

Website: Food for the Soul. A Place for Christian Sharing.

Topic: “When God was most real to me.”

A website for Christians has been created to share stories of people who have had deep religious experiences. A starting point was the topic, “When God Was Most Real To Me.”

The link to this website is:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ceZeBfFqHff0zzn_NWfJ_uWT4kBiuzFQ-EAP8AooY5g/edit

Below is a series of experiences by Christians. Hopefully you will find it inspirational and helpful. There are not very many times or places where we can share your faith and experiences.

We hope this will be a place where Christians can learn of others’ experiences with God and that will lead them to want to share their experiences

Christianity ultimately is an experiential religion. You experience the realness of God, the Lordship of Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Without these experiences, Christianity becomes a code of ethics or ritual or form but no real life changing event.

Therefore I have compiled a series of testimonies of Christians sharing how they have experienced the realness of God and other aspects of Christianity. The dilemma for most of us believing and practicing Christians is that we have experienced God many times and the problem is to decide which time was He most real.

I think we would find that God has been real to persons in a wide variety of ways. That, in its self, would spiritually enriching to those who read it. I think I will find myself saying, “I never expected God to reveal himself in that way.”

I compiled a booklet of such sharing written by Christians in Burma and printed and distributed it there. Years have passed and now the best way to distribute this sharing is by a website. Such sharing might be of help to opening the eyes of youth and young people to the fact that many have experienced God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Some of the experiences might point the way for them to have such experiences themselves.

If you would like to share your experience of God with other people, please send it by e-mail to Neil Sowards at: neildianasowards@gmail.com Or mail it to Neil Sowards, 548 Home Ave., Fort Wayne, IN 46807

Your sharing needs to be in English and be a half page to about one page. If persons can be found to oversee a website in Karen, then it can be expanded to have a Karen language section.

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I Desire God

By Tansy J. Kadoe

There is no exciting drama about what had led me to accept Jesus Christ as my savior. Nonetheless, since I received Christ in my life, the experiences that have taken place have been nothing short of life-transforming.

It was in early 2002 that I participated in a Bible study with Pastor Ruth Peterson. The Bible character we studied was Nehemiah. I had never finished reading the Bible previously. Nehemiah saw the problems and took actions; He organized different groups of people and assigned them to do specific tasks; He protected his workers; He endured and conquered mockery, threats, insults, and offenses; He prayed, encouraged, and dealt with problems one by one; He finished building the wall in 52 days.

From childhood, I have always been into organizing people and events at my church and in the community. I took pride in my ability to multitask with efficiency. Nehemiah fascinated me with his organizational and leadership skills. This Bible study about Nehemiah instilled the desire in my heart to read the entire Bible. I struggled to understand what it was that God intended for me to do. Nevertheless, I believed I would find all the answers to my life in the Bible and I continued reading it.

In 2005, the influx of Karen refugees resettled in Phoenix began. After visiting Pastor Glenn Ramey's church, I felt I could be a part of this church in helping the Karen community. Pastor Ramey often preached on "Give your heart to Jesus." While this may sound like a cliché to some, it resonated in my heart. As we worked together to solve a whole host of issues refugees faced, I had the privilege of understanding how Pastor Ramey reasoned from the perspectives that were always God-focused. The fellowship that I had with the small congregation of Pastor Ramey's church was a true Christian fellowship. Pastor Ramey's church helped me grow in Christ and I shall forever miss it.

I can unequivocally say that God sent Pastors Ruth Peterson and Glenn Ramey to direct me to Him. Pastor Ruth Peterson helped me learn, analyze, and apply God's words in my life. Had I studied Nehemiah on my own, I would not have grasped half of what I got out of that Bible Study with Ruth, and thus it was unlikely for me to continue reading the Bible. But God would have it that I finished reading the entire Bible six times since then. God continuously speaks to me through His Word. In my life, I had met many who are nice and giving. But Pastor Glenn Ramey is extraordinary in that he is nice and giving with a clear focus on God and in happiness that only God can bestow. Of course, I encounter many Christ-like individuals whose light shine my way to be closer to God but these two remarkable people were God's instruments that first led to me be a true believer in Christ.

Many Karen refugees were resettled in Phoenix. At the beginning, I saw my role as helping people from the patriotic point of view. Gradually, I began to realize that God has put my husband and me in an extremely unique position to grow with my people spiritually. There is no other Karen in this area that can do what we can do. In relation with my own people, I recurrently go through contradicting emotions—I waver, I rush; I doubt, I trust; I rage, I delight; I cry, I laugh; I demand, I surrender; I reproach, I commend; I give, I take; I lose, I win; I control, I let go; I lead, I follow,..... In all these, one thing is clear to me that God wants me to help my people in diaspora unite in Christ here in Phoenix. When you know without a shred of doubt that this is what God wants you to do, you have no choice but to want to give your very best.

Well, the journey to be like Christ has many oscillations but progresses with gradual spiritual development, that still needs to grow in leaps and bounds till the day I see Him face-to-face. How does one pass the exam without the test? Although trials, afflictions, discouragement, disapprovals, failures, and rebukes come my way, my God will give me strength and guidance to be resolute. It was nice that Nehemiah finished building the wall in 52 days. That must have been extremely rewarding. But what about Jeremiah? One thing Pastor Ramey said that dwells in my head is that “God’s way is not always efficient from human’s perception.” This is such a hard concept. However, I now know that obedience and faithfulness are the yardsticks God uses to measure success. In the end, I hope that how I respond to His love and sacrifice through my actions results in Him saying, "She has done what she could," Mark 14:8.

I want to be successful in God’s eyes so help me God.

In the Past

Eunice Thetgyi,

I, alone, in the center of the universe; need to make a living; need to be independent; need to think about a career; need to take care of my daughter; need to keep up with changing technology; need to further my education; need to save up money for retirement. Always living in the future; never living in the present. The burden is overwhelming, I felt miserable. I read the Bible but couldn't take it. It's too demanding.

"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." (Mark 8:34) This is impossible to follow. How can 'I' deny myself? Who's going to take care of 'I' if 'I' don't?

"If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all." I don't want to be a servant to be the first. It's against my nature.

"For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it." (Mark 8:35) I can't lose my life. If I do, that would be the end of me.

"Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." (Matt 5:44) There's no way I can follow this. I have a natural desire to hate my enemies.

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal." (Matt 6:19) I'd be afraid NOT to store up treasures. I need it for a rainy day.

"I am the way and the truth and the life." (John 14:6)

What is the 'truth' he's talking about? What does he mean by 'life'? Don't we have truth and life now?

"The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for the pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything and bought it." (Matt 13:45-46)

It's not practical to sell everything to get that pearl and what is the kingdom of heaven anyway?

"You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."

(Mark 8: 33)

That was I.

Mother's Prayers

I heard news that mother was dying. This would be the last time going there. I vowed never to return to the wretched miserable third world country after mother dies.

Mother said, "I always pray for you, my daughter". I thought, 'thanks Mom, but I'm not about to change.' I came back after the funeral, back to my familiar and comfortable home. I was 53 years old.

A New Life

Then I begin to have a strange desire to think of the things of God. I wanted to read the gospels; started reading one; it was mesmerizing. Believed in my heart that everything He said was the truth. That was a complete turnaround from the old way of thinking! Continued reading the next and the next and finished reading all four gospels in one night. I experienced a change. I wanted to go back and help the people in the third world country. I kept going back every year. I want to be a follower of Jesus. I want to work for His Kingdom only. I ask God to be my potter and mold me into any type of vessel he wants me to be; I ask Him to use me in any way He wants. I am His work in progress and I trust Him completely. I know the feeling of peace, joy, security, and

wholeness in Him now. This is the only way I want to live. I feel like the blind man who said, **"One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!"** John 9:25. Jesus is very real to me. Everything He said was true. **"If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."** (John 8:31-32) Everything Jesus said is true. I found the truth that is from Him and feel completely free.

"Ask and it will be given to you." Matthew 7:7
Mother's prayers were answered after she died.

May His Glory fill the whole world and His name be praised over all the earth.

This happened nine years ago and God is still very real to me.

Eunice Thetgyi, Blue Bell, PA

When God was most Real

May Pearl Cartee

When is God Most Real to you?

I cannot count all the blessings that the Lord has showered upon me despite my weaknesses and shortcomings. He is good, faithful and merciful and yet at the same time just.

I am a person with few words. My mind does not wander around much either. I worry at times but not as much as I should be. My future is uncertain but I am not worry because I know He will do the best for me at the right time. This can be regarded as the blind faith as people said. May be that's why most of the time both my mind and brain are empty(not much thinking) but I know the Lord has given me a good brain.

I do not get angry easily but when I do, I would not say anything to the other party but keep replaying the scenario in my head. Every time I do that I know the Lord does not like it. I either stumble or break something and it reminds me that I should have a forgiving heart and a rational mind set. It prompts me to think the reason behind why the other person has treated me the way it was. I know God loves all of us and he wants us to be like him.

I want God to forgive me from all my sins but I don't want to do it for my neighbor. The Bible has taught us "love your neighbor as yourself", and I should do that if I am a child of God.

I feel God is most real to me when I am about to abandon His golden rules and try to work things out my own. God is Love and He wants me to love others by abiding in Him.

“We are Only Women.”

By Annie Nason

My parents are Canon and Mrs. Francis who served as Anglicans missionaries in Burma. One of my Mother's comments on her work in Burma, amongst the Animist (Traditional Religion) Khumi-Chin in the Paletwa area of Chin State particularly shows the influence of missionaries on the role of women.

When they first went to the Paletwa area in the 1930's, the Khumi women were really treated as "nobody" within the tribal system. They were often beaten by their husbands and when approached with the gospel would say "well, we are only women" , showing that they had a very low image of themselves.

The 2nd World War intervened, but my parents returned to Paletwa in 1947 and continued their work there. During the late 1950's and early 1960's my mother had the great pleasure and honor of building up a series of training sessions for first of all, clergy wives, and then other Christian women workers. She often used to comment on the amazing difference in the confidence of the women who had become Christians and how they lived their lives. Their husbands came to an understanding that Christian love was about building up, not tearing down, and they encouraged their wives and daughters in their Christian lives too.

Now, in that area, there is a flourishing Mother's Union (MU) organization, which is part of a World-wide group. In fact, the all seven of the Burma Provincial heads of the Mother's Union came to England in July 1998 for a huge international conference of MU Leaders, held in York. I met them all these women. They are wonderful people.

In the Sittwe Diocese (Headquartered in Paletwa) the MU is involved with, amongst other things, spearheading a move which provides basic health education to all the outlying villages and towns. They come centrally to various places for instruction, and then travel around in little groups to pass the information on. They have been involved in AIDS education, basic health issues, mother and baby support and more.

To me their experiences epitomizes the essence of mission work.

Eaung Tym (Annie Nason)

With My Lord, I Worry Not.

By Aung Din

Part 1 AD 1934, March

Jesus: Hey, Aung Din, I have something to tell you.

Aung Din: O Lord, Tell me please.

Jesus: It is this. I want to use you in my mission work.

Aung Din: How can it be? Lord, I am nothing. I am insignificant.

Jesus: Don't worry. I had used a shepherd, Amos, to speak for me. I had used the fishermen, Peter, Andrew, James and John, in my mission work. I molded Saul to my liking and used him. Don't worry. I will be with you, always.

Aung Din: I am the clay. You are the potter. Mold me into any form and use me. Isaiah 64:8.

Jesus: Aung Din, I will send you to college, then to Baptist Divinity School, Insein.

Aung Din: O.K. Lord, Thank you.

Part 2, AD 1941, March

Jesus: Aung Din, you have finished with your seminary training, but I must proceed on molding you.

Aung Din: Mold me, as you please, my Lord.

Jesus: Now I drive out the evil things in you. Ho! All evil things in Aung Din--Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, quarreling, rivalry, wrath, strife, sedition, heresies, envying, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like, get out of Aung Din. Pride, prejudice, greed, unforgiving spirit, and such like, get out of Aung Din.

And now, Aung Din, I must fill you with spiritual qualities. Be thou filled with love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance and such like.

Again, I will make you see visions as in Proverbs 29:18 and Joel 2:28 and 29 and I will give you wisdom from above (James 3:18) and I will see that you are full of the Holy Spirit, (Acts 1:8, Eph 5:18).

Aung Din: Thank you, O Lord.

Part 3, AD 1941 April

Jesus: Hey, Aung Din, I will send you to Kyaing Tong (Kengtung). You will have to climb up

and down the hills. You must go to villages, entering one house after another. You must carry two bags--one full of books and another full of clothes and odds and ends. Sometimes you may have traveling companions, sometimes you must go alone. Sometimes you will have nice food, sometimes not.

But, don't forget, I will be with you always.

Aung Din: O.K. Lord, with my Lord, I worry not.

Jesus: Hey, Aung Din, I must give you a wife also.

Aung Din: O Lord, no girl will love me. I talked love to two girls. They rejected me.

Jesus: Don't worry, Aung Din, I have made arrangements, already. You will certainly agree with my choice. She is a Patheingyi Beauty. Her name is Naw Aye May, good natured, kind hearted, educated, hardworking and from a respected family. She knows cooking, sewing, singing, etc. She has learned Lahu and Shan, both talking and reading. She will be a perfect life-partner for you.

