

# Adventures with the **HOLY** SPIRIT

*including* THE SCANDINAVIAN STORY



**Phillip Halverson**

# **Adventures with the Holy Spirit**

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This book is dedicated to all those who bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Gal. 6:2

## **Introduction**

The essence of the New Testament is: Take care of OTHERS and God will take care of you. Intercessory Prayer is for OTHERS.

I have had numerous astonishing experiences in intercessory prayer and I want you to know how alive and active the Holy Spirit is, bringing forth God's purposes in the earth today.

## **A Sense of Destiny**

A divine discontent began to possess Fern and me. A great yearning filled us to be absolutely controlled by the Holy Spirit.

We both worked in our local Assembly of God church since youths but we were in a static place in our Christian experience. The plateau we lived on had no new horizons—everything was maintaining the "status-quo" and it seemed all our friends were exactly in that same place.

Then, in 1962, our pastor invited us to join him in opening a downtown mission completely separate from our church. He resigned his pastorate and rented a large (former) burlesque theatre in the center of downtown Minneapolis. This was soon thriving. Every night of the week three balconies were filled and overflowing, producing throngs of seekers for the peace of Jesus. Both Fern and I worked at the altar and in the prayer room and conducted follow-up teaching for the new converts in "What's Happened to Me" seminars.

Imagine the needs of these dear converts. For some, food and clothing meant survival. Our hearts were touched with the challenge of ministering to these new brothers and sisters.

I remember so well the day Fern and I were discussing our budget in relation to our desire to help others. There was not enough money to do both.

We determined that day to take Luke 6:38:

"Give and it shall be given to you, good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye measure it shall be measured to you again."  
(KJV)

And Malachi 3:10:

"... prove me now, herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open for you the windows of heaven, and pour out for you a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it." (KJV)

A joyous abandonment filled us! We were eager to expand the scope of our lives. Why not immediately begin to tithe as if we already had the increase we wanted in finances? We had never heard of this being done, but we felt like pioneers launching forth into this new dimension.

I know what you could be thinking: someone died and left us a fortune? We discovered oil in our backyard? We uncovered a cache of diamonds in our attic? No!

The unique gifts of the Holy Spirit began to operate and events were set in motion that changed the course of our lives from that day on.

The very first thing that occurred was a very close and intimate fellowship with the Father. Our commitment led us to lean heavy on His breast; feel the heaving of His love and that breath of the Spirit of God became so preciously close.

It was a time of awe—to be in the very presence of God! The certain knowledge that He is God of every situation filled us. A sense of destiny to walk in a greater dimension of His Holy Spirit overwhelmed us and became a consuming desire.

Intercessory prayer began to develop and operate, together with the Word of Wisdom and the Word of Knowledge. The Word of Knowledge pertains to former and present persons, circumstances or events and the Word of Wisdom has to do with the future.

We were to discover miraculous happenings!

"Then you will seek Me, inquire for and require Me (as a vital necessity) and find Me; when you search for Me with all your heart." (Jeremiah 29:13)

## **Divine Arrangements**

All our crops burned out when I was eighteen years old and there were ten hungry mouths to feed in our family. The whole community was suffering. What was there to do?

My cousin Enoch had been to North Dakota to work in the harvest fields and he knew a farmer who needed four men. Enoch had room for one more passenger but no promise of work. I wanted to be on my own and was convinced that I should be that passenger. So after borrowing five dollars from my uncle and packing a suit-case, I went on a real adventure.

Before dawn, some six hundred miles later, Enoch dropped me off alone in a tiny town in North Dakota as he and the others departed to report for their jobs.

I sat down on the steps of an old, small store in that group of six antique buildings, feeling very alone. I did the only thing I knew to do—I prayed. Having spent most of my money and no way to get back home, I gratefully rested in the conscious presence of God. At that time I had not yet experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit but knew the Lord. I asked Him to open up a job for me. I didn't have long to wait!

Just as daylight was approaching, two men in an old car pulled up right in front of me. They knew of a farmer down the road who needed help! I gave them my last few cents to drive me out to this farm. On the way I noted that a freight train ran right by this farm and that the tops of the boxcars were covered with bums who had no jobs and no other way of transportation.

Walking into the farmyard, I inquired if they could use some help. "Yes! We are going to need a large crew as our crops are excellent." I put my small suitcase down in a corner of the machinery shed and went to work right then.

At noon I was invited into the farmhouse for dinner. I noted that other farmhands were served in the bunk-house area. Can you imagine my joy when the farmer gave thanks to the Lord for the food and for sending me?

He also announced that they would have a church meeting in the house that evening and anyone who wanted to come was invited. I was thrilled to see the hand of God had directed me to the home of real Christians. Of the crew of twenty men only one other young man, Richard Palmer, and I attended that evening meeting.

After some songs, a sermon, followed by a time of earnest prayer, I watched with amazement as the other young man, Richard, was filled with

the Holy Spirit. Dick is now a veteran Assembly of God missionary to Peru.

This was my first evening and when I asked where I should sleep the farmer said, "I have two sons in one double bed upstairs and Dick is in another double bed so why don't you share with Dick instead of sleeping in the bunkhouse?"

All my pre-dawn apprehensions had vanished! By night I had a job, good food, clean quarters and Christian fellowship . . . more than I would have ever dreamed.

After about a week the farmer told me he sure would like to have more workers like me. Remembering the tops of those box cars filled with men needing work, I wrote home. My father and several men of our church came to work for about two months. The needed money was provided for the harsh winter ahead and it is a matter of record that the winters of 1935 and 1936 were among the coldest ever experienced or recorded.

I was attracted to a lovely girl playing the piano in a radio station for our choir in 1937 and Fern Phil and I were married after a courtship of three years. She had been the church pianist since she was fourteen years of

age and I was a choir member. Eight months later I was drafted for one year into the U.S. Army. Nine months after that Pearl Harbor was bombed and I served until the war was over. We established our home in Minneapolis where we were very active in our church, serving in many capacities.

