packed my bag with medical supplies and took off walking. I stopped at every house along the way, asking how all were doing and if anyone needed my help. People were surprised. Neighbors who had shunned me found me on their doorstep offering my services. What I discovered was that though they had refused to come to me for help, they weren't ashamed to receive it when I came to their door. There were needs everywhere, and I was happy to fill those needs. Poor health can break down barriers when a cheery doctor shows up offering his services.

I did what I could for free even though my supplies were limited. I didn't ask for payment, because these were the same neighbors who had shunned me, and I didn't think they would pay me. I was there to give. Eventually my neighbors gave what they could in payment.

Giving is what turned my family's situation around. Within six months, the signs of poverty had disappeared, and within a couple of years we were living well.

When ill health again knocked at my door and it was my time to depart this life, my daughters and their new husbands took care of me. Though they were prepared to take care of me on their own, our kind neighbors were generous, too.

I lived out my golden years under the care of those who had formerly turned their backs on me.

What was the key? A change of heart brought about by humbling myself before Jesus and opening my life fully to Him. Crying out to Him for forgiveness. Forgiving others as God had forgiven me. Continuing to use the skills He had given me to help others. He didn't let me down. He was more than ready to take care of me and my family, and would have done so much earlier if I had turned away from my self-righteousness and bitterness earlier. Once I did, all was forgiven, and the light He put within my heart shone out into the dark corners of the hearts of others, bringing them light and turning their hearts toward generosity. My family and I never lacked again.

\* \* \*

# Home Soil Like a Foreign Land

By Nancy

Hi! My name is Nancy, and I want to tell you a story of how God fulfilled His promises to supply all our needs and more when my husband Lucas and I were faced with a serious shortage in the earthly realm.

After Lucas and I were married, we decided to serve Christ. At that time life was very different, but one thing never changes. As the Bible says, “Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever.” God is not limited by surroundings or time periods.

Our story goes like this: we had been serving the Lord in South Asia. In fact, we first came to the area when it was part of British India, and while we were there it became East Pakistan, and finally Bangladesh. After 40 years of missionary service we felt that due to our frail health, it was time to retire and return to our home country, the U.S. We had never been well off, but we’d always had enough. Now that our missionary tenure was coming to a close, we discussed how we could carry on with the Lord’s work in the U.S. and how we would support ourselves.

In Bangladesh we had received financial support from a wealthy local woman who had decided that as her gift to God she would sponsor our work, which she did faithfully for many years. When she passed on to her reward, we managed to continue to make ends meet while on the mission field. But we realized that our savings would not last for long and that we needed to plan wisely. We had little knowledge of how we would support ourselves once we reached America. We had taken the matter to the Lord in prayer many times and corresponded with friends in the U.S. who gave us some godly counsel on how to get started.

As we prayed and sought God's guidance as to what we should do, He promised us that He would supply our every need, that He would fulfill His promises in the Bible, that He would show us His plan for our work and our support, and that we would never lack for our needs. So we packed our belongings, used most of the remainder of our savings on tickets to return home, and trusted in God to show us His plan.

My husband at this time was nearing 70, still in good health, thank the Lord, and I was 60. As we arrived on home soil, we felt as if we'd stepped into a foreign land. So much had changed in the time we'd been away serving Christ. Our disorientation, along with our dwindling financial situation, was nearly overwhelming.

We stayed with old friends for those first weeks, but after a time we felt we must move on so as not to tax their generosity or resources too greatly, since our friends weren't very well off themselves. So as we prepared to move on, we were very desperate in prayer. We had the promises of God to stand on, but we began to wonder if we'd missed His cue or path somewhere along the way. He'd promised us He would show us His plan, but here we stood, still without our work or a home, and with only a few dollars to our name.

Finally, two days before we were to leave our dear friends, we received a letter in the mail from a local lawyer stating that he would like to meet us. Our transport and hotel stay would be supplied. We were surprised, as we did not know who this person was or how he knew about us or even found us. We realized it was a miracle!

We contacted and then met with this man, who explained that our dear sponsor from our time in Bangladesh had decided shortly before she died to include a

sum of money for our use in her will. This money was to be used to set up a mission in the U.S. that would enable us to continue serving Jesus for as long as we were able. The reason we hadn't heard of it until now was that there had been disagreements about some of the terms in the will and it had gone to probate court.

After everything had finally been sorted out, her U.S. lawyer had been unable to track us down, since we had left Bangladesh. He'd been contacting our former sponsor's relatives searching for us and had finally obtained the address of our friends in the U.S. So, true to His promises, we received the answer to our prayers.

We praised God for His wisdom and supply and went on to do exactly what our dear friend and the Lord wanted us to do. We opened a small mission, which was funded mainly by our former sponsor's will, local donations, and government grants. We were able to help with training and sending missionaries overseas, as well as assisting missionaries who had to return to the U.S. It was a wonderful retirement ministry and gave us the financial means to continue to serve our precious Savior without ever lacking.

Praise God, He never fails.