Aung Din: Lord, you are too good to me. Thank you.

Jesus: Remember the date--June 26, 1942. Your Wedding Day in a Lahu village called Kutki.

Aung Din: O Lord, Thank you very much. With you I worry not.

Part 4, AD 1974

Jesus: Hey, Aung Din

Aung Din: Speak Lord. Your servant listens.

Jesus: You have served for 33 years in the hills. Now you will be attached to the Myanmar Baptist Convention Headquarters for four years. Then on June 11, 1978, you will be appointed to be the pastor for the Karen Baptist City Church, Immanuel, Yangon.

Aung Din: Lord, if there be a better suited pastor for that church please choose him. Again, if there be objections and if they have no faith in me, please do not choose me.

Jesus: Do not talk any more. You are the one. You must go to every home, teach the Bible, preach spiritual sermons, lead the young, rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep. Be thou a good shepherd for the church. John 10:10; 21:15-18.

Aung Din: With your help, I will accept, O Lord, help me. With my Lord, I worry not.

Touched by God.

By Aye Wint

It was the first time in my life that I was touched by God. My mom was working at a government hospital and at that time she had to go to small towns to give lectures on breast feeding. Most of those trips I went with her. One of them was to a small town in Ayeyarwaddy State, Kyaik Latt. It was on the Inntha river. To get there, we had to go to a town called Maw Kyun by ship. We stayed in Maw Kyun for two days. Then we continued our travel to Kyaik Latt by a small motorboat. It could be reached by ship also, but people said that it would be a lot faster to go there by motorboat and it would take only about an hour. So my mom, my brother and I left Maw Kyun at 4 o'clock in the evening on a small boat. Two hours had passed and we haven't arrived to our destination. My mom asked the boat driver when we were going to arrive and he answered that we were lost in the river but he was trying to find the way. Finally, we found a village on our way and stopped and asked the directions. We were on the right track again. After about half an hour the boat stopped. We didn't know what had happened. After a while it started again.

It was getting dark and after about ten minutes, water started to enter the bow of the boat. We bailed but it didn't help. It was getting worse and worse and still we were in the middle of nowhere. Then we heard thunders and it started to rain. We were so scared that we didn't do anything except praying. We sang hymns. My brother showed me what to do if we sank. Suddenly we saw a light from the shore. We went to that light and it was a village. When we arrived to the shore, we asked help from the villagers and they let us spend the night in their village. As soon as we were in a house, the storm began. When we asked them how come we didn't see the light before, they answered that the power was out for two days and it was on again just before we arrived. That was unusual because usually the power was out at least for a week when it went off.

Who made this unusual thing happen? Only our Heavenly Father. It was a miracle and that was the first time in my life I realized that God is with me wherever I am and He will protect me. He says He will never leave me nor forsake me.

Thank You, Lord.

By Daw Pwa Their (Mrs Ba Han)

In 1944 during the second World War, we were with Thonze Christians. Many other Christians, like us as refugees, were there also. The Thonze pastor, Christian workers, and our Christian group carried on the evangelistic work in nearby villages as well as in the church.

As we were refugees in the war area, we were gripped with fear as to what would happen next. Our compound was close to the bridge and near the railway station. Two large bombers came over every day and machine gunned the area. They came so suddenly sometimes we had no time to run to the shelter but we just had to lie down on the ground where we were. They came sometimes in the night, sometimes in the day but mostly in the afternoon, at or before dusk.

Thus the days passed and the Christmas season was drawing near. My husband planned to have a Christmas pageant on Christmas eve. So he wrote the pageant on the birth of Christ. Almost all our Christian group took part, and we had our practices part by part. Ever since we started our practices, we prayed that the bombers would not come during the Christmas ceremony.

The pastor told Saya Ba Han that there was no financial resources for the evangelistic work and so help was needed for it urgently. Saya announced about it in the Sunday church service before Christmas eve. On Christmas eve we had the pageant outdoors after 4 P.M. That was the best time to have it, but it was also the time the bombers usually came. About fifty people took part in the pageant, and many came to see it. The angels sang from the high verandah of the old mission house where Rev. Latta had lived. The Christmas play took one and a half hours and went smoothly. No bombers came. We closed the pageant with the Hallelujah Chorus. The Japanese officers and many non-Christians came to see the program. Some said they had never seen such an interesting drama, and they came to know more about Jesus.

After the program people came up and gave money for the evangelistic work. We received the amount needed to continue.

After all the people had gone away, the bombers came with bombing. We were all safe, and we had had a glorious Christmas, and nothing could keep us from saying, "Thank you, Lord God."

Used in High Call date unknown.

The Fruits of Serving God.

By Dim Hau

I am Dim Hau, the seventh of nine children. My village was Vok Lak in Tiddim Township of the Chin Hills. My parents moved to Kalembo in 1969.

Twice I have experienced death face to face. Once was from jaundice and once from drowning. When I was three years old I was stricken with jaundice. I was expected to die, so my mother sacrificed a she-goat to the nats so that I might go smoothly to the land of the dead. But the prayers of believers cured my illness after the doctors had given up hope for me.

The second experience was when I was swimming with friends in the creek at age twelve. I drowned. My friends thought I was testing them by hiding in the water. But as time elapsed,

they became fearful and searched for me under the water and pulled me out. They were able to revive me but I knew I had been very close to permanently dead.

Although my parents clung to their worshiping of nats (spirits), they encouraged me to go to church.

I wanted to experience being born again as a Christian. I prayed again and again but failed. I was very disappointed and had no peace of mind. Then one day, I prayed alone for hours. I finally experienced visions of light and with that experience came peace of mind.

God has provided me with a sweet voice and I used it to teach music to fellow women at my Lei Pi Baptist Church No 10 Pinlong Quarter in Kalembo.

After I graduated, I spent three years as a missionary among the Shan people in Uyuh region of Khamti district way up in northwest Burma. The Shans are nominally Buddhists but really they are animist in their hearts. They live in the vicinity of Phakant, the jade capital of the world. I was stationed at Naung Po-Aung village but they did not accept me.

They worshiped and consulted the nats on everything. Everything they get is first offered to the nats. They consult their nats when strangers or guests arrive. They felt the nats did not welcome my arrival. They took misfortune and sickness as being caused by nats who are displeased. On the other hand, they view wealth and health as gifts from the nats.

I began my work in their village by opening a school without charge for their children. I used songs, stories, and prayer to win their hearts. Their parents became interested and gradually began to accept me. I visited and prayed for the victims of No 4 (heroin) and other drugs whom the local Buddhist monks had shunned on the grounds such addiction could not be condoned. Caring and encouraging those in this condition, helped win them over. After three years work, I managed to enlist thirteen persons for baptism.

The Lord guided me through these years. In April of 1993, we dedicated a two story house for worship that was 27 by 28 feet. Twelve new converts were baptized at that occasion. I promptly handed over the task of keeping the church going to them and they happily accepted.

Dylan Chain

My heart was filled with joy as I walked out of the classroom. It was the end of Midterm Exam, and such a feeling of joy developed naturally in the heart of every student who did well on the exam. A two-week vacation right after the exam also made us truly happy. During my vacation, I would celebrate Christmas, one of the most special days for Christians, with my family and friends. The celebration back home was not just a one-day celebration. In fact, it would always include a concert featuring Sunday School students, a midnight service on the Christmas Eve and a family reunion on the Christmas Day. All the fun just did not end there. A few days later, there would be another celebration with a significance of people waiting for the clock to strike

twelve on the night of December 31. I then could hardly go to sleep that night because I kept seeing all the highlights of Christmas celebration in my mind's eyes while lying in bed.

My thoughts went back to the concert performed a few days before the Christmas Day. For Sunday School children and youths, it was always an enjoyable event. Stage fright did not bother us at all. The concert was not only a show of our talents but also a time to dress up to our best. In fact, our parents saved up some money ahead of time so that we would have nice clothes that evening. For some families who couldn't afford new clothes, the green and white school uniforms would be ideal for the occasion.

The concert usually started around 7 o'clock in the evening, but those who would be performing came to church around 6 o'clock. Pastoral prayer preceded all the performances, and kindergarten students were the ones to entertain the audience first. Sometimes I felt jealous of those who were allowed to perform first and enjoy watching the concert the rest of the evening. My friends and I waited impatiently behind the stage for our turn. It was already dark when we finally got on the stage and started reciting Bible verses related to the Birth of Christ. We then sang Christmas songs both in English and Karen.

As the curtain in front of us coming down to close, we all rushed back to where we left our slippers and left the stage. A few minutes later, all of us could be seen blending in with the audience and watching the concert with great smiles on our faces. Though all performances were based on the birth of Christ, some comedy skits were included to give the audience a time to laugh. It was already passed bedtime for children when the concert was over. I guessed it must be around 11 o'clock after hearing the sentry from nearby Fire Watchtower stroke the iron bar with hammer eleven times. While walking home along the Lower Kemmendine Road, I could feel cool breeze rushing against my face and wrestling with my hair. When I crossed the road in front of West Rangoon Hospital, a sweet aroma from "Noo" trees greeted my nostril. It was the only time in the year that one could smell the fragrance when these trees were in bloom. My steps were getting faster as I couldn't stop thinking of covering myself with a nice, warm quilt and probably having sweet dreams that night.

The worship service on the night of Christmas Eve started around 11 o'clock. Though there was no need for snow boots and fur coats during the cold season in Rangoon, the people coming to worship still had to dress up warmly. Sometimes I felt as if I were an invited guest at a fashion show after seeing people put on flannel shirts with various designs, wind-breakers with different styles, sweaters with assorted colors and shawls with diverse ethnic weaving. No matter how different we were dressed that night, all of us came to worship with one thing in mind; we came to hear the wonderful message that Christ was born to save each and everyone of us. Being a child, I did not have much understanding of the great gift that humankind had received from God nearly two thousand years ago. I went to church with my parents believing that Santa would stop by our house and left me a nice Christmas gift that night. It was usually after the congregation started singing the hymn, "Silent Night, Holy Night" that I fell asleep, and I considered that hymn a soothing lullaby even to this day.

The first thing I did on the morning of Christmas Day was to unfold what kind of a gift Santa had given me this time. I always enjoyed opening the gift and had never recalled any instance in which I disliked what I found. When we went to my uncle's place on Chancellor Road for family reunion, I took the gift from Santa with me so that I could show it to my relatives. I grew up living close to the relatives from my mother side, and usually Christmas was the only time in the year that I could spend time with the relatives from my father side. I was happy not only to see them but also to savor different kinds of cakes that my uncle received as gifts from his students. In fact, cakes and seasonal fruits were always at the top of the list for things to eat during Christmas. Among different fruits, it seemed to me that "Lane Maw Thee"(Tangerine) was the king of all seasonal fruits in the cold season. (Lane Maw Thee is the Burmese word for Orange, but almost every Burmese refers to Tangerine as Lane Maw Thee). After having had a feast on different kinds of food and a great time talking to each other, We all started thinking of calling it a day and going home. For us, the Christmas Day was over, and we were grateful to the Almighty God that we had ample food to enjoy on this special day. The New Year celebration in Burma was not as popular as the one in the Western countries. In fact, the Burmans had their own New Year celebration in April which was preceded by the Water Festival, and they did not really care about the arrival of International New Year. Though we did not have a special way of celebrating the New Year, I usually waited for the 12 o'clock on the night of December 31. There was definitely no fireworks when the clock struck twelve, but there may be siren from the ocean liners making a port-call at Htee Tan Jetty that night. My house was only a five-minute drive from the jetty, and I was always thrilled to hear the siren sounded by the giant ships.

I had been tossing and turning in bed for some time. Lying under the quilt stuffed with cotton balls, I was waiting impatiently for the siren. It was a silent night with a clear sky up there serving as the window to the Universe. It looked as though all the stars were blinking at me in order to capture my attention, but what I saw in my mind's eyes was perhaps a European Master Mariner with a thick beard coming up the bridge to sound the siren exactly at 12 o'clock according to his watch. I was waiting with great expectation! Still there was no siren!

I was about to give up that night, but I thought I heard something. Maybe it was just my imagination, and I wished I had been wrong. Now I heard it clearly, and it was indeed a siren that marked the beginning of the New Year. It was worth waiting for, and I was now ready to go to sleep with great satisfaction. The Christmas and New Year celebrations were over now, but they would remain as fond memories for a long time or perhaps until we celebrate the next time.

God's Guiding Hand.

By Naw El Ta

I was born in a Karen village of Saw Tay Der way up in the hills of Burma, far from urban centers. My father was a gospel worker in the hills of Shwe Gyn. I had ten brothers and sisters.

By urban standards, we were very poor.

Since my earliest childhood, I have always been interested in learning and I loved to attend the village Primary school. When I was nine years old, I left my home, my loved ones, and went to Ler Doe town so I could continue my study at a Middle and High School. I stayed with a family and did house care and had to work very hard. I was so busy that I had very little time to learn my lessons. I felt I would not be able to complete my studies working so hard so I decided to go to Rangoon and find less time consuming work there which would allow me to continue my studies.

