



Psalms 78:2-4

I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark sayings of old... We will not conceal them.

Parables Bookshelf - Series 1.12.4

This issue of PARABLES BOOKSHELF continues the series *Living Epistles*.

The apostle Paul in writing to the Hebrews, reveals the great importance of faith.

Hebrews 11:6

And without faith it is impossible to please Him...

What is the purpose of our lives if it is not to please God? If it requires faith to please God, then faith must be a thing highly esteemed in the eyes of God.

Consider the following chain of reasoning. Mankind's highest fulfillment must of necessity be to attain to the purpose of his creation. The Bible tells us that man was cre-

ated for God's pleasure.

Revelation 4:11

You art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for ***You have created all things, and for Your pleasure they are and were created.***

Because God wants His sons and daughters to be fulfilled He gives them an abundance of opportunities to please Him. He daily brings to them trials and tests, suffering and hardship, that they might manifest faith in Him. Faith is the thing that pleases Him.

Therefore, our trials are actually blessings, for they afford us the opportunity to accomplish the purpose for which we

were created. By overcoming trials as we exercise faith, we please God.

There can be no higher attainment. This attainment would not be possible without adversity and unpleasant circumstances.

God created men and women to be "overcomers." What would an overcomer be without some obstacle to be scaled, some battle to be fought, or some trial to be endured? We could not be overcomers unless God gave us many things to overcome.

Thank God for your distresses and difficulties. They are opportunities for you to be all you were created to be.

Food for Thought

"A person who wholly follows the Lord is one who believes that the promises of God are trustworthy, that He is with His people, and that they are well able to overcome."

Watchman Nee

"The army of Israel looked at Goliath through the eyes of man and said he's too big to beat. David looked at him through the eyes of God and said he's too big to miss."

Wally Carter

Scripture Memory

I Peter 1:6-7

In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ...

Parables Newsletter

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Living Epistles

Living Epistles - Part Nine

Joseph Herrin (09-18-09)



Hudson Taylor - At age 21

Hudson Taylor was the founder of the China Inland Mission. He was born in England in 1832 and live to the age of 73, dying in 1905. There exists two biographical books of his life, written by his son Dr. Howard Taylor. Both books are quite lengthy, being over 500 pages each, and they are full of spiritual riches. The books are titled *Hudson Taylor - The Growth of a Soul*, and *Hudson Taylor - The Growth of a Work of God*. Both books can be read online.

<http://www.worldinvisible.com/library/hudsonaylor/hudsonaylorv1/hudsonaylorv1tc.htm>

<http://www.worldinvisible.com/library/hudsonaylor/hudsonaylorv2/hudsonaylorv2tc.htm>

There are such riches in these two volumes that I am going to make two posts from them. At an early age he discerned the call to go to China as a missionary. Hudson Taylor in his teen years worked for his father who was a chemist and druggist. Missionary societies encouraged aspiring missionaries to receive training in the medical field for they often used medical clinics set-up in China as an opportunity to share Christ with the native population.

Hudson Taylor began looking for an opportunity to receive training, and was engaged by Dr. Hardey, a Christian man with a large practice in the city of Hull. Of this period of Hudson Taylor's life we read the following.

Here then in what was called the Surgery Hudson Taylor found himself at home. Mrs. Hardey's supervision had not extended apparently to this branch of the establishment, but the new assistant was equal to the occasion and soon had everything in apple-pie order, after the fashion to which he had been accustomed at home. His knowledge of book-keeping also proved of value to Dr. Hardey, who had much work of that sort on hand and was glad to leave it to so competent a helper. Thus the doctor's relations with the Barnsley lad soon came to be of a cordial character. He was so bright and eager to learn, so willing and good-tempered, that to work with him was a pleasure, and before long the busy doctor found that it was a help to pray with him too. Many were the quiet times, after that, from which the older man came away refreshed and strengthened. Needless to say there was no familiarity or presuming on these relations. The young assistant respected himself and his employer far too much for that. He did his work faithfully, as in the sight of God, and Dr. Hardey showed his appreciation by giving him opportunities for study and by directing his reading as much as possible.

But there were drawbacks to the life at Charlotte Street, of which Hudson Taylor himself was

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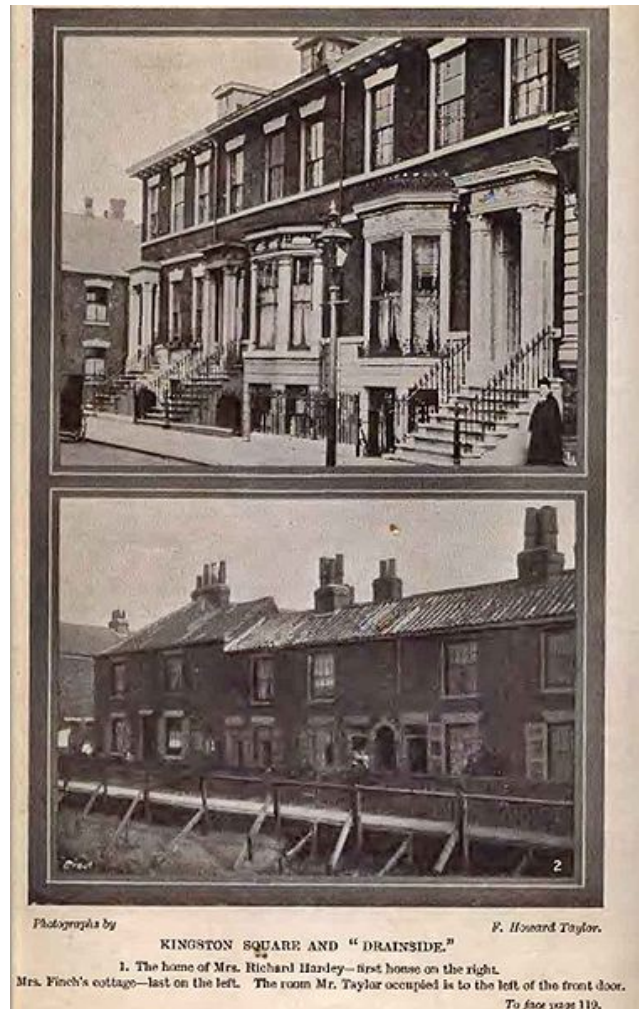
largely unconscious. For one thing it was too comfortable, too easy-going in certain ways, and failed on that account to afford some elements needed in a missionary's training. Quite in another part of Hull amid very different surroundings was a little "prophet's chamber," bare in its furnishings and affording neither companionship nor luxury, where a stronger if a sterner life could be lived, apart with God. Moses at the backside of the wilderness, Joseph in Pharaoh's prison, Paul in the silence of the Arabian desert lived that sort of life, and came out to do great things for men in the power of God. That was the life Hudson Taylor needed and to which he was being led. He did not choose it for himself, at any rate not at first or consciously. The Lord chose it for him, and so ordered circumstances that he was brought to see and to embrace it, finding in self-denial and the daily cross a fellowship with his Master nothing else can yield.

