

from: HAND ON THE HELM.

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*Something Supernatural
Confronted Invader Planes*

It was a crucial moment in British history.

Deep in the underground operations room of the 11th Group Fighter Command on a Sunday morning in September, 1940, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and his military advisors sat watching the lights on the electrical battle charts.

Because of the demolitions during the previous retreat to Dunkirk, the British were dangerously short of defense materials. In all of England there were only 500 eighteen-pound guns, many of them stripped from museums, with which they could repel an invading army; and they were equally short of all other defense materials.¹

Intelligence reports from the continent clearly indicated invasion of England by the enemy was under preparation.

As early as July, Hitler had ordered his Luftwaffe (the German air force) to begin shooting Royal Air Force planes out of the sky to make air defense of the British Isles ineffective, if not impossible. This had been a difficult job, for the Royal Air Force had fought furiously, and had shot down 164 Nazi bombers that month with a loss of only 58 of their own aircraft. In August, despite insufficient sleep and rest, the out-numbered British downed 662 Nazi bombers, while losing only 360 of their own.¹

Yet, even though the Royal Air Force continued to inflict heavy

losses on the seemingly inexhaustible supply of enemy aircraft, the men watching those electrical charts in the underground operations room knew that the scores could change. They knew the capacity of the Nazi war-time factories had been increased to produce more modern planes and to produce them faster than the British could. England needed a miracle and needed it soon.

As Churchill watched on that momentous September Sunday, a sudden alert showed more than forty aircraft approaching from the French seaport, Dieppe; more than forty approaching from another direction; more than sixty from still another; and even more than eighty aircraft approaching in one unit.¹

As each Nazi formation neared the English coast a British squadron would rise to meet it. Since there were only 25 squadrons assigned to the 11th Fighter Command defending southern England, soon all of them were in the air.¹

Tension grew in the underground shelter.

Air Vice-Marshal Keith R. Park requested reinforcements from Stanmore to the north; but they could spare only three squadrons.

"What other resources have we?" Churchill asked.

"None, Sir," was the reply. The room was silent.

"The odds were great; our margin small; the stakes infinite," Churchill wrote later.¹

Then inexplicably, the discs on the wall chart began to move eastward. The great Nazi air flotilla had turned back. With 185 of their aircraft downed in flames, they were in retreat! Miraculously, against all logistical probability, the Royal Air Force had won the battle!¹

Just why Royal Air Force pilots continued to win against unbelievable odds may or may not be satisfactorily explained in the records of the Imperial General Staff. But British Intelligence officers received strange information from three different members of the Nazi armed forces. One was from a Nazi pilot captured after his crippled plane was downed in England.

"Why did your formation retreat when only two planes were attacking you?" the intelligence officers asked the prisoner.²

"Two!" exclaimed the pilot. "There were hundreds!"

After the prisoner had been dismissed, the British intelligence officers exchanged puzzled glances. They all but dismissed the strange reply until a Luftwaffe officer, captured later, asked them in perplexity.

"Where did you get all the planes you threw into the battle over Britain?"²

His British interrogators managed to mask their surprise. Actually, the powerful Nazi bomber force had been met by a mere handful of little outmoded Royal Air Force Spitfire and Hurricane fighters. There was no sky full of Royal Air Force planes! Only a few dog-tired pilots, making anywhere from their third to their seventh combat mission that day, had met his mighty bombers.

Perhaps visionary planes rode the skies in formation with the Royal Air Force and perhaps only the Nazis could see those planes that convinced them they were confronted by overwhelming numbers.

It was the remarks of an imprisoned Nazi Intelligence officer captured still later that came nearest to disclosing the divine source of the plane-filled mirages which had confused the Luftwaffe pilots.

"With the striking of your Big Ben clock each evening at nine," the Nazi told the British Intelligence officer, "you used a secret weapon which we did not understand. It was very powerful and we could find no countermeasure against it..."³

He was right! There was a powerful force set in motion each evening as Big Ben struck nine. It was the powerful force of a nation in heartfelt prayer, against which no countermeasure *could* hope to prevail... a nation in prayer to the omnipotent God of creation. Each evening as Big Ben in the clock tower of the Parliament Building struck nine, the people of the British Isles and of the far-flung English Commonwealth halted for the famous *Silent Moment of Prayer*.

Inspiration for this *Silent Moment of Prayer* had come from a prominent industrialist, W. Tudor Pole, as a result of a conversation years earlier with a soldier buddy in World War I. As Pole and his friend chatted in the mouth of a cave near Jerusalem on the eve of

battle, a moment of silence fell;—then Pole's young companion turned to him and said,

"I shall not come through this struggle. Like thousands of others, it shall be my destiny to go on now.

"You will survive. You will live to see a greater and more vital conflict fought on every continent, on every ocean, and in the sky."

Pole's friend continued with a plea for a spiritual response from all those who would fight in that future war. He stressed the power of silence and urged a moment of silence each day. Then he said, "When those tragic days arrive, do not forget us."¹

The next day, as he had predicted, the young man was killed in battle. Pole was severely wounded and was captured, but managed to escape with an overwhelming sense of miraculous aid.²

He never forgot his friend's parting words. Years later, during that "greater, more vital conflict fought . . . on every ocean and in the sky," after he had become a wealthy industrialist, Pole put his visionary friend's suggestion into effect. He proposed the *Silent Moment of Prayer*. Through his influence this daily, prayerful observance was begun during the dark days of the miraculous evacuation of Dunkirk in 1940.

Did these prayers materialize into the hundreds of visionary planes which the defeated Nazi pilots thought they had seen?

Were these prayers the "secret weapon" the Nazi Intelligence officer asked about? One can only note that the "secret weapon for which we could find no countermeasure," operated "with the striking Big Ben at nine P.M.," . . . *The Silent Moment of Prayer!*

Notes

¹Albert La Fay, "Be Ye Men of Valor," *National Geographic*, August 1965. Used with permission.

²*Shoring Magazine*, February 1961, San Diego, California.

³*Round the World At Nine O'Clock* (London: Big Ben Council). By kind permission of W. Tudor Pole.

Japanese Admiral Encountered Invisible, Impenetrable Shield

Admiral Sako was in command of the Japanese submarines that entered Pearl Harbor and helped Japanese fighter planes destroy the Hawaiian-based American Naval vessels in the surprise attack of December 7th, 1941.

Later, he maneuvered his submarines, undetected, to the very shores of the United States and attempted to assault the coast of California.

Some years after the war, Admiral Sako toured the United States and related what had transpired during those attempted attacks. But much had happened to Japan in the interim. And much had happened to the Admiral, too, before he made that speaking tour of America.

After the fall of Japan in 1945, Prince Higashi-Kuni, the Premier, had sent for Toyohiko Kagawa, a Japanese Christian, and said:

"Dr. Kagawa, Japan has been destroyed, not because we had not sufficient army, but because we had suffered the loss of a good standard of morality and engaged in war.

"We need a new standard of ethics like that of Jesus Christ. Buddhism can never teach us to forgive our enemies, nor can Shintoism. Only Christ was able to love His enemies.

"Therefore, Dr. Kagawa, if Japan is to be revived, we need Jesus

Christ as the basis of our moral life. I want you to help me put the love of Jesus Christ into the hearts of our people."¹

Later, Kagawa was called to preach to the Emperor Hiro-Hito... "for half an hour," but the Emperor did not look at his watch. Neither did Kagawa. He preached for an hour and forty-five minutes; and ended with reading from his battered Bible, "Whosoever would be great among you must be the servant of all."²

Voicing an opinion similar to that of Premier Higashi-Kuni, the honorable Hachira Yuasa, President of the International Christian University in Japan, stated: "In the Fellowship of the Cross is the hope for reconciliation of broken humanity and for the creation of a Christian world order."²

As a result of the efforts of Premier Higashi-Kuni and others, Christian influence was being felt in postwar Japan and was growing quietly. That is how Admiral Sako happened to attend a prayer meeting one night. It was just a small group, but there was great sincerity and a spiritual power permeating it that was almost tangible.

→ Admiral Sako was converted. He became a powerful Christian speaker. Eventually, he toured the United States. Repeatedly, he told his audiences of the great need for a Christian world. But he spoke most often of the power of corporate prayer.

He described a strange bafflement during the war when he had approached the shores of the United States to fire upon her cities.

"We were unable to do any damage," Admiral Sako confided. "*It was the power of corporate prayer which protected your mainland.*"

There have been other occasions when prayer apparently provided an impenetrable shield during danger. One of the strangest events occurred in Vietnam not too long ago.

Notes

¹Cyril Davey, *Kagawa of Japan* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1939), p. 125.

²Robert Merrill Bartlett, *They Dare To Believe* (New York: Association Press, 1952).

Blinding Legions of Light Surrounded Vietnam Village

It happened early in 1968. A whole village in South Vietnam experienced a miracle of divine intervention and protection. A few months later, Keith Swaggerty and his friend, Cliff Custer, were visiting in that village and the Mayor described the strange occurrence.

Under cover of darkness a Viet Cong soldier, one of a battalion of over a thousand men in the area, came to the village and warned, "Tomorrow is your day. So if you are going to get anyone out of the village, get them out now."

This Viet Cong battalion had been capturing village after village at will in that vicinity. But the young boy had learned to love and respect the Christians of this small community, even though he was a Viet Cong guerrilla. He was giving them twenty-four hours notice of the planned attack.

The Mayor did not arouse the villagers that night. He knew the Viet Cong would not attack by daylight, so "tomorrow" meant "tomorrow night." The next day he called his people together and told them of the informer's message.

"We cannot defeat them by force," the villagers said. "We do not have necessary arms and ammunition."

"But," they decided, "we believe that Christ can be our defender."

So they agreed that they would turn to Him in prayer.

Fervently, they prayed and sang songs of praise and thanksgiving throughout the day. And their hearts were lifted.

At last, at dusk, they could see the Viet Cong moving in the edge of the surrounding trees, getting into position to attack. But a strange peace and courage filled the hearts of the villagers. They smiled at each other as they still sang, and prayed.

When complete darkness closed in, the first shots were heard. But as suddenly as the barrage began, it ceased. Not another shot was fired around the entire village area... nothing but silence out there the whole night through... nothing but silence all the next day. Nor in the days to follow were any shots fired into the village.

A few days later, some of those attacking men were captured by approaching South Vietnamese forces and brought into the village.

"Why did you halt your attack on our village?" they were asked.

"As we opened fire," the Viet Cong prisoners replied excitedly, "all of a sudden there appeared, all around the village, men clad in shining white. We fired at them but they wouldn't fall. They shone brighter than the sun and we couldn't aim at them. We were terrified and we ran."

"That happened just a few months ago," Cliff Custer concluded in telling the incident at the annual meeting of the Camps Farthest Out held at Oral Roberts University. "And why didn't it make headlines?... because no one would believe it."

"And yet," he added, "when Keith [Swaggerty] later told this story in New Zealand, a woman was sitting in the audience nodding her head. After the talk, she came up and shook Keith's hand."

"I saw you agreeing with me as I told of the village defenders clad all in white," he said. "You seemed to know what was going to happen before I told it. Were you there?"

"No, I wasn't there," she replied. "But I was in Africa when the Mau-Mau uprising took place. And when some of them were attacking our village, we were in prayer and later they reported the same thing."

"They wouldn't attack because there were these 'somebodies' all

in white, radiant, glowing, and they couldn't break through.'"¹

Stories of legions of angels protecting believers who put their faith in God rather than in arms or flight are more common than most people imagine. But many of these occurrences have never reached the printed page. Yet, Christ, Himself, spoke of these "legions of angels" which He could have called to His aid and thus avoided the crucifixion (Matthew 26:53).

Notes

¹*Fellowship Messenger*, July 1968, St. Paul, Minnesota. (Report of a speech made by Cliff Custer at the annual meeting of the Camps Farthest Out held at Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, Oklahoma, May 1968.)

*Soldiers Shielded
On Dunkirk Beach*

Lying on the shell-torn beach at Dunkirk, with machine gun bullets and shrapnel kicking up sand alongside him, and Nazi bombers dropping their lethal missiles all around him, a British chaplain hugged the sand for what seemed like hours.

It was during that tragic, miraculous week in May, 1940, when the British army, in hopeless retreat, lay exposed on the sand dunes of Dunkirk. Armed only with their rifles, the British Tommies were trapped at the water's edge, pinned down by the Nazi guns with little hope of rescue.

Suddenly, the British chaplain realized that despite the deafening noise and the machine gun bullets and shrapnel kicking up the sand all about him, he hadn't been hit.

Dazedly, with the bullets still whizzing past, he stood up; and looked at a surprising sight...the impress of his own shape in the sand...the only smooth, undisturbed spot in the whole bullet-pocked area.¹

Something mysterious was happening on the beaches at Dunkirk; and the chaplain was not the only one to notice it and to comment on it afterwards.

Four hundred times as miraculous and unexplainable as the experience of the British chaplain was the one reported in the London

papers by C.B. Morelock, for it involved over four hundred men who were machine-gunned systematically, up and down, and bombed by sixty enemy aircraft, again and again. And, in the end, *there was not a single casualty!* Every one of those men left that beach unharmed!¹

Notes

¹Margaret Lee Runbeck, *The Great Answer* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., Cambridge Riverside Press, 1944). Used by kind permission of the author and Harold Matson Co., New York, subsequent copyright owners.

*Ninety-First Psalm Became
Their Impenetrable Shield*

For four long years, in the *front line warfare* of World War I, the British regiment commanded by Colonel Whittlesey had not one casualty. *They did not lose a single man!* They could only give one explanation for this incredible record.

During those interminable years of danger and valor, every officer and every enlisted man in the regiment daily affirmed his faith in God's protection by repeating the Ninety-first Psalm:

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

"I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.

"Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence...

"Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.

"A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee..."

"Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation;

"There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

"For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways..."

Each officer and soldier in the regiment carried a complete copy of the psalm and either read it or recited it from memory daily.

Considering the casualty totals for the war; and more specifically, considering the casualties experienced by adjacent regiments, the chances that an entire regiment could go through such front-line battles *without a single casualty were astronomical!*

Religious magazines on both sides of the Atlantic published the story. And it was pointed out that, as hard as it might be for some people to believe that the bullets and shells aimed at the men of this regiment were supernaturally deflected, it was harder still to believe that *coincidence could have sent that many bullets astray.*¹

There have been many other occasions when deadly bullets have been supernaturally deflected from their intended victims.