In Rangoon I met Thra (Teacher) Edmund Dee, the son of Thra Raleigh Dee. I married him in May of 1973 when I was twenty years old. Although I became a housewife, the interest to study did not disappear in me. Many people criticized me saying that I was irresponsible and neglectful of my duties as a housewife, but I continued to study whenever I could.

We lived with my father-in-law Thra Raleigh Dee on the school compound. When he died, we had to move from the compound and we found a place but it was not safe or comfortable. One night, when I went to the hospital to give birth of my second child, a thief came and took away many of our belongings. My husband was hard of hearing and so the thief took this opportunity to enter the house and take what he wanted at his leisure. But we thank God that he didn't attack and harm any of the inhabitants.

My husband worked as Assistant Librarian at the Burma Divinity School (now Myanmar Institute of Theology). In 1979 he was doing some translation work but was not well. He sent me to continue my studies. In that year I passed my Matriculation and then got Diploma in Theology at Karen Bible School. I then was appointed Assistant Librarian to the Burma Institute of Theology. These were happy years as our family served the Lord in His work.

Unfortunately, my husband went to heaven on February 9th, 1990. It was a very difficult time for us. Many of my Christian friends showed me their sympathy and concern, so my morale was kept up. I really knew that God loved me very much.

In 1992, I took the position as Librarian to the Karen Bible School. I received an opportunity to attend Library Science Course at the University of Rangoon. I graduated in February 1994. It was only with the help of God's guiding hand that I gained a high education since my parents were poor hill people and few of my village went beyond Primary level. God mercifully opened the way for me and now I thank Him for choosing me as one of His servants to serve in a Christian Library. Though I met difficulties and hardships, He mercifully looked after me and never let me starve. God's way is not our way and He works in His own time.

On a Dark Night.

By Hkyon Naw

I was quite young when this adventure happened, but I will never forget it. I am a Kachin. My village is Washawng, eighteen miles from Myitkyina in the northern part of Burma.

Our family is very poor. But my parents are strong Christians, and they always prayed for us. I have two brothers and two sisters. When I was young, we had no money for our education. We had to work hard for our further study. Every vacation we had to work as coolies or other work to earn money to go to school.

One summer vacation one of my cousins and I bought rice from a village where it was cheap and took it some distance to another town and sold it. In this way we gained some money.

One day we bought about thirty baskets of rice at a little village which is about thirty miles from our village. Thirty miles is a long way by ox cart or walking. Between these two villages there are no other villages but only thick jungle. We took the rice by bullock cart. Usually we went at night between these two villages. On that memorable night we carried rice as usual. There is a bridge of bamboo about half way between the villages. While we were coming near this bridge, we could hear some strange sounds. Our bullocks refused to go on. But we forced them to go. When we got nearly to the bridge, we could see a herd of wild elephants in the jungle.

Wild elephants are very fierce and can tramp down anything in their way if they run wildly. Our two bullocks broke off from the cart and began to run back towards the village from which we had come. We two boys jumped down from the cart and began to run back towards the village as fast as we could. We were in real danger for our lives if the elephants took out after us. It was so dark under the trees that I could hardly find the way. My cousin is stronger and bigger than I so that he could run faster. Also he had taken the electric torch (flashlight) and so could find the way easily. But he was too frightened to wait for me.

I was so young that I could run only about three miles before I fell to the ground exhausted. I couldn't even cry. I prayed to God with all my heart to guard me through this terrible night.

Soon I heard the sound of the elephants again and so I ran again. I found I could run more than I had thought. I knew God was strengthening me. Later the sound of the elephants was farther from me. So I took rest for about three hours. Then I walked on to the village.

I caught up with my cousin and the two bullocks. I was so tired I couldn't even talk. We walked together to the village and arrived there about two o'clock in the morning. All the villagers were sleeping and we dared not awake them for fear they would think we were bandits and would set upon us. So we slept the rest of the night in a stable.

The next morning we told the villagers about our experience. They went back with us to the bridge. The herd of wild elephants had gone. We found our cart but there was no rice in it. Then we discovered that the elephants had taken the bags of rice and put them on the bridge, on the bamboo and the road. They had not demolished the rice or the cart. We were surprised and

thankful. So we took the bags of rice and loaded them back in the cart and yoked the bullocks to the cart and started to our village. The villagers guarded us till we safely reached the edge of our village. How thankful we were to reach home!

From that night I realized that, though I was young, and knew nothing to do, if I prayed to God with all my heart, God listens to my words and helps me.

Neat Experience

By Jane Hottsclaw

I was returning from a visit to New Mexico via airplane and I could tell my seat mates were speaking another language. Later I saw the man was reading a paper called "Friends of Burma". I told them that I had sent some Christian literature to Burma. We started talking and I found out he was in the army and she had been to Korea to visit him. He is a doctor and his wife lives in Indianapolis. He went to Judson College and spoke very good English. We talked about the Judsons who took the gospel to Burma and felt God had had a hand in that meeting. Probably no one else on that flight had an interest in Burma except me.

My Deadly Experience.

By Nant Hsein Hsein

"I will not die; instead, I will live and proclaim what the Lord has done. He punished me severely, but he has not let me die." Ps 108: 17-18.

Many times, when I am discouraged, this experience encourages me in my ministry. It happened when I was attending Burma Institute of Theology with a doubtful heart until God warned me on June 16th 1982. In Burma, the doors of the train are never closed and we are free to try to jump up or down even when it is still going or starting to go. So I was one of the heroes who try to jump before the train is totally stopped. On that day, I was in a hurry to get the train because our dorm was closed at 6:00 pm.

When I arrived at the station, the train was already there and starting to move. I began to run in order to jump on the train. People at the station told me not to try but I didn't care. So I jumped and I don't know what happened to me. When I regained consciousness, I knew I was under the train between the rail and the station platform. The train was moving very fast above me. I called upon God to help me while waiting for the train to finish passing over me. When the train was gone, I got up and found I had no injury, not even a drop of blood came out. Except for a little pain on my knees and back, no bone was broken and no skin was bruised. I believe that it was a miracle God had cared for me. I suddenly remembered Psalm 108:17-18. A very doubtful

heart was changed to a little doubtful heart.

The Promise.

By Kenneth C. Po

When I was a young man, while studying engineering at the university, my father, Dr. Clarence C. Po, said to me, "Kenneth, you are the eldest son. If anything happens to me, I want you to take responsibility for your mother, sisters and brother."

I was surprised by the request and replied, "Father, you are still young and in good health. There is no need to talk about such things."

My father said, "We cannot know the future. Promise me!"

And so I promised my father as he had asked me.

About two years later, my father was tragically killed in a Comet Jet airliner crash and that promise came quickly to my mind.

When that sad news came to our family, my mother bravely gathered our remaining family together and though in tears, said a prayer asking God to see us through the tough times ahead. She promised we would work together to survive and then she verbally placed the whole family in God's hands, confident that He would take care of us. I've never forgotten that act of strong courage and deep faith.

At that time I had two more years to go for my engineering degree and my sister had one more year for her medical degree. Times were tough for us. The compensation from the airlines helped, as did relatives--uncles and aunts, and father's doctor friends.

I never forgot my promise to my father and saw my younger brother and sisters through college. For seventeen years I cared for my mother the best I could. She once chided me, saying I was giving too much to her. But I answered I was only doing what I had promised my father and I could not do less.

Looking back on it all, I feel God did take care of our family just as my mother had prayed. The Lord is Great indeed!

God is My Refuge.

By Ku Shar Rei

My name is Ku Shar Rei and I came from Tee Ther Klo village, De Mor Soe township, Kayah

State. I was born there on April 15th, 1966 and was premature. I had little chance of survival but, by the grace of God, I did. The pastor came and prayed for me and told my parents that, if I continued to live, I must serve the Lord. Since I was the eldest child, my parents, too decided that I must serve the Lord when I grew up.

I finished school to the tenth standard and achieved the "B" list. But I had no wish to serve the Lord's work. Therefore I worked at Socialist People's Council Office as a clerk for two years. After the political change which took place in 1988, our office became the Township Law and Order Restoration Council and I continued to work there as a clerk.

On the fourth of May, 1992 at 10 AM, five insurgents, who were not wearing uniforms but armed with guns, seized our office. After attacking the office for half an hour, they took the typewriter and went away. Three staff members and one soldier died in the fight. Eight of our staff were injured and we took them to Loikaw Hospital.

A friend of mine, who was a Buddhist, told me that I was very lucky and his words made me think. Only then did I realize that it was not because I was lucky I survived but it was God who protected me in time of danger. I could not even eat or sleep but kept thinking back to what happened that day. I could not drive that event out of my mind. Finally, I decided that I must serve the Lord in return for His mercy shown me. So I resigned my job on the 1st of June, 1992.

Since that time I have been preparing for full time Christian service at Karen Baptist Theological Institute and want to serve the Lord through the A.D. 2000 ministry.

Coming Home.

By Salai Thawng Ling

When I arrived at the top of the mountain, Innlangtang, I could see my village, Tlangkhua. Happiness and joy flowed into my heart. This is my village, my native place, my home. I saw my parent's home, the church building located on the hilltop in the middle of the village, and many houses. My village is home to 126 families in the Chin State of Myanmar (Burma). It was a wonderful sight!

I had been away from home for fifteen years to further my education. I spent eight years in the Middle and State High school in Hakha. I then studied at Rangoon University.

I went on to Myanmar Institute of Theology and in March 1986, I received my Bachelor of Divinity.

During those fifteen years, I occasionally visited my village, but I never could spend much time there. But now it was different. I was home to stay as long as God wanted me there. I would

serve Him as a minister in Tlangkhua and the surrounding churches.

On May 3rd, 1986, I had arrived by truck at Thantlang, which is the nearest town from my village. I walked twenty-four miles towards my village with my two nephews Siang and Will. Now from the peak of Innlangtlang, we descended to my village. Many friends, relatives and villagers met us at the gate with warm and cheerful greetings. Some people shouted, "Everybody come, Thawng is home!" I heard cries of joy as I entered the village. Some women with babies and small children greeted me, saying "Saya Thawng, we are very happy because you have come home."

My father stood at the entrance of our home. He looked much older than I remembered him. When he reached out to hug me, I noticed his white hair and grey beard. His aging seemed to be a sign of the loneliness because my mother had died seven years before. But now our house was filled with joy and laughter on that beautiful evening.

The village celebrated my return with a special worship service that ran late into the night. I was given a chance to speak about my experiences.

"Fellow villagers, this is a great day for me. I thank God for giving me this opportunity to be reunited with you and also thank all of you for helping me in various ways during my seminary study. Let's unite with each other more and more and do our best for the kingdom of God. May God bless you all."

The next day, I walked through the village and greeted each family. Some were sick in bed. Others recently widowed.

I was pleased to see a large number of young adults in the village for this promised a good future for the village and our church. I thought God wanted me to begin His work among these young adults.

From the hilltop by the church, I viewed the surrounding area. A gentle breeze cooled me. I felt excited, yet calm. I knew I was where God wanted me to be.

In the evening, I walked past the state primary school I had attended as a child and the soccer field where I had played. Many memories came to mind. Then I came to the Christian cemetery. I was enchanted by the beauty around me until I focused on the graves.

As I stood before my mother's grave, I was overcome first with sadness. Then I was filled with joy because my mother had already met our heavenly father. I suddenly remembered the words of Jesus: "I am the Resurrection and the Life, He who believes in me will live, even though he dies." John 11:25 NIV. My mother is not dead! She lives happily with the angels in heaven.

Coming back to my earthly home had brought a warm welcome and much happiness.

How much greater the warmth and joy when we are welcomed to our heavenly home!

God's Manifest Will.

Rev. Mac Donald

Rev. Mac Donald was born and brought up in Pan-Ka-Dat village, and studied up to seventh standard at the village school. He continued his high school education at the Pequ Karen High School in Rangoon after the end of World War II. He then worked as a clerk for three years at a Rubber Company in Thamaing, Rangoon.

His father, who was a pastor, wanted his son to follow in footsteps and fervently prayed for that to happen. But his son lacked the interest and inclination to serve the Lord.

Mac Donald prayed that God would manifest his will to him with respect to accepting His higher calling. God answered him by way of a dream in which he dreamed that he died and went to heaven after he had gone through trials and tribulations on earth and had no desire to live anymore. He met people dressed in white garments in a room and he wished to stay there, but one of them approached him and told him to return to earth to complete the tasks he left unfinished.

Mac Donald left his job and attended courses at Burma Institute of Theology and the Burma Baptist Convention's Agriculture Institute.

Then Rev. Mac Donald had a second dream. As before, he dreamed he was in heaven and a voice told him to inspect his house as it was nearly completed. Then he heard another voice telling him to open the Book of Life which was placed on a table in his room. He leafed through the pages and again he heard another voice urging him to return to earth and work, as several lists of names still remained to be registered on this Book of Life.

He woke up and from that time up to the present, spanning 30 years he dedicated himself to the ministry. He then committed his life to the service of the Lord. His first assignment was with the Rural Agriculture Development Mission for three years. Then he served as pastor of Kwin Chaung village in Wakema township under the Bassein Myaungmya Pwo Karen Baptist Conference. He knew that to be able to serve wholly as pastor of this impoverished, little village with a small congregation of 40 members, he needed three things--a plot of land, a church for worship and the propagation of the gospel, and a Youth Band to win souls for Christ.

