

The Overcomers' Testimonies

THE CHURCH OF ALMIGHTY GOD

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Foreword

1991 was a year of tremendous and far-reaching significance for the whole of mankind, so deeply corrupted as they are. That was the year in which our Savior Jesus finally appeared, having long been awaited by all those who piously believed in the Lord and thirsted for the truth, and He had returned as the incarnated Almighty God of the last days. The coming of Almighty God countered the notions of all people, for He had not descended to Israel upon a white cloud, nor had He appeared openly to all nations and peoples; instead, He came in secret into the formidable bastion of atheism—China—and, in the land where the great red dragon lies coiled, He began the work of judgment beginning in God's house. Because China is the darkest, most corrupt, most God-resisting nation in the world, and because it is the land wherein the great red dragon and all manner of evil spirits have made their home, it is here that God utters His words, and it is here that God judges, chastises, purifies and saves those who have been so deceived and so deeply corrupted by the great red dragon. Through this work, God has gained a group of overcomers in the East of the world who have become testimonies to God's victory over Satan, and thus God's wisdom and almightiness are more clearly revealed. Just as Almighty God says: **"In many places, God has prophesied gaining a group of overcomers in the land of Sinim. It is in the world's East that overcomers are gained, so the landing spot of God's second incarnation is without a doubt the land of Sinim, exactly where the great red dragon lies coiled. There God will gain the descendants of the great red dragon so that it is thoroughly defeated and shamed. God wants to awaken these deeply suffering people, to awaken them completely, and to have them walk out of the fog and reject the great red dragon. God wants to awaken them from their dream, have them know the essence of the great red dragon, give all their heart to God, rise up out of the oppression of the dark forces, stand up in the East of the world, and become proof of God's victory. Only then will God gain glory"** ("Work and Entry (6)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). Because of the work and utterances of Christ of the last days, God's chosen ones in China, who have been so profoundly deceived by the great red dragon as they live under its dark rule, are all conquered by Almighty God's words. One by one, they are freed from the bondage and control of the great red dragon and return before God's throne to receive the watering and supply, the pruning and dealing, and the judgment and chastisement of Almighty God's words, as well as all manner of trials and refinements. Finally,

amidst the manifold ways in which the great red dragon's regime hunts and persecutes them, God's chosen people stand witness, thereby becoming the specimens and models of God's work in the last days whom God makes complete in China, and they also become powerful testimonies to God's victory over the evil forces of Satan.

Ever since Almighty God's work in the last days began on the Chinese mainland, the great red dragon has never stopped persecuting The Church of Almighty God. In order to eradicate God's work in the last days, to turn China into a godless zone, and to achieve its objective of controlling mankind forevermore, it does what it does best: disrupting, destroying, and doing all it can to resist God's work. Not only does it disseminate all manner of rumors and falsehoods to attack and falsely accuse God's chosen ones, but it also employs all kinds of despicable methods to persecute them: It investigates people both openly and in secret, it monitors phone calls, shadows people, secretly arrests people, searches homes and exacts fines, it extorts confessions through torture, it threatens and seduces, and it leaves people ruined in both body and mind. These methods have led to countless numbers of God's chosen people being arrested, cruelly beaten, and forced to undergo reeducation through labor, while some of them have even been left crippled or have lost their lives. The great red dragon employs these methods in an attempt to force God's chosen people to reject and betray God, so that they accept its rule, its mastery over them, and its oppression and exploitation forever. But God is an almighty God, and His wisdom is ever exercised based on the deceitful schemes of Satan. Amidst the ruinous tortures inflicted on them by the great red dragon, although God's chosen ones suffer great pain and torment and face tribulations with only the slimmest chance of survival, yet they come to see clearly the great red dragon's reactionary, evil essence, which is so perverse and which runs so contrary to Heaven, and they also come to see its demonic countenance. In their hearts there arises a bitter hatred for the great red dragon, and born in them is a resolve to stand witness for God even at the cost of their own lives. Ultimately, they rely upon the illumination and guidance of God's words and upon the strength God bestows on them, until finally they overcome the weakness of their flesh, they break free from the hold death has over them and, with true faith and a heart filled with love for God, they bear resounding testimony for God before the great red dragon, and cause Satan to be utterly shamed and defeated. Just as Almighty God says: **"Those who God refers to as overcomers are those who are still able to stand witness, maintain their confidence, and their devotion to God when under the**

influence of Satan and under siege by Satan, that is, when within the forces of darkness. If you are still able to maintain a heart of purity and your genuine love for God no matter what, you stand witness in front of God, and this is what God refers to as being an overcomer" ("You Should Maintain Your Devotion to God" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). These overcomers are therefore the group of people who are edified and perfected by the words of God amidst the dark oppression of the great red dragon.

To others, they look just like everyone else, but under the watering and supply of Almighty God's words, they come to understand some truths, and they find the faith and the determination to cast off the dark influence of Satan, follow God, and walk the right path in life. They therefore still pray to God, rely on God, stay righteous by relying on the strength bestowed by God's words, and never surrender or give in under all the inhumanly cruel and ruinous tortures inflicted upon them by the great red dragon and throughout all their days spent languishing in dark prison cells. Though some of them may be brutalized to the verge of death, their resolve to pursue the truth is strengthened; though some of them may be in the prime of their youth, when faced with cruel torture and incarceration at the hands of the great red dragon's demons, they still emit an aura of love and they spend their youth without regret; though some of them may suffer persecution and adversity and be savaged by demons, yet they feel even more how precious God's grace is, and their love for God is made even stronger; as they travel the hard road, draining the bitter cup of brutality, some obtain the illumination, inspiration and guidance of God's words, their spirits are awakened, and they compose songs of praise for life; some struggle against the darkness and oppression, and in times of danger, they experience the transcendence and greatness of God's life force; some rely on God and are saved from death at the final moment, they perceive the incomparable vastness of God's love, and find a pillar in God's words that keeps them holding onto life. It is clear, therefore, that although this group of God's chosen people who overcome Satan under the guidance of God suffer the loss of physical comforts, yet they gain the truth, they obtain spiritual liberation, and they live out meaningful lives. Though they undergo storms of wind and rain and suffer great hardships, they bear strong, resounding testimony for God before Satan, and become the overcomers who are edified and perfected by God in the midst of adversity. This entirely fulfills the words of Almighty God: **"I Have previously said that a group of overcomers are gained from the East, overcomers who come from amid the great tribulation"** ("All Is Achieved by the Word of

God” in The Word Appears in the Flesh).

When you read this book, this notion may perhaps arise in your mind: Isn't God almighty? Why would He allow the regime of the great red dragon to harm His chosen people like that? If you think this, then it shows that you still do not fully understand God's almightiness and wisdom, for only those who do not know God's work judge things solely on their outward appearance, and judge things only by their own notions and imaginings—this is no way to recognize the true fruits of God's work. Almighty God says: **“When I formally begin My work, all people move as I move, such that people throughout the universe occupy themselves in step with Me, there is ‘jubilation’ across the universe, and man is spurred onward by Me. In consequence, the great red dragon itself is whipped into a state of frenzy and bewilderment by Me, and serves My work, and, despite being unwilling, is unable to follow its own desires, leaving it no choice but to submit to My control. In all of My plans, the great red dragon is My foil, My enemy, and also My servant; as such, I have never relaxed My ‘requirements’ of it. Therefore, the final stage of the work of My incarnation is completed in its household. In this way, the great red dragon is more able to do service for Me properly, through which I will conquer it and complete My plan”** (“Chapter 29” of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). **“God intends to use a portion of evil spirits’ work to perfect a portion of man, so that these people can completely see through demons’ deeds, and allow everyone to truly understand their ancestors. Only then can humans completely break free, not only forsaking the posterity of the demons, but even more so their ancestors. This is the original intent of God completely defeating the great red dragon, to make it so that all of man knows the great red dragon’s true form, completely tearing off its mask, and seeing its true form. This is what God wants to achieve, and it is His final goal on earth for which He has done so much work; He aims to accomplish this in all of man. This is known as the maneuver of all things for God’s purpose”** (“Chapter 41” of Interpretations of the Mysteries of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). In each stage of His work, God mobilizes all things to work and render service for Him, and this is exactly what happens in God's work of the last days which He has unfolded throughout China. The great red dragon is no exception, as it has become a foil and a serving object within God's work. Through the great red dragon's resistance to and disruption of God's work, God enables everyone to recognize

its true face, thereby severing all ties with it and freeing themselves from its shackles. But what exactly does God wanting people to see through the demons' actions and forsake the great red dragon once and for all have to do with them attaining full salvation? As we all know, the great red dragon behaves perversely, it acts contrary to Heaven, and is reactionary in the extreme. In order to turn China into a godless zone and keep the people of China thoroughly controlled under its dark rule, it constantly turns the truth on its head, wantonly propagates atheism and materialism, and disseminates all manner of fallacies and heresies to corrode people's minds, deceive their spirits, and stop people from coming before God to accept His salvation. Thereby it achieves its objective of controlling and devouring people forevermore. If people wish to wake up from the great red dragon's deceptions, rid themselves of its tyranny and suppression, and wholly turn to God, then only by experiencing persecution and repression at the hands of the great red dragon will they be able to clearly see its evil, vicious, despicable and shameless demonic face, and only then will they loathe it and curse it from the bottom of their hearts. They then pledge their lives to sever all ties with the great red dragon, they cast off the influence of Satan once and for all, and they follow God, obey God, and walk the path of light in life whereby they pursue the truth and attain full salvation. It is therefore evident that God uses the great red dragon as a foil and a serving object to enable His chosen people to understand the truth, to develop discernment, to stand witness for God, and finally to be made perfect and attain full salvation. The way God works is magnificent! God uses the frenzied repression of the great red dragon in His service to perfect His chosen people, to enable them to know His righteous disposition, wisdom and almightiness, and to see how practical God's work is, so that they may all express true praise for God from the bottom of their hearts! Just as Almighty God's words say: **"In My plan, Satan has ever snapped at the heels of every step, and, as the foil of My wisdom, has always tried to find ways and means to disrupt My original plan. But could I succumb to its deceitful schemes? All in heaven and on earth serves Me—could the deceitful schemes of Satan be any different? This is precisely the intersection of My wisdom, it is precisely that which is wondrous about My deeds, and it is the principle by which My entire management plan is carried out. During the time of the building of the kingdom, still I do not avoid the deceitful schemes of Satan, but continue to do the work I must do. Among all things in the universe, I have chosen the deeds of Satan as My foil. Is this not My wisdom? Is this not precisely that which**

is wondrous about My work? On the occasion of the entry into the Age of Kingdom, tremendous changes occur in all things in heaven and on earth, and they celebrate and rejoice. Are you any different? Who does not feel as sweet as honey in their heart? Who does not burst with joy in their heart? Who does not dance with delight? Who does not speak words of praise?" ("Chapter 8" of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh).

The accounts collected in this book, The Overcomers' Testimonies, are all the victorious testimonies of God's chosen people in China, who are being perfected by God's words amidst the frenzied persecution of the great red dragon. As the facts show, God uses the frantic resistance and persecution of the great red dragon to edify and perfect His chosen people and to enable their lives to grow and mature. At the same time, God uses this resistance and persecution to expose and eliminate all those wicked people who do not truly believe in Him and who do not love the truth. This aptly shows that the wisdom of God is exercised based on the deceitful schemes of Satan, that God has already defeated the great red dragon utterly, and that He has gained all glory!

Almighty God's words say: **"Wherever the incarnation appears is a place from which the enemy is vanquished. China will be the first to be annihilated; it will be laid to waste by the hand of God. God will give absolutely no quarter there. Proof of the great red dragon's progressive collapse can be seen in the continued maturation of the people; this is obvious and visible to anyone. The maturation of the people is a sign of the enemy's demise"** ("Chapter 10" of Interpretations of the Mysteries of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). The chosen ones of God who stand witness for Him are the group who bear testimony for God at precisely the moment of the nation of the great red dragon's fall; they are the testimonies to God's victory in His war with Satan, and the irrefutable proof of Satan's defeat and humiliation. The maturation of God's people heralds the toppling of the nation of the great red dragon. God's work on the Chinese mainland will end in glory: He has made a group of people into overcomers and He has gained His glory! God's chosen people have now taken upon themselves the holy mission, to testify to God's work in all corners of the world and to spread God's holy name. The name of God shall be magnified throughout the entire universe, all mankind shall submit before God and worship the incarnated Almighty God, and all the nations of the earth shall become the nation of Christ—this shall soon be done by God!

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Explanation About Footnotes: This book contains two kinds of footnotes. Those marked with numbers (like this^[1]) are footnotes from the original text, while those marked with letters (like this^[a]) are notes on the translation.

1. God's Love Was With Me in the Devil's Dark Prison

By Yang Yi, Jiangsu Province

I am a Christian of The Church of Almighty God and I have been a follower of Almighty God for over ten years. During this time, one thing I'll never forget is the awful tribulation when I was arrested by the CCP police a decade ago. Back then, despite my being tortured and trampled on by evil demons, and coming close to death several times, Almighty God used His mighty hand to guide and protect me, to bring me back to life, and return me to safety.... Through this, I truly experienced the transcendence and greatness of God's life force, and gained the precious wealth of life conferred upon me by God.

