

HELP FOR REFUGEES, INC.

A tax-exempt, non-profit corporation

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"and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified!" (Daniel 5:23)

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 prisons.

From an unpublished Bible meditation by late Reverend Richard Wurmbbrand

How to Glorify God

A friend of Newton was an atheist. He assured the scientist that the world "just happened" without a creator. Newton did not reply but made a metal reproduction of the solar system. When his friend saw it, he said, "Well done, who made it?" Newton answered, "Nobody." "Come on." the friend said. "Don't tease me. Tell me who did it." Newton replied, "You cannot believe that such a toy exists without having been created by an intelligent being, and you want me to believe that the huge planets and all the stars with their astonishing mechanics 'just happened' by themselves?"

Faced with the incredible, unexplainable miracle of God's creation, like Eve in the Garden of Eden, man easily falls into the sin of doubt. Yet, something is sure: not Man created the universe. The same mind that makes us be sure that two and two make four, has to accept God's overwhelming revelation: We worship and praise God as our Creator. Elihu in the Book of Job, reminds suffering Job: "Remember that thou magnify (God's) work, which men behold!" (Job 36:24) MARX CALLED RELIGION, "AN OPIUM FOR THE PEOPLE." Yet, during the time communists reigned in the Soviet Union, in 1976, even a soviet author, B. Iaukioplis published in Vilnius, the capital of (what at the time was) Soviet Lithuania, a book. "The Small Secret." THE COMMUNIST AUTHOR SHOWS HIS DESPAIR BECAUSE "YOUTH EDUCATED IN COMMUNIST SCHOOLS BELIEVE RELIGION IS NOT AN OPIUM, BUT A VITAMIN! SOVIET YOUTH ASSERT THAT RELIGION HAS GIVEN THEM HEALTH!"

I was born Jewish. I came to the Christian religion from outside. My first sentiment towards it was amazement. A babe lies in a manger yet contains all the treasures of Godhead. I wondered how God became man to save us from sins, though knowing beforehand that He would be received by some with hatred and by the great multitude with apathy.

The skies were observed at that time, perhaps even more than now. There were learned Jewish people who knew from the Scripture where would the expected Savior of the World be born. (Matthew 2:5) Palestine was a small country. The rumor about an angelic song heard from heaven and wise men who came from far-off to worship and bring to this poor family rich gifts, spread most likely like wildfire, but learned politicians of those times couldn't care less.

The sin of apathy

When I became a Christian, I was amazed at the attitude of the priests and theologians toward the newborn Messiah. At the request of King Herod, they provided him with an objective, scientific and academic report of where the Savior was meant to be born. They gave him the geographic coordinates. (Matthew 2:4) They made no passionate appeal that Herod should forsake his sins and bow in adoration before the Messiah. They considered themselves to have fulfilled their duty once they had established the Messiah's birthplace without even thinking of serving Him. These were false chief priests, though canonically their priesthood was alright. They were of Aaron's descent, had studied and were ordained; but men became high priests at that time through bribes given to Roman governors. Priesthood had become a business and a political position.

The temple, called by Jesus while a teen, "my Father's house," due to its corrupt clergy ended up being called by Jesus, "a den of thieves." The Gospel recounts further how King Herod tried to get rid of the newborn King, the Messiah of Israel. Many children were killed in the whole province surrounding Bethlehem. Did anybody protest when innocent children were slain? Jesus knew that He would meet with apathy and came into the world to save the apathetic.

Jesus contemporaries were "astonished at his doctrine," (Mark 1:22) His doctrine was simple and life changing. For Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." (Matthew 16:24) In the middle of the temple, surrounded by throngs, He urged one and all, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me." (Matthew 11:29) Jesus said: "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels." (Luke 9:26) Through the ages, the followers of Jesus have astonished the world with their willingness to sacrifice for the Christian faith. Our brethren tortured under communist dictatorships can bear hatred and torture. They are not ashamed of His word. Their lives are God's work. By supporting their Christian dedication and sacrifice, we glorify God.



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.

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

Christians Helped with Your Gifts! 4 Years Imprisonment for Teaching Sunday School



Sign reads: “Serve God!”