So there came a day, providentially, when the young assistant could no longer be domiciled at Dr. Hardey's. His room was needed for a member of the family, and as the Surgery was not provided with sleeping accommodation he had to seek quarters elsewhere...

"After much thought and prayer, I was led to leave the comfortable home and pleasant circle in which I resided, and engage a little lodging in the suburbs, a sitting-room and bedroom in one, undertaking to board myself. I was thus enabled to tithe the whole of my income; and while one felt the change a good deal, it was attended with no small blessing. More time was given in my solitude to the study of the Word of God, to visiting the poor and to evangelistic work on Sunday evenings than would otherwise have been the case. Brought into contact in this way with many who were in distress, I soon saw the privilege of still further economizing, and found it possible to give away much more than I had at first intended."

It all reads so simply and naturally that one can hardly imagine any special sacrifice to have been

involved. Let us hunt up this "sitting-room and bedroom in one," however, and find out what were in actual fact the surroundings for which he had given up his home on Kingston Square. The change could scarcely have been more complete.



Hardey Residence at top/Drainside in Lower Image

"Drainside," as the neighborhood was termed, could not under any circumstances have been considered inviting. It consisted of a double row of workmen's cottages facing each other across a narrow canal, connecting the country district of Cottingham with the docks and estuary of the

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Humber. The canal was nothing but a deep ditch into which Drainside people were in the habit of casting their rubbish, to be carried away in part whenever the tide rose high enough. It was separated from the town by desolate spaces of building-land, across which ran a few ill-lighted streets ending in makeshift wooden bridges. The

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cottages, like peas in a pod, were all the same size and shape down both sides of the long row. They followed the windings of the Drain for half a mile or more,

each one having a door and two windows, one above the other. The door opened straight into the kitchen, and a steep stairway led to the room above. A very few were double cottages with a window to right and left of the door and two rooms overhead.

On the city side of the canal, one of these larger dwellings stood at a corner opposite The Founder's Arms, a countrified public-house whose lights were useful as a landmark on dark nights, shining across the mud and water of the Drain. The cottage, known as 30 Cottingham Terrace, was tenanted by the family of a seafaring man, whose visits home were few and far between. Mrs. Finch and her children occupied the kitchen and upper part of the house, and the downstairs room on the left as one entered was let at a rental of three shillings a week. It was too high a charge, seeing the whole house went for little more. But the lodger in whom we are interested did not grudge it, especially when he found how much it meant to the good woman whose remittances from her husband came none too regularly.

Mrs. Finch was a true Christian and delighted to have "the young Doctor" under her roof. She did her best no doubt to make the little chamber clean and comfortable, polishing the fireplace opposite the window and making up the bed in the corner farthest from the door. A plain deal table and a chair or two completed the appointments. The

whole room was less than twelve feet square and did not need much furniture. It was on a level with the ground and opened familiarly out of the kitchen. From the window one looked across the narrowest strip of "garden" to the Drain beyond, whose mud banks afforded a playground for the children of the neighborhood.

Whatever it may have been in summer, toward the close of November, when Hudson Taylor made it his home, Drainside must have seemed dreary enough, and the cottage far from attractive. To add to the discomforts of the situation, he was "boarding himself," which meant that he lived upon next to nothing, bought his meager supplies as he returned from the Surgery, and rarely sat down, with or without a companion, to a proper meal. His walks were solitary across the waste, unlighted region on the outskirts of the town; his evenings solitary beside the little fire in his otherwise cheerless room; and his Sundays were spent alone, but for the morning meeting and long hours of work in his district or among the crowds that frequented the Humber Dock.

And more than this, he was at close quarters with poverty and suffering. Visiting in such neighborhoods he had been accustomed to for a few hours at a time, but this was very different. It belonged to him now in a new way, and outwardly at any rate he belonged to it. He had cast in his lot with those who needed him, and needed all the help and comfort he could bring. This gave new purpose to his life and taught him some of its most precious lessons.

"Having now the twofold object in view," he wrote, "of accustoming myself to endure hardness, and of economizing in order to be able more largely to assist those amongst whom I spent a good deal of time laboring in the Gospel, I soon found that I could live upon very much less than I had previously thought possible. Butter, milk and other luxuries I ceased to use, and found that by living mainly on oatmeal and rice, with occasional variations, a very small sum was sufficient

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for my needs. In this way I had more than two-thirds of my income available for other purposes, and my experience was that the less I spent on myself and the more I gave to others the fuller of happiness and blessing did my soul become..."

At a very young age, Hudson Taylor had turned his heart away from desiring the material comforts this world affords, and had set his affections on heavenly aspirations. He was acutely aware of his own shortcomings, and would often write to his mother or his sister to ask them to pray for him.

"I feel my need of more holiness," he wrote to his sister early in the New Year, "and conformity to Him who has loved us and washed us in His blood. Love so amazing should indeed cause us to give our bodies and spirits to Him as living sacrifices.... Oh, I wish I were ready! I long to be engaged in the work. Pray for me, that I may be made more useful here and fitted for extended usefulness hereafter." And again a few weeks later:

I almost wish I had a hundred bodies. They should all be devoted to my Savior in the missionary cause. But this is foolishness. I have almost more than I can do to manage one, it is so self-willed, earthly-minded, fleshly. Constantly I am grieving my dear Savior who shed for me His precious blood, forgetting Him who never has relaxed His watchful care and protection over me from the earliest moment of my existence. I am astonished at the littleness of my gratitude and love to Him, and confounded by His long-suffering mercy. Pray for me that I may live more and more to His praise, be more devoted to Him, incessant in labors in His cause, fitted for China, ripened for glory.

The following correspondence to his mother revealed how much Hudson Taylor was choosing to get by on a very meager diet, along with his very humble dwelling place. He could have chosen to

eat much better, but it was his delight to save as much of his money as possible to share with the poor people he visited throughout the week.

