
TRAVELING WITH GOD

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Mexico



TRAVELING WITH GOD

CHARLOTTE N. HUSKEY





Ella Mae (Hughes) Huskey (1904-1952)

With Love
1900

*This book is dedicated to Ella Mae (Hughes) Huskey
(1904-1952) who inspired James to carry the Gospel.*

TO KNOW HER WAS TO LOVE HER

PROLOGUE

GOD HAS SHOWN His love and protection to our family in so many ways that I felt compelled to write these stories so others could also see His greatness. King David wrote some of the Psalms for the same reason. "...That the generations to come might know them, even the children that should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God." Psalms 78:6 -7.

Every person's life is writing a story, daily it is affecting those with whom they associate. It is my prayer that each reader will write an inspiring story with their life and record how God has blessed them.

These stories are examples of people who laid down their personal interests to serve others. The divine love and guiding, protecting hand of God is threaded throughout each story.

May the miracles shared in this book inspire readers to

dedicate their lives to God and His service. We hope these wonders will be passed on for generations to come and that this book will be shared with many others so they may also know of the miraculous provision and protection of God.

Charlotte Huskey

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Chapter One

CALL TO GO

Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints. Psalms 116:15

Missouri 1952

ELLA MAE (HUGHES) Huskey stood in the parlor of her childhood home on 512 S. Devon Street, Webb City, Missouri. As she was combing her daughter, Esther's, hair she remembered the many times she had combed her four sisters' hair. In those years, Ella Mae had wondered if she would ever have a daughter's hair to comb. Because of a fall and broken hip that healed incorrectly when a young child, she doubted she could give birth, if by chance a man would want to marry a cripple girl.

Now she had a husband, who also loved to serve others, and three children, James, David, and Esther. After finishing Esther's hair, she, James and Esther said goodbye to Grandpa and Grandma and headed east on U.S. Highway 60

toward the Myrtle Camp Ground. There would be many young people with their parents at the camp. They would spend hours singing, sharing testimonies, praying and hearing gospel messages. She was praying David, her younger son, would meet them at the camp.

David did come to the camp meeting. He was there when Ella Mae exhorted the young people to sacrifice their lives to the cause of Christ so others would know of His great love. She told of her acquaintance with Faith Stewart who had established an orphanage and several congregations of believers in Cuba. She pleaded with the young people to go help Sister Stewart in the Cuban orphanage. Will her children accept the challenge? Ella Mae did not know God was asking James to dedicate his life in God's service.

The silence was broken when someone in the back of the little chapel began singing:

“It may not be on the mountain height,
Or over the stormy sea.
It may not be at the battle's front,
My Lord will have need of me.
But if, by a still, small voice He calls,
To paths that I do not know,
I'll answer, dear Lord, with my hand in thine:
I'll go where you want me to go.”

After the camp meeting ended, James drove his mother, David, and Esther back to Grandma and Grandpa Hughes' beloved home. “Come on in, I have dinner ready,” Grandma said.

As they were eating, Ella Mae said to Grandma and

Grandpa Hughes, “I love you and hope you will come to visit us next summer. You need to see the magnificent Rocky Mountains and the beautiful Sacramento Valley of California.”

Sunday evening before Labor Day, they started back to California. Their plan was to spend Labor Day with Ella Mae’s cousin, Mrs. Cummings. The Cummings family lived on a farm near Newton, Kansas.

This trip was special for James. His father couldn’t come, so he trusted James with the responsibility for maintenance of the car and the driving. Because James had grown up in the Midwest, it was like coming home to see extended family and old friends. From their home in California to the Missouri camp was 2,150 miles.

James also had a lot invested in the car they were driving. In the Orland High School shop class, he had repaired the motor, the body, and painted the family’s 1936 Ford. Just before the trip, his Dad traded in this car and with money James had saved, purchased a 1941 Ford. It had been a happy year for seventeen-year-old James: winning high school shop class competitions, earning his own money, and buying his first car. Now they were returning home after an amazing trip.

However, after two hours on the highway, James began feeling anxious about the car. He stopped at a gas station and checked the motor, the water, and the tires. About an hour later he stopped again to check the car.

As they were entering the city of Newton, Kansas, they were on the main highway traveling north. The car needed gas, so he pulled into the Classen Gas Station on the west side (left hand side) of the 4-lane highway. When Ella Mae

saw James checking the car again she asked, “What’s wrong, Jimmy, why are you doing that again?”

James answered, “I feel like something bad is about to happen.”

“Well, let’s pray,” she said. After prayer, Mother Ella Mae decided to drive for a while. James took the front passenger seat, David sat in the middle, Esther and their elderly friend, Sister Faith Embly, were in the back. As Ella Mae pulled out to head north on the 4-lane highway, her car’s left wheels bumped over a center divider. Moments later a drunk man with a couple of teenagers, a boy and his date, all three intoxicated, entered the intersection from the side road on the left at a high speed. The two vehicles collided. This high-speed collision caused the cars to spin. Ella Mae flew through the windshield and her head hit the pavement extremely hard. David’s foot caught on the clutch or brake pedal, causing a broken ankle as he also was thrown through the windshield.

James heard the loud, thunderous crash and the screeching of metal. The next thing he knew, he was skidding down the highway face down. “Lord, I’ll go where you want me to go, I’ll do what you want me to do,” he promised while sliding. His chin was bleeding badly. He jerked a handkerchief from his pocket, grabbed his chin, and scrambled to his feet. He saw the crumbled mess of the two cars. Where was Mother? Esther? David?

Mother Ella Mae was lying on the blacktop highway beside David. James ran to her, “Mother! Mother!” She did not respond. “Mother, Mother!” he called again. “Oh, God of Heaven help us! Jesus, please let Mother live!”

Mother Ella Mae never spoke again. Their last conver-

sation had been at the station. James hugged Esther. They both hugged Sister Faith Embly. James shook his head, wishing to shut out the accident, to escape it all, to shake it off like a bad dream. But it wasn't a dream. His mother was still silent. Would she never again comfort or pray for them? He was the oldest, only seventeen, but he had to be strong for his little sister, his brother, and their elderly friend.

They were taken to the local Bethel Hospital in Newton, Kansas. Mr. Cummings heard the report of the accident on the early morning radio news while milking his cows. He hurriedly called Grandpa Hughes. "There's been a fatal accident and Ella Mae didn't make it. I'll go get the children from the hospital. Just come to my home as soon as you can."

Mr. Cummings went to the hospital and brought the three motherless children and Sister Faith Embly to his home. It was Labor Day, September 7, 1952. Grandpa took them back to his home where they had said goodbye the day before.

Grandpa Hughes' strength and meekness made him stand tall to James as he comforted them with readings from the Bible. James especially liked Psalms 34, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him. The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous and his ears are open unto their cry."

James' dad, H. P. Huskey, was home in Orland, California when he heard of the accident. He called his friend, Bro. Lee, who had just buried his wife. Bro. Lee offered to drive him to Missouri to meet his family. While waiting for their dad, the children found this writing in their mother's notebook: "No one knows when they will be called to go." It

was dated September 4, three days before God called her to go to Heaven.

Ella Mae's greatest desire was that others, especially young people, would dedicate themselves in service to God. James did. He was totally resolved to do God's will and to go wherever God led.

"We buried my blessed mother in Carterville, Missouri on September 11, 1952. A few days later we started back over the same highway returning to our home in California, without mother and without a car. It was so hard to leave mother in the ground 1,900 miles away and return to a home empty of her love and dignity," James wrote.

Questions for discussion

1. How do we know Ella Mae loved God?
2. What did she ask the youth to do?
3. What happened on their way home?
4. What had James done to prevent the accident?
5. Where did James surrender to God?
6. What had Ella Mae written in her notebook?
7. What did others say about her?



A car like the one totaled in the crash.



Leaving Grandpa and Grandma Hughes' home. Left to Right: David, Ella Mae, James and Esther.

A Newspaper clipping of the accident. Woman's Son Had Premonition of Fatal Car Crash

A striking story told by Faith Embly, one of the injured passengers in a car driven by Ella M. Huskey, who was killed when their vehicle crashed head-on with another vehicle driven by Jack Holland of Newton, early Sunday morning. She revealed that another passenger, James Huskey, son of the fatally injured woman, had a premonition before the accident that a tragedy was going to befall the family.

So powerful, in fact was the premonition, that the seventeen-year-old James had his mother stop the car on two different occasions so that he could check it over to be assured that there was nothing wrong with the vehicle.

The premonition was still present in the youth's mind when the family stopped at the Classen Service station in South Newton to get gas. James again checked over the car and, after telling the mother and the Embly woman about the premonition, they had said a prayer.

A few moments later, after they had just pulled out of the station, the accident happened, taking the life of the mother, and injuring the four other occupants.

Added to this, the Huskey family and the Embly woman were en route to spend time with Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Cummings, who live several miles west of Newton. Mrs. Cummings and Mrs. Huskey were cousins.

In revealing the unusual story, Miss Embly revealed that the father and husband was a Church of God minister in Orland, California, their hometown, and that the entire family was deeply religious.

Chapter Two

MY FIRST TRIP TO MONARK

The day of the LORD will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works therein shall be burned up. 2 Peter 3:10

Jefferson, Oregon July 1954

JAMES HUSKEY and Charlotte Hightower had been courting for over a year, mostly by letters and occasional expensive long distance phone calls. She was living in Marion, Oregon. He lived 450 miles away in Orland, California. Traveling on Interstate 5, it took about ten hours. He came for the Jefferson, Oregon Camp Meeting in June and stayed a whole week. They went for rides and he washed dishes with her in the old camp meeting kitchen! On Saturday before leaving, he asked, "Would you and your mother like to go to Monark Camp Meeting? I could take your mother to visit her family

living in the area. Dad, Esther and I are driving straight through without stopping at a hotel. You both can ride with us.”

Charlotte had never been to Monark Camp Meeting. It was her dream. Also, her mother, Mabel (Kelley) Hightower, had wished for years to visit with her extended family whom she hadn't seen since she was a young girl. She also hoped they would have information about her brother who had disappeared in 1914 to keep from being drafted into the First World War. That was forty years ago. This would be the perfect chance! Would Dad let us go? She knew her Mother would never disobey her father. The thought of connecting with her family stimulated Mabel to try to persuade him.

Monark Camp Meeting began the third Friday in July and lasted for ten days. July was the busiest time of the year for their family. Harvesting green beans began in late June and ended in August. Mabel did all the office work for the farm, including the banking and payroll for the fifty plus migrant employees who had to be paid in cash. She also maintained an abundance of good home-cooked meals ready to eat so each one of the family could eat quickly and hurry back to the bean field. Charlotte also worked right along beside her Dad about fourteen hours a day. After weeks of persuasive talks Dad consented, although it cost him the supportive helper he needed at harvest time, and a lot of money.

Mother Mabel and Charlotte rode twelve hours on a big Greyhound bus from Albany, Oregon to Orland, California where James' family lived. The following day they started for Monark in James' little green Studebaker. James drove all day.

That night while Charlotte was driving and the others were sleeping, she saw flashes of light followed by a distant rumble. She had heard about military exercises in unpopulated areas which sometimes included shooting practices, so she imagined they were passing through one of those areas. She drove on feeling confident there was no danger.

About an hour later rain began pouring over the windshield. Charlotte could hardly see so she slowed down looking for a place to park off the highway, but found no wide shoulder. She was accustomed to Oregon's soft drizzling rain. This was so different! She was thankful her Mom was now awake to help her stay on the highway.

Suddenly, the whole country was as light as day. She could see the highway, the signs, the mountains in the distance. The light was followed by deafening crashes. "It's the end of the world," Charlotte thought. She screamed and trembled, wondering if she was ready to meet Jesus. James awoke and asked what had happened. When he saw it was just a lightning storm, he closed his eyes and went to sleep again.

When Charlotte and her mother had boarded the bus in Albany, her Dad had walked her to her seat and put her carry-on luggage overhead. When he kissed her goodbye he said, "I hope you realize I do not approve of you going on this trip." His words surprised her. She had always tried to have her Dad's approval. Would going to Monark without his total approval bar her out of heaven? She began crying and silently praying, "Lord, forgive me. Lord, forgive me. You know I didn't realize how he felt about it." *Forgive me, Lord*, circled over and over in her mind as she drove on rather unsteadily. Each time the lightening flashed and

thunder clapped, she shuddered. Charlotte prayed for what seemed like hours.

Finally, the lighting stopped. It was dark again. The end of the world had not come! She was still alive and breathing. She had a chance to do better. Charlotte was still driving down the highway; James and his dad were still snoring. Mom was still doing a good job of keeping her on the road. They drove on until the rain stopped.

Now that the end of the world was behind her, Charlotte began daydreaming about camp meeting at Monark, about the young people where James' dad had pastored. He had told her "everyone" was anxious to see his girlfriend.

They arrived on a Tuesday evening. By the time they changed clothes and entered the tabernacle the congregation was already singing. Charlotte followed James to a seat in the center aisle. Being already embarrassed because they were walking in late and knowing many of James' friends were looking at her, she slipped onto the bench as quickly as possible and drew a deep breath.

Charlotte opened the songbook and began singing. About the end of the first song, she noticed a strange bug singing along with them. It flew into the light directly overhead. He must have knocked himself out, for he fell straight into the open collar of Charlotte's white blouse. Regaining awareness, and finding himself imprisoned between her blouse and her back, the bug began clawing the skin on her back trying to escape. She clinched her teeth to keep back a scream. She bent over hoping the clawing bug would hurry out. Her face burned. Then is when she realized the dazed critter was crawling down her back, not up and out. Her blouse was tucked tightly into her skirt belt. What should

she do? Should she jump up, pull her blouse loose and let the poor bug escape? She was too shy to do that surrounded by several hundred people. Not knowing what else to do, Charlotte reached around to her back and took the bug captive in one hand with a wad of white blouse. She could feel the heat in her face as She walked down the long aisle facing all the people sitting in rows and rows and rows of benches between her and outside the open tabernacle.

Once out of the huge tabernacle, she ducked quickly behind a tent and pulled her blouse out of her skirt and shook it violently. The imprisoned bug flew happily away. Charlotte stood there hot and quivering, until composed, then made her way back through rows and rows of strangers and onto her seat under the same light! She held her collar tightly around her neck during the remainder of the service.

Charlotte was thankful the world had not come to an end. She felt at peace being in the Monark Springs Camp Meeting. She was happy meeting James' friends after the service was dismissed.

The Monday after camp meeting they went to Webb City and located Mother's cousin she had not seen for forty-one years. They told her of other cousins who were living nearby. They visited in the country south of Neosho, in Goodman, and Pineville where Mother's other uncles and cousins lived. For three full days, Mother laughed and reminisced about years gone by and got caught up on years of family news. Unfortunately, they were unable to get any news about her brother who had been gone so long.

"Thank you, James, for bringing me to see my family," Mother said.

. . .

Questions for discussions:

1. Where did Charlotte want to go?
2. Why did Mama want to go?
3. Why were they needed at home?
4. While traveling, what happened that made Charlotte afraid?
5. What did Charlotte think was happening?
6. What made Mama happy?
7. Why was their trip good?



James and Charlotte leaving after their Wedding.

Chapter Three

A TIME TO DIE

To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die. Ecclesiastes 3:1-2

Monark Springs, Missouri July 1954

EVERY DAY during Monark Camp Meeting, James was recording the preaching on his big reel-to-reel tape recorder. One evening he recorded a very unusual service. It began as usual at 7:00 p.m. The beautiful inspirational songs were echoing through the rafters to the trees that surrounded the open tabernacle. Hands were raising in praise. Many were clapping or tapping their feet in rhythm with the singing. About a half an hour later, someone in the back of the tabernacle stopped the singing to give a testimony. When he finished, others spoke their testimonies and then the congregation prayed.

After prayer and another song, silence fell. “Who will speak tonight?” The audience was wondering.

The silence was broken when an elderly Bro. John Wilson arose from his seat and shuffled slowly up the steps to the pulpit. He laid a tattered Bible on the podium and said in his usual stuttering voice, “I- I- I wa- wa- want to- to speak, a- a- about TIME.” Then he took a watch from his trouser pocket, looked at the time, and laid the big round watch beside his Bible. The long chain dangled down the side of the pulpit. In the upper right hand corner of the blackboard on the rostrum he wrote the time, “8:32.” After that he wrote HEAVEN at the top and HELL at the bottom. Then he drew a narrow path leading to HEAVEN, a broad highway leading toward HELL.

Bro. John Wilson was a short stocky man who stuttered extremely. It took patience to converse with him on any ordinary day. However, when the Holy Spirit anointed him in the pulpit, he spoke clearly. He read Psalms 89:47, “Remember how short my time is...” Then he said, “We are all traveling through life, some are here,” and he pointed to a place on his sketch near Heaven. “Some are down here,” and he pointed lower indicating they would live longer. “But we all know we must die, so we must each remember how short our time is.”

“Time moves on at all times. Let us be still a moment.” Everyone was silent. “Now you see time moved on while we were still. How are you spending your time? Will you be able to say as Apostle Paul did, ‘I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness,’” (2 Timothy 4:7-8).

After speaking a while, he looked at his watch and said,

“Now it is thirteen till 9:00.” He erased 8:32 and wrote 8:47 in its place.

He told about a girl who said, “I have to make good with my time for I have only one candle with which to work.” (Her candle was her life.) He told about two different prisoners condemned to die, each asked for more time to live. “Will you be begging for more time when you must die? Or will you have used your time wisely and be ready to meet the Lord? James 4:14 says that life is but a vapor.”

“I was traveling into the panhandle of Texas to preach in a meeting. On the way I visited a friend who had been sick. I thought I would talk to him about the Lord for I thought his time might be short. But he seemed so well as we visited I did not ask about his soul. The man died the following Friday. None of us know when our time to die will come. Job 14:1 says, ‘Man that is born of a woman is of few days.’”

“Now it is ten minutes to nine,” he said. He erased 8:47 and wrote 8:50 on the board. He read Ecclesiastes 3:1-17. After reading it he said, “We see there is a time to be born and a time to die, a time to sow and a time to reap. There is a time to be saved and time when it is too late to be saved.

“I was with Bro. Robert Porter holding a revival. He preached Sunday night, Monday, and again on Tuesday. That evening I went to his home. We drank lemonade together and visited until 11:00 p.m. Bro. Porter said he hadn’t felt better in all his life. The following morning at 5:00 a.m. someone called him for prayer. Sis. Porter said, ‘Just a minute, I’ll get him.’ She laid down the phone and went to get him. She found Bro. Robert Porter lying dead in his bed.”

A hush fell over the audience after he told this story. In the far rear corner of the tabernacle, near the back, sat Mayola and Harvey Johnson and Eunice Cole with several of her five children. Ten-year-old Norene sat close to Mayola, who was intently listening to Bro. John Wilson, when her head fell over on Mother Cole's shoulder. Then her body fell. Others sitting nearby saw it and rushed to keep Mayola from falling onto the sawdust covered floor. Jim Wall had gone out for a drink and was returning when he stopped abruptly and watched Harvey, Paul Cole and others carrying Mayola out.

All over the rear part of the congregation, people were whispering to each other. "What happened?" "Did she faint?" "Did she die?" One by one curious people walked out.

From the pulpit Bro. Wilson noticed the disturbance and said, "Let us pray." James turned off his tape recorder. After praying, the disruption had not yet settled so Bro. Wilson said, "Let's sing a song." While the congregation was singing, several ministers went out and gathered around the cot on which Mayola had been laid. A sister was fanning her, another washing her face. Her husband, Harvey, was kneeling beside her head and speaking gently while the ministers were praying. Mayola never responded. She was gone. The ambulance came and took Mayola's body. Mayola was with Jesus.

After the audience had quieted down, Bro. Wilson continued speaking and James began recording again. "Don't be like Felix who told Paul, 'Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee'

(Acts 24:25). We have no record of Felix getting right with God. Hosea 10:12 says, ‘...it is time to seek the Lord...’”

The hands on the clock were still moving. He wrote 9:12 on the board. Then he read, “Revelation 10:5, ‘And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven...that there should **be time no longer...**’” He closed his Bible and said loudly, “The angel said, ‘Time shall be no more.’ So, remember—how short my time is. Come and pray while we sing number 410.”

1. Have you any time for Jesus,
While the fleeting moments roll?
Is this mortal life so busy
That you cannot save your soul?

Refrain:

Soon the summons from the portals
Of the mansions in the sky
May be sounding your departure;
You must then take time to die.

2. Have you any time for Jesus?
Can it be, life’s journey through,
That you have no time to serve Him
Who has spent His life for you?

3. Time for business, time for pleasure,
Time to revel on in sin—
Will you not take time for Jesus?
Oh, invite Him to come in.

Children, teenagers, adults, and old people throughout

the audience were crying. All the altar benches and the front benches across the tabernacle were quickly filled with people praying. The atmosphere was charged with the cry: “Now is the time to prepare to meet God!”

Questions for discussion:

1. What did Bro. John Wilson talk about?
2. Does anyone know the moment he will die?
3. Who died while Bro. Wilson was preaching?
4. Are you ready to die suddenly?
5. What must everyone do to be ready to die?
6. Why were many people praying?

This sermon is available on
www.churchofgodpreaching.com. Type in John Wilson and
it should come up.



Mayola's Sunday School class. She died while Bro. Wilson was preaching.

Chapter Four

SAVED FROM DEATH

I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the water, I will be with thee, and the river, they shall not overflow thee. Isaiah 43:1-2

Orland, California, 1957

JAMES AND CHARLOTTE were married in December. Three years later they moved into his family's old home on Chapman Street in Orland, California. The Huskey family was living there when their mother died in a car accident caused by a drunk driver. Kneeling beside his mother on the highway, James dedicated his life to serve God and others as his mother had done.

When James' father, H.P. Huskey, became confined to a Tuberculosis Sanitarium the house was sold. Five years later, James was working in Santa Anna, California, 529 miles from Orland. One day he received a phone call from the bank loan officer where he had done banking since his first

job. After a little renewing acquaintance, the loan officer said, “Your home place on Chapmen Street is up for sale. The owners have defaulted. If you want it, it can be yours by just covering the delinquent payments.”

“Wow! Sounds like a good investment. Is it still in good shape?”

“Looks the same from the outside.”

“I’ll let you know in a few days,” James answered. James had one of his friends in Orland check the home. It was in good shape. James and Charlotte had a small savings, so they paid the amount needed. He sent them the papers to sign and the home was theirs.

Charlotte was thrilled. Soon after they were engaged she had written out a budget that included saving for a house. Now, in less than three years into their marriage, God had opened a way for them to have a home of their own. It was a small wooden house, two bedrooms and one bath, but it also had a nice garden spot and a chicken house. She had grown up on a farm in Oregon where they always had chickens for meat and fresh eggs and a big garden with home grown berries and vegetables. After recovering from his illness, James’s father lived with them when he wasn’t away from home preaching. He was a marvelous gardener and loved caring for chickens. Charlotte was delighted with their cozy little home.

Bobby, their only child, was only eighteen months old so they had plenty of room. They put a bed beside the baby’s crib so James’ father could be with them when he wasn’t traveling.

Every evening before going to bed, they read the Bible and prayed together. When Grandpa was home, he lead their

worship by reading a scripture and explaining it, then each one prayed out loud one at a time. They always asked God to protect them through the night.

One night, Charlotte had a blissful dream and woke herself up singing loudly. She lay a while enjoying the heavenly feeling and singing again the song in her mind. After she became fully awake, she smelled a strange, strong odor. “Wonder what it is?” she murmured. After thinking a bit longer, she realized it was the same odor that she smelled when lighting the oven of her little gas cook stove. “The oven must be on and not lit,” she said.