Shapoval Dina Iosifovna (Kravchenko), 77, writes: “The Soviet state imprisoned me for my Christian faith from September 10, 1973 to September 10, 1977, on Articles 142/2 and 227/1 of the Soviet Penal Code. God manifested His mercy towards me, and allowed me to suffer also for His name.

In the underground church, we conducted a ministry to our children. For this activity, the KGB condemned me as well as two more brethren, who had to suffer 5 years and 4 years of communist jail. For the first three months in prison, I had fellowship with another Christian lady-prisoner, a sister named Lida Bondari. When she had been freed, I began to worry about how I would stand through these days in prison all alone. But Christ said to me, "Why are you afraid? I will be with you always." When the sister was released, I rejoiced and did not feel any loss. The Lord was so close to me that I was ready to face any suffering.

Toward the end of my prison term, there came a period we had to work also on Sundays in order to complete some work-plan. I prayed and said, "Lord, what should I do? It is written 6 days to work and the 7th day of the week to spend with the Lord. Lord, if you give me power, as all these four years I did not work on Sundays, so give me a sign, be close to me " For refusing to work on Sundays I was placed several times during winter in a freezing stockade. When I got out I felt Lord Jesus so close to me, that I wanted again to refuse to work on Sundays and accept the penalty of being placed during a bitter winter in this cold enclosure.

There was another woman-prisoner to whom I witnessed my Christian faith. As we walked through the prison, she said, "There is a brightness all around us!" I did not see any glow but the Lord revealed her such a glow. She was often called by the prison commander. She was told I would be locked up to the end of my life because my faith as practiced, was forbidden by the Soviet state. She replied even to the KGB: "If Dina is persecuted, it means her faith must be right!"

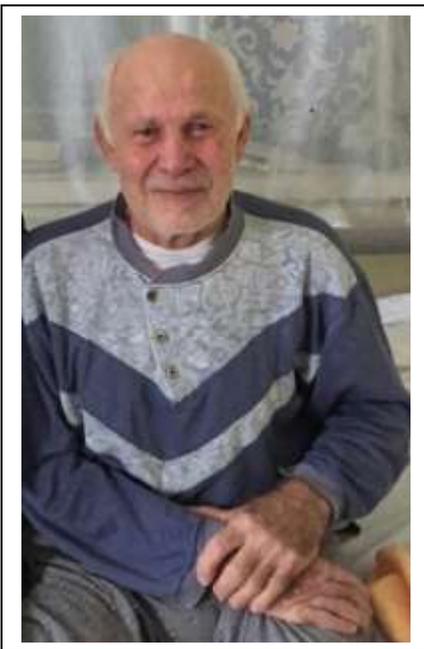
For 15 days twice, they put me in a room called the Strict Confinement Room, as a punishment for refusing to work on Sundays and then for 6 months they imprisoned me in the PKT (a worse room than the Strict Confinement Room. Food was served every second day only. There was no place to sit down as an iron-plate “bed” with no mattress, being attached to the wall, was opened nights only.) There I was fed much worse than the general jail population, yet my weight increased by 6 pounds. The administration said, "You are the worst offender. Others we know how to make them listen to us, but we could not convince you." I also refused take part in the communist political indoctrination lessons. The prison-lecturer asked, "Why don't you come attend the lessons?" I answered, "When I go to the cafeteria, I know the purpose I'm going for (to eat.) But I see no purpose in going to lessons on politics." On a Sunday a woman said with some urgency, "You are called to the Emergency Department!" Two minutes later, a different

woman came and told same words, and so did 5 more people, all one after another. My heart was beating, my fear filled me, I began to worry, I said to myself, "What! Is this the first time? Why be afraid?" Then I kneeled and prayed, "Lord, until you give me full peace, I will not go anywhere." I went out and prayed. Two more women approached and told I was expected in the Emergency Department. Then, I understood why? The communist prison guards in the Emergency Room were looking to me through a one-way window and they were starting being impatient, testing me yet seeing little emotion. When I received a full sense of peace in my heart, I appeared before them. I came to the door and prayed, "Lord, go before me." I had just entered and was already flooded with questions. I was silent at first as I waited for Christ to tell me what to answer. God gave me full victory and they were ashamed, and they thought I was smart and knew what to answer. In fact I was just repeating what God spoke to me. It was not from me but the Holy Spirit spoke through me."

