PRAYER BELL
INDIA

CALLED BY HIS LOVE

RAMABAI MUKTI MISSION
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BEHOLD, I STAND AT THE DOOR, AND KNOCK
(Rev. 3:20)

BY DR. SHEELA GUPTA

'There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death' (Prov. 16:25).

There is only one way and one meeting place where we can meet God. We meet Him at the cross—in Christ and Him crucified alone. It is here where God comes into vital contact with man and man with God. Christ, by shedding His own precious blood, has made peace with God for us.

I praise the Lord that He led me through this only living way, where at the cross I met my Saviour. I was born into a Hindu family and belonged to the Vaishya Caste. My mother was an orthodox Hindu, so much so that she would not even drink water offered by a Christian, and I, too, was brought up with the same background.

Although I had most of my education in mission schools and colleges, I must say I was never brought face to face with the living Christ. All I understood was that what Krishna was to me, Jesus Christ was to the Christians. I, however, always liked the solemn atmosphere of a Christian service.

As far as my spiritual life was concerned, I used to worship the various Hindu gods in the usual traditional way. But I was sure of one thing, that whatever knowledge I had of my own religion, I did not find peace in it. I could not find anything in it on which to lean and on which to hold. All around I saw blind faith, idol worship, and hypocrisy. However, I still went to the temples to worship, but came out, as always, empty, dissatisfied and disillusioned.

One experience stands out very clearly in my mind. Once when I was a medical student, I visited some famous temples in north India. My father and younger sister were also with me. We arrived there at 2.00 o'clock in the afternoon and were not allowed to go inside to have a glimpse of the gods. We were told that the gods were sleeping at that time. I said to myself, 'What kind of a god is this who goes off to sleep?' This, I think, was the beginning of when doubts came into my mind about my own religion.

As the years went by, I started experiencing a strange mental unrest. I was enjoying the pleasures of this world, but deep down within my heart I knew I was not happy. A hungry and a miserable soul was I, groping in the dark, but could not find my way out. Like a lost sheep, I struggled on in my own human strength, until I came to a point when I could not continue any more.

In 1954 I received the opportunity of going to Vellore, a place where
I was longing to go and work on the staff of the Christian Medical College and Hospital, but it was purely for my own material gain. I thought I would stand a very good chance of getting a fine job after having worked on the staff of such a famous hospital. But the Almighty God had an entirely different plan for me.

At first I was very unhappy at Vellore, so much so that I wanted to leave, but the Lord kept me there with His mighty hand. My mental turmoil became worse, and, in order to escape from my own wretched self, I started going to the movies very frequently, and I also started reading the filthiest novels I could find.

During this period, an Australian staff member came to stay in the interns' quarters, and her room was near mine. The Lord had very clearly shown her that she should stay there and not at 'College Hill', where the other staff members were staying. Before long, she started praying for my conversion, and one day, in a very rude manner, I told her that she must not try to force herself on me, as she would never be able to convert me. I thus continued in my mental agony, but she continued to pray. One verse which this friend often quoted from the Bible was Rev. 3:20—'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me'.

A strange thing then happened. I started seeing the Lord Jesus on the cross, and this cross haunted me night and day. Then one night I picked up the Bible which had been presented to me some years back and which I had hardly opened. The place where I happened to open the Bible was at the 18th chapter of the Gospel according to St John, and I began to read all about the crucifixion of our Lord, and soon I found that tears were rolling down my cheeks. I read this portion several nights. Then one night at about 2.00 o'clock in the morning, I heard a loud knock. At first I thought that it must be the hospital ward-aid, but then suddenly I saw the Lord Jesus again, and I knew that it was the Saviour of the World knocking at the door of my heart. His eyes were full of love and compassion. I told Him I could not take Him into my life as I worshipped Krishna, and thus in my stubbornness I rejected Him.

But the time had come. The Good Shepherd had found His lost sheep. All He had to do was to pull her out of the last bit of the thickets in which she was caught up and carry her in His own arms.

On April 4, 1955, at about 8.30 p.m., my friend and I went for a walk. It was a moonlit night. I could see the hills very clearly. My friend started praying, and suddenly in front of my eyes there burst forth the vision of hundreds of crosses on top of the hills with the Lord Jesus on them. I felt as if my whole brain would burst, so
violent was the storm and yet so clear the vision. That very night I surrendered myself at the feet of my Saviour and received Him into my own heart. Praise be to His holy Name! My heart was flooded with a strange peace and joy, a joy which cannot be expressed in words, but can only be shared with those who are His.

At this very time, the Lord brought to Vellore His chosen servant, Brother Bakht Singh, who started a campaign on April 14, 1955. The Lord clearly showed me that I must be baptized by His servant, and thus, along with several others, I was baptized on April 27, 1955. It was a great day in my life.

The Lord in His abundant grace and mercy put me in the midst of His own children from the very beginning, and, being in the fellowship of His saints, I was constantly experiencing a spiritual growth.

For a long time, I had been wanting to work in a small hospital in some small place. I also was longing to tell the people in the ‘way-out’ places about the love of our Lord and also the way of salvation. One day I shared my thoughts with my friend Adrienne, and I was surprised to hear that she, too, had been thinking along the same lines for some time. We both committed this to the Lord. Once when we both were on a holiday, we had a great burden for our future work, and one night we just poured out our hearts to the Lord. The following morning the Lord gave us promises from Job 5:8, Psalm 37:5 and Philippians 4:6. We also asked the elders to pray for us. Then Miss Janet Callan visited Vellore, and she casually mentioned to us the need of a doctor in Mukti. At that time I did not pay any attention to it. It was after some months that Mukti once again came to my mind. Adrienne and I started praying about it night and day. The church in Vellore was also praying about it. We also thought of a few other places, but the Lord was closing every other door save the one at Mukti, and yet we wanted to be absolutely sure about it. Then one day we wrote to Miss Callan and asked her if the door was still open for us at Mukti, and she wrote that they had prayed for a doctor for years, and that they would very much like to have Adrienne and myself if the Lord so led us. They also joined with us in prayer.

