

Victory in Babylon!

For ages 7 years and up

- Based on the true adventures of God's children! God's miraculous care, protection, leading, guidance and help in difficult circumstances!

THE STORY SO FAR:

The 18 teens, JETTs and children from the Green Trees Home are in the midst of the most exciting adventure of their lives! After being snatched from their beds in a pre-dawn raid, they have been taken away from their loving Homes to Morfield, an institution run by the Children's Welfare Department. Under the leadership of the teens, the Family kids have stood strong against attempts to de-program them.

Determined to break their unity and strength, Miss Rottweiler has separated the younger children from the teens and JETTs and put them together with System kids, many of whom had no respect for the law or police. Although it looks like a defeat, the Lord has permitted this to happen for His Own good purposes.

Later, in the Royal Palace of Heaven, the Archangel Michael has presented Jesus with a petition of the Family's desperate prayers from their Worldwide prayer

day. This has inspired the Lord to do something extra special for His precious little "captives in Babylon"!



NOTE TO PARENTS, TEACHERS AND ALL:

Throughout the chapters of "Victory in Babylon", you will find many Bible verse references. We believe these verses are an important addition to the story and that the children (especially OCs and older) should look them up and/or read them, as they show that the story is based on the Bible. Also, the application of the verses to the story teaches the children how to apply the Word, not only to the story, but to real life situations. However, when reading each chapter of "Victory in Babylon" for the first time with children, in order to keep the excitement of the story flowing, it may be better not to stop and look up each Bible reference as you read the story. You could instead (1) look them up as an assigned project afterwards; or (2) do it when reading the story through the second time around; or (3) look up the verses when talking about and discussing the story later. God bless you! Happy reading!

A HEAVENLY VISITOR

It was a stormy night around Morfield! The rain lashed furiously against the "B" Block dormitory windows as the Family children lay in their beds trying to sleep.

"This is the most awful time I've ever had!" despaired OC Tommy, as he stared gloomily at the cold, iron frame of his lumpy bed. "First we were taken away from our parents, and now we've been separated from the teens and we're with all these other boys!" He looked around at the sleeping shapes of ten other boys with whom he and Paul and Jesse were now sharing a crowded dorm.

They had only been separated from the teens and JETTs for a few hours, and already Tommy felt totally discouraged. He, Paul and Jesse hadn't prayed together before lights out. It had been so strange to suddenly be thrown in with ten rough and rowdy boys. Tommy just hadn't been able to muster up the courage to pray openly in front of them.

"I'm just a failure!" Tommy groaned, as the wind moaned outside. "If I don't even have the guts to pray in front of these boys, how will I ever be bold enough to witness in the Great Tribulation?"

Then he started to worry

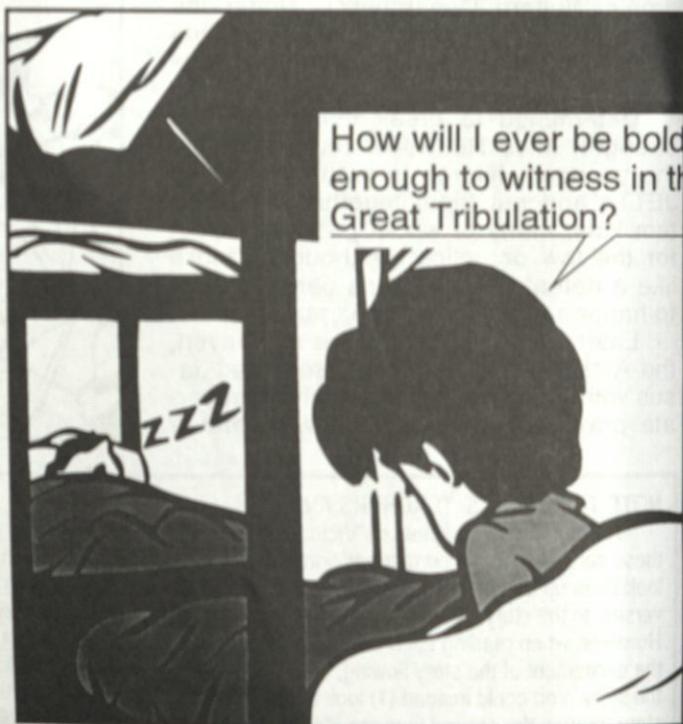
about the next day. What if the bullies started picking on him? Should he fight back? What if they were served white sugar and white bread and pork sausages for breakfast? Should he refuse to eat it? What if they weren't allowed to have devotions together? How would they get their Word time?

"Oh, dear!" Tommy fretted. "And I'll never be able to lead the little kids in on-fire inspirations and do everything like the teens did!"

He tossed restlessly on his bed, unable to get comfortable. His mind then wandered back to a question he had asked Mrs. Sharp:

"Excuse me, Ma'am. Do you know if our parents have phoned?"

"No, child, we haven't heard a word from any of them! You poor boy! Your parents must not really love or care for you, otherwise they would have phoned,



wouldn't they? Never mind, we want you to feel like this is your home now!"

"Mrs. Sharp, I don't believe that's true!" Tommy answered angrily. "I know my parents love me very much! I know there must be some other reason why they can't call us, or why they haven't come to see us!"

"Well, why haven't they, then?" asked Mrs. Sharp, not sounding quite so sweet and understanding. "If they were good parents and if they loved you, they'd be here, wouldn't they?"

A sudden thought came to Tommy. At first he didn't think it could be possible ... but maybe it was. "Mrs. Sharp, do our parents know where we are?"

"Uh ... um ... well, that's not really my department," she stum- bled.

Tommy's eyes opened wide in sur- prise as he realised he was right! He could hardly believe it! How could these people be so mean!

Tommy lay on his bed thinking about Mrs. Sharp's reaction. He remembered Uncle Peter's words just before they were taken away: "Remember, no matter what they tell you, we love you and will be fighting to get you back!"

"This really is a spiritual battle!" Tommy thought. "They're trying all kinds of ways to weaken us and make us give in to them. Jesus, please help me!"

He realised this was no time to get down and discouraged. He had to fight! He buried his face in his hands, and tried to focus his mind on the Lord.

"Rebuke the Devil!" he whispered fiercely, furrowing* his forehead in de- termination. "I rebuke these lying vani- ties, and discouraging thoughts! I hate vain thoughts, but Thy law do I love! Je- sus, Thou wilt keep me in perfect peace when my mind is stayed on Thee because I trust in Thee!"— Jon.2:8; Psa.119:113; Isa.26:3.

Tommy repeated Isaiah 26:3 over and over as he fought to pull his mind off the Devil's wavelength of doubts and fears and on to the Lord and the promises in His Word. It took real effort, but he knew that he just had to pray and fight, or else he would sink even deeper into the

Devil's doubts and discouragement.

"Resist the Devil and he will flee from you."—Jam.4:7b. Tommy began to quote every fighting and trusting Scrip- ture he could think of. "What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee. In God have I put my trust; I will not be afraid what Man can do unto me."—Psa.56:3,4. "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."—Jn.14:27b. He thought of many of the songs from the "Fear Not" Tape, and the Lord began to run those tunes through his head one after another. "My peace I leave with you, My peace I

**"What time I am
afraid, I will trust in
Thee. In God have I
put my trust; I will not
fear what flesh [Man]
can do unto me."**

—Psa.56:3,4.

(Words followed by asterisks [*] in the text are defined at the bottom of each page. Meanings given are only for the use of the word in the story, and do not cover every meaning of the word.)

furrowing — making wrinkles in

“Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”—Jn.14:27b.

give unto you: not as the World giveth, give I unto you.... We are troubled on every side yet not distressed, yet not distressed; ... For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”—Jn.14:27; 2Cor.4:8-9; Rom.8:18.

From the depths of his heart he desperately prayed Psalm 27, clinging to the Word and promises, and making them his own!

As the Word filled his thoughts and heart, his faith and trust in the Lord grew. He knew Jesus would never leave nor



Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe on His gentle breast,
Here no fears can alarm me,
Here can my soul find rest.

forsake him (Heb.13:5b), and he felt a beautiful peace and comfort. “Safe in the arms of Jesus, safe on His gentle breast, here no fears can alarm me, here can my soul find rest.” It was such a beautiful feeling! Such a supernatural peace! (See Phil.4:6 and 7.)

“Thank You Jesus! Praise You Lord!” he prayed and praised as he opened his eyes. Outside too, all was calm. The storm had passed!