Realizing it as dangerous, she rushed quickly into the kitchen and found a stove burner was open at the highest position and not burning. She could hear the gas as it escaped into the house. Quickly she turned it off, then threw open the backdoor to allow fresh air to enter. She then rushed and opened the front door. Next, she checked the room where Bobby and Grandpa were asleep. It was also filled with the odor. “Thank you, Jesus,” she whispered as she carefully opened the window beside Bobby’s crib. Then she opened the window by Grandpa’s bed. The noise awakened Grandpa and, being somewhat deaf, he yelled, “What’s going on?”

His voice awoke James, and the three of them talking woke Bobby. Everyone was awake and wanting to know, ‘why’? Charlotte had to explain why all the commotion. “I dreamed we were all together walking happily up a hill toward heaven. We could see heaven at the top. As we drew nearer and nearer, I heard singing. I began singing out loud, so loud it awakened me. That’s when I smelled something strange. A burner of the stove was open and I could

hear the gas escaping. So, I began opening the doors and windows.”

They talked a while about how easily the dream could have become a reality. Grandpa told some stories of people dying in their sleep. They then bowed on their knees and thanked God for protecting them by giving Charlotte the dream.

Charlotte believed God had spared their lives because He had something for them to do. From that time on she tried even harder to always obey God. She had a continual thought that God had a particular job for them, although she didn't know what it was.

James had told her before they married that he believed God wanted him to be a missionary. He had been investigating the New Tribes Mission organization for about three years and praying about working together with them. He had met numerous highly dedicated men and women who were training to work in various remote regions of the world. Their commitment was very impressive. These couples were going into areas where there were no roads nor waterways to bring in needed supplies and where the thick jungle's covering made dropping from airplanes impossible. Their small children, food, camping equipment, translation material and everything else had to be carried many, many miles. After James told Charlotte about them, she struggled and prayed to be just as completely dedicated to God as those people were. Both James and Charlotte had been faithful workers in their local congregation. They both were faithful to visit, teach Sunday school and lead the young people in activities. The elders in the church encouraged them to follow God, but what was God saying to them?

Because James had been praying about working with New Tribes Mission, they went to a weekend training camp. That was all the missionary training they received.

Later that summer, James and Bobby contracted the mumps. After ten days lying in bed, James said to Charlotte, “I think I am well enough to go to camp meeting.”

“I can’t go and drive you. Are you strong enough to drive to Bakersfield?” Charlotte asked.

“Yes, driving is easy. I’ll take Bobby along.” They left early the following morning.

When James gathered with the brethren to participate in the ordinance of feet washing at the camp meeting, God said to him, “Stay with the people that wash your feet.”

When he came home he told Charlotte, “We aren’t looking any more for a missionary group with which to work. God told me to stay with the people where we are worshiping. Also on the way home I saw a vision. In the vision, I was jumping off a cliff and God’s big hand caught me. We will just do whatever God says regardless of how foolish it seems, because God will catch us in His great hand.”

Questions for discussion:

1. How did God protect the Huskey family?
2. Why did God protect them?
3. What did James want to do?
4. Describe James’ vision.
5. What did God say to James?
6. Were they now more prepared to work for God?

Chapter Five

LEAVING OUR HOME

**The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears
are open to their cry. Psalms 34:15**

Orland, California, 1961

JAMES AND CHARLOTTE were sitting in the living room of their newly remodeled home in Orland, California when James said, “I think God wants us to move to Mexico.”

Charlotte looked around at the large living, dining and kitchen area that James had added to their home just six months earlier. While admiring it, she remembered the night on Redondo Beach when James had asked, “Will you marry me and go with me across the ocean to be a missionary?” She also remembered the dream that had saved them from possible death and knew God had saved them because He had a special work for them.

For seven years they had lived Charlotte’s ideas of a good life. James was earning good wages and she was

managing the money well. They had saved money and bought the Huskey's old home. Later they sold it and bought and remolded this larger home. At the same time, they were devoted to God and helping with many church activities. However, they were more intensely occupied in material achievements.

"Before we married, I promised to go across the ocean with you to be a missionary," she answered. "It sounded easy the night I promised. It's harder now that we have four children and Rosi with a heart problem."

"I think God is saying we should go. If we step out by faith, God will catch us in His big hand. Remember my vision? I know it's a big step, but God called me eight or nine years ago."

"Yes, that tragic night," Charlotte said.

He lowered his eyes to the Bible on his lap and fingered its pages. "We were finishing a wonderful trip to camp meetings and visiting with Grandma and Grandpa Hughes when suddenly our lives changed. Dad and we three siblings returned alone to our home here in Orland. We were broken, motherless, and without transportation. I tried to keep our home like it was before Mother died. But without her it wasn't like a home."

"One by one the others left. David went to live with the Whittenborn family in Southern California, because he wanted to continue working with the Mexican people as he had done with Mother. Then Dad got tuberculosis. It was a sad day for us all when I put Dad and Esther on the bus. I knew Esther would be frightened having to travel alone all the way to Oregon after Dad got off at the Tuberculosis Sanitarium in northern California. Mother was gone forever,

David a day's drive away, Dad confined to the sanitarium for three months or longer, and Esther 500 miles away with the Hightower family in Oregon. I was alone most of the next two years. After working all day, it was so difficult to come home to a silent house and my mind full of memories I wished to recover. Only God's grace sustained me during those times."

Charlotte had no idea of the pain James had suffered. She could not remember a death among her family. She had always been surrounded by a living, loving family. She carelessly said, "At least you aren't lonely now with all the excitement four children can cause. Anyway, we better get off to bed because we have an early appointment tomorrow. The doctor wants to check Rosi. Maybe that will help us decide about moving to Mexico."

The following morning, they left the older children at a friend's home and went on to the doctor's office. "What a cute little redhead," Dr. Rollins said, as he examined their six-week-old daughter, Rosa Maria.

"How is she acting?" he asked

"She cries when I lay her flat." Charlotte answered. "After several sleepless nights, I found that propping her crib at a 45-degree angle, she slept very well. What could be causing it? Is it life-threatening?" He did not answer. He asked them to wait while he did more tests on her.

After a long wait, Dr. Rollins asked them to come into his office. He sat down behind his desk and they sat in chairs facing him. "A valve in your baby's heart is not closing when it should," he said. "She will need surgery. However, performing heart surgery on a newborn is very difficult. It is much better to wait, if possible, for at least two years. The

surgery is also very expensive, but you need not worry about that. I can arrange to have it done at the Crippled Children's Hospital in San Francisco. There is an excellent heart specialist in Chico who will examine your baby and advise as to whether she can wait two years or will need something done sooner," he added. "The heart specialist can see you on Wednesday morning at ten o'clock. Do you think you can keep the appointment?"

"Yes," James answered. The nurse handed little Rosi to Charlotte. She clutched Rosi tightly as James and the doctor talked. She did not listen to the conversation because her mind was only on the precious bundle in her arms who might have a difficult life ahead of her.

They drove home in silence. Charlotte was having conversations with God. "Will you trust me to do the best in your life?" God questioned.

"But Lord, you know how much I love my baby," Charlotte argued. "I don't want to give her up."

"And you know that I love her too and that I know the future," God answered. All the way home, God and Charlotte talked.

Finally, she said, "Yes, Lord, Rosi is yours. I will trust your way and your wisdom."

That night after the other children were asleep, they decided to call the saints to have a day of fasting and prayer for Rosi's healing. They telephoned Charlotte's parents, Alvin and Mable Hightower, James' father, H. P. Huskey, Bro. Ira Stover, the pastor of the Guthrie congregation, and those in their church in Orland. They asked each one to fast and pray with them on Tuesday.

On Wednesday, Charlotte arranged for a friend to stay

with the other three children while they took Rosi to the heart specialist. He examined her thoroughly. Then he tested her using different equipment. When he was all finished, he said, "I don't think you have anything to worry about. This child only has a very slight heart murmur."

"How shall we care for her?" Charlotte asked.

"Care for her like you would any other baby. Just watch for anything unusual, like fingernails or lips turning blue, that is, unless she is very cold. After she is older, any blueness after running would be a reason to have her checked again. Otherwise, just take her home and enjoy her! She should be all right."

They walked out of the doctor's office knowing that God had taken care of Rosi. From that day forward Rosi could sleep like a normal baby.

The following months were turbulent. James made repairs on their home so the renters would have no major problems. He bought a heavy-duty one-ton panel truck to haul the things they would keep.

For Charlotte, leaving her home was as difficult as having her teeth pulled. Her dream from early childhood was to be a homemaker. She rubbed her hands over the smooth bar where her children ate their breakfast and lunch. She kissed her electric sewing machine; there would be no electricity where she was moving. She picked up the dress she had made for Tricia's birthday. She wiped tears as she looked over the kitchen she had designed and James had lovingly built for her. She walked through her house enjoying its beauty and the spacious new living and dining area. She looked out over the large garden and the area she planned for the orchard. She prayed and wrestled with her

emotions when her children were asleep. “Lord, give me a willing heart. Help me to be totally dedicated. I think you saved us to do your will. Please make me willing,” she prayed over and over again.

They packed things that they could take and sold or gave away everything else. They rented out the house for the amount of the mortgage payment plus taxes. They loaded the heavy-duty utility van with things they thought they would need in Mexico. The last day, they traded Charlotte’s washing machine for a motorcycle to use for off-road trips that would be necessary in mission work.

With four children age five and under, they drove away from Orland, committed to live the remainder of their lives on the mission field wherever God led. They never returned to live in that home.

Questions for discussion:

1. What did God want James to do?
2. Why did Charlotte think moving would be hard?
3. When was James called to be a missionary?
4. Did God take care of Rosi?
5. How will the move affect their lives?
6. Are you willing to do what God wants you to do?

Chapter Six

GOING TO VISIT GRANDMA IN A BLIZZARD

Part 1 of Visiting Grandma

**For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee
in all thy ways. Psalms 91:11**

Rosarito Beach, Mexico 1963

THE FAMILY HAD BEEN LIVING in Mexico over a year when Charlotte said to James, “I think I should go visit my parents. I’ve gained a lot more respect for them since we have been surviving like they did when I was a child.”

“Yes, our new life here in Mexico is teaching us many things,” James replied.

“Now, I know how hard Mama worked every day preparing our meals and keeping our clothes clean and ready to wear,” Charlotte said. “I yearn to hold her hands and say, ‘I love you. I certainly do appreciate you both much more since I have experienced a few times like those you all endured for many years. Now I understand how much you and Daddy sacrificed for us children. I comprehend a little

of the stress you both carried when you did not know if Dad would have a job to supply food for us.”

“I know we need to go, but every time we have tried, something has happened to stop us,” James said. “Nonetheless, if we don’t go now we will have to wait until you are able to travel after the baby comes. When is our baby due?”

“March,” Charlotte answered. “Another three months. Oh, how I wish I could be near them soon. I would love to feel the smooth touch of my mother’s hands and hear my daddy’s soft voice praying. I not only want to see them, I think it is my duty to take the children to visit them. They haven’t seen Rosi. Bobby, Tricia and Timmy have changed a lot since they saw them three years ago.”

“Yes, it’s been a long time. The last time we saw them was before we moved here. They stopped by our home in California as they were moving to Batesville, Arkansas. Timmy was a newborn,” James answered. “I do wish I could take you, but I need to stay here and keep the new converts encouraged.”

“Tomas could encourage them while we are gone,” Charlotte replied.

“He is already busy in Valle de la Trinidad and making trips to the Indians up in the mountains. He couldn’t cover three places so far apart. It is a five hour drive from here to Valle de la Trinidad.”

“Yes, I know.”

“I do think you should go. Your parents aren’t young or in good health. We will be going to the Pacoima Assembly Meeting in a couple weeks. Let’s go prepared should something work out for you to go from there,” James suggested.

“Sis. Edith’s father has been visiting her on the Santa Catarina Indian Reservation. He may be planning to return home soon. Maybe you could travel on the same bus with him.”

“That would be wonderful!” Charlotte exclaimed.

At Pacoima they learned that Bro. Pat Cole was leaving on December 30. He offered to travel with Charlotte and help her with the children all the way to Oklahoma City, about 1,300 miles. From there, she and the children would go on to Batesville alone, about 400 miles farther.

News spread through the camp that Charlotte wanted to go visit her parents whom she hadn’t seen in three years. It seemed that everyone at the meeting wanted to help. People all over the campground were handing money to James, so he bought tickets. When they boarded the bus in San Bernardino, California, James said to Bro. Cole, “You are God’s angel over my family.”

Charlotte had ridden on a public transportation bus only once in her life. That was with her mother ten years ago. She had no idea what she was about to encounter. She was six months pregnant and dreaded to be seen in public with four little children five years of age and under. People often stared at her large tummy and then let their eyes flow from one child to the other. More than once a caring woman had remarked, “How do you manage?” Others asked, “And when is the next one due?” These incidents were embarrassing. Although her children were well behaved, she would endure many embarrassments before the thirty six hour bus trip would end. However, the overwhelming desire to see her aging parents, especially her mother whose health was failing, spurred her to take up the challenge.

They boarded a big Greyhound bus at 9:15 p.m. in San

Bernardino, California, destined for Batesville, Arkansas, approximately 1,700 miles east. The bus was crowded with holiday travelers and many military personnel returning to their respective bases after the Christmas holidays. The military men were allowed to enter the bus first. Charlotte's family was last to enter because they were last to purchase their tickets. By the time they boarded, there were only four empty seats.

She placed Tricia and Timmy in a seat near the window beside a friendly looking woman. Soldiers sitting on the long seat across the back motioned to a seat between them. Bobby looked at his mother for approval. There were only two vacant seats, one for Bro. Cole and one for her and the baby. She nodded, "okay" and with her large diaper bag over one shoulder and holding Rosi in her arms, she climbed over a very large woman and squeezed into the seat by the window.

Timmy began to cry when Charlotte sat down. The woman in the seat beside Timmy picked him up. He let out a blood curdling scream and started hitting the woman. Tricia tried to calm him. The woman looked around for his mother. Charlotte felt the sting of disapproving eyes as she climbed out to take care of her frightened son. This was her first embarrassment. "I'm so sorry," she apologized to the offended woman.

"I just wanted to comfort him," she said. "May I help you with the baby?" Rosi went gladly into her arms. Charlotte thanked God that another angel had appeared to help. She took Timmy into her arms and climbed back over the large woman and into the tiny space by the window. She

wiped tears of gratitude as she showed Timmy things outside. He laughed.

From her seat, she could hear bits and pieces of stories the military men were telling about Tijuana. She could hear Bobby laughing. She was not sure how wholesome the stories were for his young ears. "God please watch over Bobby," she prayed.

Near 3:00 a.m. they arrived in Phoenix, Arizona and everyone unloaded for a bathroom stop. She took the girls and Bro. Cole took Timmy and Bobby. When they were waiting in line to reload the bus, another *angel* appeared in the form of a bus driver. He walked over to Charlotte and said, "We are adding another bus on this route, would you like to ride in the less crowded one?"

"Yes Sir," she answered. "Thank you."

"Then come with me," the driver said.

"You and the children follow him. I'll get your bags," Bro. Cole said, when the bus driver had finished speaking.

The bus driver escorted her and the children right to the bus door. They walked past a long line of people waiting to enter the bus. The military men in the front of the line stepped aside politely and Charlotte and her four small children boarded the bus ahead of everyone. "Thank you, God," she whispered.

After everyone was settled on the bus, four seats across the aisle and two in front of Charlotte were empty. She found a pillow for each child in the overhead storage bays. Bobby, Tricia and Timmy each stretched out across two seats. She set Rosi on the seat next to her and lay back in her seat with Rosi's head on her lap. She closed her eyes and

said. "Thank you, God, for this extra space! I can never love you enough for all you are doing for me."

Bro. Cole had already told her to sleep whenever she could and he would watch the children. She was soon sound asleep. From Phoenix, Arizona to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (960 miles) they had an abundance of space.

When the bus door opened in Flag Staff, New Mexico, the cold wind rushing in woke them. Looking out, Charlotte saw the trees, the house roofs, the streets and sidewalks were all covered with snow. She buttoned Tricia's sweater and zipped Bobby's poplin jacket. Bro. Cole wrapped his coat around Timmy and carried him through the blizzard to the bathroom. "Don't step in the snow," Charlotte cautioned. "The snow will get your tennis shoes wet. Then your feet will be cold."

The children had never seen snow before. They began asking questions: "What is snow? Why don't we have snow in Mexico? Will it be at Grandma's house?" Charlotte found blankets in the overhead compartments and wrapped the three smaller ones up warmly. After a while, each one settled down and they all went back to sleep.

All day the bus crept slowly through the snow and ice. Knowing that Bro. Cole was watching the children, Charlotte slept in between the bathroom stops. All through the night when she awoke she saw the snow falling. They shivered when getting out of the warm bus into the icy wind at each bathroom stop. They felt the snow, they crunched it in their hands and stomped in it, but later cried, "My hands hurt, my feet are cold." They cried and begged for food. But there was not enough time for both bathrooms and hot meals. They bought snacks and cold sandwiches. They were

dressed in light clothing because the weather in Mexico was like spring year-round.

Charlotte began to fear traveling without Bro. Cole, for they must separate in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. She must take another bus to Little Rock, Arkansas. The Greyhound bus line on which she was traveling did not go into Batesville, Arkansas, where her parents lived. In Little Rock, Charlotte would have to transfer all her bags and children to the Trailways bus station which was on the other side of Little Rock. Little Rock was the biggest city in Arkansas. If she missed the connection in Oklahoma City, she would also miss the one in Little Rock. She feared being stranded in this storm with four small children and no money for a hotel room.

Questions for discussions:

1. In what ways had Charlotte's attitude toward her parents changed since she had moved to Mexico?
2. Who did God supply as their guardian angel?
3. Name some things that made the trip difficult.
4. Name several angel helpers that God sent.
5. What made traveling easier from Phoenix to Oklahoma?
6. Do angels watch over God's children continually?

Chapter Seven

ANGELS ALL ALONG THE WAY

Part 2 of Visiting Grandma

**The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them
that fear him, and delivereth them. Psalms 34:7**

Little Rock, Arkansas, 1963

THE GREYHOUND BUS line did not go near Batesville, Arkansas, where Charlotte's parents lived. From Little Rock, Arkansas, they would have to ride a different bus line entirely. The Trailways bus station was across town from the Greyhound station in the large city of Little Rock.

They arrived in Little Rock almost an hour later than scheduled. Would she miss the connection with the Trailways bus and have to spend the night in the bus station with four tired hungry children? They had already spent two nights trying to sleep in a moving bus. She hurried the children off the bus and seated them near the ticket counter. She left Bobby, soon to be seven years old, as guardian over

Tricia (four) and Timmy (three) while she went, with Rosi in her arms, to retrieve their luggage.

Behind the ticket counter, she saw her baggage was being inspected. "I am Charlotte Huskey. Those are my bags," she said.

The agent looked at the tag on one bag, then asked, "What is in this suitcase?"

"Clothes for my children," she answered, and pointed to her four little ones.

The agent offered Charlotte her clip board, "Name the articles and how many there are in each bag," she said.

"Madam," Charlotte pleaded. "My bus came in an hour late. I've got to get to the Trailways station before my connecting bus leaves. I'm late already. It will be a miracle if I make it to the other station in time. I have no money for a hotel."

"Sorry," she said, without the least bit of compassion. "Arkansas has laws about what enters the state. You must fill it out or we can't release the bags, and be sure and sign your name at the bottom."

"Mine and my children's clothes are all I have, Madam," she said in a desperate tone. "Just write down children's clothes. I can hardly write with this baby wiggling in my arms."

She shook her head 'no' and continued holding the clip board in Charlotte's face. Charlotte stood Rosi on the floor and held her between her legs while she scribbled across the page in huge letters, CHILDREN'S CLOTHES, AGES 7 YEARS DOWN TO 20 MONTHS. She signed her name at the bottom of the page, dropped it on the counter and reached for a bag. No one stopped her! She scooted one

toward Bobby, another one at Tricia. “We have to hurry outside and wave down a taxi,” she said to Bobby. He took off lugging the heavy bag with both hands. Tricia followed, dragging hers. Charlotte, with Rosi in one hand and Timmy hanging to her skirt, picked up the largest bag and headed toward the door.

It was freezing cold, but thankfully the bitter wind was coming from the south and they were on the north side of the building. The children huddled together against the plate-glass window of the bus station while she stood at the street corner waving for a taxi. One flew by, another, and another. “Oh Lord,” she prayed. “Make one of these drivers stop for us.” No sooner had she prayed than one stopped.

“Where do you need to go?” he asked.

“To the Trailways Bus Station,” she answered excitedly.

He looked at his watch. “You have a reservation?”

“Yes, they routed me that way because the Greyhound buses do not run to Batesville and that’s where I’m going.”

“Get in,” he barked. He loaded the luggage, while she herded the children into the back seat and climbed in beside them. She thought Timmy would cry if she didn’t stay right beside him. (This was before seat belts or car seats were required.)

“I think you have already missed your bus,” the taxi driver said as he honked loudly and sped out in front of another taxi. “Get your transfer ticket ready,” he said. He dodged in and out of traffic, around cars, trucks, and bicycles all across the large capital city of Arkansas. It was Charlotte’s first ride in a taxi and she promised herself that it would be her LAST!

She closed her eyes and gritted her teeth to keep from

screaming. Usually, she instinctively gasped loudly when afraid. Sooner than she had anticipated the taxi stopped. She opened her eyes and they were parked alongside a big red and white Trailways bus. The taxi driver jumped out, ran to the bus door, and began banging rapidly. The bus door opened and the taxi driver motioned for Charlotte to come.

She shoved her tickets into the open hand of the bus driver, who said, "Go ahead and get seated." He opened the luggage door from an inside switch, and she heard her bags as they were being thrown in, one, two, three. "Thank you, Jesus!" she whispered, as Bobby and Tricia squeezed past her. She lifted Timmy onto the high bus step, then Rosie and herself right behind him. "God, you have sent *angels* all along our way," she whispered.

The bus was sparsely occupied, but being a little unnerved about the previous excitement and the cold icy weather, they piled together into two seats. After the children warmed up and relaxed, they began nodding. One at a time, she helped them move into separate rows and laid them across two seats. She too was soon asleep with Rosie across her lap.

Charlotte was awakened by a voice saying, "Madam, Madam."

"Are you calling me?" she asked.

"Yes, Madam," the driver answered.

She moved into the front seat across from him. "I see you are going to Batesville. You will have to change to a connecting bus that will take you on into Batesville. My route doesn't go there. You will change at Bald Knob. Is someone meeting you in Batesville? It will be very late.

when you arrive. This ice storm has thrown every bus off schedule.”

“I was booked to be in Batesville at 4:00 p.m.”

“Yes, and it is about 9:00 p.m. now. They will have been waiting a long time.”

“My dad, mom and siblings live a few miles out of Batesville,” she answered. “I’m sure someone will be there for me.”

“Well, Bald Knob is coming up here pretty soon.” She felt the bus slowing down. “Maybe you better get the kids awake and bundle them up. It is awfully cold out there.”

Bundle them up? she thought. They are wearing their warmest clothing. She felt mean and guilty. She thought she was a terrible mother because she had not gotten warmer clothing for them. She should have gone to a Goodwill store and bought secondhand coats and stocking caps, maybe even found boots and mittens that they needed. However, in her excitement she had not thought of the possibilities of traveling through a blizzard.

In a few minutes, the bus was stopping. “This is Bald Knob. You will change here.”

She looked out the window. “Is this a town? All I see are banks of snow and ice.”

“This is the intersection of Highways 167 and 67. A connecting transport will be available from this point on,” he said. Then she heard him mumbling, “Looks like he is late too, and I’m already running late.”

