



The Mission Trail

Box 99

Guthrie, Okla. 73044

Willie C. Murphey • Frances E. Murphey •

"LIFT UP YOUR EYES, AND LOOK ON THE FIELDS; FOR THEY ARE WHITE ALREADY TO HARVEST." — JOHN 4:35

VOL. 16, NO. 4

THE MISSION TRAIL

APRIL, 1980

God's Messages to the Seven Churches — Part 1

Radio Broadcast for March 9, 1980

After considerable research and looking to the Lord to direct, I have decided it would be valuable to bring the listeners and readers a report on The Seven Churches of Asia Minor to whom God gave His messages and promises through the Apostle John while on the Isle of Patmos as found in the Book of Revelation.

Although there are things spoken to these congregations which are applicable to our day, I do not consider that each of these Churches or congregations represent an "age" through which the Church has passed or is to pass. Instead I believe these messages were directed to "the angel" or minister as overseer of the congregation and the message applies to that particular Church. However, the truths spoken are a warning to us from which we may profit as well as all others of all ages. With this in mind let us proceed. As a text let us consider this verse: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." Rev. 2:17.

Wouldn't it be interesting to know just what has become of each of these congregations after all these years? There was Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea, seven of them.

To cite some of my reference material,

let me say Adam Clarke Commentary has been very helpful. Also a report of Henry Lindsay, who was a chaplain to the British embassy at Constantinople back in the year 1816. This is now more than 164 years ago. He made report to the British Foreign Bible Society after visiting the sites of the 7 Churches of Asia Minor to distribute Bibles. So he tells what he found. Further information has been obtained from Encyclopedias and "Revelation Explained" by F. G. Smith.

Beginning in the second chapter of Revelation let us consider Ephesus, the first Church mentioned. Get your Bible and read the second and third chapters of Revelation along with us. The message to Ephesus was: "I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: So some things they were doing were commendable, but let us go a little further: "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." A whole sermon might be preached on this alone. They were slipping and los-

ing out. They were told to repent and do their first works, or else the candlestick would be removed out of his place.

Indeed, the candlestick has long since been removed from its place at Ephesus. There is no longer such a city. On a site nearby a few poor cottages exist. Lindsay, said he found but three Christians, two brothers who keep a small shop and a gardner. He said "their ignorance is lamentable indeed." Can you imagine this after the Apostle Paul ran into such strong opposition there? This is where the great temple was built to honor the "goddess Diana"... This temple was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. There are some conflicting reports as to size and length of time in building, but from what I gather it was more than 400 feet long, more than 200 feet wide. It was supported by more than 100 pillars from 50 to sixty feet high and took from 100 to 200 years or more to build at the expense of all Asia! On an earlier broadcast I referred to this goddess Diana as being the "Huntress" but after more research I find there were two different goddesses known as Diana. This "Diana of the Ephesians" was the one of "nature" and seems to me was more heathenish with many emblems of animals and flowers, etc. So now there is no temple to the great goddess Diana, no spiritual church and no city of significance known as Ephesus. A warning it is indeed!

To the church at Smyrna the message is: "I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich)". So this congregation had suffered many things and was very poor in temporal goods. But there is one thing unique about this Smyrna; it has survived wars, earthquakes many and destruction. During the Roman wars it was

taken and partly destroyed. In the thirteenth century only the ruins of its former splendor were left, but today it stands with an estimated population of 375,000 as the most important place of trade in Asia Minor. It is true they are still poor. The appearance of the city from the sea is extremely attractive, but a closer inspection dissipates the illusion. The houses, are mostly built of wood, are mean and fragile looking; the streets close and filthy, and filled with intolerable stench proceeding from the sewers and drains. The city is divided into four quarters, Frank, Turk, Jew and Armenian. Most of the other cities either do not exist at all, or their names have been changed, but not Smyrna. Smyrna remains. Who knows how much preserving effect the acceptance of Christianity may have had there? It is believed the famous Polycarp was the pastor at Smyrna and he was later martyred about 167 A. D.

Next we come to the Church of Pergamos. The saints there had not denied the name of Christ, but some things such as fornication and idolatry were prevalent and the call was for them to repent. It may have been they associated with idolaters in the heathen temples, and partook with them in their religious festivals. As far as the city of Pergamos, it no longer exists as such, but in its place north of Smyrna is Bergama. The population of Bergama has been estimated to be from 6,000 to 20,000. One hundred and sixty-four years ago this chaplain, Henry Lindsay reported considerable church activity but wrote: "I experienced with deep regret that the resident clergy were totally incapable of estimating the gift I intended them".

