

## HELP FOR REFUGEES, INC.

A tax-exempt, non-profit corporation

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**We help orphans and elderly Christians (many in their 80s, even 90s) who had been imprisoned for their faith in present or former communist countries**



Late Reverend Richard Wurmbbrand with wife, Sabine

Late Reverend Richard Wurmbbrand spent 14 years in Romanian communist prisons. Mrs. Wurmbbrand was imprisoned for nearly three years, also for her Christian faith, in some of the same communist prisons.

**NOVEMBER  
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### **Announcement:**

A free copy of the paperback book, "**Reaching Towards the Heights,**" A Book of Daily Meditations on the Word of God by Richard Wurmbbrand, may be requested using the order form on the internet, at the <https://helpforrefugees.com> site. (See third column!)

*"And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." (Matthew 17:20)*

From an unpublished Bible meditation by late Reverend Richard Wurmbbrand

### **Faith by the bushel!**

By birth, I am a Jew. In my youth I was an atheist. The words of Christ had no authority for me. Even after I had accepted Him, some of His words seemed fantastic. I tried to move mountains and did not succeed. Neither do I know any child of God who would be able to perform such a deed. I asked the Lord how it was that His words did not correspond to the simple physical reality.

The Gospels are full of examples where Jesus' words were misunderstood when interpreted in a simplistic sense. John 2:18-22 reads: "Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body. ` When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said." Also Mark 4:11 reads: "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables."

Now, a disciple of Christ should not deliver monologues in prayer, but should expect to receive answers to his questions. I received an answer to mine: "You, my beloved, cannot move mountains because your faith is not the size of a mustard grain. You have bushels full of faith."

You do not use a one-thousand-ton hammer, such as those employed by heavy industry, to crack open a walnut. A mighty hammer can only perform great works. By the same token, you are called to do greater things than amuse yourself by moving mountains. You can move God. Remember how God decided to destroy the Jewish people after they had worshiped a golden calf, and Moses through his prayer made God change His mind. The Bible describes how prophet Jonah being given a specific message from God was crossing the city of Nineveh crying: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." Yet, the king of Nineveh, addressed the population: "let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?" It is written further, " And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not." To produce changes in heavenly decrees is much more important than moving mountains.

Since then, I have stopped trying to move mountains. We are seated with Christ in heavenly places. We participate in things happening there. And when in our earthly life mountains hinder, we don't command them to move. We follow the example of Christ, about whom His bride says, "My beloved comes leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills" (Solomon's Song 2:8). Don't try to remove mountains of difficulties in your own life. Jump over them. Do your Christian duty in spite of them.

We have not "a grain of faith" but bushels. We are not content with moving what is a mountain on the speck of dust called earth, a nonentity in the universe. We have mobilized millions of men of prayer who shake heavens. We put hosts of angels in action. Christians of all races and their children cry to God, day and night. The sun never sets upon our Christian activity.

Those who weep with the weeping Christ jump over the mountains of indifference and silence which false leaders, in conscious or stupid collusion with the Communists, have tried to maintain around the persecuted church. They actively help persecuted Christians and contribute toward physical and spiritual relief for families of martyrs.

Here, an example of a child's faith by the bushel! The communist authorities in the Soviet Union were not content just forbidding Christian meetings. The communist police and courts fine heavily the Christians participating in such meetings, When Russian Christians cannot pay such fines amounting to more than 6-months-worth of salary, the KGB confiscates their furniture and belongings. When they took the carpet from a Christian's house, his child asked what would happen to it. The father replied, "It will be sold at an auction for the benefit of the state. It will be in somebody else's house." The saintly child clasped his hands and said, "Thank God. What a joy that others will walk on such a nice, fine carpet. It is their turn. We have had our part of joy In It.' The faith of this child is able move mountains of Christian love!



The Communist Jilava Prison. Entrance to the underground cells.



Prison cell with bunk-beds with no mattress, prisoners were obliged to sleep on. Stove for show only, never heated in cold winters.



Mug-shot of Late Reverend Richard Wurmbrand when held in the Jilava prison, in communist Romania.