"I am sorry you make yourself anxious about me," he wrote in January. I think it is because I have begun to wear a larger coat that everybody says, 'How poorly and thin you look !' However, as you want to know everything, I have had a heavy cold... that lasted a week. But since then I have been as well as ever in my life. I eat like a horse, sleep like a top and have the spirits of a lark. I do not know that I have any anxiety save to be more holy and useful..."

As to my health, I think I never was so well and hearty in my life. The winds here are extremely searching, but as I always wrap up well I am pretty secure... The cold weather gives me a good appetite, and it would be dear economy to stint myself. So I take as much plain, substantial food as I need, but waste nothing on luxuries...

I have found some brown biscuits which are really as cheap as bread, eighteen pence a stone, and much nicer. For breakfast I have biscuit and herring, which is cheaper than butter (three for a penny, and half a one is enough) with coffee. For dinner I have at present a prune-and-apple pie. Prunes are two or three pence a pound and apples tenpence a peck. I use no sugar, but loaf which I powder, and at fourpence halfpenny a pound I find it is cheaper than the coarser kind. Sometimes I have roast potatoes and tongue, which is as inexpensive as any other meat. For tea I have biscuit and apples. I take no supper, or occasionally a little biscuit and apple... I pickled a penny red cabbage with three halfpence worth of vinegar, which made me a large jar-full. So you see, at little expense I enjoy many comforts...

I take as much plain, substantial food as I need, but waste nothing on luxuries...

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What a glimpse is here afforded into his deeper life during that winter at Drainside! " I cannot tell, I cannot describe how I long to be a missionary, to carry the Glad Tidings to poor, perishing sinners. . . . For this I could give up everything, every idol, however dear . . . I feel as if I could not live if something is not done for China."

This was no mere emotion, no superficial interest that might give place to considerations of personal advantage.

It was not that he had taken up missionary work as a congenial branch of Christian activity, but that the need of the perishing in heathen lands, the need and longing of the heart of Christ-" them also I must bring "-had gripped him and held him fast...

Yet much as he longed to go, and go at once, there were considerations that held him back.

"To me it was a very grave matter," he wrote of that winter, "to contemplate going out to China, far from all human aid, there to depend upon the living God alone for protection, supplies, and help of every kind. I felt that one's spiritual muscles required strengthening for such an undertaking. There was no doubt that if faith did not fail, God would not fail. But what if one's faith should prove insufficient? I had not at that time learned that even 'if we believe not, yet He abideth faithful, He cannot deny Himself.' It was consequently a very serious question to my mind, not whether He was faithful, but whether I had strong enough faith to warrant my embarking in the enterprise set before me.

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O 'When I got out to China,' I thought to myself, 'I shall have no claim on anyone for anything. My

only claim will be on God. How important to learn, before leaving England, to move man through God by prayer alone."

He knew that faith was the one power that could remove mountains, conquer every difficulty and accomplish the impossible. But had he the right kind of faith? Could he stand alone in China? Much as he longed to be a missionary, would such faith as he possessed be sufficient to carry him through all that must be faced? What had it carried him through already, here at home?

He thankfully realized that faith, the faith he longed for, was a "gift of God," and that it might "grow exceedingly." But for growth, exercise was needed, and exercise of faith was obviously impossible apart from trial. Then welcome trial, welcome anything that would increase and strengthen this precious gift, proving to his own heart at any rate that he had faith of the sort that would really stand and grow.

And here it should be remembered that in taking this attitude before the Lord, Hudson Taylor was wholly earnest and sincere. He was bringing "all the tithes into the storehouse," a most important consideration; living a life that made it possible for him to exercise faith to which God could respond in blessing. In a word, there was no hindrance in himself to the answer to his prayers; and experiences followed that have been made an encouragement to thousands the wide world over...

"To learn before leaving England to move man through God by prayer alone," this and nothing less was the object Hudson Taylor had before him now, and it was not long before he came to see a simple, natural way of practicing this lesson.

At Hull my kind employer, always busy, wished me to remind him whenever my salary became due. This I determined not to do directly, but to

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ask that God would bring the fact to his recollection, and thus encourage me by answering prayer.

At one time as the day drew near for the payment of a quarter's salary I was as usual much in prayer about it. The time arrived, but Dr. Hardey made no allusion to the matter. I continued praying. Days passed on and he did not remember, until at length on settling up my weekly accounts one Saturday night, I found myself possessed of only one remaining coin, a half-crown piece. Still, I had hitherto known no lack, and I continued praying.

That Sunday was a very happy one. As usual my heart was full and brimming over with blessing. After attending Divine Service in the morning, my afternoons and evenings were taken up with Gospel work in the various lodging-houses I was accustomed to visit in the lowest part of the town. At such times it almost seemed to me as if heaven were begun below, and that all that could be looked for was an enlargement of one's capacity for joy, not a truer filling than I possessed.

After concluding my last service about ten o'clock that night, a poor man asked me to go and pray with his wife, saying that she was dying. I readily agreed, and on the way to his house asked him why he had not sent for the priest, as his accent told me he was an Irishman. He had done so, he said, but the priest refused to come without a payment of eighteen pence which the man did not possess, as the family was starving. Immediately it occurred to my mind that all the money I had in the world was the solitary half-crown, and that it was in one coin; moreover, that while the basin of water-gruel I usually took for supper was awaiting me, and there was sufficient in the house for breakfast in the morning, I certainly had nothing for dinner on the coming day.

Somehow or other there was at once a stoppage in the flow of joy in my heart. But instead of re-

proving myself I began to reprove the poor man, telling him that it was very wrong to have allowed matters to get into such a state as he described, and that he ought to have applied to the relieving officer. His answer was that he had done so, and was told to come at eleven o'clock the next morning, but that he feared his wife might not live through the night.

"Ah," thought I, "if only I had two shillings and a sixpence instead of this half-crown, how gladly would I give these poor people a shilling!" But to part with the half-crown was far from my thoughts. I little dreamed that the truth of the matter simply was that I could trust God plus one and-sixpence, but was not prepared to trust Him only, without any money at all in my pocket.