On September 29, 1956, I received a letter from Brother Rajmani, one of the elders of the assembly at Madras, stating that the elders had complete peace about our going to Mukti. This I took as a seal from the Lord, and the same day the Lord gave us the promise from Revelation 3:8—‘Behold, I have set before thee an open door’. That very day we wrote to Miss Fletcher that the Lord had clearly shown us that we should go to Mukti as His two humble servants.

On December 26, 1956, the church at Vellore commended us to the service of the Lord. We left Vellore on January 4, and after spend-
ing a few days at 'Jehovah Shammah', the assembly at Madras, and six weeks at 'Elim', the assembly at Hyderabad, we arrived in Mukti on February 22, 1957. The time spent at 'Elim' in the fellowship of His saints was a very precious time for me, for the Lord taught me many things and gave me a true vision of His church. The saints there sent us with much prayer, which was a great strength to us.

When I arrived in Mukti, I knew that the Lord's hand was upon this place, for I could see His goodness everywhere. I have been deeply touched by the love and affection that has been extended to me by the Mukti family. As I entered the gates and saw everyone, I lifted up my heart to Him in praise and said, 'Oh Lord, let them see only Thee in me'.

The next morning I was taken around the hospital, and when I looked around, I knew that the Lord had literally fulfilled every promise which He had given us for our future work and had supplied all our needs far beyond our thinking or asking. I can only say that I am most unworthy to receive so much from His loving hands.

My only burden is that the medical ministry at Mukti will be used for His glory, and that everyone who enters the gates of the hospital may know that our Lord Jesus Christ is the great PHYSICIAN.

I am very conscious of my unworthiness and my limitations. Please pray that the Lord will guide me with His mighty hands and will accomplish that for which He has brought me to Mukti.
TO THE FATHERLESS AND THE WIDOWS

By Adrienne Mogatta

'Pure worship and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world' (James 1:27).

The word 'religion' in the English version of this verse does not give the best meaning. In Sanscrit the word is translated 'bhakti', which means worship, and this is a much truer expression of the meaning here. This is one of the foundation verses of the Ramabai Mukti Mission, and one through which the Lord has led me to come here.

The Lord called me to His service in India in 1947, and it was on September 9, 1951, that I arrived at the Christian Medical College and Hospital in Vellore, South India, where I was appointed as Physiotherapist, under the support of the Church Missionary Society of Australia. During my five years at Vellore, the Lord was continuing to work in my life and teaching me many things about Himself. His Word, and His church. Brother Bakht Singh came to Vellore early in 1955, and there were a number of prepared hearts who quickly responded to the message of God's servant. I was one of many whose eyes were opened concerning believer's baptism, and praise the Lord, He broke my will, and gave me grace to be obedient to this commandment.

The Lord next began to give me a new vision of His purpose for His church, and on February 26, 1956, He clearly showed me that I should resign from my position at the hospital. For the next six months I was seeking to know the Lord's next step for me, and during this time I was continually learning more and more of His ways and purposes through the study of the Word and the teaching of His prophets and teachers whom He has raised up in this land.

In August, 1955, Miss Callan came to Vellore and mentioned that Dr Sheela Gupta and I would be welcome at Mukti if the Lord opened up the way. However, at that time I had not known definitely that it was the Lord's will for me to leave Vellore. It was not until August, 1956, that I wrote to Miss Callan, and asked her to make it a matter of prayer as to whether God was leading us to Mukti. We also asked the elders of the assemblies to pray with us about this matter. At the end of October, we heard from Brother Rajmani, one of the elders in Madras, that they had absolute peace about our going to Mukti. Miss Fletcher wrote to us that those at Mukti also were praying and believed that the Lord's hand was guiding us thither.

We arrived here on February 22, and the Lord gave us wonderful promises both in the morning and at night, assuring us that He had
brought us here with His mighty hand. Now it remains for us to be kept true to the heavenly vision, and to be those whom the Lord finds usable for His heavenly purposes. Please pray that from Mukti many living stones will be claimed for His church.

'And (he) hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all' (Eph. 1:22, 23).

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WILL YOU SHARE YOUR BIBLE WITH INDIA?

Multitudes are waiting for knowledge of the Way of Life, for the inspiration, comfort, joy, and hope that are yours as you read your Bible. As the time for printing the Scriptures in Marathi draws near, the cost looms as a mountain before us. Will you ask the Lord what He would have you do to share the message of your Bible with India?

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THE BIBLE

'When I am tired, the Bible is my bed;
Or in the dark, the Bible is my light.
When I am hungry, it is the vital bread;
Or fearful, it is armor for the fight.
When I am sick, 'tis healing medicine;
Or lonely, thronging friends I find therein.

'If I would work, the Bible is my tool;
Or play, it is a harp of happy sound.
If I am ignorant, it is my school;
If I am sinking, it is solid ground.
If I am cold, the Bible is my fire;
And wings, if boldly I aspire.

'Should I be lost, the Bible is my guide;
Or naked, it is raiment, rich and warm.
Am I imprisoned, it is ranges wide;
Or tempest-tossed, a shelter from the storm.
Would I adventure, 'tis a gallant sea;
Or would I rest, it is a flowery lea.

'Does gloom oppress? The Bible is a sun.
Or ugliness? It is a garden fair'.
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