“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father are this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” (Apostle James Epistle 1:27)

**Heroes of the Faith and their Families, Helped with your Gifts!**  
**Some pictures of elderly Christians Imprisoned under Communism for the Faith**  
**Read their full testimonies in our past newsletters at <http://helpforrefugees.com> (third column!)**



**Atanasoie Neculai  
of the Army of the Lord**

He was arrested and placed ten months in a labor camp for refusing to become an informer of the Romanian communist secret police. Has 8 children. The Army of the Lord is a widespread Evangelical organization inside the Greek Orthodox church in Romania.  
**Read his testimony in our 2/2019 Newsletter.**



**Aursulesei Ioan  
of the Army of the Lord**

He underwent a public mock trial of 3 hours for being a “social parasite” and for “disturbance of public order” according to the law No. 153 in former communist Romania. He was fined nearly 6 times his monthly salary for holding an underground Christian prayer meeting in his home. He has 5 children.  
**Read his testimony in our 2/2019 Newsletters.**



**Ileana Russ  
of the Army of the Lord**

She was only 13 when her father Petru Popa was sentenced in former communist Romania to 12 years of prison for Christian activities in the Evangelical movement, the Army of the Lord. All their possessions were confiscated. **Read her testimony in our 2/2019 Newsletter.**



**Petru Rumatchik  
(deceased)**

A Baptist who was imprisoned 18 years in the coldest part of Siberia. He was sentenced and resented 6 times for the faith and underground Christian activities in former Soviet Union.  
**Read his full testimony in our 3/2019 Newsletter.**

**Heroes of the Faith!  
Persecuted Christians Helped with your Gifts**

**Here Briefly, My Life Journey of Faith**



I was born, Petr Ivanovich Tkachenko 09/17/1952 in the Bes-Tyube mine-town, Akmola region, former Soviet Union (presently in Kazakhstan.) In 1928, my grandparents, having a farm and a mill, were dispossessed and deported to Kazakhstan, to the Pavlodar region in the village of Golubovka. The family of the deported had 3 children: Maria, Vasily and my father Ivan - the youngest was 9 months old, at the time of exile.

In 1970. I graduated from high school and was eager to become a doctor. An unsuccessful attempt to enter the Tselinograd Medical Institute and the subsequent one, to be a laboratory assistant at the Department of Anatomy, brought me closer to Jesus Christ. During the summer and autumn period of being in the city of Tselinograd (now the city of Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan) I attended the services of the registered Baptist church and formed a firm decision to follow the Lord.

After returning home to the place of residence, I discussed with two peers a plan of classes with children and younger youth. We visited parents at home asking for their consent and assistance in this work. With some caution, as written in the Bible verse "... Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46) most of the parents gave their consent.

After 8 months I was drafted into the army, already converted to God in repentance, but not baptized by faith, I accepted Him while in the army in the church of Dushanbe. After the army, we continued Sunday classes with children and youth, conducting and combining our meetings with Christian musical activities, out of caution. Children Sunday schools were forbidden. However, the Bible writes: "A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." (Matthew 5:14.) Once, during a trip on a regular bus, we openly sang Christian songs.

The communist party organizer of the town-mine, Al Diptan, was actively involved in the fight against believers. He threatened me at the next summons to the village council: "leave the church or we will put you in prison." I had to decide ... my thought was: "in the church-meetings you taught one and all, but now you want to run away?"

I began to pray and the Lord sent a revelation twice within a short time: "If you do not leave, there is suffering ahead." I fasted and prayed a lot, and then said to the Lord: "Thy will be done, as You want, give only the strength to endure everything and remain faithful."

The criminal case was conducted by the regional investigator from Tselinograd, V. M. Sokolovsky, a Soviet jurist specialized on especially important nation-threatening criminal issues. Like it is written that David said to King Saul, I also wanted to say to him: "after whom dost thou pursue? after a dead dog, after a flea?" (1 Samuel 24:14)

On the instructions of the regional prosecutor Baranov, 100 witnesses were interrogated before myself being sent to court. The accusations against me in this criminal case were comprised in two volumes: The first volume had about 700 pages and the second, about 900 pages. I was accused under two criminal articles:

The first article 200-1 part 2 "Encroachment on the personality and rights of citizens under the guise of performing religious rites." This article asked for imprisonment for up to three years, or as an alternative, correctional labor for up to two years.