This he spoke in relation to the new Testament in Greek which he had for them.

God's message to the Church at Thyatira was: "I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first." This all sounds good, but yet there were a few things against them. And the scriptures refer to the woman Jezebel. Now, we know the wicked Jezebel, Ahab's wicked wife and how she was responsible for the death of Naboth that the king might get his vineyard. So it seems here in this Church at Thyatira something was taking place which was very much out of order. It is quite possible that "fornication" referred to spiritual idolatry. And this was defiling the congregation.

God gave Jezebel a time to repent and so he did this Church of Thyatira... God is ever working and calling for his people to come out from Babylonian confusion and be a separate and clean church.

Again, the ancient city of Thyatira no longer exists, but Ak-Hissar occupies that site some 58 miles NE of Smyrna. Abundant relics can be found of Thyatira. But it has gone the way of other ancient cities. Ak-Hissar has a population of an estimated 20,000. Lindsay estimated this population to be 30,000 when he visited there 164 years ago. He found one Greek church and one Armenian Church. And he did leave there a Romanic Testament which was esteemed a great treasure. He later sent them four other copies. But just think what Thyatira might have been as a source of truth and light if they had held fast to the truth and purged out all the things which contaminated them in this warning from God through the Apostle John!

God's message to Sardis was: "Be watchful, and strengthen the things

which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God." How true this is of so many people and professors when God turns the search-light of truth upon their lives and hearts! Their works are found to be imperfect. The flaws will then show. "For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Dear ones, I don't have sufficient time to finish this message on the Seven Churches of Asia, at this time. Let us continue on a later broadcast. Do keep listening to the broadcast. We need to learn from the lessons of history. Listen to these scriptures of solemn warning:

"And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." Matt. 21:44.

"For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off." Romans 11:21-22.

"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;" 2 Thess. 1:7-9.

Every day may seem alike as they come to us, but each day comes with its own opportunities, its own calls to duty, its own privileges--offering us invaluable gifts. That day passes and never returns again. Other days as bright may come, but that day never comes a second time. If we do not take then the opportunities it offers, we may never have another chance to get them, and shall always be the poorer for what we have missed. It is then easy to think what we might have had or what we might have been.

Our Father, help us to realize "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope". Bless each listener in the way which they have need and thine shall be the praise through Christ. Amen.

Thank you, friends, for a few moments of your time. If we may be of some spiritual help to you, be sure to let us know. Until we meet again, this is Willie Murphey saying God bless and keep you always and a very cheerful goodbye.

Testimonies

From Calif.: "I really enjoy The Mission Trail. Here is a little offering to help keep it on the air and in print. May the dear Lord bless you and continue to keep you in his tender care. Please continue to remember me in your prayers." --Sis. Ruth Turner

--o--

From Wash.: "We are thankful to the dear Lord for all his blessings to us. We love him and want to be careful to please him. The world has no charms for us. We have lots of battles, but we have lots of victories too."

--Sis. Violet Thomas

From Texas: "I love the Lord this morning. I mean to press right on in this way. I want to be true and faithful to the end of my life here on this earth. Truly a lot of people are going out into eternity -- ready or not! What a sad time for those not ready. What a glad time for those who are. We must be ready when the Lord comes. You dear ones who got saved while at different meetings last year, keep pressing on. Pray much. Read your Bible. Some of you got saved for the very first time in your life. Others have returned unto God after wandering back in sin for a season... Now you are back in the fold. Look to Him. He will help us. Let us pray for and encourage one another in the faith. Remember the lost ones too. I was happy to be in services for a few days of assembly meeting there. I've already seen some answers to prayer."

--Sis. Velda Ellis

--o--

From Kans.: "I hope you are alright. We still love the Lord, and so thankful we can live for Him. Pray for us as the devil is so busy. I know we need to be so watchful. Love,"

--Sis. Dolly Gideon

--o--

From Mo.: "We attended the anniversary of Bro. Albert and Sis. Margaret Eck. It was lovely. My husband was able to go and enjoy it for which we are thankful. The Lord is surely blessing him. We are looking for complete healing." --Sis. Esther Hightower

--o--

From Colo.: "Jesus has been so good to me. Oh, to trust and serve him better each day is my prayer and live so when he calls for me I'm ready to go to meet him and all my loved ones and all God's children. Won't it be wonderful there, no more sorrow, trials, or heartaches. Do pray for us all here."