My conductor led me into a court, down which I followed him with some degree of nervousness. I had found myself there before, and at my last visit had been roughly handled. My tracts had been torn to pieces and such a warning given me not to come again that I felt more than a little concerned. Still, it was the path of duty and I followed on. Up a miserable flight of stairs into a wretched room he led me; and oh, what a sight there presented itself! Four or five children stood about, their sunken cheeks and temples all telling unmistakably the story--of slow starvation, and lying on a wretched pallet was a poor, exhausted mother, with a tiny infant thirty-six hours old moaning rather than crying at her side, for it too seemed spent and failing.

"Ah!" thought I, "if I had two shillings and a sixpence, instead of half-a-crown, how gladly should they have one-and-sixpence of it." But still a wretched unbelief prevented me from obeying the impulse to relieve their distress at the cost of all I possessed.

I was not prepared to trust Him only, without any money at all in my pocket.

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It will scarcely seem strange that I was unable to say much to comfort these poor people. I needed

*My heart was as light
as my pocket.*

comfort myself. I began to tell them, however, that they must not be cast down; that though their circumstances were very distressing there was a kind and

loving Father in heaven. But something within me cried, "You hypocrite! telling these unconverted people about a kind and loving Father in heaven, and not prepared yourself to trust Him without a half-a-crown."

I was nearly choked. How gladly would I have compromised with conscience, if I had had a florin and a sixpence! I would have given the florin thankfully and kept the rest. But I was not yet prepared to trust in God alone, without the sixpence.

To talk was impossible under these circumstances, yet strange to say I thought I should have no difficulty in praying. Prayer was a delightful occupation in those days. Time thus spent never seemed wearisome and I knew no lack of words. I seemed to think that all I should have to do would be to kneel down and pray, and that relief would come to them and to myself together.

"You asked me to come and pray with your wife," I said to the man, "let us pray." And I knelt down.

But no sooner had I opened my lips with "Our Father who art in heaven," than conscience said within, "Dare you mock God? Dare you kneel down and call Him Father with that half-crown in your pocket?"

Such a time of conflict then came upon me as I have never experienced before or since. How I got through that form of prayer I know not, and whether the words uttered were connected or dis-

connected I cannot tell. But I arose from my knees in great distress of mind.

The poor father turned to me and said, "You see what a terrible state we are in, sir. If you can help us, for God's sake do!"

At that moment the word flashed into my mind, "Give to him that asketh of thee." And in the word of a King there is power.

I put my hand into my pocket and slowly drawing out the half-crown, gave it to the man, telling him that it might seem a small matter for me to relieve them, seeing that I was comparatively well off, but that in parting with that coin I was giving him my all; what I had been trying to tell them was indeed true - God really was a Father, and might be trusted. The joy all came back in full flood-tide to my heart. I could say anything and feel it then, and the hindrance to blessing was gone - gone, I trust, forever.

Not only was the poor woman's life saved; but my life, as I fully realized, had been saved too. It might have been a wreck - would have been, probably, as a Christian life - had not grace at that time conquered, and the striving of God's Spirit been obeyed.

I well remember how that night, as I went home to my lodgings, my heart was as light as my pocket. The dark, deserted streets resounded with a hymn of praise that I could not restrain. When I took my basin of gruel before retiring, I would not have exchanged it for a prince's feast. I reminded the Lord as I knelt at my bedside of His own Word, "He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord"; I asked Him not to let my loan be a long one, or I should have no dinner next day. And with peace within and peace without, I spent a happy, restful night.

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Next morning for breakfast my plate of porridge remained, and before it was finished the postman's knock was heard at the door, I was not in the habit of receiving letters on Monday, as my parents and most of my friends refrained from posting on Saturday, so that I was somewhat surprised when the landlady came in holding a letter or packet in her wet hand covered by her apron. I looked at the letter, but could not make out the handwriting. It was either a strange hand or a feigned one, and the postmark was blurred. Where it came from I could not tell. On opening the envelope I found nothing written within ; but inside a sheet of blank paper was folded a pair of kid gloves, from which, as I opened them in astonishment, half-a sovereign fell to the ground.

"Praise the Lord," I exclaimed. "Four hundred percent for twelve hours' investment - that is good interest! How glad the merchants of Hull would be if they could lend their money at such a rate." Then and there I determined that a bank that could not break should have my savings or earnings, as the case might be--a determination I have not yet learned to regret.

I cannot tell you how often my mind has recurred to this incident, or all the help it has been to me in circumstances of difficulty in afterlife. If we are faithful to God in little things, we shall gain experience and strength that will be helpful to us in the more serious trials of life.

But this was not the end of the story, nor was it the only answer to prayer that was to confirm his faith at this time. For the chief difficulty still remained. Dr. Hardey had not remembered; and though prayer was unremitting, other matters appeared entirely to engross his attention. It would have been so easy to remind him. But what then of the lesson upon the acquirement of which Hudson Taylor felt his future usefulness depended," to move man through God, by prayer alone."

"This remarkable and gracious deliverance," he continued, "was a great joy to me as well as a strong confirmation of faith. But of course ten shillings however economically used will not go very far, and it was none the less necessary to continue in prayer, asking that the larger supply which was still due might be remembered and paid. All my petitions, however, appeared to remain unanswered, and before a fortnight elapsed I found myself pretty much in the same position that I had occupied on the Sunday night already made so memorable. Meanwhile I continued pleading with God more and more earnestly that He would Himself remind Dr. Hardey that my salary was due.

"Of course it was not the want of money that distressed me. That could have been had at any time for the asking. But the question uppermost in my mind was this: 'Can I go to China? or will my want of faith and power with God prove so serious an obstacle as to preclude my entering upon this much-prized service?'

"As the week drew to a close I felt exceedingly embarrassed. There was not only myself to consider. On Saturday night a payment would be due to my Christian landlady, which I knew she could not well dispense with. Ought I not, for her sake, to speak about the matter of the salary? Yet to do so would be, to myself at any rate, the admission that I was not fitted to undertake a missionary enterprise. I gave nearly the whole of Thursday and Friday, all the time not occupied in my necessary employment, to earnest wrestling with God in prayer. But still on Saturday morning I was in the same position as before. And now my earnest cry was for guidance as to whether I should still continue to wait the Father's time. As far as I could judge I received the assurance that to wait His time was best, and that God in some way or other would interpose on my behalf. So I waited,

*All my petitions,
however, appeared to
remain unanswered...*

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my heart being now at rest and the burden gone.