**“I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.”
—Heb.13:5b.**

Clara, Aiko, Nina, Suzy and Precious were in the “B” Block girls’ dorm, along with seven other girls of various ages.

As four-year-old Precious lay in bed, she watched as the big, beautiful, silvery moon slid out from behind the storm clouds and magically turned the raindrops on the windows into pearls!

There were also little tear-drops on her cheeks. Mrs. Sharp had refused to allow her to put up her picture of Jesus.

Then suddenly it was as if the moonbeam had kissed her with a cheery thought! Even without the picture, she knew what Jesus’ sweet face looked like, and she remembered the verse Sharon had

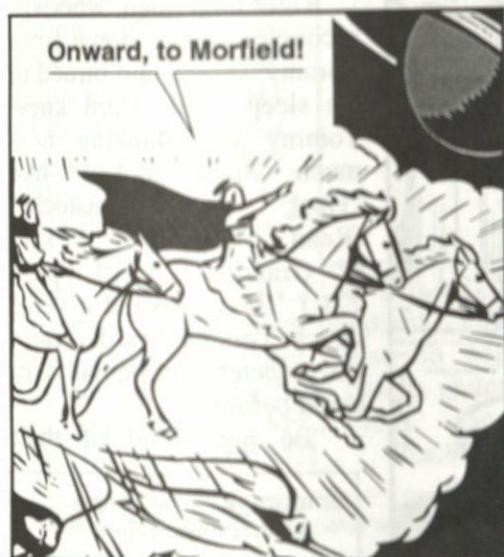
told her the other day, "Lo, I am with you always."—Mat.28:20b. All she had to do was close her eyes and look at Jesus ... and yes—there He was, smiling down at her with such tender love and concern!

"My beloved Precious!" smiled Jesus, as He knelt by her bed. Gently, from the Spirit, He stroked her darling little head. "Just a few more days, My precious one, and this big storm will be past, and you'll laugh and play again with your loved ones!"

The Lord turned to Daniel, Joseph, the Archangel Michael, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego and Ruthie, who were standing right behind Him in the girls' dorm. "This little one shall be one of My great Queens in the Millennium and the Great Age beyond!"

The Lord had been deeply moved by the Family's fervent prayers, and by His Own tender love for His children, to want to do something extra special for His little ones in their time of trial!

Throughout the Bible Jesus had made special trips to Earth a number of times, even appearing in Person to Abraham, Jacob and Moses, and to His Disciples



and friends after He had been resurrected from the dead. (See Gen.17:1; 18:1; 32:30; Exo.33:11; Deut.34:10; Acts 1:2,3.) After all, the World was His Creation, and He could visit it whenever He pleased.—And this was an occasion when it did please Him to want to personally visit these little "captives in Babylon", just as He had visited others of His children in times past. (See Dan.3:25.)

For His Grand Tours of the Universe, the Lord liked to use His incredible "Spacemobile"!—The one that Ezekiel saw, powered by gigantic cherubim Angels and mysterious Spirit-filled wheels! (See Eze. 1 and 10.) But when on more informal business, the Lord loved to ride bareback on His magnificent white stallion! This enormous battle horse, especially designed and created by the Lord to carry Him into the Battle of Armageddon, was standing right at that moment in Morfield's courtyard, being "ooohed and aaahed over" by a number of admiring Angels and spirit helpers.

It had been one of the biggest thrills yet in their eternal lives for Daniel and Joseph to gallop with the Lord through one of the pearly gates and "fly" their Heavenly horses through space, escorted by the Lord's Royal Guard of Angels! It had given them a thrilling taste of what it was going to be like to ride down to Earth in the upcoming Battle of Armageddon! (See Rev.19:11-21.)

As soon as the Devil got wind that they were coming, he threw a temper tantrum and tried to "spoil" things by whipping up a storm. It was actually only a token* protest, because he well knew that even the winds and waves obey the Lord.

token — an outward sign, not genuine & sincere

Sure enough, as the Lord and His entourage* approached Morfield, Jesus commanded the storm to cease, and there was a great calm. (See Mat.8:26,27.)

Now the Good Shepherd was taking great delight in personally visiting the bedsides of His precious little lambs! He blessed and kissed and spoke words of encouragement over each and every one.

"These two shall turn many to righteousness and be called great in My Kingdom!" He said of Aiko and Nina. The Lord smiled as He remembered when He first had the idea of creating them. He had been relaxing by His favourite waterfall in the Palace Gardens. "So shalt thou bring the Water of Life to many!" the Lord promised as He bent over and kissed each of the twins.

After visiting the younger girls, the Lord walked on down the corridor to the

boys' dorm. On the way, He passed a sour-faced Mrs. Sharp.

"As soon as any of the children pray that this woman be removed from her position, I want it done immediately!" He commanded.

"With pleasure, my Lord!" replied Valiant.

"Make sure that she is replaced with someone who will treat My children with love and respect."

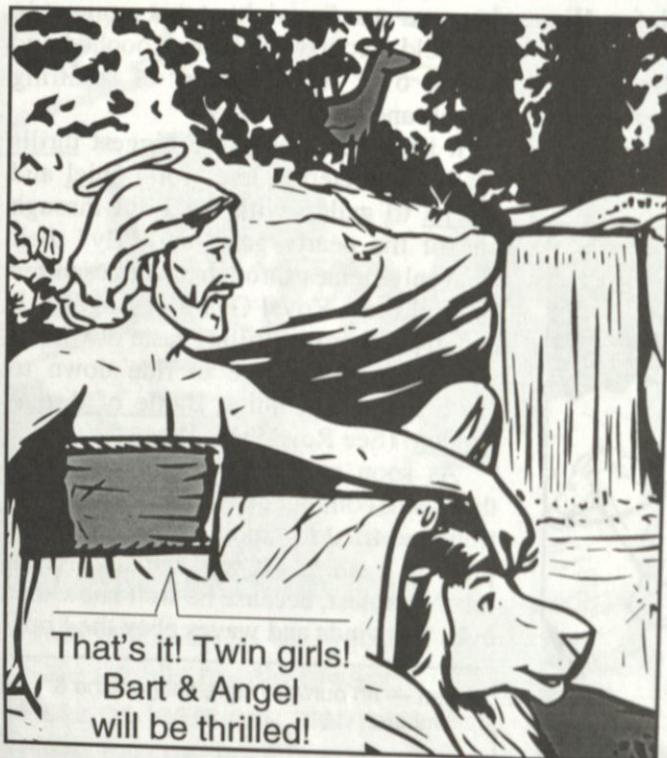
"Yes, My Lord! As You have spoken, so it shall be done!"

Entering the boys' dorm, the Lord first went over and knelt by the bed occupied by Tommy. He was resting peacefully with his arms around his pillow, gazing up at the moon outside the window. Jesus noticed a hair from Tommy's head that had fallen onto his pillow.

"Number thirty-four thousand and seven!" He smiled. "You see, My dear child, even the very hairs of your head are all numbered, and no evil shall befall you!"—Mat.10:30; Psa.91:10a. (See also Psa.23:4 and Job 5:19.)

Right then Spud, who was a couple of beds down from Tommy, snored and turned in his sleep. The Lord knew Tommy was thinking how much Spud looked like "Huck" in "Comstock". (Read "Comstock!"—"Life of Grandpa!" Vol.1, page 271.) He whispered a verse which Tommy heard clearer and sweeter than he had ever heard before.

"Be not afraid of their



entourage — the people accompanying Him

faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee!"—Jer.1:8. The Lord then stretched out His Hand, and placed it over Tommy's heart.

"Out of the depths you have cried unto Me, and I have answered thee and strengthened thee and with strength in thy soul! (Psa.130:1; Psa.138:3.) Out of weakness shall this little one be made strong. He shall wax valiant in fight, and do exploits for Me in the Great days of Tribulation to come!" (See 2Cor.12:9; Dan.11:32b.)

Next the Lord visited the bedsides of Paul and Jesse. "Behold, these are two of My mighty men of Kingdom Come! But even now they must learn to put away childish things and put on the whole armour of God and fight, so that they may stand in this evil day! (See 1Cor.13:11; Eph.6:10-18.) All the powers of Heaven are on your side, My sons, to strengthen, help and fight for you! But you must choose to walk in My paths, and not turn to the right side or the left. (See Deut.5:32; 28:14; Josh.1:7; 2Ki.22:2; Pro.4:27.) You must choose to be obedient. You must choose to stay close to Me through prayer, like little chicks under the shadow of My wings. (See Psa.17:8,9; Psa.57:1; Psa.91:1;

Mat.23:37.) You must eschew the evil and choose the good. (See 1Pet.3:11.) Otherwise I cannot bless or prosper you or use you as I would! I can do everything else for you, but the majesty of choice is yours!" (See Deut.30:19,20; Josh.24:15.)