". . .I being in the way (of obedience and faith) the Lord led me. . ." (Genesis 24:27).

## **Utterances**

It wasn't until I was married and had a child that I first spoke in that heavenly language (tongues) when I was baptized with the Holy Spirit and I also prayed in tongues, not only in my home but in church and home prayer meetings.

1 Corinthians 14:14 accurately describes my experience at that time:

"For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful." (KJV)

I often felt the Holy Spirit moving me to prayer and I gave myself to that urge. It didn't matter where I was: in the performance of my job, driving my car, reading my Bible, sometimes while listening to someone speak, in meetings; I found myself breathing prayers in tongues to God.

I knew this prayer was on behalf of others because I had been taught about the work of the Holy Spirit. I also felt the need of others when I prayed. Of course, I didn't know in my natural mind what to pray for—only to pray. When others would ask me to pray, I would do so and often utterances in tongues would come forth.

I also prayed with my understanding. I made my requests known to God—putting them into words. Then that Helper, the Holy Spirit, assisted me in my prayer with supernatural utterances. It was a real release.

"... the Spirit Himself goes to meet our supplication and pleads in our behalf with UNSPEAKABLE YEARNINGS AND GROANINGS TOO DEEP FOR UTTERANCE" (Romans 8:26, KJV).

Yes, groanings came forth and, most amazing, ENGLISH WORDS! I was puzzled . . .

I inquired of my pastor. He had not heard of a similar experience but assured me that the Holy Spirit was bringing forth these English words. This did give me a measure of comfort, but my natural mind was still puzzled.

John 16:13 and 14 began to take on new meaning to me:

"But when He, the Spirit of Truth (the truth giving Spirit) comes, He will guide you into all the truth. ... He will tell whatever He hears (from the Father, He will give the message that has been given to Him) and He will announce and declare to you the things that are to come—that will happen in the future."

The King James version says:

"... He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak; and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you."

I had the Spirit of Truth dwelling richly in me and my prayer life continued to expand in astonishing ways.

## **The Hearse Without a Corpse**

I was putting the finishing touches of polish on my car while awaiting the arrival of Brad and Jean, out-of-state friends. They had said in their morning phone call that they would only have time for a quick cup of coffee.

The coffee was perking and the light lunch ready for the table when they arrived. Brad and I talked briefly in the garage while Jean and Fern visited while setting the table.

Jean shared with Fern her concern for a friend, Mrs. Edwards, who had suddenly been taken ill. Mrs. Edward's husband, a local mortician, found his wife lying on the bathroom floor, unconscious, and rushed her to the small local hospital. However, there was nothing they could do for her there and she was transferred to a larger hospital about fifty miles away.

That hospital, in turn, recommended she be immediately taken to Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, where they diagnosed her condition as an inoperable brain aneurysm. When Mr. Edwards was informed about the hopelessness of her condition, he was also told that the hospital would call to tell him when he could pick up her body.

It was a very sad Mr. Edwards who had shared this with Jean and Brad. Jean told Fern, "Be sure to pray for them."

Because of their tight schedule we finished a quick lunch, had prayer together, and bade them Godspeed on their return trip.

Later that same night, having retired, Fern was awakened by a mighty prayer I was uttering in the Holy Spirit in tongues. This was forceful; then, the English words came, "Intervene for Mrs. Edwards; intervene for the aneurysm!" Over and over again the Holy Spirit spoke these words.

When that subsided, Fern said, "That must be the Mrs. Edwards Jean was talking about today!"

"What Mrs. Edwards?" I asked. "Who is Mrs. Edwards? What about her?" Fern hadn't mentioned her conversation with Jean to me, thinking Brad had.

"Didn't Brad tell you about their mortician's wife?"



"No, what about her? Tell me!"

Then Fern proceeded to relate the brief history Jean had given her. We continued to pray for this Mrs. Edwards with our natural understanding, commanding this aneurysm to be dissolved and her body to be whole and perfect in Jesus' Name; that she be instantly whole with no effects whatsoever from this encounter. We prayed fervently for perhaps a half-hour in this fashion, holding up Mrs. Edwards to the Father with thanksgiving and praise for her deliverance. Then we slept soundly and awakened the next morning refreshed.

Not that next day, but the following day I got a call from an excited Brad:

"Phil, I have to tell you what has happened to our friend, Mrs. Edwards!" he exclaimed.

"Oh, tell us! We want to hear," I replied.

"Well, yesterday Mayo Clinic called Mr. Edwards and told him he should come and pick up his wife," continued Brad. "He drove the hearse to Rochester, planning to pick up her dead body. Entering the large lobby he thought he saw a vision to his left. Was that his wife sitting there all dressed? Walking toward her he was met by his ecstatic wife who did not know anything about her former condition except what the doctors had told her when she was discharged!"

I then told Brad about the astonishing experience of the night before last that took place after they had left our house; the mighty intervention of the Holy Spirit! We were both almost breathless!

In fact, so amazed were we that the following week-end Fern and I drove to their community in another state to visit firsthand with Mr. and Mrs. Edwards, as well as Brad and Jean, to verify this tremendous miracle. We found a very grateful, and still incredulous husband and his happy, vibrant, very-much-alive wife!

"... I am alert and active, watching over my word to perform it" (Jeremiah 1:12).

**Mr. Crawford**

Driving along the freeway from another state, we were within about fifteen miles of our home. Our car tape player had been feeding us the Word and we were rejoicing in the goodness of the Lord.

I shared with Fern the voice I heard telling me I would be in a hospital as a patient with intravenous feeding. Along with that the word "Crawford" occurred frequently in prayer.

