

YOUTH PRAYS-GOD ANSWERS!

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Name: _____

Date: _____

Lesson 15:

That Guardian Angel

THE TELEPHONE rang. Oh, it was Margaret calling.

"Dorothy? Would you like to go with us to Norwalk to hear Pastor Coon tonight? Mrs. Heintz plans to go and she says that there is room in the car for two or three more. How about it?"

Without a moment's hesitation, Dorothy answered, "Oh, yes, I'd love to go! Where shall I meet you? What time? At 6:30? Don't you think we should leave earlier? That freeway traffic can get awfully congested, you know, and we don't want to miss any of Pastor Coon's message. All right, I'll be ready. Thank you! Thank you for calling and inviting me. Bye now. I'll see you tonight."

And so began a chain of circumstances that changed the concept of prayer in the lives of several of our friends.

The author was teaching the ABC's of Bible prayer in one of the neighboring churches.

"In the prayer of faith there is a divine science; it is a science that every one who would make his life-work a success must understand." *Education*, page 257.

The speaker pointed out that just prior to the coming of Jesus, "we shall need an experience which we do not now possess." *The Great Controversy*, page 622.

These special studies that were being conducted in the Norwalk, California church were an attempt to share with the people the "how" of getting this experience. The attentive listeners were reminded, "We should now acquaint ourselves with God by proving His promises." *Ibid*.

"In the word of God there are gracious promises, from which those who are suffering, . . . may receive comfort and hope and encouragement." *Counsels on Health*, page 213.

Margaret and Dorothy were thrilled to learn the basic fundamentals--the "know-how"--of proving God's promises.

Just as they had to know the ABC's of learning before the knowledge of reading came to them, so the ABC's of prayer had to be mastered before they actually became acquainted with God. This amazing subject came from a Book they thought they knew pretty well.

Ask, Jesus bids us in Matthew 21:22.

Believe, that you receive, Matthew 21:22.

Claim, by returning thanks that we have received, John 11:41.

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The speaker recommended that all who could obtain the book *Education*, should read and study the chapter entitled, "Faith and Prayer." He called it "the million dollar chapter."

Margaret and Dorothy wholeheartedly agreed when they read on page 258: "He [Christ] makes it plain that our asking must be according to God's will; we must ask for the things that He has promised, and whatever we receive must be used in doing His will. The conditions met, the promise is unequivocal... for any gift He has promised, we may ask; then we are to believe that we receive, and return thanks to God that we have received."

As the group of ladies continued to travel the eighty-odd miles from their homes to the series of meetings and back, many different opinions and experiences were recounted. They were thrilled with the knowledge and understanding they were receiving from these meetings. Their faith and confidence in Jesus seemed to be growing by leaps and bounds.

Then one Sunday Dorothy's telephone rang again. "Dorothy," Margaret said, "Pat and her husband want to go to the meeting tonight, and since Mrs. Heintz already has a carload, I'm planning to take my car. Would you like to ride with us?"

"Yes, surely," Dorothy answered. "I'll be glad to." Arrangements were made as to the time and place of meeting.

That evening, with Pat and Harvey aboard, Margaret started in the direction of Dorothy's home. As the car's engine began to warm up, a faint odor of gasoline could be smelled.

For several minutes nothing was said. Finally Margaret became worried. "I don't like this gasoline smell at all," she commented. Silently, a special petition was sent up to the One Who promises to give wisdom and protection.

When they came to a service station, Margaret decided to have the motor checked for possible gasoline line leaks. She knew from past experience that it is not a wise thing to lean on your "own understanding" (Proverbs 3:5). If help is available, the smart thing to do is to get it!

While the tank was being filled, a young man checked under the hood.

"He's almost too young to know what he's doing," Margaret was thinking. She turned to Harvey. "Would you mind checking to see what's wrong? And please tell the man to hurry. We'll be late unless we can get back on the road shortly."

When Harvey returned to the car, he said, "The gas line has a leak, but the man tightened it. I'm sure it will be all right now."

Again a silent prayer went heavenward--this time full of thankfulness. A few minutes later, with Dorothy in the car, they headed toward Norwalk and the evening meeting.

Just before they drove onto the freeway, they pulled off to the side of the road and claimed the promise found in Psalm 34:7, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." They offered a word of prayer and headed out on the freeway.

The Sunday traffic was unusually heavy. It was stop-and-go for much of the way. As they drove along, the gasoline smell seemed to be getting stronger. Even with the windows down, the smell was almost unbearable.

Margaret was becoming very uneasy. Trying to strengthen her own courage, she said, "The smell of gasoline must be coming from the little bit that leaked from the loose connection. I'm sure it will go away eventually."

Dorothy agreed somewhat reluctantly. The others made no comment. For a while no one spoke. All were busy with their own thoughts. Was the gas line really fixed? Then how was it the smell was getting stronger?"

Margaret was earnestly pleading with God, "Please don't let anything happen. We're not seeking foolish pleasure. We're seeking more knowledge of Thee. Please take the car to Norwalk and back home again without any trouble. Thank You, Lord."

Margaret felt no definite assurance that all was going to be well, so as long as the uneasiness remained she persevered in prayer.

As the miles disappeared behind them, and they neared the suburbs of Los Angeles, the heavy traffic made it impossible for Margaret to do more than glance casually at her friend beside her. Dorothy had been a great source of encouragement on many occasions, and she was certainly a big help again, even if she did not do much talking. Part of the time, Margaret noticed, she looked relaxed enough to be enjoying a nap.