For the past 40 years, HELP FOR REFUGEES, INC. has extended financial support to Christian refugees from communist countries, orphans and Christians who had been imprisoned for their faith in present and former communist countries. Also helped is the Richard Wurmbbrand College, a high school in Iasi, Romania where many children of disadvantaged families are able to study. See <http://helpforrefugees.com>. Anyone may use a "DONATE" button on site. Due to tax laws inside Romania and Eastern Europe, some help needs be sent through the local nonprofits like the Sabina Wurmbbrand Christian Association, Romania and the Common Association of the Merciful Samaritan in the Republic of Moldova.

Christians Helped with Your Gifts!

Baptist Church Choir Conductor serves 7 Years of Prison for his Faith



Baptist brother Demcenko Vitalie Grigorievici writes: " My dear brethren and sisters, may the Peace of the Lord be with you! I was born September 1, 1936. At the moment I live in the town of Maikop, the capital city of the Republic of Adygea, Russia. In my youth the Soviet Union declared itself an atheistic state. Formally, according to the Constitution, all people were equal in rights. But in reality, it was quite different. All the policy of the Soviet state was directed against people who had faith in God. The State and the Security Bodies endeavored to control the churches in a total way. At least during 70 years of communist reign in the former Soviet Union, it had largely managed do so. The church I was participating in, did not accept any interference or cooperation with the state. It did not accept the interference of the state in the life of the church. For these reasons, I ended up being intensely persecuted.

I was sentenced twice for my Christian faith. I was arrested for the first time in 1967, in the city of Djambul (Kazakhstan, Soviet Union). The communists then sentenced me to two years of jail in the city of Alma Ata. After being freed, in 1971, together with my family, we moved to Maikop. In the church I was the choir conductor, and a soloist performer. I was convicted in 1973, this time to 5 years of communist prison, for organizing concerts of Christian songs. I spent the term of imprisonment in the city of Krasnodar. After the release, I was ordained as a deacon in the local underground church. After the fall of communism, in 2016, I suffered a heart attack. Doctors classified me as belonging to an "invalid group" #1. I'm bedridden. The right hand and the right foot cannot be used, but with the Holy Spirit I am eager, I love God and my brethren in faith, who are my dear and very close friends."

Christians Helped with Your Gifts!

Two and a Half Years of Hard Labor for Distributing Gospels

Brother Varacsa writes: "I salute you with the peace of the Lord! I was born in 1955 in North



Caucasus. **In 1936, my Christian parents were sentenced for their faith to 10 years of prison (during Stalin's time.)**

After being released, parents were sent into exile in North Caucasus. They had and raised 5 children. My father was a minister in an underground Christian Church. When 19, I repented and was received as a church member. Starting in 1976, I was involved in the transportation and distribution of underground Christian literature, as well as serving brothers and sisters who printed surreptitiously such Christian literature. I was arrested by the KGB, March 1982 at the same time as my brother Victor Peredereev in a town named Zaporozhye, then in the Soviet Union, now in the country of Ukraine. We both were sentenced to 2.5 years of prison. We were accused under Article 187 of the Soviet Penal Code.

Our Christian missionary activity was condemned as an activity that spread bad rumors and other information that slandered the Soviet social system.

After the fall of communism, I am involved currently in the work of the Church. I was ordained as a deacon in a Baptist church in the town of Rostov na Donu, Russia. I wish Good Lord's blessings upon you in the work you do! With much peace and love, Nicolai Varacsa"

Christians Helped with Your Gifts!

3 Years Imprisonment for Conducting Sunday-School!

Sister Didneak wrote: "Dear friends, I received your letter and enjoyed finding out how you remembered our having been persecuted in the Soviet times and our years of suffering in communist jails. I became a Christian in 1972. In my church, I was involved in working with children. The Soviet authorities did not allow teaching the children the Word of God. In January 1982, I ended up being arrested by the KGB. During the first interrogation the investigator spoke to me firmly: either I agree to collaborate with the Soviet KGB and become an informer, or be sentenced to prison. We refused any kind of collaboration, and by this refusal we chose the second option. Still, they were very insistent and they were telling me to accept the collaboration with them.



