December 2012 Signs of the Times Newsletter

The Signs of the Times newsletter is a collection of stories and quotes from past issues of Signs and These Times.

-------------------------------

A lady was walking homeward from a shopping excursion, carrying two or three packages in her hand, while by her side walked a little boy. The child was weary. The little feet began to lag, and soon a wailing cry arose.

“I’m too tired! I want somebody to let me ride home!”

The mother looked about her, but there was no streetcar going in her direction. She took one of her parcels and gave it to the child, saying, “Mama is tired, too, and Will must help her to get home. She is glad she has such a brave little man to take care of her, and help her to carry the bundles.”

Instantly the little fellow straightened, his step quickened, and he reached for the offered parcel, saying stoutly, “I’ll carry them all, mama.”

It was only the old, old lesson that our Father is always teaching us. “Is the homeward way weary? Try to lighten another’s burden, and the loving service will smooth thine own path.”—From the Lutheran Observer, Signs of the Times, October 22, 1912.

Quote: “Faith is the hand wherewith we take everlasting life.”—Unknown, Signs of the
When in Paris some years ago I received an account of a French infidel, who happened to find in a drawer of his library some stray leaves of an unknown volume. Although in the constant habit of denouncing the Bible, like most infidel writers he had never read any part of it.

These fugitive leaves contained the prayer of Habakkuk (chapter 3). Being a man of fine literary taste, he was captivated with its poetic beauty, and hastened to the clubhouse to announce the discovery to his associates. Of course they were anxious to know the name of the gifted author, to which inquiries the elated infidel replied, “A writer by the name of Hab-ba-kook, of course a Frenchman!”

Imagine the infidel's surprise when informed that the passage he was so enthusiastically admiring was not produced by one of his own countrymen, nor even by one of his own class of so-called freethinkers, but was penned by one of God’s ancient prophets, and was contained in that much-despised book, the Bible.

This I regard as one of the most sublime passages of inspired literature; and often have I wondered that some artist, equal to the task, has not selected the prophet and his scene of desolation as the subject of painting.—By Daniel Webster, Signs of the Times, June 14, 1910.

Quote: This quote should bring a smile for all those who have sat on committees:

“At meetings of clubs, by an effort of will,
I always contrive to keep perfectly still,
For it takes but a word of annoyance or pity,
And Wham! There I am on another committee.”—Unknown, These Times, October 1964.
NEW from Pacific Press—**Him Big God Day by Stanley Maxwell.** *Him Big God Day* is a collection of remarkable, true stories about God’s faithfulness to those who honor His holy day. Stanley Maxwell has worked and traveled around the world, gathering stories about the Sabbath and about the God who showers His children with blessings. These inspiring stories will remind you that God blesses those who determine to follow Him. On sale during the month of December for **US$10.49**, *Him Big God Day* will make great Christmas gifts for family members and friends of all ages.

Read the first chapter of this book online at [http://www.adventistbookcenter.com/him-big-god-day.html](http://www.adventistbookcenter.com/him-big-god-day.html) Order online or from your local Adventist Book Center--1-800-765-6955.

**********************

William R. Moody, in writing for the *Saturday Evening Post* the life of his father, Dwight L. Moody, tells among many good stories of the famous evangelist, the following:

“As a boy in Northfield he had achieved remarkable results in swelling the attendance at the Sunday-school, and so, arguing from that, he conceived the idea that he could be of much value to Plymouth Church as a recruiting agent. Having come to this decision, he hired a pew with the understanding that he was to fill it each Sunday.

“Like everything else he undertook, he fulfilled his commission with intense earnestness and enthusiasm. He did not wait for the young men to come to church, but he went after them, stopping them on the street corners, visiting them in their lonely rooms, and even calling them out of saloons.

“It was altogether new and strange, and the novelty of the whole work had an irresistible effect, with the consequence that in a short time young Moody was renting six pews, which he filled every Sunday with his strange and motley guests.”—*Signs of the Times*, May 9, 1900.

Quote: “Forgiveness is man’s deepest need and God’s highest achievement.”—By Horace Bushness, *These Times*, July 1971.

