

When The Gospel Came to a Little Hindu Child

By Steve Burchett

You might enjoy sharing and discussing the following poem with children. It's titled "The Hindu Child's Hope of Heaven":

A little heathen child there was
On India's sultry plains,
Where idol temples thickly stand,
And pagan darkness reigns:

She long was taught to put her trust
In blocks of wood and stone;
To sing their praises, worship them,
And pray to them alone.

A missionary came at last
To tell of better things;
To tell them of our God of love,
Our own great 'King of kings.'

A school was opened, and she went
To learn the way to heaven;
She heard of Jesus, by whose blood
Her sins might be forgiven.

His Spirit changed her youthful heart,
And filled it with His love:
She longed to see Him, and to dwell
With Him in heaven above.

One day a grievous sickness came,
And laid this dear child low;
She could not leave her little mat;
To school no more could go.

The missionary kindly went
To see this little child;
Her sufferings made him very sad;
Yet midst them all, she smiled.



O listen to her feeble voice
Now she is called to die,
While pain convulsed her frame, and forced
The tear-drop from her eye.

Yet not one murmuring word arose
From that once heathen child;
For thoughts of Jesus filled her soul,
So that she sweetly smiled.

Yes, smiled midst agonizing pain,
And smiled with death in view;
For—'After this is heaven,' she said;
And soon she proved it true.[1]

What ideas from this poem are worth discussing with children?

The grace of God

All that this little girl had ever been taught were concepts that would send her to hell forever. And she could not rescue herself because she was "a little heathen child." But her enemy, God, saved her by bringing the gospel to her and changing her heart so that she loved Jesus. This girl isn't very different from young people today—all are sinners (born "in Adam," 1 Cor 15:22) in need of the salvation that Christ alone provides for any who come to Him.

The need to seek the Lord no matter your age

Like the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:25-40), this girl desired very much to "learn the way to heaven." She didn't say, "I'll think about that when I'm older." Instead, she listened and was saved. God must change the heart if anyone is going to be saved, but she wouldn't have been saved if she refused to pay attention to the teaching about Jesus.

The response of a true Christian to suffering

The genuineness of the girl's faith is seen in her response to "a grievous sickness." It's not always easy to tell if a child is truly converted. How a professing believer responds to trials will reveal the truth. As Jesus put it, "And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy. But these have no root; they believe for a while, and in time of testing fall away... As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience" (Luke 8:13, 15).

[1] Richard Newton, *Bible Promises: Sermons for Children on God's Word as our Solid Rock* (Birmingham, AL: Solid Ground Christian Books, 2006), 186-187.

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