



My Bible School Lessons

Exploring the Word of God

Lesson #20: "Pathway to God's Throne"

Praying for Daddy

The little girl in this story was only three years old when she did this lovely thing I am going to tell you about. What a great deal of good even a tiny three-year-old can do!

Her father is a very important businessman. Not long ago he became very, very ill. He was so sick that two doctors were called in, and the servants in the great big house where he lived were told to go about their work without making the least little bit of noise, so that the master would not be disturbed.

Nobody was allowed in the sickroom except the nurses and the doctors. They were most particular about this. There was to be no troubling of the patient for any reason whatever, they said. If he did not sleep, then there would be no hope of saving his life.

And that was just what the patient could not do. Sleep would not come. Hour after hour he tossed about, restless and irritable, and constantly getting weaker.

As the days passed and he became steadily worse, the doctors finally decided that there was nothing more that they could do. It was only a matter of time, they said, and the family had better prepare for the worst.

All this time little Gloria had been filled with curiosity about what was going on in the darkened room. She knew her dear daddy was sick in there, but she couldn't understand why she was not allowed to go in, why she had to be kept so far away from him.

Now and then, when nobody was looking, she would creep along to the door of the sickroom and stand outside listening, as quiet as a little pussy hunting a mouse. There she would stay until the nurse opened the door. Then she would run away so fast that there was no time for the nurse to blame her for being there.

How little Gloria did want to see her daddy! She felt that he needed her, and it made her cross to be told that she mustn't go into his room any more.

Then one afternoon, as she was looking around a corner of the corridor, sadly watching the door of Daddy's room, the nurse came out and walked down to the bathroom. And she left the door open!

Like a streak of lightning Gloria sped around the corner and into the room. She just had to see her daddy, and you couldn't blame her very much, could you? But when she saw her daddy she felt very sad. He looked so pale and tired. "Poor Daddy!" she said, gently touching his hand. "I'm so sorry." And then after a pause, "I love you, Daddy." Daddy turned his head and smiled weakly at her. "I'm glad you came to see me," he whispered, trying to stroke her golden curls. Tears filled Gloria's eyes, and all of a sudden she walked over to the window and looked up into the sky. And there she talked quietly to Jesus, just as though she were talking to a very dear friend. In a moment or two she was back again at Daddy's bedside.

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"Daddy," she said very earnestly, with her sweet little face aglow with happiness, "Jesus told me just now that you are going to get better."

Daddy smiled and slowly closed his eyes.

Just then Gloria heard footsteps. It was the nurse coming back! But Gloria didn't even think of running to hide. It was her turn now.

"Ssssh!" she said, as the nurse came in, an angry frown on her face. "Ssssh! Daddy's asleep. Don't wake him up!" The nurse looked, and to her amazement she saw that Gloria was right. Her patient was asleep at last. The little girl had done more than all the doctors and the nurses together. The poor sick man, whom everybody had given up to die, slept soundly all that night, something he had not done for many weeks. In the morning, when he awoke, he was so much better that the doctors could hardly believe their eyes. And he kept on getting better until soon he was his old self again.

Today he is back at his work, but he never tires of telling the story of how his life was saved, not by the doctors, but by his own little Gloria and the prayer she prayed at the window that afternoon.

FLOUR BARREL MIRACLE

When Grandma was much younger than she is now she lived on a small farm hundreds of miles from a big city. Her nearest neighbors were so far away she scarcely ever saw them.

Sometimes she would feel very lonely, especially when her husband was working far from home and she was left alone with the children for weeks on end.

Sometimes food would get scarce, and the children would have to go on short rations until their daddy got back with fresh supplies.

One bad winter he didn't get back when he said he would, and the food ran out.

Grandma was worried. She hated to see the children suffer. Gladly would she have driven to the nearest village to buy food, but there was no way for her to get there. Her husband had the horse and cart.

She couldn't telephone for help, because farmhouses didn't have telephones in those days. So the last little bit of food was eaten, and Grandma wondered what would happen if her husband didn't return soon. Next morning she went to the flour barrel and looked in. It was empty. This meant there would be nothing to eat for breakfast.

At this moment Grandma remembered another barrel that belonged to a woman like her, and how the prophet Elijah promised that if she would put God first, the barrel would never be empty.