“I’ll get your bags,” he said. He got out of his seat, buttoned up his coat and slipped on heavy gloves. Then he cautiously stepped down on the icy roadside. She peeked out the window and saw him unloading her bags. He set each of

them on the bank of frozen snow that the snowplow had deposited when scraping snow off the highway.

Her heart was pounding, her hands were cold and clammy. She could feel her face burning. Surely, he isn't going to leave us here beside the highway? she thought, then said to herself, "There is no way my children could stand outside in this extreme weather." Where they lived in Baja California, Mexico, the winters were like spring. Lightweight jackets and sweaters were all they had. When they stood outside waiting for a taxi in Little Rock, the building shielded a little from the icy penetrating wind, but here there was no kind of protection. It was a *bald knob* all right, just like its name, Bald Knob. She was moving very slowly, waiting for the arrival of the transport that she was to board.

The instant she had mustered courage to go to the door, a station wagon stopped beside the road. The driver got out, and moving cautiously, came to the bus door.

"This is your connecting vehicle," the driver said, as he offered his hand to keep Charlotte from slipping on the icy steps. With a diaper bag over her shoulder, Rosi in one hand, and Timmy clinging to her skirt, she willingly took his hand. Amazingly each one got out of the bus and onto the ground without sliding down. The arctic wind lashed their faces and tore through their thin clothes. When they were out of the bus, the new driver began loading their bags into his station wagon. She eased her way around the station wagon and began helping the children get settled in. "Put the young'uns into the back seat and you get into the front," the driver said. However, she knew that Timmy and Rosi would be afraid without her, so she climbed into the back with the children. The driver grunted and slammed the door.

For an hour he didn't speak while he inched his way over the icy highway into Batesville. It was a blessing that he didn't speak, although Charlotte thought he was angry. She was far too tired to carry on a conversation. They had been on the road for two nights and two days and had been awake all day at camp meeting before they got on the bus at 9:15 p.m. After an hour of silence, he asked, "Somebody waiting to pick you up?"

"Well, yes," Charlotte said, "My mom and dad live near Batesville. They were expecting me to come in this afternoon at 4:00 p.m."

"It's almost 10:00 o'clock now. Do you think they have waited six hours?"

"I hope so," she mumbled. She hadn't considered the possibility that no one would be waiting for her.

He said nothing else until they stopped in front of the bus station. After he had opened her door and Charlotte was getting out, he said, "It's below zero out here and I see the bus station is closed, at least the lights are out." Thinking the driver knew how to open the bus station door, she helped the sleepy children out one by one.

"Stand close to the doorway against the building until the door is open," she ordered.

The driver set their three suitcases on the sidewalk, then instead of opening the door, he walked around the car and while getting in, he said, "I hope your folks get here soon." And he quickly drove away.

Charlotte was shocked! When he had picked them up on the side of the road on Bald Knob, she felt he was an *angel*. Now, he was driving away, leaving them to freeze to death! Was she having a bad dream? Was it possible that a human

could drive away leaving an expectant mother and four small, thinly-clad children standing outside in sub-zero weather? Is the world really this cruel? she questioned. The world where she lived wasn't that cruel. She had seen poverty-stricken people share their tiny huts and hungry ones share their only tortillas. This man could have shared his warm car until the station door was opened. Charlotte was numb physically and mentally.

Bobby, in khaki pants and a flannel-lined poplin jacket, was dressed the warmest of the children. Although only seven years old, he stood against the building taking care of himself like a grown man. Charlotte wrapped her sweater around Rosi and her heavy skirt around Timmy. Tricia huddled between her and the station door. "Oh, Lord, don't let us freeze to death this close to my loving parents' warm home. Help them to come soon."

Questions for discussion:

1. Why did Charlotte and the children need to hurry in Little Rock?
2. What held up their luggage?
3. Who acted as an angel in Little Rock
4. Why did Charlotte move slowly at Bald Knob?
5. What did the transport driver do in Batesville?
6. Where were Charlotte and the four children left?

Chapter Eight

ANGELS IN BATESVILLE

Part 3 of Visiting Grandma

Behold, I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Exodus 23:20

Batesville, Arkansas, 1963

IT WAS 10:00 p.m. in sub-zero weather. Charlotte and her four, small, thinly-clad children were huddled outside the locked door of the bus station in Batesville, Arkansas.

The transport driver, who brought them there, had dropped them off and driven away. They were 1,700 miles away from their home in sunny Mexico.

It appeared that God had forgotten them!

But NO! A door opened across the street. A man in a long overcoat, earmuffs, and gloves came out. He walked slowly across the icy street toward them. He unlocked the bus station, and said gently, "Please come in out of this storm." He lit an open face gas heater and invited them to

gather around and warm up. He showed Charlotte the bathrooms, the drinking fountain and a pay telephone. "I suppose you plan to call someone to come and fetch youns? There was a man hanging around here 'til the station closed. Probably your people, eh?" he asked.

"Maybe so, they were expecting us at 4:00 p.m." Charlotte answered.

"That 'twas six hours ago. I heard this storm has covered all the midwest from New York to Texas. Air flights and bus lines are all messed up, with many cancelled. I'm surprised youns got here. How fer did you come?"

"We've come from Southern California, near San Diego. We drove into the storm at Flagstaff, Arizona about eight hours into our trip."

"Whew! That's a long ways."

"We've been on the road over forty eight hours," Charlotte said wearily.

"Well, just shut off the gas, and turn the night-latch on the door when youns leave and the door will lock behind ya. Oh yes, and be sure and switch out the lights," he instructed.

"Another angel," she murmured as she watched him carefully walking across the ice covered street. A sign over the door of the building read, Batesville Hotel. Batesville, the word warmed Charlotte's heart! She was at last close to her family she hadn't seen in three years. She could hardly wait!

She quickly ripped open the diaper bag, pulled out her coin purse and a letter. Her hands were shaking as she opened Mama's last letter where she found their phone number. She dropped money into the payphone on the back wall and with trembling hands dialed their number.

Her oldest sister, Lois answered. "I'm at the bus station in town," Charlotte said, and began sobbing.

"Jim will be right there for you," Lois answered.

The children had eaten only crackers, apples and nuts since the day before yesterday. There had been no time and few places in which to buy food. While she was calling, they had seen the vending machine and were now begging. There was no time to cry. With blurred vision, she fetched out two quarters, several dimes and nickels, and they snacked while they waited.

When her brother Jim's face appeared at the bus station's glass door, Charlotte thought it was the most wonderful moment of her life. She ran to the door and fell into his arms! They piled into his warm truck cab, threw the luggage into the truck bed, and headed for Grandpa's farm. Charlotte's heart was beating rapidly. She would soon see her mother! She could hear again the soft voice of her Daddy praying. Charlotte was ecstatic when Jim stopped the truck in front of Dad's old farm house with a front porch across the full length of the house. This was the happy ending to fifty hours of struggling!

Warmth from a wood burning stove engulfed her when she stepped inside. However, when she saw her mother, she felt like screaming, "Oh, Mama you look so old! Surely you aren't going to die and leave us?" Her heart cried, "I need you Mama! I need your prayers, your emotional and spiritual support. Please, please don't leave me." She fell into Mama's arms so Mama wouldn't see the distress on her face. Mama was thin and white, her cheeks gaunt, her eyes hollow and her chin trembling. Charlotte forced a smile trying to look happy. Tears were streaming down both their faces.

Mama didn't try to pretend she was happy. She blurted out, "Oh, Dink, what is wrong with you? Your skin is gray color. You are so skinny. You look sick. You aren't rosy cheeked like my little live-wire Dink." She turned to Daddy and said, "Alvin, we've got to help her get her health back."

"Yes, Mabel, we will," he answered softly. The sound of their voices was like music to Charlotte's ears.

"I am probably just tired from the long trip. I haven't been to bed in three days and two nights," she said. "We traveled through a blizzard from Flagstaff all the way here. We could scarcely get warmed up before I would have to get the children out into the cold again to go to the restroom or to change buses. They need to put bathrooms on those buses," she said with fervor.

"Sorry we weren't at the station when you arrived. The station agent closed the station because he thought there would be no buses running until the storm broke, so we came on home." Daddy said. "We had already waited several hours."

"Yes, while Jim was bringing us here, he told me about your long wait. I'm sorry you had to be out in this blizzard."

Her sisters, Lois and Roberta (Bob), seated the children around the table and served them hot homemade soup and corn bread. Charlotte was too emotional to be hungry but she ate a little.

After three long years, Charlotte was again with her parents and siblings, her two sisters, her brother Jim, and his wife, Esther. She met their son, Little Jimmy. Charlotte hugged each one. She listened again to each distinct voice! They talked for hours until all the children were asleep and Daddy insisted they all go to bed and rest. Charlotte did

not want to sleep. She wanted to forever be in their presence.

Early the following morning, Mama called for a doctor's appointment for Charlotte. The doctor was old. Mama believed he would understand Charlotte's condition. After a detailed examination and lots of questions, he remarked, "I have practiced medicine for many years, but I have never seen a woman alive in your condition. This is Friday, you will be all right until Monday; but be at the hospital early Monday morning. You are in a serious condition. We will need to make some changes for the better."

Mama was awfully disappointed that they didn't take her right then. Charlotte wasn't. This gave her more time to be near her beloved family. It would also give her time with God, which she desperately needed after knowing about her grave condition.

It was a miracle that neither Charlotte nor any child was sick from the long, long exposure to the sub-zero weather. They had no coughs, snotty noses, or sore throats.

By Saturday afternoon the storm was gone. On Sunday the sun shone brightly. That afternoon was reasonably warm, so Lois, Roberta, Charlotte and the children walked down to the pond on the south side of the hill. The pond was somewhat sheltered and they ran and played in the sunshine.

While Lois was baiting hooks and helping the older children fish, Roberta was reading audibly Faith Stewart's book, *Living Faith*. It was filled with Sister Faith's personal healings and other marvelous answers to prayer. "Wow!" Charlotte said over and over again, as Roberta kept reading miracle after miracle.

By now Rosi had toddled over and was sitting in her

Aunt Lois' lap. Charlotte's faith was so inspired, she thought she would never fear or doubt God again. She was daydreaming of enduring great difficulties just to give God a chance to perform more miracles, when she felt something strange happening in her abdomen.

"I feel strange," she said.

Roberta closed the book and looked at her. "Are you sick?" She questioned.

As Charlotte stood up, she said. "It seems like something popped inside of me, and I feel something warm on my legs."

"It's blood!" Roberta whispered, "Look it's trickling down your legs."

"Let's get to the house before the children see this. They will be frightened," Charlotte said, and started toward the house.

Roberta followed close behind Charlotte so the children would not see the blood on the back of her skirt. "We are going in," Roberta called back to Lois. "We are leaving all the children with you."

Charlotte felt faint by the time they had reached the house on the top of the hill. Her shoes were full of blood. The places she had stopped to rest while walking up the hill were marked with blood spots. She washed up a bit and went to bed.

While listening to Roberta reading the many miracles that Faith Stewart had experienced, Charlotte thought she would also like to experience some miracles. She thought she had faith to lay down her life for the Lord. But remembering the blood in her shoes and the trail of blood she had left as she came up the hill made her shudder. She covered

her face with her pillow and prayed. “Lord, I do want to see a miracle, and I’m willing to endure pain, I just don’t want my children to be without a mother. I couldn’t have survived life’s problems without my mama. I am twenty seven years old, and I still desperately need Mama. What will Timmy do? He was so frightened when he couldn’t see me on the bus. What pain he will suffer without me? Rosi is not even two years old, Lord; who would care for her and love Tricia and Bobby as I do? I know Lois, Roberta, Esther and Jim would do their best caring for them. But next month, Esther will have her second baby to care for. Mama and Daddy are old and will soon need someone to care for them. Lord, I want to do your will, but my children need me.”

“Just yesterday I heard the doctor say, ‘I have practiced medicine for many years, but I have never seen a woman alive in your condition—be at the hospital early Monday morning and we will see if we can’t make some changes for the better.’ Lord, this is Sunday, am I going to die? The doctor can’t help me until tomorrow. At the rate I’m losing blood, I will be dead before morning.”

At that moment Mama and Daddy came in. Mama said, I think your baby might come and you will need a doctor’s assistance.”

“I think I will be all right,” Charlotte answered. “I’m too weak to be walking around. I think rest will make me better. I had lots to do before we came and the trip was so exhausting.”

“None of us know how to deliver a baby. I had my babies at home, but I always had someone there who knew how to help me.” Mama spoke excitedly.

“The doctor said he couldn’t help until Monday. He may

be out of town,” Charlotte answered. “Let me rest at least for awhile. I think I need to sleep. I have no pain, I just feel kind of—weak.”

When Lois came with the children from the fishing pond, Timmy and Bobby showed Grandpa the fish they had caught. Tricia came to Charlotte’s bed and asked, “What’s the matter? Why you in bed, Mommy? Are you sick?”

“I feel kind of tired, but I will be okay. Don’t worry about me,” Charlotte answered.

Questions for discussions:

1. In what kind of weather were they traveling?
2. Where were Charlotte and the children going?
3. Name the angels who helped them.
4. In what ways had Mama changed?
5. What was Roberta reading to Charlotte?
6. In what ways did *Living Faith* inspire Charlotte?
7. Why did Charlotte want to live?



Back Row, Left to Right: Mabel and Alvin
Hightower, Jimmy Junior, Jim, Esther holding
baby Mike, Front Row: Timmy, Rosi and
Tricia Huskey

Chapter Nine

TWO HEALINGS

Part 4 of Visiting Grandma

Pray one for another that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. James 5:16b

Batesville, Arkansas, 1963

SUNDAY EVENING JIM, Esther and their son, Jimmy, came to pray. They visited for a while and discussed Charlotte's condition. Since the doctor had told her to be at the hospital early Monday morning, they decided to let her rest until then.

While the adults were visiting, Little Jimmy took Rosi by the hand and they walked out onto the long porch that spanned the front of the old farmhouse. When Rosi heard the hoot owls calling to their mates and coyotes yapping nearby, she began crying and ran back to her Mama's bed. Rosi was accustomed to the noise of the continuous clashing of ocean waves against cliffs along the Pacific shore, or to mariachi

music blaring from radios, and neighbor children shouting, but she had never heard wild animals making night calls in the darkness.

Jimmy came running after Rosi. Neither child could speak plainly, but Jimmy chattered to Rosi in comforting tones. Then he took her hand and she went with him outside again. They stood together hand in hand facing the scary darkness while Jimmy shouted loudly to those noisy night creatures who had frightened his cousin. Quickly Rosi calmed down and they played happily on the porch while the family visited.

When Daddy was ready to have family worship, Jim called the children inside. Lois passed out the hymn books and they sang reverently just as the Hightower family had done when Charlotte was a child. Charlotte was thrilled. Having a reverent family worship at her home in Mexico was a challenge. People were continually coming and going. "This is what I've longed for so many times. Thank you, Jesus," Charlotte whispered.

After singing several songs, Daddy put on his glasses, opened up his large, well-worn Bible and read James 5:13-18. "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly

that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.”

Daddy closed his Bible and said, “The elders live far away so they cannot come at this time, but God knows we are willing to obey all parts of His Word. We are men like Elias and God will hear us when we pray just as He heard Elias.”

“Yes, and heal Charlotte like he healed Esther when her hip was broken,” Roberta added.

Charlotte turned to Esther and said, “Tell me about your healing.”

Esther started telling her story. “That happened on the eighteenth of August, the first day of the Myrtle Camp Meeting. Lois, Mom and I were planning to go to the camp meeting, but we had to get our tomatoes canned before we could go. I was hurrying to the store to get some jar lids. When I went around the curve at the bridge, the pickup nosed dived off the bridge and down into the dry creek bed. I was thrown across the cab and my pelvic bone jammed into the window handle. The pain was horrendous from that instant. Fortunately, the neighbor came by in just a few minutes. He lifted me out of the pickup, helped me up the bank and into his car, then he brought me home. Every movement caused excruciating pain. I could not move.

“I am certain that my pelvis bone was cracked, because the pain was so severe right in the bone. I could not walk or turn in bed by myself. On Saturday Mama or someone, I don’t remember who, called the Myrtle, Missouri Camp Meeting for prayer.

“The saints are so concerned about their brothers and sisters. Myrtle is eighty or ninety miles from here, but the following morning Brother Murphy Allen and Brother Curtis Williams Sr. drove that long distance to come and pray for me. They read a few Scriptures and then prayed. Before they prayed, I felt sure the Lord was going to heal me. As they were praying, I felt the pain leave. I started praising the Lord and raised up in bed by myself. As I sat on the side of the bed, I said, ‘The Lord has healed me. I want to get up and walk. Would you men please go out so I can get dressed?’ They stepped out onto the porch. Lois brought me a housecoat. I put it on and walked across the room by myself. Everyone came back in and we praised God together.”

“When the men were ready to leave, they asked if anyone wanted to ride along with them to camp meeting. We had been ready to go to camp meeting since Friday when this happened,” Mama added.

Then Esther continued speaking, “Everyone was quiet for a few minutes, then Dad said, ‘If Esther thinks she is able to go, you all could go on with them. Jim, Roberta and I will come later on in the week to be a few days in the meeting and bring you all home.’ Lois, Mom and I were already packed so we rode to the camp meeting with them. The enemy tried to get me down again at the meeting, but I kept praising the Lord for my healing. I walked up and down the hills with very little difficulty.

“Oh, the Lord is so good to us when we trust Him! He wants us to trust Him, for He is willing and waiting to do marvelous things for His people. And he wants to heal you too,” she said to Charlotte.

They gathered around Charlotte's bed and asked God to heal her.

Her healing was not instant like Esther's, but it came. Monday a tiny six-month preemie baby was born right there in the old farm house. That was the day Charlotte was to be in the hospital. When they looked on the lifeless form, (with neither arms nor legs) each one was convinced more than ever before that God's ways are best. She never went to the hospital.

The following evening Charlotte felt good and wanted to get up and do housework. However, Mama was a wise-old fashioned woman. She insisted on Charlotte resting in bed for many days. Charlotte had the long rest which she had needed so long.

The Bible says, "God has his way in the whirlwind." The trip and the recent experience seemed like going through a whirlwind to Charlotte. She was glad God had been with her. She was thankful that she had submitted to God.

In a few weeks, Charlotte was again Mama's rosy cheeked 'live-wire' Dink.

Questions for discussion:

1. How did Little Jimmy comfort Rosi?
2. What did they do during family worship?
3. What happened to Esther when her pickup went off the bridge?
4. What did Esther feel when God healed her?
5. Can you share a time when God healed you?
6. Are God's ways always best even when we do not get healed?

Chapter Ten

BUCKETS OF FISH

And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the water brought forth abundantly.

Genesis 1:21

El Cajon, California 1966

“SINCE BROTHER HARLAND SMITH will be in Rosarito for Easter Sunday service tomorrow, why don’t we go to service in Pacoima?” James asked.

“Oh yes, let’s go. I can see Ronny, and maybe there will be enough boys to play a good game of soccer,” Bobby answered.

“Yes,” Charlotte agreed. “It’s as near to going home for the holiday as we can afford. My parents are far away in Arkansas, and yours are 600 miles away in Orland. Do we have money for gasoline?”

“Yes.”

“Then let’s go! You children do your nightly routines,

hop into the bathtub, and then get off to bed. We will have to leave around seven o'clock in the morning.”

Bobby dropped his book and headed for the bathroom.

At that time, the Huskey family was living in El Cajon, California. James was studying at the International Missionary Dental School in Tijuana. Although living in California, they were driving to Rosarito Beach in Mexico each Sunday to lead the congregation in worship. Sis. Opal Kelly and Sis. Carrie Shepherd were now taking that responsibility, so it gave James and Charlotte a chance to do something different on Sundays.

Easter Sunday would be a special day in Pacoima. There would be regular Sunday School and worship service in the morning with a potluck dinner at noon and another worship service at 2:30 p.m. Some of the sisters and brothers who brought food to those dinners in Pacoima were professional cooks, so those dinners were nothing less than a holiday feast.

The following morning, while many Christians attended Easter sunrise service, the Huskey family watched the sunrise as they drove north on Interstate 5 toward Pacoima. They enjoyed Sunday School and the morning worship service. Also, they were grateful for the wonderful fellowship during the holiday feast in the dining room and the other preaching service in the afternoon. About five o'clock, they started the 158-mile trip back to their home in El Cajon.

They inched along in bumper to bumper traffic for a couple of hours through the cities. After leaving Los Angeles county, they turned off Interstate 5 and took the Pacific Coastal Route. This highway had some of the most beautiful scenery in California. In places, the Pacific Ocean

is in full view. The full moon shimmered on the water. It was very similar to that night eleven years ago when James had proposed to Charlotte. They were standing on a pier in Redondo Beach, California. He took her face in his hands and looked into her eyes, then asked, “Will you marry me and go across the ocean with me to take the Gospel?”

Tonight, James was driving. Charlotte was reminiscing while holding his right hand. She had just laid her head on his shoulder, when their three older children began begging to stop and go running on the sand.

James found a place not far from the water’s edge to park the car off the highway. Away they all ran as fast as possible. The children and Charlotte with bare feet were jumping over rocks and dashing around bushes. (This wasn’t a smart idea, but sometimes it is hard to resist something that is loved). James was jogging down the beach, when Bobby called back, “Mama, something is all over this beach. It’s shinny and wiggling. You better bring our shoes.”

Charlotte put eight-month-old Leah into Tricia’s arms and said, “Wait right here until I come back with everyone’s shoes. We might get our feet cut.” Strange, she thought, “shiny and wiggling.” It must be little pieces of metal that have washed up on the beach. The moving water must make them appear to be wiggling. While she was hunting shoes, she could hear Timmy squealing and Bobby laughing. Their excitement seemed to be growing she thought when she stopped to help the girls put on their shoes.

The moon was bright like twilight. When they got to the water’s edge, Charlotte could see hundreds of little silver fish flipping and flopping all over the sand. “Look!” Bobby shouted. “the fish are coming up out of the sand.”

“No, they are not! Fish live in the water,” Tricia reproved him. “Fish can’t live in the ground.”

“Just look for yourself. See the sand moving over there.” He pointed to a place close to Timmy’s foot. “Now watch!”

“A fish is coming up right by my toe,” Timmy shrieked with delight and reached down to get it. Leah was kicking Charlotte, wanting to get down. Charlotte set her down on the sand. Leah reached for a fish and missed it. She started crawling after another. Rosi already had a fish in each hand.

They were still watching fish coming up out of the sand when James came back. “Those fish are grunions,” he said. “They come up on the sand to lay their eggs. You are probably standing on some fish eggs right now.”

Rosi bent over. “I don’t see any eggs,” she said.

“Well, they aren’t big like a chicken egg,” Bobby answered. “Their eggs are tiny, so you can’t see them, at least not in the night.” Then turning to James, he asked, “Are these fish good to eat?”

“Yes,” James said. “I have read about grunion. Every year this area has grunion runs. That is when people are permitted to catch them for eating just like other fish. I think different localities make their own rules for grunion runs. But I believe grunion may only be caught using hands, no nets or other tools.”

“Can we take some home with us?” Timmy asked.

“I think it would be okay,” James said. “Charlotte is there anything in the car to put them in?”

“Like what, a bucket with a lid?” she asked. “They will jump out of anything else. I’ll see what I can find.”

Heading back to the car she remembered she had put their breakfast in a clean five-gallon bucket. She emptied it

and ran back to the beach with the bucket. They all began catching the wiggly grunions. About as many escaped out of their hands as were put into the bucket. But with all of them working, the bucket was filled and some were flopping over the rim. “Don’t you have anything else that we can put more in?” Bobby asked.

