

## MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE

P. O. Box 33,  
Vryheid, Natal,  
November 21, 1949.

Dear Highway Friends,

It is a dark cool day. So far we have had very little hot weather here in Vryheid. How I long to be back at Altona and yet I see clearly how much better this climate is for me, in my present physical condition. So even though my heart yearns to be well and able to work for God again, yet if I must be ill, I praise Him for the privilege of living in this nice locality. God has been so good to me and my heart overflows with gratitude today for all His love and mercy and concern over me. I don't deserve it and yet He cares and thinks of me.

We are enjoying a visit from Sister Grace Sanders and it has been so interesting and blessed to hear of her work at Altona. Altona is a busy place, I never seemed to be able to reach around to all that needed to be done there and we are so glad that Brother and Sister Parks are also located there now and able to help out in many ways. We do pray that God will greatly bless them and make them a blessing during their stay among us. Sister Campbell is at Altona now for a few weeks.

We are expecting to soon hear that Bro. George Sanders has reached Canada. We trust he has had a good passage over and will greatly enjoy his furlough in the homeland and be a blessing to you all, while there.

I have tried to write letters to all our dear friends but have failed, as the past weeks I have not been well enough to write. So please, dear ones, consider this a letter to you to wish you God's best blessings upon you, during the Christmas season and the New Year of 1950. Please write too. Many days are rather long and distressing and a letter from home makes a bright spot for me—just to know that someone cares means so much too.

May God be with you all.

Yours, resting in His dear love and care,  
GLADYS KIERSTEAD.

## HEAVEN BROUGHT TO EARTH

God's Heaven seems not far away since Jesus came to earth;  
The silence of four hundred years was broken at his birth.  
The saints of old and sages too had waited Oh so long  
For the Messiah who would come to righten every wrong.  
Yes, heaven and earth were closely joined on the night the angels sang,  
Down through the corridors of Time the heavenly anthem rang;  
And to all nations, for all time that song shall ever roll,  
For in that music God has given His answer to the soul.  
Oh for a seraph's tongue to sing that anthem o'er again,  
Of Glory to our glorious Lord; peace and goodwill to men!  
For earth and heaven still are joined; Oh let the music swell,  
For in the cleansed and trusting heart the Christ now comes to dwell.  
Not dimmed by time nor ruled by space is

Bethlehem's story now;  
The Babe is Saviour king of kings; a crown bedecks His brow.  
He bringeth heaven down to earth and each may have a part,  
And not His cradle but His throne, may be your yielded heart.

—W. E. S.

## "MINE EYES HAVE SEEN THY SALVATION"

Simeon was one of a group, larger or smaller, who cherished the Messianic hope when sceptical Sadducees had given up, and formal and pedantic Pharisees had forgotten it. Simeon and others like him had kept alive the best piety of the nation. Society has no greater benefactors than those humble souls who keep religion alive and active by their own faith and hope. Simeon's piety has many engaging and delightful traits. We mention four.

Simeon was "just and devout." The first word is from the realm of conduct, the second from the sphere of worship. He was just in the sight of men, and devout as before God, and the two were intimately connected. So they must ever be in true Christian character. We must never make devotion a thing by itself. The devout man must be righteous, or his religion will be sickly. The righteous man must be devout, or his religion will be a sinful self-righteousness.

Simeon was a man of spiritual intuition. "It was revealed to him that he should not see death till he had seen the Lord's Christ." A man who lives in fellowship with God and in moral harmony with men is likely to have revelations made to him, for God tells His secrets to those who love Him. God wakens the ear of His saints to heavenly voices, and opens their eyes to visions unseen by the earth-bound. How he does this we cannot say. It is like inspiration itself—a fact of the greatest certainty, though of method undefined.

Simeon was favoured with spiritual guidance. "He came by the Spirit into the Temple." He was often in the Temple. If a priest, he came by rota: if not, he came by custom. But this time he "came by the Spirit." Had one met him and asked why he went on this morning to the Temple he might have said, "I feel I must go. God has something to communicate to me." Those who walk with God will do many things for which the worldly wise can find no reason or motive. A slender thread draws them on, and they know better than to draw back and break the thread.

Simeon was granted the grace of spiritual insight. In the Temple that day he saw what he must have seen hundreds of times—a young mother presenting her firstborn son. But this mother was Mary, and the babe was Jesus, so named on the eighth day when He was circumcised according to the law. Now it was the fortieth day, and by the law the firstborn must be redeemed from the Temple service. The usual redemption price was a lamb, but that offering was too costly for the poor. A merciful provision to meet the case of the poor ordained that two young pigeons could be a substitute for the full offering, and these the virgin mother brought.

The voice which had spoken to Simeon before, spoke again: "This is He." Trembling with holy awe, the old man approached the young mother and asked to hold the Child in his arms. Wonderingly, she yielded up the

precious burden to his care, watching with anxious gaze the old man's emotion. Simeon broke into his swan-song: "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace according to Thy word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation."

This spiritual insight is the privilege of those who walk with God. They see more than others in the Bible, for example. Some see paper, print and binding: a book like any other book. Others see history, poetry, high literature. But spiritual minds see more. They see God at work. They see Christ and hear His voice. They see more than others in the Sacrament. All can see the bread and wine. All can perceive a loving and social friendship. But spiritual minds see Christ Himself "in the midst," as surely as Simeon saw Christ in the virgin mother's babe.

They see more in the sermon. Others may be interested. Others may follow the argument, and admire the illustrations: but spiritual minds see more. They hear the Voice of the Good Shepherd and feed out of His hand. As Simeon saw and held the Saviour in his arms, so the humble and believing soul embraces the salvation that the Saviour died to bring to men.

Simeon's eyes, brightened with the second-sight of prophecy, foresaw something of the Redeemer's glory: "A Light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Thy people Israel."

Other nations of antiquity had their glory, but not as Israel. It was the glory of Rome to give law and government to the Western world. It was the glory of Greece to give to the world beauty in art. Still her temples are our models, her poems our delight, her statues our despair. But Israel's glory was greater. For Israel gave the living and true God to the world. We still pray to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, though more clearly known now as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is from Israel that the world has the Holy Scriptures, for all the human authors of the Bible books save one were of the seed of Israel. Above all, it is through Israel that the world has the Saviour: Son of David and Son of God.

Christ has indeed proved to be the Light of the nations. See the places where woman is honoured, childhood loved, family life pure, liberty cherished, and obedience to law an honoured tradition; trace out the history of these moral virtues where they have flourished, and you will see that it is impossible to give the credit to anyone but Christ. He has been the Light of the nations, and it will be their blessedness to continue to walk in His light, and to give His light to all who still sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.

There can be no other Light. Christ comes to take away our weaknesses by His gift of strength, our pride and arrogance by His humility and sacrifice, our love of domination by the spirit of service.

So let it be our prayer at this time that He who came in the flesh to unite Himself with our race for its redemption, may come into our hearts by His Spirit. Then shall He be both—the Light in which we walk, and the Glory we proclaim and seek to spread through all the earth.

—The Christian.

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Paul).