**********************

Place this in your church bulletin or newsletter: The thought of ‘witnessing’ can be daunting but *Signs of the Times* makes it EASY. Each month *Signs* takes on a broken world and directs hearts to Jesus for relevant answers. The result is changed lives! Send a subscription today. To order call: 1-800-765-6955 or online at: [http://www.AdventistBookCenter.com](http://www.AdventistBookCenter.com)

**********************
A story is told of a little Irish lad who was wrecked in a stormy sea off the coast of England. He was washed up by the waves on to a rocky ledge where he managed to find security from the raging sea.

When he was finally rescued and somewhat recovered from his terrible experience, he was asked, “Lad, didn’t ye tremble out there on the rocks in all that storm?”

He answered brightly in his Irish way, “Trimble? Sure I trimbled. But do you know, the rock never trimbled once all night.”

It is such a refuge for which millions are looking today, a rock that will not tremble.—Unknown, *Signs of the Times*, January 7, 1948.

Quote: “The day you were born everybody was happy, you cried alone. Make your life such, that in your last hour, all others are weeping, And you are the only one without a tear to shed! Then you shall calmly face death, whenever it comes.”—Found in the Bible of Dag Hammarskjold, *These Times*, September 1965.

This is a longer story than usual for the newsletter. But it seems very appropriate this holiday season.

God Does Not Fail
A Beautiful True Christmas Story By a Pastor’s Wife
*These Times*, December 1971

The following incident of yesteryear should encourage God’s children to trust Him implicitly, even in the darkest hour.

I remember the day one winter that stands out like a boulder in my life. The weather was unusually cold, our salary had not been regularly paid, and it did not meet our needs when it was.

My husband was away much of the time, traveling from one district to another. Our boys were well, but little Ruth was ailing, and at best none of us was decently clothed. I patched and repatched, with spirits sinking to the lowest ebb. The water gave out in the
well, and the wind blew through cracks in the floor.

The people in the parish were kind, and generous, too; but the settlement was new, and each family was struggling for itself. Little by little, at the time I needed it most, my faith began to waver.

Early in life I was taught to take God at His word, and I thought my lesson was well learned. I had lived upon the promises in dark times until I knew, as David did, who was “my fortress, and my deliverer.”

My husband’s overcoat was hardly thick enough for December, and he was often obliged to ride miles to attend some meeting or funeral. Many times our breakfast was Indian cake and tea.

Christmas was coming; the children always expected their presents. I remember the ice was thick and smooth, and the boys were each craving a pair of skates. Ruth, in some unaccountable way, had taken a fancy that the dolls I had made were no longer suitable; she wanted a nice large one, and insisted on praying for it.

I knew it seemed impossible; but oh! I wanted to give each child its present. It seemed as if God had deserted us, but I did not tell my husband all this. He worked so earnestly and heartily. I supposed him to be as hopeful as ever. I kept the sitting room cheerful with an open fire, and tried to serve our scanty meals as invitingly as I could.

The morning before Christmas James was called to see a sick man. I put up a piece of bread for his lunch—it was the best I could do—wrapped my plaid shawl around his neck and then tried to whisper a promise as I often had, but the words died away from my lips. I let him go without it.

That was a dark, hopeless day. I coaxed the children to bed early, for I could not bear their talk. When Ruth retired, I had listened to her prayer. She asked for the last time most explicitly for her doll, and for skates for her brothers. Her bright face looked so lovely when she whispered to me, “You know, I think they’ll be here early tomorrow morning, Mom,” that I wished I could move heaven and earth to save her from disappointment. I sat down alone and gave way to the most bitter tears.

Before long James returned, chilled and exhausted. He drew off his boots; the thin stockings slipped off with them, and his feet were red with cold. “I wouldn’t treat a dog that way; let alone a faithful servant,” I said. Then as I glanced up and saw the hard lines of his face and the look of despair, it flashed across me, James had let go, too.

I brought him a cup of tea, feeling sick and dizzy at the very thought. He took my hand, and we sat for an hour without a word. I wanted to die and meet God and tell Him His promise wasn’t true; my soul was so full of rebellious despair.