"About five o'clock that Saturday afternoon, when Dr. Hardey had finished writing his prescriptions, his last circuit for the day being taken, he threw himself back in his arm-chair, as he was wont, and began to speak of the things of God. He

I had to swallow two or three times before I could answer.

was a truly Christian man, and many seasons of happy fellowship we had together. I was busily watching, at the time, a pan in which a decoction was boiling that required a good deal of attention. It was indeed fortunate for me that it was so, for without any obvious connection with what had been going on, all at once he said 'By the by, Taylor, is not your salary due again?'

"My emotion may be imagined. I had to swallow two or three times before I could answer. With my eye fixed on the pan and my back to the doctor, I told him as quietly as I could that it was overdue some little time. How thankful I felt at that moment! God surely had heard my prayer and caused him in this time of my great need to remember the salary without any word or suggestion from me. He replied,

"Oh, I am so sorry you did not remind me! You know how busy I am. I wish I had thought of it a little sooner, for only this afternoon I sent all the money I had to the bank. Otherwise I would pay you at once."

"It is impossible to describe the revulsion of feeling caused by this unexpected statement. I knew not what to do. Fortunately for me the pan boiled up and I had a good reason for rushing with it from the room. Glad indeed I was to get away and keep out of sight until after Dr. Hardey had returned to his house, and most thankful that he had not perceived my emotion.

"As soon as he was gone I had to seek my little sanctum and pour out my heart before the Lord for some time before calmness, and more than calmness, thankfulness and joy were restored. I felt that God had His own way, and was not going to fail me. I had sought to know His will early in the day, and as far as I could judge had received guidance to wait patiently. And now God was going to work for me in some other way.

"That evening was spent, as my Saturday evenings usually were, in reading the Word and preparing the subject on which I expected to speak in the various lodging-houses on the morrow. I waited perhaps a little longer than usual. At last about ten o'clock, there being no interruption of any kind, I put on my overcoat and was preparing to leave for home, rather thankful to know that by that time I should have to let myself in with the latchkey, as my landlady retired early. There was certainly no help for that night. But perhaps God would interpose for me by Monday, and I might be able to pay my landlady early in the week the money I would have given her before had it been possible.

"Just as I was about to turn down the gas, I heard the doctor's step in the garden that lay between the dwelling-house and Surgery. He was laughing to himself very heartily, as though greatly amused. Entering the Surgery he asked for the ledger, and told me that, strange to say, one of his richest patients had just come to pay his doctor's bill. Was it not an odd thing to do?

It never struck me that it might have any bearing on my own case, or I might have felt embarrassed. But looking at it simply from the position of an uninterested spectator, I also was highly amused that a man rolling in wealth should come after ten o'clock at night to pay a bill which he could any day have met by a check with the greatest ease. It appeared that somehow or other he could not rest with this on his mind, and had been constrained to come at that unusual hour to discharge his liability.

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"The account was duly receipted in the ledger, and Dr. Hardey was about to leave, when suddenly he turned and handing me some of the banknotes just received, said to my surprise and thankfulness

"By the way, Taylor, you might as well take these notes. I have no change, but can give you the balance next week."

"Again I was left, my feelings undiscovered, to go back to my little closet and praise the Lord with a joyful heart that after all I might go to China. To me this incident was not a trivial one; and to recall it sometimes, in circumstances of great difficulty, in China or elsewhere, has proved no small comfort and strength."

Joseph's Comments: I find this testimony very fitting for the hour in which we live. The Spirit is indicating that an hour is at hand when life as it is now known in America and many Western nations will be changed forever. Prosperity will be replaced by poverty. Christians will be thrust upon God for their daily provision, for the only alternative will be to embrace the beast system of this fallen world.

Seeing that such things are at hand, would it not prove beneficial NOW for Christians to begin living with much less? I know of some who are even at this time being led to much simpler lives. I personally have been camping in a pop-up trailer for the past two months. For part of this time I have been eating mostly grains; grits, oatmeal, cream of wheat.

It will be difficult for many to adjust when they are suddenly taken from houses filled with creature comforts, partaking of abundant foods, and then they are suddenly dislodged and having to adjust to many hardships. I encourage you to seek the Lord now to understand what He would have you to do.

Just this past week I heard from two different families whom the Lord has suddenly directed to sell their homes and furnishings (and in one case a business of 31 years), to pare down greatly and relocate to a place God has directed them to. Such things are happening frequently as Yahweh prepares His people to walk through the days ahead.

Living Epistles - Part Ten

Joseph Herrin (09-20-09)

Hudson Taylor - Growth of a Work of God



*Yours faithfully in Christ,
Hudson Taylor*

Hudson Taylor in 1893

The quotations in this post on the life of Hudson Taylor, founder of the China Inland Mission, are taken from the second biographical book written by his son Dr. Howard Taylor. The book is titled *Hudson Taylor - Growth of a Work of God*. It can be read online in its entirety at the following link:

<http://www.worldinvisible.com/library/hudsonaylor/hudsonaylorv2/hudsonaylorv2tc.htm>

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Hudson Taylor had spent six years by this time in China ministering. At the end of this period his health, which was never robust, was at such a low state that he had to return to England. He was told by the physicians that he would never be able to return to China again.

Upon arriving back in England he immediately set to work laboring to produce a copy of the Scriptures in a language that the Chinese, and the missionaries, could readily use. He also devoted himself to finishing his medical training. For four years he labored day by day, entering into his journal a brief summary of the days labor. For a man broken in health, he labored prodigiously.

The burden for lost souls in China never left him, and he continued to seek the Lord that He might raise up laborers for the mission field. Before another year had passed he had been able to arrange for five missionaries to be sent. These missionaries operated differently than most all other mission organizations in that day. They received no regular support. They did not raise large amounts of money before setting forth. They went in faith that the God who had called them would also care for them.

I scarcely slept night or day more than an hour at a time...

Hudson Taylor began to feel the pressure of this situation. His mind was led to deal with the responsibility of sending men and women to China to evangelize the population. What if support failed? What if there arose some great need among the workers, and there were no resources to send them? Hudson Taylor was confronted by the fear of great suffering and even death resulting in consequence of the missionaries who were going out with so little material support in evidence. We read of his struggle at this time.

"I knew God was speaking," he said of this critical time. "I knew that in answer to prayer evan-

gelists would be given and their support secured, because the Name of Jesus is worthy. But there unbelief came in."

"Suppose the workers are given and go to China: trials will come; their faith may fail; would they not reproach you for bringing them into such a plight? Have you ability to cope with so painful a situation?"

"And the answer was, of course, a decided negative."