To achieve these goals, Rev. Mac Donald and his church members dedicated themselves to prayers and fasting. God granted their prayers. He acquired 3 acres of land and constructed a

church at a cost of 170,000 kyats. This church served as a place of worship to glorify God in this small village. The liberal contributions from Dr. Hackett and Mrs. Louise Paw enabled him to organize a Youth Band. With this Youth Band, he toured the delta, high hills, and low lands during the summer, conducting evangelical courses and witnessing for Christ. Two hundred persons accepted Christ and were baptized.

He served in this church for seventeen years and it became a Laymen Training Center to carry on missionary works in accordance with the Year 2000 for Christ plan.

In 1976, Rev. Mac Donald went to Asian Rural Institute in Japan and on his return, he served 4 years as director of the Evangelism Mission Department, Pwo Karen Baptist Conference.

In 1991 he was again elected to serve in the same office where he is still serving (as of 1993).

During his 17 years as an ordained pastor, he baptized about a thousand persons and established three churches. He is guided by Christ's command, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;...I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Matthew 28:19-20.

Thamaing Karen Baptist Church.

Marcheta Thein

Our church is composed of some 250 to 300 families and our church membership is about 1300. Some members live far away but those who have settled in the community join us and work as full members. My husband, Waldo Thein, is the senior pastor, our assistant pastor is Thra Simon Thaw Tha and I help with Christian Education.

In a magazine article about our church, it is described as "The Church that was built by Prayers!" Actually it was built enthusiastic and happy in gaining and working together.

It took us two years of praying and working to get the papers, permits, and documents that we needed to build the church. Our old church building was too small and even with an extended wing, it couldn't hold the worshipping congregation. So, we felt, it was time. For over twenty years the church members had tried to save for the building and there was 3,500,000 kyats in the bank. The building we wanted was estimated at 20,000,000 kyats and so when the permit to build was granted, Waldo announced it to the congregation that God has given us the green light to start on the project. He also announced how much money that we had in the bank for the building. He then told the worshipers that because God has given us the go ahead, He will be with us and He will do wonders.

On our part, he challenged us, to set aside one tenth of our income for the building while the work is going on. Another thing is, if we are united and let God lead us there is nothing impossible with God. To keep the expenditure as low as possible, we can give voluntary service. All were invited to work--anytime--morning, afternoon or night. I remember at times we worked until midnight, some came in the morning, some in the afternoon and many in the evening came after their full time regular work.

Every morning at 7:00 am the prayer group of some twenty to twenty five people met for a short Bible Study and Prayer. At 8:00 am the work would begin. There were volunteer engineers, carpenters, assistant masons, watchmen, a volunteer treasurer, and two purchasers. Men, women, young people, and children came in to help at a period which was convenient to them. It was a wonderful sight to see God's people working in love and unity.

A lot of miracles took place. Every evening the steering committee would sit and evaluate and plan for the purchase of materials. One evening they calculated and knew that they would need 50,000 kyats in two days time. There were only a few thousand kyats with the treasurer. They prayed about this problem and in the morning the prayer group prayed about it. When it was time to purchase the materials, they had only 40,000 kyats. So the person-in-charge said that he would request the dealer to wait a few days for the remaining 10,000 kyats. But when they went to the dealer, they found they could buy everything they needed with the 40,000 kyats!

Another time they calculated they would need only 35,000 kyats but this time they had 50,000 on hand. When they went to buy the materials they needed they had to spend all of the 50,000. God knows more than we can pray for and He prepares and provides for all that was and is needed. All along many such instances were experienced.

Moreover, there were some, at that time, who were unemployed and could help full time. Seeing the effort and sacrifices of these people, some offered to provide meals and snacks for these people.

We had a group of church members working in Singapore. They also sent in their tithe regularly. Everyone, and they are not rich people, gave their tithe regularly and so like the blessing of the five loaves and two fish, the work was done and we could dedicate the building after only 18 months of construction. It's a beautiful two storied building with space for 1200 worshipers. When everything was finished, the money still in the bank was 3,300,000 kyats!

Since the dedication on December 8th, 1996, we have set the second Sunday of December as our church's Thanksgiving Day. God is great, He is good. He has been faithful in great things and small things. We need to be faithful to Him. We need to obey and trust Him in all things.

World War II Experiences.

By Maung Maung Din

Maung Maung Din told us that as a boy, he lived in Bassein when the Japanese came. The Japanese took a census of all families. He was seven and his brother was ten. When the Japanese conscripted labor, they said two boys equaled one man so both boys had to go and work on the road for 10 days. The Japanese did not feed them. They carried rock to make the road. Airplanes came and everyone fled into the jungle and the airplanes bombed the road, destroying what they had built. The Japanese beat those who hid in the jungle and did not come out immediately after the bombing.

His father was a medical doctor. When the Karens rebelled, they needed a doctor and so, took him with them, and he treated their wounded for six years. The Karens made him a medical officer. After the Karens were defeated and pushed back, he crossed the lines to the Burmese area. The Burmese seized him and charged him with being an officer in the rebel army and planned to imprison him or shoot him.

He said no, the Burmese army had failed to protect him. They had assigned him to a post they could not protect. It was their fault he was captured and made to serve the rebel army. Therefore they (the Burmese Army) owed him six years pay and a promotion he should have earned in that time.

To the surprise of many, he was given his back pay and the promotion!

My Guardian Angel.

Thramu Naw Paw

When I was a young child, my mother used to tell me stories, and in one story, she told us that every child had his or her guardian angel to look after them.

These angels then had to stand before Almighty God with a silver bowl that contained all the deeds done by the child they were responsible for. Those angels who brought the good deeds were very happy to present them to the Almighty God. Those angels, who had to bring the bad deeds of their children, were very sad and tears were running down from their eyes.

My mother inquired of me whether I would want to hurt my guardian angel and make my angel feel bad. I replied that I didn't want to hurt the feeling of my angel. Therefore I made up my mind to do the best in every day life.

At that time I had a Bible story book with the pictures covering Genesis to Revelation. I loved to

look at the Bible story book but I could not read it. I tried to be near my mother when she was weaving, or while she was picking paddy. I asked her about the pictures and what was happening and my mother narrated the whole story to me.

When I was full of fear, I made up my mind to read the Holy Scriptures about the prophet Elisha who prayed and the host of angels who surrounded him. When the Assyrian army came to arrest him, they could not find him. Therefore I prayed when I went to school and felt the angels surrounding me and I was free from fear.

When I was ten years old, one evening, I was left alone. My sister Naw Htoo did not return from fishing. My parents also did not return from farming. It became so dark and I felt so afraid. I took up my New Testament Bible and prayed to God that He might send his angels to keep watch over my home and protect it from all evil. After my prayer, I lay down and put my Bible on my chest and I felt warm without fear and fell asleep and slept soundly.

About 10 o'clock, my parents and sister arrived back home with plenty of fish and started chopping off the fish heads. I awoke and told my parents that I would take baptism this coming week. For I realized the Lord was with me and had helped me.

My father suggested to me that I was too young for baptism. But my mother consented for me to be baptized, provided I learned more afterwards.

Then my father told me to go to my grandfather, Rev. Tun Nyo, who was our pastor, and ask his permission.

In the early morning I went to the pastor's house and saw him coming down the stairs and I said, "Grandpa, next week I am going to take Baptism." He didn't reply, so I returned home and told my father I had informed the pastor to baptize me.

On Sunday at the 10:30 morning service, the pastor announced that those who were going to take baptism, come to the front of the congregation. Most of those who came forward were grown up and mature; I was the youngest, being only ten years old. After interrogation, we were led out of the sanctuary for awhile, and the elders discussed about our beliefs and understanding of the words. Then the elders recalled us back to the sanctuary and announced that "they were all fitted to be baptized."

After the baptism in the river, I came up and I possessed a real happiness within my heart. The pastor and the deacons welcomed us into the church and we all had our communion.

The Bag of Rice.

By Daw Pan Shwe

I believe God provides for us. My two elderly sisters and I live in Taunggyi. We share our house with sixty orphans and two aged persons. We have a PreKindergarten school which provides some money from tuition fees. We also have a small coffee shop but contrary to our hopes, it barely makes a profit because of the rising cost of everything.

Once we were running out of rice. We had only enough rice to fill one cooker. Our adopted daughter had forgotten to tell us the rice was almost gone and had gone home. We three sisters emptied our purses and pooled the contents--we had about 600 kyats, just enough for one bag of rice but it was 6 pm and the market was now closed.

Rice is measured by using empty milk tins and we had six tins left. We needed, to feed everyone, three cookers full, which took 18 tins. We rummaged in our storeroom and found some dried noodles but that would not be enough. We didn't know what to do. So we rinsed the six tins of rice and put them in one of the cookers.

After pressing the button which turned it on, we sat down and looked blankly at each other. Then we sent a simple prayer to God, "Dear Lord, please solve our rice problem. We put everything in your Hands. There is nothing we can do, unless we go out begging. That is out of the question because people will laugh at our carelessness in looking after our big family. No such thing had ever happened before. We could not bear people despising us, Lord. Forgive our shortcomings. In His name we beg Thee for Thy help. Amen"

But after the prayer, we felt a bit comforted. It was 6:30 pm and we told each other, "God will surely do something." At that moment, we heard a short, light honk of a car horn. "Whoever can that be? We don't want to see anyone while we are in very low spirits."

But we went to the door and opened it and there stood a friend, who had lived with us for many years. His mother had insisted that he come to offer us a bag of rice although it was still a few days away from the Buddhist Lighting Festival when gifts are usually exchanged. We thanked him and prayed for him and his parents. Best of all we felt a deep sense of gratitude to God and wondered at His mysterious ways of help. If it was not the Divine Intervention, what was it?

The Voice of Heaven.

By Peter Hla Min

The voice of heaven is heard in various forms by people. God speaks through the Bible to its readers, as well as through the teacher who gives Bible lessons, through pastors, dreams, and visions. My life has been changed by the voice of God.

My father set up a restaurant when I was fifteen. He handed over the entire management to me while he engaged in another business. Liquor and cigarettes were sold in the restaurant. I became addicted to beer and smoked a pack of Marlboro a day. I used to keep various kinds of liquor and cigarettes under my bed. Three drums of O.P. brand liquor were always in my room.

I had adopted Christianity when I was young but it hadn't penetrated my heart and mind.

Having led this life of addiction for one year, I heard a voice while I was studying my lessons. This soft, gentle voice said, "My son, Get out of this room!" When I heard this I felt that somebody was knocking on the door of my heart. (Rev.3:20) I was certain that the voice belonged to my Savior who was knocking at my heart's door, assuring me that He has forgiven my sins and wrong doings. Jesus always forgives and I was sure that I had been forgiven. So why should I not accept him as my Savior?

The next day I requested from my mother permission for me to go live with my grandmother and get out of the restaurant. She granted it. My mother took over the restaurant and I started attending Bible classes. From this I gained peace of mind and began to impart my knowledge of my savior to everyone I met. Then I enrolled in Kayin Baptist Theological Institute to acquire more knowledge of theology.

I feel God has called me to do evangelical work without any hesitation to share the good news in open air meetings, in hospitals or on trains. I love Jesus Christ because he first loved me.

Dr. L. W. Cronkhite.

Rose S. Po

A missionary that had great influence on me growing up was Mr. Cronkhite. He was a friend of all us children at the Bassein Pwo Karen School. It was through him I learned to be a good worker for Christ.

We lived in one of the teachers' houses on the school compound at Bassein. Mr. Cronkhite lived in one of the big houses near us. His wife and children could not take the Burma climate and so stayed in the U.S. when he returned. Therefore he lived alone and his house was open to all the children. He kept a reading room with books and picture books which we enjoyed looking at and reading so he was never without children as companions. He loved us children since his children were back with his wife. He taught us children English as well as grown-ups. He was also a very good science teacher too. He got pen pals for us in America and corrected the English in our letters before posting them. We called him Sra Pah Doh (Big Teacher).

He did a lot of campaigning in jungle villages both Christian and Buddhist. He took us

campaigning with pastors, grown ups, and choir members to sing and had church services in the villages. By that way he led many to Christ.

He loved and liked us Karens a lot and was a missionary among us for forty years. When he retired in his sixties, he wrote us many encouraging letters until he died. He was the most beloved of the Pwo Karen missionaries.

My Christian Experience in Burma.

Saw Htaw Htoo

When I was in high school, I served as a steward during the Diamond Jubilee Day in Rangoon, It was celebrated in December before Christmas. People from all over the country came to Rangoon for the ten days of celebration and had fellowship and worship together. Two hundred thousand people came including various nationalities such as Lahu, Wa, Lisu, Padaung, Naga besides the usual Karen, Chin, Kachin, Burman, Shan, Indian, and Chinese. My duty, with other young people, was to clean the church compound. There were so many people about during the day that we could only clean during the night.

Lodging was difficult to find. All the churches of the area provided a place to sleep. Food was provided by the Myanmar Baptist Convention which also provided transportation.

During the day I helped keep the many water jars full around the compound. They were not glazed so some water evaporated and cooled the remaining water. With the hot weather and so many people, the jars needed to be filled over and over. The celebration was a wonderful experience and I went back to school with very good feelings.