"Oh no!" Fern replied, "I reject that thought. We believe in healing and you are not going to be in any hospital."

However, that quiet inner voice, as well as intercession of the Holy Spirit continued, inaudible, but very certain.

In less than a week, I awoke very early one morning in intense pain. I arose, went into the living room and proceeded to read my Bible and talk with the Lord. I soon was doubled up with pain and Fern discovered me rolling, groaning, on the floor.

We did not have a family doctor so Fern called her brother and soon I found myself being admitted to a hospital. I cannot describe the unremitting pain.

No sooner had a nurse attached an intravenous feeding tube in my arm than the pain abruptly stopped and I had the most fantastic feeling of peace I have ever known. It was as though I was floating on air.

We reminded one another of the car ride and the Word of Knowledge about this and we knew this was a time to look for the unexpected. I was there for some specific purpose.

My room-mate was a man who had been there for weeks. His extremely high blood pressure was not responding to treatment and he was getting progressively worse. His wife was in another hospital for treatment of a back disorder, he informed me.

"My name," he said, "is Crawford."

CRAWFORD! I was in the right place at the right time.

I was tested for everything. Friends came to visit and pray with me. I felt fine—just waiting for the tests to be completed to get home. When my pastor came to visit and was about to pray for me, Mr. Crawford called over,

"Don't pray for him, I'm the one who needs prayer!"

It is my joy to tell you that Mr. Crawford found Jesus as his Savior that very hour. Not only that but at the end of that week Mr. Crawford's doctors came in to announce that he had improved so much he could go home. No sooner had his doctors left the room than my doctor came in to tell me that he could find nothing wrong with me; my tests were all perfect and I could go home!

As it turned out, Crawford's wife was discharged that following morning also and he insisted that they drive me home instead of Fern coming to pick me up. They lived in our same general area.

I accepted and later, over a cup of fresh coffee, Fern had the privilege and joy of sharing the good news of God's love with Mrs. Crawford, who eagerly accepted Christ as her Savior too!

"Lean on, trust and be confident in the Lord with all your heart and mind, and do not rely on your own insight or understanding. In all your ways know, recognize and acknowledge Him, and He will direct and make straight and plain your paths (Proverbs 3:5 and 6).

## **The Great Alaskan Earthquake**

We were part of a prayer group that met regularly not only to pray for individual requests, but also to rejoice over the answers to prayer we experienced. What times of refreshing! These were people who loved to pray and intercede with groanings and travail until the peace of God replaced a particular burden. We shared each others' concerns in united prayer, some sitting, some standing, some lying or sitting on the floor.

Usually, we met on a Friday night at one another's' homes. We all arrived eager to share together.

This particular evening in 1964, having been in prayer earnestly for a couple of hours, I found myself abandoned to prayer and groaning in the Holy Spirit. Then, suddenly, these English words came forth:

"At about dusk ... at about dusk ... at about dusk," the Holy Spirit going on to describe a terrible shaking, naming many cities in Alaska and devastating destruction. The fifteen or twenty of us assembled that night will never forget it.

Early the next morning I received many excited telephone calls.

"Have you seen the morning paper?" a friend asked.

"I don't take the paper," I replied.

The great Alaskan earthquake had occurred the night before and the newspapers began with the very words, "AT ABOUT DUSK"

The Word of Knowledge had been in operation at that prayer meeting. Some might ask, "What good did it do, it didn't prevent the earthquake. . . ." The purpose of God to reveal it to me at that meeting did have a consequence for George.

A rather new Christian, George was present with his wife that night. He had been mightily filled with the Holy Spirit and we were thrilled to see the gifts of the Spirit coming into operation in his life.

George had been considering associating himself with some men in a business and, in fact, even had come to my home with some of them for prayer. I had prayed with George several times and had warned him that the

Holy Spirit had given me the strong impression that he was not to go into this business. I agonized so much for George in prayer that I would call him on the phone and beg him not to get involved in this proposed business. I remember one day I could not get my work done for the tremendous burden of travail in prayer for George. My advice and tears had brought no action.

But George was at the prayer meeting on that Good Friday night. As far as I can ascertain, God had established my credibility with a true word that night (and other times that George knew about). But he chose to go into this endeavor only to find it a failure, spiritually draining, not God's will for him, and ultimately a spiritual setback.

This is a rare instance. I do not pray with people to ascertain God's will for them. Only if God burdens me in a definite area do I contact the people involved and inform them of the concern of the Holy Spirit.

"Therefore be always alert and on your guard, being mindful that for three years I never stopped night or day seriously to admonish you one by one with tears."

Acts 20:31 (Amplified)

## Donald Oman

Many times I pray off and on through the night hours. Fern usually awakens, but I drift in and out of prayer.

On this particular night I heard myself praying for a "Donald Oman". I prayed for the intervention of the Holy Spirit in a very authoritative voice several times and then in a decisive, loud command, spoke these words:

"DONALD OMAN! IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST STAND UP! — LIVE! — IN THE NAME OF JESUS, LIVE! — LIVE TO FINISH THE WORK I HAVE FOR YOU TO DO!"

We were both fully awake and a holy awe filled the room as we realized the Holy Spirit was active on behalf of someone very ill, whom we did not know.

A few months passed. We were visiting a church we had formerly attended and were astonished to see the name "Donald Oman" on a prayer request list distributed prior to the meeting.

Inquiring after the meeting, we found the person who had compiled that weekly prayer list. We asked her about this "Donald Oman—who is he?"

"Oh!" she said, "his mother-in-law is in the meeting this morning." We found her and told her of the outstanding prayer in the Holy Spirit we had experienced. And this is what she told us:

Her son-in-law, Donald Oman, a missionary to Lebanon, in charge of an orphanage, had been ill for some time. Struggling between life and death, he finally succumbed and efforts to revive him were fruitless.