"It was just a bringing in of self, through unbelief; the devil getting one to feel that while prayer and faith would bring one into the fix, one would have to get out of it as best one might. And I did not see that the Power that would give the men and the means would be sufficient to keep them also, even in the far interior of China."

"Meanwhile, a million a month were dying in that land, dying without God. This was burned into my very soul. For two or three months the conflict was intense. I scarcely slept night or day more than an hour at a time, and feared I should lose my reason. Yet I did not give in. To no one could I speak freely, not even to my dear wife. She saw, doubtless, that something was going on; but I felt I must refrain as long as possible from laying upon her a burden so crushing - these souls, and what eternity must mean for every one of them, and what the Gospel might do, would do, for all who believed, if we would take it to them."

The break in the journal at this point is surely significant. Faithfully the record had gone on for two and a quarter years; but now-silence. For seven weeks from the middle of April, lovely weeks of spring, there was no entry. First and only blank in those revealing pages, how much the very silence has to tell us! Yes, he was face to face with the purpose of God at last. Accept it, he dare not; escape it, he could not. And so, as long

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ago, "there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day."

It was Sunday, June 25, a quiet summer morning by the sea. Worn out and really ill, Hudson Taylor had gone to friends at Brighton, and, unable to bear the sight of rejoicing multitudes in the house of God, had wandered out alone upon the sands left by the receding tide. It was a peaceful scene about him, but inwardly he was in agony of spirit. A decision had to be made and he knew it, for the conflict could no longer be endured.

"Well," the thought came at last, "if God gives us a band of men for inland China, and they go, and all die of starvation even, they will only be taken straight to heaven; and if one heathen soul is saved, would it not be well worthwhile?"

It was a strange way round to faith - that if the worst came to the worst it would still be worthwhile. But something in the service of that morning seems to have come to mind. God-consciousness began to take the place of unbelief, and a new thought possessed him as dawn displaces night.

"Why, if we are obeying the Lord, the responsibility rests with Him, not with us."

This, brought home to his heart in the power of the Spirit, wrought the change once and for all. "Thou, Lord," he cried with relief that was unutterable, "Thou shalt have all the burden! At Thy bidding, as Thy servant I go forward, leaving results with Thee."

For some time the conviction had been growing that he ought to ask for at any rate two evangelists for each of the eleven unoccupied provinces, and two for Chinese Tartary and Tibet. Pencil in hand he now opened his Bible, and with the boundless ocean breaking at his feet wrote the

simple memorable words: " Prayed for twenty-four willing skillful laborers at Brighton, June 25, 1865."

"How restfully I turned away from the sands," he said, recalling the deliverance of that hour. "The conflict ended, all was joy and peace. I felt as if I could fly up the hill to Mr. Pearse's house. And how I did sleep that night! My dear wife thought Brighton had done wonders for me, and so it had."

Such a trial is common among those who answer the call to follow the Spirit wherever He will lead. There is fear to be confronted as one carries the burden for their own self. How will they eat? How will they live? Where will their provision come from? Hudson Taylor had been adequate to such trials for the six years that he was laboring alone in China, but it was an altogether different burden to be seeking for, and sending, others to a foreign land where they too must face the same risks, trials and challenges.

I knew this burden when the Lord directed me to quit my employer in 1999, and to begin a ministry of writing. I had a wife and two young children. I had no savings, and no church to support me. All I had was the leading of the Spirit. Like Hudson Taylor, I judged that I was not adequate for the burdens to be carried, but neither could I deny the Lord and refuse to follow where He was leading.

"Thou, Lord," he cried with relief that was unutterable, "Thou shalt have all the burden!"

When we see ourselves as responsible for the care of others, the weight can be crushing. We must enter into that place where we understand that Yahweh will Himself be the surety and care-giver for all those who follow Him. The burden is not ours alone to carry. The burden and responsibility belongs to Him. If He can fail, then our hope is in

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vain.

Yahweh does not promise any of His sons and daughters that they will not know troubles. He does not say they will not endure times of lack and even hunger. Indeed, He declares that such things will be common.

Philippians 4:11-13

Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

The path of self-direction seems a much safer road. When one chooses for themselves the offering they will present to God and the life they will live, they are able to bypass many of the trials of

Those who have accepted the cost testify that the presence of God becomes much more dear to them...

faith. Yet such a life is totally unsatisfactory to the Father. He requires that we hate our own life that we might follow Christ. Those who have accepted the cost can

also testify that the presence of God becomes much more dear to them than ever before. His mercies are sought for, and encountered every morning. Sufficient unto the day is the trouble thereof, and also the grace bestowed.

The Lord began introducing Hudson Taylor after this trial to people of some means. Hudson Taylor never sought such relations, for his confidence was fully in the Lord and not in the arm of flesh. Nevertheless, as God desired to expand the work of sending forth missionaries to China, He raised up those who would give of their substance, as well as raising up those who would lay down their entire lives in going to the mission fields.

Hudson Taylor relates an account of one meeting where a well-to-do family desired to contribute to the work, but they had already given to others and had nothing on hand at the moment. This family then considered that they could give the quarterly insurance money that was paid for the protection of their substantial gardens and conservatories, looking to the Lord to protect their property during that time.

So warm was the sympathy of the parents that they desired to help the Mission financially, though no appeal had been made for money and no collections taken. All the more, perhaps, for this reason, Mr. Taylor's host and hostess wished to give as a matter of privilege; but their generosity in other directions had left them little in hand for the purpose. After praying over it, however, the thought suggested itself,

"Why not trust the Lord about the conservatories, and contribute the amount almost due for insurance?"

Langley Park possessed extensive greenhouses, and winter storms were apt to be serious near that east coast. But, definitely committing the matter to Him Who controls wind and wave, the check was drawn and the premium paid into the Mission treasury. The sequel Mr. Taylor never heard till long after, nor indeed that the gift had been made possible in this way. But the Lord knew; and when a few months later a storm of exceptional violence broke over the neighborhood, He did not forget. Much glass was shattered for miles around, but the conservatories at Langley Park entirely escaped.

I have observed the Father's hand of protection in similar ways among those I have lived with. A couple years ago an elderly gentleman opened his home up to me that I might stay with him whenever I was in town. He and his grandson had been reading many of the writings I had written, and I had also shared with them numerous biographical

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books of saints who had walked in faith.

