

FIFTY YEARS

1935-1985

Part 2 - 1975-1985

"Surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses"

You will, no doubt, remember that on 22nd July 1975 the "Prayer Suggestion Paper" completed 40 years of issue and then I tried to summarize some of the interesting things that had happened during that period, by recalling the many entries during those years, and also referring to various Scriptures which mention 'forty years' and the messages that spring from them.

Now on 22nd July 1985 we have completed a further ten years of issue. Fifty years is a long time, and I doubt whether our brother P.W.Heward when he began this weekly 'ministry' had any thought that it would go on so long.

I would like to recall the words I wrote ten years ago, as to the object of this paper. "To stimulate our prayers for one another, and our praises for the Lord's good hand upon us, and to help us to keep in touch with one another, although scattered in various parts of this country and the world". This is still true!

'Fifty' is not such a common number in the Bible as 'forty'. 'Fifty years' reminds us of the Jubilee year among Israel (Lev. 25), the 'time of shouting' and the sounding of the trumpets (verse 9). Such things we as Christians do not practice, though it seems to hint at what may be in the 1000-year kingdom.

While 'fifty years' is not much before us in the Bible, 'fifty' is mentioned, and in connection with 'companies'. In 2 Kings 1 we have "the captain and his fifty" three times. In 2 Kings 2.7,16 "the fifty men of the sons of the prophets" and also how Obadiah hid the hundred prophets - "fifty to a cave" (1 Kings 18.4). In Luke 9.14 the Lord Jesus said, "Make them sit down by fifties in a company". So 'fifty' certainly sets us thinking of 'companies' and in the last case, companies fed from the Lord's hands, and that miraculously. Do we not desire in our days too, to have this double ministry of

our Lord as they did - three days of teaching, spiritual food and then finally before they dispersed, ordinary food. If we do not them from what other source shall we expect such things? May our desire be expressed in all sincerity with the words, "Lord, evermore give is this bread".

Perhaps many who receive this paper do not enjoy the fellowship of a company 'fifty' strong. But we have plenty to 'shout' about, and to make a joyful noise about, to 'jubilate', and to give thanks for all the way the Lord has kept us and led us as we waited on Him, these past 'fifty years' and longer in many cases! Let us boast and glory in the Lord!

Much concerning the service rendered to the Lord in this ten year period is to be found in "A Monthly Record", so it is not necessary to mention these things here.

Ten years ago we closed our review of the 'Forty years' with the Home-call of two dear sisters and sadly (for us) the following ten years have seen other faithful brothers and sisters taken from us, and the loss has been sorely felt. It sometimes seems, as in the case of Stephen, a man who was doing a great work and was being mightily used for God, was taken away, when from our aspect, it would seem he was doing a very useful work, and a needed work. But we can be sure the Lord makes no mistakes. When He takes one, then surely He has another to do what is necessary. But our exercise must be, "Am I ready to be used, can my God use me"?

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1975

On 20th December our sister Mrs. Gysler died, a 'native' of London, who moved with her husband to Switzerland when he retired (see 1969).

1976

In January, our brother Edward Sarna (jun) came out of Poland, to visit our brethren in W. Germany, for the first time,

thus renewing the contact Mr. Heward started many years before.

On the 10th June our brother G. Lord was called Home in Australia, where he was serving the Lord. He had emigrated from England, but before had had much fellowship with our brother W. Ellis(at Stockport)

In July of this year, Ruth and I made our first visit to Poland with our brother and sister Daniel and Magdalehe Werner(my dear Ruth's brother and sister-in-law). (We made further visits in July 1977 and 1979).

In December our brother F. A. Arreola from the Philippines who had been visiting in W. Germany came over for a few days in London, and so we had face to face contact for the first time.

1977

On 6th March our brother W.L.Pitcher, who had been getting weaker for some time, was called away. He had served the Lord by keeping in touch with many believers by correspondence.

On the 23rd of the same month our brother W.A.Kerby (Galgary, Canada) was called Home, one of the faithful believers gathering there.

1978

On 28th January our brother Tom Mott was taken, a quiet country brother, but one of the "Pillars" at Glemsford. (Looking back to 1974 I see I did not mention our brother John Mott going to be with Christ on January 1st.- they were brothers in the flesh. Another of the Glemsford stalwarts who always sought to have a word of encouraging ministry)

1979

On 22nd January our brother Robt. Coles was taken. A 'London' brother who spent his last years in Falmouth, much against his will.

In May we were able to welcome Edward and Steffi Sarza to us here in London, for a few days. What a change for them, from their home in Poland! (They also went to Birmingham to see our sister's brother in the flesh)

On 22nd September our sister Mrs. Hilda Weeks (Bournemouth) went to be with Christ. We were staying there during the previous days, and so were able to visit her each day in the hospital, but at the end she seemed to be in a coma. She was a good friend to me in many ways for many years. How we should appreciate the ministry of our sisters.

