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## September 2011 - Newsletter

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Dear Friends and Family,

Whew! Hot weather is behind us now. The gardens are mostly memory. Our freezer is full of all the good veggies to be enjoyed in the winter months ahead. God is so-o-o good!

Our subject this month is: Man's Attempt to Change God's Creation

### Caught Between A Fire and the Deep Blue Sea

The story has been told of a thrilling rescue by sea of thousands of people from the burning city of Smyrna. They were refugees, chased there from their homes by the fleeing Greek army.

The year was 1922. The world was still wracked with pain from the wars that had ripped apart homes and lands. The Turkish city of Smyrna had been given to the Greeks as a reward for their participation in the war. The Greek army had moved into Smyrna and pushed inland. Feelings ran high.

Turkish citizens were not interested in having the Greeks run their government. Unwilling to submit to the new occupation, they rallied under the leadership of Ataturk in a daring drive for independence.

The Greeks were confident of victory. They pushed steadily toward the heart of the country when suddenly they retreated before Ataturk. They burned and pillaged their way back to Smyrna. In their wild retreat, they forced their own countrymen as well as the Armenians to abandon their homes and flee to the coast. Every road to the sea was choked with refugees.

As the Greek soldiers reached the coast, in their haste to reach safety, they simply took ship and sailed away leaving their own people as refugees, defenseless, to make out as best they could.

Suddenly Smyrna was a burning inferno. The great mass of refugees pushed toward the sea to escape the flames.

A young American, Asa Jennings, and his family were among those seeking to escape the flames. He had been sent a few weeks earlier by the Y.M.C.A. to that troubled city to study what might be done to smooth relations between the Turks, Armenians, Greeks, and Jews living there.

Asa Jennings put his little family aboard an American destroyer and went back to see what he could do for the refugees.

Somehow, he arranged for food to be sent in. But this suffering mass of humanity, caught between the fire and the sea, needed more than food. They needed ships.

As Asa Jennings pondered over how to get ships for these desperate people, he learned that the twenty Greek ships that had carried the Greek soldiers away to safety were anchored at Mytilene, an island not far away. What a providence!

Immediately he went to Mytilene, certain that here was the answer. Surely Greek ships would be willing to save Greek people. To his amazement, General Frankos, in charge of transports, responded with indifferent caution and indecision.

Undaunted, Jennings would not give up. Seeing an American ship, the U.S.S. Mississippi, at anchor, he rowed out through the early morning mist to board her. He was determined to go over the head of General Frankos and make contact directly with the Greek government in Athens.

Telling the captain of the ship of the plight of the stranded Greek refugees on the shores of burning Smyrna, he asked that a code message be sent to Athens, requesting that all ships in the waters about Smyrna be placed at his disposal.

It was four o'clock in the morning. A message came back, "Who are you?"

A natural question, Jennings had been in that part of the world only about a month, and no one had ever heard of him.

He sent word back, "I am in charge of American relief at Mytilene." He didn't bother to explain that he was in charge only by virtue of being the only American there.

Athens outdid General Frankos in caution. The cabinet would have to decide. The Cabinet was not in session. The Cabinet would meet in the morning.

What protection would be given the ships? Would American destroyers accompany them? Did that mean that American destroyers would protect the ships if the Turks should try to take them? And so it went.

Finally, at four in the afternoon, Jennings' patience was exhausted. Boldly he wired an ultimatum to the Greek government.

If he did not receive a favorable reply by six o'clock, he would wire openly, without code letting all the world know that the Greek government had refused to rescue its own people from certain death.

It worked. Shortly before six o'clock a message came through: ALL SHIPS IN AEGEAN PLACED YOUR COMMAND. REMOVE REFUGEES SMYRNA.

Those ten words meant life for many thousands. They also meant that a young, unknown American had just been made an Admiral of the Greek navy.

Assuming command, he asked the captains of the twenty ships to be ready to leave for Smyrna by midnight.

