

THE STORY OF A MODERN MISSIONARY TO AN ANCIENT PEOPLE

by

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CHAPTER FIVE

DETENTION OF MY WIFE

After she had written me that she had decided to come, deploring the sad fact that because of the Messiah I should have to have so many enemies, and expressing a hope that the Messiah would soon come and confer great honor upon me for all these persecutions, I gave thanks to God, and all my friends were glad to hear the news and praised the Lord for having answered prayers, expecting very soon to see her and the children, But a few days later she wrote that as soon as she had begun to prepare for the trip, her relatives opposed her leaving. One of her wealthy uncles said that he would spend half of his fortune, if necessary, to keep her and the children from me, for they too might be apostatized. He engaged a watchman, and prevented my wife's departure. This was a great disappointment, but my earnest friends were not discouraged and continued in fervent prayer to God.

I had corresponded previously with a number of my relatives who were much attached to me, explaining to them all about the Lord Jesus and His Messiahship. A nephew became especially interested and at last expressed his belief in Christ and continued corresponding with me in a very warm and affectionate way. Knowing I could trust him, I cabled him to arrange to take my wife and children by night and bring them to Berlin; and there another man sent by the friends from Edinburgh would bring them to Scotland.

Consequently, that nephew, an honest and experienced man, dealt wisely and assisted my wife and children after midnight when all was quiet and the watchman asleep. The Lord blessed his agency so that no harm befell them, and they reached Berlin in peace and safety. He notified me when they left town, and immediately a man was sent from Scotland to meet them.

In the morning when the watchman found what had happened, my wife's relatives tried to stop her by telegraphing to the train officials all along the route which they supposed she took, to detain thieves, but fortunately they went a different way and thus escaped the trap laid for them.

Arrival of My Family

They were to arrive in Edinburgh at three o'clock one morning, and Miss Douglas herself was so kind as to stay up to welcome them the minute they came.

I anticipated great joy upon meeting my wife after so long an absence, but was greatly disappointed, for no sooner did she see me than she said, "Tell me first about the rumor of apostasy!"

It was then my duty to explain my position as briefly as possible, so I said the Crucified One is our Messiah and that all the time I was searching for the Messiah I did not know that it was He, but now I have found it out and would show it to her from the Bible as soon as we had opportunity. That was enough to confirm the report and she turned away, crying, and said that in a day or two she would return with her children, as she could not stay, on account of my belief in the Crucified One whom she had learned from earliest childhood to hate and abhor.

For two days and two nights, she maintained the same position, not looking into my face or talking to me. I felt very sad about it, for whenever I tried to explain my belief she turned away and did not want to be in the same room; so I kept still, but continued in prayer to God.

Our oldest boys of nine and seven respectively, were well educated for their age; they knew the Pentateuch and Psalms in Hebrew, well. So I read the second Psalm with them, showed that God spoke there of His Son and that He was the Messiah referred to in the second verse. I told them that this was the One in whom I believed and that through His death all our sins were forgiven and that He was sitting at the right hand of God, receiving our prayers and pleading for us.

They, with childlike faith, accepted my teaching and joined me in prayer. This we did morning, noon and evening, and sometimes between these set hours. They too offered their short prayers, that the Lord would be merciful and lead their mother to accept this same Saviour and give her peace.

She, from another room was listening to our words, although we did not know it.

Two days later as I and the boys knelt in prayer, I suddenly felt her arm around me, and opening my eyes in surprise, I saw her smiling, though with tears in her eyes, while she said, "Do not worry, I will stay with you, for I see that you are the same child of God that you were. But I want you to promise to let me observe our religion as before. Then I will know that you are right."

I agreed and we had a very happy hour; as the Lord showed His presence and gave us the peace that passeth understanding.

~ end of chapter 5 ~

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