*He Stood Untouched By
35 Firing Machine Guns*

"It was the greatest thing accomplished by any private soldier of the armies of Europe," Marshal Foch, French Commander-in-Chief of allied forces, once declared.

The private soldier was a red-headed American mountaineer, Alvin York, deeply religious, and definitely opposed to war. Tenets of his church forbade his engaging in warfare; and he had been released from duty in the army. But he did not believe that he should let others fight the battles for his freedom and protection while he remained safe at home. He did not feel good about letting others fight for the country he loved while he refused to help. He spent an entire night in prayer on the mountain top near his home. After an agonizing struggle with his conscience, his love of country prevailed and he rejoined his unit.²

On October 6th, 1918, he was in a reconnaissance group of sixteen men sent to locate the German division responsible for the deadly machine gun fire that was pinning down his American unit.²

Stepping out of a thicket in the Argonne forest, all sixteen men walked unknowingly right into the fire from thirty-five machine guns. Ten of the mountaineer's followers were killed instantly and two others were wounded but dashed back into the thicket. So did the three other men in the group. But red-headed Alvin York was angry. He stood his ground.²

Every time a gunner peeped over the rim of his machine gun nest, York sent a rifle bullet through his head. Oblivious to the German bullets, he stood erect and downed the enemy with deadly accuracy. When the German officer sent a bayonet squad after him, York picked off each of the men, beginning with the last one and finally dropping the leader.²

Amazed at his prowess, the German Major called out that he would surrender his entire force if York would cease firing. York agreed, and marched 132 prisoners, including three officers back to his own lines.²

General Pershing, commander of the American Expeditionary Force, acclaimed Alvin York "the greatest soldier of the war."

The young redhead was spared to a good purpose that strange day in the Argonne forest. When he came home, he was persuaded to reenact the dramatic occasion for a Hollywood film and was well paid for his work. He used the money right in his home community to build better schools and a church-centered college, and to improve the general living conditions of the underprivileged mountain folk there. He spent it all for others, and died in poverty.

Alvin York absolutely believed that God supernaturally shielded him from those machine gun bullets.

"It was a higher power that shielded us," York said years later. "The man on my right and the man on my left were shot to pieces. I never got so much as a scratch or a cut on my uniform."²

Navy Crew Watched Torpedo's Approach

There was also the strange case of the "crazy" torpedoes told by a deeply spiritual Texas boy in the United States Navy during World War II.

Before he left home, this Navy volunteer had agreed with his equally Christian mother that they would both repeat the 91st Psalm at a given prayer hour each day to keep him "under the shadow of the Almighty," in danger and out. The mother told the contents of one of her boy's wartime letters at the nearby Haven Of Rest Chapel services. He wrote of the crisis while his ship was under attack from the air and from enemy submarines.

His ship's antiaircraft guns were chattering incessantly and the boom of the heavy guns added to the din. Every battle station on the ship was operating. An enemy submarine advanced within firing range; and the men were watching for the wake of a torpedo, when the young Texan realized that his prayer hour had arrived. He began the 91st Psalm just as the torpedo wake appeared, tracing a direct route toward their battleship.

"I was sure that others on deck were praying, too," he wrote. In a flash, he remembered that his mother was praying at that very moment. Suddenly, when the torpedo was but a short distance away, something seemed to go wrong with its mechanism. It swerved, passed to the stern, and disappeared.

But a second torpedo was already on its way, again aimed directly at them.

"I was not afraid, for I knew God was able," he wrote. Again, at about the same distance from them, the torpedo abruptly "seemed to go crazy." It spun in the water, turned sharply and passed by the bow of the ship. No further torpedoes were fired and the submarine disappeared. The whole vessel must have been "under the shadow of the Almighty," for it received not a hit nor a scratch from the air attack either!³

*Bullets Missed
General Gordon*

Like Private York and Colonel Whittlesey and his troops in World War I days, General "Chinese" Gordon (General Charles George Gordon, 1833-1885) seemed divinely protected from bullets. He habitually *led* his troops into battle, rather than directing them from the rear. He served the British Empire well in many parts of the world, including China, India, the Near East, and Africa.

General Gordon always carried a Bible in his saddle pouch; for he preferred the study of the Bible to that of the manual of arms. He seemed to find encouragement in any task which was apparently impossible. If he must depend upon God rather than upon human skill, then Gordon actually seemed more convinced of victory than if the task appeared humanly possible. Someone said that it was as if "the terrible power of the unadorned words of the book of God awakened in him a like power."⁴

And that must have been the case when he breached the wall of a well-garrisoned city in China where the armed forces within were rebelling against the Chinese government. No sooner had Gordon's artillery managed to knock a hole in the wall than withering fire from within poured out upon his troops. It seemed that there wasn't even a small square of space in that gaping hole through which bullets were not coming at them.

But General "Chinese" Gordon walked right up to that hole in the wall and began firing at the revolutionists within. His appearance, after having apparently walked through their wall of bullets, so unnerved the rebels that they began to retreat, hotly pursued by Gordon's forces. The General's troops victoriously took the city.⁴

Among the men of destiny who seem to have enjoyed supernatural protection in times of danger, General George Washington, first President of the United States, had many narrow escapes from harrowing dilemmas.

Notes

¹Will Ouhlsler, "The Power of Prayer," *American Weekly*, 21 February 1958. Used by permission of the publishers.

²Adapted from *Lives That Inspire* by Beatrice Plumb. Copyright © 1962 by T.S. Dennison & Co., Minneapolis, Minnesota.

³*A Miracle in the Pacific*, published by Old Paths Tract Society, Shoels, Indiana. Furnished by Haven of Rest Chapel, Christian Triumph Co., Texas. Used by permission.

⁴Achmed Abdullah and T. Compton, *Dreamers of Empire* (New York: Frederick Stokes & Co., 1929).

*Five-Day War Countered
1967 Communist Threat*

The world was threatened with global war in 1967. Egypt, Syria and other Arab countries, armed and supported by Russia, declared their intentions of destroying Israel.¹

By closing the Straits of Tiran at the mouth of the Gulf of Aqaba, Egypt cut off Israel's shipping to and from her southern port of Eilat. Since Egypt had long denied Israeli shipping access to the Suez Canal, her closing of the Straits of Tiran was considered by Israel to be extremely provocative aggression.

When diplomatic efforts in the United Nations failed to lift Egypt's blockade, war was inevitable. Israel, with merely two and a half million inhabitants, was faced by a coalition of Arab nations with a combined population of between one and two hundred million people!

But Israel was a praying nation, as her history records, and the Israelis were praying.

When Egyptian tanks lumbered across the Sinai desert and ordered the United Nations' peace-keeping force off Arab soil, the Israelis mobilized their civilian army. As soon as the firing began, Israeli planes darted into the air, took a circuitous route to the enemy airfields, and destroyed the Arab air capabilities—on the ground—and hundreds of their tanks as well. Pushing rapidly through the

desert, the Israeli tanks captured Sharm El Sheik, the fort controlling the Straits of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba.

It was then that supernatural forces joined the praying Israelis.

In one instance, an Israeli tank force, halted by a sudden dust storm because of zero visibility, had a wait of only twenty minutes for it to blow over. But when it ended as suddenly as it had begun, it had swept the sand off the road ahead, revealing an enemy mine field.

Another time in the Sinai, a radio operator in the lead tank saw a never-explained veil of smoke rise up in front of the unit and call out, "Turn to the left." The entire unit followed the lead tank to the left, except the very last vehicle, a scout car. Blinded by dust at the turn, the driver proceeded straight ahead. There was a sudden explosion as his tank struck a mine. An extensive mine field was discovered, which had been avoided by the mystifying puff of smoke and the warning to turn to the left. The Israelis swiftly captured and occupied the Sinai Desert.

Meanwhile, the Israelis also defeated the Jordanian army to the east, destroying their attacking planes and capturing a large number of Jordanian tanks.

Orthodox Jews would go into battle singing the Psalms, and supernatural forces would aid them during their conflict with the Arabs. Once, as a unit was proceeding from Bethlehem toward Hebron, they noticed a strange appearance at the tomb of Abraham—and old man with a flowing beard, dressed all in white, standing with hands raised heavenward.

"There's a war on. If you stay here you are quite likely to get killed," one of the Israeli officers called out to him. When the old man showed no sign of having heard him, the officer sent a soldier to repeat it at close hand. But as the soldier reached out to grasp the aged arm and get his attention, the old man suddenly disappeared.

After agreeing to a cease-fire arrangement with Egypt and Jordan, Israel turned her attention to the Syrian forces attacking her on the north. She routed them, and was making good headway toward the Syrian capital, Damascus, before another United Nations cease-fire was accepted by both sides. But not before the strange event in the

cornfield occurred.

Twenty-one Israeli soldiers were defending a village being attacked by five Russian-built tanks and one hundred Syrian troops advancing through a cornfield standing ready for the harvest. The Israeli defenders had only a few old rifles left over from World War I and a limited amount of ammunition, including a few flares.

"We'll have to fire the flares and then run for it," the Israeli leader announced, their defeat inevitable. Israeli bullets had been merely bouncing off the tanks. But moments after the flares were fired, they suddenly ignited the corn field. The attacking forces turned to flee.

Syrian forces dropped their arms and ammunition as they fled through the hazard of the flames. One of their tanks, in attempting to cross a stream to safety, rolled over on its back and lay there. Another ran up on a large boulder in the field and hung there with its treads revolving helplessly. The remaining tanks and soldiers made their escape as rapidly as possible.

Many Israeli soldiers returning home from the Middle East battles in the Sinai, Jordan and Syria, jubilantly reported the miraculous events that aided them. Included was the strange report of an Arab mine set off by an Israeli captain's jeep. The explosion killed the driver and seriously wounded the man sitting next to him, but it set off such thundering echoes among the canyons, crags, and mountain peaks nearby that it sounded like a massive artillery attack and the enemy retreated pell mell from an advantageous, almost inaccessible position without firing a shot.²

In the Five-Day-War, Israel, acting boldly in faith, had wiped out the war potential of her main Arab assailants, whose populations, along with their Arab allies, outnumbered her forty-to-one.

Other Arab allies had not even put their forces into the field before the Jordanians, Egyptians, and Syrians had agreed to a cease-fire, their striking power having been destroyed by Israel's swift air and tank attacks.

It should also be noted that during the Israeli-Arab confrontation, Russia gave no direct military assistance or manpower to the Arab nations, although she had armed them and backed their threats

against Israel. Who can prove that Russia's hesitancy and avoidance of direct military involvement were not the result of divinely placed fears in the hearts of the leaders in the Kremlin?

Perhaps the ancestors of some of the men participating in the above miracles of war may have taken part in an equally fantastic event in the adjacent desert of Edom, centuries earlier, when a "river of blood" decided the outcome.

"River Of Blood"
Decided Battle

Far out in the dusty desert of Edom occurred one of the eeriest miraculous answers to prayer in all history.

It happened around 849 B.C. when Moab rebelled against the annual payment of tributes.

Moab had been paying a tribute of one hundred thousand rams and one hundred thousand lambs each year to the King of Israel. But when the Israelite king, Ahab, died, the Moabites decided that they would not pay the tribute to his son and successor, Jehoram.

Angered, Jehoram decided to subdue the rebels and enlisted the aid of the King of Edom and of Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, the remnant of the Jewish nation that had remained faithful to God. Passing through the wilderness of Edom enroute to Moab, however, the three combined armies found themselves without water for man or beast. They were too far into the desert to turn back; yet pressing forward would be a thirst-filled disaster. It was a desperate situation. King Jehoshaphat suggested that they seek out a prophet and through him ask for God's aid. Accordingly, they asked Elisha to intercede for them.

Grumbling, because he had little respect for the irreligious Israelite, Jehoram, or for the King of Edom, Elisha, for the sake of the devout King Jehoshaphat, sought God's guidance. After listening to the soothing music of a minstrel, while the kings waited in silence, Elisha prophesied, "Thus saith the Lord, Make this valley full of

*Birth of Nation
Hung in Balance*

It was 1787 and the dissensions of a nation-in-the-making could be heard throughout the convention hall in Philadelphia. Endless rivalries and controversies kept the delegates in a continuing state of turmoil. They had been sent from their home colonies to create a constitution that would unite the former British colonies on the Atlantic seaboard of North America into a single, strong nation, but success did not seem to be within their grasp.

In the end, they met from May until September. The first few weeks were filled with dissension so serious that the participants despaired of accomplishing anything at all. They were unable to agree upon a single issue and not a vestige of a constitution had been adopted.

Some of the delegates were talking angrily of departure and abandonment of the project. But Benjamin Franklin arose and addressed General George Washington, Chairman:

"I have lived a long time, Sir; and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth . . . that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an Empire can arise without His aid? We have been assured, Sir, in the Sacred Writings that 'except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.' I firmly believe this;

and I also believe that without His concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel.

"The small progress we have made after four or five weeks of close attention and continual reasoning with each other is melancholy proof of the imperfection of human understanding," Franklin asserted.

"Without God's help," he pointed out, "we shall be divided by our little, partial, local interests, our project will be confounded; and we ourselves shall become a reproach and a byword down to future ages.

"And, what is worse, mankind may hereafter, from this unfortunate instance, despair of establishing government by human wisdom and leave it to chance, war, or conquest.

"I therefore beg leave to move that hereafter prayers imploring the assistance of Heaven and its blessing on our deliberations be held in this assembly every morning before we proceed to business, and that one or more of the clergy of this city be requested to officiate in that service."

"From that moment, they began to make great progress," writes Melvin Evans in his inspiring book entitled *It Works* and he adds that the great English statesman, William Ewart Gladstone, characterized the Constitution of the United States, which they produced under the invoked guidance of God, as "the greatest piece of work ever struck off at a given time by the brain and purpose of man."

"The United States is undoubtedly the creation of God," Mr. Evans continues. "We must make it worthy of this destiny.

"If Benjamin Franklin, one of the greatest minds of all time, deemed it necessary to call upon God's help to solve the perplexities of a tiny struggling nation, can we find the proper solution to problems that are infinitely more complex, and in fact embrace the entire world, if we do not seek similar guidance?" he asks.²

Probably any of the writers of the Constitution would have been astonished if they had been told that the most famous English statesman of the coming century would declare their document to be the greatest of its kind ever written; and that it would be the model after which nearly every free government to originate in that century

would be fashioned.

Thus, prayer may be credited in large measure with the founding of the United States of America.