On the next day our brother Gottfried Fischer (E. Germany) was called away after a period of severe physical troubles. Another of the faithful brethren who suffered under the Third Reich.

On 21st November our brother G. Matters was called Home. I had been with him a few days before at the 'Home' and he seemed so well, for his age. Much could be said of this dear brother. What a character! Always active for the Lord.

1980

On 27th March our brother F. Oertel (in E. Germany) was called away. Our printer brother! He was almost blind and had other problems at the end. How he delighted in the literature translated from our brother P.W.H's pen. His dear wife had read the whole Bible on to tape, so that he could still hear the words he could not read.

On 20th July our brother L.J. Burrell was taken from us, a faithful man, who was often with us in the meetings, though living in Surrey. I was able to visit him when in Croydon.

On 6th August (in New Zealand) our brother H. Pollard went to be with Christ. He was an Englishman but had emigrated. He, long years ago went to Ascot Horse Races and received a tract. The next year he went again to find the brother who gave him the gospel tract. Finding our brother Mr. Heward he asked "Did you give me a tract last year?" Our brother said he might well have done. He was now saved! and the fellowship continued from there on.

On 7th October our brother Mark Vincent and Ana Escarraga (from Colombia) were married, and have been serving the Lord together since, though they live in N. Canada at North Bay, a rather isolated position.

On 30th November our brother T.F. Bailey (Worthing) was called Home after some months of physical trials. A brother always ready to witness. The gathering was at his home at Mansfield, years ago. Sadly missed!

1981

On 19th May our sister Mrs. Brett (Glemsford) went to be with Christ. For how many years she had been weak and physically tried! We began to visit her once a month on a Saturday afternoon, and have been doing so for 20 years! How many times we and many of the Glemsford believers sat around her bed, and talked of the Lord. How true in her case, the outward man was perishing, but the inward man was renewed day by day.

On 2nd October our brother K. Riisnaes who had been here in fellowship since about 1919 (from Norway) was called suddenly away on a visit to relatives. (He took me to Norway in 1938, an unforgettable experience).

Also in this month we were in Bremen for the first time to meet a new company of believers, we had not met before.

On December 31st our sister Miss L. Hall was called away. She had cared for our sister Miss Walden (blind and deaf) for so long, and so faithfully. She had a fall in the 'Home' and broke her femur, but the attempt to mend the breakage was too much. Now she is comforted! We came to know her through her being in Calgary, Canada, with the believers there.

1982

On 29th January our brother Cyril Thompson (Norfolk) was called Home. A real countryman, but ever active in witness, with a Text Banner in latter years. He had suffered with fits

for a long time, and had some nasty experiences, of which he was not aware, but the Lord preserved him from lasting injury.

In March our sister Mrs. Oertel(E. Germany) was called Home after a short illness(see 1980).

On 4th October our sister Mrs. E.A.Ellis went to be with Christ, so leaving our brother W. Ellis alone again. How hard she worked during their short marriage, and what a blessing she was in maintaining the fellowship at Stockport. How many of us look back with deep appreciation..

On the 15th our brother F.Sarna(sen.)(Poland) was called Home. He who had enjoyed the fellowship with our brother F.W. Heward in his many visits and had stayed faithful all the years since. His dear wife was also soon to go Home - 14th Jan. 1983. We have precious memories of our stays in their home and the gatherings there.

On 22nd November our brother E. Kirk(Worthing) was 100 years old. What a great age!

1983

In March, we never heard the date, our sister Miss Spencer(Draycott, Som.) was called Home. She had had a fall, and had never been very strong. But how faithful she was, for so long, when she had no encouragement at all amongst her relatives. Another aged sister who was a good friend to me.

On 30th July our brother Derek Snodgrass and our sister Ruby Mott were married, and then began their new life in Glasgow, where our brother is working.

On 5th December our brother F.A.Arreola moved back to the Philippines, he had been in U.S.A. due to his wife's ill health.

1984

In July our brother Israel Condori(Lima, Peru) married our sister Alexandra Guim(Ecuador), while our brethren from Canada and our brother Nelson Mogollon(uncle of the bride) were there.

In October, our sister Sra. Rogelia Roldan was called away, after sometime of illness, leaving our brother Alejandrino alone in the Pampas of Colombia.

1985

On the 10th April our brother H.G.Harvey(Chelmsford) was called Home quite suddenly. He was for long years with us here in Forest Gate.

April 15th brought us the first news from Corrientes of our brother F.A.Franco's heart weakness.

On 9th May our brother Henry Perrin(Buckhurst Hill) passed away rather suddenly. (Our sister Mrs. N. Williamson's step-father), whom we had known for so long. Such partings stir many a memory!

(A few copies of 'Forty Years' are still available)

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