This gentleman has a very nice piece of property outside of town. He has 24 acres of land, a fishing pond and many trees on the property. It is a very idyllic setting. From time to time people were given permission to fish in his pond, and he even allowed some local churches and the rescue mission from the nearby town to bring groups out to fish.

The thought arose that it might be prudent to take out an insurance policy to protect this man and his property against loss from destruction, or from someone being injured and filing suit against him. As he was considering this the man's grandson suggested to him that this was a test from God to see if He would trust Him or look to man for his security. After careful consideration and prayer the man chose not to purchase the insurance, but to leave the matter in God's hands.

Some months afterwards a tremendous storm came through the area. It was on Mother's Day, and there were numerous tornadoes in the area. There were many trees and buildings damaged. On the road he lived on trees toppled and telephone poles were snapped all along the way. I went out afterwards and saw that the road was closed due to the damage all around, but as I walked across this gentleman's property I did not see any evidence of damage.

II Timothy 1:12

I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.

The many trials that Hudson Taylor faced in earlier days served to lay a foundation upon which his trust in God could rest. As the cares of the ministry increased, he was able to remember the trials he had already been carried through, looking to God with hope and expectation of continued care,

protection and provision. He wrote:

Feeling, on the one hand, the solemn responsibility that rests upon us, and on the other the gracious encouragements that everywhere meet us in the Word of God, we do not hesitate to ask the great Lord of the Harvest to call forth, to thrust forth twenty-four European and twenty-four native evangelists, to plant the standard of the Cross in the eleven unevangelized provinces of China proper and in Chinese Tartary. To those who have never been called to prove the faithfulness of the Covenant-keeping God in supplying, in answer to prayer alone, the every need of His servants, it might seem a hazardous experiment to send twenty-four European evangelists to a distant heathen land, "with only God to look to"; but in one whose privilege it has been through many years to put that God to the test in varied circumstances, at home and abroad, by land and sea, in sickness and health, in dangers, in necessities and at the gates of death, such apprehensions would be wholly inexcusable. "The writer has seen God, in answer to prayer, quell the raging of the storm," Mr. Taylor continued, "alter the direction of the wind and give rain in the midst of prolonged drought. He has seen Him, in answer to prayer, stay the angry passions and murderous intentions of violent men, and bring the machinations of His people's foes to nought. He has seen Him, in answer to prayer, raise the dying from the bed of death, when human aid was vain; has seen Him preserve from the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and from the destruction that wasteth at noon-day. For more than eight years and a half he has proved the faithfulness of God in supplying his own temporal wants and the needs of the work in which he has been engaged..."

Some months afterwards
a tremendous storm
came through the area.

Instance after instance is given from Mr. Taylor's experience of direct, unmistakable answers to

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prayer, and the deduction drawn is that with such a God it is safe and wise to go forward in the pathway of obedience-is indeed the only safe and wise thing to do.

Remarking on the operation of the China Inland Mission and the type of men and women it needed, he wrote:

"That Word had said, 'Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things (food and raiment) shall be added unto you.' If any one did not believe that God spoke the truth, it would be better for him not to go to China to propagate the faith. If he did believe it, surely the promise sufficed. Again, 'No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.' If any one did not mean to walk uprightly, he had better stay at home; if he did mean to walk uprightly, he had all he needed in the shape of a guarantee fund. God owns all the gold and silver in the world, and the cattle on a thousand hills. We need not be vegetarians."

"We might indeed have had a guarantee fund if we had wished it; but we felt it was unneeded and would do harm. Money wrongly placed, and

Peace is attained by the one who makes God his refuge...

money given from wrong motives are both to be greatly dreaded. We can afford to have as little as the Lord chooses to give, but we cannot afford to have

unconsecrated money, or to have money placed in the wrong position. Far better to have no money at all, even to buy food with; for there are plenty of ravens in China, and the Lord could send them again with bread and flesh..."

"Our Father is a very experienced One. He knows very well that His children wake up with a good appetite every morning, and He always provides breakfast for them, and does not send them supperless to bed at night. 'Thy bread shall be given

thee, and thy water shall be sure.' He sustained three million Israelites in the wilderness for forty years. We do not expect He will send three million missionaries to China ; but if He did, He would have ample means to sustain them all. Let us see that we keep God before our eyes; that we walk in His ways and seek to please and glorify Him in everything, great and small. Depend upon it, GOD's work done in GOD'S way will never lack GOD's Supplies."

It was men and women of faith, therefore, who were needed for the Inland Mission, prepared to depend on God alone, satisfied with poverty should He deem it best, and confident that His Word cannot be broken.

There is great wisdom in these words, and it is little wonder that the China Inland Mission met with much greater success in leading others to faith in Christ than those missionary organizations that operated along man's principles, seeking to shield themselves from trials and distresses. It is also not surprising that the China Inland Mission found itself accused of recklessness, irresponsibility and folly by those denominational groups that always kept suitable money in reserve, and insurance policies and lines of credit for emergencies. The flesh of man finds it a terrifying thing to be vulnerable before the world. Yet peace is attained by the one who makes God his refuge and looks to the bank of heaven to supply His needs.

One such family who were willing to embrace the life of faith faced their own tests as God brought them to cast all upon Him. We read of their experience in the following words.

In the little town of Attica two other hearts had been learning similar lessons, hearts united in an equally deep bond of love. Circumstances had changed a good deal for Mr. and Mrs. Frost since Mr. Taylor's previous visit, but their home seemed, if anything, more attractive than before. The marriage gift of his father, it had been beau-

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tified by the addition of paneled wooden ceilings, to replace the plaster ones which had fallen in the lower rooms, a detail that was to have a good deal to do with the direction of their lives at this time. With every comfort in their surroundings, a large circle of friends and nothing but happiness in their children, there seemed little of earthly good left to desire. But an unseen Hand was stirring up this nest, and Mr. Taylor's second visit found them in the midst of strange experiences.

For their income, which had hitherto been amply sufficient, had suddenly been cut off through the failure of a flourishing business. At his father's express desire, Mr. Frost had given up his own business some years previously, to devote himself entirely to evangelistic work. The father was well able to supply the needs of the family, and rejoiced to have fellowship in this way in his son's service for the Lord: But now, to his sorrow, this was no longer possible. To have gone back into secular employment would have greatly curtailed Mr. Henry W. Frost's usefulness as an evangelist, and would have necessitated his giving up much active participation in the work of the China Inland Mission. This he could not feel to be the will of God, after all the way in which he and Mr. Taylor had been led, and it practically came to be, as he expressed it, a question- "Which father are you really trusting?"