Notes

¹Clarence W. Hall, "A Man of Faith," *Christian Herald*. Copyright © May 1953. Used by permission of the author and publisher.

²Melvin Evans, *It Works* (Democracy in Action, 1946). Used by permission of the author.

Bible Supplied Plan of Attack in Modern Battle

For the struggle in the Holy Land during World War I, General E.H.H. Allenby seemed a good choice to block the Kaiser's aggressive plans. And during this time, the guidance of the Bible figured in the most decisive battle fought for the control of Palestine.

General Allenby, with his Sixtieth British Division, entered onto the plain surrounding Megiddo and Mischmash, which lies north of Jerusalem. Sometimes called the plain of Megiddo, and sometimes Aesdralon, this great valley is known to be the bloodiest plain in all of history.¹

Here, blood again will flow when the awesome final battle of the ages takes place; the Armageddon spoken of in Revelation 16:16.

Here, located at the foot of the pass through the Carmel Mountains, between the fertile valley of the Euphrates in Asia and the equally rich valley of the Nile in Africa, the earliest trade routes had wound their way thousands of years before the birth of Christ. Here, enormous armies, following the trade routes, met and fought over this plain.

Archeologists have uncovered twenty cities, one above the other, demolished by warring armies. On this spot, stood the magnificent Canaanite palace whose walls were covered with gold and with historical scenes carved in ivory. The vast stables of Solomon also

*President Set Aside Day of
Public Fasting and Prayer*

With strange consistency, military successes followed fervent prayer in World War I during the year 1918.

It was on April 2nd of that year that the Congress of the United States asked the President to set aside a day of national public humiliation, fasting and prayer, as President Lincoln had once done, asking God for the welfare of our cause, His blessing on our arms and a speedy restoration of an honorable and lasting peace.

Answering that request, President Woodrow Wilson did set aside a day of national humiliation, fasting and prayer by a proclamation issued on May 11, 1918. In part, his proclamation read:

"And whereas it has always been the recent habit of the people of the United States to turn in humble appeal to Almighty God for His guidance in the affairs of their common life.

"Now therefore, I, Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Thursday, the thirtieth day of May, a day already freighted with sacred and stimulating memories, a day of public *humiliation, prayer and fasting* and do exhort my fellow citizens of all faiths and creeds to assemble on that day in their several places of worship, there, as well as in their homes, to pray Almighty God that He may forgive our sins and shortcomings as a people and purify our hearts to see and love the truth, to accept and defend all

things that are just and right, and to propose only those righteous acts and judgements which are in conformity with His will; beseeching Him that He will give victory to our armies as they fight for freedom, wisdom to those who take counsel on our behalf in these days of dark struggle and perplexity, steadfastness to our people to make sacrifice to the utmost in support of what is just and true, bringing us at last the peace in which man's hearts can be at rest because it is founded upon mercy, justice and goodwill..."

"Woodrow Wilson"¹

Following the President's proclamation many allied successes occurred. Another development which may have helped induce these successes was the formation of the Army of Prayer in the United States. Mrs. Mary Brabson Littleton took the initiative in organizing this army of fervent petitioners for victory and peace. Thousands signed the prayer cards, pledging their continuous prayers for victory, peace, and the safety of allied soldiers on the front.

From the time the national army of prayer was formed, not one overseas transport was sunk, nor did Pershing's forces lose a single battle.

The whole year of 1918 was a year of miracles for the allies. Not only did the "White Battalion" appear on the battlefield of Bethune, France, stampeding the Kaiser's formerly invincible forces. It was also the year Alvin York, the prayerful American mountaineer, cleared out thirty-five enemy machine gun nests single-handedly, and captured 132 officers and men of the Kaiser's army. Individual airmen, artillerymen, infantrymen and naval personnel began reporting miracle after miracle of individual protection in one apparently hopeless crisis after another. And 1918 was the year the allies broke through the Hindenburg line.

French, English, American and Australian victories on both land and sea occurred in 1918. The Kaiser's ally, Bulgaria, sued for peace. Another ally of the Kaiser, Austria, was defeated and made final surrender, too. And the German people revolted and deposed the Kaiser, who had to flee his empire and take refuge in Holland.

Finally, 1918 was the year in which the German nation made peace. The armistice was proclaimed six months to the day after President Wilson's call to prayer.

Notes

¹Congressional Records, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

*Pagan in Raging Battle
Offered Prayer to God*

Long ago in the fifth century, Queen Clothilde, wife of Clovis, King of the Franks, was a Christian. She often urged her royal mate to accept Christianity; but he refused her entreaties. He was still unconverted when he went to war with the Alemanni in 496 A.D.

In those days, kings preserved their lives and kingdoms by fighting, subduing, and rendering tributary any tribe or kingdom bordering their own which appeared to be growing strong enough to challenge or threaten them. This was why Clovis went to war with the Alemanni—to make them his subjects rather than his rivals. But the Alemanni were fighting for *their* lives and freedom; and they fought fiercely and well.

King Clovis, seeing his soldiers falling all around him, and the enemy steadily advancing across the field, began to realize that he was fighting a losing battle. With a sudden humility, he looked up to heaven and implored:

"Most mighty God, whom my queen Clothilde worships and adores with all her heart and soul, I pledge Thee perpetual service unto Thy faith; if only Thou givest me now the victory over mine enemies."¹

Instantly, his men were filled with burning valor and fought with irresistible strength. At the same time, a singular fear pervaded the

*Civilians in River Boats Set Forth
To Rescue Trapped Army Across Sea*

Equally unpredictable were the miraculous events of World War II, when the German nation was again plunged into an aggressive war under the fanatical leadership of Adolph Hitler. A whole sequence of miracles happened at Dunkirk on the French coast early in that conflict.

For seventeen exhausting, horror-filled days and nights in May 1940, the British Expeditionary Force had been fighting the mechanized might of Hitler's Nazi troops in France, striving against tremendous odds to break through and connect with the armies of their French allies. Then the news came that King Leopold of Belgium had surrendered to Hitler.¹

That left the British flank exposed. Their situation was hopeless. Obviously Hitler's forces could slice through behind the British army, cut their supply lines, pound their landing ports, and attack their rear. Only a swift retreat would prevent the British from being cut off and pulverized between two heavily armored Nazi forces.

To avoid the capture of their own heavy armament, which they could not hope to transport back to England, the British soldiers were ordered to destroy it. They must be lightly armed to move fast enough that the Nazis could not cut them off. While enemy planes thundered above and bombs were falling all around, the men hammered and

cursed and sobbed, battering motors into uselessness and demolishing machinery that must be left behind. Most of them must have known there was little equipment left in England to replace what they were ordered to destroy.¹

After destroying what they must leave, they turned from their shattered armaments and started back, with bombs still raining around them; while explosions were tearing holes in their path.¹

But suddenly, there was a strange feeling of peace and safety among those retreating soldiers. Many of them spoke of it afterward—an inexpressible, irrational feeling that something wonderful was happening... a peaceful serenity beyond explanation. Even little dogs, trotting placidly alongside them, seemed aware of the feeling. Hungry and thirsty like the men, they stayed optimistically alongside all the way to Dunkirk.¹

The troops arriving at the waterfront in Dunkirk were trapped, with little more than the small arms they could carry, between the big guns of the Nazis and the stormy waters of the English Channel.¹ They gathered on the beaches there, a mass of dark uniforms against the sun-bleached sands.² The pounding waves of the Channel held no more promise of a miracle for these retreating men than the Red Sea had seemed to hold for the fleeing Israelites centuries before.

But across that storm-tossed Channel a nation was on its knees in prayer. The churches of England were filled... the King and Queen knelt at Westminster Abbey... the Archbishop of Canterbury... the Prime Minister... the Cabinet... all knelt in prayer. The military high command had requested it. All England prayed... in stores... in hospitals... in restaurants... in the streets... young and old, alike... all praying for the salvation of their loved ones, praying for deliverance and peace.¹ And in the evening... all classes of people... dropping to their knees at 9 o'clock for that *Silent Moment of Prayer* which was to be observed faithfully through the evacuation and all the war days to follow.

As the British troops turned back to the English Channel, Prime Minister Churchill warned the nation that no more than 20,000 or 30,000 troops out of the 200,000 British soldiers could possibly be

rescued from the exposed beaches of Dunkirk.

Then came the miracle. At first only a few fortunate factors—seemingly unrelated—a succession of happy accidents—or was it?

There was the odd hesitancy of the seemingly invincible German military machine. Nazi General Von Rundstedt ordered a halt for regrouping of armored units at a canal crossing only twelve miles from Dunkirk. And Hitler decided to hold the armor there indefinitely.² The Luftwaffe alone was given the job, without the aid of Nazi tanks, of destroying the retreating allied forces at Dunkirk. Herman Goering had boasted to Hitler: "My Luftwaffe will complete the encirclement and will close the pocket at the coast from the air."³

But the most decisive factor was—the weather.

Although it seemed a hopeless rescue when the British first began arriving at Dunkirk, it proved, instead, to be a conspiracy of the elements against the Nazis as they pursued the retreating British. From the very beginning, the threatening storm winds proved a decided hindrance against which the Nazi bombers and their protective fighter planes had to labor, expending great quantities of fuel as they flew their bombers from distant bases.

Furthermore, those same storm winds and the waves driven by them were breaching the dykes in the low countries, flooding roads and threatening to mire down Nazi tanks which could have supported the Nazi air strikes with appropriate ground action.²

Following the storm winds, there was a dense fog that shrouded the retreating British army. And if a land breeze blew the fog seaward, it also blew dense smoke from nearby burning fuel tanks across the beaches and the rescue fleets, obliterating them from the view of the Luftwaffe bombardiers even more effectively than clouds or fog. But neither the fog nor the smoke rose high enough to obscure the Nazi planes as the British fighter planes attacked *them*.

Finally, as the fuel dumps burned low and the billowing, thick smoke began to abate, there were unseasonable, impenetrable rains that hid the embarking British.⁴

What the storm, fog, smoke and rain hid from the view of the Luftwaffe pilots was surely the strangest rescue fleet in history. From

the British Navy's first day of evacuation, it had been obvious that more shipping was needed. So the call had gone out to all boat owners.

The response was prompt. Down the rivers, out of the marinas and harbors had come the private boats, piloted by bank clerks, fishermen, Boy Scouts, yachtsmen, barge operators, college professors, and tug boat captains. They gathered at the channel ports opposite Dunkirk...small fishing boats from far up the coast, harbor defense vessels, armed yachts, river launches, cabin cruisers, life boats, rusty trawlers, barges and tugs.¹

A word of encouragement, with directions to "steer for the sound of the guns," had been their final instructions. They headed out, 1000 tiny, oddly-assorted boats on the towering Channel waves, braving the storm winds to steer toward the thunder and danger of guns and bombs. All moved valiantly forward into that danger as quickly as their various motors would let them. The prayers of a nation enfolded them, as they set forth to undertake one of the most hazardous, logistically impossible, yet divinely aided feats in all history.³

Books have since been written to try to tell the whole story of Dunkirk. It will never *all* be told, for some of the heroism of that supreme hour in British history perished in the Channel waves. But even fragments of the whole picture are piercingly vivid and thrilling.

Three men who offered to pilot boats to Dunkirk were put to work on the balky motor of a long-unused houseboat moored in the Thames River. They worked almost all night and finally got it running at five o'clock in the morning. They steered it out of the Thames and into the heavy waves of the Channel. It took twenty-eight hours to maneuver the clumsy river craft the forty miles across to Dunkirk.⁴

The trip back required even longer—about thirty-five hours—because they were overloaded with men to such an extent that the deck was under water.¹

"Each class of ship had its own difficulties. To each the operation presented problems wildly, almost insanely beyond its proper purpose. They overcame those problems. They defied insanity."³

As odd as the gallant, little cockle-shell fleet must have looked, the sights *they* encountered at Dunkirk must have seemed even stranger to them.

Sunken wrecks and protruding masts dotted the water and threatened navigation even by small boats. Shells from the big Nazi guns had wrecked the docks and were already pounding the makeshift loading berths devised for boarding ships.⁴

Threading among the clutter of wrecks could be seen a London fire brigade fireboat; a boat manned by teen-age Scouts; a river barge with colored sails; an R.A.F. seaplane tender; and men on an oyster dredger (ferrying troops to a yacht) who were wearing enamel bowls and galvanized buckets on their heads as helmets.⁴

Soldiers ferried themselves out toward the rescue ships on rafts made of barrels. One man rode the waves on a wooden locker; another on a door; a third set out in an inflated inner tube and rowed strenuously with his rifle butt.⁴

Arrival of the small boats speeded loading operations because they could go into shallow water and pick up wading men. Some could go right up to the beach. They would return again and again to the shore under fire after depositing all the men they could carry onto one of the larger boats.³

Uniforms of hundreds of thousands of troops, including French and Belgian forces, darkened the sands of the beach and dunes and spread into the water itself. Waist deep in the harbor, one group, oblivious to shells and bombs, listened to a one-man harmonica concert of lively tunes. Another group standing in waist-deep water were entertained by the slight-of-hand tricks of a card shark. Farther up the beach, two opposing cricket teams played imperturbably, except for taking cover when bombers approached. Four British engineers did stunts on motorcycles. A soldier on a chesnut horse went through the actions of a cossack circus act.⁴

If the thunder of the big guns was ominous, heard at the outset of the voyage, the combined noises as the little volunteer flotilla straggled into the waterfront was maddening. In addition, oily scum covered the water. Heat from burning fuel reservoirs scorched the

faces of soldiers and rescue crews. It even scorched the skin through their clothing.¹

But through all the danger, difficulties, and discomfort, the boatmen felt that same strange assurance which had been felt by the troops from the time they started their retreat toward Dunkirk.¹

Later, those boatmen declared that it would have been inexpressibly horrible, "except for that strange feeling we had that something wonderful was happening."¹

All kinds of improvisations were speeding the loading of hungry, exhausted, thirst-plagued men—inspired ideas, such as the resourceful officer who tested the depth alongside the breakwater jetties, and found it deep enough to bring some of the larger boats alongside. Rapid loading onto these larger boats began after he had ordered wide plankways laid atop the breakwater rocks and piling.⁴ And like the enterprising officer with a convoy of trucks. All trucks had been ordered destroyed upon arrival at Dunkirk. But, he did not take his convoy out to the area set aside for burning. Instead, he ordered his men to drive into the outgoing tide in a long line, ordered planks collected and lashed from cab-top to cab-top and thus had a swiftly-built pier for loading troops three abreast.³

An ingenious barge captain also created a loading pier of his barge by ramming it up onto the beach at low tide. At the front end, soldiers could come aboard via rope ladders. At the back end of the bulky barge several boats could come alongside for loading. When high tide lifted him off the beach again, the barge captain left for England with a full load.⁴

In a thousand such ways the evacuation seemed to organize itself. No one thought of his own needs. Each thought only of getting the job done—of saving the fellows on those beaches. Men seemed endowed with inexhaustible strength and inventiveness.