There came a sound of bells, a quick stop, and a loud knock at the door. James sprang up to open it. There stood Deacon White. “A box came by express just before dark. I
brought it around as soon as I could get away. Reckon it might be for Christmas. ‘At any
rate,’ I said, ‘they shall have it tonight.’ Here is a turkey my wife asked me to fetch along,
and these other things, I believe, belong to you.”

There was a basket of potatoes and a bag of flour. Talking all the time, he carried in
the box, and then, with a hearty good night, he rode away.

Still without speaking, James found a chisel and opened the box. He drew out first a
thick, red blanket, and saw that beneath was full of clothing. It seemed at that moment as
if Christ fastened upon me a look of reproach. James sat down and covered his face with
his hands. “I can’t touch them,” he exclaimed. “I haven’t been true, just when God was
trying me to see if I could hold out. Do you think I could not see how you were suffering?
And I had no word of comfort to offer. I know how to preach the awfulness of turning away
from God.”

“James,” I said, clinging to him, “don’t take it to heart like this; I am to blame. I ought to
have helped you. We’ll ask Him together to forgive us.”

“Wait a moment, dear, I cannot talk now,” he said and left the room. I knelt down, and
my heart broke; in an instant all the darkness, all the stubbornness rolled away. Jesus
came again with the loving word, “Daughter!”

Sweet promises of tenderness and joy flooded my soul. I was so lost in praise and
gratitude that I forgot everything else. I don’t know how long it was before James came
back, but I knew he, too, had found peace.

“Now, my dear wife,” he said, “let us thank God together”; and he poured out Bible
words of praise, for nothing else could express our thanksgiving.

It was eleven o’clock, the fire was low, and there was the great box, and nothing
touched but the warm blanket we needed. We piled on some fresh logs, lighted candles,
and began to examine our treasures.

We drew out an overcoat; I made James try it on; just the right size, and I danced
around him, for all my lightheartedness had returned. Then there was a cloak, and he
insisted on seeing me in it. My spirits always infected him, and we both laughed like
foolish children.

There was a warm suit of clothes also, and three pairs of woolen hose. There was a
dress for me, and yards of flannel, a pair of arctic overshoes for each of us, and in mine
was a slip of paper. I have it now, and mean to hand it down to my children. It was Jacob’s
blessing to Asher: “Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy
strength be.” In the gloves, evidently for James, the same dear hand had written, “I the
Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.”

It was a wonderful box and packed with thoughtful care. There was a suit of clothes for
each of the boys, and a little red gown for Ruth. There were mittens, scarves, and hoods;
and down in the center a box. We opened it, and there was a great waxed doll. I burst into
tears again; James wept with me for joy. It was too much, and then we both exclaimed
again, for close behind it came two pairs of skates. There were books for us to read—
some of them I had wished to see—stories for the children to read; aprons, and
underclothing, knots of ribbon, a lovely phonograph, needles, buttons and thread, a muff,
and an envelope containing a ten-dollar gold piece.

At last we cried over everything we took up. It was past midnight, and we were faint
and exhausted even with happiness. I made a cup of tea, cut a fresh loaf of bread, and
James boiled some eggs. We pulled the table before the fire; how we enjoyed our supper!
And then we sat talking over our life and how sure a help God always provided.

You should have seen the children the next morning! The boys raised a shout at the
sight of their skates; Ruth caught up her doll and hugged it tightly without a word, then she
went into her room and knelt by her bed.

When she came back, she whispered to me, “I knew it would be there, Mamma, but I
wanted to thank God just the same, you know.”

“Look, here, wife; see the difference?”

We went to the window, and there were the boys out of the house already, and skating
on the ice with all their might.

My husband and I both tried to return thanks to the church in the East that had sent us
the box and have tried to return thanks unto God every day since.

Hard times have come again and again, but we have trusted in Him, dreading nothing
so much as a doubt of His protecting care. Over and over again we have proved that “they
that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.”

***************************
Compiled by Dale Galusha. Please pass this newsletter on to others.

Copyright © 2012 Pacific Press, All rights reserved.
You are receiving this email because you asked to receive it.
Our mailing address is:
Pacific Press
P.O. Box 5353
Nampa, ID 83653

Add us to your address book
unsubscribe from this list | update subscription preferences
Spam
Not spam
Forget previous vote