

KOREA'S CRUCIBLE OF TESTING

By Donald E. Hoke

Whispered tales of persecution, exile, torture and death — grapevining through from Communist North Korea in recent months—presage the fate of Christians in the area of South Korea held by the Red invaders.

Stories of Communist brutality north of the 38th parallel are guardedly told in South Korea. At an annual convention in Seoul a pastor who had penetrated the 38th parallel disguised as a coolie told the 1,000 Christians convened:

"We have apostles like those in the book of Acts in North Korea." Upon urging, he revealed he had been forbidden to preach, but went ahead preaching the gospel.

Communist police arrested him, beat him and finally gave him the "water treatment." Popularized by the Japanese during the war, the procedure is to force water through the mouth and nose of the victim till his stomach is distended. Then, stretching the victim on the floor, they jump on his abdomen with heavy boots till he is unconscious or dead.

"We often prayed to die under this," he continued. "But then we asked the forgiveness of the Lord. We must live to preach the Gospel! Brothers and sisters, that's why we're here—to tell even these men about Christ!

"I have not come to this convention to escape torture or death. But I have come to tell you of your responsibility to pray for North Korea," the heroic pastor concluded . . . Since they professed to allow religious liberty, Communists resorted to thinly veiled devices to destroy the church.

Communist rallies to generate enthusiasm for the hated Red government are held every night of the week in different sections of the cities. Rallies are planned to coincide with prayer meeting nights in the areas of the churches. Every citizen is forced to attend unless sick; hence, all mid-week church services are virtually impossible.

Another device frequently used is to order church members out to do compulsory civic improvement, such as road repairing, on Sundays. And no hymn-books or Bibles can be bought in all of North Korea.

Not a few pastors have been tortured or executed. Some of those beaten or starved were released from prison just before death in order to avoid any report of someone having died in prison — an established Communist technique.

But out of his crucible of testing have seeped stories of heroism and uncompromising loyalty to Christ.

Evangelize Communists

When government forces were unable to stop Red Guerilla terrorism in the Chiri mountain area in South Korea last winter, a Presbyterian pastor from North Korea advocated a "Save Korea Evangelistic Crusade." His plan was to invade these Communist strongholds with a team of pastors for intensive evangelistic campaigns.

Twenty-four of the most prominent Seoul pastors—thirteen Presbyterian, nine Holiness, two Methodist and one Salvation Army—invaded the Chiri mountain area in February of this year. Young Elmer Kilbourne, one of two sons of E. L. Kilbourne of the O.M.S., went down to see this revolutionary evangelistic effort to stop Communism.

In two weeks time, he reported, the team of pastors contacted over 300,000 people in meet-

ings and door-to-door visitation. In the 300-odd meetings, over 8,000 professions of faith in Christ were reported as a result of the campaign, conducted in below-zero winter weather.

And Communist activity was curtailed and halted in many places when some of the leaders were converted.—Reprinted from Christian Life Magazine.

ONE CAN TURN THE TIDE!

By Lionel Fletcher

All great soul-winners have been men and women of prayer. I have known nearly all the great evangelists of this generation, and many of the last. All were men of intense prayer.

One man moved my soul tremendously when I was a young, unconverted journalist. He was staying with a Presbyterian minister, and I said, "I would like to see Mr. So-and-So." The minister spoke of him with awe in his voice and something wonderful in his face, and said, "I have never had such a man live in my house. I do not know when he sleeps. When I go to his room at night to see if he is comfortable, he is in prayer. I saw him go into the church early this morning and he has not been home for meals."

I found the church . . . I crept in lest I would disturb him. It was in the tropics of Australia. I found him divested of his coat and collar. He lay prostrate at the communion rail. I could hear the agony of his voice and the tears in his voice as he pleaded with God for that great gold mining city, that he might lead souls to God. He had been praying all night. And he had fasted and prayed all day.

I crept up to where he lay. I knelt by his prostrate form and put my hand on his shoulder and it was wet with sweat. He had never seen me before but he looked up for a moment and said, "Pray with me, brother. I cannot live if this town does not turn to God." He had been there about three weeks without conversions . . . I knelt with him and prayed with him and he opened his heart to God and pleaded as I never heard a man plead. I went back to my office awed, humbled, trembling.

That night I went to the great church where he preached. No one knew he had no food all day, and no sleep the night before. But when he rose in the church I heard several say, "What an unearthly light is on his face." It is true. He was a great Bible teacher but not an evangelist. But that night as he preached, something happened, and the whole place broke beneath the power of God. That was the first ingathering of souls I had ever witnessed.

"BURDEN BEARERS"

The camel, at the close of day, kneels down upon the sandy plain, to have his burden lifted off—and rest again.

My soul, thou too, should to thy knees, when day-light draweth to a close, and have thy Lord lift off thy load, and grant repose.

Else how cans't thou tomorrow meet, with all tomorrow's work to do, if thou thy burden all the night, dost carry through?

The camel kneels at break of day, to have his lord replace his load, then rise up anew to take the desert road.

So thou shouldst kneel at morning's dawn, to have Him give thy daily care, assured that He no load too great will make thee bear.

—Selected.

A CHILD'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

By Garry Cleveland Myers, Ph.D.

We Protestants have a curious way of taking vacation from church during the summer, whether we go on vacation or not, or whether or not there are church services near to where we are vacationing. We take the same attitude toward Sunday school, especially in urban areas.

We deserve some self-approval for attending church over a nine or ten-month period throughout the year and for sending our children to Sunday school during this period. We might be more deserving if we attended Sunday school with our children and won the older ones to remain with us for the church services.

Religious Education

Apparently, we consider religious education of our children less important than secular education, for we don't get our children started going back to Sunday school in the fall until after the public schools open.

In case we wish our children to gain best values from Sunday school, try this program.

1. Go with our children regularly to Sunday school to prove to them that we consider Sunday school important; also to make it a family enterprise and thus render the children more willing or eager to go, especially those over ten or twelve years of age, and more inclined to attend church as a part of the family. By going with our children we can enter classes and prove our eagerness to learn more of the kind of things our children learn, and prepare ourselves to be teachers if called upon to do so.

Prompt and Regular

2. Be prompt and regular in our attendance at Sunday school so our children also will be, considering lateness to Sunday school even more serious than lateness to work or to school. Think of the moral loss to the many children who habitually arrive late at Sunday school or are often absent without good cause.

3. Find out what lessons for each Sunday our children are asked to prepare and study these lessons at home with our children. Parents who begin this good practice when their children are very young can, if they enjoy their children, help them gain satisfaction from preparing such lessons.

4. Organize ourselves into a kind of church school P.T.A. with a view to encouraging the Sunday school teaching staff, proving to them the home is back of them and disciplining our children at home to comport themselves properly at Sunday school.

5. Working harder to provide a happy home atmosphere for our children and to prove to them that our own religion helps make us lovelier to live with.

TO YOUR KNEES—

If we could only get the ear of the American Church, we would cry out and say, "Stop your religious fuss and human activity and find your way to the upper room and tarry there until Pentecost be repeated."

It would start a tidal wave that would be felt to the end of the earth. Hell would put on mourning. Heaven would rejoice. Angels would encamp round about us. Crime waves would cease and the coming of Jesus would be hastened.

Who will pay the price for the Old Time Power and just such a revival? To your knees, then, oh people of God!—J. M. Hames.