The second article 170-1 "Dissemination of deliberately false fabrications discrediting the social system of the Soviet Union" ... " is to be punished with imprisonment for up to 3 years, or at judge's choice, correctional labor for up to 2 years and a fine of up to 300 rubles." (Criminal Code of the Kazakh SSR as of 01.01.1983, Alma-Ata).

The accusation was mainly based on myself having publicized the martyrdom of Vanya Moiseyev (a young Baptist brutally murdered in tortures in the Soviet Union) and my allegations of persecution of the Christian faith in the Soviet Union. The show trial lasted 4 days, from April 23 to April 26, 1974. The case did not start on April 22, in deference for Lenin having been born on that day.

On the day of the trial, all "anti-religious propaganda crowds" were present, the press, film reporters and photographers, at the table the youthful chairman of the court - Judge Spiridonov, 2-3 public prosecutors aside the elderly prosecutor Matveyev - the state prosecutor. The accusers

were in no way balanced by any defense. Everything was subordinated to atheistic ideology. Myself as a defendant, had to carry out alone my defense on God's side.

The verdict was 3 years of general regime imprisonment! For antireligious propaganda purposes, disagreements with the sentence were loudly voiced in the hall. "The sentencing of three years is too short, too mild!" ..., and the like. It seemed to some that I was given too short of a prison term under the articles - however, this was the maximum term. "Glory to the Lord for everything," I said to my former atheist teacher, who violently expressed her disagreement with the final sentence, claiming the length of the sentence was "too short!".

After that, from the police station, I was sent to the Tselinograd prison. I didn't write a protest complaint; I didn't see the point in it. After the Tselinograd prison, I was sent by a prison-railroad car to the Krasnogorsk zone in the Turgai steppes of northern Kazakhstan. (The zone became famous having been deserted of population, the air being poisoned with high levels of carbon monoxide seeping out from the abandoned local uranium mines, N. Ed.) After another 2 months I ended up staying in the Pavlodar zone, in which in the 1960-70s other brethren in faith served their sentences.

In summer 1974 I began to work on the construction site of a tractor plant, dealing with reinforced concrete structures at a height of up to 32 meters (over 100-foot high.)

On the night of November 18-19, 1974. I clearly had a dream in which several images of a future accident at work were shown. My heart was heavy, as usual I went behind the barracks before climbing up and prayed. It was Friday, November 19, we worked at a height of 16 meters (over 50-foot high) with one of the free workers - Nikolai Stepny. At the end of the working day, I was moving along a narrow bridge with a welding cable, at this time, using the Steppe assembly (lever) I jerked a steel sheet of over 400 pounds on which I was, it began to squeak downward ... for a moment I lingered on the crane girder on the right, and then I flew after a sheet gave up under me. I fell on a concrete ceiling-slab located 8 meters (25 feet) from the ground. If I had gone under a sheet of metal, it would have cut me open, as it fell on an edge. The frost of -4 Fahrenheit was growing stronger in the icy body of a dump truck, where I lay on a wooden board. I was taken to the residential area in the medical unit, and late at night to the central hospital of the zone, in the city of Pavlodar.

The consequences of the fall were: a fracture of the pelvis, a concussion of the brain, cracks in the four vertebrae of the spine 1-2, 11-12 with a pinched nerve, hemorrhage of internal organs, a rupture of the symphysis (joint of the bones in the pelvis) and contusion of the left kidney with its displacement. I was in the hospital for about 4 months. The first month was very difficult. These past painful experiences in my entire life were the hardest, but not comparable to what our Lord Jesus Christ suffered for the sins of the world. The prayers of the relatives and children of God served as a great support.

In the summer of 1975 in the zone, a group of prisoners was secretly formed who were converted to the word of God, among them one young man stood out, the son of a communist party organizer of a state farm, who subsequently endured a difficult spiritual struggle and sincerely repented of his sins. Before turning to God, Satan tempted him and offered to sell his soul for one hundred thousand rubles (at that time this was the equivalent to having been able buy 20 new cars) and to be released 1 year ahead of his prison-term.