Because of the climate in that country, plans for his immediate cremation were made. As they were preparing for this, his wife cried out, "Oh, God! Spare Don! Please, God, spare my husband!"

At that precise moment visible signs of life began to be manifest in his body and shortly he came forth, weak but ALIVE!

We ascertained the time of this miracle to be the same as the intercession of the Holy Spirit that particular night, even to the night and time-zone difference!

Donald Oman came back to this country to regain his health and he did live many years and finished the work the Lord had ordained for him. We very recently had the privilege of preaching in the church he founded in America!

". . . the Holy Spirit comes to our aid and bears us up in our weakness; for we do not know what prayer to offer nor how to offer it worthily as we ought, but the Spirit himself goes to meet our supplication and PLEADS IN OUR BEHALF WITH UNSPEAKABLE YEARNINGS AND GROANINGS too deep for utterance. And He who searches the hearts of men knows what is in the mind of the Holy Spirit—what His intent is—because the Spirit intercedes and pleads before God in behalf of the saints according to and in harmony with God's will" (Romans 8:26 and 27).

## **For Sale by Owner**

A business we had developed had grown, necessitating opening another office in an adjoining city. After a period of about six months in an office building, we discovered it had been sold and we would have to vacate in two months.

We were in a great area business and transportation-wise and the task of finding suitable space at affordable rent was a challenge.

My prayer life, as usual, included the heavenly language both in tongues and in songs as well as in English, interceding for many situations and persons. Lately I was aware of the name "Miller." With more and more frequency I heard the name "Miller" with an urgency in the Holy Spirit. I did not, of course, even think to connect it with finding office space.

The search began. Fern checked out several places that were available but not in the location we desired nor did they prove to be suitable for our business.

I had casually noticed a building almost directly across the street from the office we had to vacate but it was "For Sale by Owner." When I suggested to Fern that she should check it out, she said, "We surely don't want to BUY a building!" I walked across the street to investigate further.

I persuaded Fern to look it over as it had several office spaces we could possibly rent out in addition to plenty of space for ourselves, all on

one floor with a large neat basement.

The man that showed it to us was the nephew of the owner who was ill. He did not want to rent it out. His uncle wanted to dispose of it, and it was vacant.

Finally, we thought to ask what the price of the building was if we desired to purchase it. When he told us the price his uncle wanted for it, we couldn't believe we had uncovered such a bargain! And the Holy Spirit was nudging us about the urgency of the situation.

In fact, I was so impressed to get going with the purchase that I had our attorney draw up the papers that afternoon for the price quoted and gave them to the nephew of the owner.

That was Friday evening.

We met him on Monday morning and as he handed us back the signed papers all in order, he told us his uncle had passed away that morning. His uncle's name was MILLER! That was the first time we heard his name.

We owned that building for many years and when we felt a change coming the Lord sent a buyer not only for that building but also for our business. That is a story of countless miracles all its own.

"And my God will liberally supply (fill to the full) your every need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

## **Ivar**

Because I had been praying in the Holy Spirit for an "Ivar", and because a friend of Fern's father, named Ivar, was in a coma at the local Veterans' Hospital, I put my yard rake aside and was on my way to the back door to tell Fern I felt we should go to see Ivar.

At the same moment Fern emerged from the kitchen door. "Phil, could we go out and pray for Ivar? I am so impressed to do it today. You know he is unsaved, as far as we know."

The hospital nurse on duty at his floor told us he had been comatose for two weeks, had no visitors, and gave no response. She left to perform her other duties.

We were just outside Ivar's door, so we tiptoed in. He was alone, sleeping, in a six-bed room. He looked ashen—dead.

Leaning over his bed, Fern touched Ivar on the shoulder. "Ivar, Ivar, we have come to talk to you and pray with you." Ivar's eyes opened suddenly and as Fern was leaning directly over him, their eyes met. Softly, Fern said "Ivar, we have come to tell you God loves you and gave Jesus to be your Savior. Do you know who I am:

We were startled! "Yes, you are Rudy's daughter, Fern."

To realize Ivar was awake and alert, actually speaking to us was an astounding experience. We were witnessing a miracle! His response was slow but accurate!

I gently took Ivar's hand. "Father, reveal Jesus to Ivar now as your blood cleanses him from every sin and he becomes a child of God."

About to leave, we hadn't taken more than two or three steps toward the door when we heard his voice and turned to see him raised up on one elbow. We returned to his bed to hear him say, slowly, "Th . . . thanks a lot, th . . . thanks a lot, folks." We were awed.

Those were his last words as he went to be with his Savior that night. I am touched afresh when I tell you this event.

"(Besides these evidences) it was also established and plainly endorsed by God, Who showed His approval of it by signs and wonders and various miraculous manifestations of (His) power and by imparting the gifts of the Holy Spirit (to the believers) according to His own will."

Hebrews 2:4 (Amplified)

## **"Censored!"**

"Censored!" "Censored!" "Censored!" I heard these words over and over again as I prayed. I would pray in tongues often, with travail, and then these English words would come forth.

One day a letter arrived and stamped across the face of it was the word in big bold black letters—"CENSORED". Spiritual alert sounded.

"Dear Mr. and Mrs. Halverson," it began, "Jack M., an inmate of this prison, has requested contact with you. If you do not wish to have this



contact, do not respond to this letter. If you do wish to correspond, please acknowledge this on the enclosed card and send to. . . ."

We responded that we were honored to be counted as a friend of this young inmate and very shortly received a long letter from Jack.

He had been in my Sunday School class many years before. His whole family was saved and brought in many relatives and friends who also found Jesus as their personal Savior. But the family moved to New York to begin a new business and consequently did not find the Christian fellowship they needed so desperately. We had lost all contact with them for many years.