The Lord then laid His hands on the boys and prayed for them, that the battles of the next couple of days would help them to make the right choice to want to love and

serve Him with their whole hearts, and would be a wonderful turning point in their lives. (See Luk.22:31,32.)

He then went over to "A" Block for another special and very moving visit, this time with His precious teens and JETTs and the little ones!—After which, accompanied by His top officers, He inspected the security forces who were watching over the Lord's children, and made sure that everything was as He expected it to be. As usual, He was not disappointed, and the Lord commended* the entire body of Angels and spirit helpers for their excellent job.

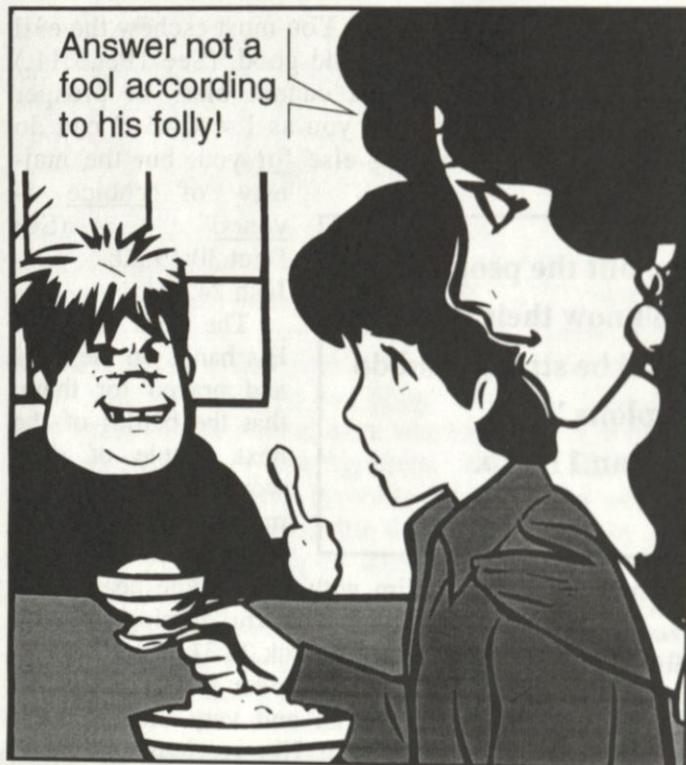
"However, the battle is not over yet," He warned. "In fact, we've only just be-gun to fight!"

"... but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits."

—Dan.11:32b.

"Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of Thy wings."—Psa.17:8.

commended — praised; spoke well of; showed approval of



Answer not a fool according to his folly!

CHAPTER 20

THE PORK SAUSAGE!

To eat or not to eat?
—That is the question!

The next morning everything that Tommy feared would happen the night before did happen. There were pork sausages for breakfast, as well as frosted flakes with white sugar, white bread and jam. Also, they weren't allowed to have devotions together, and Spud had already

sneered — spoke in a scornful jeering manner, making fun of someone

snickered — laughed nastily with mouth partly covered

started to pick on them.

"You must be those kids from that sex cult!" Spud sneered* at breakfast. "I saw it on TV! Sex, sex, sex! That's all you do, huh?"

The rest of the boys snickered.*

"You can't believe everything you see on TV," replied Tommy. "We're Christians and we tell other people about Jesus. If you lived with us, you would know that we're not a sex cult, in fact, not a cult at all."

Tommy was wondering if he should try to explain more to Spud, when three powerful verses immediately came to mind: "An-

swer not a fool according to his folly!" "Turn the other cheek!" and "Cast not your pearls before swine!"—Pro.26:4; Mat.5:39; Mat.7:6.

Clarence was impressed at how Tommy didn't get upset at Spud's comment. He had felt there was something special about these children ever since he watched them arrive at Morfield. Now he could more closely check them out.

"Aren't you going to eat your breakfast, young man?" asked Mrs. Sharp.

Tommy remembered how teen Sharon had stood up for their "rights" and demanded healthful food. It had worked, and the next day they had been given brown bread and honey. "Excuse me, Mrs. Sharp, but I thought you had agreed to give us more healthful food."

"I'm sorry, but you'll have no special

privileges here!" snapped Mrs. Sharp. "This is a government institution with a limited budget*. You'll have to eat what the other children eat or go hungry!"

Tommy looked over at Paul and Jesse, and the girls. Most of them had eaten their frosted flakes and were now starting on their eggs and sausages.

Tommy ate his eggs, but still felt very hungry. As he reluctantly took a bite of the sausage, he prayed, "Oh, Jesus, please bless and sanctify this unclean food, as You said to eat what's set before us giving thanks!" (See 1Cor.10:27; Luk.10:8.)

Back in "A" Block:

"I had a really wonderful dream last night!" Love told the others at breakfast. "Jesus came down on a white horse and visited us while we were sleeping! He walked through the dormitories, like Florence Nightingale, and visited each of our bedsides!"

"Wow!" said Danny. "Who knows? Maybe it wasn't a dream! Maybe it really happened!"

Another social worker whom they had not yet met walked in.

"Good morning, everybody!"

"Good morning, Ma'am!"

"My name is Miss Grimes. Miss Rottweiler has asked me to take care of you from now on."

The teens breathed a sigh of relief. They could immediately tell she was an improvement on Mrs. Sharp.

"What happened to Mrs. Sharp?" asked David curiously.

"Oh, she's been transferred to 'B' Block."

The teens moaned in sympathy for their younger brothers and sisters.

"Miss Rottweiler also asked me to tell you that from now on the three infants will be looked after in the Toddler Room in 'C' Block."

"No, absolutely not!" said Sharon impulsively*. "We refuse to be separated from Lily, Jamie and Brian under any circumstances!"

"But why not, my dear? They have excellent facilities and the lady in charge has a very tender heart for little ones. They'll be in very good hands! I'll also arrange it so that you can visit them at bedtime!"

"No way!" said Sharon. "If you try to take the little kiddos away from us, we'll go on a hunger strike!"

While they were talking, the sound of heavy metal rock music could be heard coming closer and closer down the hallway. Then a teen girl with huge purple earrings and glittering eye makeup sauntered* in.

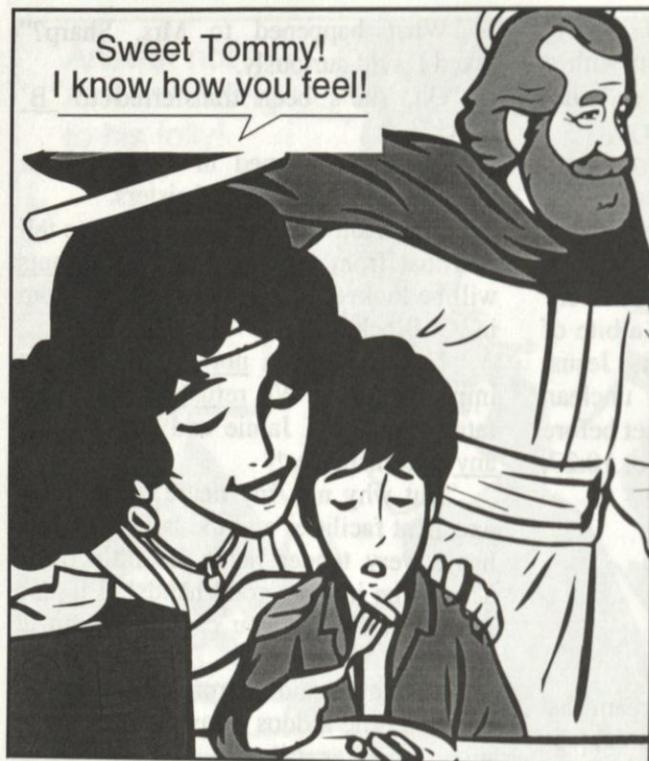
"So you must be the cult kids!" she slurred*, as she lit up a cigarette.

She was followed close behind by nine other teens. One of whom was carrying the "boom box" from which the rock music was blaring.