During the summer I attended Bible Study Class. I learned about the Bible and we sang a lot of songs. Then we had to go to share. We witnessed about Jesus and what the Christian life is like. One day, as we went out sharing, we found a woman who didn't know anything about the Lord Jesus Christ and so we told her about Jesus and the Christianity. The woman was a real Buddhist and she had come from upper Burma. She accepted the Lord Jesus and she became a believer and soon she was baptised. So I praised the Lord.

After my high school, I went to camp in the lower country to Pyarpon near Patheingyi for Vacation Bible School. It was held in a village named Nay Yaung Kar which we went to by boat. It lasted ten days and we were warmly welcomed by the villagers. We helped them study the Bible and taught them many songs.

We had Karen Language Study every summer during vacation. The old people taught the young adults and children the Karen language and also the Bible. It was there I learned to read,

understand and speak Karen. We sang Karen songs and learned about Karen literature and poems. I had a good time doing this study. At the end we had an examination and the outstanding students were given awards.

I was very happy at Christmas time. The first day of December is called Sweet December in Burma. Some of my friends and I went around the street and greeted everybody in the first hour of December with "Sweet December!" As I was a member of my church, we all went out for Christmas caroling and we played games. I also enjoyed the celebration of Karen New Year which also falls in December.

God is Great, He Answers them All.

(Psalm 145:3; 2 Sam 7:22; Deu 10: 17)

Shadrack Taw Po

In 1954 I completed my 5 years Agricultural, Dairy Technology, and The Rural Mission courses respectively in Allahabad Agricultural Institute (AAI) Uttar Pradesh, India. This famous Agricultural Institute was founded in 1911 by the world famous Agricultural Missionary Sam Higginbottom of Cleveland Heights, Ohio. The author of The Gospel and the Plow. I was really proud to be his student. I came back to Myanmar Maingtha with the Great and Mighty Motto **FIRST THINGS FIRST.**

Everything on earth belonged to the Almighty God. I had to serve Him at all cost. So in August 1955, I had devoted by self entirely as a down to earth at village level Rural Mission worker, as my great preacher, the late Rev. Brayton C. Case and Rev. Dr. William D. Hackett did it in the field of the Rural Mission Ministry. I worked for it earnestly for more than 30 years without interruption. During this period I prayed earnestly to my beloved Savior to fulfill 3 great things I required for my whole entire life. Well, I knew that my petition were Just and Sound. I knew He liked it. I firmly believed He would answer them all. God is Great. Really Great beyond comparison. He is Great in His Creation, His Guidance, and Great in His Salvation to all mankind.

First and Foremost, I prayed to be His faithful and loyal co-worker in the Rural Mission Ministry Service for at least 30 years. Definitely, He answered it YES. And gave me more and better than I had expected.

Secondly, after I had completed 30 years of service for Him, then I would proceed on to the Institute of Theology for the Bachelor of Theology or at least for the Bachelor of Religious Education. But I did not succeed. My precious Almighty God did in the other way. He gave me 3 more extra years to teach the Rural Mission courses in one of the Bible Schools. Due to sudden illness, I had to stop performing my precious duties in teaching. Finally I surrendered to Him. I firmly believed He would never forsake me. It was really true. My precious Mighty

Savior built up a new bridge instead. He made it clear that He is the only one that was Great and Mighty. He was in full and firm control in everything, in every circumstances, in every crisis, and in every needs.

He planned it before hand. He did it this way. He had prepared my eldest daughter to fulfill the need the requirement; I earnestly longed for. In the year 1989, she succeeded in her Bachelor in Theology Course. At the present time, she is working as one of the Religious Education staff in the Myanmar Baptist Convention Headquarters. How wonderful it was! God is great, really great in His provision, His guidance and plannings.

Thirdly, the last but not the least. After serving Him 30 years in Rural Mission Ministry, I earnestly prayed God to give me privilege to reveal at least 4 mighty Rural Mission issues. He gave me 6 instead. How marvellous it was!

Believe it or not, the issues were written and completed in 6 years time, the time when I was in great distress--a prolonged suffering from Ischemic Heart Disease, gonty, arthritis, and catarrhae eyes. Really I was in a miserable condition. But be sure, God always did great thing like this for His glorious purposes. The Almighty God is definite and True to His words as one of the Psalmist proclaimed in psalms 84:8,6 "How happy are those whose strength comes from you, who are eager to make the pilgrimage to Mount Zion, as they pass through the valley of Baa, it becomes the place of springs. The early rains fill it with pools. They grew stronger as they go, they will see the God of gods on Zion." (Good News Bible).

Oh! My precious Brothers and Sisters in Christ, Believe Trust, Obey and work for Him earnestly, definitely sure, with pure and simple faith. He would do it more than, better than you had expected.

Furthermore, the next vital steps was how those issues would be accomplished through publication. To finance the publications of these Rural Mission issues was completely out of hand. There are three types of Rural Mission issues to be published. Social, Economic Life in the Church, and the Religious Aspect. God knew everything before hand. He paved the way by knocking at the doors of the heart of my precious friends far and near. The means poured in time from all sides. It came from Fort Wayne, Indiana, from Springfield, Missouri, for Claremont, California etc, etc. Finally, my special cup runneth over with the Divine Blessings. The issues were doing fine in the rural churches.

In spiritual aspects, the rural mission issues completed were as follows. The Lord's Acre, Church Bells in Many Tongues, The Rural Pastor: His Work and Training for Tomorrow's World by Dr. Edward Krusen Ziegler (a translation issue). Back to the Roots (a devotional life for the Christian Leaders). The Church and the Rural Reconstruction, My Cup Runneth Over (dealt with the church Lord's Acre planning program followed by overflowing Divine Blessing.)

In conclusion, the Greatest needs of the world today is fresh revelation of the fact:

--God is greater than Man's Greatest Needs
--God is greater than Man's dire emergency.
--God is greater than Man's Greatest Crisis
--God is greater than Human Circumstances or combination of all circumstances.
--God is Omnipotent, Omnipresent, and Omnipowerful.
--God is Great, always Great--Believe, Trust, Obey and work for Him.
He answered them all.

The \$5 Gift

By Sue Dolbow.

Six months before I went to Burma, a man and his young daughter were in a local pizza shop and heard the owner talking to me about my going to Burma. The man introduced himself as a local pastor on his way to a mission trip with a group of church members. We prayed and he gave me a \$5.00 bill to give to someone while I was on my trip. He said I would recognize the right person or project to receive the gift. I saved that exact bill in my Bible cover pocket. While I was in Patheingyi, we visited Matthew 25 Love Clinic and I was so saddened by the lack of medical supplies and the sparse accommodations. The staff was doing an amazing job in dispensing medical aid.

All night at the hotel, my mind kept going back to the clinic and in the morning, I asked Susanna and my group if I could stop by the clinic and donate the money. We did, and I told him my story and the clinic now has the "love gift" \$5.00 bill, donated by an American pastor and directed to them by God by way of Sue Dolbow. This incident humbles me very much.

My Christian Experience.

By Sui Tial aka Khin Swe Oo

My Chin parents are farmers and very poor. I have five brothers and two sisters who are all students. I decided I wanted to go to Myanmar Institute of Theology (MIT) near Rangoon. My parents did not like my intention to attend MIT. They could not and would not support me, so I prayed for a good sponsor. God gave me a sponsor in the form of the pastor of All Racial Baptist Church at Mandalay. I praised God that I was now able to attend MIT.

In 1992 I attended preclass to learn English. Preclass students are not given accommodations on the school grounds. Therefore I lived with Sayama Daw Stellamein's house. She is a teacher at nearby Karen Baptist Theological Institute (KBTI). I lived with Naw Magnolia and Naw Myaung Mya Paw who became my best friends. They both are Karens. My messing (room and board) fee was 500 kyats per month. In spite of help from my sponsor, money was in short supply and my parents could not help me.

I remember well the 29th of November, 1993. I was supposed to pay the 500 kyats the next day to Daw Stellamein. The others had their fee. But I only had 400 kyats in hand. I felt so sorry. I couldn't sleep the whole night. I felt alone but then I realized that I had Jesus Christ, who is my savior and He can give me all my needs. I prayed for faith in Him.

The next morning as I got up, I heard a knock on the door. I opened it and found my best friend, James, a fellow student at MIT, who said to me, "Can you give a sermon this morning? We are having a program of thanksgiving for Apeke's birthday."

I accepted the invitation with gladness. I prepared a sermon on Gen. 12:1-3 and Psalm 103:1-3. It was my first sermon at MIT. After the worship service, Apeke gave me an envelope. As a Chin, I supposed it to be a thank you letter as it done in Chinland. When I arrived at my home, I was very surprised to open it and find a 100 kyat note which is just what I needed to pay my messing fee. I thanked and praised God for fulfilling my needs.

My Experience with God.

By Saw Tah Moo

My mother graduated from Karen Women's Bible School and my father from Karen Theological Seminary in 1922. They went to Chaingmai, Thailand to propagate the gospel in heathen villages. Their marriage produced two sons but both died of severe malaria. After four years they returned to Burma and settled in Pattan Village in Myaungmya District. He was paid five kyats a month. I was born there. My father called me Saw Tah Moo meaning life or living (for Christ). I studied to the sixth standard in Pattan.

My parents moved to Toungoo and I entered 7th standard. When Japanese occupation came, we moved to a rural area and worked as farm helpers for three years.

When the British returned, we went to Toungoo and I entered 7th standard at Union Christian High School. In 1949 while I was in matriculation class, the insurrection took place and God sent me to a Karen non Christian village in Lehdoh (Great Stone) area. My goal at that time was to be an engineer and I tried to enter Engineering College but God forbade me. I stayed four years in this heathen village serving as primary teacher. I realized that I needed to know the meaning of the message of the Bible in order to share it with them. I prayed for God's guidance and He opened the way for me to attend seminary. Under the encouragement and recommendation of my pastor, Rev. Peter Hla, I was admitted as a student in June, 1953 along with Sharo and Jerry Lynn. The principals were Dr. Paul Clasper and Dr. Chit Maung. We studied four years. In my final year, Jerry Lynn became my spiritual friend and we prayed together in the early morning. We prayed for life work and life partner. God answered both our

requests.

After my graduation in 1957, Dr. William Hackett called me to work with him two years as middle school principal at Loinanpa Village in Kayah State with two hundred students.

In 1959 Dr. Chit Maung wrote me saying that Karen Theological Seminary needed young staff. I consented and regarded it as a privilege to work with experienced staff members.

I served on the staff of Karen Baptist Theological Institute from 1959 to 1993. God gave me two visions. One was to write commentaries in Sgaw Karen on the Major and Minor Prophets, Revelation, Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Hebrews, James, and the parables of Jesus. I also served as teacher, principal and later, dean of men.

God has given me a call to establish an orphanage at Toungoo and already has placed 20 acres in my hands. With God's help and the church at Toungoo, we will establish the orphanage.

Tha Kyaw Maung's Experience.

By Tha Kyaw Maung

Tha Kyaw Maung's mother was Kachin and a Christian. His father was Arkanese and Buddhist. Tha Kyaw Maung grew up as a Buddhist and had a shinbyu. That is the ceremony by which he became a monk for a week. It represented his passing from childhood to adulthood.

In 1988 the students of Burma were ignited into demonstrations for freedom, free enterprise and democracy. Tha Kyaw Maung joined the demonstrations and helped organize and lead. The population united behind them and hundreds of thousands demonstrated. The military junta responded with brutal force killing thousands--some say 3,000, other 10,000.

In the aftermath, the secret service hunted down all who had been part of the demonstration particularly in leadership roles. Tha Kyaw Maung was arrested and held at the infamous Insein jail. Like many others he was beaten and tortured. As he suffered in prison he thought of his mother. He knew she would be praying for him. He had never felt inclined towards Christianity but the thought came to him that he too should be praying. Having no experience at prayer he nevertheless partitioned God to free him from this horrible jail. He said to God if God freed him by such and such a date, he would become a Christian. He doubted if anything would happen but nevertheless he continued to pray. Then suddenly, for reasons he did not understand, he was freed.

He was baptized by a Karen Bible woman to fulfill his vow.

Mahn Aung Myint Than.

Rev. Mac Donald

Mahn Aung Mying Than was born in Zi-Pyu-Kyun village, Nyaung Don Township on March 30th, 1948. He attended the village school up to the middle school level and continued his high school education at No.1 State High School, when he moved to Insein in 1966. He matriculated in 1971 and was employed in the Myanmar Railways Corporation.

In 1976, a life changing event occurred to him which led him to seek Christ. He started taking an interest in Campus Crusade activities, he attended Bible classes conducted by Dr. Herman Judson also known as U Han Sein. On January 1st, 1977 he accepted the Lord as his personal savior. He carried out daily devotions, Bible reading, learning lessons in self improvement and witnessing for Christ. From 1978 to 1991 he witnessed for Christ in various parts of Burma.

In 1991, he sustained a severe back injury through a fall from a tree and was bedridden for three months. He fasted four days and prayed for recovery and made a pledge to wholly serve the Lord. According to Psalm 118:17-18 "I shall not die but live and declare the works of the Lord,...; but he hath not given me over unto death." He recovered and served the Lord through personal witnessing and teaching the gospel. Many became converts because of his efforts.