On the boats bearing them back to safety, the men wanted to pray. They said prayers on the gawky houseboat with its decks awash. They said them out loud.¹ Many of them had never prayed aloud before. Some of them had never prayed before at all.

Back in the camps in England, they still wanted to pray. In one

camp a concert had been set up to give the men something beside the horrors of the recent campaign on the Continent to think about. In the midst of the concert some of the men stood up and asked if they could have a prayer. Thereafter during every concert given in that camp, a short prayer service was included.¹

Voices of the rescued were added to those of the rest of the nation praying not only at the 9 P.M. "*Silent Moment*," but all through the day and night, little flash prayers as they went about their duties. Without doubt those prayers helped to strengthen the boatmen who still toiled with superhuman endurance to save the troops yet remaining on the beaches of Dunkirk.

On the English coast, too, those who received the men off the weird, conglomerate rescue fleet worked with an inspired efficiency that accomplished miracles. One such group was composed of carpenters, divers, mechanics and engineers—a small army of ships' repairmen who worked around the clock in a vast ship repair yard improvised at Dover. They skipped sleep, rest, and meals time and again to get damaged ships on their way back to Dunkirk.²

The incoming flow of hungry, thirsty and exhausted men was met at Ramsgate, at Dover, at Newhaven, at Sheerhaven, and at Folkstone. At each port, a tireless compassionate army of women offered them tea with biscuits, sandwiches, or rolls made by other thousands of indefatigable women. Local bake shops closed their sales rooms and sent all they could produce to the water front.

Children collected and passed out postcards and pencils to the men, then collected and mailed their inscribed messages to anxious families. Nurses and near-nurses treated minor wounds and burns; and sent more serious cases to improvised medical centers, where dedicated doctors, apparently supernaturally sustained (as who wasn't in that whole hallowed, heroic enterprise?), worked ceaselessly around the clock to treat the men who had been snatched from the inferno of fire, bombs, and bullets at Dunkirk.³

Amidst all the heartening and loving services rendered by thousands of volunteers, the flow of men in and out of the coastal area was a wonder of efficiency—the shuttle of buses from docks to

waiting railway trains, the threading of those trains through and around the great population centers of England—the prompt dispersion of those retreating but uncowed British soldiers—these, too, were part of the miracle of Dunkirk.³

It was while recording the losses and gains of the Dunkirk evacuation that the British began to realize with an almost eerie elation that their prayers were being heard. They had to be. Their unbelievable successes in the face of apparently insurmountable difficulties had no other explanation.

They could not be at Dunkirk to see the actual accomplishments of prayer and faith—but they knew that according to all previous military experience, the rescue of that many men, under such conditions, against such military odds—was logistically impossible.

Moreover, these rescue figures continued to mount.

Only 7,669 troops were evacuated the first day. But as the weather continued to protect the stranded British, on the second day 47,310 troops were taken to England. This was more in a single day than they had dared to hope they might rescue in the entire evacuation.⁴

On Thursday, 53,823 British soldiers were brought back to England. Friday and Saturday totals bettered this, with 68,014 and 64,429 rescued. But Friday and Saturday were also clear days and the German planes took a terrific toll of life, planes and shipping. The losses were so devastating that the British command ordered only night time evacuations from then on.⁴

What they did not know at the time, was that Nazi Baron von Richtofen was equally dismayed and frustrated over Luftwaffe losses; and that Hitler had ordered a change of targets, directing that all planes be made ready by June 3rd (the following Monday) to bomb airfields around Paris.⁵

Sunday night 26,256 men were evacuated from Dunkirk. The final total, after Monday night's evacuation, was 338,000 troops, including 139,911 French and Belgian troops.

A startling fact of the evacuation was that the *small craft* not only accomplished wonders shuttling men off the beaches to the larger boats; but that they actually transported a total of 90,000 men all the

way to England. The small boats had ferried to England more than three times the highest total the Prime Minister had thought could be taken off the beaches of Dunkirk—three times the 20,000 to 30,000 total he had estimated as barely possible to rescue! At least one out of every four or five men who returned to England had made the trip on a small boat.³

Dark days lay ahead for Britain; but the miracle of Dunkirk lit the darkness with hope and optimism. The British situation was desperate, but the British spirit was undaunted. Indeed as the miracles of Dunkirk were told and retold in the press of two continents, British spirits rose in a high tide of confidence and courage.

And how that confidence and faith was needed, for with the destruction of British equipment at Dunkirk, Britain only had the rifles with which the men had returned and military equipment for scarcely two divisions—against the 200 splendidly equipped divisions of the Nazis.⁴ No matter, the British had their faith.

Prime Minister Churchill afterwards revealed that in all of England, following the evacuation from Dunkirk, there were only 500 eighteen-pound guns and howitzers, many of them stripped from museums. Moreover, Britain's French allies were in dire straits. Nazi bombers were pounding the airfields of Paris and Nazi tanks rolled relentlessly toward the French capital. Britain had little enough to offer France in this agonizing crisis; but what she had, she offered, increasing the supply in spite of her own crucial needs, as the situation grew worse each day in France. England only asked that France hold on and give her a chance to rearm. But it was to no avail. The Nazis were already *behind* the main French fortifications, and the armies of France were in tragic confusion. The surrender of France came all too soon. Britain stood alone.⁵

But the triumph of lifting 338,000 men out of the jaws of death at Dunkirk stood out against the stark reality of the nation's dark dilemma. Like the crossing of the Red Sea, it emerged as one of the most magnificent and miraculous, one of the most unique and courageous performances of a nation in all recorded history... a

beacon to further greatness... a rainbow of promise shining against the dark clouds of war.

Notes

¹Margaret Lee Runbeck, *The Great Answer* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., Cambridge Riverside Press, 1944). Used by kind permission of the author and Harold Matson Co., New York, subsequent copyright owners.

²William L. Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1960). Used by permission of the publisher.

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⁴Richard Collier, *Sands of Dunkirk* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1961). Copyright © by author and used by permission. See also *Readers Digest*, August 1961.

⁵Adolph Galland, *The First and the Last* (New York: Ballantine Books). Used by permission.

⁶*National Geographic*, August 1965. Used by permission.

*Winds of Destiny
Aided Weary Pilots*

The German Luftwaffe had spent the months since Dunkirk in an effort to destroy as much of the British R.A.F. as possible. When they finally concluded their massive attacks, on September 15, 1940, there was still no rest for the Royal Air Force pilots... not with the Nazi ground forces rapidly completing their cross-Channel invasion preparations. British airmen barely had time to refuel before they were ordered to hit the Nazi invasion fleets in the ports across the English Channel. There, thousands of German troops were being loaded into barges and transports destined for England.

Battling gale winds which had suddenly risen, the British R.A.F. streaked for the ports of departure across the Channel, where they alternately dropped incendiary bombs and made strafing runs to disrupt the enemy's activities.

Suddenly, the British realized that the storm winds appeared to be joining forces with their efforts to stop the German invasion, for the winds fanned the flames of the burning ships in the harbor below, battering and sinking the fire-ravaged transports. Those winds multiplied the Nazi casualties by burns and drowning to a total of 60,000 men.¹ And most importantly, they added to the loss of shipping, which in the end was so tremendous that it was irreplaceable. Apparently, the losses were so great that plans for invasion

of Great Britain no longer seemed practical or feasible. Hitler never attempted a full-invasion campaign against the British again.

What seems so utterly impossible about this defeat of the Nazi invasion forces before they even left the French ports is that, despite the gale winds and the Nazi air defense, *not a single British plane was lost.*²

Public statements by England's leaders affirmed the belief that there was supernatural protection and assistance which led to the desperately necessary victories at Dunkirk and now against the Nazi invasion forces. Jubilantly, the man on the street proclaimed that divine aid had been unquestionably granted through the forces of the weather in answer to a nation's prayers.

It should be pointed out at this time, that even as the Allies prayed, there must have been many German mothers, officers, and men praying for the safety and victory of their own forces and loved ones, as Germany was also considered to be a predominately Christian nation. However, the objectives of the World War II armies differed greatly and the motives and spiritual positions of their leaders could not have been more completely opposed to one another.

Hitler's forces were sent forth to seize land and possessions that belonged to others. They were sent to obtain wealth and power for their evil ruler at the expense of neighboring nations who would have chosen to remain in peace. Hitler was attempting to create a vast Pan-German empire encompassing most of the world by subjugating hundreds of millions of people of other nationalities to his rule. The Allies were fighting to halt those cruel aggressions.

Notes

¹Statistics from *National Geographic*, August 1965.

²*Associated Press*, London, released this information on October 18, 1940.

*They Thought Nazis
Came As Liberators*

Church doors swung open in Russia for the first time in a decade or two when the Nazi armies invaded the land of snows in June, 1941. Long closed, or converted into communist offices or museums by the atheistic government, the churches were suddenly cleansed and Polish and Czech clergy were imported by the Nazi invaders to set up altars and give the Russian people back their religion.

Joyfully, Russians crowded into them. More than one million candidates were baptized in the rush that followed. Some were young people in their early twenties. Under the communist regime they had been denied the privilege of Christian baptism.

Naturally, the Russian believers immediately considered the Nazi invaders to be liberators from their godless rulers in the Kremlin. Millions surrendered without resistance.¹

The Soviet General Andrei Vlasoff defected to the Nazis and within a short time had formed the Russian Liberation Army, composed of six hundred thousand former Soviet prisoners. As its indentifying banner, his army proudly bore the flag of the Apostle Andrew, which in the past had been the flag of the Czarist Navy. (The Apostle Andrew visited Russia after the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ.)¹

By their apparent reverence and love of God, the invading soldiers

began making friends among the Russians. In eleven days they had occupied an area larger than all France.² Within a few weeks seven million Russians had surrendered to the Nazi invaders. In many areas, according to the ancient Russian Orthodox tradition, the Nazis were welcomed as friends with gifts of bread and salt.¹

The communists, watching young and old swarm to the churches to participate in the services and in communion, realized with dismay the religious hunger of the Russian people.¹

The whole Nazi scheme, however, was a sham devised for the sole purpose of deceiving the Russian people. It was hypocrisy on a national scale.¹ While the Russian people were rejoicing, their cities were being overrun. Sevastopol fell, Rostov fell, and Nazi troops pressed forward toward Grozny and Stalingrad, threatening to stop oil supplies in the first case, and to cut the Volga line of supply in the second. The Germans reached the Caucasus and hoisted the Swastika on Mount Elbruz, the highest peak in Europe. Only at Stalingrad did they meet stubborn resistance.²

In August, they had captured Pskov on the way to Leningrad and Vitebsk on the way to Smolensk. In the south, they captured Zhitomir on the way to Kiev. Leningrad was blockaded. Smolensk was captured; and the Germans occupied the Ukraine almost everywhere west of the Dnieper River, thus acquiring the great industrial and agricultural reserve of Russia.² Only the Russian factories hastily transplanted beyond the Ural mountains escaped acquisition by the invaders.

The apparent reverence and love of God had been merely pretenses ordered by the Nazi Command. When counter-orders came through, these same Nazi soldiers were set loose to loot and rape, terrify and massacre.¹

But not before the equally cynical, atheistic communists in the Russian government had witnessed the effectiveness of the Nazi ruse, and had resolved to utilize it themselves. Drastic action was needed, for the communist regime was collapsing with a crash. Even such an extreme measure as reversing atheist tenets and giving their churches back to the Russian people was expedient in such a crisis.¹

A general in the Russian army, a Christian himself, later told the whole story to Father George, who traveled incognito in Russia shortly after the war and wrote the thrilling book, "God's Underground."

"So the Communists decided that they would turn this strong religious fervor to account... They would tell the people that the old quarrel between State and Church had ended; that the Russian people in driving out the Nazis would also be driving out the enemy of Mother Russia; and that they might have back their God as a reward.

"It became a grim and cynical contest then, between the two most godless governments in the world as to which should most successfully masquerade as the defender of the Russian God.

"You know," the general told Father George, "I was quite aware of the duplicity that lay behind the whole move. And yet I have never been more touched, more deeply stirred, then when the proclamation of religious freedom was announced at Moscow, and we were asked to join in public prayers for our dear, desperately menaced land...

"We felt strong again; strong enough to go immediately into battle; strong enough to fight and die without regret, to save our homeland. For she had become... our *holy Russia*.

"How wonderful that moment was! How wonderful it would have been if the change of heart on the part of our government had been an honest one! If the Communists had honestly changed, Russia might rise to very great heights under them... their professed love of the poor, their pretended desire that all men receive equal opportunities—might then at last be more than propaganda promises never sincerely spoken.

"The good in the ideal of Communism cannot be realized until it is separated from the error and falsehoods in which it is embedded. But if the idealistic portion of the Communists' dream were grafted onto Christianity, what a spiritual marriage that would be!

"Oh, if such an event may come about while I am here to see it."

"And you think there is a chance of that?" Father George asked him.

"Of course there is a chance," the General said, impatiently. "Rid

us of the little handful of despots in the Party, and the thing will come about of its own volition."¹

It was with such thoughts and emotions as those cherished in the heart of this general that the Russian people complied with the government's request for public prayer; and the Russian armies, hard-pressed by the relentless Nazi military might, flung themselves into battle with the same fury with which Russians have always met invaders of their land. And with that fury, against terrific odds, but supported by the prayers of the nation, they drove out the invaders.

On June 6th, 1943, the American and British allies of Russia had landed in Europe, lessening the pressure on the Soviets. Munitions were pouring in from America and from the transplanted Russian factories beyond the Urals. Thus supplied, the Russians attacked the Nazis all along the line. Zhitomir was taken. Pskov was taken. Leningrad was relieved. Nikopol was taken. Odessa was taken. The Soviet forces were back to the 1938 border and soon over it.²

Although the battles were long, hard, and at times uncertain of success, the Russians fought on, secure in faith, enfolded in the prayers of a nation. It was a long ordeal, but perhaps in future history, it may be told in a single sentence: **SUDDENLY THEY COULD PRAY, AND THEY DROVE OUT THE INVADERS.**

Notes

¹Father George (as told to Greta Palmer), *God's Underground* (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1949). Used by permission.