It was January 23, 2004 (the second day of Chinese New Year). I needed to go and visit a sister from the church, as she was in trouble and in urgent need of help. As she lived a long way away, I had to get up early to get a taxi, so I'd be back the same day. I left home just as it was getting light. There was hardly anyone on the streets, just the workers cleaning up rubbish. I anxiously searched for a taxi, but there were none about. I went to a taxi rank to wait and stepped into the road to flag one down when I saw it coming—but it turned out to be a vehicle belonging to the Environmental Protection Bureau. They asked me why I'd flagged them down. "I'm sorry, it was a mistake, I thought you were a taxi," I said. "We think you were putting up illegal posters," they replied. "Did you see me doing that? Where are the posters I was putting up?" I said. Without giving me the chance to defend myself, the three of them rushed forward and forcibly searched my bag. They rifled through everything in my bag—a copy of a sermon, a notepad, a purse, a cell phone and a pager I no longer used, and so on. Then they took a closer look at the copy of the sermon and the notepad. Seeing there were no posters in my bag, they held up the copy of the sermon and said: "You might not have been putting up illegal posters, but you believe in Almighty God." Next, they rang the National Security Brigade's Religion Division. Soon after, four people from the National Security Brigade arrived. They knew I was a believer in Almighty God as soon as they saw the things in my bag. Without letting me say anything, they bundled me into their vehicle, then locked the door to stop me running away.

When we arrived at the Public Security Bureau, the police led me into a room. One of them fiddled with my pager and cell phone, looking for clues. He turned on the phone but it showed low battery, then the battery was completely dead. Try as he might, he couldn't get

it to turn on. Holding the phone, he looked worried. I was puzzled too—I'd just charged the phone that morning. How could it have no power? I suddenly realized that God had miraculously arranged this to stop the police from finding any information about the other brothers and sisters. I also understood the words spoken by God: **“[A]ny and all things, whether living or dead, will shift, change, renew, and disappear in accordance with God’s thoughts. Such is the way in which God presides over all things”** (“God Is the Source of Man’s Life” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). Truly, all things and all events are in God’s hands. Whether living or dead, all things undergo change according to God’s thoughts. In this moment, I gained a true understanding of how God holds sovereignty over and orchestrates all things. What’s more, I gained the confidence I needed to rely upon God to face the coming interrogation. Pointing at the things in the bag, the police officer asked accusingly: “These show that you’re clearly no ordinary church member. You must be one of the senior leadership, someone important, as junior leaders don’t have pagers or cell phones. Am I right?” “I don’t understand what you’re saying,” I replied. “You’re pretending you don’t!” he roared, then ordered me to squat down and start talking. Seeing I wasn’t going to play ball, they surrounded me and began punching and kicking me—as though they wanted to kill me. With my face bloody and swollen, my whole body aching unbearably, I collapsed on the floor. I was incensed. I wanted to talk reason to them, to argue my case: What have I done wrong? Why did you beat me like that? But I had no way of talking sense with them, because the CCP government doesn’t talk sense. I was confused, but I didn’t want to give in to their beatings. Just as I was at a loss, I suddenly thought of how, since these evil officers of the CCP government were being so absurd, since they weren’t letting me speak any words of reason, I needn’t say anything to them. I was better off keeping silent—that way I’d be of no use to them. When I thought of this, I stopped paying any attention to what they were saying.

Seeing that this approach had no effect on me, the evil policemen flew into a rage and grew even more barbaric: They turned to torture to extract a confession. They handcuffed me to a metal chair screwed to the ground in such a position that I could neither squat nor stand. One of them placed my uncuffed hand on the chair and struck it with a shoe, only stopping when the back of my hand had gone black and blue, while another stomped on my feet with his leather shoes, rolling his shoes around on my toes to crush them, which is when I experienced an incredible, shooting pain that went straight to my heart. After that, six or

seven policemen took turns at me. One of them concentrated on my joints, and pinched them so hard that a month later I still couldn't bend my arm. Another grabbed my hair and shook my head from side to side, then wrenched it back so I was looking up. "Look at the sky and see if there's a God!" he said viciously. They carried on until nightfall. Seeing that they weren't going to get anything out of me, and because it was Chinese New Year, they sent me straight to the detention house.

When I arrived at the detention house, a guard ordered a female prisoner to take all my clothes off and throw them in the trash can. Then they made me put on a dirty, foul-smelling prison uniform. The guards put me in a cell and then lied to the other prisoners, saying: "She went out of her way to break up other people's families. A lot of families have been ruined by her. She's a liar, she deceives honest people, and upsets the public order...." "Why does she look like a simpleton?" one of the prisoners asked. To which the guards replied: "She's putting on an act to avoid being sentenced. None of you would have been clever enough to think of doing that. Anyone who thinks she's a fool is the biggest idiot of all." Thus deceived by the guards, all the other prisoners said I was being let off too easily, and that the only thing good for someone as bad as me was the firing squad! Hearing this enraged me—but there was nothing I could do. My attempts at resistance had been to no avail, they had only brought more torture and savagery. In the detention house, the guards made the prisoners recite the rules every day: "Confess your crimes and submit to the law. Inciting others to commit crimes is not allowed. Forming gangs is not allowed. Fighting is not allowed. Bullying or insulting others is not allowed. Making false charges against others is not allowed. Taking others' food or possessions is not allowed. Playing tricks on others is not allowed. Prison bullies will be cracked down on. Any violation of the rules should be reported to the correctional officers or roundsmen immediately. You must not cover up the facts or try to protect prisoners who have violated the regulations, and the prison rules must be implemented in a humane way. ..." In reality, the guards encouraged the other prisoners to torment me, allowing them to play tricks on me every day: When it was 8 or 9 degrees below zero, they soaked my shoes; they secretly poured water in my food; in the evening, when I was asleep, they drenched my cotton-padded jacket; they made me sleep next to the toilet, and they often pulled off my quilt in the night and pulled my hair to keep me from sleep; they snatched my steamed buns; they forced me to clean the toilet, and forced their leftover medicine into my mouth, they didn't let me relieve myself.... If I didn't do anything they said,

they'd gang up and beat me—and often at such times the correctional officers or the roundsmen would hurry out of view or pretend they hadn't seen anything; sometimes they'd even hide a little way off and watch. If the prisoners went a few days without tormenting me, the correctional officers and the roundsmen would ask them: "That stupid bitch has smartened up these last few days, yes? Meanwhile, you lot have gone soft in the head. Anyone who brings that stupid bitch around will have their sentence reduced." The guards' brutal torment filled me with hatred for them. If I hadn't witnessed this with my own eyes and personally experienced it, I would never believe that the CCP government, which is supposed to be full of benevolence and morality, could be so dark, fearful, and horrible—I would never have seen its true face, a face that is deceitful and duplicitous. All its talk of "serving the people, creating a civilized and harmonious society"—these are lies designed to deceive and hoodwink people, they are a means, a trick, of beautifying itself and gaining kudos it does not deserve. At that time, I thought of the words of God: **"Small wonder, then, that God incarnate remains completely hidden: In a dark society such as this, where the demons are merciless and inhumane, how could the king of devils, who kills people in the blink of an eye, tolerate the existence of a God who is lovely, kind, and also holy? How could it applaud and cheer the arrival of God? These lackeys! They repay kindness with hate, they have long since disdained God, they abuse God, they are savage in the extreme, they have not the slightest regard for God, they plunder and pillage, they have lost all conscience, and have not a trace of kindness, and they tempt the innocent into senselessness. Forefathers of the ancient? Beloved leaders? They all oppose God! Their meddling has left all beneath heaven in a state of darkness and chaos! Religious freedom? The legitimate rights and interests of citizens? They are all tricks for covering up sin!"** ("Work and Entry (8)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). Comparing God's words to the reality, I saw the dark and evil demonic substance of the CCP government in perfect clarity. To maintain its dark rule, it keeps a tight grip on its people, and stops at nothing to delude and deceive them. Superficially, it purports to provide religious freedom—but in secret, it arrests, oppresses, persecutes, and murders people across the country who believe in God. It even tries to put them all to death. How evil, brutal, and reactionary the devil is! Where is the freedom? Where are the human rights? Are these not all tricks by which to deceive people? Can people glimpse any hope or light living beneath its dark rule? How can they be free to believe in God and pursue the truth? Only then did I

recognize that God had permitted this persecution and tribulation to befall me, that He had used it to show me the viciousness and brutality of the CCP government, to show me its demonic substance that is in enmity to the truth and hostile to God, and to show me that the People's Police, whom the government vigorously promotes and touts as punishing evil, advocating good, and promoting justice, are the accomplices and minions it has meticulously nurtured, a bunch of executioners who have the faces of men but the hearts of beasts, and who would kill someone without blinking an eye. To force me to reject and betray God and yield to its despotic power, the CCP government stopped at nothing in torturing and ravaging me—yet little did it know that the more it tortured me, the more clearly I saw its devilish face, and the more I despised and rejected it from the depths of my heart, making me truly yearn for God and trust in God. What's more, it was precisely because of the guards' torture that I unwittingly came to understand what it truly means to love what God loves, and hate what God hates, what it means to turn one's back on Satan and turn one's heart to God, what it is to be barbaric, what the forces of darkness are, and, furthermore, what it is to be malicious and insidious, false and deceitful. I was grateful to God for letting me experience this environment, for allowing me to tell right from wrong and even more so, determine the right path of life to take. My heart—which had been duped by Satan for so long—was finally awakened by God's love. I felt that there was great meaning in my having the fortune to experience this tribulation and trial, and that I had truly been shown special favor.

After trying everything else, the evil police came up with another plan: They found a Judas who had sold out my church. She said I believed in Almighty God and she also attempted to get me to turn my back on God. Seeing this evil servant who had reported many brothers and sisters who spread the gospel, and hearing all the wicked words that spilled from her mouth—words that vilified, slandered, and blasphemed against God—my heart was filled with fury. I wanted to shout at her, asking why she was so unconscionably hostile to God. Why was it that she had enjoyed so much of God's grace, yet had joined forces with evil demons to persecute God's chosen ones? In my heart, there was unspeakable sadness and pain. I also felt a great sense of remorse and indebtedness; I truly hated myself for how, in the past, I had not tried to pursue the truth, and had never known anything but the enjoyment of God's grace and blessings like a naive child, giving no thought to the pain and humiliation God had endured for the sake of our salvation. Only now, when I was deep in this den of fiends, did I sense just how hard it was for God to work in this filthy,

corrupt country, and just how great the pain He had suffered was! Truly, God's love of man carries great pain. He does the work of saving mankind whilst enduring man's betrayal. Man's betrayal has brought Him nothing but pain and hurt. No wonder God once said: **"Even in the space of just one night, they may go from a smiling, 'kind-hearted' person to an ugly-looking and ferocious killer, suddenly treating their benefactor of yesterday as their mortal enemy, without rhyme or reason"** ("God's Work and Man's Practice" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). Today, although I had fallen into the clutches of the devil, I would not betray God no matter what. Regardless of how great the hardship I suffered, I would not be a Judas for the sake of saving my own skin, and I would not cause pain and grief for God. As a result of my being sold out by that Judas, the evil police stepped up their torture. She, meanwhile, stood to one side and said: "You don't know good from bad. You deserve this! You don't appreciate my kindness. You deserve to be tortured to death!" Hearing these vicious, evil words incensed me—but I also felt an inexplicable sense of sadness. I wanted to cry, but I knew I must not; I didn't want to let Satan see my weakness. In my heart, I secretly prayed: "O God! I wish for You to gain my heart. Although I can't do anything for You at the moment, I wish to bear victorious testimony to You before Satan and this wicked person, utterly shaming them, and through this bringing comfort to Your heart. O God! May You protect my heart, and make me stronger. If I have tears, may they flow inward—I cannot let them see my tears. I should be happy because I understand the truth, for You have blown the dust from my eyes, giving me the ability to differentiate, and clearly see the nature and substance of Satan, which is to oppose You, and betray You. Amid refinement, I have also seen how Your wise hand arranges all. I wish to rely on You to face the following interrogation and defeat Satan, that You may be glorified in me." After praying, in my heart there was the strength to not rest until I had completed my testimony to God. I knew that this had been given to me by God, that God had given me great protection and greatly moved me. The evil police wanted to use this wicked woman to make me betray God, but God is a wise God, and He employed this wicked woman as a foil to show me the rebellious nature of corrupt mankind, thus stimulating my resolve and faith to satisfy God. What's more, I had some knowledge of God's wise work, and I saw that God rules and maneuvers all that there is in service to perfecting the people of God. This is the indisputable fact of God using wisdom to defeat Satan.