“I’ll see,” said Charlotte, as she started running back to the car.

Charlotte had grown up in Marion, Oregon about sixty miles from the Columbia River. Some neighbors went to the river each year when the smelt came inland to spawn. They would come back with ice chests and buckets full of fish packed in ice. She had always wanted to go smelt fishing but was never able. Now God had allowed her and her family to go on a grunion run. She felt blessed that God was allowing her and her children to do something few people get to do. She took the clean clothes she had brought for emergencies out of a plastic bag and laid them carefully on the back seat. Then she found an empty gallon water jug. They slipped the little fish one by one down into the small jug opening and put others in the plastic bag.

Back home, they were fortunate to have a large freezer compartment in the refrigerator of their rented house. After getting the children bathed and off to bed, James and Charlotte stayed awake most of the night cleaning, packing and freezing the little fish.

The following day, as soon as the children were home from school and had eaten some fish for a snack, they studied about *grunions* in the World Book Encyclopedia.

They read, “Grunion fish live only along the coast of Southern California and Baja California. Grunions lay their

eggs on sandy beaches from late March to August. This is done only on nights of the highest tides during a full or new moon. The eggs usually incubate in ten days. They hatch when the highest tide water reaches them again. The tiny newborn fish burst out like popcorn and are carried out to sea in the high tide water.”

“Does that say that the little fish can stay alive inside the egg shell for a whole month?” Bobby asked.

“It says they usually hatch within ten days but can stay a month in the shell and then hatch alive.”

“That sounds impossible,” Bobby added.

“But all things are possible with God,” Tricia reminded him. “God made them that way.”

“Does it say that fish come out of the sand like we saw?” asked Timmy.

“This explains the fish coming out of the sand,” Charlotte said, and began reading again. “The female drills her tail into the wet sand until she is buried up to her pectoral fin. Then she lays her many eggs. While she is laying eggs, the male fish wraps his body around her and fertilizes the eggs.”

“I think he must accidentally pile a lot of sand up on her so that she is covered with wet sand,” Charlotte said. “Cause the fish we saw were covered with sand.”

“So she was coming out after laying her eggs?” Tricia asked.

“Yes, the mama fish dug a hole and laid her eggs. She then wiggles herself out of the hole and back into the water. The fish are only on the sand about one minute or less.”

“There were hundreds of fish coming and going like

people did at Sea Port Village during the New Year's fireworks celebration," Bobby stated.

Charlotte laughed at his comparison. "Yes, but wasn't it great that God caused us to stop at the right place and at the right time? We knew nothing about grunion, where they lived, nor their spawning habits. But God caused us to stop at the exact time to see this miracle of nature that he created. Isn't God good?"

"Yes," they all agreed.

"Always remember, if you obey God's rules, He will give you many great adventures like we had last night."

"Yes, Mama, we will," each one promised.

Questions for discussion:

1. Why did the family go to Pacoima?
2. Why did they stop at the beach?
3. What surprise did God have for them?
4. What unusual spawning habits did God give to grunions?
5. How long can grunions stay out of the water?
6. Can you share other strange habits of animals?

Chapter Eleven

AN ARTIST WITHOUT HANDS

**God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power,
and of love, and of a sound mind. 2 Timothy 1:7**

Miami, Oklahoma to Ciudad Juarez, Mexico 1966

GRANDPA HIGHTOWER WAS LEANING against the front post of his little store in Miami, Oklahoma. He was watching James, Charlotte and their five children packing their car for their return trip to Mexico. Charlotte noticed him wiping a tear now and then. They could only come to visit him every two years because of limited finances.

At last, all suitcases, boxes and bags were in the carrier on top of the car or tucked behind the seats. Then everyone began hugging and saying goodbyes. Charlotte squeezed Roberta, her all-time buddy since childhood. She hugged Lois, her gentle, loving, oldest sister. Charlotte remembered those years when she called Lois, “Granny” and “Slow-poke.” Today Charlotte was wishing she had never cut Lois

down with her words. She wished for the ability to erase the scars she had put on Lois' heart. Now she saw great strength in Lois to have overcome the mockery and rejection that she had received through the years. In spite of it, she had become a sweet person.

When Charlotte hugged her seventy-four year-old father, she wondered if he would live until she came back to see him again. They barely had enough resources to live and do the work they were called to do, and traveling back East every summer to see her family was out of the question. Her mother had been dead only a year and ten months. Her dad had aged so much since then. "Thank you Daddy for giving me the desire to obey God and to teach my children truth," Charlotte said. "Thank you for all you have taught me and for training me to stop all activities and take time to worship God every day together with my family." She was trying hard to not cry. But tears of gratitude and fear of not seeing him again kept rolling out.

With sad hearts and many tears, they drove away.

They traveled the remainder of the day, through the night and part of the following day in the sweltering August heat without an air conditioner. They arrived tired, hot and sweaty in El Paso, Texas. As soon as they crossed the international border into Mexico, Charlotte said, "While you go looking for Estevan, please let us stay in the plaza so the children can relax and play. They have been cooped up for many hours."

They found a neatly manicured plaza in the center of downtown Ciudad Juarez. The plaza was full of vendors. One man rode a bicycle with a cylinder-shaped oven built on the back of it. He tooted his air horn and the people came

running. “Oh, he is selling hot baked sweet potatoes!” Bobby said. “They smell good, but I don’t like them.”

Another man had metal cooking pots of different shapes and sizes tied together and hanging from his shoulders. The pots made clanging sounds as he walked. A little girl was selling brightly-colored flowers made from red, orange, purple, and pink crepe paper. An elderly woman was cooking enormous twenty-four inch flour tortillas on a wood-fired barrel oven. At one corner of the plaza a man was pressing long strips of dough from a plastic bag with a star-shaped tip. The dough fell into a kettle of hot oil. As soon as the dough turned golden brown, he lifted them out, cut them in eight-inch pieces and sprinkled them with cinnamon and sugar. “Churros! Churros!” he called, while placing six in each little sack.

“Buy some. Please, please, Mama,” begged Timmy.

She bought two sacks of these delicious Mexican funnel cakes.

There were also different artists around the plaza drawing or painting. One was drawing portraits, another had paintings of different scenes of the city, the church, an old adobe building, and the plaza. The one that caught their attention was an artist painting without hands. He painted with a brush held between the stubs of his arms.

They were watching this artist painting when James found them. “What happened to your hands?” Timmy had just asked.

The artist finished painting a donkey and laid down his brush, then turned to face them. He looked surprised when he saw Timmy. “Where did you learn Spanish?” he asked.

“We live in Baja California,” James answered.

“That is interesting,” he answered. “You asked how I lost my hands. I was about your age, or maybe a little older. Several of us boys went hiking in the mountains. We had heard tales that soldiers had camped in those mountains and that some guns, bullets, and camping gear had been found hidden in a cave up there. At different times, we had gone looking for that cave. On this day, we got lucky. At least we thought we were lucky. We found several things. Among them were strange looking heavy metal objects. We thought they were containers filled with money or maybe nuggets of gold. We began trying to open them. When we were not able to pry them open, we started throwing big rocks at the objects to break them open. We were imagining gold coins tumbling out when the objects opened.

“Suddenly one exploded! Then another! And another! A portion of my friend’s face shattered off into the air. One friend lost his foot. Another one died before anyone got him down from the mountain and to the hospital. As you can see, my hands and a portion of my arms were blown off.” He held up his stubby arms that ended a few inches below his elbows.

“Oh, that was terrible,” Charlotte said, “how did you survive without your hands?”

“For many years, my dear mother cared for me as if I were a baby. God bless my dear mother. She already had much work to do. After a few years of her caring for me, I realized that someday she would die and I would have to take care of myself. I started doing everything I could. I learned that I could hold a spoon between my arm stubs. After many tries and many failures, I was able to get it to my

mouth filled with food. I learned to do many other things that my mother had been doing for me.

“Later, I was able to write a little with a pencil between my arms; then I learned to control a paint brush, to make shapes and connect the shapes to make pictures. I thank God because he helped me learn to paint. Now I can take a little money home to help Mother buy food and other things we need.”

Tricia patted her daddy’s arm, “Can we buy the picture he is painting?” she asked.

“Yes,” he answered. Then turning to the artist, he asked, “May I buy the one you are painting?”

“Of course, just let me add a few more details.” As he was touching up the painting, James snapped some photos.

After they were back in the car, Charlotte said, “We have learned very important lessons today.”

“What’s that?” Rosi asked.

“To be careful,” Timmy answered.

“And to not be afraid if you are handicapped,” Bob said. “That man learned to do lots of things without his hands because he wasn’t afraid to try.”

“Yes, but he also lost his hands because he wasn’t afraid,” Timmy remarked.

“Yes, he did, but the lesson we learn from that is to be careful to not prowl around where you aren’t supposed to.” Charlotte said. “To not be afraid is another. He also had to ignore ridicule and discouragement and push himself to keep on trying. I’m sure many times he wanted to give up and not try again.”

“I think everyone who was selling in the plaza had to conquer fear and discouragement. Fear keeps people from

doing many things they could do,” James said. “The Bible says, ‘Perfect love casts out fear, because fear has torment.’ Fear is like a chain that binds a person, keeping them from doing what they want to do. That torments the person.”

“But if we hope in Jesus we will not be afraid to try. Isn’t that right?” Tricia asked.

Charlotte turned to Tricia and said, “Yes, that is right. Hope in Jesus gives us confidence. Philippians 4:13, says ‘I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me.’”

“I think Grandpa had confidence in Jesus to sell his farm and buy a little store when he had farmed most all his life,” James said.

“Yes, but that was his dream,” Charlotte said. “I remembered hearing him say, ‘I love farming, but when I am unable to farm, I want to operate a little grocery store.’ I am happy Dad has accomplished another of his life’s dreams. But I am sure it wasn’t easy to leave the farm life that he loved so much.”

“He trusted in God and worked against fear and discouragement,” Tricia added.

“He seems to like his grocery store just as much as he did his farm,” James said.

“I like his store too,” Timmy and Rosi said at the same time.

“Grandpa was such a dear daddy, so protective, caring, and honest. He worked many long days in the heat and the cold to provide for our family and others who were in need. He was very passionate for God’s Word. I hope God will give each of us grace to be as true to God as Grandpa has been,” Charlotte added.

“I want to be like Grandpa,” Bob and Timmy agreed.

Questions for discussion:

1. Why were they leaving Charlotte's family?
2. Why did Charlotte show special love to Lois?
3. How were people earning money in the plaza?
4. How did the man without hands earn money?
5. Why did the artist have no hands?
6. What lessons can we learn from this story?



Chapter Twelve

DRIVING ACROSS MEXICO

Part 1

**The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few.
Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will
send forth labourers into his harvest. Matthew 9:37-38**

From Myrtle, Missouri, to Mexico City 1969

JAMES HUSKEY and Leslie Busbee had just finished packing their vehicle with personal items, used clothing, and camping gear. It was August 4, 1969, at Myrtle, Missouri Camp Meeting. After eating dinner in the little dining hall in the basement below the chapel, their families and church brethren gathered around to say, “goodbye.”

“You’ll be gone three weeks?” “Yes, I’m sure or longer,” James answered.

“And where are you going?” someone in the crowd asked.

“We are going to Southern Mexico,” Leslie answered with a big smile on his face. “We’re going to visit a lot of

new brethren. Say, James, how many states did you say we're going to visit?"

"Let's see. Our first stop will be Mexico City. We'll enter Mexico at Matamoros, across from Brownsville, Texas, get our visas and permission to take the van into Mexico. We will see about eight other states.

"Wow! I wish I could go," Bobby complained.

"I will try my best to take you next time," James promised. He hugged his family. Bro. Leslie hugged his three small children, John, Jeannie, Angela and his wife, Sylvia. Everyone bowed their heads and Leslie prayed for God's protection over them and over the families they were leaving behind.

They stopped by a printing company near Corpus Christi for tracts and Bibles in Spanish. The following morning, they crossed the border, 935 miles from Myrtle. They got their visas and permit for the van and headed south. As he was driving, James noticed Leslie hunting for something. "Are you getting hungry?" James asked.

"No, just looking for the handouts that Evelyn Anderson gave us."

"They are inside that short bench seat," James answered. "The seat is a lid. Lift it."

Leslie lifted the seat and looked at the stacks of papers. "Which one should I give out first?" He questioned as he read the titles.

"Maybe something about how to know Christ as their Savior," James answered.

Leslie found a leaflet and stuck it in front of James as he was driving. James read the title. "Yes, that is a good one."

“Did you know that Evelyn was my Sunday school teacher when she lived in Guthrie?” Leslie remarked.

“No, I didn’t know that. I sure appreciate the Spanish Bibles and literature they gave us. I think we will need every one of them.”

“So, not many people have a Bible in Mexico?”

“Not many.” James answered.

When James stopped to buy gasoline, Leslie got out with his hand full of tracts. He went to each person and handed them one. The people smiled and said, “*Muchas gracias,*” (thank you).

When they started driving again, Leslie said, “The people seem to appreciate the literature.”

“They do. These people are hungry for God’s Word. Look down the highway. See those people standing beside the road. They are waiting for the public transportation. A bus will come and pick them up. Have a handful ready when we come near to them. When I slow down, throw the tracts gently out the window and watch what happens,” James said. Soon he started slowing down.

When the car got near the people, Leslie hung his head out the window and dropped several tracts, saying “*Que Dios le Bendiga,*” (God bless you). The people scrambled after the tracts, and two men chased some that were blowing in the wind! “Wow!” Leslie exclaimed.

“It is like this everywhere we have been in Mexico,” James answered. “And by the way, I’m not taking the shortest route to Mexico City. This way is beautiful country, but we didn’t come to see the natural or architectural beauty. We came to help people and there will be more villages and people on this route.”

Leslie gave away gospel literature as they drove through Ciudad Victoria and Ciudad Mante, also in many Mexican and Indian villages and along the highway. He did this each day.

On the third day, they arrived in a suburb of Mexico City at the home of a couple who had lived near James and Charlotte when they lived in Rosarito Beach. They laughed and talked while eating, then they sang together a few of the songs they had learned in past Bible studies.

The following morning when they were again on the road, Leslie asked, “Where are we going today?”

“We are going into Mexico City to find the father of one of the brothers who lives in La Mission. Traveling this way is a little farther than going straight to the *Ranchos*, but this brother has not heard from his father since moving to Baja California several years ago. He’s asked many times that we’d pray for him to get news from his father.”

“How will you find him in such a large city? Isn’t Mexico City one of the largest cities in the world?”

“Yes, it is, but God will help us. His father was working as a doorman in the television studios near the construction of the new underground transit railways.”

“I would think it’s a huge facility with many entrances and many streets leading to it.”

“I know, it is impossible without God’s help. But the Bible says, ‘I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me.’ I think God will lead us.”

Turning this way and that way for several miles, James found the studio. He parked and walked to the door. “I’m James Huskey, I’m looking for Señor Alvarado,” James said in Spanish.

The man at the door gave a little bow, then said, “*Soy Señor Alvarado. ¿Cómo puedo servirte?*” (I am Señor Alvarado. How may I serve you?)

“Do you have a son named Ernesto?”

“Yes, I have a son Ernesto, who went to Baja California.”

“I have met your son.”

“I haven’t heard from my son in years. Is he well?”

“Yes, he and his family are well.”

He clapped his hands together and added, “It’s wonderful that you would come to visit me.”

“When Ernesto heard I would be traveling near Mexico City, he asked if I would try to find some information about you, his father.”

They exchanged important information about each of their lives for awhile, then Señor Alvarado asked, “Would you like to see the studio? It a fantastic place.”

“Well, yes I’d love to see it, but first let me see if my friend wants to come along.”

When James asked Leslie, he answered, “I think I’d rather read my Bible while the car is not moving.”

While Señor Alvarado and James were walking through the many rooms of the studio, James said, “Your son has become a Christian and he wants me to share the Gospel with you.” At that moment, Señor Alvarado saw two program directors walking toward him. He introduced James to the men, so James saw the opportunity and witnessed to all three men.

When James said goodbye, Señor Alvarado said seriously, “I am glad my son is serving Christ in spite of the bad example I showed him in his growing up years. Tell my son

and my grandchildren that I send my love and hugs. And God bless you for traveling so far to find me.”

Questions for discussion:

1. Who was going to Mexico?
2. How did Leslie share the Gospel?
3. What was the reaction to gospel literature?
4. Did Leslie give away tracts in Ciudad Mante?
5. Why did they go to Mexico City?
6. How did James find the television studio?
7. When James was leaving, what did Ernesto’s Dad tell James?

Chapter Thirteen

RANCHO LOS MARTINEZ

Part 2 of Driving Across Mexico

**A brother offended is harder to win than a strong city,
and their contention separates them like the bars of a
castle. Proverbs 18:19**

Guanajuato, 1969

SUNDAY, James and Leslie arrived in Rancho Los Martinez, Guanajuato about 250 miles northwest of Mexico City. “Oh, look, they are plowing the fields with oxen,” Leslie said, as they were driving by freshly cultivated land. “I’ve seen many oxen and only seen one tractor. The soil looks rich, but I doubt they raise much food because their equipment is obsolete.”

“And they have no irrigation. Often too little rain or too much rain causes crops to fail. The conditions here are really sad,” James said, as he parked the van beside a poorly constructed rock wall outside Rancho Martinez.

“I am Jaime Huskey from La Mission, Baja California,

where the Lara families live. They have asked me to visit their relatives who live here,” James said to a man standing beside the village gate.

“Oh, yes, I think someone received a letter telling of your possible arrival. Juan Lara is expecting you,” he said and gave directions to Juan’s house.

“Most of the homes in this area are constructed from magna rocks stacked together without mortar. Rock fences separate each yard and a rock wall surrounds each village. The family’s courtyard is behind the house for privacy,” James told Leslie as they were stumbling over rocks in the road going to Juan’s house.

“It looks like a small village but there are lots of homes,” Leslie remarked.

“I think they say there are about 100 families and maybe 500 children living here, and they have no school.”

“What do the children do all day?”

“Those whose parents have land and an ox work in the fields. They carry water from distant wells for there is no well in this village. The girls have plenty to do grinding corn and making tortillas each day. They carry clothes to distant creeks or water wells and wash them by rubbing over a smooth rock. There is plenty of work, but nothing much has changed in the last 50 years is what their families in Baja say. There is no incentive to better themselves.”

Juan Lara welcomed them with a respectful bow. He quickly sent his children to tell others that the expected guests had arrived. Soon a crowd gathered.

There were many questions to answer. “Did you come from La Mission where our cousins live?” a handsome young man asked.

“Sí,” (Yes) James answered. “Señor Santos, Señor Crescencio, and Señor Martin are my neighbors.” The crowd applauded and then first one and another began asking about their uncles and their children, many of whom those in Rancho Los Martinez had never met. According to their story, Papa Lara, with his three sons and their wives, had left the rancho in 1939. They had homesteaded land in a valley near the Pacific Ocean. A few times someone from Los Martinez had gone to Baja to visit and shared news from the family, but mostly only a few letters had brought small bits of information. To get a report from someone who had recently seen and spoken with their living relative was a delightful pleasure. The questions were many. The hours passed until darkness was settling in. Many wanted to know about the new religion that relatives had written about. “I’ll tell you about it tomorrow,” James promised.

James rented a hotel room in Valle de Santiago after driving from Mexico City and visiting in Rancho Los Martinez. “It’s been another long day,” Leslie said as he stretched out on the clean bed.

“This room will be ours until we leave for Michoacán. We will visit the ranchos during the day and come back here each night,” James said.

The following day James and Leslie went back to share the Gospel with the people in Rancho Martinez.

While James was passing Himnos de Gloria song books to those who could read, an elderly woman walked up to him. “I was saved and baptized in La Mission camp meeting last June,” she said.

“Oh, yes I remember you. God bless you. I’m so glad to see you,” James said.

“Tell Doña Chuy that I’m doing my best to keep my faith. We have no other brethren here.”

After singing several songs together with the crowd, James interpreted as Leslie preached about how to be saved.

While the crowd was listening attentively, a man came staggering in and stood right in front of James. Several men in the crowd tried to get him to leave, but instead, he moved closer and closer until James could not see around him. James shifted to one side and the other. The drunk moved with him. Besides obstructing James’ vision, he was constantly muttering. Finally, Juan Lara and another man carried him out.

Soon he was back. Spotting Leslie, he stumbled toward him. Holding out his hand, he said, “Gim-me fifty cents.” He saw James and was soon at his feet again. This time the drunk sat down on the ground and quietly listened.

At meal time Juan Lara’s wife covered a small home-made table with a white cloth embroidered with beautiful red roses. Don Juan Lara set the table in front of James and Leslie. In clay plates, Señora Lara served bean soup and corn tortillas with a glass of water. “How do you eat without a spoon or fork?” Leslie whispered to James.

“Watch me,” James whispered. James tore off a piece of tortilla and folded it; he scooped the thick bean soup into it and lifted it to his mouth.

“Okay,” Leslie answered. He used his tortilla as a scoop and soon he had eaten all the food on his plate.

A few days later when James and Leslie were again preaching in Rancho Martinez, the man who had been drunk came to meet them. He was sober, cleanly dressed, and shaven. “I’m ashamed I bothered you the other night when I

was drunk. My wife died three weeks ago. I've been drinking to forget my sorrow. I have four small children. Please pray that God will bless them. And any time you come again, remember my house is your home." (This man died a few years later, leaving his children orphans.)

On their next visit, they met an unusually sweet-spirited Christian. She was very happy in the Lord because her husband had gotten saved a few days before he died. She manifested the fruits of the spirit, especially longsuffering. She never murmured or complained about her life, and James could tell by her dress and home that she was very poor and suffering many adverse situations. She killed a chicken and insisted they eat at her table. A few weeks after James returned home, he received a letter from her telling of her great joy teaching the children about the Lord. "Although many are ridiculing me for doing it, I am happy and many children are attending," she wrote.

The people in Martinez were confused about Christianity. While some, especially the Lara family, welcomed the Gospel because their families in Baja favored it, others were hostile against it. Their reason is that a young preacher lived among them for a time and persuaded many to believe in this "new religion." But over time he fell in love with one of the girls, and instead of going through the customs of the village for a proper engagement and marriage, he eloped with the girl. From that time on, many had been suspicious of every Christian, especially men and boys.

On another day they visited Rancho Salitre. Some of the brethren in Sis. Edith Cole's congregation had come from Salitre. James mentioned their names and soon many people were asking about the "new religion," so James said, "Get

the men together and we will answer your questions this evening.” That evening a crowd gathered and with Leslie’s help James was able to explain many questions they had about Bible doctrines. Several bowed on their knees in the dirt and repented. One was Deciderio. This young man wanted to go to his relatives living in Baja. He rode with James and Bro. Leslie the remainder of the trip. Later he came to Baja California and lived with the Huskey family for some time; then went to live with his relatives in Sis. Edith Cole’s congregation.

The next evening they had service again in Rancho Martinez. Before leaving, Señor Juan Lara asked them if they would give a Bible to a Christian who had none. “You say the folks in *Piedras Anchas* (Wide Rocks) want us to bring them a Bible?”

“That’s right, I was up there last week and Señora Guadalupe told me again, ‘If any of the brothers (Christians) come, be sure to tell them to bring me a Bible and some good news from God.’ She says no one in her village has a Bible.”

James’ brow wrinkled as he answered, “They say it’s thirty miles over these rocky roads to *Piedras Anchas*. How do we get there?”