²H. G. Wells, *Outline of History*, revised and updated by Raymond Postgate and G. P. Wells (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1971). Used by permission.

*Army of Prayer
Recruited Again*

On a sunny Sunday morning upon the Pacific Island of Oahu, Hawaii, American army officers ambled after their white balls bounding across the verdant golf links; and were in turn followed by their caddies, lazily trundling their well-filled golf bags on two-wheel carts. It was December 7, 1941.

Military planes rested primly in precise rows across the U.S. airfields, awaiting practice flights.

In the protected harbor, the greater part of the United States Pacific Fleet rocked calmly on the gentle waves of the bay. Sea gulls hovered serenely above them, watching for bits of food discharged from the galley. Peace pervaded the island in every aspect of the Sunday morning calm.

Suddenly, out of the sunny sky, burst wave on wave of Japanese bombers and fighter planes. The naval ships in the harbor were blasted and set ablaze by bombs. The harbor was darkened by pillars of black smoke from the stricken ships. The neat rows of planes on the island airfields exploded into flaming fuel and crumpled into heaps of molten metal. The damage was done almost before the ships' guncrews could man their antiaircraft guns; before the fighter pilots could get their planes off the ground. The Japanese bombers made three sweeps over their targets before they turned to streak back to

their carriers. They left behind the wreckage of an airforce and a navy, crackling in flames and plumed with smoke. Some of the bomb-torn naval units were already slowly sinking to the bottom of the harbor.

No war had been declared. The Japanese nation simply began a war with the United States by making a sneak attack upon the U.S. fleet and airfields at Honolulu.

Almost immediately, war was officially declared, with the United States and Great Britain joining against Japan and Nazi Germany.

While the war departments of Japan and Germany had been arming heavily for years in preparation for their projected expansionism, neither the United States nor Great Britain nor, for that matter, any of the European victims of Nazi aggressions had rearmed.

For this reason, prayer and the will to fight were the main assets of the British and the Americans in the early stages of the war.

The situation desperately called for prayer. The Japanese attack had disabled or destroyed the greater part of the American Pacific fleet. This left the Philippines vulnerable to Japan's next attack. There the Philippine and American armies on Bataan and in Corregidor, though they fought desperately to protect the great harbor of Manila from the Japanese, were finally defeated and captured. In addition, much of England's equipment had been abandoned in Europe. Paris had fallen and France had surrendered to the Nazis. Rommel's German armies were sweeping across North Africa. A bleaker outlook for the British and the Americans could scarcely be imagined.

Following the Pearl Harbor disaster, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt had issued a *proclamation for prayer* ending:

"We are confident in our devotion to our country, in our love of freedom, in our inheritance of courage. But our strength, as the strength of all men everywhere, is of greater avail as God upholds it.

"Therefore, I, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, President of the United States of America, do hereby appoint the first day of the year 1942 as a day of prayer, of asking forgiveness of our short comings of the

past, of consecration to the tasks of the present, and of asking God's help in days to come. We need His guidance that our people may be humble in spirit, but strong in the conviction of the right, steadfast to endure sacrifice, and brave to achieve a victory of liberty and peace."

In response to the president's proclamation, the Army of Prayer had been launched again. Those who joined simply pledged themselves to daily prayer for victory and to continue this prayer in thanksgiving for peace for six months after the armistice.

It was pointed out that the victory in the war was absolutely in the hands of God; and that one of the divine requirements for a military victory is prayer.

Prayers must be uttered with humble and contrite hearts, it was urged—with a full realization of our national ingratitude to God, our preoccupation with money, our godless education of American children in our secular schools, and all our other sins of commission and omission, for which we should humbly ask God's merciful forgiveness.

Members of the Army of Prayer were reminded that they must ask in the utmost humility and contrition for God's mercy and His blessings upon the righteousness of the allied cause.

And they *must* have prayed with appropriate humility, for a series of miraculous events answered their prayers. Startling accounts of utterly impossible escapes from deadly danger, and individual deliverance from certain death appeared so often in U.S. newspapers that Frank C. Laubach wrote of them:

"Either this war is producing more liars than you could count, or miracles are happening. Fish have jumped into boats, birds have landed on men's heads, and strange winds have blown boats to shore."

Men in the battle areas were praying, too, of course—in their planes, on their ships, in their trenches. None of those who prayed, were in a more hopeless situation than the eight men who found themselves in three frail life rafts, adrift on the lonely Pacific Ocean.

Notes

¹Frank C. Laubach, *Prayer, the Mightiest Force in the World* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1946).

*Men Lost on Vast Pacific Ocean
in Life Rafts Asked God's Help*

Two tiny rafts tossing on the threatening waves of the trackless Pacific held eight helpless U.S. airmen. Alone on the great expanse of heaving water, they were hungry, thirsty, and painfully burned by the scorching sun.

Faulty instruments had taken them off their course and when their fuel was exhausted, they had to ditch the plane and inflate their life rafts, which they managed to scramble into and lash together with a rope thoughtfully seized by Captain Eddie Rickenbacker as he left the plane.

The only food they had on the rafts consisted of four oranges for eight men. They had no water. For eight days, beginning October 21, 1942, a period in which those eight men should have consumed a total of 192 meals, they subsisted on those four oranges and no water.

Their feet, hands and faces were painfully sunburned; and after the oranges were gone, they suffered even more from the pangs of hunger and thirst.

"As soon as we were in the rafts at the mercy of God," Johnny Bartek, one of the men recounted, "we realized that we were not in any position to expect help from Him. We spent many hours of each day confessing our sins to one another and to God...

"Then we prayed..."

They had a Bible with them and they read from it each morning and each evening; and they prayed. They prayed for deliverance and after the oranges were gone, they prayed for food. They had two little fish lines with very small hooks, but no bait.

"Were it not for the fact that I have seven witnesses," Captain Eddie Rickenbacker recounts, "I would not dare tell this story because it seems so fantastic. Within an hour after prayer meeting on the eighth day, a sea gull came out of nowhere and landed on my head.

"I reached up my hand very gently and got him. We wrung his head, feathered him, carved up his carcass, and ate every bit, even the little bones. We distributed his innards and used them for bait.

"Captain Cherry caught a little mackerel about six or eight inches long and I caught a little speckled sea bass about the same size, so we had food for a couple of days...

"That night we ran into our first rainstorm. Usually you try to avoid a black squall, but in this case we made it our business to get into it and catch water for drinking. Later we were able to catch more water and build up a supply."

They needed that water, for their frail rafts tossed on the Pacific waves under the blazing sun for twenty days, with the men aboard them miserable from heat, hunger, and exhaustion. Forlorn dots on the vast, heaving waters, the airmen prayed, and held onto faith.

At last, on the twenty-first day the search planes spied those infinitesimal small dots far below. They had to fly almost directly over them to see them. That they found them at all on that endless sea was miraculous. Finally, the men were picked up on November 13th, 1942.

The rescue of Eddie Rickenbacker and his companions had a number of important results.

As a famous flyer in World War I, Rickenbacker had become a valuable man in the Air Force during World War II. He was being used by the Secretary of War, Henry L. Stimson, to make confidential inspections of and reports on American airbases in the United States, Great Britain, and the Pacific.

On this particular mission across the Pacific, Rickenbacker was also carrying an unwritten, top-secret message from the Secretary of War to General Douglas MacArthur, whose headquarters were in Port Moresby, New Guinea. It was important that he get through with the message. By December 1st, Rickenbacker was able to fly over the Pacific for his meeting with General MacArthur.

The survival of the airmen was important to the war effort in other ways. Because of the experiences of those eight men, survival equipment was redesigned. Life rafts were made longer and wider, carried sails and such emergency supplies as concentrated food, vitamins, first aid kits, fishing tackle and bait. They were also fitted with radios and with small chemical distillers capable of converting sea water into drinking water.

But beyond helping the war effort, the experiences of the rescued airmen had far-reaching spiritual results. They made powerful witnessing Christians out of the airmen who had experienced the miraculous answers to their prayers; and through them made a strong impression upon the American public.

"Rickenbacker has become an evangelist without knowing it," columnist Ray Tucker declared.²

Equally outspoken about his experiences on the raft in the Pacific ocean was Johnny Bartek:

"Then we prayed—and God answered," he asserted. "It was real. We needed water. We prayed for water and we got water—all we needed. Then we asked for fish, and we got fish. And we got some meat when we prayed. Sea gulls don't go around sitting on people's heads waiting to be caught... then I prayed again to God and said, 'If you'll send that one plane back for us, I promise I'll believe in you and tell everyone else.' That plane came back and the others flew on. It just happened? It did not! God sent that plane back!"¹

The whole free world was thrilled by the rescue and by Captain Rickenbacker's words:

"We prayed," and "We were spared to come back and tell America to pray."²

There is no doubt that more Americans prayed and all prayed

more earnestly after the rescue of the airmen. For they realized how desperately American servicemen *needed* and *wanted* those prayers. Furthermore, still greater numbers of Americans believed that their prayers were being *answered*, an opinion which that rescue and other supernatural episodes confirmed.

Plane Crew's Ghostly Answer Drifted 600 Miles Across Sea

"Chaplain, now is your chance to prove what you've been preaching," the American pilot said as he gloomily surveyed the bomber plane's gas gauges. "We're out of gas, several hundred miles from base; and surrounded by Japs.

"You've been telling us for months we must pray and believe God to answer in time of trouble, and that He does it right away. We need a miracle right now, with the surf on one side of us and the Japs only half-mile away in either direction."³

The target of that World War II plane had been several hundred miles from the bomber's base. And, while the raid had been a perfect success, the return trip had scarcely begun when the plane began to lose altitude and the gasoline gauges rapidly moved toward "empty."

Fortunately, an island with a wide, smooth, sandy beach was spotted below. Or was it fortunate? They could see a Japanese flag fluttering among the trees that shaded a military camp as they approached. It was a Japanese-occupied island.

But they had no choice. It was either this island or the surging sea. The bomber's motors missed and spluttered as they headed for that sandy, secluded beach, and touched down without a jolt.

Cautiously, the crew disembarked and inspected the area. For some reason unknown to them, their landing went unnoticed by the occupation forces.

After a brief survey of their situation, Chaplain Johnson knelt in the sand under the shade of the great bomber's wing and began fervent prayer with a firm belief in God's promises.

He prayed all afternoon.

There were no means of help or rescue within hundreds of miles. He knew that. But he felt an unwavering assurance.

Nothing happened. Night fell and still no Japanese patrols had appeared. The crew believed that the Japanese were unaware of their presence on the island. Chaplain Johnson continued to pray in the darkness; and to believe that God would work a miracle.

At last the crew slept on the beach; but the chaplain continued in prayer.

About two A.M., the pilot was strangely aroused. Moving slowly, he surveyed the sandy beach between the bomber and the dark rim of trees. No shadowy figures moved in that direction. But there was a new sound to the waves on the beach side. A huge, dark blob seemed to loom at the water's edge.

Stealthily, the pilot awakened his crew, one man at a time, placing a warning finger on the lips of each as he roused him. As they watched and listened and whispered their fears (and hopes) they argued that the Japanese garrison hardly needed to make a long trip around by water to apprehend them, when they were already within half-a-mile walking distance. Nor did they believe an attack by night would be logical on the part of the Japanese garrison, for the trees would give them ample protection for an attack by day, while the plane's crews would be clearly visible on the barren beach.

Nor would a Japanese boat crew, putting into an island they knew to be garrisoned by Japanese, observe the stealth that the crew of this silent vessel displayed.

At last, the American airmen could bear the suspense no longer, and they crept to the water's edge. They moved so silently that the kneeling chaplain was not disturbed. Dimly they made out the outlines of a large barge. No voices could be heard aboard, and no sounds of human footsteps.

A giant tow rope, dangling almost to the surface of the beach, brushed stiffly against the pilot's shoulders. Maybe this was a tow-barge, with no crew on her. A gentle breeze wafted an unmistakable odor to the pilot's nose. And he knew they must board that barge.

If there were a crew abroad, they were definitely asleep, he reasoned. One sentry, or two could be dealt with. He had been sleeping with his knife in his hand, and after ordering the crew to "hold onto that rope," he placed the knife in his teeth like a boarding pirate and slowly shinnied up the rope and crept over the edge of the barge.

Silently, the pilot sought a sentry. The deck looked deserted. No sentry, no crew was aboard. The barge was deserted! And the deck was covered with oil drums. He unscrewed the opening to a drum, and whiffed the contents. Gasoline!!! He could scarcely restrain a shout of joy.

Sliding down the tow rope, he imparted the tremendous news to the crew. The barge! The oil drums! The whole fantastic answer to their desperate need seemed like a dream to the stranded men. This drifting barge had brought them the one thing in all the world that could get their bomber swiftly off this island and see them back to home base.

Jubilantly, they streaked across the sand and embraced their startled chaplain.

"Your miracle's here, padre!" they exulted.

In quiet haste, with the aid of the in-flight refueling hose, and of flashlights which revealed fifty drums of high-octane gasoline among those aboard the derelict barge, they loaded the precious, miraculous fuel. Then they took off thunderously down the beach and were soon airborne far out over the water, bound for their own island landing strip.

An investigation later revealed that the skipper of a U.S. tanker, finding himself in submarine-infested water, had ordered his gasoline cargo removed to minimize the danger from a torpedo hit. Barrels of gasoline were placed on barges and set adrift . . . 600 miles from where Chaplain Johnson's plane crew had made a forced landing.³

In just a few weeks, that oil barge had drifted 600 aimless miles across the vast Pacific, and had beached within *fifty steps* of the stranded men!

The Chaplain's prayers had been heard in heaven.

Notes

¹Lillian Eichler Watson, *Light From Many Lamps* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1951). Used by permission of Eddie V. Rickenbacker Estate.

²Eddie V. Rickenbacker, *Rickenbacker: An Autobiography* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1967). Used by permission of the Eddie V. Rickenbacker Estate.

³Adapted from *The Sunday School Times*, Philadelphia, Pa., 27 May 1967. Credit line to "Senior Bible Student," Union Gospel Press, submitted by Mrs. Clarence Jones.