Seeing that they weren't going to get me to say anything they wanted, they spared no

expense—be it manpower, or material and financial resources—to go up hill and down dale asking for proof that I was a believer in God. Three months later, all their rushing about had come to nothing. In the end, they played their trump card: They found a master interrogator. It was said that everyone who was brought to him was subjected to his three forms of torture, and no one had ever not confessed. One day, four police officers came and said to me: “Today we’re taking you to a new home.” Next, they pushed me into a prisoner transport van, cuffed my hands behind my back, and put a hood over my head. The situation made me think they were taking me out to secretly execute me. In my heart, I couldn’t help but panic. But afterward I thought of the hymn I used to sing when I believed in Jesus: “Since the earliest times of the church, those who follow the Lord have had to pay a high price. Tens of thousands of spiritual kinfolk have sacrificed themselves for the gospel, and thus they have gained everlasting life. Be a martyr for the Lord, be a martyr for the Lord, I am prepared to be a martyr for the Lord.” That day, I finally understood the line in that hymn: Those who follow the Lord have had to pay a high price. I too was prepared to die for God. To my surprise, after getting in the van, I inadvertently overheard a conversation between the evil police. It seemed they were taking me somewhere else to be interrogated. Ah! They weren’t taking me to be executed—and I’d been preparing to die a martyr for God! Just as I was thinking this, for some unknown reason one of the police tightened the strings of the hood over my head. Soon after, I started feeling uncomfortable—it felt like I was being suffocated. I found myself wondering if they really were going to torture me to death. At that moment, I thought of how Jesus’ disciples had sacrificed themselves to spread the gospel. I wasn’t going to be a coward. Even if I died, I wouldn’t beg them to loosen it, much less would I admit defeat. But I couldn’t control myself: I passed out and collapsed onto them. Seeing what was happening, the police quickly loosened the hood. I started foaming at the mouth, then couldn’t stop vomiting. It felt like I was going to vomit my insides out. I felt dizzy, my head empty, and I couldn’t open my eyes. I had no strength anywhere in my body, as if I’d been paralyzed. It felt like there was something sticky in my mouth that I couldn’t get out. I’d always been frail, and after being abused like this I sensed I was in trouble, and that I might stop breathing at any time. Amidst the pain, I prayed to God: “O God! Whether I live or die, I am willing to obey You. I trust that whatever You do, it is righteous, and I ask that You protect my heart, so that I may submit to all that You orchestrate and arrange.” Sometime later, the van arrived at a hotel. At that time, my whole body felt weak and I couldn’t open

my eyes. They carried me to a sealed room. All I could hear was the sound of many minions of the CCP government standing around discussing me, saying that seeing me was like seeing how Liu Hulan had been. “What an eye-opener, how impressive!” they said. “She’s even tougher than Liu Hulan was!” Hearing this, my heart surged with excitement. I saw that by leaning on faith and relying on God there definitely would be victory over Satan, that Satan was under God’s feet! I thanked and praised God. At this moment, I forgot the pain. I felt tremendously gratified to be glorifying God.

Soon after, the “interrogation expert” the police had spoken of arrived. As soon as he entered, he shouted: “Where is that stupid bitch? Let me have a look!” He walked in front of me and grabbed me. After slapping me dozens of times on the face, he gave me several hard punches to the chest and back, then took off one of his leather shoes and hit me across the face with it. After being beaten by him like this, I lost the feeling that there was something I couldn’t get out of my mouth or stomach. I no longer felt so dazed and I could open my eyes. Feeling gradually came back to my limbs, and strength started to return to my body. Next, he roughly grabbed my shoulders and pushed me back against the wall, ordering me to look at him and answer his questions. Seeing I wasn’t paying him any attention enraged him, and he tried to get a reaction from me by vilifying, slandering and blaspheming God. He used the most contemptible, despicable means to bait me, and said ominously, “I’m deliberately tormenting you with what is unbearable to your flesh and soul, to make you suffer pain that no normal person could suffer—you’re going to wish you were dead. In the end, you’ll beg me to let you go, and that’s when you’ll speak sense, and say that your fate isn’t in God’s hands—it’s in mine. If I want you to die, it’ll happen straight away. If I want you to live, you’ll live, and whatever hardship I want you to suffer, that’s what you’ll suffer. Your Almighty God can’t save you—you’ll only live if you beg us to save you.” Faced with these despicable, shameless, contemptible thugs, these wild animals, these evil demons, I really wanted to fight them. “All things in heaven and on earth are created by God and controlled by Him,” I thought. “My fate is also subject to God’s sovereignty and arrangements. God is the Arbiter of life and death; do you think I’ll die just because you want me to?” At that moment, my heart was filled with fury. I felt like I couldn’t contain it; I wanted to cry out, to fight back, to declare to them: “A human would never beg for mercy from a dog!” I believed that this was me developing my sense of justice—but to my surprise, the more I thought this way, the darker I became inside. I found myself without words of prayer, unable to think of

any hymns. My thoughts grew cloudy, I didn't know what to do, and at that point I started to feel a little afraid. I quickly quietened myself before God. I reflected upon myself, and tried to know myself, and at that moment God's words of judgment came to me: **"What you admire is not the humility of Christ.... You do not adore the loveliness or wisdom of Christ ..."** ("Are You a True Believer in God?" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). Yes—I had seen Christ as too insignificant, and I had admired power and influence, not the humility of Christ, much less had I admired the wisdom of God's hidden work. God uses His wisdom to defeat Satan, He uses His humility and hiddenness to reveal the true face of Satan, and to gather evidence to punish the wicked. So too, all the despicable acts the policemen had perpetrated against me and all the blasphemous and God-resisting things they had said today clearly exposed their demonic substance as haters of the truth and resisters of God, and this would be the evidence needed to warrant God's condemnation, punishment and destruction. Yet, I failed to see Christ's wisdom and humility, and, thinking that "A kind person is liable to be bullied, just as a tame horse is often ridden," I wasn't content to be humiliated and oppressed. I even believed that fighting back was the most just, dignified and courageous thing I could do. Little did I know that Satan wished to incite me to fight back against them, forcing me to acknowledge the fact of my belief in God in order to convict me. If I really did fight them with impulsive courage, would I not have fallen prey to their deceitful schemes? I was truly thankful to God for His timely chastisement and judgment of me, which gave me protection amidst my rebelliousness, so that I saw through the deceitful schemes of Satan, recognized the venom of Satan within myself, and gained a little knowledge of what God is and the humble and hidden life essence of God. I thought of how Christ faced being persecuted, hunted, and killed by the CCP devil, and how all mankind passed judgment on Him, and condemned Him, and slandered Him, and abandoned Him. Throughout, He bore all this silently, enduring all this pain to carry out His work of salvation, and never complaining. I saw just how kind, and beautiful, and honorable God's disposition is! Meanwhile, I—a filthy, corrupt person—had wanted to use my impulsive courage to uphold my supposed dignity, to fight for my own justice based on my own will when persecuted by the evil demons. Where was the sense of justice in this? And where was the strength of character and dignity? In this, was I not showing my ugly satanic face? Was I not revealing my arrogant nature? Thinking this, my heart was filled with remorse. I made up my mind to imitate Christ. I became willing to submit to this environment and to try my best to

cooperate with God, leaving no opportunity for Satan.

My heart grew calm, and I silently waited for the next round of this battle with the demons. My refusal to confess had cost the supposed expert a lot of face. He furiously twisted one of my arms behind my back and pulled the other behind my shoulder, then tightly cuffed my hands together. After less than half an hour, big drops of sweat were rolling down my face and into my eyes, preventing me from opening them. Seeing I still wasn't going to reply to his questions, he threw me to the ground, then lifted me up by the handcuffs behind my back. I instantly felt a tearing pain in my arms, as if they'd been broken. It hurt so much I could hardly breathe. Next, he hurled me against the wall and made me stand against it. Sweat was blurring my eyes. It hurt so much my whole body was covered with sweat—even my shoes were soaked. I'd always been frail, and at this moment I collapsed. All I could do was pant through my mouth. The demon stood to one side watching me. I didn't know what he saw—maybe he was afraid he'd be blamed if I died—he quickly grabbed a handful of tissues to wipe away my sweat, then fed me a cup of water. He did this every half an hour or so. I don't know what I looked like at that time. I guess it must have been very frightful, because I could only pant with my mouth open; it seemed I had lost the ability to breathe through my nose. My lips were dry and cracked and it took all the strength I had just to breathe. I felt death once more drawing near—maybe this time I really would die. But at that moment, the Holy Spirit enlightened me. I thought of Luke, one of Jesus' disciples, and his experience of being hanged to death. In my heart, I spontaneously regained my strength, and kept saying the same thing over and over to remind myself: "Luke died by being hanged. I, too, must be Luke, I must be Luke, be Luke.... I willingly obey God's orchestrations and arrangements, and I wish to be loyal to God unto death like Luke." Just as the pain became unbearable and I was on the verge of death, I suddenly heard one of the evil police say that several brothers and sisters who believed in Almighty God had been arrested. In my heart, I was shocked: Several more brothers and sisters were to be tortured. They were bound to be especially hard on the brothers. My heart was filled with worry. I kept silently praying for them, asking God to guard them and allow them to bear victorious testimony before Satan and never betray God, for I did not wish for any other brother or sister to suffer as I had. Perhaps I was touched by the Holy Spirit; I prayed without cease, and the more I prayed, the more inspired I was. I unconsciously forgot my pain. I knew full well that these were the wise arrangements of God; God was mindful of my weakness and was leading me through

my most painful time. That night, I no longer cared how the evil police treated me, and paid not the slightest attention to their questions. Seeing what was happening, the evil police used their fists to savagely beat my face, then wound the hair at my temple around their fingers and wrenched it. My ears were swollen from being twisted, my face was unrecognizable, my bottom and my thighs had been left bruised and torn when they beat me with a thick piece of wood, and my toes, too, had been left black and blue after being smashed with a piece of wood. After hanging me up by handcuffs for six hours, when the evil police opened the handcuffs, the flesh below my left thumb had been rubbed clean off—there was only a thin layer left covering the bone. The handcuffs had also left my wrists covered in yellow blisters, and there was no way of getting them back on again. At that moment, an important-looking female police officer walked in. She looked me up and down, then said to them: “You can’t beat this one anymore—she looks like she’s about to die.”

The police locked me in one of the hotel rooms. Its curtains were pulled tightly shut twenty-four hours a day. Someone was assigned to guard the door, and none of the service personnel were allowed to enter, nor was anyone allowed to see the scenes of them torturing and savaging me within. They took turns at interrogating me without respite. For five days and nights, they didn’t let me sleep, they didn’t let me sit or squat, nor did they allow me to eat my fill of food. I was only allowed to stand leaning against the wall. One day, an official came to interrogate me. Seeing that I was ignoring him, he flew into a rage and sent me flying under the table with a kick. Next, he pulled me out and punched me, causing blood to flow from the corner of my mouth. To cover up his savagery, he quickly closed the door to stop anyone coming in. Then he tore off a handful of tissues and wiped away my blood, washing the blood off my face with water and cleaning the blood off the floor. I deliberately left some of the blood on my white sweater. When I returned to the detention house, however, the evil police told the other prisoners that the blood on my clothing was from when I was being certified at the mental hospital and said that was where I’d been for the last several days. The wounds and blood on my body had been caused by the patients—they, the police, hadn’t touched me.... These cruel facts showed me the ruthlessness, insidious cunning, and inhumanity of the People’s Police, and I felt the helplessness and despair of those who fall into their hands. At the same time, I gained a deep appreciation of the righteousness, holiness, brightness, and goodness of God, and felt that everything that comes from God is love, protection, enlightenment, provision, comfort, and support. Every time my pain was at

its worst, God would always keep enlightening and guiding me, increasing my faith and strength, allowing me to emulate the spirit of the saints who had been martyred for the Lord throughout the ages, thus giving me the courage to stand for the truth. When the evil police's savagery left me at death's door, God allowed me to hear news of other brothers' and sisters' arrest, using this to further move me to pray for them, so that I forgot my own pain and unwittingly overcame the constraints of death. Thanks to Satan acting as the evil, vicious foil, I saw that only God is the truth, the way, and the life, and that only God's disposition is the symbol of righteousness and goodness. Only God rules everything, and arranges everything, and He used His great power and wisdom to lead my every step in defeating the siege of the demon legions, in overcoming the weakness of the flesh and constraints of death, thereby allowing me to tenaciously survive in this dark lair. As I thought about God's love and salvation, I felt greatly inspired, and I resolved to fight Satan to the very end. Even if I rotted in jail, I would stand firm in my testimony and satisfy God.