"COULD YOU SWITCH THAT OFF FOR A FEW MOMENTS, PLEASE?" shouted Miss Grimes. "I'd like to introduce you to your new room-mates."

budget — the amount of money available to pay for certain things
impulsively — hastily, without thinking or praying

sauntered — walked in a very casual or idle way
slurred — spoke indistinctly or not clearly



In "B" Block dining hall:

"Sweet Tommy!" smiled Ruthie, as she comforted him in the Spirit, and helped him not to feel condemned about eating the pork sausage. "I know how you feel!"

She turned to Shadrach, with whom she was overseeing the younger group. "You know, when I was a captive maid in Naaman's house, I had to eat what was set before me giving thanks, otherwise I would have starved! I could never have gotten away with what you boys did in Babylon!"

"Well, it seems to me," said Shadrach, "that our ministry in Babylon was much

more of an open ministry. The Lord wanted us Hebrew boys to stand up for our convictions and to demonstrate to the King, and the whole of Babylon, the power and wisdom of God and give them a sample of our whole way of life."

"Hmmm, yes," pondered Ruthie. "Mine was much more of a hidden ministry. The Lord called me to mostly be a sample of God's Love!—To be there at the right time to comfort and help Naaman and his wife and point them to the answer."

"That's right!" said Shadrach. "And it was your sweet sample of showing love for your captors, instead of bitterness and hatred, that convinced Naaman and his wife of the power of the God of Israel!"

"Yes! Praise the Lord!" said Ruthie. "So the Lord definitely does work in different ways at different times and in different situations!"

They were interrupted by Meshach and Abednego, who were looking after the teens and JETTs in "A" Block. "Sorry to bother you, but something has come up!—The teens are planning to go on a hunger strike to protest the little ones being taken to the Toddler Room. Also, they've just been asked to take scholastic tests, in preparation for System schooling. They're refusing to do that too!"

"Ha! Those guys are on-fire radicals, like we were!" chuckled Shadrach. "However, just like we did, I think they're going to have to learn to 'give

and take' a little on some of these things!"

"Yes," agreed Abednego. "Remember how we wanted to stubbornly hold on to our old Hebrew names? But after we prayed about it, the Lord showed us it would be better to 'give' on some things, because we were going to have to be absolutely uncompromising on others! We had to decide which were the really important things that we just had to stand up for our convictions on, the things that were worth dying for!—Like refusing to deny our faith, or refusing to bow down and worship their pagan* idols! Then we had to decide which were the more minor, unimportant things, that it wasn't worth creating a big stir over and that we could just let go! And I think the Family kids will have to learn to do the same!"

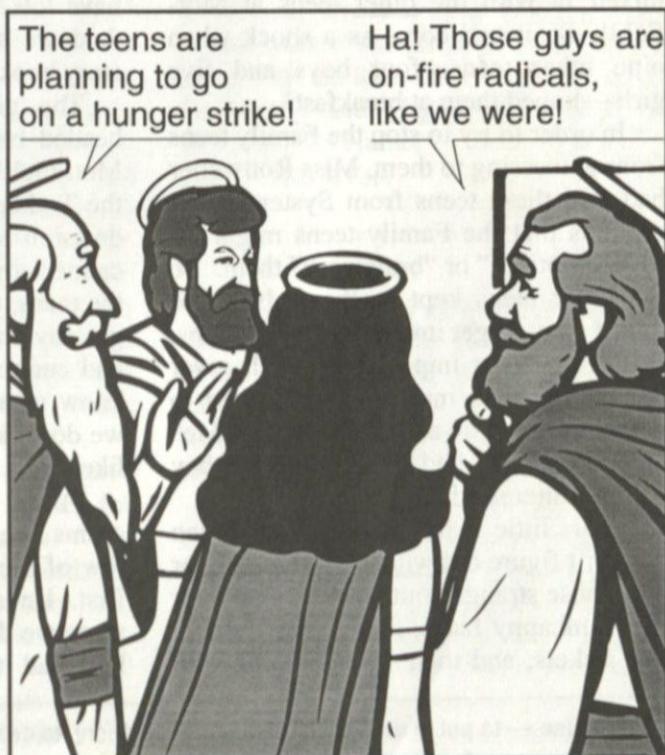
"I agree!" said Ruthie. "Now that Miss Rottweiler is no longer allowing them special food or privileges, they're going to have to back down a little on some things, like Tommy did this morning. God bless him, he did his part! He requested a healthier diet. Since they refused, the Lord certainly doesn't expect him to go hungry or feel under condemnation about it! The Lord is able to cleanse and sanctify the food and make it healthy!"

"However, the 'B' Block kids get Coca-Colas and chocolate bars for their morning snack!" pointed out Abednego. "So somewhere

they are going to have to draw the line! They'll have to decide, 'We will eat this, if we have to, but not that. We will watch this video, if we're compelled to, but that one is too violent.' They'll have to ask the Lord to lead and guide them in each individual situation!"

"Actually," said Meshach, "even if the kids do have to eat junk food, or are forced to watch System TV, the Lord can turn those things into testimonies! He can miraculously keep them strong and healthy in spite of a poorer diet than what they have at Home! He can even use bad things that they see on TV to convince them how much better their way of life in the Family is, compared to how shallow and sickening and horrible the System is! We can inspire the children to pow-wow those things and draw good meaningful lessons out of them!"

"All right. Well, we'd better get back



pagan — heathen, not worshipping God

to the kids," suggested Shadrach. "We're going to have a full day helping them to handle all these different situations! Lord, please help the teens and children to continue to uphold the Family standard as best they can and fight for what they know to be right! Help them to know that as long as they pray and ask You what to do, then of course You are going to give them wisdom to draw the line between what they should and shouldn't do!—Just as You have so far!" (See Pro.3:5,6; Mat.7:7.)

Miss Rottweiler had not informed the Family teens that they also would be mixed in with the other teens at Morfield! So it had come as a shock when nine other teens—four boys and five girls—joined them at breakfast!

In order to try to stop the Family teens from witnessing to them, Miss Rottweiler had told these teens from System backgrounds that the Family teens might try to "hypnotise*" or "brainwash" them. So the other teens kept to themselves and didn't want to get into any conversations. Besides, it was impossible to talk over the blaring rock music. Sharon tried to get them to put on a "Come Fly with Me" tape, which she had in her bag, but they weren't interested.

Poor little Lily, Jamie and Brian couldn't figure out what was going on, or who these strange youths were, with their hard, unhappy faces, their "tough" looking jackets, and their faces painted with

**In all thy ways
acknowledge Him, and
He shall direct thy
paths.—Pro.3:6**

lots of ugly makeup!—Not to mention the stinky, smoky things in their mouths, and the awful, confusing, painful, screaming, violent noise booming out of the tape recorder! Lily and Jamie looked very upset, and Brian began to cry.

"Maybe they would be better off in the Toddler Room after all," Sharon suggested to the others. "I'll ask if Naomi and I can go over there and check it

out."

Naomi and Sharon were pleasantly surprised to find that the Toddler Room was much nicer than they had expected. The lady in charge, Miss Price, was playing a game with two other little children. She stopped for a moment to talk with the girls and show them around. "We have lots of toys for them to play with. And we have some cartoon videos and story books I read to them."

The girls thanked Miss Price, and headed back to "A" Block, escorted by Mrs. Fields, who had taken them over to the Toddler Room. "Boy, this is a tough decision to make," said Naomi. "It's a calmer atmosphere there than being with the teens, that's for sure! But, they won't get any spiritual feeding there. Just toys and cartoons and stories—and we don't know what the stories will be like. And we don't know what those other kids are like."

"Yes," agreed Sharon. "Miss Price seems like a sweet lady—but then quite a few of these people seem to be sweet at first. I'm sure some really are, but at this stage we don't know, do we? No matter how bad it is with the teens, I still don't

hypnotise — to put in an artificial sleep-like condition; to dazzle or overcome

want to let the kids out of our care. Who knows when we'll get to see them again, and who will take care of them?"

"Yes, that's true," added Naomi, "but they are pretty scared and unhappy with those wild teens around. I think we're going to have to ask the Lord for the answer. He said we should not lean to our own understanding, but acknowledge Him in all our ways, and He will direct our path."

"You're right. But it will be pretty hard to pray in that noisy room with the other teens," said Sharon. By this time the two girls had arrived back outside the entrance to "A" Block. They stopped to pray before going inside. Mrs. Fields didn't seem to mind, but stood respectfully a short distance away.

"Dear Jesus," prayed Naomi, "You promised, 'I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with Mine eye.' (Psa.32:8.) 'Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.' (Pro.3:5,6) We claim those verses, that You will direct our paths and show us what is the right thing to do about the little ones. They're Your precious little children, Lord, and we want to do our best to take care of them. Please show us if this Toddler Room will be a safe and good place for them to be. Amen, thank You Jesus!"