Jack's brilliant mind got him into too much trouble and eventually his career in crime had landed him behind bars. Seeking to end his life, he managed to slash his wrists, only to live with guilt and despair.

One day, in solitary confinement, agony overwhelming him, he cried out in desperation, "Oh God! Send someone to me! Help me! God, Oh God, help me!"

To his vision appeared the image of our faces. He knew unmistakably that God would send us to him, and his request led the prison officials to contact us.

We wrote him how honored we were to be counted as his friends and not only were we touched with his story, but we wanted him to know we would do everything we could to be a strength to him and stand by him and his family. We assured him of our prayers and of the Holy Spirit's intercession for him. He was encouraged, even though still desperately depressed. We wanted to see him.

Jack certainly did have problems. Not only was he incarcerated, but his wife Joyce was pressing for a divorce. His letters to her were returned unopened, causing him great torment. His furniture was being repossessed; one day his new car was hauled off by the authorities for non-payment, and there was no money to make the mortgage payments either.

Now there is a certain fascination in knowing that the Holy Spirit has breathed on a situation. You don't know how in the wide world things are going to turn out right, but you do know that you have a part to play, with the certainty that God IS going to deliver. Of that we were confidently

expectant, even though at first it certainly did not seem like a fortuitous adventure. We wanted to obey the Lord.

The letters poured back and forth between us. Every day Fern would sit down to the typewriter, having nothing fresh to say, and every day God would give her the scriptures and encouraging words Jack needed to hear. He was absolutely sick about losing his wife and young son.

The evening is memorable that Fern and I decided to stop to meet Joyce and their four-year-old son, Greg. Joyce was bitter against her husband. Don't talk to her about him! We asked what help we could be and asked her if she had a Bible. When we told her that her husband had accepted Jesus as his Savior when he was a boy, she left the room and we were surprised to see her return bringing a Bible.

It seemed to us that Joyce responded in an indifferent way when we read scriptures and presented Christ as the only answer. When asked if she would accept Jesus in her situation, she said she couldn't pray. But she did repeat a prayer after Fern. Then, a surprising turn: she called Greg over and said, "Greggy, you pray like Mommy did."

We urged her to read the book of John first and added that we wanted to keep track of her by stopping in, holding phone conversations, and having her and Greg in our home for dinner and some overnight weekends.

Fern tells this: "I was tempted to think she had merely repeated that initial prayer only to be polite. Many times the animosity she felt for her husband gave me the impression that the Word of God had not been sown in good ground, but I was determined to nourish that ground so it could bear fruit. I knew this was God's will.

"Stopping by her home one afternoon with a couple of sweet rolls for coffee, I chatted with her, read scripture and asked her if she would please reconsider her attitude toward her husband. His letters were always sent back to him unopened and he so wanted to communicate with her. But those walls of separation had long before been built and reinforced.

"When I asked Joyce how she was coming along with her Bible reading, her reply was, 'I just don't get anything out of it.'

"Well, Joyce, the scripture tells us in Matthew 8:31 and 32 that if we continue in His Word, we are His disciples and that we shall know the truth and the truth shall set us free. Jesus is the way, the truth and the life.

"I explained to Joyce that the first way to obey the

Lord is to show love. 'I wonder, Joyce, how you can show God you really want to obey Him and partake of His freedom. . . ?'

"It was very quiet. Joyce had nothing to say.

"I know," I continued prayerfully, "you have it tough right now, but think of your husband in prison. He has it a lot tougher. Just to show a glimmer of concern (I didn't dare use the word LOVE) to another human being who is worse off than you are, why not just out of pity send him a note?

"Absolutely no response. I headed for home.

"While I was preparing our evening meal for guests, the phone rang. 'Hullo. This is Joyce.' It was the first phone call I had ever received from her. 'Well, I. . . well, I just ... uh ... I just came from the . . . uh . . . corner drugstore . . . and ... uh ... I mailed a short . . . uh . . . note to . . . Jack.'

"THAT'S WHEN I KNEW JOYCE HAD THE SPARK OF GOD LIVING WITHIN HER! She had deliberately determined to obey the glimmer of light she saw at the far end of the tunnel. It was all she could do at that point. Thank God she did it!

"I was more determined than ever to fan that spark. In her own way, she had made a move toward God and God would take giant step to aid her!

"All this time, Phillip continued to pray much in the Spirit about "Censored!"

One night we took Joyce and Greg to an ice show.

Another night stands out; we were dropping them off after a special concert at our church. Knowing their finances were desperate, Phillip handed Joyce some money.

"The next day I was close by and stopped in to see her. She had been to a hairdresser and had the fanciest hairdo I had ever seen—complete with several hair-pieces. My first reaction was 'Joyce, you and I are going to have a little talk about the value of money.' But, you know, it wouldn't come

out that way? Instead I found myself saying, 'My, Joyce, you look just beautiful! Your hair is gorgeous!'

"I was so thankful on my way home that I hadn't let the old flesh come out to scold Joyce. And that was the beginning of a real change in her relationship, not only with us, but with her husband.

"During the next few months, communication opened up between Jack and Joyce. He wrote us volumes. His letters to us were full of praise and expectancy about his future which he had now totally committed to the Lord. He announced to us he was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke in that heavenly language. . . . "I am now a free man even in prison!" he exclaimed.

(Since Fern had more to do with Joyce than I did, it seemed she should tell of the experience.)

In spite of meeting with our pastor before the Pardon Board, in spite of Fern's taking her to her divorce lawyer, in spite of relatives being disturbed over everything, God was in it for blessing!

His enrollment in every Bible correspondence course resulted in a wall full of graduation certificates with A-Plus in each course. I know, because I later had them all framed for his new home.

Jack's appearance changed dramatically from bloody, bitten nails, bloodshot eyes, nervous, jerky motions to a self-confident, eager-to-learn, eager-to-please, well-groomed young man anyone would be proud to know.