--Sis. Addie McEndree

From Mo.: "We send greetings in Jesus dear name. We are so glad we have found one that cares for us through all the scenes of life. He has truly proven a friend to us. Life would not be worth much without Him. We are still in the valley of affliction. But we know God knows just what is best for each one of His trusting children. It is better farther on. All the toils of the road will seem as nothing when we get to the end of the way. The Lord has given us such a beautiful sunshiny day after all of the snow. The snow was about 12 inches in our front yard. But Bro. Mac came and made so many good paths so it was not so bad to get around. Bro. Mac and Sis. Carrie are so good to come and help us ... we have been enjoying so much your messages over the radio."

--Bro. & Sis. F. E. Wilson

--o--

From Okla.: "Another year has gone and some of us are still here; 87 years is a long time. I can remember when most all churches were on fire for God, no cold formal meetings as there are now. So many places Jesus has been programed out ... God has been very good to me and I thank him for it all. I know I am living on borrowed time and I praise God each day for letting me live... The 37th Psalm has always been a favorite of mine."

--Sis. Minnie A. Adcock

--o--

From Okla.: "I am still saved and determined to make Heaven my home."

--Sis. Mary Anna Brown

--o--

From S. Car.: "...hope this finds you both well and happy in the Lord. I love Him this morning with all my heart. I do desire the prayers of you both to pray for me that the Lord will completely heal me if it is the Lord's will to do so. I have a need and that is I need more faith..."

--Sis. Minnie Boulden

From Calif.: "We send greetings of Christian love in Jesus dear name, the one who spilled His precious blood so many years ago to save a lost world and its power is still the same today, that whosoever will may come and receive pardon regardless of how vile a sinner they may be. He is so patient and longsuffering with all of us... We hope this year will be the most profitable year you have had in your work for the Lord."

--Sis. Agnes Huskey

--o--

From Okla.: "Greetings to you in the name of our blessed redeemer who will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. Here of late I have been thinking on what a great inheritance that we (the children of God) have. Not only can we have abundance of joy and happiness in this life but at the end it will far exceed any inheritance that we have here on earth, "a treasure that fadeth not away..." Please keep me on your mailing list. I do covet your prayers."

--Sis. Elnora Conley

--o--

From Pa.: "This letter leaves me doing just fine in soul and thanking God that it is as well with me in body as it is... We pray the Lord continue to bless you as you send forth the little paper in his name."

--Sister Mary Johnson

--o--

From Okla.: "If we trust God he will see we live (food, shelter and clothing). Doesn't he clothe the lilies of the fields? The most important thing in our life is to plan to die, get ready for heaven or hell is our doom. Our spirit groans within us for the lost."

--Sis. Doris Bowers

--o--

From Mo.: "I'm much encouraged in my soul and body and I'm pressing on with courage, looking forward to that crowning day." --Sis. Thelma Busbee

From Oregon: "I wanted to tell a little incident of how God protected Lucille Trimble and me. She comes over almost every 3rd Sunday and I meet her in Albany. A big transport truck passed us and was really rolling. When he got up ahead of us, all of a sudden a big hub cap popped off and came rolling right for my car at a high rate of speed. Just as it got almost to my car it suddenly swerved and went off in the ditch. It was as though the hand of God changed its course. Both of us said, 'Praise the Lord' at the same time. Oh how thankful we were. It could have hit our windshield or seriously damaged the hood and maybe put us off the road. So you see how God protects His children. It pays to serve Jesus each day."

--Sis. Grace Jones

--o--

From La.: "We had a reasonably quiet year in '79, but it sure doesn't sound very good for the beginning of this new year. I just hope and pray the dear Lord will be pleased to permit us to continue our freedom of worship, and keep us from war... Surely we do not know what we will face this year and it really should stir all the saints to draw close to the Lord, and together."

--Sis. Myrtis Flynn

--o--

From Fla.: "We're yet encouraged in the way of the Lord, rejoicing that He is yet the same, tho the years bring many changes. It's been six years since we married and moved from Guthrie to Goulds, Fla. We're thankful to the love and mercy of God alone that we can say that these years have left our souls wiser and more enriched in the things of God. The Lord has shown Himself faithful and strong in our behalf, for which we praise Him. Do continue to send the Mission Trail, and may the Lord bless the labor..."

--Bro. Riley and Sis. Bonnie Riley

From Okla.: "It is a great blessing to know that Jesus prayed for us, as we read in St. John 17:3--'And this is life eternal, that they might know the true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.' It seems to me it is as in Isa. 45:21, 22: 'Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the Lord? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.' 'But thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.' 1 Cor. 15:57. I truly enjoyed the message last Sunday morning March 2, over the Broadcast."

--Sis. Eva Penner

--o--

From Calif.: "I am yet saved and pressing on. Please continue to send The Mission Trail... I am 82 years old and I am still able to be up and going. It is getting hard for me to write now. Please pray that I will be ready when God calls for me."