“Yes, it’s about 50 kilometers. But the road has been washed out by the heavy rains. If we could walk, it shouldn’t be more than eight or nine kilometers straight up there. It’s up on that tallest mountain over there.” He pointed toward a mountain behind two smaller ones. We can go between those two low mountains and then climb up the side of that highest one. *Piedras Anchas* is just out of sight but almost on the top. There is a big water spring up there and sometimes in

the dry season when our wells are dry, we carry our water from up there.”

James had seen women with clay pots on their heads carrying water, also boys and girls leading burrows with water jugs hanging off their backs, but he had never imagined carrying them from a mountain four or five miles away.

James turned to Leslie and said, “Some folks living up on that mountain want to know about God, but no one in the village has a Bible. What do you think? Could you walk that distance to take them a Bible?”

“No Bible? No one in the village has a Bible?”

“That is what he said,” James answered.

Questions for Discussion:

1. Where did James and Leslie go on Sunday?
2. Can you describe Rancho Martinez?
3. Why did James go to Rancho Martinez?
4. What caused some to not trust Christians?
5. To what other rancho did they go?
6. What did the people in Wide Rock want?



No one in this village had a Bible.

Chapter Fourteen

NO BIBLE IN THE ENTIRE VILLAGE

Part 3 of Driving Across Mexico

**For this cause also thank we God without ceasing,
because, when ye received the word of God...ye
received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth,
the word of God... 1 Thessalonians 2:13**

Piedras Anchas, Michoacán

“GOOD MORNING, JAMES,” Leslie said when James came out of the Valle Santiago Hotel room where they stayed for the night. Leslie sat reading his Bible on the little porch.

“Are you ready to go up the mountain today?” James asked.

“I sure want to. I have an ingrown toenail that hurts every step, but I sure want to help that village get a Bible. It’s terribly sad that no one in the village has one. I can hardly imagine being without my Bible. I read mine every day.” He looked away for a moment, then turning again

toward James he asked, “Isn’t the man bringing horses for us to ride?”

“He promised he would.”

“I think that is the only way I can make it. How far is it?”

“It is about five miles,” James answered.

After eating breakfast, they headed out to Rancho Martinez and found Juan waiting with two donkeys and a mule.

Soon they were winding through a rocky gorge dodging brush, cactus and low tree branches. “A pair of chaps would feel mighty good right now,” Leslie remarked.

“Yes, this trail is very narrow.”

After awhile Juan stopped, “We are now leaving the state of Guanajuato and going into the state of Michoacán. The state line comes through here.”

Leslie was already off his donkey. “I’ll walk a while,” he said, “I don’t know which is worse, to walk on a sore foot or ride in a wooden saddle without a saddle blanket.”

Leslie walked until his foot was hurting badly, then he mounted the wooden saddle and rode until his ‘setter’ hurt equally as bad. He slid off the donkey and limped on his sore foot until he couldn’t stand anymore pain, then he rode the donkey for awhile. All the way up the mountain Leslie was in pain one way or the other.

They went straight to Señora Guadalupe’s house. “We have brought you a Bible,” Señor Juan shouted at the gate of her rock fence. Señora Guadalupe and several children came running and opened the gate. When James presented her the Bible, she bowed and then kissed him on the forehead. Then she kissed the Bible over and over and over again, wetting it

with many tears. Holding the Bible against her heart, she motioned for the three men to be seated on the handmade chairs that the children had brought outside from her tiny home. The walls of her house, about five feet high, were made in the usual way from lava rocks loosely stacked and without mortar. She told a small girl to bring them each a drink of water. While the girl was getting the water, she opened the Bible and began reading silently.

“Please Mama, let me read it aloud so everyone can hear,” a tall boy begged. She kissed the Bible again and handed it to him. He began reading loudly and distinctly. The other children gathered around listening intently.

“Oh what hunger they have for God’s Word. Seeing this is worth all the pain to get here,” Leslie remarked.

By now, Señora Guadalupe’s neighbors were coming into her yard. They listened reverently while the boy read.

After the boy had read for a long while, a man interrupted him to invite Juan, James and Leslie to have lunch at his home. They followed him to another tiny rock house, where they were again served beans and tortillas in clay plates. While they were eating, Juan said, “There was very little harvest this summer because of the heavy rains. This family is fortunate to have beans. Many families have only corn tortillas and chili peppers to eat.”

When James told Leslie what Juan had said, Leslie covered his mouth with his hand and remarked, “Oh, we should not be eating their food.”

“Eating with them is acknowledging their friendship,” James answered. “It is important that we accept what they offer.”

When they finished eating, another man walked up and

extended his hand. After they shook hands, he bowed and said, “For a long time our village has been wishing for someone to come to bring God’s Word. Please come into my yard so there will be room for all the people who wish to hear.”

When James repeated in English what the man had said, Leslie covered his face and weeping said, “Oh God, bless these dear people.”

James, with Leslie limping beside him, followed the man over the rocky path to his tiny house. The people followed behind. Before they arrived, a crowd had already gathered inside his large courtyard.

The owner brought out two homemade stools, one for James and one for Leslie. “Oh, thank you, Jesus, for a place to get off my feet,” Leslie whispered.

Some of the villagers found rocks and stumps on which to sit. Others sat on the ground, some were squatting, while many others were standing. Some boys climbed upon the rock fence and a few men, each on his horse, listened from outside the fence.

The large crowd listened reverently while James read from the Bible and Leslie explained it.

No one seemed to notice when a mother pig, followed by her squealing babies, came through the open gate and seated herself at James’ feet. She rolled around in the dirt and had just gotten situated with her babies nursing, when a second mother pig and babies joined the crowd. The courtyard was crowded with men, women, children, the two pig families and four dogs, but not one person allowed the animals to distract them from listening to the Bible.

When he finished preaching, Leslie asked, “How many

would like to be saved from your sins?” Every hand in the large crowd was lifted. “Oh, how these people love the Lord,” Leslie remarked, “What great reverence they show for God’s Word! I believe with all my heart that they truly have been longing for it.”

“In years not very far past, the Padres in this area did not allow Bible reading. They had frightened the people into burning all religious literature. Last year in Rancho Pegeros, a woman showed us the Bible she had kept hidden for years. She told us that an airplane had dropped Christian literature as it flew low over these ranchos. A few days afterwards a Padre came and built a fire in their village, then ordered everyone to bring the literature and their Bibles and threw them into the fire.”

Leslie answered, “No wonder they were so attentive to the reading.”

After the worship service ended, Juan took them to a spot where they could see the awesome natural beauty that God had created. The sun was slipping behind the tall mountain peak, highlighting miles and miles of hills and valleys covered with native vegetation unharmed by man. The view was breathtaking.

The descent down the mountain forced Leslie’s ingrown toenail against the hard toe of his shoe every time he stepped. Every few minutes James could hear him whispering, “Oh Lord, please help me. Oh Lord, please help me.” When he could not endure the pain, he climbed onto the donkey with a wooden saddle and no blanket. That too, was excruciating pain. Whether walking or riding he was suffering.

“I’ve preached to drunken men before, but never to a

family of pigs,” James said as they were driving back to the hotel.

Leslie chuckled and asked, “Tell me about other unusual audiences you have experienced.”

“Well, we’ve had service when the donkey joined in braying when we were singing, with the chickens running about cackling, and with dogs barking their ‘amen.’ One time while I was teaching a lesson, someone gave a donkey a big wad of bubble gum. The donkey was standing behind the crowd. I couldn’t keep from seeing him when I looked at my audience. I had trouble suppressing laughter while the donkey was stretching his mouth wide, chewing the gum.”

Leslie covered his mouth and laughed. “That must have been hard.”

“I’ve been locked in a courtyard alone with about 200 prisoners around me. Also, I have met unusual audiences while visiting in hospitals. Some are so poor they can’t buy a glass of juice. Others are very rich. Most everyone is ready to listen to God’s Word when they are hoping and praying God will help them out of some trouble,” James said.

“Well, it has been an interesting day. Those miles up and down the mountain were very painful, but seeing the people enjoying God’s Word was worth the pain,” Leslie said, as he was soaking his foot in warm water in the hotel room.

“Tomorrow we will visit a Tarascan Indian town called Caltzontzin in Michoacán,” James said. “When the Volcano Parícutin erupted in 1943, the lava covered several villages and ten square miles of fertile farm land. The government gave many of these homeless people portions of land around Uruapan, a large city of Michoacán.”

“Are those Indians as poor as the Mexicans we’ve been visiting?”

“They are poor according to our standards, but not destitute. There are many avocado orchards around Caltzontzin. According to the natives, the U.S. sent soldiers with truckloads of little avocado trees into this area. They built temporary shelters for those who lost their homes and farms. They also helped get the trees planted and taught the Indians how to care for the avocado trees. That was more than twenty years ago, so those trees are now producing many beautiful avocados. This keeps the Indians from being extremely needy. They call Uruapan the Avocado Capital of the World.”

“I don’t see how they could produce more than Fallbrook, California. Have you seen those hills covered with avocado trees?” Leslie asked, as he opened up his diary.

“Yes. It’s simply beautiful. Not many years ago those hills looked like waste lands,” James answered.

Questions for discussion:

1. Why were they going up the mountain?
2. Why did Leslie not want to walk?
3. What did the woman do when she received the Bible?
4. Do you love God’s Word as much as those villagers?
5. Why did the Indians move to Caltzontzin?
6. What kind of trees did they cultivate?



A poor family shares their food with James and Leslie.

Chapter Fifteen

WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW?

Part 4 of Driving Across Mexico

But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall say, for it will be given you in that same hour what you shall speak. Matthew 10:19

This is a News Letter James wrote.
October, 1969

SATURDAY, August 16 we left Rancho Martinez to go to the state of Michoacán and to encourage Irineo Rama, a young believer. On our way to Michoacán we thought we were taking the shortest route, but as it turned out, it was not the best route. Our first stretch of road started out as a good paved highway, then it became a good gravel road, then just hard dirt, then slick mud. It was dark when it narrowed into a hilly one lane road among tall pine trees. At the bottom of a hill, we drove into a mud hole, getting stuck, and we found that we could not go forward nor backward.

We had been thinking perhaps the best thing to do was

try to go back the way we had come, as we were not sure that we were on the right road. But now we could not go forward up the slippery hill nor get up the slick hill behind us; and to go back was not good either, because a few miles back we came upon 16 soldiers. They told us they were looking for bandits in the hills and for our own safety we shouldn't stop on the road till we got into town. Now we were stuck! All this happened around 10 p.m. when it was pitch dark. Would we have to stay here the rest of the night? Would it rain more, making it even harder to get out? Where are the bandits? We began to think of all these dangerous things, and Leslie started praying out loud. Deciderio, a believer from Salitre, also appeared scared but he didn't say much.

He and Leslie, with mud up over their ankles, tried pushing. We finally got out of the deep hole, but we could only go a short way up the hill and no farther. After many tries, Leslie said, "Lord we've done all we can do. You will have to do it for us." So, we had an agreement in prayer. Just as we finished praying, we saw lights in the trees up on the hill behind us. Who was it? The bandits? Or help?

I turned on my lights and honked the horn. A pickup truck stopped up on the hill behind us and six men came walking down. They assured us that we were on the right road to Uruapan, Michoacán and that they would help us get out. They helped me get moving up the hill. Then, when I could, I parked the van and we helped them get through where we had been stuck. Within an hour, about midnight we were on a paved street in Uruapan. Thank the Lord! We parked next to a filling station and went to sleep. In the morning we went to a bath house and got cleaned up.

This was Sunday morning, and we drove out about two miles to a little town where our friend Irineo was living. The name of this Indian village is Caltzontzin (Cal-son-zin). We soon found the brother and his wife. They were so glad to see us and said, “We can hardly believe that you have come so far to visit us.” Then the brother’s father and mother, in their native attires and native customs, bowed and kissed our hands.

We had some precious experiences the six days that we stayed with those dear people. Irineo Rama had come from La Mission two months before. He was our neighbor, who had committed his life to God and wanted to share the Gospel with his Indian family and friends.

We soon saw that these people were hungry for the Gospel. Irineo Rama spends much time visiting and telling people in the village the way of salvation. Therefore, he feels that he shouldn’t take a steady job because people come to his home all hours of the day wanting to hear more of God’s Word. There is opposition also. We learned that in years past the missionaries who tried to go into this town were run out every time.

They have heard rumors that the Catholics are going to burn Irineo’s mother’s house because he and his family are staying there until they get their own house built. They have started building it already.

Oh, yes, the priest also gave us some publicity. While we were in town, he announced over his big loudspeaker, “There are two American protestants in town giving away old rotten clothes and bad literature. No one should believe what they say.” Praise the Lord.

Sometimes before we got out of bed in the mornings,

we could hear Irineo outside preaching to someone that had come to ask questions. One day we went to the shop where they weave cloth on hand-powered looms. The boys stopped their looms to listen to the gospel. Some people walked in the cold rain at night to hear what we had to tell them. God saved a young man a few days before we arrived, and others are learning very quickly. They are so hungry! One night we had service in a sister's home and about sixty attended. She had a sick baby that we prayed for and the Lord healed it that same night. The next day she went out and testified to her neighbors that the Lord had healed her baby. After that, other mothers brought us many babies to pray for. One was right at death's door. We prayed and he began to eat. He hadn't eaten in four days. We left the town before we saw the baby completely well. Let's pray for these people, also Irineo's father, who has asthma.

One family here wanted to give us two pigeons. We told them that we could not take them across the border, so the next day they came with a nice salad and two roasted pigeons for us to eat.

Leslie made friends every place we went, especially with the children. For him there was not a dull moment. My heart too was overjoyed to be able to work with these hungry souls. Everyone is very poor; you can't help but love them. But as we found out, all of them did not love us and did not want the truth preached.

Now it came time for us to leave, on the twenty-third of August. We had prayer with a little group and told them all goodbye. Down the street I stopped to see if the little sick baby boy was well. Returning to the car I was met by two

fellows, who said, “The authorities are calling for you to come to the town hall.”

Just yesterday the new jail, built of rock and steel, was shown to us. Later we found the jail had yet to have its first occupant and there was a plan to fine him 500 pesos (about \$63.00 at that time) in order to help pay for the construction of the jail.

We could have driven on out of town, but we turned around and went back to see what they wanted. There were two men, the holding officer and the mayor, seated at a desk. Leslie stayed in the car, I guess so he could pray better. I walked in with a smile on my face, and to my surprise about thirty-five men followed me into the large room. Before they had a chance to say anything, I said, “We were on our way out of town, but I am glad you called. I wanted to meet you and to tell you how nice everyone has treated us. I also want to bid you goodbye and say that we hope to come again. I have been investigating some of your farming and economic problems and there is a possibility that I could bring some kind of help for the town.”

By this time, Irineo had heard about it and he came running in. They asked me if I had any other plans, and I told them that I was going to keep in contact with Irineo.

They said, well, let him speak. Irineo got right down to the issue. He said, “There are rumors around town that some wanted to burn down my mother’s house and run us out of town. It is because I am telling men they should not sin. He really broke out and began to preach to them against sin. Some, who had come with maybe something else on their minds, just walked out. Irineo said nothing bad about the Catholics, he only preached against sin and that Christ was

the answer and the way to salvation. “Yes, I went away from my town, and found peace, and I have dedicated myself to a different religion. I am determined to serve my Lord until the day of my death.”

The officers told us that they had heard rumors also, and they wanted him to know that they would act to protect him and us if anything did happen. But that they couldn’t assure us that nothing would happen. They said as far as the law was concerned, they knew that there is religious freedom and they would protect those freedoms.

The old man that we thought was spying for the priest told me when I shook hands with him that it was all right if we wanted to help the town economically but that they could not have another religion in town because then the people would fight.

I told him that we came to teach the people that we should love our neighbors as ourselves and those that follow our religion didn’t fight.

We were then dismissed. We gave them all a cheery “*Adios, hasta la vista,*” (goodbye, see you later) and drove away.

Going the shortest route to the United States, we had a fast and safe trip back to our families.

Questions for discussion:

1. Who wrote this letter?
2. Why were James and Leslie afraid when they were stuck?
3. Why did mothers bring their babies for prayer?
4. In what ways did the people show interest in God?
5. What happened when they were leaving town?
6. What were James’ last words to his accusers?

Chapter Sixteen

WOW! FIVE DOLLARS

**Therefore, take no thought, saying, what shall we eat? or,
What shall we drink?... for your heavenly Father
knoweth that ye have need of all these things.
Matthew 6:31-32**

Yuma, Arizona, 1969

CHARLOTTE AWOKE when the car veered onto the protective freeway shoulder and began vibrating. “Wake up! James,” she called, “You have gone to sleep again.”

James shook his head and jerked the car back onto Interstate 10.

“I’m awake. I will drive while you sleep,” she said.

Being exhausted from recent events and traveling in the extreme August heat without an air conditioner was zapping their strength. James would drive until he was dozing, then Charlotte would take a turn until it was too dangerous to continue, then James would drive again. All these stops and

naps in roadside parks made progress slow. They had driven this same long trip from Southern California to Missouri many times without stopping to sleep and made the distance in less than 30 hours.

This year, however, after the Monark Springs camp meeting in Neosho, the family had gone to another camp meeting in Myrtle, Missouri. James and Leslie Busbee then left on a long trip into Southern Mexico. While they were gone, Charlotte and the children stayed on Uncle Jim Hightower's farm near Monark Springs camp ground and some nights with her father and two sisters who lived in Miami, OK. On weekends, Jim and his wife, Esther, took them picnicking, swimming and fishing in the beautiful Missouri parks.

When James returned from this trip, they had been away from Mexico for a month. They were eager to get back to the brethren and new converts in Baja California. Therefore, the following morning after James returned, they headed toward Mexico.

On the third day of traveling in this slow manner, they were nearing Yuma, Arizona about sundown when their Ford van, that had traveled over eight states in Mexico, started having problems. Thank the Lord, they were able to drive it until they found a Safeway grocery store with a large parking lot. It was already dark, so they found a secluded corner of the big parking lot in which to spend the night. Charlotte arranged beds for the children inside as she had done at previous times.

While she was getting the children ready for the night, James analyzed the situation and found out which motor parts needed replacing. He had the tools to replace the worn-

out parts, so he found a telephone booth, and with the help of a stranger, he located a nearby auto parts store.

After that was finished, and the parking lot was empty, James and Charlotte climbed on top of the van, spread out their sleeping bags and slept as they had done in roadside rest areas the two nights before.

At 8:00 a.m. the following morning, James was at the auto parts store. He was able to buy the parts he needed and walk back to the van by about 10:00 a.m. By then, the children were awake and hungry, so Charlotte asked him for some money to buy food.

“I’m awfully sorry,” he said, “but this is all that was left after buying the car parts.” He handed her a little over \$1.50. (They had no debit card nor credit card.)

She opened her mouth to say, “What can I buy with this?” But the Holy Spirit cautioned her to say nothing so the children would not know they had no money. She turned to the children and said, “You children stay right here till I come back with breakfast.”

Each one begged to go in where it was cool, but she thought they would be begging for food she couldn’t buy. However, Tricia had not yet gone in to the bathroom, so she was permitted to go.

They went to the bathroom then headed for the dairy section to buy a gallon of milk. There was money for that and a loaf of bread. They already had disposable cups in the car.

Charlotte was reaching for the milk when Tricia ran up to her excited and waving a \$5.00 bill. “Look, look, a man gave this to me! He said, ‘Give it to your mother in the name of Jesus.’”

“Let’s go tell him thank you,” Charlotte said. She was truly thankful but also wanted to be able to recognize him should he appear again. They walked all around inside the store and out into the parking lot but never found him.

With the money, she bought bananas, another loaf of bread, lunch meat, two tomatoes, a small jar of mayonnaise, and a big bag of ice. They always appreciated having ICE when traveling in the hot summer without an air conditioner. Now they had both ice and enough food for breakfast and lunch! “Praise God for suppling our needs,” Charlotte prayed, as she showed the hungry children all the good food.

They arrived in San Diego in the early evening, stopped by the post office and found an offering in a letter. After cashing the check, they went to their favorite store, Boney’s. At Boney’s, they purchased bulk supplies of flour, beans, milk, meat, raisins, fresh fruits and vegetables at economical prices.

They drove across the international border through Tijuana’s wild traffic and there was the beautiful Pacific Ocean. Soon they would be with friends. They would soon see those new converts and the church family with whom they worshiped.

They had already lived in Mexico almost seven years. It was truly home. It was the only home the younger children knew. There was no dread or fear. The closer they got to the little yellow house on the hill, the better they felt.

An hour later as they were driving down the mountain, their neighborhood came into view. The children shouted, “There is our house!” They came down the mountain and turned onto the dusty, bumpy road that led to their home. They passed the ballfield; the players welcomed them with a

shout. Going up the hill near their house, children came running to greet them, women stood at their windows waving, and men lifted their hats in warm salutations.

How good it was to be able to go to Oklahoma and Missouri to camp meeting with the people of God. How precious to be with Grandpa Hightower and with aunts, uncles and cousins. How wonderful to be back in La Mission, Baja California, Mexico!

Questions for discussion:

1. To what camp meetings had the family gone?
2. What did the family do in Missouri while James and Leslie were in Mexico?
3. Why were they traveling slowly?
4. What happened near Yuma, Arizona?
5. How much money was left after purchasing the car parts?
6. How did they get money for food?

Chapter Seventeen

COME AND HELP US

And there stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia and help us. Acts 16:9

Ciudad Mante, Mexico

“HEY, James, I just came from the Faith Publishing House and they gave me this letter in Spanish for you to translate,” Tom Melot said.

James read the letter. “It came from Ciudad Mante, Tamaulipas, Mexico. This man says he found some gospel literature and wants someone to come and preach in his town. Would you like to go?”

“Of course, I would love to go and have already been thinking about going to Mexico, if I only had the money.”

“Money’s no problem; when God wants something done, He will supply,” James answered. “He supplied for us all those years we lived in Mexico.”

“I wonder how the man got a tract from us here in Oklahoma? Have you ever been in that part of Mexico?”

“Well, when Leslie and I went on that trip in 1969, we drove through that area. Leslie handed out gospel literature everywhere we went. He even threw them out the window of the car. This man must have found one of those.”

A few days later, Tom Melot came driving a big cement mixing truck up the driveway of the Huskey’s home near Guthrie, OK. He jumped out and said, “Here’s money for our trip to Mexico. I contracted to paint this truck.”

“Do you have equipment to do this kind of job?” James asked.

“I can borrow or rent whatever we need,” Tom answered.

The Huskey family was very excited about going back to their beloved Mexico. That very evening they attacked the rusty old truck with wire brushes, paint scrapers, and sandpaper blocks. For hours after school each evening and weekends the children crawled over that big drum, scraping and chipping away the old paint.

When they were almost finished with the job, James knew they would be going to Mexico. He wrote the man saying that he would meet him at the Ciudad Mante post office on a certain day.

It took longer than they had expected, but after weeks of hard work, they finished painting the truck and got the money. It was late evening before they finished loading the van, but knowing that they were to meet the man in two more days, they started out that night. Tom Melot with his girls, Teddy Meek, Aunt Bob, Shirley Watkins, and the Huskey family of seven were tightly packed into three cars: Bob’s Volkswagen bug, James’ Ford Econoline van, and

Tom's Maverick. Besides the thirteen people, there were personal luggage, camping cots and stools, sleeping bags, a small tent for privacy when changing clothes, Coleman camp stove, cooking utensils, and several days' supply of food.

They drove until all drivers were exhausted. Not having money for motels, they stopped at a highway rest stop in southern Texas. The boys and men stretched out on tables. They had just caught a few moments of sleep when the thunder and lightning started.

Quickly, they repacked, then inched their way on through the drenching rain. The VW had mechanical problems and they had to stop several times to get the Volkswagen bug going again.