One day, many evil police I had never met before came to look at me and discuss my case. Without meaning to, I overheard the supposed expert say, "Of all the interrogations I've done, I've never been so hard on anyone as that stupid bitch. I had her hung up by handcuffs for eight hours (it was actually six hours, but he wanted to show off, afraid that his superior would say he was useless) and still she didn't confess." I heard a female voice say, "How could you beat that woman so badly? You're brutal." It turned out that among everyone who had been arrested, I had suffered the most. Why had I suffered so much? Was I more corrupt than other people? Was what I'd suffered God's punishment of me? Maybe there was too much corruption in me, and I'd already reached the point of punishment? Thinking of this, I couldn't hold back my tears. I knew that I mustn't cry. I couldn't let Satan see my tears—if it did, it would believe I'd been defeated. Yet I couldn't contain the feeling of grievance in my heart, and the tears flowed beyond my control. Amidst my desperation, I could only call out to God: "O God! At the moment, I feel deeply aggrieved. I keep wanting to cry. Please protect me, stop me from bowing my head before Satan—I can't let it see my tears. I know that the state I'm in is wrong. I am making demands of You and complaining. And I know that no matter what You do, it is the best—but my stature is too small, my rebellious disposition is too great, and I am incapable of gladly accepting this fact, nor do I know what I should do to get out of this wrong state. I ask that You guide me, and allow me to obey Your orchestrations and arrangements, and never again misunderstand or blame

You.” As I prayed, a passage of God’s words floated into my head: **“You too must drink of the bitter cup from which I have drunk (this is what He said after the resurrection). You too must walk the path I have walked. You must lay down your life for Me”** (“How Peter Came to Know Jesus” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). My tears immediately stopped. Christ’s suffering was incomparable to that of any created being, nor was it bearable to any created being—whereas here I was feeling wronged and complaining to God that it was unfair after suffering a little hardship. Where was the conscience and reason in this? How was I fit to be called human? After that, I thought of what God said: **“[B]ut the corruption in their nature must be resolved through trials. In whichever aspects you are not purified, these are the aspects in which you must be refined—this is God’s arrangement. God creates an environment for you, forcing you to be refined there so that you can know your own corruption”** (“How to Satisfy God in the Midst of Trials” in *Records of Christ’s Talks*). Pondering God’s words and reflecting upon myself, I understood that what was arranged by God was aimed at my corruption and deficiencies—and this was precisely what my life needed. It was only through this inhuman suffering and torment that I was able to realize that I pander far too much to my flesh, that I am selfish, lowly, demanding of God and am not content to suffer for God and be a shining testimony for Him. If I hadn’t gone through this suffering, I would have continued under the mistaken impression that I had already satisfied God; I never would have realized that I still have so much corruption and rebelliousness within me, much less would I have gained firsthand experience of how arduous it is for God to do His work among corrupted mankind to save them. I also never would have truly abandoned Satan and come back before God. This hardship was God’s love for me, it was His special blessing upon me. Having understood God’s will, my heart suddenly felt clear and bright. My misunderstanding of God disappeared. I felt there was great value and meaning in my being able to suffer hardship!

After trying everything they could, the evil police had gotten nothing from me. In the end, they said with conviction: “The CCP is made of steel, but those who believe in Almighty God are made of diamond—they’re one better than the CCP in every regard.” After hearing these words, in my heart I couldn’t help but cheer and praise God: “O God, I thank and praise You! With Your almightiness and wisdom, You have overcome Satan and defeated Your enemies. You are the highest authority and may glory be to You!” Only at this moment did I see that no matter how cruel the CCP government is, it is controlled and orchestrated by God’s hands.

Just as God's words say: **"All things in the skies and on the ground must come under His dominion. They cannot have any choice, and must all submit to His orchestrations. This was decreed by God, and is the authority of God"** ("Success or Failure Depends on the Path That Man Walks" in The Word Appears in the Flesh).

One day, the evil police came to interrogate me once again. This time they all seemed a little strange. They looked at me when they spoke, but it didn't seem they were talking to me. They appeared to be discussing something. Like the previous times, this interrogation ended in failure. Later, the evil police took me back to my cell. On the way, I suddenly heard them saying that it looked like I would be released on the first of the next month. Hearing this, my heart almost burst with excitement: "This means I'll be out in three days!" I thought. "I can finally leave this demonic hell!" Suppressing the delight in my heart, I expected and waited as every second passed. Three days felt more like three years. Finally, the first of the month arrived! That day, I kept staring at the door, waiting for someone to call out my name. The morning went by, and nothing happened. I put all my hopes in leaving in the afternoon—but when evening arrived, still nothing happened. When it was time for the evening meal, I didn't feel like eating. In my heart, I had a sense of loss; at that moment, it was like my heart had fallen from heaven into hell. "Why isn't she eating?" the correctional officer asked the other prisoners. "She hasn't eaten much since she came back from being interrogated that day," one of the prisoners replied. "Feel her forehead; is she sick?" the correctional officer said. A prisoner came up and felt my forehead. She said it was very hot, that I was running a fever. I really was. The illness had come on very suddenly, and it was very severe. At that moment, I collapsed. Over the course of two hours, the fever got worse and worse. I cried! All of them, including the correctional officer, watched me crying. They were all nonplussed: Their view of me was as someone who was neither enticed by the carrot nor browbeaten by the stick, who had not shed a single tear each time she was faced with grievous torture, and who had been hung up by handcuffs for six hours without a groan. Yet today, without any torture, I cried. They didn't know where my tears came from—they simply thought I must be very ill. In fact, only God and I knew the reason. It was all because of my rebelliousness and disobedience. These tears flowed because I felt despair when my expectations had come to nothing and my hopes had been dashed. They were tears of rebelliousness and grievance. At that moment, I no longer wanted to set my resolve to bear testimony to God. I didn't even have the courage to be tested like this again. That evening, I wept tears of misery, because

I'd had enough of life in prison and I despised these demons—and even more than that, I hated being in this terrible place. I didn't want to spend another second there. The more I thought about it, the more dispirited I became, and the more I felt a great sense of grievance, piteousness, and loneliness. I felt I was like a lonesome boat upon the sea, one that could be engulfed by the water at any time; moreover, I felt those around me were so insidious and awful that they might vent their anger on me at any time. I couldn't stop myself from crying out: "O God! I beg You to save me. I'm at the point of collapse, I could betray You anytime and anywhere. I ask that You take hold of my heart and enable me to return before You once more, and I ask that You take pity on me once more, and allow me to accept Your orchestrations and arrangements. Although I cannot understand what You are doing now, I know that all You do is good, and I ask You to save me once more, and allow my heart to turn to You." After praying, I stopped feeling afraid. I began to calm down and reflect upon myself, and at that moment God's words of judgment and revelation came to me: **"Do you want the flesh, or do you want the truth? Do you wish for judgment, or comfort? Having experienced so much of God's work, and having beheld the holiness and righteousness of God, how should you pursue? How should you walk this path? How should you put your love of God into practice? Has God's chastisement and judgment achieved any effect in you? Whether or not you have a knowledge of God's chastisement and judgment depends on what you live out, and to what extent you love God! Your lips say you love God, yet what you live out is the old, corrupt disposition; you have no fear of God, much less do you have a conscience. Do such people love God? Are such people loyal to God? ... Could someone such as this be Peter? Do those who are like Peter only have the knowledge, but not the living out?"** ("The Experiences of Peter: His Knowledge of Chastisement and Judgment" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). God's every word of judgment was like a two-edged sword striking at my Achilles' heel, heaping condemnation upon me: Yes, many were the times that I had made solemn oaths before God, saying that I'd forsake everything and endure every hardship for the sake of the truth. Yet today, when God used reality to ask something of me, when He needed me to actually suffer and pay a price in order to satisfy Him, I hadn't chosen the truth or the life, but had blindly been ridden with anxiety, distress and worry because of the interests and prospects of the flesh. I didn't even have the slightest faith in God. How could I meet God's will by doing this? God wanted what I lived out to be fruitful. He did not

want flowery, empty oaths. Yet before God I had knowledge but no reality, and toward God, I had neither loyalty nor true love, much less did I have any obedience; I lived out nothing but deceit, rebelliousness, and opposition. In this, was I not someone who betrayed God? Was I not someone who broke God's heart? At that moment, I thought of when the Lord Jesus was arrested and nailed on the cross. One after the other, those who had often enjoyed His graces abandoned Him. In my heart, I couldn't help but be overcome with remorse. I hated my rebelliousness, I hated my lack of humanity, I wanted to once again stand up, to use real actions to make my promises to God a reality. Even if I rotted in jail, I would never again hurt God's heart. I could never again betray the price of blood that God had paid in me. I stopped crying, and in my heart I silently prayed to God: "O God, thank You for enlightening and guiding me, and for allowing me to understand Your will. I see that my stature is so small, and that I have not the slightest love or obedience toward You. O God, right now I wish to give myself completely to You. Even if I spend my whole life in prison, I will never make concessions to Satan. I wish only to use my real actions to satisfy You."

After a while, there were more rumors that I was to be released. They said it would only be a few days. Because of the lesson I'd learned last time, this time I was somewhat more rational and coolheaded. Though I felt very excited, I wished to pray and seek before God, to never again make choices for myself. I would only ask God to protect me so I might obey all of His orchestrations and arrangements. A few days later, the rumors had once more come to nothing. What's more, I heard the correctional officer say that even if I died in prison, they wouldn't let me go, the reason being that I wouldn't tell them my home address and name—so I would be imprisoned forever. Hearing this was really hard, but I knew that this was the pain that I ought to suffer. God wanted me to bear this testimony for Him, and I was willing to obey God, and bow to God's will, and I trusted that all matters and all things are in God's hands. This was God showing me special grace and raising me up. Before, though I'd said I would rot in jail, that was just my own aspirations and desires—I did not have this reality. Today, I was willing to bear this testimony through the life I lived out in reality and allow God to find comfort in me. When I became full of hate toward Satan and resolved to do battle with Satan to the very end, to truly bear a genuine testimony to rotting in jail, I saw God's almighty and miraculous deeds. On December 6, 2005, the prison van took me from the detention house and left me by the side of the road. Thus, my two-year life in prison came to an end.

After experiencing this awful tribulation, although my flesh had endured some hardship, I had gained a hundred—a thousand—times more: I had not only developed insight and discernment, and truly seen that the CCP government is the embodiment of Satan the devil, a band of murderers that would kill people without blinking an eye, but I had also come to understand God’s omnipotence and wisdom, as well as His righteousness and holiness; I had come to appreciate God’s good intentions in saving me, and His care and protection toward me, thereby allowing me, during Satan’s savagery, to overcome Satan one step at a time, and stand firm in my testimony. From this day onward, I wish to give my entire being completely to God, and I will staunchly follow God, that I might be gained by Him as soon as can be.

2. The Life Force That Can Never Be Extinguished

By Dong Mei, Henan Province

I am an ordinary person who lived a run-of-the-mill life. Like many who yearn for the light, I tried lots of ways to search for the true meaning of human existence, so that my life could have more meaning. In the end, all my efforts were in vain. But after I was fortunate enough to accept Almighty God’s work of the last days, miraculous changes occurred in my life. It brought more color to my life, and I came to understand that only God is the true Provider of people’s spirits and lives, and only God’s words contain the true meaning of human life. I was glad that I had finally found the right path in life. However, whilst performing my duty one day, I was illegally arrested and brutally tortured by the CCP government. Thereafter, I underwent a life experience that will forever be etched into my life’s journey ...

One day in December 2011 at around 7 a.m., another church leader and I were carrying out inventory on church assets when more than ten police officers suddenly burst through the door. One of these evil police rushed up to us and shouted, “Don’t move!” Seeing what was happening, my head reeled. In my mind I thought, “This is bad—the church is going to lose a lot of assets.” Next, the evil police searched us like bandits carrying out a robbery. They also ransacked each room, turning them upside down in short order. In the end, they found some property belonging to the church, three bank cards, deposit receipts, computers,

mobile phones, and so on. They confiscated all of them, then took me, the other church leader and two others to the police station.

In the afternoon, the evil police brought in another three sisters that they'd arrested. They shut the seven of us in a room and didn't let us speak, nor did they let us sleep when night fell. Seeing the sisters shut in with me, and thinking of how much money the church had lost, I was beside myself with anxiety. All I could do was urgently pray to God: "O God! Now that this situation has befallen me, I don't know what to do. Please protect my heart and keep it calm." After praying, I thought of God's words: **"Do not be afraid—when things like this happen in the church, they happen with My permission. Stand and speak on My behalf. Have faith that all things and matters are permitted by My throne and contain My intentions within them"** ("Chapter 41" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). **"You should know that all things in the environment around you are there by My permission, I arrange it all. See clearly and satisfy My heart in the environment I have given to you"** ("Chapter 26" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words quelled the panic in my heart. I realized that, today, this environment had befallen me with God's permission, and that the time had come when God was asking me to bear testimony for Him. Having understood God's will, I prayed to God and said: "O God! I wish to obey Your orchestrations and arrangements, and to stand firm in my testimony to You—but I am of small stature, and I ask that You give me faith and strength, and protect me so that I may stand firm."

The next morning, they split us up and interrogated us. One of the evil police said proudly, "I know you're a church leader. We've been monitoring you guys for five months. ..."

When I heard him describe in detail everything they'd done to monitor me, a shiver ran down my spine. In my mind I thought, "The CCP government really puts a lot of groundwork into arresting us. Since they already know I'm a church leader, there's no way they're going to let me go." I immediately made a resolution before God: I'd rather die than betray God and be a Judas. Seeing that their questioning wasn't yielding any results, they assigned someone to watch me and not let me sleep.