\* \* \*



# **Suddenly I was at Retirement Age**

**By Frank**

Frank: I was a career noncommissioned officer in the army. While I was well trained in logistical analysis, there weren't many opportunities in post-military life where I could easily adapt that training for civilian purposes. My life had been highly structured and regimented, and very much in a cocoon, where I fulfilled my task and never really had to concern myself with the other stages of the work. That was someone else's responsibility. There were rules and regulations that guided the reactions and expectations of others, as well as myself.

So much was taken care of for me. I had health care, a steady income, and my day was planned out to the minute, including free time. I had all my bases covered. I knew my place. I was over some and under some. Although I had been based in several countries, I usually worked on the military base, so my life was familiar no matter where I was stationed.

Before I realized it, I was at retirement age. Suddenly it began to hit me: I was stepping out into a world where hardly anything was clearly defined, a world where there was no one to tell me what to do, where standards overall were what you decided to make them to be, and where doing the right thing according to the rules was no guarantee that things would work out as planned. Doing your job was no longer enough. It was like being thrown into the middle of an icy sea in the midst of a storm after having only known the relative warmth and comfort of working on a big ship, below deck where the shocks and discomforts and seeming chaos rarely reached. It was destabilizing, to say the least, and at times the sense of being in free fall without a parachute would bring me to the brink of panic.

I had a small pension. I wouldn't starve, but what I was starving for was direction, purpose, meaning in what I would now do, and most of all the sense of security that my life had had up to this point.

I'd had some connection to the Lord in my early teen years, but it had faded with the adrenaline rush of being somebody in the military. The more my life had become regimented physically, the more it had become stifled spiritually. Routine and having authority over others replaced the need for spiritual things to cling to. Now, though, I was starting to feel the need for something to hold on to, to stabilize the gut-wrenching tailspin that my life seemed to have fallen into.

It was in the midst of one of those near panic moments when I remembered the peaceful calm that had sometimes engulfed me as a young teen when I had slowed down and stopped to think about the Lord. At that moment it was exactly what I needed, so I called out to the Lord.

“Lord, help me, please. I'm worried. I feel lost and I'm not sure where to turn for help. Please guide me through this situation. I'll never again relegate You to last place in my life. I apologize for not acknowledging You earlier in my life. I understand if You don't even want to help me. I'm not a bad person, but I also can't say I'm a good person. All I know is that I need You now. I feel like I can't depend on anyone else, not even my own experience. Amen.”

I can't explain it, but the battle in my mind stopped. The fog of confusion cleared. The sense of emotional agoraphobia that had seemed to ratchet me into a near panic, faded. There were no more advancing enemy patrols of failure or sounds of imagined mechanized faith-killing machines such as fear and worry moving through my mind. I just had a peace. I felt like everything would be okay. I didn't hear an audible voice, but these words clearly came into my thoughts.

“Son, you’ll be fine. I am with you. You don’t have to do everything perfect to deserve My help or win My good favor. You have it. I gave My life for you. You are not being abandoned or left hanging, twisting in the wind. I have a tight grip on you, and no matter what it looks like, I’m not going to let go.”

That’s all He said. That’s all He needed to say. To make a long story short, I faced my retirement with a new perspective.

When discharged, I stayed with my elderly uncle (my only surviving relative) and his family. The economy was not booming, so jobs were scarce. I was just going to have to search my training for qualities or skills and let the Lord show me how to turn them into something that was needed.

Just having a pension wasn’t enough. I had to find a way to put meaning into the rest of my life, even if it meant starting at the bottom. The first months were discouraging, to say the least. Some people might think that you can just say, “I was in the military,” and everyone jumps up and says, “I want to hire you!” But as too many vets know, when push comes to shove, it’s not that simple. But I had overcome the biggest hurdle of my own fears and I used every available moment to work on finding ways to adapt.

After some months, my uncle told me that he had heard of a job opening. One of the wealthy families in the city was looking for a chauffeur and security man.

On the appointed day I went to apply, and was discouraged by the number of younger applicants. While sitting outside waiting for my turn to be interviewed, a prim Pekinese came up to me, looked right at me, then barked and jumped up into my lap as if I were his best friend. My first reaction was that he was kind of cute in a yappy sort of way. But then as I looked down at my only civilian suit, on which my hopes of looking professional were pinned, my heart sank. The little

animal had walked through a few muddy patches in the yard, and my suit had become a canvas for the dog's "paw" painting.

Tempted to lose my temper, and with all my training of force being the solution to every problem, I nearly catapulted the dog into the bushes. But something inside, a gentler, calmer presence, stopped me. It wasn't the dog's fault, so why be angry? I decided that the damage was already done and my hopes of getting this job were gone anyway. So I scratched the dog's ear and let him stay for a few minutes, planning to simply leave in defeat before even bothering to go in for the interview.

The lady of the house saw this happen. She was at first amused, but then became concerned about my clothes. She rushed over and apologized. She asked me to come into the kitchen, where her servants would get me cleaned up.