About noon the following day, Tom's car drowned out in a flooded part of the highway near Brownsville. He was standing in ankle-deep water with his head under the hood of his car when lightning struck nearby. Power from the voltage almost knocked him over. He screamed and jumped inside his car to wait till the lightning stopped.

When the lightening stopped, he got his car going, and the three cars crossed the international border into Mexico. They discovered the immigration offices were closed for the night. They would have to wait through the night and try again in the morning to get visas and car permits.

Having spent a day and a night already in the cars, the beach seemed a welcoming place to rest. According to the map, the beach was not far away. They asked about the distance and were told it was close. But after driving many miles and knowing they had to be at the immigration office

early the following morning, they found an alternate camping place, a field beside a water canal.

They unloaded cots and sleeping bags and were getting pretty well settled for the night when Bob called out through the darkness, "Come and look in this canal."

Using flashlights they could see maybe twenty or so huge snakes swimming around in the water; that blew their hopes of a good night's sleep. They folded up the cots and climbed back inside the cars. Tricia, Shirley and Tom's girls slept in his car, and Bob, Tim and Teddy in the Volkswagen. Tom stretched out over his car hood; Aunt Bob, Rosi and others slept inside the van; and James and Charlotte climbed on top of their van.

They were just dozing when a car full of men joined their camping spot. They parked right beside Bob's VW, pulled out their guitars, played and sang for what seemed an infinite amount of time. From sheer exhaustion, the missionaries fell asleep as the men enjoyed their party.

Bob understood Spanish. Upon hearing their stories, he decided they could not be trusted. So, he elected himself to be watchman over our group. He stayed awake until the men were asleep. The remainder of the night he checked at intervals to see if every man was still asleep. The men left before daylight.

In the morning, when Charlotte picked up the loaf of bread to make peanut butter sandwiches for breakfast, she discovered a tunnel about one and a half inches in diameter through two thirds of the loaf. The bread, still in its plastic wrapper, was in the van under the seat where Leah had slept. Most likely a snake or a mouse had visited and eaten his breakfast first.

About that time one of the boys walked up carrying a dead water moccasin, maybe three inches around and as long as Tim was tall. They snapped a picture of it. They all lost their appetites in their haste to get out of that snake-infested place.

Our family loved the Volkswagen bug that Tomas had given to Bob. It was one of the children's ties to the fun memories of driving it around in Baja California. Today Bob was leading the three cars as they headed back into Matamoros to the immigration office. Although it was not raining, flood water carried the Volkswagen like a boat down the highway and up onto a bank beside the road. Now again, they had to repair their beloved car and get it back onto the highway. After all the trouble they had, they decided it best to sell it. A Volkswagen Bug was greatly prized in Mexico. They had no trouble selling it for a good price.

It was almost noon when they got it sold and finally got visas and legal papers for the two remaining cars. At last, they were going south on the highway again, packed more tightly than before in only the Ford Econoline van and Tom's Maverick. They had to sit on luggage and prop their feet on camping gear. They arrived at the Ciudad Mante post office that evening.

Isaiah, the writer of the letter asking for Gospel tracts, had waited two days and a night in the city plaza across from the post office. His friend, Efrain Huerta, saw him there and waited with him. Meeting them was like meeting a long, lost brother. They said that the people in Division del Norte were expecting a church service in their town.

The men got acquainted, while Charlotte and the children walked through the plaza and ate some hot street tacos.

Then Efrain got into our van with James. Isaiah went in Bro. Tom's car. Now, the group numbered fifteen, plus a forty-kilo bag of seed corn and Isaiah's weekly supply of groceries.

They drove directly to Ejido Celaya, Efrain's home. In Celaya, the group met his father and mother and his four siblings. After a short visit, they went to the nearby river and bathed, washing their clothes as they washed their bodies. It was their first bath in three days. Then they drove on to Division del Norte and set up a quick camp just before dark. There, they hung their clean wet clothes on mesquite bushes to dry.

The following evening, almost everyone in the town gathered and listened while Tom gave a message of salvation and James translated. They sang, prayed and preached every night for several days with great success.

From that time on, the church has made several more caravan trips into Celaya. On one of those trips, as they were leaving town, a frightened pig darted under Tom's car between the front and back wheels. Naturally, it squashed the pig. That caused quite a stir in the village. The owner demanded Tom pay for the dead pig, and he did. But what can be done with two hundred pounds of dead pig when traveling.

They unpacked and stayed another day. That afternoon, Efrain's family cleaned and butchered the animal. The skin was cleaned and put into a big pot over an open fire. Some of the meat was boiled and other parts fried in the lard rendered from the fat. They had a feast with yummy chicharones, salsa, beans, meat, and fresh homemade corn tortillas.

Questions for Discussion:

1. Why did they want to go to Mexico?
2. How did they earn money for the trip?
3. Name some things that happened because of the storm.
4. Why couldn't they sleep beside the canal?
5. What happened to the Volkswagen?
6. How many days did the men wait at the post office?



Villagers of Division del Norte came to tell them goodbye.

Chapter Eighteen

THE WRECK

With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible. Matthew 19:26

Ojos Negros, Baja California

BOB HUSKEY and George Hammond were in Ojos Negros doing a project on the church. They had just returned from purchasing materials in Ensenada. Bob was unloading materials from the Westfalia Volkswagen camper when a man in a pickup stopped. "Is Opal Kelly here?" he asked.

"Yes, I'll get her."

Bob disappeared inside the chapel and reappeared with Sis. Opal Kelly.

"Good morning, may I help you?" she asked.

"I have gotten two phone calls. The first call last night was such a bad connection I couldn't understand the message. It seemed like it was about a death. A lady called this morning from the same number. The message was diffi-

cult to understand, but I think she said someone had died, and Bob Huskey needed to come home for the funeral.”

“What?” Bob asked, “that’s me.”

“Well, maybe you had better return the call and see if you can get some more information. Sorry I couldn’t come sooner. I had to wait until someone came to take my place at the store.”

Bob and Sis. Opal went back to the store, to the only telephone in Ojos Negros. Bob called his Aunt Esther, because he knew his family was away on a trip into the central part of Mexico.

Aunt Esther said, “Grandpa Hightower passed away.”

“I didn’t know he was sick?”

“He was only sick two days. It was sudden. No one was expecting it. The girls are so hurt, and your dad being away, Jim and I had to make all the decisions. We want to have his funeral on the twenty third. Can you get here by then? Your dad said they could. They aren’t as far away as you.”

“I’ll do my best,” Bob answered.

He and Bro. George finished what had to be done and packed his red and white Volkswagen camper and started out of Ojos Negros heading for the international border in Tijuana across from San Diego, California. They would need to travel across California, Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma and a portion of Missouri.

“We will need to hurry to get there in time for the funeral,” Bro. George said, as he drove speedily across the flat valley. He was still speeding when he started up the mountains that separated the valley of Ojos Negros from the coastal city of Ensenada.

“Hey, slow down,” Bob called.

“What you saying? You sound like an old grandma, not a seventeen year old boy,” Bro. George said. He laughed and kept going at the same speed.

“It’s dark and foggy, and the headlights don’t extend far in fog,” Bob cautioned.

“We have a long way to go, more than 1,600 miles in just three days. There is no time for poking around,” he said, and laughed again.

“You couldn’t possibly stop at this speed in the distance that your lights are shining,” Bob retorted. “There might be a cow on the highway or a stalled vehicle. You know it’s common to come upon stalled cars right on the highway. And if someone was by the car, you might kill him.”

“I thought you wanted to get to your grandpa’s funeral. We can’t get there in time if we creep along.”

“We may not get there at all if you don’t —” Just then, the highway made a hair pin curve right in front of them.

Bro. George fought with the steering wheel to keep his 1969 Volkswagen camper bus on the road. But as Bob had just said, he was going too fast. The camper flew off the highway and rolled over. It landed upside down at the bottom of a steep canyon. “You okay?” Bob asked, when he heard the elderly man moaning.

“My back, my back,” he groaned.

“Lay still. I’ll see if I can wave down some help. I think I hear the slight humming of a truck motor.” Bob climbed out through the broken windshield. He looked up at the steep bank to the highway and wondered how he could scale it. There was no time to waste! A truck was coming. He could hear the air brakes as the driver slowed the truck. Another vehicle might not pass for hours.

Bob grabbed a mesquite bush and pulled himself up onto a ledge. A bit at a time, he dug away the sand and smaller rocks making a place for his feet. Slowly, step by step, he climbed up near the highway. The truck was coming down the mountain. The air brakes were louder as the heavy truck slowed almost to a stop so it could make the hair-pin curve that Bro. George had missed.

Bob scrambled up onto the highway edge and stood up. By now, the loaded truck was nearing. Bob waved for the driver to stop. The driver drove on. It was a cargo truck laden with goods for delivery, maybe too heavy to stop, or already late for his delivery, Bob thought.

But Bob knew he had to get help. His elderly friend was at the bottom of the ravine with a back injury. And another vehicle might not pass for a long time. With the surge of adrenalin pumping into his blood veins, Bob ran after the truck. He saw his face in the rearview mirror of the truck. It was smeared with blood. Then he noticed his hands, they were also bleeding. No wonder the truck driver didn't stop. Bob looked like a wild man. He pushed on! He was gaining! Now he could see the truck driver's face in the mirror, but he paid no attention to Bob's motions to stop. Panting, Bob ran alongside the truck until he grasped its mirror, then jumped upon its running board. "Hey, there's been a wreck!" Bob shouted above the roar of the motor and the air brakes. "An old man is lying at the bottom of the ravine with a back injury. I'm sorry to bother you but we gatta have help. Please, stop! Please! And wait until I can get him up here."

The trucked pushed his brakes until the heavy truck stopped. Bob ran back to the curve and climbed down the

cliff to the wrecked camper. “Careful,” Brother George said, “I think my back is broken.”

“Okay,” Bob answered. “A truck is waiting for us that will take us back to the valley.”

Bro. George braced himself to allow Bob to move him. With God’s help, Bob did the impossible. He carefully got the elderly man out of the camper and up onto his shoulder. Slowly but steadily, Bob carried him up the steep cliff, down the highway and sat him inside the truck.

Bob squeezed in beside him, and they rode all the way down the mountain and across the valley to the Church of God chapel where Sis. Opal Kelly, the missionary, lived. She met them at the kitchen door behind the chapel. “It’s you, Bob. You are bloody. What happened?”

“We missed that real sharp curve on the mountain. The camper is at the bottom of the ravine. Bro. George has hurt his back.”

“You left him on the mountain?”

“No, he’s in the big truck that brought me here.”

“How in the world did you get him up the cliff? But, bring him in. I’ll get a bed ready.” She hurried back into the bedroom behind the chapel.

Bob and the truck driver carried Bro. George and laid him on the bed. He groaned with every movement.

Sis. Opal Kelly went into her little kitchen and brought out some cookies. “This is a thank you gift for helping us,” she said, and handed the driver a bag of homemade cookies.

“Thank you, madam,” he said. “I’m glad I could help. Think you’ll be alright, or should I call an ambulance from Ensenada?”

“*Graciosa por su ayuda,*” (Thanks for your help) Bob said. “I couldn’t have made it without you.”

“I wonder if the truck driver would have stopped if I hadn’t jumped on the running board,” Bob murmured, as he watched the driver rev up his motor and drive away.

How Bob ran down a truck, carried a man up the steep embankment and then got back to Missouri in time for the funeral is still a mystery, but he did. All things are possible with God. When the family gathered, everyone was there, including Bob.

Questions for discussion:

1. Where was Bob?
2. Why did Bob need to leave?
3. Why did they roll down the canyon?
4. How did Bob get the truck to stop?
5. How did he get Bro. George up the cliff?
6. Are all things possible with God?



The Westfalia Volkswagen before it was wrecked.

Chapter Nineteen

A BLESSING IN DISGUISE

For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. 1 Peter 2:15

Del Rio, Texas 1973

THE HUSKEY FAMILY of seven and three other families who attended the same church had just crossed the international border into Coahuila, Mexico. Their destination was Uruapan, Michoacán with various stops along the way.

They changed their dollars into Mexican currency and lined up at the immigration office to get visas. “If everyone acts respectfully, we shouldn’t have any trouble getting the visas,” James whispered to each child and young person as he went through the group telling each one what identification they would need. After waiting in line for an hour, the paper work went quickly.

Each one started back to his particular car with a visa to stay in Mexico for six months. An officer with four tempo-

rary importation stickers, one for each vehicle, was following them. As they were jumping into the four cars, suddenly the officer with the stickers in hand turned around and hurried back into the immigration office. They knew they could not go until those stickers were on the cars, so they waited with eagerness.

After what seemed a long, long time, another officer came to where the adults were standing. “We have run into some problems,” he said politely. “We cannot give your group permission to enter our country.”

“What did you say?” Lloyd Eck questioned.

“A ‘group’ entering must register ahead of time, so the history of the group can be investigated. Also, we must have on record where you will be staying and what you will be doing each day of your stay.”

James spoke up, “We are not an organization. We are only four families and a few of the children’s friends traveling together. I speak Spanish. My friends do not, so they asked to travel together with me.”

“I know who you are,” the officer answered rather gruffly. “You are a religious group coming to convert our people to your religion. We don’t need another religion in Mexico.”

“We have a lot of good clothes to give away, and we brought toys for the children at the orphanage in Uruapan, Michoacán,” Lloyd protested.

“Sorry, but you have to do it the legal way,” the officer said. He spun around and walked away quickly.

“We can’t go?” the teens began asking.

“Not right now,” James answered. “But let’s go to the park and we will decide what to do.”

At the park, the young people stretched a rope between two trees and were playing volleyball, while the adults were sitting on park benches discussing the next step. A stranger walked up to James and said, “You look like Christians so I wanted to get acquainted.” After introductions and a little time getting acquainted, James told him the trip plans. After that, he asked, “Could you use some Spanish Bibles? I share the Gospel by giving away Bibles.”

“Yes, Yes,” James answered. “In the area where we are going, there is a great need for them.”

“I’d be happy to give you a box of Bibles and New Testaments printed in Spanish.”

“Oh, that would be wonderful,” several replied.

James and Lloyd followed the man to his car and brought back a big box full of Bibles.

“God must have ordered our meeting today,” the man said. Then he prayed that God would bless the trip across Mexico, shook hands and walked away as suddenly as he had come.

This visit encouraged them to continue the trip now that God had supplied Bibles for those they planned to visit. They drove on to Pedro Sanchez’s home. He lived in Ciudad Acuna, in Coahuila, Mexico, a town near Del Rio, Texas. They were able to visit him because he lived in the free zone close to the border.

Pedro was one of the first converts in Rosarito, Baja California back in 1962. He and James were arrested and thrown in jail because a person accused them of robbery. It seemed they would be there a long, long time. However, after singing and studying the Bible for several hours that day, the police chief removed all charges and let them walk

away free. (That was a miracle.) Years later, Pedro and his family moved from Rosarito to this area. They were happy to see each other.

Pedro was expecting them and had things set up for all to camp with him and his neighbor. When they told him the officials had rejected their temporary vehicle permits, he advised, "Wait until the officials who refused entry go off duty. They change at 7:00 p.m. About eight o'clock, one family go in alone, and you will probably get the importation sticker. When that car returns, another car go. Going in one at a time will remove the suspicion."

At 8:00 p.m., Lloyd and Judy Eck were in line. When they returned with a sticker on their car, Tom Melot and those riding with him left. It was July and the lines of cars to enter were long, so it was early morning before Anica Wall and her family went. Each one received a permit to enter and the sticker was placed on each car.

About 5:00 a.m., James and Charlotte went back across the international border and got in line to get their temporary importation sticker for their van. It was about 6:30 a.m. when the officer finally came to put the sticker on the vehicle. When he saw all the luggage in the van, he ordered them to empty it so he could inspect the inside.

Besides all personal luggage, they had plastic sacks full of give-away clothes pushed under and around all the seats and suitcases. In every tiny space around the three bench seats and along the walls they had crammed tightly-rolled clothing. Hurriedly, James drug out the heavy suitcases and opened them. While the suitcases were being inspected, James was bringing out the plastic bags of clothes and then all the loose clothes that had been tucked into every tiny

area. All this clothing made a heap of clothing about three feet high. While the inspector was slowly going through the plastic bags, James pointed to his watch. It was almost 7:00 a.m. We were praying while the officer inspected the van. He pulled his head out of the van and shook his head at the pile of clothing. Then he walked around the van and placed the sticker on the windshield. They breathed a sigh of relief, and began throwing in suitcases, hand bags, plastic sacks, and loose clothing.

They had hardly started throwing in the loose clothes, when the officer who had refused them the day before walked by.

It was plain to see that he was angry. "God has allowed us to go. The sticker is on the windshield," James said with a big smile, as they were wildly throwing in the clothes. All that had taken hours to pack, they threw inside in a few minutes.

Back at Pedro's house, a shout of joy resounded when they saw the importation sticker on the van.

"Why did it take so long?" Judy asked.

"The line was very long and we had to empty the entire van," Charlotte answered. "Want to help me repack it?"

She opened the side door to reveal the mess of clothes. "Wow! How did you fit them all in here in the beginning?"

"Like this," Charlotte said. Then, taking a small dress and rolling it up into a tiny ball, she tucked it into a place above the suitcases under the back seat. "See, there is room for many more in this spot. Even the front seats have room under them."

Beatrice, Pedro's wife, and her neighbors hunted through the clothes and picked out articles they or someone they

knew could use. James and Bobby rearranged the luggage and larger sacks full of clothes. Then Judy and the older girls helped Charlotte tuck individual pieces into all the empty spaces.

James and Charlotte ate breakfast. Everyone prayed together, loaded up, and the four cars headed for Southern Mexico with an added box of Spanish Bibles to give away. The delay had been a blessing in disguise!

Questions for discussion:

1. How many families were on this trip?
2. Where were they going and why?
3. Why were they not allowed entrance?
4. Who did they meet at the park?
5. Why do you think God delayed their entry?
6. When did James get the sticker on his van?
7. What can we learn from their experience?



Preaching in Cañas.

Chapter Twenty

PREACHING IN CAÑAS

And the following sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. Acts 13:44

Valle Santiago, Guanajuato, Mexico 1973

IT WAS another one of those trips to Southern Mexico when the Huskey family traveled together with the families of Tom Melot, Lloyd Eck, Anica Wall and several teens. Our contact person in Valle Santiago, Guanajuato, had received permission for our group of twenty five, including four small children, to camp in a large hacienda. Every day they went to share the gospel in different *ranchos* (villages) around the city and came back to eat and sleep inside the high walls of the hacienda. It was a dream situation. Besides being well protected, it had bathrooms with showers and plenty of warm water and many rooms in which to spread out and relax. There was a cement threshing floor where years ago oxen trod on the grain to break it loose from the stalk and

the husk. This made a perfect play area for volleyball, four square and other games. It was a mission trip and vacation in one.

“Angel and Cecilia, from the congregation in Pátzcuaro, where Sis. Edith Cole is pastor, want us to visit their family in Rancho Pino,” James said to Lloyd Eck while they were planning activities for the following day. “I talked to Juan (their guide) about it and he tells me that the heavy rains have washed out the road. The only other road into Rancho Pino is miles and miles around. However, he said, we could drive into Rancho Cañas and walk from there. He says it’s about nine kilometers (5.4 miles) from Cañas to Pino.”

“That’s a long way, but I think most of us are strong enough to walk that far. Maybe we could get a donkey for the small children,” Lloyd answered.

“And we will need one to carry our lunch and water jugs,” Judy added.

The following morning, after breakfast and daily devotions, the young folks climbed into the back of Irineo’s truck. The others rode with Lloyd. On the way, they passed Rancho Pegueros first, then Rancho Martinez and on to Rancho Cañas. There they parked the vehicles and rented two donkeys. The donkeys’ owners said there had recently been a shooting in Rancho Pino. A young man persuaded his sweetheart to elope with him and her father tried to kill the boy. Now, the families of the girl and the families of the boy are on the edge of war. “I am related to the young man, so I cannot go into the west end of the village. Whoever follows me will have to walk around to the farther edge,” one guide said.

Tom Melot and some of the young people left with him

and his donkey carrying our lunch basket and largest water jug. The adults, the small children and a few young people followed the other guide. The children took turns riding the donkey.

Shortly before noon, the adults arrived in Pino with aching feet, tired legs and sunburns. After a bit of scouting, they found the young people and the donkey with the cold water and lunch. After another half-hour and more walking, they found what the guides thought to be a safe place and sat on the ground to rest their tired feet and eat lunch. While they ate, James and the guide tried to find Angel and Cecilia's family but came back without finding them.

Usually, when our group started singing, a crowd would quickly gather. But today the house doors stayed shut. People were afraid to come out on the streets, although they were singing in front of the post office, the center of the village. Only the postmaster's family and a few men came to listen.

They were greatly disappointed, especially after the sacrifice they'd made to walk in the hot sun over the long rough tiresome trail. James read a portion of the Bible. They prayed for peace in the village and started the laborious five mile walk back.

About sundown, weary and depressed, they were trudging along the narrow trail into Las Cañas, when suddenly, the road widened. Looking ahead, they saw many people standing along the road. Some men and boys were sitting on the rock fences that separated each rock home and the road. The men greeted them with "*Buenos tardes*" (good evening). Women holding small children in their arms and with other children beside them, welcomed

them with smiles. It seemed like a hundred people were waiting.

“Now tell us the Good News,” a man with a loud voice shouted.

“Yeah, we’ve been waiting all day,” another added.

Above the rumble of voices, James began singing,

“Cristo es el mismo hoy, cristo es el mismo hoy,” They all joined in singing, “He is Just the Same Today” in Spanish. Gene Beasley, who was careful about being prepared for every occasion, quickly pulled a *Himnos de Gloria* song book from his pocket and handed it to Tricia. She lead them singing the remainder of the song.

“Have you ever heard of Jesus,
 How he came from Heaven to earth
 With the name of mighty virtue,
 Though by very humble birth.
 When the world was held in bondage,
 Under Satan’s dismal sway,
 Jesus healed their dread diseases,
 He is just the same today.

He is just the same today
 He is just the same today
 Yes, he healed in Galilee,
 Set the suffering captives free.
 He is just the same today.”

While we were singing, Charlotte could hear men talking to Irineo. “Why did you pass us up and walk away over

there to share your Good News? We have been waiting so long.”

Other people gathered around each of the four other men, Gene Beasley, Lloyd Eck, Tom Melot and James and began asking questions about the Bible. The translators, Bob, Tricia and Charlotte, were each translating for a different group of people. They were all searching their memories for Bible scriptures, trying to give Bible answers to the questions being asked so rapidly.

By now it was dark. Irineo and Lloyd turned on the lights of their vehicles. Even with that light, sometimes a flash light was needed to read a Bible portion. They continued answering questions and explaining Bible truth a long time while standing there in the street. Finally, the small children became weary and mothers began taking them away. After the women and children had gone, the men kept asking questions until the Americans were so weary they excused themselves and left.

On the road back to the hacienda, they chattered about the day. “God sure turned this day around,” Tom remarked.

“It was a perfect ending to a day that looked like a wearisome waste,” Judy said.

“I could hardly believe there were so many men in that village,” Charlotte said. “And they were all listening so intently.”

“Yes, and asking serious, important questions.”

“I trust God will give them more understanding.”

“I’m sure the Holy Spirit will lead them into all truth, for that’s what He promised to do,” James added, with assurance. “God will finish up what He started.”

“It makes me feel like I’m floating on a cloud,” Tom added.

Questions for discussion:

1. Why did they plan to go to Pino?
2. How far did they walk?
3. Why were the people afraid to come out of their homes?
4. Why did the people of Cañas wait in the street?
5. Do you like listening to God’s Word?
6. In what ways did the Americans’ attitudes change?