"Praise the Lord! The Lord just gave me some really encouraging verses for the little ones!" exclaimed Sharon. "He shall feed His flock like a Shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arms, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.' (Isa.40:11), and, 'Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say

unto you, That in Heaven their Angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in Heaven.' (Mat.18:10.) Hallelujah! I think the Lord is trying to encourage us that they are His children, and they are in His care most of all! We can't take very good care of them in the teen dorm, so I think the best we can do for them is take them to the Toddler Room, and really pray for them and trust that the Lord will take care of them."

"Yes, I agree," said Naomi. "But I think we should insist that we be able to sleep with them at night."

"Jesus, thank You so much for those encouraging promises that You are going to protect Your precious little ones," prayed Sharon. "We claim and stand on those promises, and rebuke the Devil from trying to get us discouraged or worried about their situation. Keep us trusting You, dear Jesus, that You will keep them from any evil or accidents. Also, please work it out for us to be allowed to sleep with the little ones at night. I claim the verse, 'And whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name, that will I do!'"—Jn.14:13a.

"Oh, aren't they absolutely darling!" exclaimed Miss Price, as the girls arrived at the Toddler Room a little later with Lily, Jamie and Brian. "Don't you worry, dears! They'll be quite all right with me!"

Sharon and Naomi were not allowed to stay with the little ones, but had to return right away to "A" Block. Rather than have a big emotional parting, Sharon explained to the children that the nice lady had lots of fun things for them to do, and that they would be back to see them later. She then said a short prayer

for their safekeeping, that they'd have a fun time, and be a good sample.

"Children, come and see the cute little hamsters we have over here!" Miss Price said cheerily, distracting them to make it easier for Sharon and Naomi to leave. Lily, Jamie and Brian looked back a little nervously at Sharon and Naomi, but when the teens smiled and encouraged them, the little ones seemed happy to go and meet their new little furry friends.

"Well, I guess we'll call off the hunger strike," Sharon suggested, as she and Naomi walked back over to "A" Block. "And Lord forgive us, we also didn't pray before we refused to take the scholastic tests. We just didn't want to cooperate with anything they suggested. But I'm learning that we just can't lean to our own understanding in any situation. We have to pray, and follow the Lord! I definitely feel that the Lord

placed that lady there to help take care of the little ones. That Toddler Room is much more like what they're used to at home. I think they'll be happier there than being in 'A' Block surrounded by that bunch of rowdy teens!"

"Maybe we'd better take advantage of being away from the System teens to pray about the scholastic tests," suggested Naomi.

"Oh, yes," agreed Sharon. "Dear Jesus, You promised that 'If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.' (Jam.1:5.) So, I ask You to please instruct us, direct us and give us wisdom about

whether we should take the scholastic tests or not!"

"Yes, please help us to make the right decision," continued Naomi. "Also, Jesus, please help our parents to be able to get in touch with us! And rebuke Mrs. Sharp for lying to us that our parents haven't phoned because they don't care about us. You said, 'Let the lying lips be put to silence!' (Psa.31:18), and, 'Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.' (Mat.18:6.) Jesus, You are He that 'putteth down one, and setteth up another.' (Psa.75:7.) I claim that verse that You will somehow get rid of Mrs. Sharp and replace her with some sweet lady who will treat Your children with respect, and give them proper loving care!"



“Whew! Those prayers were great!” exclaimed Meshach. “It’s so powerful when they use the Word as a weapon like that! It really enables the Lord to beam down some quick and powerful answers!” (See Heb.4:12.)

“Yes!” agreed Ruthie. “That’s a lesson that even a lot of the adults in the Family are now just starting to catch onto as well!—The importance of really quoting and claiming God’s promises and standing on the Word in time of need! It really brings results!”

“It sure does!” smiled Shadrach, who had just received a message from Jesus. “Things are really moving! The Lord just gave us the go-ahead to answer all of the girls’ prayers right away! And one He’s already given permission for!”

“Great!” grinned Valiant, unfolding his wings. “Goodbye, Mrs. Sharp! That was the prayer I was waiting for!”

“How are you going to remove her?” asked Abednego curiously.

But Valiant was already streaking* towards town, accompanied by a squad of judgement Angels.

“Praise the Lord! I just got something encouraging about the scholastic tests!” said Naomi, as they stood listening to the Lord after praying. “Do you remember the vision the Lord gave me at Green Trees that Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego would be helping us? Well, I saw them again! They were waving and smiling and en-

couraging us and cheering us on! Then suddenly it came to me how they had to take scholastic tests in Babylon! And they were taught ‘the learning and tongue of the Chaldeans.’ (See Dan.1:4.) But the Lord blessed it and used it for His Glory, so that they ended up ten times smarter and wiser than anyone else in the Empire!—So, I think the Lord does want us to take the test!”

“Yes,” agreed Sharon, “let’s go for it! Let’s ask the Lord to turn the test into a testimony of how superior our home schooling Family education is! I was also getting that if we cooperate on some of these things that are important to them, then they might be willing to cooperate on some of the things that are even more important to us, like being allowed to sleep with the little ones at night.”

“Excuse me, girls! There’s something I want to tell you!”

After seeing the conviction of you young people, my faith has been rekindled!



streaking — moving very fast at top speed

Sharon and Naomi turned to look at Mrs. Fields, who this whole time had been standing by patiently waiting for them to finish. She had tears in her eyes. "I ... I want you to know that I personally am very sorry about what has happened to you. I wish I could do more to help you, but I have to be careful, or I'll lose my job. However, I will tell you that I know that your parents have been phoning Miss Rottweiler's office in town many times a day, and trying to get in touch with you. But I don't think they know where you are! I've also heard that one of the most famous lawyers in this country has volunteered to help you!

"I myself used to go to church regularly, but I stopped some years ago. However, after seeing the conviction of you young people, my faith has been rekindled*! I've heard lots of wild tales about your group, but I no longer believe a word of it! I can see for myself that you are truly dedicated and wonderfully sincere Christians, and I want you to know that I'll be praying for you!"

"Oh, God bless you, and thank you, Mrs. Fields!" The girls each gave her a hug. "You have no idea what an encouragement and answer to prayer you are!"

Sharon and Naomi almost flew into the dining room to share the good news with the rest of the teens! "Oh, wait!" Naomi stopped suddenly just as they entered the room. "We'd better be careful how we tell everyone that our parents have been calling," she whispered to Sharon. "We could get poor Mrs. Fields in trouble if the other workers or Miss Rottweiler find out that she told us!"

"You're right! Lord help us! That would have been a big mistake!" answered Sharon, as they quietly entered

rekindled — stirred up again

the room. "Let's just tell each of the teens individually, so the System kids don't hear us."

CHAPTER 21

THE TEDDY BEAR!

After breakfast Tommy, Clara, Paul and Jesse were taken to one classroom in "B" Block, while the worldly kids went to another.

"Children, we'd like to see how much you've learned in the Family!" announced Mrs. Sharp, as she handed out some test sheets and pens.

Tommy started to look over the questions, but he was distracted by thoughts of Suzy, Nina, Aiko and Precious, who had been taken over to the interview room for questioning. Surprising even himself, Tommy suddenly found himself praying out loud for the little girls: "Jesus, Your Word says, 'Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast Thou ordained strength because of Thine enemies, that Thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.'—Psa.8:2. Lord, please help Your strength to be made perfect in their weakness (2Cor.12:9), and give them 'a mouth and wisdom that all their adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.'—Luk.21:15. Jesus, please also make a way for us to be able to have devotions together! Please anoint us now to take this test and use it for Thy glory!"

"Amen! Yes, Jesus!" responded Clara.

"Amen," mumbled Paul and Jesse.

"Ssssssh!" interrupted Mrs. Sharp. "That's enough! No talking please! You have one-and-a-half hours to do the test!"

Meanwhile in the interview room with Aiko ...

"What's your name, dear?"

"Aiko Anderson!"

"And how old are you, Aiko?"

"Six. But, I'm almost seven!"

"My name is Auntie Hilary, and this is Uncle Ted and Auntie Janet. We're very interested to know all about the fun things that you do at your Home."

Aiko looked at the three of them. "These aren't my aunties or uncle!" she thought. "They're just trying to make me feel like they're my friends. But I don't like them. I want to go home!"

"When can I go home?" asked Aiko. "I want to see my mommy and daddy!"

