

King James Bible Study Correspondence Course

An Outreach of Highway Evangelistic Ministries
5311 Windridge lane ~ Lockhart, Florida 32810 ~ USA

Women Heroes of the Faith**Lesson 3B Mary Groves Müller**

(Wife of George Müller, founder of the Bristol Orphanage)

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To get a full understanding of this lesson you must read Lesson 3A first, this is the continuation.

The Müllers' children did not leave the orphanage when they were grown, through prayer, and much consideration, had found them suitable employment. At the time of their departure, their belongings consisted of their clothes, shoes, and money that had been kept for them in savings accounts. Mr. Müller had a special meeting with each orphan on their last day. He talked with them, read the Scriptures, and said a special prayer for them. As a parting gift, he gave each orphan a new half-crown (a monetary unit equal to two schillings and six pence, equivalent to \$200 in the 21st century) a Bible, and two volumes of The Müller's journal.

In a speech given in 1880, Pastor Samuel Barriball, a former Müller orphan, described what the departure from the orphanage was like. He said, *"It was the unspeakable privilege of every orphan boy and girl, on the afternoon prior to departure from the home, to pay a special visit to Mr. Müller private room, to have a talk together, with reading of the Scriptures and prayer. I venture to say that the influence of that parting interview has been a lifelong and abiding inspiration to a good and useful life in the case of a very large percentage of those who passed from under the Müller's care. It was indeed a priceless heritage to go forth into life's battle with a prayer from such a team that God's blessing may rest upon you, and be your portion for evermore."*

Providing for so many children was truly an enormous undertaking. George and Mary met daily to pray together, during which time they gave thanks to God for His many gracious answers to prayer, as well as making every new need known to Him. They also prayed for the spiritual condition of each of the children. There were other times during the day that they met with the workers for prayer. It is quite obvious that prayer was the sole means of keeping the orphan work alive and successful. George decided to keep detailed journals of all the answered prayers and publish them yearly in an effort to share with the world the remarkable ways God had provided for their work. George said, "The first and primary object of the work was, and still is, that God might be magnified by the fact that the orphans under my care are provided with all they need, only by prayer and faith, without any one being asked by me or my fellow-laborers, whereby it may be seen that

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God is faithful still and hears prayer still.” Their journals were entitled a *Narrative of Some of the Lord’s Dealings with George Müller*.

The following are some excerpts:

July 28, 1836. We would not have been able to pay the weekly salary of the teachers had not the Lord helped us again. This evening a brother gave eight pounds from a number of his workmen who paid weekly one penny each of their own accord toward our funds. The money had been collecting for many months, and, in this our time of need, it had been put into the heart of this brother to bring it.

October 9, 1838. Today we were brought lower than ever. The matrons in the Boys’ Orphan House had only two shillings. We were wondering whether to buy bread with it or more meat for dinner when the baker left seventy-five loaves of bread as a gift.

November 24, 1838. This has been a very remarkable day. We had little money in hand this morning, and several pounds were needed. But God has helped us through this day also. While I was in prayer about the funds, I was informed that a lady ordered three sacks of potatoes to be sent to the Orphan Houses. They could not have come at a better time!

February 7, 1839. This day there was no money on hand, and I was waiting on God. At four o’clock I went to the Girls’ Orphan House to meet for prayer and found that a box had come for me from Barnstable. The box was opened, and it contained more than fourteen pounds for the orphans and for the Bible fund. Besides this, there were four yards of cloth, three pairs of new shoes, two pairs of new socks, six books for sale, a gold pencil-case, two gold rings, two gold earrings, a necklace, and a silver pencil case.

July 15, 1839. Two pounds seven shillings was needed for the orphans, but we had nothing. I had no idea how to obtain the means for dinner and for our other needs. My heart was perfectly at peace and sure of help. That afternoon we received a letter from India, written in May, with fifty pounds for the orphans.

May 27, 1840. The Lord has had mercy! A person owed us six pounds fifteen shillings. This morning I asked the Lord to incline his heart to bring the money, or at least part of it, since we were in such need. Just as I was going to meet for prayer with our fellow-laborers this afternoon, he brought four pounds. Enough has come in to supply us for several days. But I must mention one more thing which is even more precious: the Lord has begun to work in the hearts of several of the boys. They want to learn more about Jesus.

September 5, 1840. Because so little has come in during the last days, at least three pounds was required to supply the needs of the day. Not one penny, however, was in hand when the day began. Now observe how the

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kind Father helped us! This evening a sister brought two pounds ten shillings sixpence. Though she did not feel well, she said she had come because it was on her heart, and she could not stay away.

October 1, 1841. When I had not one penny in hand for the needs of this day, ten shillings were brought to me for the orphans. The enclosed note read, "Your heavenly Father knows that you need these things. Trust in the Lord." This word of our Lord is to me more valuable than many bank notes.

February 9, 1842. As far as I know, we had never been in greater poverty. We were in need of milk, bread, and coal. When I arrived at the Orphan Houses, I found that the Lord had just sent help two or three minutes earlier. A brother was on his way to work this morning when the Lord put the orphans on his heart. He could not go on any further but felt constrained to bring three sovereigns to the Orphan House. Help was never more truly needed, nor did the help of the Lord ever come more obviously from Himself God's timing could not have been better.