During the third day's interrogation, the chief of the evil police turned on a computer and made me read materials vilifying God. Seeing that I was unmoved, he next questioned me closely about the church's finances. I turned my head to one side and ignored him. This made him so angry he started swearing. "It doesn't matter if you don't say anything—we can

detain you indefinitely, and torture you whenever we want,” he threatened fiercely. In the middle of that night, the police began their torture. They pulled one of my hands over my shoulder and wrenched it downward, and lifted the other up behind my back. Pressing against my back with their feet, they forcefully handcuffed both wrists together. It hurt so much that I screamed in pain—the bones and flesh in my shoulders felt like they were going to be ripped apart. I could only kneel motionless with my head on the floor. I thought my screams would make them ease up on me, but instead they inserted a teacup between my cuffed hands and my back, which redoubled the pain. The bones in my upper body felt like they’d been snapped in half. It hurt so much I didn’t dare breathe out and cold sweat poured down my face. Just as I felt I could bear the pain no longer, one of the evil police took this chance to say to me, “Just give us a name and we’ll let you go straight away.” At that moment, I called out to God to protect my heart, and I immediately thought of a hymn: **“God incarnate suffers, how much more should I, a corrupt person! Should I yield to dark powers, how would I see God? When I remember Your words, they make me long for You. Whenever I see Your face, I fill with guilt and respect. How could I abandon You, seeking so-called freedom? Ready to suffer, to repay Your hurt heart”** (“Awaiting God’s Good News” in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). “Yes,” I thought. “Christ is the holy and righteous God. He incarnated in the flesh and came to earth to deliver salvation to thoroughly corrupted mankind. For some time now, He has been persecuted and hunted by the CCP government and has been opposed and condemned by mankind. God should never have had to suffer in this way, but He quietly endures all of this to save us.” So, upon reflection, I saw that I was suffering now in order to gain salvation—I should be put through this suffering. If I yielded to Satan because I couldn’t bear the pain, how could I face God ever again? Thinking this gave me strength, and I grew unyielding once more. The evil police tormented me for about an hour. When they undid the handcuffs, my whole body collapsed limply to the ground. “If you don’t talk, we’ll do it again!” they shouted at me. I looked at them and said nothing. My heart was filled with hate for these evil police. One of them stepped up to put the handcuffs on again. Thinking of the excruciating pain I had just suffered, I kept on praying to God in my heart. To my surprise, when he tried to pull my arms behind my back, he couldn’t move them. My arms didn’t hurt too much, either. He was trying so hard his whole head was covered with sweat—but he still couldn’t get the cuffs on. “You’re pretty strong!” he huffed angrily. I knew that this was God caring for me, and that God was giving

me strength. Thanks be to God!

Making it to daybreak was hard. I still felt traumatized when I thought about how the evil police had tortured me. They had also threatened me, telling me that if I said nothing, they'd have to take me deep into the mountains and execute me, and that, afterward, when they arrested other believers, they'd say I sold out the church—they'd blacken my name, and make the other brothers and sisters of the church hate and renounce me. Imagining that, my heart was swamped with waves of desolation and helplessness. I found myself feeling timid and weak. In my mind I thought: "I'm better off dying. That way I won't be a Judas and betray God, nor will I be renounced by my brothers and sisters. I'll also avoid the pain of torture of the flesh." So I waited until the evil police who were guarding me weren't paying attention, and then I smashed my head hard against the wall—but all that happened was that my head swam; I didn't die. At that moment, God's words enlightened me from within: **"When others misinterpret you, you are able to pray to God and say: 'O God! I do not ask that others tolerate me or treat me well, nor that they understand or approve of me. I only ask that I may be able to love You in my heart, that I may be at ease in my heart, and that my conscience may be clear. I do not ask that others commend me, or hold me in high regard; I only seek to satisfy You from my heart ...'"** ("Only by Experiencing Refinement Can Man Possess True Love" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). God's words drove out the gloom from my heart. "Yes," I thought. "God sees people's innermost hearts. If the police frame me, even if the other brothers and sisters really misunderstand and renounce me because they don't know what actually happened, I trust that God's intentions are good; God is testing my faith and my love for Him, and I should seek to satisfy God." Having seen through the devil's cunning schemes, I suddenly felt embarrassed and ashamed. I saw that my faith in God was too small. I had been unable to stand firm after suffering a little pain, and had thought to escape and avoid God's orchestrations through death. The evil police's aim in threatening me in this way was to make me turn my back on God. And if not for God's protection, I would have fallen for their cunning scheme. As I pondered God's words, my heart was filled with light. I no longer wanted to die, but to live well, and to use what I lived out in reality to bear testimony to God and bring shame upon Satan.

The two evil policemen tasked with guarding me asked why I had hit my head against the wall. I said because the other policemen had beaten me. "We primarily work through

education. Don't worry—I won't let them hit you again," one of them said with a smile. Hearing his words of comfort, I thought: "These two aren't bad. Since I was arrested, they've been quite nice to me." With that, I relaxed my guard. But at that moment, God's words flashed into my heart: **"At all times, My people must be on guard against the cunning schemes of Satan, protecting the gate of My house for Me..., which will stop you falling into Satan's trap, at which time it will be too late for regrets"** ("Chapter 3" of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words provided a timely reminder to me, showing me that the devil's cunning schemes are many, and I should be on guard against these demons at all times. Little did I expect that they would soon reveal their true colors. One of the evil police began to slander God, while the other sat beside me patting my leg, leering at me and asking about the church's finances. In the evening, seeing I was dozing off, he started groping my chest. Seeing them reveal their true faces, I was filled with indignation. Only now did I see the supposed "People's Police" were nothing more than hooligans and bullies. They were actually capable of doing such despicable, nasty things! As a result, I could only urgently pray to God to protect me from their harm.

Over the next few days, the evil police not only questioned me closely about the church, but also took turns keeping watch over me and preventing me from falling asleep. Afterward, seeing that I'd given them nothing, the two evil policemen interrogating me grew furious. One of them laid into me, slapping me across the face, hitting me who knows how many times. My face smarted, began to swell up, and in the end grew so numb I couldn't feel anything. Because their questions had yielded nothing from me, one evening the chief of the evil police screamed at me and said, "You need to start opening your mouth. You're testing my damn patience—I don't believe there's nothing we can do with you. I've met many people much tougher than you. If we're not harsh on you, there's no way you'll submit, damn you!" He gave the order and several of the evil police started torturing me. In the evening, the interrogation room was gloomy and terrifying—I felt like I was in hell. They ordered me to squat on the ground and place my shackled hands over my feet. Next, they inserted a wooden baton between the crooks of my arms and behind my knees, forcing my whole body to curl up. They then lifted up the baton and rested it between two tables, leaving my whole body hanging in the air with my head upside down. The moment they hoisted me up, my head went dizzy and I found it hard to breathe. It felt like I was suffocating. Because I was

suspended in the air upside down, all my weight was hanging off my wrists. At the beginning, to stop the handcuffs cutting into my flesh, I clutched my hands tightly together, curled up my body, and tried my hardest to stay in that position. But my strength slowly ebbed away. My hands slid from my ankles to my knees, and the handcuffs cut deep into my flesh, leaving me in excruciating pain. After hanging like this for about half an hour, it felt like all the blood in my body had pooled in my head. The painful distension in my head and eyes made it feel like they were going to explode. Deep cuts had been gouged into my wrists, and my hands were so swollen they looked like two loaves of bread. I felt I was on the verge of death. “I can’t take any more, take me down!” I shouted desperately. “No one can save you but yourself. Just tell us a name and we’ll let you down,” said one of the evil police officers viciously. In the end, they saw I really was in trouble and took me down. They fed me some glucose syrup and started questioning me again. I lay limp as mud on the ground, my eyes squeezed tightly shut, paying them no heed. Unexpectedly, the evil police hoisted me into the air once again. Without the strength to hold on with my hands, I had no choice but to let the handcuffs embed themselves in my wrists, the serrated edges sawing into my flesh. At that moment, it hurt so much I let out a heartrending scream. I didn’t have the strength to keep fighting and my breathing had grown extremely shallow. It seemed like time had stopped. I felt like I was teetering on the verge of death. Thinking that this time I really was going to die, I wanted to tell God the words in my heart before my life ended: “O God! At this moment, when I really am on the verge of death, I feel afraid—but even if I do die tonight, I shall still praise Your righteousness. O God! In my brief life’s journey, I thank You for choosing me to return home from this world of sin, stopping me from wandering, and allowing me to ever live in Your warm embrace. O God, I have enjoyed so much of Your love—and yet only now, when my life is about to end, do I realize that I haven’t cherished Your love. Many times have I made You sad and disappointed; I am like a naive child who knows only to enjoy its mother’s love, yet has never thought to pay it back. Only now that I am about to lose my life do I understand that I must cherish Your love, and only now do I regret having missed so many good times. Now, what I regret most is that I have been unable to do anything for You and I owe You so much, and if I can still live, I will certainly do my best to perform my duty, to make up for what I owe You. At this moment, I ask only that You give me strength, so that I may fear death no longer, and face death with fortitude....” My tears fell, one after another, trickling down my forehead. The night was frighteningly quiet. The only

sound was the clock ticking, as if counting down the seconds that remained of my life. It was then that something miraculous happened: It felt as if warm sunlight was shining upon me, and I slowly stopped feeling the pain in my body. God's words reverberated through my mind: **"From the moment you come crying into this world, you begin to fulfill your duty. Performing your role in God's plan and in His ordination, you start your life's journey. Whatever your background, and whatever the journey ahead of you, no one can escape the orchestrations and arrangements of the Heaven, and no one is in control of their own destiny, for only He who rules over all things is capable of such work"** ("God Is the Source of Man's Life" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). "Yes," I thought. "God is the source of my life, God rules over my destiny, and I must place myself in God's hands and submit to His orchestrations." Pondering God's words gave me a pleasant, tranquil feeling in my heart, as if I were reclining in God's warm embrace. I found myself falling asleep. Afraid that I was dying, the evil police took me down and hurriedly gave me some glucose syrup and water. In my brush with death, I had beheld God's miraculous deeds.

The next day, the evil police spent the whole evening hoisting me up over and over again. They questioned me about the whereabouts of the funds for the receipts they'd confiscated. Throughout, I said nothing, yet they still didn't give up. To get hold of the church's money, they used every despicable means to torture me. At that moment, God's words echoed in my heart: **"Thousands of years of hate are concentrated in the heart, millennia of sinfulness are inscribed upon the heart—how could this not inspire loathing? Avenge God, completely snuff out His enemy, do not allow it to run rampant any longer, and do not permit it to kick up as much trouble as it wishes anymore! Now is the time: Man has long since gathered all his strength, he has devoted all his efforts, paid every price, for this, to tear off the hideous face of this demon and allow people, who have been blinded, and have endured every manner of suffering and hardship, to rise up from their pain and turn their backs on this evil old devil"** ("Work and Entry (8)" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words gave me great strength and faith. I would fight to the death with Satan, and even if I did die, I would stand firm in my testimony to God. Inspired by God's words, I unwittingly forgot the pain. In this way, each time they hoisted me up, God's words inspired and motivated me, and so the more times they hoisted me up, the more I could see through to their demonic substance, and the greater my resolve to stand firm in my testimony and satisfy God became. In the end, they

each wore themselves out on me. “Most people can’t stand being hung up like this for half an hour, but she’s lasted all this time—she’s really tough!” I heard them comment. I was thrilled to hear this. In my mind, I thought: “With God as my support, you cannot beat me down.” As well as torturing my body, during my nine days and nights in the police station the evil police also deprived me of sleep. Every time I closed my eyes and began nodding off, they would smack their batons against the table, or else make me stand up and run about, or else just scream at me, trying to make me crumble and break my mind. After nine days, seeing they hadn’t reached their objective, the police still didn’t give up. They took me to a hotel, where they cuffed my hands in front of my legs, then inserted a wooden baton between the bends of my arms and legs, forcing me to sit with my body curled up on the floor. They made me stay in this position sitting on the floor for the next several days, which caused the handcuffs to cut into my flesh. My hands and wrists swelled up and turned purple, and my bottom hurt so much I dared not rub or touch it; it felt like I was sitting on needles. One day, one of the leaders of the evil police, seeing that my interrogation had been fruitless, walked up to me fuming with rage and slapped me hard in the face—hard enough to loosen two of my teeth.

In the end, two section chiefs from the Provincial Public Security Department came. As soon as they arrived, they took the handcuffs off, helped me to a sofa, and poured me a cup of water. “You’ve had a hard time over the last few days—but don’t take it to heart, they were just following orders,” they said, feigning kindness. Their pretense made me hate them so much I gnashed my teeth. They also turned on a computer and showed me false evidence, they said many things that condemned and blasphemed against God. I felt enraged. I wanted to argue with them, but I knew that doing so would only make them blaspheme against God even more frantically. At this moment, I truly felt how great the hardship suffered by God incarnate had been, and how much humiliation God had endured for the sake of saving man. What’s more, I saw how contemptible and hateful these evil demons were. In my heart, I secretly swore that I would make a complete break with Satan and forever be loyal to God. Afterward, no matter how they tried to deceive me, I kept my mouth shut and said nothing. Seeing their words were having no effect, the two section chiefs could only leave in a huff.

During the ten days and nights in the hotel, they kept the handcuffs on me, making me squat on the ground holding my legs. Looking back on the time I spent under arrest, I spent

nineteen days and nights in the police station and the hotel, and it was the protection of God's love that had allowed me to nap a little. Besides that tiny nap, the evil police hadn't let me sleep at all in all that time; I had only to shut my eyes for a moment and they'd do anything it took to keep me awake—whacking the table, fiercely kicking me, screaming at me, ordering me to run about, and so on. Each time I'd be startled, my heart would hammer in my chest, and my nerves would be shot. What with being kept awake in this way and the evil police's frequent torture as well, my strength ended up severely depleted, my whole body was swollen and uncomfortable, and I started seeing everything in double vision. I'd know there were people in front of me talking, but the sound of their voices would seem as if it were coming from somewhere far away. What's more, my reactions were becoming very slow. For me to have somehow made it through this was all thanks to God's great power! As God said: **"He causes man to be reborn, and enables him to tenaciously live out his every role. Thanks to His power and His inextinguishable life force, man has lived for generation after generation, throughout which the power of God's life has been the mainstay of man's existence, and for which God has paid a price that no ordinary man has ever paid. God's life force can prevail over any power; moreover, it exceeds any power. His life is eternal, His power extraordinary, and His life force is not easily overwhelmed by any created being or enemy force"** ("Only Christ of the Last Days Can Give Man the Way of Eternal Life" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). In my heart, I gave sincere thanks and praise to God: "O God! You rule all things, Your deeds are inestimable, only You are almighty, You are the inextinguishable life force, and You are the wellspring of the living water for my life. In this special environment, I have beheld Your unique power and authority." In the end, the evil police got no answers to their questions from me, and they sent me to the detention house.