"Well, if you answer these questions truthfully, and tell us what we want to know, then maybe you can go home very soon," lied Ted Roach.

"What kind of games do you play at your Home, Aiko?" asked Hilary Side-winder.

"Oh, all kinds of games.—Hide and Seek ... Freeze Tag ... Takin' the Bacon ..."

"What about inside games? Do you like to play dress-up?"

"Sometimes for birthday parties we come in our fancy dresses, or have a Gypsy Night."

"What happens on Gypsy Night?"

"We all gypsy dance together."

"Do the little gypsy girls ever take off their clothes for the gypsy boys?"

"No, of course not!" Aiko answered, puzzled. "We just have inspiration and sing gypsy songs. If it's a birthday party, then maybe we'll have cake and ice cream."

"Then what happens?"

"We pray together for the night, and then we go to bed."

"Does anybody go to bed with you?"

"Sometimes Mommy cuddles in bed with me for story time."

"Do you sleep in the same room as your parents?"

"Not all the time, just on parent nights, and on sleep-over nights."

"Does anybody else besides your daddy ever sleep in your mommy's bed?"

"Sometimes Nina and I do, when Daddy's on a witnessing trip."

Aiko was small for a six-year-old, but very smart. She was answering the questions honestly, but didn't quite understand why they were asking her these things. Then she remembered what Sharon had explained to Nina, Precious, Suzy and her the day before.

"You see, in the World today they have a real problem with some bad, wicked adults and parents who hurt their own children or don't take good care of them. That is called child abuse. When you go for your interview, they'll probably ask you questions to see if that has ever happened to you. Aren't you glad that your mommies and daddies and aunties and uncles are so sweet and loving, and take such good care of you?"

"If people who neglect or hurt or abuse children are caught, they can be sent to jail. Their children might be taken away so somebody else can take care of them. That's the reason why many of these other children are here at Morfield!"

"Because these things happen to quite a few children in the World today, they have made a law that says the police and social workers are allowed to take children away from their parents even if they

only think that they may have been hurt. Then a judge has to decide whether anything bad actually did happen to the children, and whether it is safe for them to return to their parents.

"This law has helped protect a lot of children who were being hurt by their parents or other adults. But, unfortunately, the Devil and our enemies have also used this law to attack our Family. They have lied in the newspapers and to the authorities that our parents have been abusing and mistreating us! Can you imagine? We know how sweet and loving our parents are, and we know they would never do anything to harm or hurt us! So we know what a terrible lie of the Devil this is!

"But do you know why they are doing that? The Devil is causing it because he wants to stop us from telling people about Jesus! He wants to take our parents away and put them in jail so they can't go witnessing—just like they kept doing to the Apostles in the Book of Acts. And he's trying to take the Family children away from their parents so they won't get the Godly upbringing and the training in the Word that they need to be strong witnesses for Jesus. The Devil is afraid of our parents being witnesses and he's also afraid of you children being witnesses, because he knows we're going to win many many people to Jesus! So he's trying to stop us by using the ridiculous charges of child abuse. And do you know that every single time our enemies have examined our Family children and tried to prove that they are abused, they have instead proved that the children are healthy and well cared-for and not abused!

"Anyway, accusing our parents of child abuse is the excuse they used to

break into our Home and bring us here to Morfield. And that's why we're being interviewed and asked all these questions.—They're trying to get us to say things that never happened. They want us to say that our parents have been abusing us in some way. But, don't worry! Our parents haven't done anything wrong and neither have we. So when they're asking you questions, just remember: Keep praying and be a good witness and sample! We have the best and most Godly upbringing in the whole World!"

Hilary Sidewinder continued, "Now the next thing we'd like to talk about is touching. You know, sometimes your mom or dad might hold your hand or give you a kiss good night. Do you do that sort of thing in your house?"

"Yes," answered Aiko.

"That's nice," said Mrs. Sidewinder. "That is good touching. Now, do you know what bad touching is?"

"Well, I guess it's when someone hurts you."

"Yes, that's right, Aiko. But sometimes a bad touch doesn't hurt right away, but it might hurt you inside, in your feelings, because you know that it is wrong. Have your parents or aunts and uncles ever touched you in a bad way?"

"No!" Aiko thought this was a very strange question, it was so ridiculous!

"Aiko, I'd like for you to tell us the truth," butted in Janet Thompson. "I know that someone has taught you how to answer these questions!"

"I am telling the truth!" replied Aiko, close to tears. "The only time anybody's ever hurt me is when the police came and brought me here! They were mean to do that! And you are mean, too, to make me stay here! I want to go home!"

“Aiko, there’s no need to lie to us,” said Hilary Sidewinder gently. “If you just tell us the truth, then we’re going to buy you a big teddy bear. But if you don’t tell us the truth, then I’m afraid we might have to punish you by keeping you apart from the rest of the children.”

“I am telling the truth!” Aiko repeated, tears running down her face. “And I don’t want your teddy bear! My parents and my aunties and uncles have never hurt me! They always take good care of me and I want to go back home! I don’t want to answer any more of your questions! I don’t have to, and I won’t!”

The three inquisitors* looked at each other in frustration.

“All right, Aiko, you may go now,”

sighed Ted Roach.

He picked up the telephone.

“Hello, could you put me through to Miss Rottweiler, please. Oh, hello, Geraldine. Yes, we finished the last of the interviews. ... No, nothing, I’m afraid.”

CHAPTER 22

JESSE’S ORDEAL!

Except for a few questions about evolution, the OCs found the scholastic tests fairly easy, and had no trouble finishing up in time.

Then they were taken to the dining hall for snack.

They were happy to be reunited with Aiko, Nina, Suzy and Precious, who were back from their interviews.

The cook brought out Coca-Colas and chocolate bars.

“Excuse me, Ma’am, do you have anything else?” Tommy asked politely. “We’re used to eating more healthy snacks.”

“Aw, come on, Tommy!” pleaded Jesse. “We already ate the pork sausages and frosted flakes with white sugar this morning.”

“Yes, but we didn’t have any choice. However, we don’t have to eat these. Especially when we know how they’ll rot our teeth and are bad for us.”



inquisitors — people asking questions harshly or severely

"Sorry, if you don't want Cokes then you'll have to drink water," said the cook. "But you can have bread and jam if you like."

"Let's just skip snack," suggested Clara.

"But I'm hungry," said Nina.

"Well, I think it's okay to have a little white bread and jam then," responded Clara. "But I don't think we should start drinking Cokes and eating chocolate bars. You know what they would do to our teeth!"

After snack, Mrs. Sharp took the children to an activity room where there were lots of books and toys.

"You can play here until lunchtime," she said.

"Excuse me, Ma'am," asked Tommy. "Can we first go to our dormitories and get our books from our bags?"

"Certainly not!" snapped Mrs. Sharp. "Why don't you try reading these books for a change?" she said, pointing to the bookshelf. "They'll do you a lot more good." Then she left, leaving the children in the room on their own.

"Thank You Jesus! That's an answer to prayer," testified Tommy. "I prayed that the Lord would work it out for us to have some Word time together!"

"But how can we?" asked Paul. "We don't have our little books."

"Well, that's one of the reasons why we've been memorising all of our lives, to prepare us for such a day as this!"

"Hey, neat!" exclaimed Clara. "That's right! Think

of all the Word we have memorised between us! All the Bible verses, Chapters and Daily Mights! Let's just pray and pick a topic and then quote all the Word that we've memorised on that subject. Won't that be fun?"

"Yes," mumbled Jesse. "But first I need to go to the toilet."

Passing through the dining hall on his way to the toilet, Jesse noticed that the Cokes and chocolate bars were still out on the table.

"Hmmm!" thought Jesse. "What's to stop me from taking one?"

He quickly stuffed a can of Coke and a chocolate bar into one of his jacket pockets. "Well, I'm only going to do this once, so why not take two of each!" he



reasoned, stuffing the same into the other pocket. He looked around to see if anyone had noticed. "That's funny," he thought, "we're not being watched as closely as before!"

Jesse was wrong! It was true that the staff were no longer overseeing them so closely, because they wanted to give the bullies a chance to pick on them. But Jesse was being watched very closely indeed by Sunray and Banner, his two personal Guardian Angels, as well as his other spirit helpers. He was also being watched by a lot of little devils. Up until now they had not been able to break through the Angels' shining force field of protection and seriously influence the children in any way. However, because of Jesse's outright rebelliousness and wilful disobedience there was now a chink in his armour that the Enemy was allowed to get through, and one of the little fiends was now able to get closer to him. Reluctantly the Angels allowed him to hop up and perch on Jesse's shoulder.