“Blessed are the feet that bring good Tidings!”

Chapter Twenty-One

A MIRACLE IN CHILI

Behold I give unto you power... over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

Luke 10:19

Mountains in Southern Chili, 1991

NORA STOOPED to enter the door of the little wooden house in the mountains. There, in the corner, was the casket and Cesar lying in it. The casket was a plain pine box with neither soft covering nor embroidery on the lid. It was made of rough pine still fresh and white, sawed just yesterday at the mill in nearby Conco.

The smell was the same as any *velorio* (funeral), that of freshly cut flowers, candles and rum. The beady-eyed men were holding their wine bottles. Some were slumped in chairs; others had their backs against the wall and legs sprawled out on the floor.

A woman was rubbing alcohol on Cesar's mother who

had fainted. A girl with a long braid down her back fanned her. Cesar's two sisters, Joanna and Michel, sat on either side of his casket looking ghostly.

Mario, Cesar's father, staggered in from the back door. He swayed back and forth then headed for the casket. "Cesar, Cesar, get up from there," he demanded. "Here, I'll give you a hand." He shoved his hand hard into the casket.

"Watch out!" Nora called to her brother, as the casket teetered.

"You can't keep me from helping my son," Mario snorted. Then he raised his fist toward heaven and shouted, "God, why did you take my boy, my only son, my pride and joy? I hate you for it. Give him back, I say. Give him back. Now!"

"Mario, don't do that," Nora said. "Don't curse God. He's the one you need in a time like this."

"God? Who needs God? A God so cruel!"

"I know it's hard," Nora answered, and laid her hand on his shoulder. He swayed backward away from her. "We have to submit to God's way."

"I'll never submit to God," he retorted angrily. "Just you wait and see. I'll never pray again."

"Oh, Mario, don't say that," His wife begged.

"I'll say what I want," he stormed, "and you stay out of it."

How could Cesar's family's life change so abruptly? Their lives had changed when Uncle Bill came to their ranch to go rabbit hunting, and the accident happened. Mario, Uncle Bill, and Cesar left with rifles on their backs. Sunrises were peeking over the Andes when the men were coming to a fence. Cesar was ahead. He pulled up the top row of barb-

wire and slid between the two. His foot slipped on the dew-laden grass, and he fell. The men heard Cesar's gun fire and saw him slump. Cesar was dead on arrival at the hospital in Conco.



Four years passed and Mario had kept his promise. Since that day, he had not prayed. Most of the time he had stayed drunk. Their mother lived across the field from Mario, and she too had tried many ways to turn him back to God and help him to stop drinking. He also ranted at her and his brother who tried to help him.

Once or twice a year Nora traveled many miles back home to visit her family. Each time she was there, she urged Mario to seek God, but he would only rage and curse God again.

He was seldom sober in the four years since Cesar's death. His little house got no repairs. It needed painting, the doors sagged, windows were broken and not replaced, but Mario didn't care. He just drank and drank. His wife looked haggard and years older than her age. Joanna, Mario's older daughter, moved away from home to find work, for he was not supplying for the family. Michel, the youngest daughter, often hid when her father came home. But Mario wouldn't stop drinking.

It was summer; Nora had two months' vacation from her job, so she went home to be with her mother. While there, she saw Mario drunk day after day. She prayed every day that God would soften his heart and deliver him from the addiction. One day she came by when he was

standing at the bus stop. “Where are you going?” Nora asked.

“To Conco; I’ll be back tonight. See you then.”

Well, he didn’t come home. The family found him in the hospital. Someone had knocked him unconscious and stolen his billfold. He wasn’t seriously hurt so they brought him home.

Three days later Nora saw him at the bus stop again. “Hi! Are you going to town?”

“Yes, I’m going to Conco again.”

“You mustn’t do that,” she said. “You’ll just get drunk again.”

“That’s just what I want to do. I’m so miserable. I can’t live like this. I’m going to stay drunk ‘til I die.”

“Oh, please don’t,” she cried.

“Yes, that’s what I’m going to do.”

“Listen, Mario, we have guests at Mom’s house. Some brethren from the United States have driven way up here in the mountains to visit our family. They want to meet you, too.”

“Really? Why are they here?”

“They came to the camp meeting in Ruca Curo. Wouldn’t you like to meet them?”

“So, they must be Christians. You think they would visit a drunk like me?”

“Sure, they will. They are at Laurel’s visiting right now. You go back home and I’m sure they will visit you tomorrow.”

“I don’t believe it,” he said staunchly.

“Believe me, they will.”

“Well, if you say so,” he muttered, and started walking

toward his home. Nora watched him for a while and then headed toward her mother's house. Suddenly, she heard him calling, "Nora, Nora."

"What?"

"Ask your visitors to come and pray for me."

Nora's heart felt like it would burst. She nearly flew home. "Mom, Mom," she called, as she ran in the door. "You won't believe what happened."

"What is it?"

"Mario asked to have the brethren come and pray for him."

"It's too good to be true," her mother gasped, as she fell into Nora's arms. They hugged and cried together. Then Nora fell on her knees and thanked God from the bottom of her heart.

It was 1:00 a.m. Friday when the visitors returned from visiting Laurel. Nora stayed up to tell them the great news. The following morning at 8:00 a.m. they went to Mario's house. He met them at the gate. "Good morning," he said cheerfully. "Come in, I've been waiting for you."

After introductions and a little small talk, the brethren got right to the point of man's great need for God's saving grace. Mario wiped a few tears and then looked up. A desperate look was in his eyes when he said, "But, I've cursed God many times. Will God forgive me?"

"Oh, yes He will," each one assured him.

"No. I know he won't forgive me. I'm just too bad. Don't waste your time with me. I'm going back to Conco and stay drunk until I die."

"No," Nora cried. "You can't do that." He started for the door. She jumped up and blocked the doorway.

“Get out of my way,” he shouted, and pushed her aside. Out the door he went.

They followed him. Everyone and his wife were begging him not to go. Then James, one of the visitors, began praying aloud. Pablo, the other brother, took Mario by the shoulders and said. “The spirit of Satan is forcing you to do this. In the name of Jesus, we rebuke that spirit.”

Mario stopped. Standing there in the yard, they battled Satan with prayer. Each time either of the men stopped praying, Mario would start to leave. The brethren prayed again and again. They tried to convince him that Christ would forgive. He would take a few steps. They would again rebuke Satan in the name of Jesus. He would stop. This happened over and over again. It was a tough, hard battle but they persisted in binding the power of the devil and commanding him to come out of Mario. Nora stood at the gate preventing him from escaping.

All this time, everyone was standing outside in Mario’s yard praying fervently in the name of Jesus. After about an hour, Mario began vomiting. The men kept reproving the evil spirits and commanding them to come out. After vomiting a while, he calmed down and walked back into the house and slumped down into a chair. In a few minutes, he began crying and begging God to forgive him. I believe everyone in the room was praying. Bro. James, Bro. David and Mario were praying audibly. After about half-hour of earnest praying, Mario said, “I feel so clean.”

“Is Jesus Lord and ruler of your life?” Pablo asked.

“Yes, Jesus is my Lord,” Mario answered. He stood up and raising his hands above his head, began praising God. At that moment, he was standing near the same spot where he

had raised his hands and cursed God saying he would never pray again.

James and Charlotte witnessed the demonic power of Satan being broken in Mario's life. "This was worth our whole trip!" Charlotte exclaimed.

The four-year-long nightmare had ended for Mario and his family.

Questions for discussion:

1. Who had died?
2. What did Cesar's father do?
3. How many years did Mario blame God?
4. Why could Mario not repent?
5. Who kept praying for Mario?
6. Can a person be forgiven who has cursed God?
7. Did Mario confess that Jesus is Lord (ruler) of his life?
8. Is Jesus Lord of your life?

Chapter Twenty-Two

GOD REPAIRED OUR CAR!

Part 1 of Traveling to Vera Cruz

And ...[Jesus] said, The things that are impossible with man are possible with God. Luke 18:27

Tigre, New Mexico, 1992

JAMES AND CHARLOTTE were packing their 1984 Ford LTD Country Squire station wagon for a long trip. “Put your sleeping bag into this corner,” Charlotte said to their youngest son, Ben. He tucked his bag and his suitcase into the left rear corner. Then he finished cleaning the car windows while his friends, Doug Cole and Jeremy Booher, were putting their luggage in.

“I’m surprised we got everything in with all our camping gear, sleeping bags and clothes for three weeks.” Charlotte said. James was doing last minute motor checkups. He shut the car hood and said, “The motor seems to be in good shape. Are we ready to go?”

“Yes, we are anxious to go,” they said.

The morning was reasonably cool as the five rode south on Interstate 35 to Oklahoma City. “This trip has been eighteen months in the making,” James told the boys. “The congregation of believers in Tijuana want to travel to share their Christian experiences with extended family members who live in other states. Many have been saving for months to make this trip. A week ago, we received a letter from Pastor Humberto saying that twelve persons had sufficient money saved for their portion of the trip expenses, and his big Ford turtle-top van was in good condition for the trip.”

“Was Bro. Humberto and his wife, Cecilia, at Monark this last camp meeting?” Jeremy asked.

“Yes,” James answered.

“Did Sister Dena Porter give him that van?”

“Yes, that is the van traveling with us on this trip.”

“About how many miles are we traveling?” questioned Doug.

“Let’s see, it is 1,350 miles from our home in Guthrie to San Diego, CA. Tijuana is in the most northwestern corner of Mexico, a few miles south of San Diego. We will connect with the other travelers in Tijuana and be driving as far as Veracruz, in the southeastern part of Mexico. The distance from Tijuana to Veracruz is about 3068 km. not including the many side trips to visit family members. The total distance will be well over 6,000 maybe 7,000 miles. We will drive through different states where the folks had once lived and witness a day or two with each family. Our final destination is Veracruz, Veracruz, which was the hometown of Virginia Hueto and her three children, Griselda, Ana, and Daniel.”

“Wow! That is a long trip.”

By ten o'clock they were feeling the heat of the July sun beating down on the roof, but the car air conditioner kept them comfortable as they crossed the Texas panhandle. "Have you boys been to the West Coast before?" James asked.

"Our family lived north of San Diego for many years," Jeremy answered.

"I've been out there to visit my Aunt Edith who lived as a missionary in Mexico south of Mexicali," Doug answered.

"So you both have seen the deserts, the Pacific Ocean and some of Mexico?"

"Yes," they answered.

By the time they were speeding over the hills in eastern New Mexico, James noticed the motor was losing power when going up hills. To reserve power, he turned off the air conditioner. They rolled down the windows and the hot wind burned their faces. The loss of power steadily grew worse until at times the motor would almost die before reaching the hilltop. To someone traveling in a car without problems it may seem that there are not many hills on I-40 in this area, but they encountered many. Hoping to get to Albuquerque where car parts would be more available, they began turning off the engine at the top of each hill. This allowed the motor to cool while it coasted down the other side. At the bottom of each hill, James started the motor again and drove up slowly. Then again, he would coast down the other side, over and over during the afternoon.

They were still traveling slowly on I-40, when James said, "The sun is dropping fast, we had better find a place to get off the highway for the night. This car might decide to stop completely in a place not so safe on the interstate."

A little while after sundown they came upon an abandoned gas station on top of a hill. There was ample room for parking and a good place for starting in the morning. Ben, Doug and Jeremy took their sleeping bags, climbed over a fence in back of the abandoned building, and found a safe place to sleep on the sand. James and Charlotte folded down the back seat of the station wagon and made their bed.

The following morning they hobbled along until they arrived at Tijeras, New Mexico. They located the only garage in town and, fortunately, it was open on Saturday. After examining the motor, the mechanic said, "The motor head gaskets are ruined. I will have to order new ones from Albuquerque, but they won't be delivered until Monday."

James fingered his chin as he studied the situation, then said to the mechanic, "Monday morning we are to be leaving from Tijuana, starting a trip across Mexico. A group of people are waiting to go with us. We need to go on."

"I doubt you will get to Albuquerque," the mechanic answered.

James looked over at me and the three boys who were standing in the shade of a tree in front of the garage. "What do you think God wants us to do?"

"Seems to me we must move on for the sake of those who have sacrificed so much for this trip. They can't, or at least they won't, go without us," Jeremy answered.

They were all secretly praying. "We sure need God to show us what to do. It would be sad to get stranded alongside the highway in this July heat," Charlotte said. One of the boys suggested they pray for direction. They bowed their heads, and James prayed, "Dear Lord, please show us what to do. God, will you keep this car going? You created the

mountains, I'm sure you can create car parts too; just let us know what we should do...."

When James finished, Jeremy Booher prayed and then Charlotte prayed also that God would show them whether to go or not. "Now let's pray for the car," Jeremy suggested. They surrounded the car, laid hands on it and prayed again. After prayer James turned to the mechanic and said, "I think we will drive on. Maybe we can get parts in Albuquerque. What do I owe you for your service?"

"Nothing. Nothing at all," he answered and shook James' hand. "Sorry I couldn't help you. I hope you make it to Albuquerque." The mechanic was looking very concerned as they drove away.

Once out of the little town and back on the interstate the car picked up speed and ran perfectly. In Albuquerque James purchased the package of head gaskets the mechanic said was needed and tucked them flat under the luggage and drove on to Tijuana without a bit of trouble. It is about 800 miles from Tijeras, New Mexico to the church building in Tijuana.

They left for Veracruz on Monday morning, the appointed time. Besides the highway miles, they made a dozen or more side trips to towns and villages to see relatives and friends, where they shared their testimonies. They toured Mexico City, traveled on to Veracruz and returned back to Guthrie without any trouble with the car. The whole trip was approximately 7,000 miles.

Two years later when they sold the station wagon it was still running well. James offered the unopened package of head gaskets to the new owners and told the story of how God repaired the car. When James reached under the floor

mat to get the head gaskets, they were missing. Later he found that Ben had kept the head gaskets as a reminder of God repairing their car.

Questions for discussion:

1. What was the reason for this trip?
2. What kind of trouble did they have going across New Mexico?
3. Did the mechanic believe the car would go far?
4. What did they do outside the garage?
5. Did the car drive well after prayer?
6. How many miles was the entire trip?
7. Did the car run well for two more years?
8. What happened to the head gaskets?



God repaired the motor and it never caused trouble again.

Chapter Twenty-Three

BANDITS AT MIDNIGHT

Part 2 of Traveling to Vera Cruz

But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

Matthew 10:19-20

Tepic, Nayarit 1992

BEFORE LEAVING TIJUANA ON MONDAY, Pastor Humberto stood in front of the small group of believers who were traveling together. “Does everyone understand we are not going on a vacation?” he asked.

“Yes, yes, we understand,” they answered in unison.

“What is the purpose of this trip?”

“It is a mission trip to introduce our families and others to Christ,” Hector answered.

“Are each of you prepared to testify and witness to unbelievers about what God has done in your lives?”

“Yes,” they answered again.

“You have each given money to cover expenses of our transportation only. We have no extra money for hotels nor restaurants. Food will be the responsibility of each person. There may be times when we will sleep on cement floors. Some nights we may sleep on the ground out under the stars and may not be eating good meals every day. Is each one ready to sacrifice comforts to take the Gospel?”

“Yes, yes,” they answered in agreement.

James, Charlotte, their son, Ben, Jeremy Booher and Doug Cole had arrived the night before, a little later than expected because of car trouble.

After Humberto’s little talk, they loaded up in the two cars and started out together from Tijuana on a trip that would take them from the northwestern corner of Mexico to Veracruz in the southeastern part. There were seventeen people with sleeping rolls and luggage packed into Pastor Humberto’s twelve-passenger van and the Huskey’s station wagon. Six adults in the car and ten adults and one child in the van. To say they were packed would be an understatement.

The first stop was fellowshiping with brethren in Mexicali, the capital city of Baja California on the US border. Early the following morning they continued the long trip.

They traveled 843 km to Guaymas, Sonora and chose to sleep on the beach there. This was not the first time James, Charlotte, and Ben had slept on this beach. They knew it was well patrolled, because it is a port where the big ferry ships load goods from Mexico’s mainland and transport them to Santa Rosalia, Baja California and vice versa.

While the group was giving out tracts and sharing their

stories, they met four young men going to a Bible school in the area. The boys were also out witnessing for Jesus. They encouraged and inspired one other.

The following night they decided to pay \$10.00 for fifteen miles on a toll road because they thought it was safer than driving through some very curvy, dangerous mountains near Tepic, Nayarit. To make the evening more interesting, they had divided the two groups. All the ladies, Paula, Julia, Cecilia, Viki, and her older daughter, Griselda got into the station wagon with Charlotte. They were following James, who was driving the big van with the men and children. It was dark and the city was poorly lighted. Just before getting on the toll road, Charlotte lost sight of James. However, she thought that he would appear again any minute, so she paid the \$10.00 toll and entered what she assumed to be the safer highway.

Because it was so costly, there was very little traffic; therefore, they relaxed and had fun. They sang hymns beautifully and also sang crazily. They talked about womanly things, like sewing, cooking, stories about their children, fantastic answers to pray, etc.

Charlotte was convinced that James was ahead of them, so she sped up trying to catch him. By now it was near midnight. They were goofing off in the middle of a good story, when she saw the red lights of a police car flashing behind her. She was speeding. She felt afraid, caught, and guilty. She slowed down, hoping he was just passing her, for he too was driving very fast. She slowed a bit more. He wasn't behind her nor did he pass her. He was traveling alongside her.

She slowed a little more, still thinking he would pass.

When he didn't, Charlotte became really nervous because she always hated driving beside another car. She was afraid she might swerve into the other car or drop off the shoulder and lose control. She kept slowing down and was trying desperately to keep her car in her lane. He slowed every time she slowed. At last, she took her eyes off the highway and glanced over at him. The officer in the passenger seat had a machine gun pointed right at her! She slammed on the brakes and quickly pulled off the highway.

The police van stopped in front of their car and two officers, each with machine guns, jumped out instantly. One ran to the passenger side of the car and the other to Charlotte's window. Trembling, she rolled it down. He placed the machine gun pointing at her on the open window and demanded, "Let me see your driver's license, your car registration, and your visa." The other officer stood on the other side of the station wagon with his gun pointed inside the car also. Viki, who was sitting in the passenger's seat, was searching the glove compartment for the three documents. The guns were making them more nervous every minute. Charlotte was wishing James and the men would show up.

To help calm her fears and to cover for speeding, she asked nervously, "Did you happen to see a dark brown twelve-passenger van? We are traveling together with it, and some way we got separated. My husband is driving that van. These women's husbands and sons are with him. We are trying to find them; that's why I may have been going a little too fast."

He said nothing.

Charlotte was trembling so terribly, she clinched her jaws to keep from biting her tongue. She handed him the

documents. While he was looking at the documents, a squawky message came over his radio. It didn't sound like Spanish. The officer on the passenger side of the car stepped aside and answered the call. The officer at Charlotte's window looked at her driver's license and said, "Oklahoma. That is a long way from here. What are you doing so far from home?"

Her teeth were clanging uncontrollably. Before she got control enough to answer, a small white pick-up with red lights flashing and a siren howling went flying by. The other officer motioned to the one talking to Charlotte and started running back to the police car. "We must be going. There is an accident up ahead," he said, and shoved the documents back at her. They hurried away, jumped into their van and were quickly out of sight. Charlotte laid her head over the steering wheel and began silently thanking God for safety. Cecilia began praying out loud, "Thank you kind heavenly Father for watching over us and protecting us. We are thankful you are a present help in time of need. We love you and ask your protection over the van also and those inside it. Amen." Still trembling and jaws shaking uncontrollably, Charlotte remained slumped over the steering wheel, while first Paula and then Viki thanked God for His tender care.

When everyone was through praying, Viki put the important papers back into the glove compartment and Charlotte started the car again. A few miles down the road they saw the police van in front and the white pickup parked behind another car off the highway. "The car looks in perfect condition," Viki said.

"There are no signs of a wreck, but maybe it is banged up on the other side," Charlotte said.

Later when they stopped to pay at the toll gate, Viki asked the attendant if a brown turtle-top twelve-passenger van had passed. He answered, “No, and I’ve been on duty all night.”

They parked under a light so James could readily see the car, and all got out to walk around and calm down. The attendant, having nothing to do, came over and visited with them. During the conversation someone told him about the policemen. He wrinkled his forehead and asked the description of the vehicles and several other questions. Then nodding his head, he asked, “Did they know you were traveling with another car?”

“Yes, because she asked if they had seen the other vehicle?” Viki answered.

“That question saved you,” he said. “Those were not police officers. Police officers do not patrol this highway. It is too dangerous for them. The gang who stopped you have robbed and killed many people traveling in cars with United States license plates. However, since you were traveling with another car, they let you go because those in the other car would report the action. You had better thank the Virgin Mary that you are still alive.”

“Oh, yes, we have already thanked God for protecting us. We did that as soon as they left us,” Julia said.

Paula seized the opportunity to tell the man about Jesus. “We are Christians. We pray to Jesus, not the Virgin Mary,” she told him. She talked with him a long time, explaining the plan of salvation.

As she was witnessing, Charlotte was thanking God that she had asked if they had seen the van. God had put those

words in her mouth for their protection, because she had no idea of the danger they were in!

Paula was still witnessing to the attendant when James drove into the paying booth.

When the men found out what had happened, they all had another season of praise and thanksgiving.

Questions for discussion:

1. Why were they traveling across Mexico?
2. Were the travelers ready to sacrifice for the Gospel?
3. Why did they pay the expensive toll?
4. Who stopped the women?
5. How did God protect them?
6. Has God ever caused you to say the right words?

Chapter Twenty-Four

NEW FRIENDS

Part 3 of Traveling to Vera Cruz

...As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men especially unto them who are of the household of faith. Galatians 6:10

Morelia, Michoacán 1992

THE MORNING after the scare with the *Cartel* (Mafia), near Tepic, Nayarit, the group of seventeen people in two cars made two side trips to worship with believers in their homes. Then they traveled on to Morelia, the capital city of Michoacán.

Going up the mountains after leaving the enormous congested city of Morelia, the twelve-passenger van started making strange noises, lost power and stopped. The two-lane highway they were traveling on had been cut through the side of a mountain with no shoulders on either side. However, the truck stopped at a spot where the road had been made wide enough for a public transportation bus to

stop and unload and load. Thank God, there was a safe space to park the two vehicles off the highway.

It was late afternoon and the van needed to be repaired quickly before darkness fell or its seventeen passengers would be stranded for the night on the highway. James quickly opened the hood and listened while the motor was accelerating, while it was idling, as the gears were engaged and disengaged. He decided what pieces were needed for the repair, then he and Pastor Humberto took the station wagon back down the mountain into Morelia to buy the parts.

“Well, this is a good place to evangelize,” Paula said, as she looked across the highway and down the hill to the many houses scattered over the mountainside. “Who wants to go with me?”

“I will,” Jeremy answered quickly. Then Charlotte, Ben, Oscar, Hector, Doug and others nodded their heads.

“It would be best to separate and not all go to the same house. We might frighten the people,” Cecilia advised. “Who wants to go with me?” Several joined her.

“I think Jeremy, Ben and Doug could go with me, since I know a little English,” Oscar suggested. “Where is that bag of pamphlets?”

Paula always had Gospel literature in her bags. She had been giving them out everywhere they had stopped. Griselda teamed up with Paula and they walked down the hill.

Oscar separated his tracts among the boys and went toward the south. Hector, Anna and Cecilia and her two girls went another direction.

Charlotte, Viki and Julia guarded the broken-down van. Charlotte stood between the mountain wall and the van thinking of the dangers. In this narrow passage, someone

could hold us at gunpoint and no one would know it, and when darkness settles in, it will be much more dangerous. And what if the van doesn't get fixed tonight. We do need help.