I had a son and a little girl, my mother was sick, my husband was not faithful, and all this created a very difficult situation. But the Good God was very merciful to me and strengthened me. After the investigation, I was sentenced to a term of three years of jail, which I spent in a Soviet prison in the town of Kharkov, presently in the country of Ukraine (before, part of the Soviet Union.)

My sister took care of my mother who was sick and took her to live with her in the Donbass Region of present Ukraine. My mother's health did not improve. I wrote to my sister that if my mother goes to the Lord, she will urgently write to me a telegram with such sad news. I thought the communist prison authorities would allow me attend my mother's funeral. When I got the telegram I went to the Head-Guard and all I got was a mocking reply: "Cuttie, what do you complain about? Your mother died on the 2nd, she was buried on the 3rd, and the telegram arrived on the 5th. We are not responsible the telegram had been delayed." A common-law prisoner, a

non-Christian lady was also part of our prison work-detachment. She had been convicted to 11 years of prison. Yet when her father died, she was allowed to go to the funeral.

Because of good behavior, my time to be released came way before the sentence-finishing-deadline. I was summoned to a KGB Commission. They asked me, "Did you finally get it? Have you understood everything?" I replied, "Yes, in fact I did understand everything when I became a Christian in 1972. I was not supposed to continue my sinful life, as I used to." Someone on the KGB Commission retorted promptly, "Then you will be shut up in prison to the end of your term." I thanked them and got out. Believe me, dear friends, I was not walking in that hallway but was flying! I thanked God for His victory and His mercy for me. I was repeating again and again, what I read in Matthew 10:19, "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak."

On the day of liberation, since I was sleeping on the second floor, I was able to talk to my son outside through an open window. I asked him to appear around lunch. I just got off the window and a lady came in and told me, "you have been called by the prison-commander. I came into his office and he said, "Didneak, we'll release you tomorrow morning at six AM. The car will take you to the railway station. Your ticket has already been purchased. " I said, "The relatives will come and meet me here." He shouted back, "I'm only wrong once in my life. I know how Christians meet their relatives. There will also be songs, and flowers, will take photos and more." He said to the Service-Helper who was holding some package: "Give her the box, because she will not drink it." In the package was some paltry sum of money I earned in these years of imprisonment.

In the morning at 6:00 AM, a KGB Colonel led me out, and a black Volga car was waiting for me. They put me in the car. I said to them, "Do not take me away, for I will need return here back from the train station to the prisongate. My relatives are supposed to be meeting me here." They asked me at what address would any of my relatives stay, while in town. I gave them openly the address I happen to know of a Christian family who was living not far from that prison, Hlebarobnaya street 8A. After the second turn, the driver told me to get out. I asked him, "Where did you stop?" It was early in the morning, a very cold 1st of March 1985, it was dark. Facing me were two gates. I had no idea where to go, or what to do. I had never been there. A man came out and I asked him, "Where does the Tkacheov family live?" He said to me, "I am Tkacheov, but who are you?" I replied, "Didneak ". He said to me, "Enter, for you have reached the right address." I went into a room where my relatives were asleep. The Tkacheov family was Christian. Since they lived close-by, all relatives of Christians about to be freed, used their home as a reference.

Now I live with my nephew, who has his family and his worries so different from what us old people go through. My daughter lives in Kiev, Ukraine. She is the only person who continues to care for me. I thank the Lord for not letting me down.

Dear fellow-Christians: A Russian song says, "With Christ in prison is freedom; and without Christ even freedom is a prison ". I want to say to the younger generation that did not suffer persecution yet, to keep close to Christ, and not be afraid of persecution and imprisonment. Better with Christ in prison, because these are short-term sufferings and then you will have eternal life with Jesus Christ. In the Eternal Heaven there will be no tears or pain. With this thought I end my letter. You forgive me if I did not write very well, but you know I wrote the whole truth. Stay with the Lord. I'm waiting for your answer. Didneak Maria Vasilievna"

Help for Refugees, Inc. PO Box 5161, Torrance, Ca. 90510, USA. Email: hfr@helpforrefugees.com, website: <http://helpforrefugees.com> (EIN: 95-3064521) is listed in Publication 78, Cumulative List of Nonprofit Organizations described in Section 170(c) of the Internal Revenue Service. Gifts to Help for Refugees are tax-deductible.