On the way to the detention house, two policemen said to me, "You've done really well. You guys might be in the detention house, but you're good people. There are all sorts there: drug dealers, murderers, prostitutes—you'll see when you arrive." "Since you know we're good people, why do you arrest us? Doesn't the government talk of freedom of religion?" I asked. "That's the Communist Party lying to you. The Party gives us our livelihood, so we have to do what it says. We don't hate you or have anything against you. We just arrested you because you believe in God," one of the policemen said. Hearing this, I thought back over everything I'd experienced. I couldn't help but recall the words of God: **"Religious**

freedom? The legitimate rights and interests of citizens? They are all tricks for covering up sin!" ("Work and Entry (8)" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words cut right to the heart of the matter, allowing me to truly see the true face of the CCP government and how it tries to gain kudos it does not deserve: On the surface, it flies the flag of religious freedom, but in secret it arrests, oppresses, and cruelly hurts those who believe in God up and down the country, in the vain hope of banning God's work, and it even shamelessly plunders the church's money, all of which lays bare its demonic substance that hates God and hates the truth.

Whilst in the detention house, there were times when I was weak and in pain. But God's words kept inspiring me, giving me strength and faith, allowing me to understand that, although Satan had stripped me of the freedom of the flesh, my suffering had edified me, and had taught me to rely on God during the torture of these evil demons, allowed me to understand the true meaning of many truths and to see the preciousness of the truth, and it had increased my resolve and motivation to pursue the truth. I became willing to keep obeying God, and to experience all that God had arranged for me. As a result, when working in the detention house, I sang hymns and quietly thought of God's love. I felt that my heart had come closer to God, and I no longer found the days so painful and distressing.

During this time, the evil police interrogated me many more times. I thanked God for guiding me in overcoming their torture time and time again. Afterward the evil police withdrew all the money from my three bank cards. Helplessly watching the church's money being taken by the evil police broke my heart. My heart was filled with hate for this greedy, evil gang of demons, and I yearned for the kingdom of Christ to arrive soon. In the end, despite not having any proof, they sentenced me to a year and three months of reeducation through labor for "disrupting the public order."

Through being brutally persecuted by the CCP government, I have truly tasted God's love and salvation for me, I have come to appreciate God's almightiness and sovereignty and His miraculous deeds, and I have beheld the authority and power of God's words. Moreover, I have come to truly despise Satan. During that time of persecution, God's words accompanied me through the distressing days and nights, they allowed me to see through Satan's cunning schemes and they provided timely protection. God's words made me strong and courageous, allowing me to overcome that savage torture time and time again. God's words gave me strength and faith, and they gave me the courage to fight with Satan to the

very end.... Thanks be to God! Almighty God is the truth, the way, and the life! I shall forever follow Almighty God to the very end!

3. A Youth Without Regret

By Xiaowen, Chongqing City

“Love’ refers to an emotion that is pure and without blemish, where you use your heart to love, to feel, and to be thoughtful. In love there are no conditions, no barriers, and no distance. In love there is no suspicion, no deceit, and no cunning. In love there is no distance and nothing impure” (“Pure Love Without Blemish” in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). This hymn of God’s words was once my companion as I lived through an interminable and painful seven years and four months of life in prison. Though the CCP government deprived me of the best years of my youth, I gained from Almighty God the truth that is most precious and most real. Therefore I have no regrets whatsoever!

In 1996, I accepted Almighty God’s salvation of the last days. Through reading God’s words, attending meetings and fellowshiping, I came to firmly believe that everything God says is the truth, and the highest of all life’s aphorisms, and that it is entirely at odds with any theories or knowledge of this wicked world. The thing that made me even happier was that I could simply be open with my brothers and sisters in the church, I could speak my mind freely and I didn’t have to be wary or engage in deception like when I came into contact with people in the outside world. I felt a happiness and joy I had never felt before, and I came to love this big family. But it wasn’t long before I heard that faith in God was persecuted in China and that Christians often being arrested and persecuted was a common occurrence. I was greatly puzzled by this because the words of Almighty God are all so that people worship God, walk the right path in life, and so that people conduct themselves with honesty. If everyone believed in Almighty God, the world would know such peace. I really didn’t understand: Believing in God is the most righteous undertaking. Why does the CCP government want to persecute and oppose those who believe in God, and even arrest them? In my heart, I thought: No matter how the CCP government may persecute me or how strong public opinion is, since I now firmly believe this to be the right path in life, I absolutely must follow it to the end!

After that, I began performing a duty in the church that involved delivering books of God's words. I knew that doing this duty in such a God-defying country was extremely dangerous and that every moment carried the possibility of being arrested, but I knew even more strongly that expending myself for God and performing my duties as a created being was my vocation, and that it was my incumbent responsibility. Just when I had every faith in performing my duty, a day came in September 2003 when I was apprehended by the city's National Security Bureau whilst on my way to deliver some books of God's words to my brothers and sisters.

At the National Security Bureau, I was scared, and I didn't know how to face the repeated interrogations of the CCP police, so I called out urgently to God in my heart: "Oh, Almighty God. I ask that You give me wisdom, bestow on me the words I should say, and keep me from betraying You. I ask that You give me faith and strength, and no matter how the CCP persecutes me, I will stand firm and bear witness for You." During that time, I called out to God every day and I didn't dare to leave God even for a second in my heart. I praised God for looking after me and protecting me; every time they interrogated me, I was hiccupping constantly and I wasn't able to speak at all. Seeing God's wondrous deeds, I became fiercely single-minded: I am ready to risk it all! They can take my head, take my life, but today it is absolutely impossible for them to get me to betray God! When my resolution was set and I felt I would rather give my life than be a Judas and betray God, I felt really thankful to God for opening up the way forward for me. Every time I was interrogated, God protected me and got me through the ordeal safely. Though I said nothing to them at all, in the end, the CCP government still imposed on me the charge of "using a xie jiao organization to destroy the application of law" to sentence me to nine years. Because of God's protection, when I heard the court ruling I didn't feel distressed, nor did I fear the people in the court. Instead, I had nothing but contempt for them. They were on high pronouncing their judgments, and I was down below saying in a small voice: "This is proof of the CCP government's defiance of God!" Afterward, public security officers came specially to investigate my attitude, and I said to them very calmly: "What's nine years? When the time comes for me to be released I'll still be a member of The Church of Almighty God, and if you don't believe me, you just wait and see! But remember, this case is on your hands!" My attitude surprised them a great deal, and they gave me the thumbs up and said: "We've got to hand it to you! We admire you! You're tougher than Jiang Zhuyun! Let's meet up when

you come out, and we'll buy you dinner." At that point, I felt God was glorified, and so I was gratified. When I was sentenced that year, I was only just 31 years old.

Chinese prisons are hells on earth. The endless prison life allowed me to see very clearly the cruel and inhuman face of Satan, as well as its demonic essence that opposes God. China's police do not follow the rule of law; they follow the rule of evil. In prison, the guards don't make life hard for people themselves, but instead they encourage the prisoners to use violence to keep other prisoners in check. The prison guards also use all manner of ways to restrict people's thinking. For example, anyone who goes into prison has to wear the exact same prisoner's uniform issued by the CCP government, and each person has to wear a special serial number; they have to get their hair cut in the style the government requires, wear the shoes the government allows them to wear, take government-prescribed routes and walk at the government-prescribed pace. No matter the time of year, in wind or rain or on hot days or in freezing weather, prisoners must do as they command and are not able to choose anything for themselves. Every day they required us to assemble together at least 15 times to number off and sing the praises of the CCP government at least five times; and then there were the political tasks, such as making us learn the prison laws and the constitution with a big exam every six months, the aim of which was to brainwash us. They also gave us exams on prison rules and discipline whenever they wanted. The prison guards not only subjected the prisoners to mental torture, but they also devastated our bodies with utter inhumanity: We had to do over 10 hours of hard labor every single day, and what's more they would crowd several hundred prisoners into a small, narrow factory building to work. Because there were so many people and so little space, and everywhere there was the loud noise of machines, no matter how healthy someone was when they entered prison, after they'd been there a while their body would suffer serious harm. Behind me was a big machine used for punching eyelets into shoes. It punched eyelets continuously every day, making an unbearable booming noise. After a few years, my hearing became seriously damaged, and it still hasn't recovered even now. The thing that harmed people even more was the large amount of dust and pollutants in the factory building, and many people became afflicted with tuberculosis and pharyngitis. Also, because we had to sit working for such a long time without being able to move, most people ended up with severe hemorrhoids. The CCP government turns prisoners into money-making machines, without any regard for whether they live or die, making people work every day from early morning until late at night.

I was so exhausted all the time, and I felt very run-down. Not only this, but we also had to give our answers to all manner of spot-check examinations in the prison that could come at any time, plus weekly political tasks, manual labor and public tasks and so on. Therefore, I spent every day in a state of high mental anxiety, with nerves stretched to breaking point at all times for fear that I might slip up slightly and not keep up with every task, and then have to suffer the punishments of the prison guards. In that kind of environment, it was really not easy to get through even one day safe and well.

When I had only just begun my prison sentence, I couldn't stand this kind of cruel ravaging within the prison, and all the different kinds of high-intensity labor pressure and the ideological pressure made me feel like I couldn't breathe. Add to that coming into contact with all kinds of other prisoners and having to endure the physical and verbal abuse and insults of the prison guards and head prisoners. I was often tormented to desperation and I fell into despair many times. In particular, whenever I would think of the incredibly long prison term of nine years, I would feel such desolation and helplessness. I don't know how many times I cried, and I even thought of death as a way to free me from this kind of suffering. Whenever I felt myself falling into extreme sorrow and I felt that I couldn't go on any longer, I would urgently pray and call on God, and God's words would enlighten and guide me: **"You can't die yet. You must clench your fists and resolutely continue to live; you must live a life for God. When people have truth within them then they have this resolve and never again desire to die; when death threatens you, you will say, 'O God, I am unwilling to die; I still do not know You. I still have not repaid Your love. I must die only after coming to know You well.' ... If you do not understand God's intention, and merely ruminate on your suffering, then the more you think about it, the more distressed you feel, and then you will be in trouble and begin to suffer the torment of death. If you understand truth, you will say, 'I have not yet obtained truth. I must properly expend myself for God. I must bear good witness of God. I must repay God's love. After that, it doesn't matter how I die. Then I will have lived a satisfactory life. Regardless of who else is dying, I will not die now; I must tenaciously continue to live'"** ("Only by Pursuing the Truth Can You Obtain Changes in Your Disposition" in Records of Christ's Talks). God's words shone like a light as soft and gentle as a mother, pacifying my lonely heart, and they were like a father's warm hands, wiping the tears from my face. At once, a breath of warmth and a breath of strength surged through my heart. I understood

that though my flesh must suffer pain in this dark prison, yet it was not God's will that I should seek death; if I couldn't bear witness for God then I would become a joke of Satan. If after nine years I could walk out of this demonic prison, then that would be my testimony. God's words gave me the courage to live on and I became secretly resolved in my heart: No matter how many difficulties lie ahead, I shall live on. I shall live bravely, live strongly, and I absolutely will bear witness for God and satisfy Him.

Being overburdened with work year in year out, month in month out, my body became weaker each day, and sitting in the factory building for a long time made me sweat abnormally and profusely. When my hemorrhoids were very bad, they would start bleeding at any moment, and I would often feel dizzy due to severe anemia. It wasn't an easy thing, however, to get treatment in prison. When they were in a good mood, the prison guards would give me some cheap medicines. But when they were in a bad mood they would say I was trying to shirk my work by feigning illness, so all I could do was to endure the afflictions of illness and swallow my tears. I would be overworked all day long, and I would drag my exhausted body back to my cell and want to have a rest. But I didn't even have the right to a good night's sleep. Either the prison guards would wake me up in the middle of the night to go do something, or they would make loud noises to wake me up. They would often play games with me to the point where I was all in a muddled trance and in unspeakable misery. Moreover, I had to endure the prison guards' inhuman treatment. I used to sleep on the ground or in corridors like a refugee, or even next to the toilet. The clothes I washed could not be air dried, but were dried by the body warmth that came from being crowded together with the other prisoners. Washing clothes in winter was especially a most upsetting thing, and many people got arthritis from wearing damp clothes for long periods. In this prison, no matter how healthy someone was, it didn't take long before they became slow-witted, run-down or wracked with ailments. We often ate out-of-season, withered old leaves that shops didn't want anymore, and if we wanted to eat something better, we had to buy the expensive food in the prison. In prison, although the guards made us study the law, there was no law in that place; the prison guards were the law. They had only to see someone they didn't like and they would come up with any old reason to deal with them, and even physically punish them for no reason at all. Even more hateful was that they classified those who believed in Almighty God as political prisoners, saying that we were worse criminals than murderers or arsonists. They were therefore especially hostile to me, treated me most harshly and

tormented me most viciously. All these many kinds of evil deeds are ironclad proof that the CCP is perverse, godless and is in opposition to God! Enduring the cruel torment of the prison guards, my heart was often filled with righteous indignation and it felt such sadness and resentment: Exactly which law has been violated by our belief in God and our worship of God? Exactly what crime have we committed by following God and walking the right path in life? People are created beings in God's hands and believing in God and worshiping God is an unquestionable truth. What reason does the CCP government have to flagrantly obstruct us and do all it can to cruelly oppress us? It's plain that it is perverse and godless, opposing God in all things. It labels those who believe in Almighty God as reactionaries and it severely oppresses and ravages them, trying to catch and exterminate all who follow Almighty God. Isn't this confusing right and wrong, and being utterly reactionary? They oppose Heaven so wildly and set themselves against God, that in the end they must meet with God's righteous punishment! For there must be judgment wherever there is corruption, and there must be chastisement wherever there is evil—these are the heavenly rules and principles as preordained by God, and no one can escape them. The CCP government is guilty of the most heinous crimes, and there can be no escape from being destroyed by God. Just as God said: **“God has long since loathed this dark society to His very bones. He gnashes His teeth, desperate to plant His feet upon this wicked, heinous old serpent, so that it may never rise again, and will never again abuse man; He will not excuse its actions in the past, He will not tolerate its deceit of man, He will settle the score for every one of its sins throughout the ages; God will not be in the least bit lenient toward this ringleader of all evil,^[1] He will utterly destroy it”** (“Work and Entry (8)” in The Word Appears in the Flesh).

