

# LASTING EFFECTS

"Have faith that God answers your prayers," my mother always told me, "even if it takes you years to know that He has."

This was a lesson she taught me while I was growing up in Stuttgart, Germany, during World War II. We lived in a sixth-floor apartment overlooking the city. At night we could hear bombers flying, the popping of anti-aircraft guns, sirens wailing.

Then one morning when I was 12, we heard a plane buzzing overhead, a rare thing to hear in the daytime. We rushed outside to see an American plane catch fire and fall from the sky.

"*Gott, behuete den Piloten*," I prayed aloud. (God, protect the pilot.) My younger sister Jutta piped in, "*Hilf ihm, lieber Gott*." (Help him, dear God.) Mother also bowed her head, as did littlest Isa. Four Germans praying for the American pilot.

That night we listened to the radio. The reporter said there was no trace of the pilot in the wreckage. I felt sure that my prayer had been in vain.

Many years later, after the war, Mother and I immigrated to the United States. We settled in California, and Mother went to work for a hospital in the San Fernando Valley. One day during a routine checkup, a patient detected Mother's German accent and asked, "Where are you from?"

"Stuttgart," she replied.

"I remember that city well," he said. "During World War II I was shot down over Stuttgart on a reconnaissance mission. In broad daylight."

"But we saw you!" Mother exclaimed. "From our balcony!—I believe it!" (She became even more sure when he told her the date of his crash.)

"It's a wonder I survived," said the pilot. "After walking away from the plane I wandered behind enemy lines at night for a week. When I was finally captured, I ended up in a camp where my treatment was surprisingly humane. The Good Lord was with me ... somehow."

The Lord was with him because of our prayers. I'm sure of it. For as I learned in the case of the brave pilot, God keeps prayers alive.

—Irmgard Wood (Courtesy of "Guideposts")

## THIS I KNOW

I know not by what methods rare,  
But this I know, God answers prayer.  
I know that He has given His Word,  
Which tells me prayer is always heard,  
And will be answered, soon or late.  
And so I pray and calmly wait.

I know not if the blessing sought  
Will come in just the way I thought;  
But I leave my prayers with Him alone,  
Whose will is wiser than my own,  
Assured that He will grant my quest,  
Or send some answer far more blest.

—Eliza M. Hickok



US planes over Germany in 1943.

Prayer is not flight; prayer is power. Prayer does not always deliver a man from some terrible situation; it enables a man to *face* and to *master* the situation.

—William Barclay

Prayer is not overcoming God's reluctance; it is laying hold of His highest willingness.

—Richard Chenevix