The Calling of God.

By Salai Thawng Ling

I wanted to be an officer in the army but God had other plans for me. My will was to be a master but God's will was for me to be His servant.

I studied hard to meet the rigorous entrance requirements for the Defense Service Academy. For a whole month I joined other candidates in being tested for mental, physical, and practical skills.

I was in good physical condition and worked hard. I followed orders and cooperated with the other candidates. I was pleased with my performance. I thought I had done well. But when the names of the winning candidates were announced, my name was not among them. I was very sad, hurt, and disappointed.

I returned to studying at the University of Rangoon. Very early one morning, I suddenly awoke and knew that something was wrong in my abdomen. The pain increased quickly. By sunrise, it was so intense, I could barely speak. My roommates, Pa Iap and Pa Uk, took me to the western Yangon Hospital at 7:45 AM. The surgeons performed an emergency operation to remove my

appendix.

A few days later, as I began to recuperate from surgery, I heard the tragic news of my mother's death two weeks earlier. She had already been buried. I was 800 miles from my village, and unable to travel, I lay in my hospital bed and cried for my mother. I was her youngest son and she loved me more than my other brothers and sisters. Her death hurt me very much.

My pain and tragedy weren't over. The following week, I heard that my oldest brother, who had been a Christian, changed his faith to another religion in order to marry a woman. In our Chin tradition, the oldest son is very important; he is on the level with our parents. When a father dies, the oldest son inherits both his property and responsibility for the younger brothers and sisters. My father was one of the first Christian converts in our region. He was a young man when American Baptist Missionaries came to western Burma. After he accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior and Lord, he felt called to spread the gospel. He founded many Christian churches in our region. For more than fifty years, father was a pastor, sharing the Love of Jesus with villagers in the Chin Hills.

And now, his oldest son and heir had forsaken his faith. My heart ached for my father. I could hardly imagine the depth of his sadness. Even for me, this was a great disappointment and tragedy. I was angry with my brother.

I could hardly bear all this pain. It was only two weeks since my surgery. I was recovering from appendicitis, but spiritually I was in turmoil.

Pa Iap and Uk visited me often and tried to comfort me. One evening they brought some Christian friends with them. Gathering around my bed, they prayed for me.

For the first time in months, I felt the Love of Christ. But I had a deep sense of regret. My Christian friends left. For the first time since my surgery, I felt a strong desire to read my Bible. When I opened it, I was surprised to find this verse: "My Grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." II Cor. 12:9 NIV.

At that moment, I realized that God was in control and could overcome all my misery. I also came to realize that these pains were a sign of God's call. I finally and totally accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior and my Lord that day. I knew what it meant to be a new creature.

My pain became a blessing; my hospital bed like the Damascus road. At last I became a new man.

My Parents

Saw Richard Thawt

Before writing about the miraculous event witnessed by my father and his two friends, Lahu Saya Kya Bo Shi and Saya Kya Awi, I would like to tell you about my parents and their mission work among the Lahus.

My mother's name was Naw Du Aye, a native of Seh Gone Gyi village. She finished her primary school education and graduated from the first Women Bible School in Ahlone Township. I do not have any record of her graduation date. My father was Saw Po Thawt from Seh Gone Gyi village in Pa Thein Township. Though he completed Fourth Grade, he did not graduate from a Bible school.

My mother used to tell me that there was no rice mill when she was in Bible school. Rice grinding was done with hands. In 1916, the A.B.M work in Lahu region was handed over to Rev. & Ma Ma J. H. Telford. They established Pang Wai Mission School and the school that educated students up to the Seventh Grade. Later Rev. Telford wrote a letter through Saya Ba Te and Saya Po Shet to Pa Thein that mission workers and school teachers were urgently needed for the Lahus.

When that letter reached Seh Gone Gyi village in Pa Thein, the youths from both Eastern and Western Pa Thein registered their names to go and work in Lahu, Keng Tung State. At that time, my parents had been married for four years, and they had a two-year old daughter. The colleagues of my parents were Saya Sein Khin, Saya Chit Swe, Saya Ba Yin, Saya Maw Htoo, Saya Ba Tun and others. In Pang Wai Middle School, Saya Chit Swe served as a headmaster while Saya Sein Khin took charge of teaching. My father, Saya Ba Yin and Saya Ba Tun served as mission workers and also as pastors.

The youths from Pa Thein left for Tha Ze via Rangoon. They then walked all the way from Tha Ze to Keng Tung. Food and personal belongings were carried on horseback. Their destination was Pang Wai.

First of all, the Karen teachers had to learn the Lahu language. Then Rev. Telford gave them work assignment in the villages and paid 15 Rupees a month. Financially, there had not been much difficulty as the churches which sent the volunteer youths in Pa Thein were also paid 10 Rupees a month.

Youths built their own houses and then worked on the construction of school. They also taught the local populace songs and introduced them to such sports as soccer and volleyball. What the youths from Pa Thein did for the Lahus finally earned them a respect! Health care was provided to the local populace in the form of traditional medicine combined with prayers, and the people there were in good health.

I was born on May 9, 1927. When I first became aware of myself, my father had already established four Lahu villages. Although I do not know about some villages, I do know about the two villages. It was quite difficult to convert the Lahus to Christianity. The villagers would seek baptism only after their headman was baptized. My father baptized the new converts from 9 o'clock until 2 in the afternoon. Karen mission workers usually stayed in a Lahu village for three to five years, and then they moved to other villages. They left a church in every village that they had stayed. In fact, they used Moving Mission System. The Lahu Sayas were given a responsibility to take care of the church.

I would like to tell you a miraculous event. It happened in March of 1938. Someone fired a gun, but it did not hit the people. The shooting took place near Mong Yan village.

March was the time when the youths held a campaign for evangelistic work. They preached in the surrounding villages and a weekly bazaar. They first sang a song, and that attracted many people. They started preaching when the crowd was getting large. Subsequently, several people accepted Christ as their Savior.

In March of 1938, Rev. Po Thawt, Saya Kya Bo Shi, Saya Kya Awi and three of their followers spent a night near a stream in the jungle after preaching late at night. Before going to sleep, they cleaned the gun they brought along with them.

Saya Kya Bo Shi: This gun has been thoroughly cleaned. I won't be afraid of any criminal.

Rev. Po Thawt: The government didn't issue this gun for firing at people. Only for shooting animals (hunting).

Saya Kya Bo Shi: If the people are bad or hostile, I'll have no choice but to shoot them.

Around 2 o'clock in the morning, Rev. Po Thawt woke everybody up and told them about the strange dream he had. In the dream, they were surrounded by tigers, but the angels restrained the tigers when the animals were about to attack them. The interpretation of the dream was that they would encounter criminals on their way but God would help them escape unharmed. Rev. Po Thawt ordered his friends never to use the gun. Having finished their breakfast, Rev. Po Thawt and his friends continued their journey early in the morning. When they reached a place 12 miles from Mong Yan, they met a group of Chinese dacoits who opened fire on them. Rev. Po Thawt forbade his friends from returning fire and asked them to pray instead. Whenever the dacoits tried to shoot at them, their guns misfired. Their bullets would go off only when they aimed their guns to the sky and fired. While Rev. Po Thawt and friends were praying for their deliverance from the shooting, Saya Kya Bo Shi grabbed the gun and fired at the dacoits. Subsequently, the Chinese returned fire, and this time they were successful in firing their guns. However, the bullets did not hit anything except Saya Kya Bo Shi's hat. Rev. Po Thawt asked Saya Kya Bo Shi why he fired the gun. The reason Saya Kya Bo Shi gave was that one of the dacoits came very close to where they were taking shelter. He also said he got "one shot two kills." Rev. Po Thawt then reminded him not to shoot again, and they all continued their prayers. About 15 minutes later, Rev. Po Thawt opened his eyes and looked around, but could not find his friends and three followers. They had run away to safety. He then crossed a stream and reached a small village. He asked the villagers to accompany him to the site of shooting, but when they got there, the Chinese were nowhere to be found. All they saw was a pool of blood on the ground.

At first, the Chinese dacoits had a hard time firing their guns. The guns misfired! The bullets went off only after Saya Kya Bo Shi returned fire. However, none of them hit Rev. Po Thawt and his friends. The Chinese were firing from about 14 yards away. My mother had a dream that my father came under attack on the very night that shooting took place. She immediately woke up all her children and prayed for his safety. In the morning, she had the villagers gather and pray with us. We also gave thanks to the Lord.

Three days later, one of my father's followers arrived in our village and told us what had

happened to my father and his friends. My father got home safely seven days after the shooting. The whole congregation gathered, and we praised our Lord's name.

Another Miraculous Event

Saw Richard Thawt

The Lahus raised ghosts(evil spirit). Sometimes, Lahu women were sent to a small hut built outside the village for monitoring ghosts. The ghosts asked them chicken, pigs, dogs and sometimes human hands and feet for food. Those believed in ghosts said they could hear the voices of ghosts when they were asking for food. When the ghosts did not get food, they harassed people. Some were possessed by the evil spirit, and they jumped to their deaths into the river. Even some Christians in the village believed in ghosts and worshiped them. It was hard to forbid them from practicing their beliefs. They finally gave up their beliefs only after they witnessed a miracle.

There were more than 70 households in a small Lahu village called "Htaw La." It became a Christian village after Rev. Po Thawt did the mission work there. There was a lady in the village who raised ghosts. Her name was Nant Taw, and she was about 30 years old. Instead of going to church, she did farming on Sundays. When my father warned her, she cursed him. One summer when I was about 10 years old, the villagers came to my father asking him to drive the evil spirit out of Nant Taw who had been possessed for some days now. My father had a short prayer service with his family and made me carry the Bible and accompany him to Nant Taw's house.

When we got there, we were barred from entering the house by some villagers. They said she had been in this condition for two days, and even 20 men were not enough to hold her down. I remembered Acts 19:16 just before entering the house. Despite the attempts made by the villagers to stop us, my father hold my hand, and we both went in. As soon as Nant Taw saw my father, she asked what brought him here. My father replied that he came to see her in Jesus name. He then raised his hands and stood right in front of her. He placed his hand on her head and started praying. Some villagers ran away from the house because they feared that the evil spirit would kill everybody in the house. My father prayed very loud, and after the prayer ended, Nant Taw collapsed and was lying on the floor. Though she was too weak to stand up after the evil spirit left her, she was still alive. Regarding the possession, some said God must have punished her for her failure to believe the living God and attend church and her sin against the pastor. I saw everything from the beginning to the end! The Lahus would not give up their beliefs unless they saw a miracle like this.

The Day I Can Never Forget.

By Henry That Thio

I will never forget the days my tears fell down unceasingly. I was elected to serve the Lord as

Youth President in addition to being choir leader in my mother church at Hakha, the Johnson Baptist Church. At first I seriously tried to refuse the responsibility because I was not secure in my salvation. But they would not accept it. I took the position but there was no real peace and joy in my heart because I was a nominal Christian and did not truly understand why Jesus had died.

But I did the best I could and my work was appreciated by the deacons and ministers. They thought I might ascend to be a saint and I was seized with pride. They could not sense my bad behavior and shameful deeds. They really didn't know me because I was such a hypocrite. But I vividly came to realize that there was no hiding place from God.

As President, I conducted, as Master of Management, the Leadership Training Program which lasted five days. On the evening of the last day, we had a service of consecration led by one of our ministers. As we were about to be consecrated, I lit my candle and joined the service. I was surprised at what I said, I uttered these words at the beginning of my prayer, "Lord! Leave me behind just now. Don't accept me as a leader because I am not worthy to serve you and to lead these young people." Suddenly tears rushed from my eyes, fell down my cheeks, and wet my chest. My whole body shook and I slowly knelt down before the holy pulpit. I felt a force filtering in and igniting my heart. I prayed, "I have never experienced such a heart feeling before. If it is your manifestation through your Holy Spirit, then I submit two of my bad habits which have been fastened on my life for a long time. I have been addicted to tobacco juice and betel nut. If you have chosen me to be your true son, Lord, give me spiritual strength so that I can be able to refrain from these habits. I have no strength to do it by myself, Lord."

I challenged God for His response. He responded by bringing to my mind His word which was written in Matthew 5:1 the beatitudes, Psalm 103:3,12 [God] who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases." and "as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgression from us." Isaiah 1:18 "Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord; though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool." These words forcefully touched my life and became deeply rooted into my heart. I felt a great joy more than words can say. I confessed my heart felt thanks to my Father unceasingly.

After the service I asked the participants, who had felt a new impression, to remain in the church. Eight young brothers and sisters stayed. Praise the Lord!

The next day, I visited my relative's shop. She always gave me tobacco juice to drink. I said, "I no longer want to defile myself with this abominable thing any more. Now, I become a new creature and apart from all these things. My life is concerned only with Jesus."

My sister is not satisfied this is true and forced me to drink the juice. But this time she was surprised! I couldn't stand this smell and vomited. Hallelujah!

My negative side was overcome by a positive power that took hold and shaped my life. This force made me commit myself to God and to come to Myanmar Institute of Theology in order to serve all my life.

The Conversion of Daw Tin Hla.