Outside the immediate family no one knew of their position, and both Mr. and Mrs. Frost saw it to be a special opportunity for putting to the test, not their faith only, but the definite promises of God. A few months previously they had determined never, under any circumstances, to go into debt. Amid the apparent comfort of their surroundings, therefore, and with wide margins of credit in the stores of the little town, they found themselves directly dependent upon their Heavenly Father even for daily bread. How searching as well as precious were the experiences through which they were learning more of His infinite faithfulness is a story to itself that we may not enter upon here. Suffice it to say that their joy in God was growing deeper and their desire to be

wholly engaged in His service stronger, although they little anticipated the sacrifice that would be involved.

Great was the encouragement to Mr. Frost, as to Mr. Taylor, of the welcome with which they were received at the Niagara Conference of this summer. The interest in China seemed deeper and the sympathy for the Inland Mission stronger than the previous year. The gifts of 1888 for the support of American workers were largely exceeded, and many new friendships were formed and old ones strengthened...

An unseen Hand was stirring up this nest...

Mr. Taylor's chief object in coming over being the settlement of the work upon a permanent basis, he gave much time to meetings with the Council and intercourse with its individual members. The number of the latter was increased, and Mr. Sandham finding it necessary, on account of many engagements, to retire from the position he had held, Mr. Frost was invited to assume the sole responsibility as Treasurer and Secretary, making his home in Toronto.

So this was what it had all been leading to! In view of recent experiences, he was himself prepared for a life of faith with regard to temporal supplies; but he knew that Mrs. Frost would feel giving up their lovely home very keenly, on account of the children.

"One day as I was in the parlor, resting," he wrote of this critical time, "my wife, unknown to me, was waiting upon God in her own room for guidance. While thus engaged she was led to open her Bible and to read in the book of Haggai; and she had not read long in this portion of Scripture before she had the light for which she had been so earnestly seeking. A moment later I

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heard her coming to me across the library and hall. She stepped to my side, and without a word laid her open Bible on my knee, pointing as she did so to the fourth verse of the first chapter of Haggai. I looked at the words indicated and read as follows:

'Is it a time for you, o ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses and this house lie waste?'

"It was not necessary that my wife should say anything to explain her meaning; the lesson was

Two hundred and fifty dollars with the Lord was all that we could need.

self-evident. One look in her face showed me that the Lord had won the victory for her, and one look at the ceiling overhead settled the question finally for myself. From

that hour, though it was not an easy thing to do, we were united in our desire to give up our home, in order that we might have part in the building of that spiritual house, the temple of Christ's body, which we knew the Lord was waiting to see completed."

Gladly would Mr. Taylor have made it possible for the step to be taken without financial difficulty; but while he could give them enough for the actual move, there was little over. The contributions at Niagara and in other centers, while amounting to thousands of dollars, were almost all designated for individual missionaries, and could not be drawn upon. About fifty pounds given to Mr. Taylor for his own use he felt free to pass on, but "beyond this" he said quite frankly, "I can promise you nothing. You will have to look to the Lord for supplies, as we do in England and in China."

"I confess," was Mr. Frost's very natural recollection, "that Mr. Taylor's words did not at first suggest an inviting prospect. To move my family and belongings, to take a home in a strange city, to invite a large number of candidates into that

home, to supply their needs and our own and to carry on the work of the Mission with little more than two hundred and fifty dollars was certainly not a promising arrangement from an earthly standpoint. But recent experiences had given me to understand that there was a factor in the case not to be left out, and which being reckoned upon altered the proposition. That factor was the Lord Himself. Two hundred and fifty dollars was anything but a large sum with which to begin such an undertaking; but two hundred and fifty dollars with the Lord was all that we could need. Thus, so far as finances were concerned, I soon felt prepared to accept Mr. Taylor's offer."

There are many in this hour who have been dwelling in their paneled and ceiled houses who are hearing the call to follow Christ into circumstances where they will daily have to look to Yahweh for their provision. There is often nothing than "a still, small voice that guides them." Yet weighing all things, and having waited upon the Father to be sure that they have discerned between the voice of their own soul, and the voice of the Spirit, many are accepting the challenges and finding the Father faithful.

He has not promised us that there would not be sacrifices, or material loss, or even seasons of poverty and hunger. But He will never abandon His people, or forsake them. There is truly a fellowship in joining Christ in His sufferings.

The following excerpt from Rick Joyner's book *The Call* is here presented as a fitting conclusion to this series of writings. It is written as Christ speaking to His people.

"Those who come to Me now, fighting through all the forces of the world that rebel against Me, come because they have the true love of God. They want to be with Me so much that even when it all seems unreal, even when I seem like a vague dream to them, they will risk all for the hope that the dream is real. That is love. That is the love of

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the truth. That is the faith that pleases My Father. All will bow the knee when they see My power and glory, but those who bow the knee now when they can only see Me dimly through the eyes of faith are the obedient ones who love Me in Spirit and in truth. These I will soon entrust with the power and the glory of the age to come..."

May you be blessed with peace and understanding in these days.

*These I will soon entrust
with the power and the
glory of the age to
come...*

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PARABLES PRECEPT— What's in a Name?

HELLO
my name is

Joshua

Joshua was the name of Moses' servant who was chosen by God to lead the people of Israel into the land of Canaan. Joshua became a great warrior. He led the Israelites in all their battles as they took possession of the land promised to them.

The name Joshua means "Yahweh saves." This is the same name that the Son of God bore some 1,500 years later. Although most English speaking Christians

call the Son of God Jesus, His Hebrew name was the same as Joshua of the Old Testament.

Joshua was a type and shadow of Jesus. Christ leads His people into battle as they wage war to take possession of the land promised to them. What is this land? Christ identified the kingdom given to His disciples with the following words.

Luke 17:20-21

"The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."

Christians today have been promised that God will lead them to victory over every enemy in

their flesh. No giant, no stronghold, no walled city will be able to stand against them.

What are the giants and enemies we face today? They are fear, lust, pride, anger, covetousness, and things like them. Our Savior is proclaims that "Yahweh Saves" today. He will set us free from all that holds us captive. He will lead us to take possession of the land in which we dwell.

What a marvelous parable God has hidden in the history of Israel. The pattern is "first the natural, then the spiritual." They had a natural kingdom to conquer. We have a spiritual kingdom to establish.

Our Champion, Yahshua, goes before us!