At that hour the ships were in place. Asa Jennings, aboard the lead ship, ordered the Greek flag run down and an American flag flown in its place with a signal that meant "Follow me."

He mounted the bridge and ordered full steam ahead.

Try to picture that scene. As the stately ships moved forward, on the horizon could be seen the smoke

arising from the burning city. Then the charred remains came into view. Imagine the feelings as Jennings and those Greek sailors gazed at the blackened skeletons of those once prestigious buildings. The skyline looked haunted, deserted, depressing.

Now the shoreline can be seen, a black border of human beings in sharp contrast against the waters. No sign that they are still living can be seen, but Jennings knew that it was a border of 300,000 sufferers waiting, hoping, praying as they had done every moment for days for ships, ships, ships.

As the ships moved closer, and the shore spread out before him, it seemed as if every face was turned toward them, and every arm outstretched to bring them in. It seemed that the whole shore moved out to grasp them. The air was filled with the cries of those thousands, cries of such joy that the sound pierced to the very marrow of his bones.

No need to tell them what those ships were for. They had scanned the watery horizon for days, longing, hoping, looking wistfully for ships. No one need explain that here was help, that here was life and safety.

Never before had he been so thankful, so truly happy, as on that early morning when he realized that at last, and thank God in time, he had been able to bring hope, and a new life, to those despairing thousands.

What a thrilling rescue! An answer to their desperate hope, saving them from certain doom.

Friends, we too are waiting for a rescue. A rescue from a convulsing, troubled planet. A planet where fear rules, a planet where death reigns. A planet where frantic, frightened, frustrated men will soon cry, "Stop the world! I want to get off!"

Does anyone see the suffering billions on this earth? Does anyone hear the silent cry for help? Does anyone feel the desperate hope for rescue? Does anyone care? Is help on the way?

Good news, friends, God has an answer! He has scheduled a great rescue not from the sea, but from the sky.

Paul describes it this way: "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with Him in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (I Thessalonians 4:16,17).

### CONGRATULATIONS ANGEL WOODRUM!

Angel Woodrum lives in West Madison, WV. She has earned three bible certificates. (Our regular Bible course and a course in the Book of Daniel as well as a course in the Book of Revelation)!

We realize how much time and effort it takes for studying and completing these courses. We really appreciate your dedication and faithfulness in studying God's Word! We know God will bless you and all the knowledge you have learned will be a continual blessing to you.

Congratulations Angel! Keep in touch. We love you!

Katie and Rodney Armstrong  
Cleaver of Truth Ministry

### The Blind Hymn Writer

Fanny Crosby, the noted hymn writer, was blinded at the age of six weeks, apparently by the application of a too strong poultice to her eyes. The following poem was written about her:

Sweet blind singer over the sea,  
Tuneful and jubilant, how can it be  
That the notes of gladness that float so far,  
As if they fell from an evening star,  
Are the notes of one who may never see  
Visible music of flower and tree?

How can she sing in the dark like this?  
What is her fountain of joy and bliss?  
Her heart can see. Her heart can see.  
Well may she sing so joyously;  
For the King Himself, in His tender grace,  
Hath shown her the brightness of His face.

By Frances R. Havergal of England

### FROM KATIE'S COOKBOOKS

#### Blueberry or Pineapple Sauce

(Julianne Pickle)

Bring the following to a boil in a saucepan:

2 cup fresh or frozen blueberries (unsweetened)

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup water

1 Tbsp honey

$\frac{1}{8}$  tsp salt

$\frac{1}{4}$  tsp vanilla

Combine in a separate container:

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup water

1 Tbsp cornstarch

When berries come to a boil, add the cornstarch water, stirring constantly until it returns to boil. Remove from heat.

(variations: Instead of blueberries you can use pineapple, peaches, raspberries, strawberries. (You may have to use a little more honey in some of these.) This makes a delicious topping for pancakes, waffles etc.

We will see you next month.

Remember God loves you and so do we!

Rodney and Katie

Note: You will notice this month that the Bible History has been omitted in order to have room for the article on the Federal Reserve.