About fifteen minutes later, the local transportation bus pulled in behind the van. Several people got off the bus and scattered in different directions. One man came over to the women and asked, "Are you waiting for someone?"

"We are having trouble," Viki answered. "The men have gone into the city to buy necessary repairs for the truck."

"Are you traveling through? You look like Christians. I know most of the Christians in this area but don't believe I have met you." He talked for a while longer, then saying a few more words of sympathy, he walked on up the narrow trail and was soon out of sight.

The sun was already on the other side of the mountain. Loneliness settled over Charlotte. Would this night be more frightening than the bandits of last night? They had hoped to be safe for the night with Julia's family. Without money for hotels, where would they stay? This was definitely not a good place.

About a half hour later they saw a group of people coming down the trail. Smiling, they walked over to the women and said, "Welcome to Goleta. *Dios les bendiga*" (God bless you)."

The stranger who had spoken to them earlier introduced a man he called Pastor. "We have a small church up on this hill. We have come to invite you to come rest awhile then join us for services tonight."

"Oh, thank you," Viki exclaimed, "but we are a large group, seventeen in all. Some have gone over there evange-

lizing.” She pointed toward the houses scattered over the hillside. “Others are in town looking for parts to repair the van.”

“We have room in our hearts for all Christians. We’ll make room in our homes also,” he answered.

“We are traveling from state-to-state visiting family members of our group to share the Gospel with them,” Viki said. She put her hand on Julia’s shoulder and continued; “Our plans were to be at her mother’s home tonight.”

“I am so happy to get to share Jesus with my elderly mother and brother,” Julia said, as she clasped her hands together. “They have never heard about the saving grace of Jesus. My sons and I have been so happy since we opened our hearts to Christ. I’m sure they will be just as excited as I was. Christ has done so much for us. That’s one of my sons coming up the hill now,” she said, pointing to Oscar walking back with the boys.

“You are certainly welcome to stay here with us for the night. It is getting rather late in the day,” the pastor said.

“Gracias. Gracias. Muchas gracias,” they said, over and over again.

“We will see what the group thinks best,” Viki assured them as they left.

When the group returned from giving out tracts, Charlotte said, “There are Christians living up on this hill, and they asked us to spend the night with them. They thought it was rather dangerous for us to be here and said we should at least come up there while the men repair the van.”

“Let’s go,” Ben suggested. “I think I can make a new friend with the bit of Spanish I know.”

“Yes, let’s go,” Paula added. “Maybe we can help one of

them.” Paula and the young people started on up the hill. Viki and Charlotte stayed to inform the men when they returned.

After the men returned with the parts, the women walked up the hill and found the little church, where a group of boys were laughing and talking with their boys. Men, women and children were busy preparing the chapel for service. Soon the men joined them driving both the car and the big van up the narrow dirt road.

When the service started, the pastor introduced our group to the congregation and invited them to participate. They sang, prayed and shared some experiences. Then James read the Word and explained it. When the worship service was over, the women disappeared and the men began moving the benches back against the walls.

“They must be making room for us to sleep here,” Charlotte whispered to James. To their surprise, they began setting up tables, and the women returned with hot, home-prepared food. The group was then invited as guests to fill their plates first. It was a feast compared to the way they had eaten since leaving Tijuana.

They visited together like family who had not seen each other for a long time. Although strangers, truly they were **one big family** with the same **Father**. They had been born again into the same family of Jesus. What a splendid experience! What delicious food! By the time the evening ended, it seemed they were with friends they’d known for years. Praise God.

That night they took sleeping rolls out of the cars, but instead of sleeping under the stars, they were invited into different homes. Some families gave up their beds and went

to the chapel and slept on the floor where the boys were sleeping.

Their destination that evening was to be in Julia's mother's home. God, however, had a beautiful evening planned. In place of the breakdown becoming a nightmare, it turned into a glorious evening making memories they would never forget.

The following day when they arrived in the town of Tacátzcuaro, where Julia's family lived, the reception was quite different.

Questions for discussion:

1. What kind of trip had they planned?
2. Why did they stop in Goleta?
3. What did they do while waiting?
4. How were they sharing the Gospel?
5. Who gave them a place to sleep?
6. Were the new friends obeying the Bible verse?

Chapter Twenty-Five

BIBLE CONFETTI

Part 4 of Traveling to Vera Cruz

**He that believeth on the Son [Jesus] hath everlasting life:
and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but
the wrath of God abideth on him. John 3:36**

Tacátzcuaro, Michoacán, 1992

AFTER A WONDERFUL NIGHT with a newly found part of the Church of God, the travelers headed southwest to Tacátzcuaro, where Julia's family lived. She, a Tarascan Indian, and her three sons were excited to be going to see their family.

On the way they stopped to tour Pátzcuaro and Tzintzuntzan. Here they relived some of Mexico's important history. Pátzcuaro had been the first capital of the Tarascan Indians during the years they had been the dominant force in western Mexico. It was built on the shore of Lake Pátzcuaro.

Later the Tarascan capital was relocated to Tzintzuntzan. There are five yacata (semi-circular) pyramids around Tzintzuntzan.

“Some of these pyramids were tombs for the kings. Others were used for altars on which humans were sacrificed,” Charlotte told the group. “When our family toured this area in 1973, my daughter, Rosi, found a handmade blackstone knife in one of these pyramids.”

In the middle of Lake Pátzcuaro is a statue of Christ that many people worship. Some of the young people took a boat ride out to the statue. It was an interesting sight and provided an easy opportunity to share the gospel with others they met in the area.

They arrived at Julia’s parents in late afternoon. Her family had been expecting them and had food already prepared for all seventeen. We sat down and ate a wonderful meal of Tarascan tamales, refried beans, salsa, and rice.

Three generations of Julia’s family lived together. Rooms were built on the north and south sides of a very wide-fenced yard. We entered the courtyard from the town’s unpaved street through a narrow tall gate. Another smaller gate on the west side opened into the family garden and orchard. Our vehicles were left outside on the street tight against the high fence with barely room for another car to squeeze by.

On the north side, near the entrance, was the modern kitchen and dining room of the married grandson, Julia’s nephew. It had a sink with running water, a propane gas cooking stove, kitchen cabinets, and a chrome dining table and chairs. Beside it was his mother’s kitchen and dining area. In this area was a metal-top adobe wood-burning stove.

Dishes, cooking utensils and provisions were stored in open shelves. Several clay pots filled with water were sitting on the dirt floor beside a wooden work table. Beans, rice and coffee were boiling in clay pots on the metal top adobe stove.

On the south side of the courtyard one could enter four separate bedrooms. There was a room for each couple and one where the boys slept, and the other for the girls. The fifth room was grandmother's tiny kitchen and bedroom. She slept on the dirt floor and did her cooking while squatting beside a little fire on the floor.

After eating and visiting a while, Ben said to Doug. "Let's go see what is going on up town? The streets were crowded with people when we came through."

"Yes, let's go," Doug agreed. "See if your mom or dad will also go so they can interpret in case we want to talk to someone."

"Let's take tracts to give away in case we have an opportunity to share with some people. I noticed that the big Catholic church was filled with people and many were standing outside as if waiting to enter," Jerney added. "The people must love God."

When they arrived at the plaza in front of the church, the church was still full and crowds were standing outside. Musicians were playing in the plaza and here and there were vendors selling food and other wares.

Suddenly, a male voice was speaking over the microphone at the top of the church. They stopped to listen. "What is he saying," the boys asked.

Charlotte signed for them to be quiet while she listened. "It sounds like he is warning the people against us."

“Really? Tell us what he is saying,” Doug insisted.

She listened carefully as the man repeated the message. When he was quiet, Charlotte said, “I think he said ‘A group of heretics have arrived in town. They will be trying to persuade you against the mother church. Do not listen to them. Do not receive anything they try to give you. I speak this in the name of the Holy Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.’”

“Does he think we are bad?” Ben asked.

“He’s just trying to keep the people coming to his church,” Charlotte answered. “After people feel God’s love and have their sins forgiven by Jesus, they stop going to confession or paying a priest to pray for them. The priest doesn’t want that to happen.”

They just giggled and went on through the plaza smiling, greeting people and trying to give them tracts. Needless to say, the majority of the people refused to accept a tract. Only a few people were polite enough to take one.

That night in Julia’s parent’s home, a few blocks from the catholic church, they sang loudly and happily the beautiful songs about salvation. They prayed and read Bible portions in clear voices hoping that the neighbors would hear. Julia’s family seemed to enjoy it.

The following morning, they chatted together while making tortillas from freshly ground corn and cooking them on the metal top of the adobe stove. They sat around a handmade table in handmade chairs and ate *huevos* (eggs) *rancheros* with refried beans and rice. It was a perfect setting for a delicious Mexican *desayuno* (breakfast). Oh, so yummy!

Later, Julia’s brother took them to see his orchard, and

they were given the opportunity to pick bananas and other tropical fruit from his trees. In the afternoon a cousin, Jose, guided them down Mexican Highway 14 to the Tarascan Indian ruins at Tingambato and gave them a personal tour. There were pyramid-shaped sacrificial altars and one tomb, also a court where the Indians of that era played ball. They climbed down inside a pyramid to a tomb where a ruler had been buried. Then they climbed up the pyramid to where they burned the sacrifices. The boys played ball on the court.

“This has been an interesting learning experience,” Charlotte told Jose, as they were walking back to their cars.

“These were some of the oldest of the Tarascan Indian ruins,” he said. “I am studying Tarascan History at the university. I was so excited to find this.”

“It isn’t a tourist attraction?”

“No, not yet.”

“I shall never forget this. Thank you, thank you, for bringing us here,” James said.

That evening, all the family, except the grandmother, gathered in a circle in the courtyard for another worship service. They joined in the singing and read from the Bibles James shared with them. Julie’s brother said excitedly, “I think neighbors are hiding behind the fences listening. Some did last night.”

They visited with the family for several hours. “Our plans are to leave early in the morning so we can get through Mexico City before evening rush-hour traffic,” James told them, “so we will also say good bye tonight.” “As a ‘thank you’ for your splendid hospitality, we present you with these gifts and a Bible and a New Testament.”

Julia’s family expressed gratitude that we had come and

brought Julia and her sons to visit and sadness that we were leaving. They gave us many hugs, handshakes and said, “*Dios les bendigas*” (God bless you) over and over again.

Early the following morning we quietly gathered up our bedrolls and suitcases then headed to the vehicles. At the gate, Bro. Humberto stopped us and very seriously requested, “Let us all bow our heads and have prayer before loading.” He prayed earnestly, begging God to protect them through the town and out onto the highway. Julia’s brother and wife were standing a little way back inside the patio waving goodbye when Humberto opened the tall gate.

We all gasped! Confetti made from torn up printed material covered both vehicles. They were grabbing handfuls of confetti when James commanded, “Get into the car quietly and quickly. We need to get out of here!”

They jumped into the vehicles with what confetti they could gather quickly. As they moved carefully along the road, they smoothed out bits of confetti and read the words. “It seemed to be words from Bible verses,” Charlotte told James. Each one guessed that the confetti had been made with the New Testament or the Bible that they had given to Julia’s family the night before.

Sister Julia burst into tears. She had prayed and hoped for many months that when her family heard of Jesus’ love they too would accept it as she and her sons had done.

For many miles they put together words and sentences from the confetti. It was impossible to build many sentences but they did prove that God’s precious Word had been torn into thousands of tiny pieces to make the confetti that was thrown on their vehicles that early morning before they left Tacátzcuaro, Michoacán.

Julia was still crying when they arrived in Mexico City that afternoon.

Questions for discussion:

1. Why was the group traveling across Mexico?
2. Did Julia's family welcome them?
3. Who told the people to not accept the Gospel?
4. Who came to the fence to hear the Word?
5. Of what was the confetti made?
6. Upon whom will the wrath of God fall? (verse)

Chapter Twenty-Six

STRANDED IN THE SONORA DESERT

In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God.

1Thessalonians 5:13

Obregón, Sonora, Mexico 1995

JAMES, Charlotte and Daniel, a young friend, were traveling through the hot Sonora desert on Highway 15. They were forty five miles south of Guaymas and thirty miles northwest of Obregón, when Charlotte asked, “James, did you hear that?”

“Yes, that pipe lying on the highway hit the van. I hope it didn’t puncture a tire. I tried to miss it.”

A short while after they heard the pipe hit their van, the red light on the motor heat gage began flashing. The index needle indicated the motor was dangerously hot. James slowed down and pulled off the highway.

He crawled under the van. “The water line is cut into two pieces,” James informed them. “All the water from the

motor has drained out. I dare not drive without water circulating through the motor.”

“I hope there is a town of some sort not too far away for it is a long way back to Guaymas,” Charlotte said.

“Yes, we left it behind at least an hour ago,” he answered. “And it’s a long ways to Obregón. I’d better get going and try to find some help before the day is gone. I have no idea how far I’ll have to walk. You two stay here and watch the van. It might get stripped if left unattended in this isolated place.”

They watched as James hurried along the highway. Those were days before the GPS. Besides, we had no cell phone. They watched James trying to flag down a truck, but it sped on. Later he tried getting a car to stop. “Poor guy,” Charlotte said, “He may have to walk ten miles or more, and he drove most of the night and has had nothing to eat since yesterday afternoon at your house.”

Daniel nodded in agreement.

After James was out of sight, Charlotte opened her Bible hoping to find a comforting verse. The first verse that she saw was, 1 Thessalonians 5:13. “In everything give thanks.”

She began complaining to God. “How can I be thankful to be stranded in the Sonora Desert? But I am thankful that we brought Daniel with us. At least I’m not alone. He is a big boy and looks strong. But, God, we need to be in Culiacán tomorrow. They are depending on our help. It may take days to repair this van. Am I to be thankful for this?”

While Charlotte was wiping tears from her eyes and sweat from her face and trying to justify herself for not giving thanks in this situation, she soon saw something else for which to be thankful.

They had pulled off the highway beside some large ditch digging equipment. Not far behind them was an abandoned shack she hadn't noticed. Unexpectedly, a woman appeared from behind the shack and walked over to the van. "I see you have been here in the hot sun for a long time. Please come inside to the shade of my house," she said. Although it was a bit cooler inside, it seemed almost unbearably hot to Charlotte who was accustomed to a constant cool ocean breeze off the Pacific Ocean near her home.

While the woman was serving them beans with fresh corn tortillas, she said, "We are staying here temporarily, to guard the big John Deere tractor and caterpillar."

"For what are the tractors being used?" Charlotte asked.

"They are being used to dig channels for raising shrimp," she answered.

"Here in the wasteland?"

"Yes, a big company is transporting water all the way from the Gulf of California. It will supply seawater for cultivating shrimp."

After Daniel lost interest in conversation, Charlotte went outside and played soccer with him. The woman thought it quite remarkable that a gray-haired woman could play soccer.

Four hours later, James came back in a truck, ready to tow the van to a garage. "This is Sister Josefina's brother, Francisco," he said, introducing the truck driver.

"Josefina that lives in Ensenada?" Charlotte asked excitedly.

"Yes."

"How did you meet him?"

"While you were in Oklahoma last fall, Francisco's son,

Ruben, came to visit his Aunt Josefina. She brought Ruben to church several times. He was such a nice young man, and I wanted to keep in contact with him, so before he left Ensenada, I got his address. The bus driver who picked me up told me that the next town was Vicam. The name ‘Vicam’ sounded familiar. I thought awhile and then I remembered Ruben! I found his address in my billfold. Isn’t this amazing?”

“Yes,” she said, and hugged James, “It must be God’s plan that we see Ruben again and meet his family.”

“I had no trouble finding Ruben’s family. Señor Francisco earns money by selling fish, therefore almost everyone in town knows him,” James continued. “When I told him about the accident, he borrowed his friend’s truck to tow us to a good mechanic. Things couldn’t have worked out more perfect!”

“In everything give thanks. That is what God told me this morning,” Charlotte said. “Now I realize why I should have been thankful that we were stranded in the Sonora Desert. The van water line getting broken was God’s way of getting us where He wanted us. We aren’t stranded. We are in the center of God’s will.”

Ruben’s mother, Lorena, had dinner waiting for them when they arrived at Francisco’s home. Ruben was excited to see them and to meet Daniel too. Later in the evening, several other extended family members came to Francisco’s house to hear recent news from their little Aunt Josefina. She lived 700 miles away near where James and Charlotte were also living. This must be how it was in Bible times when news came from family members far away, Charlotte thought.

While the different families listened, James shared with them all he knew about their Aunt and her daughter and her two adorable grandchildren.

“How did you meet Aunt Josefina?” someone in the group asked.

James answered, “We met Josefina when the church set up a tent near her home and preached the message of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Josefina came every night and surrendered her life to God. Since then she testifies to having tranquility and assurance in her life that she had never had before.”

“We also have heard the gospel and have accepted it,” Francisco said. “Tomorrow evening we have prayer meeting in a home. Can you come and preach to us? I know everyone would be happy to hear you.”

“Yes, I’ll be glad to,” James answered. “My wife also gives lessons on child training.”

“Maybe we can arrange for the women to meet tomorrow during the day,” Señora Francisco suggested.

James and Charlotte were taking a box of song books to give to the congregation in Culiacán, so they passed out the little *Himnos de Gloria* song books. Josefina’s family thumbed through the book and selected several songs they knew. They sang together. Then James read some portions from the Bible and they prayed.

The following day James and Francisco rode on a public bus to Ciudad Obregón, approximately fifty miles away and purchased the new parts needed to repair the van. In the evening they walked across town to the cottage prayer meeting, where James gave a Bible lesson.

On Wednesday afternoon, when Ruben came in from his

college classes, he sat down beside Charlotte and asked, “Sister, what do you think about evolution? Our science books teach that everything in nature evolved from almost nothing. I can’t believe that.”

“For almost a year, I have been researching and writing about Evolution,” Charlotte told him excitedly. “I just finished having a lot of it translated into Spanish, but I didn’t bring any of the translated material because it wasn’t quite finished. I am also making picture charts for exposing the errors of Evolution. There is much evidence to prove that the world was created by a master designer and that nature did not evolve slowly into what it is now. The first chapter of Genesis says that God created each plant and animal to reproduce ‘after its kind.’ Each one was created to reproduce another like itself. Millions of fossilized plants and animals from thousands of years ago are very much the same as the plants and animals we have today,” she said.

“I wish I had evidence to show my professor,” Ruben said.

Charlotte jumped out of her chair and hurried into the bedroom where they had slept. She returned so excited; she could hardly talk. “Look Ruben! Here is the book you need. Take it to your teacher tomorrow. See if he will read it.”

Ruben held the book fondly and read the title, *El Colapso de la Evolucion*, autor Scott M. Huse. (The Collapse of Evolution) Then he continued asking more questions. Daniel was also being taught the ‘Theory of Evolution’ so he began asking questions. He also needed defense against the theory which is also heavily stressed in his school. Charlotte was amazed that she had read articles that explained the very questions the boys were asking. God had

already prepared her and had caused her to put the book in her suitcase. Also God had ordered the breakdown of their van.

The following evening Ruben told Charlotte that his teacher had asked to take the book home. “I hope that’s all right,” he said.

“The book is yours,” she said. “God caused me to put that book in the suitcase because he knew people in this town needed it.”

Thursday night, James preached in the church the family attended. On Friday afternoon, Charlotte gave a lesson on child training to a group of mothers. Soon after she returned to Francisco’s home, James came in and said, “The car is ready to go; however, I don’t have \$200.00 to pay the mechanic. I suppose I will have to go again on the bus to Obregón and get money from the bank.”

“No, you won’t need to do that,” Francisco spoke up. “I’ll pay whatever you lack. The mechanic knows I’m honest and will pay him along as I get the money.”

“I would be very grateful,” James said, “because we do need to get on to Culiacán. If you can ride with us, I’ll get the money for you with my bank card and buy your bus ticket back home.” James offered.

“Do we have \$200.00 in the bank?” Charlotte whispered to James in English. “I think so. God always supplies what we need,” he answered.

When Ruben told Charlotte goodbye, he said, “Today my professor showed *The Collapse of Evolution* to the class and said a lot of positive things about it. Now several students want to read it, too.”

“I hope it will help many people,” she answered.

“Thank you very much for the book,” he said, and squeezed her hand as he shook it.

Francisco and Lorena rode with James, Charlotte and Daniel into Obregón. James drew money from the bank and gave Francisco an offering and \$200.00 to pay the mechanic. They returned to their home by bus. James, Charlotte and Daniel drove on through the night (270 miles), arriving in Culiacán, Sinaloa early Saturday morning.

Questions for discussion:

1. How did God get James and Charlotte to stop in Vicam?
2. Who came to tow the van?
3. Why did many families come to visit with James and Charlotte?
4. In what ways did Josefina change after surrendering to God?
5. What was Ruben studying in school?
6. In what ways had God prepared Charlotte to help Ruben?
7. Name the four ways they shared the Gospel in Vicam.
8. For what should we be thankful?

LIVE IN ME

Precious Savior, thou art mine,
Thou hast saved by grace divine.
Let Thy love within me shine,
Live in me, dear Lord, live in me.

Guide my thoughts, my words and deeds
As Thy Holy Spirit leads.
By Thy words my soul He feeds.
Live in me, dear Lord, live in me.

Keep me yielded, Lord to thee,
Dead to self, I'll surely be,
Others then my Lord may see.
Live in me, dear Lord, live in me.

Keep me holy in Thy sight,
Walking in Thy blessed light,
In the path of truth and right.

Live in me, dear Lord, live in me.

Let me feel thy presence near,
Thy faint whisperings to hear,
To my soul Thou art so dear.
Live in me, dear Lord, live in me.

Grace sufficient for the day,
Thou hast promised if I pray.
Humbly now these words I say,
Live in me, dear Lord, live in me.

Chorus (after III, VI)
Live in me today, I pray
In Thy love I'm hid away
In my heart forever stay
Live in me, dear Lord, live in me.

(tune "Just a Closer Walk with Thee")

— Ella Mae (Hughes) Huskey 1904 -1952

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Charlotte N. Huskey is an emerging author of juvenile memoirs. This is Charlotte's eighth book, five of which are sequels. These books appeal to all ages because they are of days gone by when life was slower, simpler and safer. They are historical nonfiction that read like fiction, an excellent resource for parents who desire to build their children's faith. Many homeschooling parents are using these books. They appreciate the large print, simple vocabulary, and the questions for discussions at the end of each chapter.

Charlotte has written hundreds of children's stories. For fifteen years she published weekly children's Bible lessons, with corresponding stories for the Church of God Sunday school magazine. In 1975, a very short story of Mabel was published as a continued series in this magazine. Charlotte received many calls for the complete story so she wrote *Mabel, A Demonstration of the Power of God's Word*.

Charlotte and her husband James served as missionaries in Mexico for twenty-three years. During those years, she taught Sunday Schools, organized and taught in both Vacation Bible Schools and Christian camps.

Charlotte is a Proverbs 31 woman. Her family and home have always been top priorities. She is continually researching, writing, and publishing articles of family interest.

Although not a conference speaker, she has given many lessons on family life at assemblies throughout the United States, Mexico and Chili. *Growing Children in the Light of Eternity*, (142 pp.) was released in 2019. It is a collection of those articles filled with outstanding philosophies for Christian parenting.



ALSO BY CHARLOTTE N. HUSKEY

The first four books are sequels in this order:

Mabel A Demonstration of the Power of God's Word

A Faithful Father

How Big is God?

Growing Up with God in the Valley

Growing Children in the Light of Eternity

Also in Spanish:

Mabel: Una Demostración Del Poder de Dios

Que Tan Grande es Dios