--Sis. Esther I. Thornton

--o--

From Mo.: "The Lord is my helper. He is a present help in time of need. He loves us all. He knows every heart. I'm praying for you all... pray for me."

--Sis. Lily Mae Glass

--o--

From Mo.: "I so much enjoyed reading your Feb. 3 message on 'Vengeance' in the Mission Trail. It was so well explained and very easy to understand. I sat down and began reading and never stopped until I read through it... There is so much vengeance in the world today and crime. One is appalled at all of it and wonders if the time isn't near for the Lord's return."

--Sis. J. Edw. Leach

at press time

we understand:

Our heart-felt sympathies go to Bro. Ben Goldsberry and other members of the family in the loss of his mother. Her funeral was held in Welch, Okla., Saturday, March 8. Neither Bro. Ben nor his companion, Sis. Sybil are well in body. Remember them in prayer.

--o--

SELECTED

"Once when young Henry Moorhouse was walking down the street in Manchester, England, he heard a man calling out from the doorway of a building: 'Ladies, and gentlemen, come and see the great American pig.' Moorhouse paid the entrance fee and went to look at the remarkable animal. At the command of his master, the animal would pick out letters from the alphabet and spell the words 'good pig.' He would also perform other feats--walk on his hind legs and offer to shake hands with the crowd. The porker was washed and scrubbed, his hoofs were polished and he was all dressed up. No one could deny he was well trained and well behaved in every respect. But in spite of his remarkable 'culture' and his attractive appearance, he later proved he still had the nature of a hog. While out for exercise one day he slipped from his leash and was soon rolling and grunting contentedly in a large mud puddle."

--Sel. by Sis. Grace Jones

--o--

"But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." 2 Pet. 2:22.

"When the way looks dark and we can't see our way, we just look up to our Pilot who has promised never to leave us nor forsake us."

--Sis. Eva Cox

--o--

Welcome to Bro. Ralph and Sis. Dorothy Wilkins who recently moved from Michigan to Oklahoma. We are glad to have them in the Guthrie congregation.

--o--

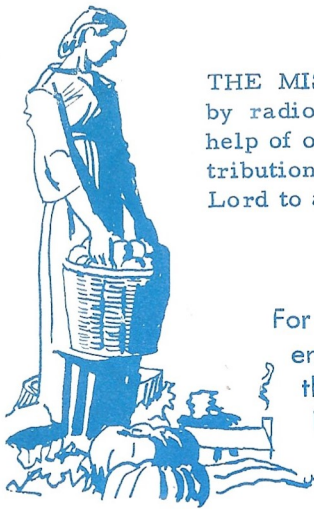
Congratulations to Bob and Norene Harmon on the birth of their son, Randen Daniel on Feb. 23. Their address is Box 86, Prattsville, Ark. 72129.

--o--

Guthrie-- "We are happy to report that we enjoyed the hospitality of Bro. Ralph & Sis. Inez Beisly, Coffeyville, Kans., during our visit Friday, Saturday and Sunday, March 7, 8, 9, during which time we were in services with the saints there. It was a pleasure to become better acquainted with those of that congregation."--Wayne and Mary Murphey

--o--

Frances and I were happy to be with the saints of "Four Corners" near Blue-jacket, Okla., Sunday morning, March 9. The attendance was very good we thought, and we enjoyed the fellowship of the Lord's people. Sis. Gladys Piper has a large house trailer near the chapel and it was good to visit with her there and Bro. Albert and Sis. Margaret Eck. On our return we also stopped by and visited Bro. and Sis. Oscar Wall. The Lord gave us a good day, beautiful weather, and the fellowship of the saints. How wonderful to be a member of the great "Family of God." --WCM



THE MISSION TRAIL, originating in Guthrie, Okla., is broadcast by radio and published in printed form by Willie Murphey with the help of others. Its principal support comes from the free will contributions of its listeners and readers. Those who are led by the Lord to assist may do so by sending their offering to:

THE MISSION TRAIL, Guthrie, Oklahoma 73044



For some it will come true: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." Jer. 8:20. Let us hasten with the message which Jesus gave: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

Broadcast Schedule

Listen for THE MISSION TRAIL weekly on

RADIO STATION	LOCATION	DIAL SETTING	TIME
KGGF	Coffeyville, Kansas	690 kc.	Sunday, 8:00 a. m.

The Mission Trail
Box 99
Guthrie, Okla. 73044

Return Postage Guaranteed

BULK RATE
U. S. POSTAGE
8.4 ¢ PAID
Guthrie, Okla.
Permit No. 133