Now consider:

1. The Pardon Board had reviewed his record and said they would not allow a parole.
2. His family's lawyers couldn't get anyone to budge for a parole.
3. His long sentence appeared to have no chance of being shortened for any reason.

But only a few weeks before Christmas that year, aware of the many months the Holy Spirit had been interceding for this young man, and holding him up before the Father as if he were my own son, I was startled to hear the English words in prayer—"The prison bars are broken at

Christmas." Often while in prayer these same words would come. Of course, Jack was the only person we knew who was in prison at that time, and in the natural thinking process we couldn't imagine Jack being given a release after the Parole Board was so firm in their denial of a reconsideration of his term.

We had been at the prison often, not to see Jack, as he was allowed only two visits per month and we wanted them to be with his family, but we were invited by the chaplain to conduct some early Sunday morning services and to substitute occasionally when the chaplain would be out of town.

The night before Christmas Eve we went to Joyce's parents' home, where she and Greg were spending the holidays. We had brought a gift of a pretty nightie and slippers to encourage her hope of a second honeymoon.

We were startled by a knock at the door. Her father opened the door to find JACK, grinning from ear to ear!!! We felt like Rhoda when Peter was released from the Roman prison by the angel (Acts 12:8)—we couldn't believe our eyes!

Of all the unexpected turns of events, Jack was out on a work-release program and he NEVER ENTERED PRISON DOORS AGAIN! THE PRISON BARS WERE BROKEN AT CHRISTMAS! A Word of Wisdom!

I am happy to tell you he has a beautiful home and furnishings, car and boat. He is a respected member of his community today.

He is always going about doing good. Fern always receives a beautiful floral gift every Mothers' Day, no matter where we are, and for several years, every time we had a big snowfall, I would awaken to find my driveway completely cleared by this outstanding young man.

It is a joy to be with this family. He is one of our treasures.

"Bear ye one another's burdens and so fill the law of Christ."  
Galatians

## **Part 2 - THE SCANDINAVIAN STORY**

### **The Scandinavian Story Begins**

In the early Spring of 1972 I was praying much in the Holy Spirit for Norway and Sweden. I thought I was praying for their governments as I often pray in the Spirit for international events, leaders of countries and affairs of State.

I am a Norwegian by heritage and my wife Fern is Swedish. We both have heard relatives talk of family events in the "old country," but never dreamed we would one day be ministering there.

When some friends called to tell us they would be going on a Full Gospel Business Men's airlift to Europe and Scandinavia, suggesting we go too, we said we would surely pray about it—remembering that I had prayed concerning Scandinavia. We were open.

After a Sunday morning church service, a friend of mine came to me and prophesied that I would be overseas in a large church where an older man would stand up in the back of the congregation and ask for prayer for a son who hadn't been heard from for many years. I took this as a confirmation to proceed in the planning for Scandinavia.

We applied for, and received, our passports, put in a call to FGBMFI Coordinator Henry Carlson in Chicago (it was the deadline day for reservations), and got confirmation that we would be on the next flight approximately two weeks later.

We needed luggage and hustled about preparing our wardrobe for the last of April and first part of May in northern Europe.

Two days before we were to leave for Chicago our friends called us again.

"Forget about Scandinavia," they said. "We have decided to go to Mexico City on business and would love to have you join us in Dallas and fly together to Mexico City for about ten days."

"Oh!" I replied, "we have all our clothes ready for northern Europe!"

"Not to worry," they said, "you can buy warm weather clothes in Mexico!"

"Well, we'll pray about it and call you right back tomorrow morning because you'll have to know immediately to make your plans," we said.

As we hung up the phone we looked at each other. No way were we going to Mexico when we felt the direction of the Holy Spirit confirming to us that we should go to Scandinavia!

The next morning our call to them was met with regret on their part, but with steadfast assurance on ours. It would have been fun to be with friends in a part of the world we had never visited, but we felt a deep commitment to follow the promptings and confirmation of the Holy Spirit.

We did not know what was ahead, nor care, but it was exciting to anticipate an adventure and depend totally on God.

In Copenhagen two days later, Henry Carlson came to me, with a group of assembled men, to designate areas of ministry. He asked me where I thought I would like to go. My reply was "Norway" because I always wanted to see the land of my forbears.

But Henry suggested he felt a strong impression to send us to central southern Sweden.

That was enough!

Henry did not know that for several weeks the Holy Spirit had been whispering to me in that inner voice, . . . "You will be sent . . . you will be sent . . . you will be sent." I recognize the leadership of the Holy Spirit and this was another witness to my spirit. I told Henry I would go where needed.

On the short plane hop from Copenhagen to Stockholm, Fern and I sat next to a military man. When he mentioned the name of his country, Fern said, "Oh! You are from behind the Iron Curtain!"

"Yes," he replied, looking downcast, "we do not have the freedom you Americans enjoy."

"You think Americans are free?" we asked. "They are bound by chains of sin and wickedness and do not experience real freedom and liberty until, like all people, they meet Jesus Christ and are liberated from the guilt and penalty of sin. Then they, as you, can know true freedom."

We continued this meaningful discussion until we landed at the Stockholm airport. He received our words graciously and thanked us for sharing this with him. He gave us a memento of his country, which we cherish.

By the time we received our luggage at the Stockholm airport and found the train station to embark for our assigned area, we had to run to catch the train as it was leaving the station.

But when we arrived at this particular church, the minister was puzzled; we were scheduled for another day on his calendar.

As we were standing outside on the huge stone steps a Saab pulled up to an abrupt stop (the only way they stop in Sweden!) The woman driver informed us in quite good English that she had been sent to pick us up and deliver us to another church some miles away.

Their meeting was in progress when we arrived after dark. We could make out the tall white steeple and the beautiful stained glass windows. Inside we found the church packed with an eager group, about 500 or so. Never will I forget that first evening.