While being fussed over by one of the servants, I saw her speak with a man who I thought was probably her husband, who, like a commanding officer, was standing nearby observing the whole situation. He came over and in a businesslike manner asked me why I was here. Although it was obvious, and I assumed he was just asking to size me up, I explained that I was applying for the chauffeur job. He said that wouldn't be necessary, as the position had been filled.

Without showing my disappointment, I thanked him for his time and started to leave. He asked where I was going, and I said, "To look for a job."

He said, "But you have one. I told you the position was filled—that is, if you'll take it."

In my surprise, I blurted, "But, sir, what about all these other applicants, many of whom are younger and stronger than me?"

He said, “I’m not the one doing the hiring; the lord is,” as he pointed to the Pekinese.

Still not understanding that he was referring to his pet as lord, I replied, “Oh, you know the Lord? How did He show you?”

“He marked you quite clearly,” he said with a smile. “My assistant, Charles, will work out the details with you.”

On his way out, the head of the household turned to a maid and politely said, “Please see to it that Lord Duffy is bathed and groomed, and that his toenails are properly clipped. Thank you.”

I was employed by this captain of industry and his family, as chauffeur and security guard, as well as pet caretaker to Lord Duffy, the Pekinese. My faith and love for Jesus continued to grow, and it was my privilege through the years to share my faith with this gentleman and his family, as well as his business associates. I found my new career to be almost as satisfying as my new faith.

—Staff Sgt. Frank Shepherd, retired military officer, unretired from life

\* \* \*

# **I Had to Return to my Home Country**

**By Jacob**

Jacob: For many years I served the Lord in the Southeast Asian country of Cambodia. I had felt called there when I was a young boy of seven. I took this commission very seriously, and though young at the time, I testified of the call that I had received from God to reach the people there. Of course, no one believed me; I was just a boy. How could I have heard from God? However, I had a conviction in my heart that could not be destroyed.

When I turned 17, I set sail for Cambodia. It took months to make my way there from England, but I finally made it. That is when my work began in earnest. It was tough and I encountered many obstacles, but I lived a life that was kept and provided for by God Himself; no one else could have intervened as well on my behalf. My God continued to supply all my needs according to His riches. My faith grew and was developed on that mission field. I faced danger, sickness, hunger, and crises of faith, but the Lord remained faithful and trustworthy.

As the years rolled by and old age and the difficulties of health that come with it crept up on me, I found myself having to face the decision of returning to my home country. It was a shocking realization for me to find out that God was in that choice. If it had been up to me, I would have died happily in Cambodia, which I called home.

I hadn't kept in contact with anyone since I had left, so the idea of traveling back to my home country left me feeling bewildered. It seemed, though, that God wasn't yet done using me, and that there would be more purpose in me going to England than staying in my beloved Cambodia.

When I was saying farewell to my friends and those who had become my family, my heart broke into so many pieces. I questioned whether I was doing the right thing. However, no matter how many reasons I came up with as far as why I felt it would be better for me to stay in Cambodia, I couldn't escape the clear direction I had received from the Lord to return to England.

So I set sail for a land that had now become foreign to me. Not having a place to land, I felt trepidation. Even though I was in circumstances similar to when I had set sail for Cambodia, it felt different. As I thought and prayed and meditated, it seemed that the difference this time was because I was retiring from a life of service instead of beginning it. This realization scared me. I hit the lowest low I had ever experienced. I thought that God was retiring me.

Through many sleepless nights and lonely hours, I felt God's presence. He slowly helped me to realize that if I wanted to serve Him, there never need be retirement from a life of Christian service. This understanding flooded my soul with joy and a glimmer of hope, reassuring me that I wasn't washed up and that my service wasn't over.

When I stepped onto the dock, I knew that there was a purpose and a venue for me, though I didn't know what it was. I wasn't sure which direction to go. I left the port and headed toward the main street. I prayed, "God, show me which way to proceed."

A moment later, I heard a voice call out to me: "Old man, where are you heading?" I turned around to see a cheery face. His name was Andrew, and I knew in my heart that the Lord had sent him. He invited me to stay with him and his family. Andrew worked at the port. He was a Christian and said that God had

spoken to him that day and told him to be prepared to receive a visitor. He guessed it was me.

Andrew's family warmly welcomed me. It was here that I found one of the purposes for my return to England. God wanted me to share with Andrew and his family about God's miraculous supply, His intervention, and the satisfaction I had received in following God's call to the mission field.

The greater purpose was when Andrew and his wife and I collaborated in local evangelical work around the port. I taught them from my experience in Cambodia, and they taught me many things about life in England in this day and age.

A life of service to God is never over, and He will help you to continue serving Him and others for as long as you are able. When you take care of His work, He will always care for you. You may not be on a far-flung mission field. You may not be working with a team of dedicated co-workers. You may be alone or with one or two others, doing your part to change the world. However, where or when is not nearly as important as simply following the Lord and doing what you can to bring His love to others.