In this demonic prison, I was no better than a stray dog in the eyes of the evil police. Not only did they abuse me physically and verbally, but they would often root through my bed and scatter my personal belongings all over the place. Also, whenever some kind of social unrest happened in the outside world, the people in the prison who were in charge of political matters would come for me and question me about my views on what had happened, and if my answer didn't please them, they would constantly rebuke me for following the way

Footnotes:

1. “Ringleader of all evil” refers to the old devil. This phrase expresses extreme dislike.

of belief in God. Whenever I had to face this kind of questioning, my heart would leap into my throat, not knowing what kind of scheme they were planning against me this time. My heart was always urgently praying and calling out to God for Him to help me and lead me through these difficult times. Day after day, year after year, all the various kinds of maltreatment, exploitation and oppression were a torment beyond words: Every day being overburdened with labor tasks, the monotonous political tasks and the afflictions of illness, plus the long-term mental oppression, brought me almost to the edge of collapse. In particular, there was a time when I saw a middle-aged woman prisoner hang herself from her cell window in the middle of the night because she couldn't bear any longer the inhuman tortures of the evil police, and a time when an elderly woman prisoner died in prison because she wasn't treated for an illness quickly enough, and at these times I would once again fall into suffocating hopelessness. Again, I would conceive the idea of death as a way to end my troubles and I felt that death was the best way to be free. I knew, however, that it would be a betrayal of God, and I just couldn't do it. All I could do was endure all this pain and obey God's orchestrations and arrangements. But when I thought of my interminable sentence, and of how gaining freedom was so far away in the indefinite future, I felt indescribable pain and despair, and I felt that I really couldn't go on any longer; I really didn't know how long I could keep myself going. So many times, all I could do was to get under the bed sheets and sob secretly in the dead of night, praying to Almighty God and confiding to Him all my heart's troubles. When I was in the most pain and felt the most helpless, I thought of God's words: **"You, especially, have all suffered persecution and experienced difficulty in returning home; you suffer, and also have thoughts of death and an unwillingness to live. These are weaknesses of the flesh. ... You do not know what God is doing today. God has to allow your flesh to suffer in order to transform your disposition. Even though your flesh suffers, you have God's word and you have God's blessing. You cannot die even if you want to: Can you resign yourself to not knowing God and not obtaining truth if you die? Now, mainly, it is just that people have not yet obtained truth, and they do not have life. Now people are in the midst of the process of seeking salvation, so they must suffer some during this period. Today everyone throughout the world is tried: God is still suffering—is it right that you do not suffer?"** ("Only by Pursuing the Truth Can You Obtain Changes in Your Disposition" in Records of Christ's Talks). God's words soothed my sad heart and enabled me to understand the meaning of suffering. God now

performs the work to change man's disposition; I am still corrupt and there are many of Satan's poisons within me, so how could I attain change and purification without suffering? This pain is something I'm supposed to suffer, and is something I must endure. When I thought of these things, I felt no pain, but on the contrary, I felt that my ability to endure this persecution and to endure being imprisoned for my belief in God, and that I could suffer in the pursuit of salvation was something most valuable and most meaningful—this pain I was suffering was so worthwhile! Without being aware of it, my heart turned from grief and became joyful, and I felt an irresistible urge to sing a hymn in my heart, called "We Are Fortunate to Meet With God's Coming": "We are fortunate to meet with God's coming, we hear His voice. We are fortunate to meet with God's coming, we attend the feast of the Lamb. We know the incarnate Almighty God, we see His wondrous deeds. We understand the mystery of human life, Almighty God's words are the most precious. ... Who can be more blessed? Who can be more fortunate? God bestows the truth and life upon us, we must live for God. We must live for God. We must live for God. We obtain the truth and testify to God to repay God's love" (Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). I sang this hymn in my heart over and over. The more I sang the more encouraged my heart became, and the more I sang, the stronger and more enjoyment I felt, and I couldn't help but swear an oath before God: "Oh, Almighty God, I give thanks to You for Your solace and encouragement, and for making me have the faith and the courage to live on. You make me feel that You really are the Lord of my life, the strength of my life. Though I have fallen into this nest of devils, I am not alone, for You are always with me as I live through these dark days, giving me faith and the strength to live on time and time again. Oh God, supposing I can one day leave this place and am able to live free, I will still do my duty. I will no longer cause You grief, nor will I make any plans for myself. Oh God, no matter how painful or difficult the days ahead may be, I wish to depend on You and live on with strength!"

While in prison, I often thought back to the days I spent with my brothers and sisters—what a great time that was! Everyone was happy and laughing. There were disputes too, but it all became a beautiful memory for me. Every time I thought back to how I used to be slipshod with my duties, I felt such guilt and so indebted; thinking of how I got into disputes with my brothers and sisters because of my arrogant disposition, I felt extremely sad and remorseful. At times like these, I would be in floods of tears, and I would sing a hymn secretly in my heart: "I've believed in God for many years but have never done my duty well, I feel

such deep regret in my heart. I've enjoyed so much of God's love, but have never given anything back. God has given me so many opportunities to practice, but I approached them all in a slipshod manner, and instead single-mindedly sought status, fame and fortune and made plans for my future destiny. Filled with extravagant desires, I truly knew no shame and have wasted so much good time. ... I am so remorseful—why didn't I accept God's judgment and chastisement when I read His words? I don't know if my repentance has come too late, I am so remorseful. I don't know if God will give me another chance, I am so remorseful" ("I Am So Remorseful" in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). In the midst of this pain and self-reproach, I would often pray in my heart to God: "Oh God! I really owe You so much. If You will allow it, I wish to seek to love You and, after I get out of prison, I wish still to do my duty. I wish to start over and make up for my previous debts." During my days in prison, I really missed the brothers and sisters that I grew so close to and I really wanted to see them. Yet here I was in captivity in this demonic prison, so this desire was nothing more than a fanciful wish. Yet I would often see my brothers and sisters in my dreams, dreaming that we were together reading God's words and fellowshiping the truth, so happy, so joyful ...

When the Wenchuan earthquake happened in 2008, the prison in which we were being detained was also shaken, and I was the very last one to evacuate the scene. The aftershocks continued for days, and both prisoners and guards were all terrified and in a state of alarm all day long. But in my heart, I felt exceedingly calm and sure, for I knew that this was the fulfillment of God's words and it was the fire of God's wrath that had befallen and punished those who resisted God on earth. That earthquake was the biggest for a hundred years, and during that time God's words were always protecting my heart. I believed that life and death were in God's hands and, no matter what God did, I would always be willing to obey God's orchestrations and arrangements. The only thing that made me sad, however, was that if I died I would no longer have a chance to do my duty for the Creator, no longer have a chance to repay God's love and would no longer be able to see my brothers and sisters. My worrying was unnecessary, however. God was always with me, giving me the greatest protection, enabling me to escape death during the big earthquake and to live on safe and sound!

In January 2011, I obtained early release, and my slavish life in prison was finally brought to an end. Having obtained my freedom, my heart felt incredibly excited: "I can go back to the church again! I can be with my brothers and sisters again!" I was so excited,

there was really no way I could put it into words. What I hadn't anticipated was that, after I returned home, my daughter did not recognize me, and both relatives and friends looked askance at me, hid themselves away from me and would have nothing to do with me. No one around me understood me, and they couldn't accept me. Although at this time I was no longer being subjected to the maltreatment and torment of prison, yet being given the cold shoulder, ridiculed and rejected was even harder to bear; I became weak. I couldn't help but recall the past to mind: I had only just turned 31 the year I was sent to prison, and when I came out of prison I was already 39. I spent eight winters and seven summers in prison. So many times, when I felt alone and helpless, God orchestrated people, events and things to help me; so many times, when I was in pain and despair, God used His words to comfort me; so many times, when I wanted to die, God gave me strength and made me have the courage to live on. During those endless, painful years, it was God who led me step by step through the valley of death and enabled me to live on tenaciously. And here I was facing this bit of suffering and becoming distressed and weak, causing God to grieve—I really was a mean person, weak and useless and so ungrateful! Thinking of this, I condemned myself greatly, and I couldn't help but think of the oath I swore to God back in prison: "Supposing I can one day leave this place and am able to live free, I will still do my duty. I will no longer cause You grief, nor will I make any plans for myself." Thinking of this oath and remembering the time when I swore this oath to God, tears blurred my vision, and I slowly began to sing a hymn: **"I myself am willing to seek after You and to follow You. Now even if You want to abandon me, I will still follow You. Whether You want me or not, I will still love You, and in the end, I must gain You. I offer up my heart to You, and no matter what You do, I will follow You for my entire life. No matter what, I must love You and I must gain You; I will not rest until I have gained You"** ("I Am Determined to Love God" in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs).

After spending some time in spiritual devotions and making adjustments, under God's enlightenment and guidance I very quickly left my negativity behind and threw myself once again into doing my duty.

Although I spent the best years of my youth in prison, during those seven years and four months I was able to suffer for my belief in God and I have absolutely no regrets. Because I came to understand some truth and I experienced God's love, I feel that enduring this pain had meaning and value, that this was God's exceptional exaltation of me and

kindness to me, and God's special favor to me. Even though friends and relatives don't understand me and my daughter doesn't recognize me, yet nothing and no one can break my relationship with God; not even death can keep me from Him.

"Pure Love Without Blemish" was the hymn I most loved to sing in prison, and today I want to devote my purest love to God through taking practical action!

4. From Suffering Is Emitted the Fragrance of Love

By Xiaokai, Jiangxi Province

I'm an ordinary country woman and, because of the feudalistic idea of only valuing male children, I was unable to raise my head in front of others for shame of having borne no son. Just when I was suffering the most, I was chosen by the Lord Jesus and, two years later, I accepted the salvation of Almighty God. Moreover, I understood much truth from within the words of Almighty God and my spirit obtained true release. However, while I was performing my duty to repay God's love, I was twice arrested by the CCP government and I suffered brutal torture and torment at the hands of the CCP's pawns. Just when I was on the verge of death, the words of Almighty God continually guided me and inspired me and allowed me to stand witness in the midst of Satan's cruel harm, thereby strengthening my determination to follow God and love God for all my life.

Around 5 p.m. one afternoon, in May 2003, I was on my way to perform my duty when suddenly the village Party secretary rode up on a motorbike and blocked my path. He barked orders at me, saying: "Stop! What are you doing? Come with me!" I was taken by surprise, and I realized that I had been followed. I immediately thought of the pager, the church's cash receipts and other things I had in my bag and that, once these things were in his hands, it would bring about great loss for the church's work. So I ran as fast as I could, hoping to find an opportunity to throw away the things in my bag, but I didn't get very far before he caught me. Not long after, a black car drove up and out of it sprang five or six ferocious-looking policemen who surrounded me at once. They laughed maliciously and said: "This time we've really got you, the leader. Still think you can run away? Dream on!" Then they forcefully twisted my hands behind my back, put me in the police car and took me to the local police station.