The people seemed to surge with anticipation. I had an interpreter because I do not speak or understand Swedish. This man spoke excellent English, as do all the young people, and I learned that he taught at the local high school. He and his wife were on furlough from African mission work. This same man was my interpreter during our entire stay in Sweden, at all the meetings.

I didn't realize until that first meeting was over that when I had lapsed into that heavenly language (tongues), I was speaking SWEDISH!

My interpreter embraced me after the meeting, before we departed to a midnight lunch at a nearby home. In fact, he never was far from me wherever I went. I found out just before we left Sweden that I had prayed with him in his native Swedish tongue also, and he told me that I had related certain situations that concerned him and told him things that only he knew.

From that very first night we had throngs of people coming to our various locations throughout central southern Sweden.



Our schedule for eight days was at least two meetings a day, often three, and occasionally four. We were in large high school classrooms, conducting question-and-answer sessions as well as giving our testimonies in radio stations and large alcoholic centers. I want to tell you about the remarkable experience I had in the largest prison in Sweden, at Kumla.

"In all your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your paths."  
Proverbs 3:6

## **Kumla**

It was our great privilege to stay in the home of Rev. and Mrs. Stig Johansson, who pastored five Baptist (very close to Pentecostal) churches. Neither he nor his wife Berit knew English. Berit actually had studied English in high school many years ago, but had no opportunity to practice speaking it. This led to many comical situations in communications. I had to give up on ingredients and measurements for delicious recipes, even though I tasted to determine flour, sugar, etc. Gestures, with expressions you wouldn't believe, were basic. Love conquered all barriers here!

For instance, the day Rev. Johansson was trying to communicate to us that we would be ministering at a prison. With fingers crossed over his face and making himself look downcast, pulling at imaginary bars, etc., marked the high point of comedy. With relief we studied his pencil drawing and finally guessed correctly—a prison!

A little later our interpreter explained that the prison at Kumla was all underground and the state's largest facility for hardened criminals. Rev. Johansson had not been able to arrange for any meetings there for a period of years and was delighted that the officials consented to admit the "Americans."

Arriving at Kumla Prison the officials spoke to us in English and explained the security bell system to us. We were then led underground, high skylights above us, where approximately twenty Psychiatric Ward prisoners were assembled in a room. Fern played the piano (everywhere we went), and we sang just a bit.

As I was speaking, through the same interpreter, I told of an experience we had with a prisoner in the United States; of his dramatic

deliverance from sin and of his total commitment to follow Jesus. To my left, by the doorway, stood three Doctors of Psychiatry, observing.

Suddenly, as I was speaking, a tall blonde young man rose in the rear of the room and marched right to the front. Standing directly in front of me, he said in good English, "I want Jesus to be my Savior!"

I immediately took him to another room directly across the hall. As we were finishing, a prison guard appeared.

"Please come quickly!" he urged.

A middle-aged man in the front row had created quite a disturbance. The demons within him were speaking in a high-pitched voice, "I ruined your meeting! I ruined your meeting!" He was writhing and hollering while two guards were trying to control him. No one knew what to do.

As I stopped and quickly observed the situation and breathed the Name of Jesus, I perceived he was demon possessed. Putting my hands on each side of his head, the Holy Spirit actively joined in prayer.

In a loud voice I commanded the demons to leave him, in Jesus' Name.

"Don't say THAT NAME!" cried one of the demons. "SPELL IT, BUT DON'T SAY IT!"

But in the continued force of the Name of Jesus and the utterances in tongues, I commanded all demons to depart.

"We know we have to go, but we have no place; where shall we go?" they asked.

I consigned them to an uninhabited desert part of the earth. The man slumped down in his chair like a wet rag. He was not an English-speaking person! Demons can speak any language and did so this day.

I knew this man wasn't completely delivered, but the first warning bell had rung and we had only seven minutes to get out before the gates automatically locked for the night.

The three doctors wanted to talk to me.

They said they would like to have me minister all throughout the prison to small groups, well-guarded. They said they had heard the Pentecostals had power like this, but they had never seen it before.

Oh! We would liked to have stayed, but I had a job to get back to even though God was already working in me the desire to let go of my secure job and be where He needed me. Firm plans for the remaining days in Sweden had been made and it was not up to me to change them.

Within my spirit welled up a great longing to be able to come back to Sweden as God would direct.

"Behold! I have given you authority and power .. . over all the power that the enemy possesses, and nothing shall in any way harm you. Luke 10:19

## **A Prophecy Fulfilled**

We were welcomed into a traditional Lutheran church with its beautiful horseshoe-shaped balcony, immaculately clean, and well-filled with expectant Swedes.

After some songs and preliminaries, I was almost finished delivering my message for the evening that the Lord had placed on my heart earlier that day.

When I paused briefly, I was interrupted by a voice in the back of the church. An older man was standing up, and with a sobbing voice asked me if I would please pray for his son who hadn't been heard from in many years. His whereabouts were unknown. He wanted, before he departed to be with the Lord to see his son once more. We were all moved by his anguish.

I immediately remembered the prophecy a friend had given me when we were inquiring of the Lord regarding this very trip. Of course I prayed! The Holy Spirit took hold in power and I recognized another mark of confirmation upon my own ministry.

In two or three days the report came back to us: this son had unexpectedly returned home to his jubilant father!

"And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following." Mark 16:20

## **The State Church**

Old and magnificent buildings landmark the Swedish state churches. Cathedral ceilings, ornate marble altars and splendid, rare chandeliers grace

buildings that are attended by only eight or ten old folk once a week. The majority of young Swedes do not exhibit any interest in "religion".