(Continued on next page)

READ AND PASS IT ON!

The young man experienced a strong shock, but the Lord won! He did not accept being bribed and renounce the faith.

After his release, Victor was baptized, married, there were difficulties in his spiritual life, out of 8 children, 5 were members in the church, one of them was even promoted as a minister.

In the fall of 1975 in this prison colony, I was held in, an anti-religious lecture was held, there were many prisoners, it was led by a senior lecturer of the Pavlodar regional communist executive committee. The camp administration, a KGB worker, and teachers were present.

At the end, the lecturer allowed prisoners to ask questions. Being in prayer, I had an urge from the Lord: "This is your time for your testimony ..." Answering my questions, the lecturer turned from a calm tone to becoming furious and began to accuse me of propaganda of my faith. The prisoners leaned over to my side, loudly expressing their approval. Later, it became known that a criminal case was opened against me. Believers at large prayed and everything was quietened. I was not sentenced again to a new prison term. On the contrary, because I was an invalid, they released me 4 months and 25 days ahead of the end of the term, on parole (a conditionally early release) without admitting guilt. On instructions from the capital city of Alma-Ata, the communist authorities demanded I write a request for pardon and I refused to write it.

After being released, the employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs instituted a house check. The medical commission established myself being in a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade disability group for 1 year. This was completely removed next year. Praise the Lord for the whole journey. My life after having been freed, did not start in true freedom but continued under the vigilant eye of the KGB. The Lord consoled me with the word: "Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake." (Luke 6:22)

*Our mission has sent help to as many of these faithful Christians we could locate and contact personally!*

409	Власенко	Валентин	Мефодьевич	1958	Украина
410	Вольф	Андрей	Корнеевич	1958	Казахстан
411	Куркин	АЛЕКСЕЙ	ЯКОВЛЕВИЧ	1958	Россия
412	Левин	НИКОЛАЙ	ВИКТОРОВИЧ	1958	Казахстан
413	Романюк	Владимир	Николаевич	1958	Украина
414	Тистен	Давид	Давидович	1958	Россия
415	ТУРКЕВИЧ	Василий	Тарасович	1959	Украина
416	Бычков	Степан	Павлович	1959	Украина
417	ДРИСВЯНИКОВ	АЛЕКСАНДР	АЛЕКСАНДРОВИЧ	1959	Россия
418	СВЮРЦОВА	ЛЮБОВЬ	НИКОЛАЙВНА	1959	Россия
419	Варовин	Виталий	Федотович	1959	Россия
420	Дубицкий	СЕРГЕЙ	АДАМОВИЧ	1959	Россия
421	Лашенко	Борис	Владимирович	1959	Украина
422	Талченко	ИВАН	ИВАНОВИЧ	1959	Казахстан
423	МАРЧЕНКО	Станислав	Павлович	1960	Украина
424	Дочинко	Александр	Максимович	1960	Украина
425	Отмазов	Венедикт	Александрович (Валерианов)	1960	Узбекистан
426	Савинко	Михаил	Михайлович	1960	Эстония
427	Федеева (ШВЕЦОВА)	ДИНА	ВЛАДИМИРОВНА	1961	Австрия
428	ШВЕЦОВА	АННА	ВЛАДИМИРОВНА	1962	Австрия
429	Богородице	Александр	Валериевич	1962	Эстония
430	Миников	Павел	Дмитриевич	1962	Эстония

Above, a **sample only** of a long list, our mission was able to compile beside other lists, of over 480 elderly Baptist Christians most of them still alive, who suffered for the Christian faith in the former Soviet Union. The prison sentences amounted from 2 years, to as many as 18 years of communist prison. If considered together, their years of prison-sentences shown in our **abbreviated** table, would most likely add up to over 2,000 years of prison. The 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> column together, show year of birth and the most recent country they live in (like Ukraine, Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, etc.) We try obtain exact addresses, so we may be able to send encouraging help to those still alive. We were able to send repeated help to about 120 such elderly Russian-speaking Christians and over 110 of other languages. Many of their testimonies you can read in the monthly newsletter. Testimonies available also on the internet. **Look up third column at: website: <https://helpforrefugees.com>**

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