But Dorothy had not been resting as comfortably as was supposed. Her thoughts were also on the One Who "stands back of every promise He has made." All the while that Margaret was praying for divine help, Dorothy was reminding the Lord of His promise and was asking for deliverance from danger. The fumes were definitely getting stronger. Again she prayed, "Dear Lord, You have promised that Your angels will form a camp around those who fear and obey Thee, to deliver them. We love Thee, Lord, and we know that You love us. We thank You for sending Your angels to keep us safe."

Why all this concern over a problem that supposedly had been taken care of? But then, you know what happens when gasoline comes in contact with a hot engine!

Margaret and Dorothy had real cause for concern. Their olfactory system was relaying a message to their reasoning powers that something was drastically wrong. Instead of the now familiar odor diminishing, it was growing stronger.

All were relieved when they reached their destination. They were all thankful to the One Who "commissions His angels to save His chosen ones from calamity." The Acts of the Apostles, page 153.

It was a good meeting. The speaker's confidence and faith in God in the evening message greatly encouraged all who were learning to claim Bible promises. There were smiles and happy comments at the close of the service as the "good-bys" were being said by the departing congregation.

All too soon it was time to begin the long journey homeward. They had almost forgotten about the problem while in the meeting. Now as they stepped into the car, the smell of gasoline once again reminded them of the situation. Once again they paused and asked God to take care of them on the homeward journey.

They wondered as they sat in the car before driving away, "Should they have the car checked again?" It would be hard to find a service station open now. Most of them had closed up already. After some discussion, it was decided that since the attendant had fixed the loose connection, they would consider the problem as having been solved.

Was presumption entering the picture? "Presumption is Satan's counterfeit of faith. Faith claims God's promises, and brings forth fruit in obedience. Presumption also claims the promises, but uses them as Satan did, to excuse transgression." The Desire of Ages, page 126.

"God's precious promises are not given to strengthen men in a presumptuous course or for him to rely upon when he rushes needlessly into danger." Testimonies, Vol. 3, page 482.

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"There are certain conditions upon which we may expect that God will hear and answer our prayers. One of the first of these is that we feel our need of help from Him." Steps to Christ, page 95.

Margaret and Dorothy were complying with these conditions. Margaret, as owner and driver of the car, was as helpless as she was ignorant of mechanical devices. A "typical woman driver" she could only Ask, Believe, and Claim the promises God had made.

Margaret searched her own heart to be sure that everything was all right and that God could answer the petitions of her heart. She remembered that in Steps to Christ, page 95, it says: "When all known wrongs are righted, we may believe that God will answer our petitions." Yes, she was sure that everything was all right in this department.

"He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Hebrews 11:6.

"There is necessity for diligence in prayer." Steps to Christ, page 98.

"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." Colossians 4:2.

"When our prayers seem not to be answered, we are to cling to the promise; for the time of answering will surely come, and we shall receive the blessing we need most." Steps to Christ, page 96.

Because Margaret and Dorothy had learned all this from the meeting and were obeying these injunctions, they could also say with confidence, "We `have done as Thou hast said.' We `present Thy promise, "Ask, and it shall be given you." ' Christ's Object Lessons, page 147.

As they committed their way unto the Lord, and trusted also in Him, He fulfilled His promise and did "bring it to pass." Psalm 37:5. The trip back home was uneventful.

The angel of the Lord did encamp around them and delivered them from a most dangerous situation, and from what could have become a burning, fiery furnace.

The next day a reliable mechanic checked the motor. Instead of a loose connection there was a definite break in the gas line. Evidently the service station attendant had broken the line when he tightened the connection. For over eighty miles, gasoline had been spraying out all over the hot engine.

When the repairs were done, Margaret received a certain thrill when she heard the mechanic say, "Your guardian angel must certainly have been with you last night. You could all have been blown to kingdom come!"

Surely we do have a prayer-hearing God Whose "children are never absent from His mind." The Desire of Ages, page 313.

"We may present our petitions to the Father, claiming all that He has promised. The honor of His throne is staked for the fulfillment of His word." Prophets and Kings, page 158.

Note: Margaret was so thrilled with this miracle that she gave me the above account, and we are happy to share it with you in her own words.

Quiz 15

1. What science must everyone understand who would make his lifework a success? _____.
2. Complete: Just _____ to the coming of Jesus, "we shall need an experience which we do _____ possess."
3. Complete: "We should _____ acquaint ourselves with God by proving his promises."
4. What are the basic fundamentals of proving God's promises? Give texts. ABCs of Prayer:
A:
B:
C:
5. What is the "million dollar chapter"? _____.
6. True or false: When we pray for wisdom or protection in a problem, we should then do nothing except wait for the Lord's answer. _____.
7. Thought question (true or false): The Lord expects us to do what we can do, using the intelligence He has given us, then what we cannot do, He steps in and does for us. _____.
8. Complete: As long as the _____ remained, she _____ in prayer.
9. Complete: Presumption uses the promises to _____.
10. Complete: God's precious promises are not given for men to rely on when he into _____.
11. Find a text to claim to fulfill each of these conditions to prayer. The first one is filled in for you. You may find these in "God's Promises Solve My Problems".
 - a. To fill our need. John 6:44.
 - b. To right all wrongs. (Also not to cherish any sin.)
 - c. To believe God is.
 - d. To be diligent in prayer.
12. Multiple choice (circle one): When our prayers seem not to be answered, we should:
 - a. Cling to the promise.
 - b. Decide the Lord is not going to answer this particular prayer.
13. What did the car mechanic tell Margaret?