They Infiltrated The Infiltrators

Early in 1961, vast uneasiness seized the businessmen of the great Brazilian nation. It seemed to them that their country was poised for a plunge into communist chaos. Propagandists and organizers from Cuba, Russia, China, Czechoslovakia and other communist countries, working tirelessly, were misleading far too many Brazilians with their lies and false promises.

Finally, the alarmed businessmen called a meeting in Rio de Janeiro late in 1961 to determine what could be done to halt the communist plot to enslave the nation.¹

"The time to head off disaster is *now*, not when the Reds are in full control of our government," they declared. They organized "The Institute for Economic and Social Research" (IPES). Holding additional meetings in Sao Paulo and other centers, they organized the businessmen in those cities also.

Spontaneously, other organizations of businessmen and industrialists sprang up throughout Brazil and began resistance movements to foil the communist plot.

Though each operated independently, they began to pool their findings and coordinate their plans of action. They published hundreds of newspaper articles answering the boastings of the communists, made surveys of public opinion, and circulated letters

advising people of the political inroads of the communists in the Brazilian government.

Nothing better portrays the bold and dauntless spirit of the Latin American people than the way the Brazilians fought the communist conspiracy threatening their nation. They defied the infiltrators and matched wits with the scheming conspirators who were boring into their government, attempting to control or destroy them. Time and again they outwitted and thwarted the plotters; but, in spite of their sincere efforts, the carefully planned communist plot flourished.

Thoughtful women of Brazil, also greatly alarmed by the communist subversion in their country, began to organize. They could see that their government was already largely controlled by the communists and their sympathizers. When the efforts of the men's resistance movements began to hurt the subversives, the retaliation of the communist-controlled government forced the men underground. But the women's organizations were not silenced, and they began to get in some telling blows. They never did go underground. They continued to combat the efforts of the communists openly.

Within twelve months of the formation of the first women's resistance group, LIMDE, in Rio, through the efforts of Dona Amelia Bastos, they had organized other women's groups in every major city of Brazil, from Belem on the north to Porto Alegre in the south.

The action of the Women's Democratic League (LIMDE) of Belo Horizonte was particularly bold and dangerous. Hearing that the communist-led Federated Union of Latin American Workers proposed to hold a mass meeting in their city, with two communist organizers from Russia as their featured speakers, they telegraphed the union officials:

"PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT WHEN THE PLANE BRINGING THESE MEN ARRIVES, HUNDREDS OF WOMEN WILL BE LYING ACROSS THE AIRSTRIP."

When the plane appeared overhead, these women *were* on the airstrip, singing patriotic songs and religious chants. Even when the plane swooped threateningly low, they stood their ground, steadfast,

daring and determined. Thwarted, the organizers never landed. The plane went on to Brasilia, instead.

These same women again scored heavily when vehemently communistic Leonal Brizola arrived in Belo Horizonte to address a so-called "Land Reform Congress" which was in reality a propaganda meeting.

Arriving with the most rabid pro-communist speech of his career in his pocket, Brizola found the hall packed. But it was packed with patriotic Brazilian women who were fervently praying. Speaking above the continuous murmur of those prayers was impossible.

In frustration, Brizola strode impatiently into the street. The streets were packed as far as eye could see—again with devout Brazilian women. It was impossible for him to be heard above the swelling earnestness of their prayers.

Brizola's fiery speech was never delivered in Belo Horizonte. He left with it still in his pocket.¹ Although he was exasperated by the incident, he may have thought it was an isolated event rather than a part of a well-organized, powerful resistance to communist intrusion.

Actually, the communists had reason for confidence in their carefully laid plans to conquer, for those plans were assuredly thorough, as the resistance groups learned later.

Their preparations involved the open operations of 800 hardcore communists and the secret assistance of 2,000 cooperating sympathizers in the Brazilian government, including some elected Congressmen and many upper-level advisors.¹

Government pressure had closed many radio and television stations and suppressed newspapers that opposed them.

Every army officer who was obviously too honest, Christian, or patriotic to be influenced against his country had been removed from his command and placed at a desk job. These officers and similar men in civil government had been marked for murder. The executioners appointed in each case were warned that failure to liquidate their appointed victims would result in their own summary execution.¹

Stacks of posters bearing huge likenesses of Castro, Mao Tse Tung and Kruschchev were already printed and stored, to be flaunted the

instant the communists were in open control. There were ten-thousand revolutionary uniforms on hand, shipped in and stored; and fifty-thousand more had been ordered. Stacks of counterfeit money had been printed and were also held in storage for the purpose of paying the revolutionary soldiers and bribing local officials.¹

Another preparatory part of the communist plot was to send college students to communist Cuba or to certain fraternal communist student groups in other Latin American countries for indoctrination. This was a government subsidized program that had been going on for several years at an annual cost of \$100,000. By this and other means, the communists felt that they had made considerable progress in controlling public opinion.

Knowing the thoroughness of their own preparations and the successful subversions they had already accomplished in many different countries, these communists had reason to ignore mere "spotty resistance," and to proceed with their thoroughly implemented plot to conquer Brazil.

Actually, they felt so secure in their plot to take over Brazil, that they planned quite a ceremonial occasion for the event. This was in March 1964. At government expense (involving a bill of \$400,000),¹ they transported 100,000 communists, sympathizers, or susceptible Brazilians into Rio de Janeiro to a giant mass meeting which was to be addressed by pro-communist President Goulart; and arranged to have their "ceremonies" telecast to the entire nation.

To this *simpatico* audience, in full view of television cameras, President Goulart announced that democratic government was "outmoded," and declared that Brazil needed a change in her form of government.¹

This was a crisis! A shudder ran through the television audience of the entire nation. First Goulart announced the full legalization of the Communist Party. Then he ostentatiously signed two decrees which further revealed the planned take-over by the communists. The first decree gave the six oil refineries left under private control to the government. The second decree empowered the government to seize large land holdings which it ruled "uneconomically administered"

and to hand these over to peasants, after the manner of Castro's "land reforms" in Cuba.¹

These two decrees were clearly dictatorial. They ignored the constitution as well as the Brazilian Congress, which had the sole authority to change the constitution. Clearly this was a move to establish a communist dictatorship. But patriotic Brazilians were in for a further shock.¹

President Goulart was followed on the television screen by Brizola (President Goulart's brother-in-law and chief spokesman). His speech demanded the abolition of Congress and the substitution of assemblies of workers, peasants, and army sergeants in its stead. This was a carbon copy of Lenin's "soviets" of workers, peasants, and soldiers!

Reaction to this nefarious sell-out to Russia and China was swift. Having been thoroughly alerted by anti-communist resistance, the Brazilian people instantly recognized with horror that this was intended to be the beginning of civil strife and chaos, and an easy take-over by the communists. It was a pattern that had been used in one country after another--in Europe, Cuba, and less successfully in Korea, Guatemala, and Costa Rica.

But Goulart and his henchmen were unaware how thoroughly the IPES, CONCLAF, GAF, CENTRO INDUSTRIAL, CAMDE, LIMDE, and other anti-communist organizations had aroused the Brazilian people to their peril. Nor was he aware how strongly Brazilian Christians felt about the godlessness, the ruthlessness, and the corruption of the communist conspiracy, especially of the communist leadership.

Christian women's organizations, still daringly in the open with their anti-communist activities, sprang into action immediately upon hearing the traitorous speeches by Goulart and Brizola.

A prayer procession of 600,000 marchers, sparked by the women of Sao Paulo, marched down the broad avenue of that city in a "March of the Family With God Toward Freedom." Carrying anti-communist banners, they stepped in solemn rhythm while hawkers on the sidelines sold newspapers containing their 1300-word

manifesto stating in part:

"This nation, which God has given us, immense and marvelous as it is, is in extreme danger. We have allowed men of limitless ambition, without Christian faith or scruples, to bring our people misery, destroying our economy, disturbing our social peace, to create hate and despair. They have infiltrated our nation, our government administration, our armed forces, and even our churches with servants of totalitarianism, foreign to us and all-consuming... preserve us from the fate and suffering of the martyred women of Cuba, Poland, Hungary, and other enslaved nations."¹

"The most moving demonstration in Brazilian history," one spectator described the march. It was followed by others in other cities. Those demonstrations frightened the communists.¹

Spurred on by this spiritual resistance to the enemy, the Brazilian navy published a war cry signed by 1500 naval officers and declared that the time had come for Brazil to "defend itself." This was addressed to all the nation's citizens.

The Brazilian army then announced publicly its agreement with the navy's views; and in far away Brazilia, some Congressmen proclaimed their concurrence.¹

The local garrison in Brazilia marched to attack the presidential palace.

Governors began calling for the overthrow of Goulart.

An army division began marching toward Rio de Janeiro. The First Army, based in Rio, when ordered by Goulart to intercept them, marched out and joined forces with them, instead. Immediately, Goulart and his communists fled the country. Incoming ships from Czechoslovakia, loaded with more arms for the revolutionaries, turned about and sped for Cuba. By April 1, it was all over. Happy Brazilians were dancing in the streets.¹

It was all over except that CAMDE, one of the leading women's organizations, had planned a massive prayer procession opposing the communist infiltration. This was originally planned to be what the

Sao Paulo march was, a "March of the Family With God Toward Freedom." But when the news came that the communist leaders had left the country, the overjoyed marchers, determined to show the strength of support the anti-communists had in Rio, renamed the demonstration a "March of Thanksgiving to God"—"a march... for real democracy."¹

"It was a massive movement—an ocean of humanity, flowing beneath a snowstorm of confetti joyously flung from the skyscrapers that line Rio's boulevards.

"Only after communist records were captured from Goulart's palace and Brizola's home did the anti-communists discover how menacing the communist threat really had been, with its 30,000 G-11 troops pledged to fight until death; and instructed in the evil communist arts of staging strikes, in agitating and confusing, in how to destroy, plunder, and burn public buildings and private enterprises. In how to capture telephone exchanges, radio and television stations, in how to kidnap and hold hostage public persons, who, in case of set-back, were to be immediately killed... These and many more fiendish and destructive arts."¹

Upon learning how well the communists were organized to win in Brazil, one cannot fail to ascribe the success of the resistance to the fact that Brazilian people recognized God as the source of their freedom and as their hope for victory against the atheistic communists.

Centuries before the dauntless women of Brazil stirred their nation to action, other nations used the spiritual power generated by prayer and praise processions to ward off catastrophe from massive enemy attacks.

Notes

¹Based on "The Country That Saved Itself," by Clarence W. Hall, *Reader's Digest*, November 1964. Used by permission of the author.

Many theories can be advanced as to how the dock rose. None of them accounts for the fact that ordinary pumping procedures would have raised it in four hours, had there been no storm to undo the laborious repairs of the divers. Why had the air suddenly ceased to froth to the surface and lifted that Grand Dock upward? And what had inspired the Captain to continue to pray and work and hope long after logic had dictated against it? No amount of rationalization answers all these questions. We are left with the only answer as it came from the man who witnessed it: "a miracle!"

Notes

¹Adapted from *No Banners, No Bugles* by Captain Edward Ellsberg (New York: Dodd Mead & Co., 1949). By kind permission of the publishers.

He Prayed For Troops In Gliders and Landing Craft

Wracked with pain and fever, a young boy tossed endlessly on his bed in a Kansas City home. His infected leg was badly swollen and the doctor advised amputation. But the lad said he would rather die than lose his leg and with it his joy of participating in sports.

"Promise," he demanded of his brother Edgar, "if I go out of my head, you won't let them cut it off; and pray... pray hard. It will get well." Edgar promised him.

The whole family was deeply spiritual; and the boy's faith was so firm that he convinced his parents. They waited through ten long, suspenseful days while the red swelling crept up and the patient slipped in and out of delirium.

At last, the doctor said it *must* be amputation... or else.

But Edgar, true to his promise, blocked the door, grim and determined.

The whole family had been praying, but now they knelt together; and during prayer somehow received assurance and the faith to refuse.

The medically impossible happened. The prayer was answered. The leg was saved, and so was the career of a future United States General and President. That young boy, Dwight D. Eisenhower, grew up to be Commander-in-Chief of the allied forces during World

War II, and later President of the United States, neither of which responsibilities would likely have been placed upon him if that leg had been amputated. All during his life, General Eisenhower was upheld by that same unwavering faith.¹

On a storm-swept mountain on the Mediterranean island of Malta, one suspenseful night during the war, that firm faith sustained him in the face of threatening hazards over which he had no control.²

It was July 9, 1943, the night before allied troops were to make their first landing on the island of Sicily. Two thousand vessels were ploughing across the Mediterranean from North Africa, well on their way to the western side of the island and were scheduled to land at 2:45 A.M., in the dark of night.²

The convoy had been attacked repeatedly since leaving North Africa, sometimes attacked by as many as a hundred units of Axis planes in a single day. Miraculously, in spite of these repeated intensive attacks, *not a single vessel in the convoy had been hit.*³

On this particular night of the proposed landing, two hundred and sixty-four C-47s were flying in with paratroopers and gliders to drop combat teams on the island that would take possession of bridges and road centers. The C-47s were towing gliders to be let loose off Syracuse. From there, they could glide noiselessly in through the night to take possession of strategic points, while the powered C-47s, which would be needed later during the coming invasion of Italy, could return safely to their air bases in Tunisia.³

A strong west wind was blowing, which meant that the beaches chosen for the landing would be pounded by breakers at the time of disembarkation. It also meant that the C-47s were flying into strong side winds—a dangerous business with gliders in tow. There would be trouble with the chutes for the paratroopers, as well as difficulty in landing on target.¹

There were grave dangers ahead for the men in the air and the men on the boats; but it was too late to call off the invasion. The convoy had already covered the major portion of its journey and was nearing its destination. Nor was it safe to order the C-47s to circle back without delivering their gliders. They must drop paratroopers at

bridges and crossroads to block any enemy reinforcements which might be sent to oppose the landing of allied troops.³

After dinner, Eisenhower and some of his staff members went to the southeastern end of Malta hoping to glimpse those C-47s towing gliders, as they flew over toward Sicily.

It was a moonlit night, and in spite of the stormy winds, there were few clouds; so they actually did see the pilots fly over in the perilously buffeting sidewinds. It was after he watched the planes going over, towing their gliders through the storm winds, that General Eisenhower drew apart from his staff to the top of the hill—for prayer. And that prayer was answered!¹

Astonishing Events At Sea Followed Prayers

High winds and mountainous waves still greeted the naval ships carrying United States troops to be landed on the Island of Sicily, while Eisenhower continued to pray that night.