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." II Corin: 5:17

Daw Tin Hla was a staunch Buddhist from Paan. She had two daughters and a husband who was a business man. Being a devout Buddhist, she was not receptive to the gospel of Christ when her friend, Daw Pansy, witnessed to her. Then misfortune struck her. Her husband was imprisoned on account of a business deal and she was in financial straits. On top of this, her two daughters became critically sick. In deep anguish, she knelt before her altar in fervent prayers but could not find any remission from her predicament.

She requested her friend, Daw Pansy, to pray for her. Daw Pansy prayed for her and the sentence "Nothing is impossible with God" deeply touched Daw Tin Hla. She experienced a fleeting vision of Christ right behind her altar at dusk. She also heard voices saying, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." The prayers of her friend sustained her and the vision and voices she saw and heard, filled her with joy and peace. Not long afterwards her husband was released from jail and her two daughters recovered from their illness.

But Daw Tin Hla had not surrendered her life completely to the Lord; she had not accepted the Lord as her personal savior. She still remained adamant in spite of the ordeal that she had gone through. Eight months later she heard voices saying, "I am the living God, I am with you always even unto the end of the world, and my loving kindness endureth forever." Only then did she renounce her religion and decide to follow Jesus Christ.

She was baptized by Rev. Roland in 1981 and surrendered her life to Christ. Rev. Mac Donald and U Nyan Lin went to Paan at her request and taught her about Christ and His teachings, and prayed for her. She started to read the Bible and to this day (1994), she zealously witnesses for Christ among relatives and strangers. Because of her, many came to believe in Jesus Christ and become converts.

Someone is in Need of our Help

By Rob Jarrold

My father, the Rev. W. S. Jarrold, went to Burma (Myanmar) as a missionary in 1933 and worked until 1965. Will, or as he was better known, Jerry Jarrold, stayed even during the Second World War, having responsibility for several refugee camps in the north of the country. Most of

the 33 years he was based in Akyab (now Sittwe) and then in Rangoon (Yangon) for five years, as country secretary for the Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society (BCMS).

Initially, however, he was a roving preacher based aboard a small motor launch named the "Victory" and traveled up and down the many rivers of Arakan. During his time on the Victory he had many interesting and no doubt exciting experiences. One of these, which I remember him telling me about, is as follows.

One evening, about in the year 1935, coming in to the shore to tie up for the night, a nasty current suddenly pushed the boat into the bank far faster than intended. A large branch of a tree on the bank of the river pushed its way into the side window of the boat and ended up pushing against the ceiling of the small cabin. The river was tidal and as the water in the river fell, the Victory was slowly tipped to a more and more dangerous angle. Unable to free the boat, because he lacked the necessary saw or axe to cut the branch of the tree off, Jerry contemplated a bleak future of having to report the loss of the boat to the bishop!!!

Along the bank came an old blind man, carrying an axe, led by the hand by his son. The old man had not left his house for the past five years and yet had suddenly said to his son, "Take me along the river bank, someone is in need of our help."

The branch was cut, the boat righted itself, and all was well.

What caused the old man to stir from his house?

How mysterious and amazing are the ways of God!

Erville Sowards' Experiences

By Neil Sowards

Here are two experiences I remember my father, Erville E. Sowards, sharing with me.

Sometimes people, who are not knowledgeable about what missionaries have accomplished in a country ask, "What is gained by sending missionaries? Aren't the people happy the way they were and shouldn't we just leave them alone?"

I remember my father talking about one of the thrills of being a missionary. He described sitting at a table with Christians from a number of different ethnic groups (tribes in those days) discussing how to improve education in their schools. He was aware that many of their grandparents had fought each other and looked upon each of the other ethnic groups as inferior and fit only to be raided and stolen from. Now they were working together seeking to formulate better education for their children and grandchildren. To him, seeing groups in conflict become

groups in cooperation was his greatest reward as being a missionary.

Another time he described the transformation that went on when animists became Christians. Before, they led very fearful lives. They were afraid of offending some spirit who then would cause sickness, accidents, crop failure, etc. They viewed the world as full of evil spirits who wanted to harm them. They sacrificed constantly trying to appease the evil spirits and so were reduced to poverty. Neighbors, who they didn't know, had the "evil eye" and were to be feared and avoided.

When the Christian evangelists came and told them the world was a good place created by a God who loved them and wanted them to have a good life, they welcomed Christianity with open arms. It was liberating to learn disease could be prevented or treated. Prayers could give them power to heal and control their lives. They no longer felt at the mercy of the evil spirits. The missionaries showed them how to grow better crops and healthier animals and so they prospered. Life became good to them and they put their efforts into building churches, schools, clinics and working together for a better life. It was said a person could tell by the expressions on the villagers' faces whether the village was Christian or spirit worshippers. The Christians looked happy and spirit worshippers looked fearful.

Fear of God

By Million Kwi

I was a teenager during World War II when the British retreated from Burma. Before the occupying Japanese reached our area, there was great danger from lawless decoits taking advantage of the lack of police to keep order.

The Burman authorities ordered our village to give up all their guns and our naïve village elders gathered up all the guns we had for defending our village. They did not even keep back one! Then other Burmans when they learned we had surrendered our guns threatened to massacre us because we were without weapons to defend ourselves. We were like sitting ducks waiting for them to come and rob, rape, or kill us.

The only thing we could think of doing was to ring the church bell three times a day and pray to God for His protection. We also fasted. We were so fearful that our throats were constricted and we could not swallow food anyway.

The God made a miracle. The Burmans looked at the huge pile of guns our elders had brought to their town and reasoned in their minds as only Burmans could reason, "If we Burmans had been asked to surrender our guns, we would surrender only a token number and keep back the rest for self-defense. So if this huge pile of guns is just a token number—how much more must these Karens have hidden in their possession still." So even though they shouted their threats over the

loud speakers from their village nearby, they never dared to actually attack us. They also watched us to see if we sent out messengers to get re-enforcements from other Karen villages. But we were so busy praying, we never did that. We were the only Karen village for miles around and the Burmese thought we were too strong to need to send for re-enforcements. God put the fear in them so they refrained from attacking till the Japanese came and we were ten safe under Japanese protection.

Unasked for Gift

By Million Kwi

Many years ago money was very scarce and we saved all we could to send back to Burma to help our friends there. I bought only inexpensive food for my family, usually chicken which is the cheapest meat here and occasionally beef. One day, I saw fresh fish at the market and was tempted to buy it. I reasoned I could afford to buy it as \$4 to \$5 per pound and I liked fish very much. But then I thought of our people back in Burma and moved away from the fish counter. Again I was drawn back to the fish counter and I stared and stared at the fish. But I managed to move away. This happened four times. I finally was able to discipline myself and strode off trying to convince myself that chicken was tastier and more expensive than fish in Burma even though it is only one fourth the cost of fish in America.

That evening, my next door neighbor came over and said, “I went fishing for fun and caught some fish. My wife hates to clean fish—in fact she does not want fish to eat. Would you like to have them?”

“Oh, yes!” I answered and he brought me six fish—each one weighing about six or seven pounds! How delicious they were and we enjoyed them very much.

I had prayed for things that I needed, but I had never thought of praying for fish which was an unneeded luxury. Yet my Heavenly Father provided me with a special treat!

Mahn Pongyi

By MacDonald

Mahn Pongyi was an Indian and a Hindu born in Buddha Gaya village seven miles from Gautama’s birth place, Puri city, India. He was the second youngest child among his five siblings. He came to Burma as a fourteen year old boy to stay with his uncle U Mu Sa in Kan Tha Gone village in Myaungmya township. Three years later he moved to Ka-Dat-Kwin village and at age 29 he married Nant Kyawt, a Pwo Karen Christian woman from Kwet-Nwai-Chaung village. They had two daughters.

Mahn Pongyi was a devout Hindu and a Hindu community leader with one hundred and eighty disciples. He strictly observed the elaborate Hindu religious rituals built a pagoda in Set-kone village and paid homage to a Bodi tree he brought from India and planted in Ka-Dat-Kwin village. He performed these rites in hopes of finding the one true God, but he did not find God.

Mahn Pongyi's change of religion from Hinduism to Christianity was brought about through the concern of his family. His wife and his two daughters were devout Christians and wished that their family would remain united in life after death at the feet of Jesus. The daughters solicited the help of Rev. MacDonald. That minister came to Kywet-Nwai-Chaung with his Youth Band, ostensibly to give an open performance during the Christmas season. On December 23rd, 1974 after an open air evangelism program and youth band performance, the minister had a discussion of the gospel with Mahn Pongyi. On Christmas night Mahn Pongyi dreamed that he met Christ. The following morning at 6 AM he was baptized by Rev. U Mya Kyi. After baptism, he studied the scripture diligently day and night and dedicated his life to preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ to this day (1993). From 1974 to 1993 he won two hundred and thirty souls to Jesus Christ, including Sgaw Karens, Pwo Karens, Burmese, and Indians. He prayed for over five hundred Indians sick with various diseases both children and adults and over three hundred recovered.

In 1992 he was suffering from prostate gland and was hospitalized at Myaungmya Hospital and then at Bassein Hospital. He was in the hospital 64 days. The surgeon demanded six thousand kyats to operate on the gland. At 73 years of age and unable to meet that price, he presented two options to God in prayer. He asked God to either terminate his life or to make him well by 6 AM the following day. When six in the morning came and he was still alive, he realized he had been healed. He asked the ward nurses to remove the catheter but they refused. He removed it himself. He then witnessed for Christ about his miraculous recovery in the hospital. Later he went to Rev. MacDonald's residence in Dobigone, praising and thanking God. He witnessed for Christ the following week for healing his disease and making him whole.

“Verily, verily I say to you, He that believes on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works that these shall he do.” John 14:12.

“To Thee the First Fruits Give”

By Shadrack Taw Po

While attending Agriculture school in India, I participated in the choir and regularly attended church at the Institute. One Sunday the Sermon by the famous missionary Dr. Stanley Jones was “To Thee the First Fruits Give.” I had the habit of writing down the sermon and this sermon planted a seed that fell on fertile soil.

That Sunday I attended the church with only two banknotes—a one rupee note and a ten rupee note. I was running short of money and so planned to give the one rupee note in the offering and save the ten rupee note to buy a cafeteria coupon book for ten rupees. (In those days one could eat a week on ten rupees.) So I carefully put the notes in my shirt pocket keeping the ten rupee note behind the one rupee note.

When the offering came by, I reached into my pocket and took out the front note and put it in the offering bag, sure that I had given my Lord the one rupee note.

The sermon was precious, inspiring and dynamic and showed me that my motives and attitude towards my Savior were totally impure and wrong. I had only wanted to give him the one rupee note and retain the ten rupee note for myself.

After the sermon, I went back to my room at the hostel and opened my pocket. Greatly to my surprise I discovered only a pitiful, lonely one rupee note left behind. I was greatly distressed. I said, “Oh my goodness, my precious ten rupee note is gone. I have given it my mistake! What can I do? I sat there brooding over the lost treasure.

Suddenly I felt the presence of someone entering my room. These words swiftly came to my mind, “Be of good cheer my son, I will abundantly supply your needs. The only thing I need from you is your heart, your Best. Give me your Best. Give your best to your Savior.” He words overpowered me the whole Sunday evening. The whole night I slept restlessly. I knew exactly where the words came from. Thank You, Lord.

The next morning at 8 am, I received a written note from the Institute of Cafeteria Manager, Mr. Aaron, saying that a close friend bought a coupon book for me and the coupons were with him. I was surprised and delighted but also I was ashamed of myself. Tears ran down my cheeks, for I knew that I had committed a great mistake towards my Lord. But He is merciful. He kept His Promise and His Word—“I will Abundantly supply all your needs.” I knelt and confessed and surrendered to Him and prayed, “To Thee the First Fruits Give.”

My Life Story

By A. Han Win

My father is pastor of the Telegu Baptist Church in Mawlamyaing. I have three older brothers and one older sister. I was the last fruit of their marriage and my parents dedicated me to God.

In 1990, God changed my life through His redeeming love. One night, I had a dream. An angel came to me and said, “The Master needs you to serve in His service.”

In the morning, I told my father what I had experienced. Then, in Morning Devotion, God answered through the prayer of my father.

After thinking about it a long time, I decided to attend the Myanmar Institute of Theology.

There are many Indians in Myanmar but Indian churches are very small and weak. So, I believe, that is the revealing vision of God to me to serve the Telegu Mission of Myanmar. Although we are very weak, I believe that God will help us. So to this cause I have dedicated my life.

Newly-born in Christ

By Lwin Moe

Back in the late 1950s, the American Baptists owned a hospital in Moulmein, a city in Burma. My grandfather worked there as a general laborer. He was born in a small village near Moulmein and married to my grandmother, who was living in the hospital compound. My grandfather became a Christian when he was thirty. My grandmother had been a Christian since her childhood. Being from a small Mon village (Mon is one of the ethnic groups in Burma) village, my grandfather had some friends who were Mons and were working there.

My grandfather's friends had a disagreement with the hospital's administration around 1955. They held a meeting at my grandmother's house. They met there occasionally and decided to strike. Although my grandfather did not participate in the strike, he let them use his house as a rendezvous for them just for friendship's sake. So my grandfather was also dismissed along with them after the strike.