December 16, 1842. Nothing has come in. At six o'clock this evening, our need was very great in the Orphan Houses and the day schools. I prayed with two of the laborers. We needed some money to come in before eight o'clock tomorrow morning, so that we could buy milk for breakfast. We had scarcely risen from our knees when we received a letter containing a sovereign for the orphans. About five minutes later, a brother promised to give me fifty pounds next week. A quarter of an hour after that, a sister left a sovereign for the orphans. How sweet and precious it is to see the willingness of the Lord to answer the prayers of His needy children!

November 20, 1857. The boiler at the new Orphan House number 1 leaked considerably. The condition of the boiler could not be known without taking down the brickwork surrounding it. That would take days, and what was to be done in the meantime to find warmth for the children? A bleak north wind had set in, bringing the first really cold weather. The repairs could not be put off, I asked the Lord for two things

- 1. That He would change the north wind to a south wind.*
- 2. That He would give the workmen a desire to work.*

On Wednesday, the south wind blew, exactly as I had prayed. The weather was so mild that no heat was needed. The brickwork was removed, the leak was soon found, and the repairmen set to work, and preferred to work all night till the job was finished. By the next morning, the repair of the boiler was accomplished.

These are very small sampling of the more than fifty thousand answers to prayer George recorded in the journals. Throughout it all Mary was right there next to her husband praying and supporting all of his efforts. Without

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question Mary was a “help meet” for George. She had received an excellent education in her youth and was a very good mathematician which enabled her to help George by examining the account books and bills every month. If any mistake was made along the way, Mary found it. She was also quite knowledgeable in astronomy, English grammar, geography, history and had studied French, Hebrew, Latin, and German. She was able to use this fine education not only in the orphanage, but also to teach their daughter, Lydia, their only surviving child of four. Mary also possessed great ability in the area of needlework as well as a thorough knowledge of material and linen. This was immensely helpful when, as the wife of an orphanage director, she had to order thousands of yards of fabric for the making of clothing and bed linens. Mary worked tirelessly to provide clothes and good, comfortable bedding for the children, many of whom had never even slept in a bed. Instead of using her education and talents for her own benefit, Mary used them to better the lives of the orphans and to help her husband run the orphanage.

George and Mary cared more than anything else for the salvation of the orphans, and for this they consistently prayed. They kept detailed records about each child that came to the orphanage - their name, when they arrived, their circumstances before arriving, notes about them during their time at the orphanage, when they left, where they went when they left, and, most importantly, if they ever became a believer. Many children did, and often George would receive letters of gratitude.

Here are just a few:

December 10, 1859

Dear Sir,

I have been taught by your life that there is something truly noble and grand for a man to live for; there is nothing more noble than the cause for which you have spent, and are still spending your valuable life, for which cause I do hope to spend mine, namely, the cause of Christ. ~~~~~Kathleen

Dear Sir,

The greatest thing that has ever happened to me was at the Müller homes because there I learned about the Lord Jesus, through the teaching that had been put into my heart as a child. I gave that same heart to the Lord one day, and I have never regretted it. ~~~~~Edith Larby

December 10, 1859

Dear Sir,

I thank you for the education, food, clothing, and for every comfort, but above all, for the instruction from God’s word which I received in that happy Orphan House; for it was there that I was brought to know Jesus as my Saviour. I hope that you will be spared many more years to care for poor,



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destitute children like me. I hope to prosper in my trade, and thereby show my gratitude for all your kindness. With all my love, I am, Dear Sir, yours gratefully. ~~~~~~Sarah

George and Mary, through the working of the Lord in response to their prayers, were able to care for 10,024 orphans. Mary passed away in 1870 and George in 1898. After George passed away, the work continued, and another 8,000 children lived and learned in the orphanage at Ashley Down.

George attributed all of the success to the Lord’s goodness of course, he said he could not have done it without the loyal support and help of his dear wife, Mary. About her he said, “She had one object in life, to live for God. She was also, as a Christian, of a meek and quiet spirit. If all Christians were like her, the joys of heaven would be found on earth far more abundantly than they are now. God had been pleased to give me a Christian wife, who never at any time hindered me in the ways of God, but sought to strengthen my hands in God, and this too, in the deepest trials, under the greatest difficulties, and when the service in which she helped me brought on her the greatest of personal sacrifices. That precious wife never found fault with me, but heartily joined me in prayer for help from God, and with me looked out for help, and help came then we rejoiced together often we wept for joy together. God Himself had given me my beloved wife.”

Proverbs 31:10-12, 28. *Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. 11 The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. 12 She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. 28 Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.*

Notes

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1. What decision did George make with regard to his salary as pastor?
And how did Mary handle this decision?
2. What was George's first real test in having faith that God would meet his needs?
3. In what city did George and Mary Müller end up settling?
4. How would this decision have helped them unknowingly prepare for their orphanage ministry? (reference question 3)
5. What year did the orphanage open and who was the very first orphan to enter?

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6. George and Mary worked hard to make sure the orphanage ran smoothly and to help, educate, and love the children. What impressed you the most about their ministry?

7. For what purpose did George & Mary Müller write and publish his journals?

8. Of the sample journal entries provided, which one did you find the most interesting and why?

9. What all did George and Mary pray for with regard to the orphanage and the children in it?

10. List several ways Mary was a true help to her husband during their years of ministry together?

11. List some of the things George said when describing his wife?

True/false

- George and Mary never made known to anyone their needs for the orphanage except God.
- His journals recorded specific answers to prayers.
- George and Mary always made sure that when an orphan was ready to leave, they had a job and money to get a good start.



Scripture Memorization: copy the following verses on the back:
Hebrews 4:16; Job 8:5; Psalms 73:27-28 (Must be in KJV).

any questions?