As the waves mounted in heights, so did the concern of the troops who were to embark in small craft and brave those twelve-foot waves in making their way to shore. They had crossed the Atlantic and traveled the Mediterranean in good weather; and just when they needed tranquil seas for their landing operations, the storm had struck.

Even the huge naval ships plunged and shuddered with the impact of the waves as they towered higher and higher. The landing destination was the Bay of Scoglitti; and was set for 2:45 A.M.⁴

As darkness drew on and the troops realized that they would be combating those horrendous waves in the dark, their hearts were heavy. At 11:30 P.M. the waves were still pounding. The men had been briefed about the military operation set up to wrest this island from the aggressor troops of Adolph Hitler; and they knew the hour for the landings could not be changed. It must synchronize with the operations of the paratroopers who would be dropped to seize

crossroads, bridges and other strategic points to block Axis attacks on the landing operations.

At last they heard the powerful C-47s overhead, towing in the gliders full of parachutists. Suddenly, just as the planes flew over, an astonishing thing happened. The wind died down as quickly as it had started, and the Mediterranean became quiet.

Seen in the dim light of the storm-clouded quarter-moon, the water, compared to the mountainous storm-tossed seas during the previous nine hours, looked good indeed to the men destined to make the landings.

"Let the cynical laugh," Lt. John Mason Brown, aboard his troop ship, wrote in his log of the expedition, "but we have seen something of a miracle tonight... The Mediterranean, still choppy, still tossed by a heavy surf, but, compared to what it was only a short time back, as quiet as if God had put His hand on it."⁴

The winds had ceased at the very moment that the planes began to cut the gliders loose. The parachutists glided in and began their drops without the perilous buffeting they had expected.

The operation beginning at 2:45 was a success, with few casualties and few wounded despite enemy air attacks. Not a single ship was hit by the Luftwaffe bombs! General Eisenhower's prayers were indeed answered.

Another story involving the invasion of Sicily and Italy was told to James L. Kraft and retold by him in *Guideposts* magazine and in syndicated stories in the newspapers.⁵

This was an account of another of Eisenhower's invasion forces. It was scheduled for 3:30 A.M. The troop ships had made it past the enemy's big guns at the mouth of a certain bay without damage to ships or men, when the windstorm struck them with ferocity.

Towering waves would make the landings so hazardous that a conference to consider withdrawal was called immediately. But this would mean passing under those heavy enemy guns again, with the last of the withdrawing ships still within range of them by daylight. Moreover, the element of surprise in the time and place of the

invasion would have been lost.

On the fleet flagship, the chaplain asked if he might call together the ship's personnel for prayer, asking God to still the storm.

"Surely our need here is as great as on the sea of Galilee," he urged.

"You're giving God a big order to fill," the Admiral replied. "This storm is scheduled to last about 48 hours more. But if you want to try it, go ahead."⁶

The men on the flagship did pray as the ship lunged and plunged in the heavy seas. They prayed intensely, asking for just one thing—that the waves be stilled.

By 3:30 A.M. the sea was still—as smooth as a mirror!

Notes

¹Clarence W. Hall, "Man of Faith." Copyright © *Christian Herald*, May 1953. Used by permission of author and publisher.

²Sherwood E. Wirt, "The Faith of Dwight Eisenhower," *Decision*, July 1965. Copyright © 1965 by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. Used by permission.

³Captain Harry C. Butcher, *My Three Years With Eisenhower* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1946). By permission of the publisher.

⁴John Mason Brown, *To All Hands: An Amphibious Adventure*. Copyright © 1943 by McGraw Hill Book Co., New York. Used by permission of Mfrs. Hanover Trust Co. and Catherine Meredith Brown, as trustees under the will of John Mason Brown.

⁵Adapted from "Face Up to Fear," February issue. Copyright © 1952 by Guideposts Associates, Inc., Carmel, N.Y. 10512. Used by permission from *Guideposts Magazine*.

(Joshua 3:2-4, 18).

Joshua was a man of great faith. He had *reason* to be. And his faith led to God's continual hand of protection and victory for the nation of Israel.

Notes

¹Adapted from Joshua 10:1-26.

General Patton Closed the Circuit of Prayer Power

"During the Battle of the Bulge, I was a member of General Patton's Third Army and I vividly recall his prayers for clear skies. It always reminded me of Joshua's call for the sun to stand still at Gibeon."¹

This statement was made in a letter from the Reverend Frederick Fox, Special Assistant in the White House under President Eisenhower. He was referring to the disheartening conditions during World War II when, in December, 1944, the United States Third Army under the command of General George S. Patton, Jr., bogged down in Western Europe, overtaken by freezing rain.

In spite of the drenching rains which had hampered them throughout the Saar and the Moselle Campaigns, from September until December, Patton's units had made brilliant progress. Now they were near the Ardennes Forest, and were heading toward the forbidding fortifications of the famed Siegfried line.²

But the rains were still falling along with snow, and the thermometer often plunged below zero at night. The Third Army had ground to a halt, immobilized by snow, rain, ice, and mud.²

Troop trucks dropped into chug-holes or slid into ditches, and replacements slogged forward on foot. Ammunition trucks bogged down in bottomless ruts. Self-propelled artillery stalled in the

drenched fields. Tanks slithered on the slippery ice. Snow in the forest, unrutted by trucks, was crusted over with a glassy layer of frozen rain, splotted here and there with the blood of the wounded.³

Hospitals were full of frost-bite cases. Front line troops, hungry and shivering, fought doggedly, wondering where their supplies, reinforcements and artillery support were.³

Siberian huskies and sleds were the only ambulance service that could reach the wounded. Flown in from the United States at the request of General Patton, they carried blood plasma, morphine, and antibiotics to the injured men. Before the arrival of the huskies, men were dying in the fields while ambulances mired down and stalled.⁴

The somber gray clouds, intermittent fog and snow, and now freezing rains, chilled the soldiers in body and spirit.

Combat planes sat forlornly on the runways while the front line troops, depending upon them for close-in fighter-bomber support, delayed their offensives. With visibility zero, the men couldn't even fly, much less see their targets.³

Reconnaissance planes were similarly grounded by fog, rain, snow and clouds. To General Patton this was the most distressing aspect of the dilemma, for without reconnaissance he had little idea of the position of Nazi forces.²

Silently the general besought heaven for just four clear days. In four days of sunshine, reconnaissance could pinpoint the targets for the artillery; and fighter-bombers could find and bomb Von Rundstedt's lines. Four days of sunshine could dry the hindering mud and allow the trucks carrying ammunition, supplies and rations to reach the forward lines. Four days of good weather would permit his ambulances to speed the wounded to the hospitals. And would enable his artillery and tanks to maneuver once more.

Abruptly, General Patton picked up his phone and called Third Army Chaplain, James H. O'Neill.

"This is Patton," he said. "Do you have a good prayer for weather? We must do something about these rains if we are to win this war."²

Chaplain O'Neill was not surprised at the request.

"I know where to look for such a prayer," he assured the General.

"I'll report within the hour." But the few prayer books on hand contained no formal prayer on weather that the chaplain thought might be acceptable to the army commander. So he sat down and typed one from his heart:

*"Almighty and most merciful Father, we humbly beseech Thee, of Thy great goodness, to restrain these immoderate rains with which we have to contend. Grant us fair weather for battle. Graciously hearken to us as soldiers who call upon Thee that, armed with Thy power, we may advance from victory to victory, and crush the oppression and wickedness of our enemies, and establish Thy justice among men and nations. Amen."*²

It might be well, he thought, to type the Commanding General's Christmas greeting on the other side. This would please the recipient; and anything that pleased the men, he knew would please General Patton.

So he turned the card over and typed:

*"To each officer and soldier in the Third United States Army, I wish a Merry Christmas. I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty and skill in battle. We march in our might to complete victory. May God's blessings rest upon each of you on this Christmas Day. G. S. Patton, Jr., Lieutenant Commander, Third United States Army."*²

This done, the Chaplain donned his heavy trench coat, crossed the quadrangle of the old French military barracks, and reported to General Patton.

"Have 250,000 copies printed," the General ordered after scanning the prayer, "and see to it that every man in the Third Army gets one."

"Very well, Sir," the chaplain replied. This was doing something about the weather in a big way! The size of the order amazed the chaplain. After a moment's hesitation, he called the General's attention to the greeting on the reverse side.

"Very good," the General said, with a smile of approval. He signed the card and returned it.

"Chaplain," he said then, "sit down for a moment. I want to talk to you about this business of prayer." He rose and walked to the high

window, where he stared out at the ceaseless rain. For a second, he rubbed his face in his hands.²

Unforgettably silhouetted against the silver rivulets on the windowpane, he stood there a long silent moment. He was six-feet-two, powerfully built, and stunningly dressed, as always. But something in his stance conveying the inner power of the man was what etched the picture forever in the memory of his chaplain.²

Sitting there observing that powerful physique, Chaplain O'Neill had time to recall the thoughtfulness of this man who felt a great individual responsibility for the welfare of the men in his command; how he was known to take time in the heat of action to discuss new methods to prevent trench feet; how he would personally order that dry socks be sent forward daily, with the rations, to the troops on the line; how he would kneel in the mud to care for a wounded soldier, administering morphine and waiting until the ambulance came.²

"Chaplain, I am a strong believer in prayer," the General said at last... "In war there is always an unknown between the military planning and the operations. That unknown spells the difference between defeat or victory, success or failure. It is the reaction of the actors to the ordeal when it actually comes. Some people call that 'getting the breaks.' I call it God.

"God has his part or margin in everything. That is where prayer comes in.

"Up to now, God has been very good to us in the Third Army. We have never retreated; we have suffered no defeats, no famine, no epidemics. This is because a lot of people back home have been praying for us. We were 'lucky' in Africa, in Sicily, and in Italy, simply because people prayed. But we have to pray for ourselves, too."

He went on to explain the character in a man that makes him a good soldier... something built in... a world of truth and power that is higher than himself... Patton declared that men should pray no matter where they were, in church, or out of it; if they did not pray, sooner or later they would "crack up."²

"We've got to get not only the chaplains, but every man in the

Third Army, to pray. We must ask God to stop these rains. These rains are the margin that holds defeat or victory.

"If we all pray... *it will be like plugging in on a current whose source is in Heaven. I believe that prayer completes that circuit. It is power.*"²

Immediately following Chaplain O'Neill's meeting with General Patton, 250,000 copies of Patton's call to prayer were distributed among all of the fighting men, officers and soldiers alike, in the entire Third Army.

No sooner had the distribution been made than the need for prayer became even more pressing.

General Von Rundstedt's Nazi forces crept out of the Schnee Eifel Forest on December 16th to the complete surprise of the few American divisions on the Luxembourg frontier. Heavy rains, thick fogs and swirling ground mists cloaked the enemy's movements and muffled the sound of their approach.²

Shrouded in those mists and shielded from view above by lowering clouds, the jubilant Nazi forces pressed relentlessly forward. The few divisions of General Patton's Third Army on the Luxembourg front, with their visibility reduced to a few yards, and all sound muffled by snow, mud, and heavy mists, found it hard to fight an enemy they could neither see nor hear. And the weather wasn't going to change.

The best meteorologists in the world were employed by the army to get accurate foreknowledge of the weather. For as General Patton had said, the weather often means the margin between defeat or victory. These skillful forecasters informed the American Command that no break in conditions was possible. The weather would continue as it was, indefinitely: "*Cold, Continued Rain And Snow, Ceiling 100 Feet, Visibility 300 Feet.*"

But that omitted the possibility of a miracle.

It was when the Third Army turned from east to north on December 19th, to counter the Nazi thrusts, that the miracle happened. By noon on the twentieth of December, the clouds began to thin and by two P.M. the sun broke through.

Every American soldier on the front knew what that meant, and a

mighty shout went up along a hundred-mile stretch. Throughout the Third Army, the cry was, "*A miracle!*" "*A miracle!*"

Patton's reconnaissance planes sped forward to map enemy positions; and by three o'clock, his fighter bombers streaked to the attack. Soon the troops in the forward positions were cheered by the sight of wave after wave of supporting planes, and by the sound of bombs crashing along the advancing Nazi units. In the closest enemy positions, they could hear the rat-a-tat-tat of the machine guns as their air support strafed the enemy lines. As wave after wave of planes thundered over their heads, shaking the snow and ice off the treetops, the soldiers cheered lustily and made ready to follow their tanks into the fray.³

The fighter-bombers kept up the attack until dark, and in one day they accounted for 361 Nazi planes. At nightfall, the Black Widow night-fighters took over. Their radar equipment found the Nazi supply columns and their machine guns strafed them in total darkness.³

The next day broke bright and clear and the Flying Fortresses and the Liberators from the British air bases began chalking their vapor trails across the sky as they attacked the Nazi rear areas. It was Christmas week and the miraculous weather out of nowhere continued for eight straight days.³

Trucks, tanks, artillery and ambulances pulled out of ruts and moved forward on the sun-dried roads.³

General Hugh Gaffey's 4th Armored Division began to gather speed and fought its way to within sight of Bastogne on the second day of fair weather. On the third day they defeated the last opposition and rumbled into Bastogne. Immediately, twenty-two ambulances were assigned to evacuate the wounded and were given road priority. Forty truckloads of supplies also followed General Gaffey's forces in.²

Von Rundstedt's daring probes into the U.S. lines, hoping to isolate them from the British forces and to defeat the Allies one at a time, had brought him out of the formidable fortifications of the Siegfried Line and had made him more vulnerable to allied air attacks.

And the Air Force, as well as Patton's tanks, made the best of the situation. All through Christmas week the planes flew the bright clear skies in perfect flying weather. They came over by the hundreds, destroying countless enemy tanks, as Von Rundstedt valiantly tried to bring up reinforcements.²

General Patton had prayed for only four days of battle weather. But a whole week of flying weather was given him. His chaplain did not see him again until late in January, in the city of Luxembourg.²

"Well, Padre," the General greeted him, smiling exultantly, "our prayers worked." He tapped one side of Chaplain O'Neill's helmet with his riding crop. "I knew they would," he added. That exuberant crack on the helmet was his way of saying "well done."²

"In the spring of 1945, I was in Luxembourg shortly after Bastogne and the reduction of the Bulge," the late Dr. Daniel A. Poling wrote in telling of the electrifying effects of that answered prayer upon Patton's troops.

"From Chaplain (Colonel) James O'Neill, one of the finest chaplains and truest Christians in the service, I received his personal copy of Patton's much discussed prayer for the rains to stop, the Patton prayer for battle weather...