We had been told of this lethargy in all of Scandinavia, and so we were stirred from the first meeting to find crowds and many young people. About fifty percent of our attendance was young people; they followed us everywhere. If there weren't enough seats, they sat on the floor, in the aisles or directly in front of the altar—historically an open area. In this one particular Lutheran state church we enjoyed the grand tour before our meeting began. The pastor showed us the portraits of all the former pastors, hung impressively in the Great Hall. The many enormous chandeliers were unlike any we had ever seen, indescribably beautiful. The grandeur of this particular church remains a marvelous memory. On either side of a long path from the church's front doors were the monuments of the departed faithful.

When the meeting began, young people had filled the aisles and the front of the church right up to the altar rail. We noted many of the same faces in all our meetings. This was to be our last meeting in Sweden and young folk were there by the score.

When I finished speaking, having had occasional utterances in tongues, I wondered just how to proceed. I paused to pray, inviting the audience to join me. The Holy Spirit bore witness to Jesus as Savior and as I finished my prayer, I heard quite a moving about. Opening my eyes, I saw young people surging to the altar, weeping. So many came that they climbed over the altar rail into the "inner sanctum" reserved behind the altar. I did not know what I had said in tongues, but all heaven broke loose!

Not only did salvation appear to them, but many were filled with the Holy Spirit to overflowing and began to speak with other tongues. It was a very loud and noisy time in such a formal church of the "establishment."

I went from youth to youth, being led by His Spirit in a mighty demonstration of His power.

When I had finished praying with a certain young man, my interpreter informed me that he was a student who was a "toughie" and "incorrigible". Here he was, weeping in repentance before the Lord! I was later informed of life changes that continued and confirmed this move of the Spirit of God!

God broke through!

He does what no man can do!

"... as servants of Christ, doing the will of God heartily and with your whole soul; rendering service readily with goodwill, as to the Lord and not to men." Ephesians 6:6, 7 (Amplified)

## **A Park in Oslo**

We had only one day left before the entire airlift, which had disbanded to various European countries, was to meet in Stockholm.

As I had been praying much about Oslo for several days, we determined we would take the train to Oslo just for the day and then go back to Stockholm, believing the Lord had a purpose for us in Oslo.

The train journey was very interesting. The passengers kept to themselves. This was explained to us as their respect for privacy not snobbishness. Indeed, we found everyone to be very hospitable, opening up if we spoke to them, and an elegantly dressed lady across the aisle from us offered to share some fresh fruit when she knew we were Americans.

As we disembarked from the train, we inquired about a place to buy the famous Norwegian wool sweaters. As it was only a few blocks from the train depot, we strolled along, finally making our purchase. We weren't in the mood for a meal, having eaten excellent food on the train, but decided to have a sandwich in the park adjacent to our shopping. Having purchased some picture postcards, we were addressing them and wondering where we could find a post box.

I noticed a tall blonde young man cutting across the park in our direction with books under his arm.

"Pardon me," I inquired very loudly and clearly, hoping he would understand better! "Can you tell us where we can mail these postcards?"

'OOOOOOOOOOoooooo'—a long, high-pitched voice kept on without speech until I said, "In the Name of Jesus, SPEAK!"

Immediately the young man pointed and said, in perfect English, "There is a postbox around the next corner over there."

"Do you live here?" we asked.

Again, "OOOOOOOOOOooooooo," until the command to speak in Jesus' Name was given. Every remark we made elicited this same high-pitched sound, until THE NAME that is higher than any name was spoken.

At the Name of Jesus he informed us he was a student on his way to a class at a University near the Park. His study was of "COMPARATIVE RELIGIONS"!

We knew we were in the right place at the right time.

At the Name of Jesus, again, he then told us he wanted to study to find out who the true God was! We told him of Jesus and His claims on his life.

He was going to be late for his class by this time and anxious to be on his way. Not wishing to detain him, we told him this: "When you will confess Jesus as your Lord and Savior you will be free from your speech impediment."

Our time, too, had elapsed and we were due to catch the night train for Stockholm.

Mission accomplished!

We were very weary. The eight days in Sweden with very little rest made us wish we had the foresight to have arranged for a berth overnight to catch up on sleep. But things had to be done quickly.

We couldn't sit together as the train was very crowded. Parents were holding their young children on their laps and we were glad even to get a seat.

I tugged at the sleeve of the trainman as he came to validate tickets.

"We would like to have sleeping accommodations. Is this possible, sir?"

"All full! Sorry," was his reply.

Five or ten minutes went by. The train finally got underway and the sun had set when I noticed the trainman beckoning me. I rose and met him in a corridor where he informed me a woman was getting off at the next stop and we could have her berth. He said there would be no charge as she had paid to Stockholm and suddenly decided to change her plans!

There were scores of people on that overnight trip who would love to have gotten some rest, and perhaps some that needed it more than we, yet our Father had us specifically in mind to see to our comfort.

In this case the Comforter (Blanket) surrounded us and we felt absolutely abandoned to His love and care.

Pastor Stig Johansson and his wife Berit asked us, "Why leave now?" They had not witnessed such a move of the Lord in such a fashion before and begged us to stay.

I explained that I had to get back to my job and our tickets were good only for certain dates. With tears at the train station in Hallsberg, we bade one another "Goodbye—we look forward to seeing you in God's timing—please come back—Goodbye."

We returned home with a stronger commitment to serve God with our full strength and be utterly dependent on the Holy Spirit.

"... the Holy Spirit come to our aid and bears us up in our weakness; for we do not know what prayer to offer nor how to offer it worthily as we ought, but the Spirit Himself goes to meet our supplication and PLEADS IN OUR BEHALF WITH UNSPEAKABLE YEARNINGS AND GROANINGS too deep for utterance. And He who searches the hearts of men knows what is in the mind of the Holy Spirit—what His intent is—because the Spirit intercedes and pleads before God in behalf of the saints according to and in harmony with God's will" (Romans 8:26 and 27).

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