"Hee, hee, hee!" the filthy little demon tittered*. "Quick Jesse! To the toilet! You can eat your goodies in there!"

As Jesse entered the toilet he noticed Julian, one of the male social workers who was always very sweet to him, using one of the urinals.

"Oh, hi there!" smiled Julian. "Fancy meeting you here! It's ... er ... Jesse, isn't it?"

"Yes, it is," replied Jesse, as he went into one of the toilet cubicles and shut the door.

Then he heard Julian's footsteps walking over from the urinal to the cubicle next to his, and the sound of the door being closed.

"Uh-oh. That's strange," thought Jesse. "Why would he follow me into the next toilet?"

Then he noticed a little movement on the partition that separated the two toilets. He had noticed before that someone had bored little peep-holes between some of the toilet walls. They were usually stuffed up with little bits of toilet paper so that no one could see through, but Julian had poked the little piece of paper out, and Jesse knew that he was peeking through at him.

"GET OUT OF THERE, JESSE!" yelled Sunray. "He's a Sodomite! He's like that Sodomite priest in Israel that Grandpa tells about in 'Now It Can Be Told'!" (See ML #2759:15-20 in GN 505.)

"No, no, stay, Jesse, stay!" crooned* the dirty demon. "Julian won't do you any harm! He likes little boys!"

"Yuk!" whispered Jesse to himself as he got out of there fast.

His heart was also beating fast as he walked quickly down the corridor back to the dining-hall. He knew he had stepped outside the charmed circle of God's protection.

"I'll put back the Cokes and chocolate bars, and then sneak back into devotions," he thought. "The others will never know what happened!"

However, that wasn't the kind of repentance that the Lord was going to bless! To Jesse's dismay, the cook was clearing the Cokes and chocolate bars away.

"Oh no, too late!" he groaned, as he ducked back into the corridor. "And I can't go back to the other kids with my pockets heavy and bulging. I'll have to

tittered — laughed or giggled nervously

crooned — spoke with a soothing tone

find somewhere to eat them quick."

"How about out back by the garbage cans?" the little imp suggested. "Nobody ever goes back there!"

Jesse slunk quickly down the passage that led to the back door. Then he snuck outside to an enclosed area behind the garbage cans.

"What are you doing here?"

Jesse almost jumped out of his skin! Then he saw that Spud and three of his cronies* were already there secretly smoking cigarettes.

"It's one of the new kids!" Spud grinned. "I bet he snuck out for a smoke!"

"I ... uh ... you see ... uh ..." Poor Jesse was caught completely off guard. He didn't know what to say.

"You'll have to say yes!" cackled the demon. "It would be ridiculous to say you snuck out to secretly eat the morning snack!"

"Uh ... yes, I did ..." Jesse stuttered. "But ... umm ... I forgot them ... well, I'll go back in."

"Here, have one of mine," offered one of the boys, holding out his pack.

"Hee, hee, hee!" giggled the demon. "Now you'll have to take it!"

Knowing that he was doing the unthinkable, but too weak to back out, Jesse fumblingly pulled a cigarette out of the pack. Awkwardly he put it in his mouth, as one of the boys lit a match.

"No, you have to suck in to get it to light," sneered

cronies — buddies; friends

Spud. "You've never smoked before, have you? ... No, not like that! ... Inhale the smoke right deep down into your lungs!"

COUGH! COUGH! COUGH!
COUGH! GASP! CHOKES! SPLUTTER!

The boys mocked and laughed at Jesse doubled over, blue in the face.

"Hey, we better get out of here," Spud said to the others. "Break time is over. We better get back to class."

Jesse had never tasted anything so foul, nor had such an awful, humiliating experience. With a moan he sank down to sit with his back against the cold grey concrete wall.

"The Lord is through with me!" he despaired, as he stared miserably at the garbage. "I don't think He could ever forgive me for this."



“Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”—Col.3:16.

“That’s for sure!” agreed the imp on his shoulder. “So why just sit there? You might as well drink the Cokes and eat the chocolate bars!”

Tommy, Clara, Paul, Aiko, Nina, Suzy and Precious were amazed. They had been taught that this might happen some day—having no other Word for devotions except what they had stored in their hearts. Now it had actually happened to them, and they were so thankful that their teachers had faithfully insisted that they do their daily memory and review work, even when they hadn’t felt so enthusiastic about it at times. (See Col.3:16.)

The children were also encouraged at how the Holy Spirit was even able to bring back to their remembrance Word that they thought they had forgotten! (See Jn.14:26.) They also felt that the Lord was really happy that they were making this effort to unite, pray and read the Word together, even though it was difficult for them to do so. (See Eph.4:3; Psa.138:3.) The Lord blessed and

anointed their efforts and strengthened them through the Word they were sharing, giving them a real boost of inspiration!

They had chosen God’s Care and Protection as their topic, and they had already quoted Psalms 1, 2, 23 and 27. They were now asking the Lord to help them remember some Daily Mights on the subject.

“Oh, I know a good one!” exclaimed Nina. “Come on, Aiko and Suzy! You memorised this one too. Let’s quote it together!”

Abednego helped the girls remember it, but at the same time he was thinking sadly, “This is just the Word that dear Jesse needs right now. How sad that he is missing it!”

Stay in God’s Will!

The safest place in the World for you is in the centre of God’s Will. No matter where you are, or how you are, or what you are, or what’s against you, the Lord will keep you if you are in the centre of His Will! It’s a charmed circle where you live a charmed life. “The name of the Lord is a strong tower: The righteous runneth into it, and is safe.”—Pro.18:10.

So don’t get disobedient, don’t run outside of God’s Will and His protection. Walk within the Will of God, or Satan may be allowed

“Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”—Eph.4:3.

to give you problems. You can suffer sometimes for your sins, your carelessness, prayerlessness, haste and disobedience to the Lord. In a sense, He is bound by His Own rules, and His Own laws, and He can't protect you when you violate the rules! When you're out of His Will He may even allow you to fall prey to the snares of the Enemy.

Help us to stay close to You, Jesus, in the center of Thy Will, then we know we're in the center of Thy provision, and protection and blessing and usefulness, where we have nothing to worry about. We can trust You utterly by faith because we know we're being obedient and doing Thy Will.—GP DM:325.

"Thank you Jesus!" said Clara. "That was really feeding. Now let's try to think of some more Scriptures on God's protection."

"Psalm 91:1 is one of my favourites," said Tommy. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.' I remember how Grandpa explained that if you're outside and it's very hot and sunny and a big cloud comes along to protect you from the hot sun, then you're under the shadow of the cloud.—And that's what it's like when the Lord is protecting you. It's like you're under His shadow!" (See "Psalms for Kids" ML #2390:6,7, GN 317 or Vol.18.)

"Wow, yes!" remembered Clara. "And Grandpa also said that when the Children of Israel were out in the hot desert, God sent along a special cloud which protected

them from the sun. And at night there was a cloud of fire over them to keep them warm." (See Exo.13:21,22.)

"That's right!" Tommy explained to the younger ones. "So the Lord is able to protect and keep us in whatever situation we're in. But we have to do our part and stay under the shadow of God's protection. How do we do that, Nina? Do we have to be safely at home at Green Trees?"

"No, we just have to pray and stay in God's Will! Then Jesus will take care of us anywhere!"

"I memorised some quotes that tell what happens when you don't stay close to the Lord," piped up Paul.

This was Paul's first contribution to the devotions. So far he hadn't entered in with his whole heart. It was hard on his pride that Tommy and Clara, whom he normally tended to tease and look down on because they were younger, had taken the initiative to try to shepherd the group. Also he had been wondering what Jesse was up to. However, the quotes he had recently memorised were so fitting, that he felt he just had to share them.

"God cannot protect you, prosper or bless you when you are out of His Will and running around outside of the secret place and from under His shadow, His wings, and the fortress of perfect fellowship with Him! When you do this, you can no longer claim the protection and defenses of Psalm 91, and He may even let you fall prey to the Enemy, because you're playing around with fire and living so close to Enemy territory!

singed — (pronounced "sinj'd") burned a little

“We are engaged in a spiritual warfare with Satan himself, and if you want to win the battles and stay free to serve the Lord, you’d better keep in tune and in touch with the Holy Spirit and on God’s territory all the time and close to His Word and in the right spirit and constantly in prayer, seeking the Lord and praying for His protection and His help and thanking Him constantly for His blessings, and staying mighty close to the Lord!—Or you’re going to be singed* by that old fire-breathing Dragon! If you go running around outside of the tower of God’s protection and the holy place of His Will, that old Devil’s going to be on your trail and try to give you all kinds of trouble!”—“Fear Thou Not, for I Am with Thee”, ML #2591:48,50.