She knelt by the barrel and prayed.

"I've always tried to put You first, dear God. I've paid my tithe and brought up my children to love You. Now we are in great need, and I claim the same promise."

As she prayed a voice seemed to say to her, "Bang the barrel!" So she stood up and banged it, good and hard, with the flour dipper. Then she looked inside. There was flour at the bottom. Quite a lot, in fact; at least enough to make a nice little breakfast for everybody. Next day Grandma banged the barrel again, and once more found flour at the bottom of it, this time enough to make a pan of biscuits. The third day she banged it again, and still more flour came.

The day after that she banged it again.

Believe it or not, she kept on banging that barrel for a whole month, and without fail always found enough flour at the bottom to give them something to eat. She was still banging it when her husband arrived home with fresh supplies of food. He laughed when he heard the story, but she didn't. To her it was something very precious. Ever after she would remember 1 Kings 17:14.

"The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth."

She had claimed God's promise, and He had kept it, as He always does.

Wall of Horses

The horses had come through the village once before, and a wild and savage sight it had been. Rounded up from the prairies, they had suddenly turned down the narrow dirt road between the houses, and with the thunder of a thousand hoofs had raced madly through.

That was years ago, and the people who now lived in the village never dreamed it would happen again. Surely there would never be another stampede like that, not in their lifetime.

So time passed, and children were born. They grew up and played on that same dirt road. Horses from nearby farms passed peacefully to and fro, and the children knew most of them by name; but of the wild horses of the mountains and prairies they knew nothing, except what their mothers had told them of the big stampede. Sometimes, perhaps, they dreamed, as children do, of that terrible day when the whole frantic herd went galloping through their village.

Life was very happy and peaceful there, far from city noises and railroads and speeding automobiles. Nothing very special happened from week to week until one afternoon, Yes, it was a Sabbath afternoon. Lucy and Lillian had studied their Bible lesson with their parents that very morning. It had been about Daniel in the lions' den, and the two children had enjoyed it very much, especially the part where the angel came and shut the lions' mouths so that they would not harm the prophet of the Lord. They had asked Mother if the angels would go to the rescue of other people who might get into trouble like that, and Mother had said they surely would.

The lesson over, the children had gone out for a little walk by themselves. They had planned to go down the dirt road, across a field or two, then back again. But they did not get that far.

Suddenly, while they were still in the village, they heard a strange noise in the distance. Looking up, they saw a great cloud of dust, which seemed to be coming nearer and nearer.

Then, amid the dust they could see horses, galloping horses, galloping madly—straight toward them.

They were standing near a little bush not much taller than themselves, and no protection at all, but now they knelt beside it, saying a little prayer, and wondering what would happen.

Meanwhile Mother had heard the horses too. Instantly she had recognized the dreadful sound that had frightened her so much long ago. At the same moment she thought of her children. Where were they? Surely they must be on the road, right in the path of the wild, plunging beasts. She ran out to look. Yes, there they were! She called to them, but they could not hear her. Meanwhile the wild horses, scores and scores of them, were rushing madly, blindly, frantically, right through the village toward them!

"Save them! O Jesus, save them!" Mother cried in desperation, turning her head away lest she should see them killed.

Then something very wonderful happened. You do not need to believe it unless you wish to, but I know it is true. The mother told me about it herself. And the oldest girl too.

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Suddenly, as the horses neared the children, those in front stopped. Neighing frenziedly, they reared up on their hind legs, their hoofs pawing the air. Then the next row piled onto those ahead of them, their front legs straddling the others backs. Behind them still others did the same, until, in the space of seconds, there was a wall of horses right across that village street. With their manes flying in the wind, and clouds of dust billowing about them, it was a never-to-be-forgotten sight.

In that brief pause the children slipped away and hurried home. The horses plunged and tossed a little while longer, then dropped their hoofs to the ground and started off again on their mad and thunderous flight.

"But weren't you afraid?" asked Mother as Lucy and Lillian came sauntering up to her. "Afraid?" they said, quite unconcerned. "Oh, no. We knew the angel of the Lord would look after us, and he did."

Then they went indoors to play, while Mother, who had been sick with fright, marveled at their faith.