My grandmother then explained everything to the hospital's administration and pleaded with them to show sympathy to her for her children's sake. But the administration refused her appeal and told her that they dismissed every one of them according to God's answer to their prayers. From that time onwards, my grandmother became a person who did not believe in God and relied on herself rather than on God.

She went on to be like that for thirty years until 1995. In 1995, she went to a church to meet her friend there. At that time there was a group of Christians who were preaching the Gospel. During a break, a soloist sang the hymn "The Old Rugged Cross". While hearing that hymn, my grandmother experienced a sudden change. Christ came into her mind, and she became anew. She was overwhelmed with joy.

From that time on she always talks about God and sings a lot. She was content with her life and felt sure that God would provide her daily food. She went preaching the Gospel a lot until the present even though she is seventy eight.

Her conversion was a great surprise for all of us in the family. Not only the family but many friends including the pastor of Moulmein Baptist Church were greatly surprised at her conversion. She says she is just a newly-born baby in Christ. She says she is just three years old. She thanks God for everything. She always says she would not become a born-again Christian if her husband did not get dismissed.

Therefore for everybody on earth, there is an almighty God who knows everything and plans everything for us in order that we may have an eternal life in Heaven.

God's Leading

By Ma Luu Sein

I am a member of one of the ethnic groups called Lahu. I am the fourth daughter of six siblings. In 1994, God bestowed on me a chance to start studying the Bible at Southern Shan State Baptist Bible School. I had made up my mind to attend Bible school in 1990. However, I was not able to go to Bible School because of financial difficulties.

We were in a high hardship as my father remarried soon after my mother was killed in an air crash in 1987. What's more, my father lost his job and couldn't find another one so we all had to rely only on my oldest brother's income. For this reason, my dream of being a theological student had never become fruitful.

We lived among a lot of non-Christians (Buddhists) and so we hardly got a chance to worship at church service. Besides, the children from Christian families had no Sunday School to go to.

Seeing this, I got a strong desire to study Bible theology so that I can share the good news to God with these poor children.

Being near the border of Thailand, my province of Eastern Shan State doesn't have many churches. The few that there are do not really practicing members. To my despair, there are a number of Christian youth who go astray from God's way.

For these reasons, I am diligently trying to prepare and study during my years at Bible School against a lot of hindrances and difficulties. Now I am in my final year.

If it were not for God, I believe, I would not have this opportunity.

THE WILL OF GOD

By Mr. Hai Vung

"Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver you and you shall glorify me." Psalms 50:15
In my twenty nine years of life, two days stand out as unforgettable. On April 10th and June 12th, 1993, God gave me important lessons and taught me to accept the will of God.

As were many of our people, I was facing economic crisis due to inflation and rising costs. Therefore I decided to go to Maishoe, which is noted for its gold mines and gems, particularly sapphires. These are called Maishoe-kyauk. Kyauk means precious stone. I decided I would dig for these precious stones.

Maishoe is in central Shan State about 120 miles from its capital, Taunggyi. Therefore, I left

Mandalay on April 7th by bus and spent the night at Taunggyi. The next day I proceeded to Namsan, 63 miles away where I have relatives living and stayed there two days. At Namsan I made a new friend who was a copilot with the Air Force and based at Namsan. He helped me to go to Maishoe. We left on Monday, April 10th at 6:30AM.

Then we traveled 21 miles and arrived at Minlone. There all passenger cars were being stopped by the Burmese Army and no explanation was given. We figured out these soldiers were from the Pinlone Regiment and they wanted to go to another camp and needed transportation, so were requisitioning private cars as they came along the road. We were very frightened, as often the army seizes men for porters, but this time they only wanted cars.

It was the hot season in Myanmar. All the leaves had turned brown and fallen. Everything was covered with dust. The sun shone very brightly and the temperature was hot. Even the breeze was hot. The soldiers did not allow us to rest in their camp but forced us to remain the sun. I was wet with sweat. We sat under the leafless trees and suffered.

All the passengers were from different backgrounds and ethnic groups but we seemed to be the only Christians. The sun rose higher and the day became hotter. We were very hungry and thirsty. Some passengers had lunch with them, but we had nothing. I had a little jiggery (palm sugar) which we ate. We suffered stomach pains and lay down on the dusty ground. There were not enough vehicles to transport the army.

All the passengers were disappointed and we were angry at the soldiers' manners. I was angry because I had no more money to continue my journey if the soldiers took the vehicle on which I had paid to travel. As I sat there and worried, I remembered the suffering and prayer of our Lord Jesus Christ in the garden of Gethsemane (Matt. 26: 36-45). I recalled the words, "Your will be done," which Jesus prayed, and I received comfort from these words. I went down to a quiet place, bowed down and prayed: "Lord, we can't do anything now. Please help us according to thy will, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven, so that I may glorify thy name."

An hour later, three more vehicles arrived and we proceeded 26 miles to Lechia town with the soldiers. We had lunch there at 3:30 and proceeded towards Mainaung village 44 miles farther. About ten miles before we reached the village, we met some people running toward us who told us many men had been dragged away as porters by the government army. This news was terrible and they persuaded us not to go to Mainaung. At this point there were 12 vehicles and about 150 passengers.

All the passengers were trembling, for we all knew about the suffering of the porters in the war zone. Many porters died of disease, or were beaten to death. Others were forced to walk through mine fields and were left to die when wounded. Being a porter was a death trip. Many dreadful stories of the suffering of porters had reached our ears.

It began to get dark, and the drivers talked about the matter as the passengers trembled with fear.

One of the drivers told us that if the army comes, you must all run away to escape because we cannot help you. So the passengers prepared to run away. I also prepared. Unexpectedly a heavy rain came. Then many mosquitoes attacked us. The road was boggy and filled with mud. I was very disappointed and worried for my future.

This area was no man's land between the government's army and rebel armies. Some passengers had been robbed on this road so we realized it was not good to remain here. Two hours later three men came from Mainaung and told us the soldiers were gone.

This news made us very happy and so we continued on to Mainaung. The vehicles kept getting stuck in the mud so we arrived at midnight. We learned many men had been dragged away as porters.

I realized that God had helped us through the other soldiers at Pinlone who delayed us. Had we not been delayed, we would have arrived earlier at Mainaung village and been seized as porters. I praised God for saving us. I also realized God can use even bad soldiers to help us.

The next day we continued to Maishoe and arrived there at noon. I went to Maishoe hill. I then worked for a private individual who had a license to dig for precious stones in a certain area. We found a big precious stone and several smaller ones, but the rate was low I'm not sure what was going on. We turned all our finds over to our employer. The jewel buyers said some of the jewels were not real. Maybe our boss was a cheat. I didn't get as much money as I expected. Although I wanted to continue working, I decided to leave in order to return to school.

I left Maishoe Hill at 4AM on June 12th. This was 22 miles by main road from Maishoe town. Four hours later we arrived at Maishoe. Fortunately a devout Buddhist gave my friend and me 270 kyats to add to our meager purse. I then headed for Yangon (Rangoon). The car broke down frequently.

When we crossed one bridge, the main timbers broke and the car fell down. Fortunately no one was hurt but the car was damaged. After the car was repaired, we proceeded to Mainaung village. We arrived at a bridge guarded by a Burmese army unit. For security reasons they allowed crossing the bridge only between 7 AM and 6 PM! We begged them to allow us to cross the bridge but they refused permission. Finally they permitted us passengers to walk across the bridge but not the car. There was no food to be found so we decided we must walk on to Mainaung six miles farther. It began raining heavily and the road was muddy. Only after many difficulties, did we arrive at Mainaung at 9 and found food and shelter.

We waited at Mainaung and the car came up at 9AM but its engine broke down again. Then another six cars arrived but they were almost full of passengers. All the drivers knew each other and our driver requested the other drivers take us. Our group rushed to take the few seats and all the places where one could hang on the side of the vehicles. There was not even a place to stand with one leg and hang on. I was not fortunate and so there was no room for four of us. We were

in a sorrowful situation again.

Fortunately a small car came along which had only four passengers. It looked as if it could not go very far but we had no other choices and so we followed in this car. All the other cars had disappeared out of sight ahead.

As we drove along, the engine became very hot and we stopped and poured cold water on it whenever water was available. Other cars overtook and passed us. It was so disappointing. Our driver tried to catch up with the other cars, but the frequent stops to cool the engine prevented us. Then unexpectedly, we overtook all the cars at Lechia . They had been stopped by the Burmese Army who needed eight cars to transfer some units. Our car was in such bad shape, the Burmese army did not want it and allowed us to pass the others and continue on our way. We passed Lechia about 3PM and proceeded towards Pinlone.

About eighteen miles further, we saw four passenger cars stopped on the road. But no one had gotten out of the cars which seemed strange to me. As we passed them, our car was ordered to stop. As I looked around, I saw many robbers with various arms, grenades, and grenade launchers. They surrounded the passenger cars and did not allow anyone to get out. They belonged to the Lwai-maw, a very cruel group.

Suddenly their leader appeared. He threatened us, “Obey us or die.” He called all the drivers and demanded every passenger will give them 100 kyats and each car 5000 kyats. If we did not, he would explode the cars and passengers with bombs.

We knew we were standing at the mouth of our graves and all the passengers were trembling. I had only 110 kyats and my friend had 150 kyats. If we give it to the robbers, we will not be able to go on as we have no friends in Namson. We felt absolutely helpless.

I remembered Psalm 50:15 and I prayed. “Lord, please help us again; I have no friend except you. Please help us according to your will and through your power, so that I glorify your name.” Our driver returned from negotiating with the robbers. Our car and passengers were allowed to continue without paying any money. As we continued I asked the driver what had happened. He said one of the robbers’ leaders had recognized him. He had told them that all of his passengers were his relatives and had no money because of the problems they had had at Maishoe Hill. He then gave the robbers 500 kyats.

I praised God again for delivering us by arranging for us to ride in the broken down car. We arrived at Lwelem at 8:15 and had dinner there which cost us 90 kyats each. I only had 20 kyats left and my friend sixty. We then waited for a car to go to Namsan. Fortunately a commercial vehicle came along and we were allowed to ride it for free.

I arrived back at school feeling God had cared for me in many ways on this trip.

U. Saw Bu

By Emilie Ballard

There had been just enough incidents over the years to keep racial hatred and distrust between the Karens and the ethnic Burmans alive. After the Japanese conquered the British in Burma but before they got to Myaungmya District about 150 miles west of Rangoon, the Burmans in Myaungmya arrested all of the Karens both Christians and non-Christians, in the area and put them in jail, then brought out 50 each day and shot them. This continued for 4 days before the Japanese army officers arrived to take over the administration of the town. Then the Burmans told the Japanese that the Karens could not be trusted because they were pro-British (which was true, since it was only under the British that the Karens had had a fair chance to get a good education or good jobs).

One day a Japanese army group that was checking on power lines in the area encountered a group of Karen villagers who were guarding their village from possible attack by the Burmans, and they were asked who their leader was. They replied that it was Saw Bu. At that time he was an ordinary Christian villager, who after finishing 2 years of college, taught school for 1 year, then became part owner of a rice mill.

The soldiers sent for him, and he went to them promptly. They took him with them to the Japanese commander of the district, Minami Suzuki. The commander said, "Saw Bu, why are you Karens fighting all the time?"

He replied, "We don't fight all the time; but when others come and mistreat us, we fight them in return. We are not against the Japanese."

The commander then showed him a map of the area and pointed to all the Karen villages, which were marked in red. He said, "Saw Bu, you Karens are wicked; so we will kill all of the villagers and burn the villages."

Saw Bu pleaded with him earnestly, but the commander was determined. When Saw Bu saw that he could not persuade the commander otherwise he pointed to the commander's long saber hanging from his waist and said, "If you are determined to destroy my people, please behead me first. I can't bear to go back and see my people destroyed like that." Then he put his head down at the edge of the boat.

At this the commander's heart was moved, and he replied, "Saw Bu, we Japanese want and greatly respect courageous men like you. So I'm going to send you back to the village tonight and you call all the Karens together beside the rice mill by 10 am so we can talk about peace."

Saw Bu got back about midnight and in the end about 10,000 Karens gathered the next day, and

the Japanese made a peace agreement with them.

Since Saw Bu had risked his life on their behalf, all the Karens, both Pwo Karens and Sgaw Karens, both Christian and non-Christians, looked to him as a savior. He served as liaison between the Japanese and the Karen until the war ended and between the Burmans and the Karens after that as long as he lived.

After the war, a Buddhist woman gave him a large tract of land in appreciation. He used it to establish a school teaching from first grade through high school there, and the village of Yedwinyegan developed around the school.

I (Emilie Ballard) was privileged to live in this village for the last 3 years of his life. I found him to be one of the most Christ-like persons I have ever known. He remained humble and gave himself tirelessly for the people. He helped the poor and needy, and even leper who came to him were given a nourishing meal there before being sent on their way. The village was 4 miles from Myaungmya and he had the only vehicle (a jeep) besides the mission jeep in the village. Every time he went down to town if a woman or older person was walking to town, he would get out and have him or her take his place while he continued on on foot. He was so loved and respected that while he was sick in the hospital, he was unanimously elected as representative of the district to the parliament without ever having campaigned (though he died before he could serve).