These quotes, in fact the whole devotions, were just the Word that Jesse desperately needed, but missed, due to his goofing off and playing around on the Enemy’s territory. Too late, Jesse slunk back in.

“I’m sorry I was on the toilet so long,” he apologised. “I was feeling sick.”

“Oh, poor Jesse! Yes, you do look sick,” said Clara. “Would you like us to pray for you?”

“Uh ... yes, please,” muttered Jesse weakly.

As Tommy, Clara, Paul and the little girls laid hands on Jesse they noticed that he smelled funny. He smelled like some of the staff who smoked cigarettes. He also had chocolate stains around his mouth.

“Jesse, is there anything else you want

prayer for?” asked Clara.

“Uh ... no”

Suddenly, Jesse groaned and heaved and threw up the contents of two cans of Coca-Cola mixed with chocolate onto the floor! “Oh, Jesus!” Jesse moaned to himself, as Paul and Tommy ran off to get help. “This is the worst, most humbling moment of my life!”

CHAPTER 23

VICTORY OUT OF DEFEAT!

When Mrs. Sharp heard that Jesse had thrown up, she ordered him to bed for the rest of the day. He gratefully followed her up to the dorm. He felt he really needed some time alone to think and pray.

However, he was annoyed to find that Clarence was also sick, and was lying in the bed opposite his.

“What’s the matter with you?” asked Jesse, after he was settled in bed and Mrs. Sharp had left.

“I don’t really know,” wheezed* Clarence feebly. “I often have these dizzy spells and get sick. I think it’s because my mom was using drugs like cocaine when she was pregnant with me.”

“Where is your mom?” asked Jesse curiously.

“I don’t know.”

“Where do you live?” Jesse’s heart was beginning to get touched by poor Clarence’s story.

wheezed — breathed with difficulty

"We had an apartment. But because of my mom's work—it's true, she's a prostitute, like Spud said—she left me with my grandparents most of the time. They drank a lot, and would get into fights with each other. Then after my mom left, I went to live with them. That's when my grandfather started beating me." Clarence pointed to a mark on his face. "I've still got the bruises, see? Then when the social workers found out, they brought me to Morfield."

"But what happened to your mom?" Jesse gently asked.

Clarence's voice began to choke up as he explained, "Well ... one day I came home and the apartment was empty. I found a note from my mom. She said that she was dying of AIDS and wanted to go away and spend the last few years of her life on her own. And so that's why ... " he started crying, "... that's why I don't have a mom any more."

Jesse was crying too, as the story had so touched him. Clarence had disappeared beneath his bed covers and was sobbing his heart out.



"Oh, Jesus," Jesse wept, as he prayed, "I'm so sorry. I have so much to be thankful for. You've given me such a wonderful Family, such a wonderful life! And poor Clarence has hardly had anything. Please forgive me for not appreciating my place in Your Family like I should. Forgive me for being so selfish. Instead of being loyal and faithful, I goofed off and played around on the Devil's territory."

"I REBUKE YOU, SATAN! I resist you in Jesus' name! I'm a child of God! I belong to You, Jesus! I'm so sorry, Jesus! Please forgive me! You said, 'Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you.' -Jam.4:7. Jesus, please forgive me and help me to get out of the mess I've gotten myself into, and give me a new start. Help me to be the child of God that You want me to be. Help me to live for others, and not just always selfishly think about myself. And Jesus, please help Clarence to find You and get saved!"

"THAT'S WHY YOU'RE HERE, JESSE!"

Jesse wiped his eyes and looked over at Clarence under the bed covers. He had never heard the voice of the Lord so clearly before.

"Clarence ... "

"Yes?" replied Clarence, peeking out. He was surprised that Jesse still wanted to talk to him.

Jesse had not had much experience with personal witnessing. He wasn't sure he would know what to say, or how to show someone that Jesus could save them. But right now none of that crossed his mind. All he wanted with all his heart was to give Clarence Jesus!

"Clarence, I want you to meet my Best Friend. He's a Friend that will always be there when you need Him!

He'll stick by you through thick and thin. He'll be closer to you than a brother. (See Pro.18:24.) He'll also be the Father to you that you never had! In fact, He's the best Dad in the whole Universe! Do you know Who I'm talking about?"

Clarence was silent for a moment, and then replied, "You're talking about God, aren't you?"

"Yes, I'm talking about God and about His Son, Jesus. In the Bible it says, 'For God so loved the World (and that includes you, Clarence, because you're part of the World, right?) that He gave His only begotten Son (that's Jesus!), that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' (That means your spirit will never die! Even if your body dies, you'll live forever and ever in Heaven, Clarence!)"

Clarence pondered for a minute. The local church had tried to get him to come to Sunday School once, but he hadn't been interested. However, he could see that these kids were different from them. From the very first time he set eyes on them, he knew that there was something special about them. He had never seen children show such love and concern for each other. And now, for the first time in his life, someone was showing that they cared about him!

"Please, receive Jesus, Clarence!" Jesse pleaded. "It's so easy! Jesus says in the Bible, 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock! (That's the door of your heart!) If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him.'"—Rev.3:20.

"So what do I do then?"

"Do you want to say this little prayer after me?"

The very instant Jesse yielded to the Lord and cried out for forgiveness and resisted and rebuked the Devil, Sunray reached out and grabbed the hindering imp around its scrawny little neck!

"Yes, Sir, I'm leaving!" gulped the terrified imp, as Sunray held him up between two fingers and threw him away!

And the very moment that Jesse stepped out by faith to tell Clarence about Jesus, all of Jesse's Guardian Angels and spirit helpers rushed to his side to give him all the boldness and wisdom and love that he needed, and the right words to say!

Then they held their breath as Clarence made his decision. Watching the salvation of a human soul was always an awe-inspiring experience for the Angels.

As Clarence bowed his head and repeated the Salvation prayer after Jesse, the Guardian Angels and spirit helpers whooped and hollered for joy! Word quickly spread throughout the entire Heavenly Host at Morfield! Singing and dancing broke out in the camp of the Saints on the hillside, and everyone took time to praise God and have a good old shoutin' hallelujah time! (See Luk. 15:7,10.)

As Clarence bowed his head and repeated the Salvation prayer after Jesse, the Guardian Angels and spirit helpers whooped and hollered for joy! Word quickly spread throughout the entire Heavenly Host at Morfield! Singing and dancing broke out in the camp of the Saints on the hillside, and everyone took time to praise God and have a good old shoutin' hallelujah time! (See Luk. 15:7,10.)

The news also quickly spread

custodian — guardian; person in charge

anthem — song or hymn of gladness or praise

throughout all the different levels of Heaven. As the great Custodian* Angel wrote Clarence's name permanently in the Book of Life, the "Morning Stars", a magnificent Heavenly choir of Angels, sang an anthem* of joy and praise to the Lord that yet another precious soul had been born into His everlasting Kingdom.

Jesus Himself was overjoyed! As far as He was concerned, winning new

souls to His Kingdom was what the mission at Morfield was all about! One of the main reasons why He had allowed the raid to take place was to strengthen His children and make them the witnesses He needed them to be, so that through personal witnessing, and newspaper and radio and TV articles, and the witnessing of those who just got saved, like Clarence, thousands of new souls would be saved for all Eternity! Clarence was just one of the first of many souls that were going to be won as a result of the Green Trees children being taken into captivity.

The Lord ordered that from this moment on, Clarence should be given full Angelic protection, and free access to all the powers and privileges that were the basic rights of every child of God and citizen of Heaven.

Jesus was just as happy about Jesse! He smiled with great pleasure as he watched Jesse jump out of bed, rummage* in his fleebag to find his Bible, and then go over and sit by Clarence's bedside to give him a

class on Salvation and the Holy Spirit.

"Hey, Clarence!" exclaimed Jesse, as he showed him his Bible. "I can see Jesus shining in your eyes. I never saw you smile before!"

"No wonder! I've never felt so happy before!"

Jesse suddenly realised that he didn't feel sick any more. He also felt older and more grown up. He felt like a sold-out, on-fire, witnessing, Endtime disciple of Jesus!

"Me too, Clarence! This is the happiest moment of my life!"



Quick! Pass the word!
Clarence is saved!

TO BE CONTINUED!...

rummage — search through