"That prayer and greeting were typically Patton. They were from the Old Testament rather than the New and had the ring of Joshua and David at their militant best. They were not written for a soft time, but for their occasion...

"They were words to make men strong. and they did.

"I wrote from Luxembourg that at home we may no longer believe that God sends rain in answer to prayer, but along the Rhine I found 250,000 men who believed—firmly believed—that God *stopped* the rain in answer to *their* prayers.

"Everywhere I went, men told me the story and showed me the cards. The only doubters seemed to be among the officers, especially a few chaplains; but there were no doubters at Patton's headquarters.

"At any rate, the rains stopped... 'Battle weather' came and stayed for an unprecedented ten days, during which General Patton's army swept the enemy back to the river and presently beyond."⁵

Those prayers and the fact that their commander had requested those prayers had added something immeasurably potent to the army's fighting power.

General Patton was right. His Third Army soldiers needed to pray for themselves. And they did—250,000 of them. That prayer added a new dimension to their fighting—born of a greater confidence that God would hear and heed and help them, and of a livelier faith that their commander would be guided by God in his crucial decisions.

Those prayers had indeed "closed the circuit," between heaven and earth and brought them power and victory.

It is certainly not illogical to think that God, the ruler of all the nations, the arbiter of history, should sometimes use the forces of nature to work His will with the nations of men.

Those who still ponder this amazing question can consider once again the stories related here . . . the snows of Russia and the rains of Waterloo, the great flood of Noah's time, the sunny skies and calm seas in answer to Patton's and Eisenhower's prayers . . . or the astounding day in history when Joshua called the sun to stand still in the sky. There is little doubt in the light of these and other records that the God who answers prayers of faith in times of grave peril has His hand firmly upon the helm of national destinies.

Notes

¹Personal letter to author from Frederick Fox, Special Assistant to the White House under the late President Eisenhower.

²General James H. O'Neill, U.S. Army Deputy Chief of Chaplains, *The True Story of the Patton Prayer*. Quoted by kind permission of the author.

³From a written copy of a speech made at the First Presbyterian Church, Houston, December 28, 1947 by H.R. Safford, Jr., who gives various magazine and biographies of General Patton as his sources.

⁴Fred Ayers, Jr., *Before the Colors Fade* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1964). Used by permission of the author.

⁵Daniel A. Poling, *Faith Is Power For You* (Philadelphia: Chilton Books, 1950). Used by kind permission of Ann Louise Poling, executor of the will of Daniel A. Poling.

PART THREE

Angels, Visions, Voices and Dreams That Have Changed the Course of History

known to strike only once in a century, or at most once in a generation. But when it came, hurling rain, snow, and sleet, it had a lethal fury that terrified all who lived in the Alpine countries. Strange to say, never before in man's memory had the *Bora* struck in the early morning hours.

This particular *Bora*, on that spring morning of 394 A.D., struck with unsurpassed violence. Sweeping down past the peaks of Nanosberg, through the ranks of Theodosius' army, it blasted the pagan soldiers of Abergast in the face with such force that their archers were blinded and could scarcely stand against it to pull their bowstrings.³

Coming from behind the Roman soldiers, it added force to Roman arrows, sending them even to the rear ranks of Abergast's army. Its horizontal fury actually turned back the arrows of Abergast's own archers and hurled them into the flesh of men in their own ranks.

Thus, in a sudden miracle, the *Bora* came at the exact moment it was needed. The Christian army of Theodosius defeated barbarism and saved the Roman Empire from being captured by pagans.³

Can the sudden windstorm be discounted as a freak of nature, rather than a miracle of divine intervention? That would leave the two appearances of the radiant horsemen and their identical predictions unaccounted for. And further, *that predicted victory wasn't happening until the storm struck.*

Notes

¹Mrs. Hugh Frazer, *Italian Yesterdays*. Copyright © 1913 by Dodd Mead & Co., New York. Retold by permission of the publishers.

²George Hodges, *Saints and Heroes to the End of the Middle Ages* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1913). Used by permission of Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

³From *The Horizon Book of Ancient Rome*. Copyright © 1966 by American Heritage Publishing Co., New York. Reprinted by permission.

Mysterious White Cavalry Frightened Advancing Army

It was April, 1918, nearing the end of WWI when the mysterious "White Battalion" of cavalry were seen by hundreds of German soldiers in the Kaiser's army. It all happened near the little French town of Bethune, and a German officer later recounted the experience in awe:

"We were advancing at the head of our troops, all of whom were in excellent spirits, singing as they swung along, thinking that the British were now defeated and all that remained was to go forward without much opposition and capture Paris, where we would have a fine time—plenty of drinks and all else we desired.

"By my side was my Lieutenant Fritz, and he suddenly seized hold of my arm, saying, 'Look, Herr Captain, there is a large body of mounted men approaching Bethune from the other side. See, the smoke of the burning houses is blowing away and I can discern their uniforms. Why, they are all dressed in white and are mounted on white horses. Who can they be?'

"'I don't know,' I replied. 'They may be British Colonial mounted troops.'

"Lieutenant Fritz replied, 'I know of no British Colonial mounted troops with white uniforms and white chargers. But anyway, they will

be blown to pieces now our heavy artillerymen are opening fire upon them.'

"We halted instinctively," the Prussian Captain continued, "and stood watching those white-uniform-clad cavalymen advancing quietly through the smoke, their figures clearly outlined in the shining sun against the smoke of the burning town. We saw the shells breaking amidst their ranks with shattering crashes which shook the ground. This barrage was followed by intensive machine gun fire which raked the advancing men until it seemed impossible for anyone to survive. But the White Cavalry came quietly forward at a slow trot and not a man or a horse fell!

"Resistless as the incoming tide, they advanced, and in front of them rode their leader—a fine figure of a man. By his side was a great sword similar to those used by the Crusaders, and his hands lay quietly, holding the reins of his great white charger as it bore him forward.

"Then a terror seized me, and I found myself fleeing from that awe-inspiring body of white cavalry, frightened and terrified. All around me were the masses of my men, formerly an army, but now a rabble, broken and afraid, all fleeing from them, but more especially from that wonderful leader on his great white charger...

"The German army is defeated. I don't say you will not have any more fighting, for this you are bound to experience; but I do say that we have lost the war, and that it is due to the 'White Cavalry.'"¹

Louise W. Eggleston continues the account with a footnote: "This actually happened and was attested by many hundred Germans: the English did not see the White Cavalry.

"God's Legions of Light," she adds, "were enabled to intervene and prevent a crushing defeat because enough people believed and prayed for His Divine Power to come to their rescue." Then she points out that if prayers sometimes seem to remain unanswered it is because "we have failed to unite our faith and prayers and remain in one accord until God's way is made manifest. In this instance," she continues, "in answer to national prayer in Great Britain and the United States, He sent His Heavenly Hosts and those were the White

Cavalry seen by the Germans.

"These forces can move at the word of command from men of faith, when they call them to the Lord's work, to carry out His will."¹

Notes

¹Louise W. Eggleston, *The How and Why of Prayer Groups* (Baltimore: Koinonia Press, 1952). Used by kind permission of the author.

greater protection. Chinese employers of the British Embassy also said that the Boxers certainly would not attack the missionaries.

But local authorities insisted that every precaution be taken and, from June 20th to August 14th, only government soldiers and marines were allowed on the Peking wall to keep lookout for enemy movements.

But once the missionaries were no longer seen on the walls, the number of Boxer attacks increased.

It was during an attack by a superior force that the defenders noticed strangely illogical behavior among the attacking insurrectionists. With more than adequate forces, they had fought their way to within seconds of their objective when they abruptly halted and began to point upward.

The whole attacking force, seemingly filled with consternation, suddenly turned and fled. Some were captured, and when asked why they were running, they replied in obvious terror:

"We saw the walls suddenly swarming with angels in white. Everyone began shouting that the 'shen' (the gods) had come down to fight for the foreigners and our cause was lost."¹

God's angels are truly His messengers or forces of assistance, and may appear as a great military battalion, or alone, perhaps as a kindly old man, according to the task to be done.

Notes

¹Adapted from *Knights Masterbook of New Illustrations* by Walter B. Knight (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956). With additions from letters of missionary's family.

Russian Writer Saw Challenging Vision

It was Christmas day, 1960, at a typical social gathering of intellectuals in Moscow.

"Comrades," an atheistic author began during a lull in the chatter, "have you found me to be unreasonable in anything? Or strange in anything?"¹

"No, no," his companions assured him. "We have noticed nothing peculiar. Why do you ask?"

"A few months ago," he explained, "I was in the South writing the first chapters of my latest book. I had great clearness of mind and inspiration. Suddenly, outside my window, twenty-five feet above the ground, I saw the form of a white-haired man, eighty or ninety years old ...

"At first I was terrified, but afterwards, I decided that my mind was overworked. I did not know how to react. I shook my head right and left. The old man fixed his strange, shining eyes upon me and spoke to me with a calm voice, calling me by my first name, and saying,

"And now you will labor only for Christ and the Orthodox Church. The dominion of Satan is coming to an end."

"Who are you?" I asked the strange old man.

"A slave of the Savior, Christ, just as you are also," he replied.

"But I am an atheist and do not believe in the existence of Christ," I told him.

"The apparition would not leave...with sweetness, love, and patience," the old man continued,

"You will believe now, however, and you will dedicate your life to Him, alone. The time has come for Christ to be glorified once again by the Russian people. You, who are an atheist, will henceforth become a faithful lamb of the Lord."

"Comrades! the apparition repeated itself many times! And even repeats itself here in Moscow!"

"Tell me. What shall I do?... I am not insane, as they will quickly accuse me." He began to tremble; and his friends tried to calm him.

Then a well-known young poet, also an atheistic communist, spoke,

"Comrades, be still and hear me for only a few moments," he said. "Our friend is not insane. Listen to my latest poem."

Arrested by his words, everyone in the room remained silent while he recited a poem of repentance, looking to Jesus "The Redeemer of the whole world—Christ, the laborer from Nazareth."

The eerie story of the vision's recurring visits, followed by the haunting beauty of the penitent poem, had a startling effect upon the gathering.

Dozens of the most distinguished intellectuals of Russia burst into tears of joy and began embracing one another.

"Comrades," exclaimed a third writer in the assemblage, "from today, I am not a Soviet writer. I am a Russian writer... a Russian Orthodox writer."

"From today," cried another, "I am neither a Soviet nor a Russian writer. I am a humble slave of Christ. For Him will I write. Him will I glorify with every line. This is my decision, Comrades!"

"Not Comrades any longer. Brothers! B-r-o-t-h-e-r-s!" cried another.

A foreign guest later told the strange story of what happened at the Moscow Christmas party. Subsequent events have proven that the tearful avowals made there were not mere transient emotional

outbursts.

For one thing, "in spite of fanatical suppression of religion and organized teaching of atheism, it is said that in the seven years between 1960 and 1967, eighty-five percent of the intellectuals in Russia have turned to Christ."¹

Some are still afraid to confess it, but others are boldly declaring their faith. "Christianity today," they say, "is dissolving the empire of Satan in order to raise from the midst of the ruins our holy and great Orthodox Fatherland which has been washed with the tears and blood of the martyrs for Christ."¹

Evidence of this Christian upsurge began to leak out into the free world press in spite of the news suppression in the Soviet Union. Russian writers began openly declaring their disapproval of Soviet oppression, and their courage caused other Russian dissenters to step forward.

The first Soviet government reactions that reached the free press came during the trials of two of those dissenting writers, in 1966, Yuli Daniel and Andrei Siniavskii. Siniavskii had written:

"So that prisons should vanish forever, we built new ones. So that all frontiers should fall, we surrounded ourselves with a Chinese wall.

"So that work should become a rest and a pleasure, we introduced forced labor. So that not a drop of blood be shed any more, we killed and killed and killed."²

Although Daniel and Siniavskii were sentenced to five years imprisonment, other dissenters were not. And their sympathizers began to multiply.

In the many years that have passed since that Christmas Day in 1960, more and more Russian men of fame have convinced the world of their desire for Christianity over Russian atheism. No author has been more acclaimed than Alexander Solzhenitsyn, who was forced to leave Russia because of his open criticism of the Kremlin's abridgement of human freedom, especially freedom of religion.

Later, Natalya Solzhenitsyn, in departing Russia to join her exiled husband, commented on the religious revival in Russia: "A miracle is

happening before our eyes. The desecrated, humiliated and trampled faith is not dead in Russia, but irrevocably draws more and more souls in every day."³

How much of the faith and courage exhibited by countless other outspoken writers and dissidents in Russia can be attributed to the miraculous appearance of the old man at the Russian writer's window may never be known. But one thing is certain, his message has been strangely contagious. And as Russian writer Andreii Amalrik declared, "The process is irreversible."⁴

Notes

¹Adapted from *Contemporary Miracles in Russia* by Archimandrite Haralampous Basilopoulous. Used by kind permission of the publishers, Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, New York.

²Abram Tertz, *On Socialist Realism*. Copyright © 1960 by Pantheon Books; a division of Random House, Inc., New York. Used by permission of publishers.

³Murray Seeger, "Mrs. Solzhenitsyn Hates to Leave, But Is Joining Husband," dateline Moscow, *Houston Chronicle*, 14 April 1974. Used with permission of the *Los Angeles Times*.

⁴"Witch Hunt Charged By Russian Writer," dateline Moscow. Used by permission of United Press International, New York.

Vision In Sky Changed History For 1200 Years

The death of Constantius Chlorus, Emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire thrust his young son, Constantine, into a position of heavy responsibility in 306 A.D. His domain stretched from the Hellespont to the Irish Sea and included Gaul. Fortunately, Constantine had the loyalty of his father's troops, for he was vigorous, imaginative, kindly, and militarily successful.¹

Soon his civilian subjects also admired and respected him, for he visited the provinces of the Roman Empire in western Europe, treating all his subjects with kindly consideration and justice.²

During his visits to the provinces, Constantine developed a rash on his hands which none of his physicians were able to cure. When his doctors failed, in desperation, he consulted one magician of Byzantium after another. None seemed able to help him. One strongly anti-Christian magician told him, "Only if you bathe in the blood of a thousand infants, killed expressly for this purpose, will your hands be healed of this ailment."³

Word of the proposed remedy spread throughout the city. Mothers of infants began wailing in the streets. But Constantine issued an imperial declaration which comforted them.

"I would rather die than to kill children to restore my health," he asserted.³