When I got to the police station, the evil police shoved me into a small, dark, foul-smelling room, and they began to bellow fiercely at me: “Come clean! What’s your name? Where are you from? What are you doing here? Speak up!” My heart was thumping, seeing their threatening manner, and I feared that the things in my bag would fall into their hands, and I was also afraid that they would torture me cruelly. While all this was happening, I cried desperately to God: “Oh Almighty God, today it is by Your permission that I have fallen into the hands of devils. No matter what they do to me, I desire only to stand by You. I pray for the wisdom and the faith to stand witness.” Just at that moment, I thought of God’s words: **“You shouldn’t be afraid of this and that. No matter how many difficulties and dangers you face, you shall remain steady before Me.... Be not afraid; with My support, who could ever block the road?”** (“Chapter 10” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). Yes indeed, God is unique. He administers all things and rules sovereign over everything, so aren’t these few evil policemen even more part of the arrangements of God? With God’s presence and support, what more was there to fear? God’s words gave me faith and my entire body became filled with strength, never again to fear Satan. But at that time, I was still concerned about the things in my bag, and my heart constantly cried out to God for protection. I thanked God for hearing my prayer—this gang of evil policemen merely interrogated me and did not search my bag. When the time came for them to change shifts, they all left the room, and I hurriedly took the accounting receipts and faith materials that were in my bag and threw them out the window. Then I broke the pager on the floor and tossed it into the trash can, and only then could I breathe a sigh of relief. I’d only just finished doing this when the new shift of evil policemen entered the room. They gave me a fierce look, then they hastily went through my bag, but found nothing. I saw with my own eyes God’s almightiness and sovereignty, and my faith was greatly increased. Because they had come up empty-handed, the evil policemen questioned me furiously, asking who exactly I had contact with, who the upper-level leaders were, and so on. I was afraid I would let something slip and fall into their trap, so I said nothing at all. Seeing this, five or six evil policemen came at me all at once in a fit of beating and kicking, cursing me as they did so, saying: “If you don’t tell us, we’ll beat you to death!” I was beaten so hard I was curled up into a ball, rolling back and forth on the ground. One evil policeman then violently pulled me by the hair and threatened me fiercely: “You’re still really damn stubborn.

You won't speak? We have our ways, so you'll see how we sort you out tonight!" I knew God was with me, and so I faced the coming interrogation and torture with a calm heart.

It was after 8 p.m. that night when two evil policemen handcuffed me and escorted me to the Municipal Public Security Bureau. Upon entering the interrogation room, an evil policeman in his forties began to play the good cop, trying to entice and persuade me: "You're young, and you're pretty. What's all this about believing in God? Cooperate with our work. So long as you tell us who the upper-level leaders are, I'll get someone to take you home straight away. I can help you with any difficulty you may have. Why suffer here? ..." Because of God's protection, I knew that this was Satan's cunning ploy, and I paid no attention to him no matter what he said. The evil policeman saw that his ploy hadn't worked, so he immediately showed his true colors. He seized me by the hair and pressed me against the floor, cruelly kicking my head until I became dizzy and felt the whole place spinning. With that he stomped on my head and said very ferociously: "Not speaking? I'm going to pull out all the stops to torture you today, and you'll wish you'd never been born. Will you tell us what we want to know?" Seeing that I still said nothing, he called in several more evil policemen who dragged me to my feet and began to slap my face over and over, until my face hurt so much it felt like it was burning with fire. But no matter how they beat me, I continually and silently prayed to God, gritted my teeth and said not one word. Seeing that I was still not surrendering, they dragged me to another room, spluttering with rage. An evil policeman picked up a taser and laughed maliciously at me, saying: "Doesn't matter that you're being stubborn. We have our ways! Let's see which will hold out the longest—you or our taser!" Then he jabbed me with it ruthlessly. In an instant, my whole body was shocked by an enormous electrical current and I convulsed involuntarily. It was as though countless insects were biting my body, and I couldn't help but emit spasmodic, shrill cries. Without waiting for me to catch my breath, another evil policeman took up a stack of thick magazines and began pounding them on my head with all his strength, and then, he wrenched me by the hair and cruelly slammed my head against the wall. Everything went black and I fell to the floor. The evil policemen bellowed at me, "Pretending to be dead!" Then they dragged me up from the floor and ordered me to kneel, but I was so weak that I could only kneel for a few moments before collapsing to the floor again. At that point, I really felt like I couldn't hold on any longer, I couldn't help feeling weak, and I thought: "These devils are truly so brutal, and I really will die today in their hands...." In pain and helplessness, I prayed to God in absolute earnest,

asking God to guide me, and for the strength to defeat Satan. Just then, God's words flashed in my mind: **"Almighty God, the Head of all things, wields His kingly power from His throne. He rules over the universe and all things and He is guiding us on the whole earth. We shall often be close to Him.... If you have but one breath, God will not let you die"** ("Chapter 6" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words made me understand that God held my life in His hands and that, so long as God didn't give His permission, then these devils wouldn't dare take my life. I thought of how I had followed God so far, how God had protected me all the way along, how I had enjoyed God's love so much and so greatly, and I thought of how the situation now unfolding was God's way of testing my loyalty and my love, and that it was an opportunity for me to repay God's love. The devils were torturing me in this way with the contemptible aim of getting me to betray God; but I would be unyielding and determined. Even if they tortured me to death, I would still not surrender to Satan. There was no way I would be a Judas just so I could drag out an ignoble existence. I wouldn't let Satan's plot succeed—I had to stand witness for God and allow God's heart to be comforted! God's words lent me inexhaustible strength; I forgot the pain that wracked my whole body, and I then had the faith and the courage to carry on fighting these devils.

Then, to extract a confession out of me, the evil police began taking turns guarding me and preventing me from sleeping and pressing me with questions over and over: "Who are the upper-level leaders in your church? Where do they live? Who else is a member? ..." Seeing me stay silent, every now and then they would grab me by the hair and kick me. I had only to close my eyes and they would beat and kick me and use the toe caps on their leather shoes to stomp on and grind my knuckles with all their might. A piercing pain caused me unspeakable suffering, and I just kept screaming. They punted me around like a football. ... As dawn approached, I'd been tortured to the point that my body was covered in countless bruises and I was in unbearable pain. Thinking of how I'd never before suffered such hardships, and thinking of the damage and torment I was suffering now at the hands of the CCP's evil police because of my belief in God, I was suddenly overcome with a wave of weakness and grief. At that point, all was dark inside me, and my fear grew and grew, not knowing what kinds of cruel torture they had in store for me next. As I lay in pain, I prayed silently to God: "Oh, Almighty God, I ask You to enlighten me and lead me to understand Your will in my plight, so that I may not lose my testimony." As I prayed, I thought of a hymn

of God's words: **"You must suffer hardship for the truth, you must give yourself to the truth, you must endure humiliation for the truth, and to gain more of the truth you must undergo more suffering. This is what you should do. ... You should pursue all that is beautiful and good, and should pursue a path in life that is more meaningful. ... You should forsake all enjoyments of the flesh for the sake of one truth, and should not throw away all truths for the sake of a little enjoyment"** ("You Should Forsake All for the Truth" in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). God's words awakened my heart and made me understand that the pain of persecution I was suffering now for my belief in God was of the utmost value and of the utmost significance. I understood that God was using this environment of suffering to show me clearly Satan's essence that is in enmity to God, so that I would be able to forsake it utterly and thereby turn my heart back to God and achieve a true love for God. God has already endured all pain in order to save me, so shouldn't a corrupt human such as I suffer even more for the sake of gaining the truth and in order to attain a true change in my life disposition? I thought, "This suffering is something I should endure in my pursuit to obtain salvation, and I need this kind of plight to temper me and edify me; this is what my life needs and I desire to accept God's great love. Today, I suffer alongside Christ and I share both in Christ's kingdom and in His tribulations—this is entirely by the elevation of God, it is God's greatest love and blessing to me, and I should be happy." Thinking this, my heart felt so comforted, and I ceased to believe that encountering such an environment was something painful, but on the contrary I felt that God had bestowed a special blessing upon me. I silently offered up a prayer to God: "Oh, Almighty God! I give thanks to You for enlightening me so that I understand Your will. No matter how Satan torments me, I absolutely will not compromise or surrender to it. Whether I live or die, I wish to submit to Your orchestrations, devote myself entirely to You, and love You until I die!" The evil police tortured me for two nights and a day and got nothing from me at all. In the end, all they could say was that I had already been "Godized," and I was sent to the detention house.

As soon as I got to the cell at the detention house, the head of the cell block, having been incited by the evil police, began threatening me: "Come on, confess or you're in for it!" Seeing that I was not going to yield, she colluded with the other prisoners to punish me in every way possible: They gave me nothing to eat, gave me no hot water, they made me sleep on the freezing cement floor every night, and made me do the dirty and exhausting

work. If I didn't finish it I had to put in overtime, and if I didn't do it well enough I was verbally abused and made to stand as a punishment.... Every day I had to face being ridiculed, humiliated, discriminated, beaten and verbally abused by the other prisoners. What's more, my money had been confiscated by the evil police so, without a penny to my name, I couldn't even buy toiletries and other daily necessities. I had no idea when these days would end and inside I felt so sorrowful, so lonely and so in pain, wishing always to get out of that demonic place as soon as I could. But the more I wanted to get out of that environment, the darker and more distressed my heart became, and tears fell unconsciously from my eyes. In my helplessness, I could only tell God again and again of my pain, hoping earnestly for God to lead me once again and make me able to obey His orchestrations and arrangements. God is my help and my support at all times, and once again He led me to think of this passage of His words: **"No matter how God works or what kind of environment you are in, if you are able to pursue life, seek to have God's work carried out within you, and pursue the truth, and if you have an understanding of God's actions and are able to act according to the truth, then this is your genuine faith and this shows that you have not lost hope in God. Only if you are still able to pursue the truth through refinement, you are able to truly love God and do not develop doubts of Him, if no matter what He does you still practice the truth to satisfy Him and you are able to deeply seek out His will and be considerate of His will, then this means you have true faith in God. Before, when God said that you would reign as a king, you loved Him, and when He openly showed Himself to you, you pursued Him. But now God is hidden, you cannot see Him, and troubles have come upon you. At this time, do you lose hope in God? So at all times you must pursue life and seek to satisfy God's will. This is called genuine faith, and it is the truest and most beautiful kind of love"** ("Those Who Are to Be Made Perfect Must Undergo Refinement" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words were like a loving mother soothing a distressed child, and they gave me great comfort and encouragement. I felt that God was right beside me watching over me and expecting me to be able to maintain my true faith in God before Satan, thereby gaining the ability to love and satisfy God and stand witness for God in the midst of painful environments and when beset by the forces of darkness—this is the most powerful testimony that puts Satan to shame. Though I was caught in this devils' lair, God's love was always with me. When I suffered cruel torture and torment and I felt weak, and when I endured Satan's

attacks and felt pained and distressed, I could always see God's provision for my life, I could feel the consolation of God's love, and I could see the hand of God opening the way out for me. I thought to myself, "God is always by my side, looking out for me and accompanying me. God's love for me is so profound; how could I ever disappoint His will? I ought not to pander to my flesh and even less should I try to flee the environments God arranges for me. I ought to recall the faith I had before, devote my true love to God and bear witness for God before Satan." Thinking these things, the pain in my heart dissolved, and I resolved to love and satisfy God even if I had to suffer all agonies. I couldn't help but sing a church hymn: "I am a person with heart and spirit, so why can't I love God? God is my support, what is there to fear? I pledge my life to fight with Satan till the end. God lifts us up, we should leave everything behind and fight to bear witness for Christ. God will carry out His will on earth. I'll prepare my love and loyalty and devote them all to God. I will joyfully welcome God's return when He descends in glory, and meet with Him again when the kingdom of Christ is realized" ("The Kingdom" in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). When I strengthened my faith and desired to satisfy God, I once again experienced God's tender love for me. God arranged for a correctional officer to give me many items for my daily use. My heart was so moved and I thanked God from the bottom of my heart. After 40 days, the evil police saw they had no way of getting anything from me, so they forced charges on me for being a "xie jiao member," and asked my family to pay several thousand yuan before releasing me.

I thought I would have my freedom back once I got home, but the CCP police never let up monitoring me and they still restricted my personal freedom. They forbade me from leaving my house, ordered me to always be available to them, and dispatched someone to monitor me. They even threatened my family almost every few days, warning them to keep a close eye on me. From the outside, it seemed as though I had been released, but in reality I had been placed under house arrest by the evil police. I therefore didn't dare to make contact with my brothers and sisters in the church, nor could I perform my duty, and my heart felt so oppressed and pained. The thing that made me even more indignant was that the evil police were deluding people in my village with their evil lies, telling them that my belief in God had driven me mad, that I wasn't right in the head and that I was capable of anything.... In the face of such despicable rumor-mongering and slander, I couldn't help but be consumed with anger. I thought to myself, "I can't be controlled by those devils in this way, and I should struggle to free myself from their demonic clutches and repay God's love."

And so, in order to elude monitoring by the evil police, I had no choice but to leave home and go perform my duty.

Three years passed in the blink of an eye. I thought the CCP police wouldn't be monitoring me any longer, so I returned home to perform my duty. However, it came as a bolt out of the blue when, early one morning in August 2006, before I'd even been home for more than a few days, the evil police came to pay me a visit. That morning, a voice hollering woke me with a start from sleep: "Hurry up and open the door, or else we'll break it down!" My husband had only just opened the door when seven or eight evil policemen swept in like bandits and, without any explanation, got hold of me and hauled me to their car. Because God was protecting me, I felt no fear. I just prayed and prayed: "Oh, Almighty God! Today I have fallen once again into the hands of these devils. May You protect my heart, give me strength, and may I once again bear witness for You." Once we got to the police station, the evil police forcibly took my photo and my fingerprints. They then took up a list of names and began to press me with questions: "Do you know these people? Who are your associates?" Seeing the familiar names of some of my sisters on the list, I responded composedly: "I don't know them, and I have no associates!" No sooner had I finished speaking than one of them roared at me, "You disappeared for several years, so where were you? You do have associates. Do you still believe in Almighty God? Come clean." The evil policeman's words made me at once both sad and resentful, and I couldn't suppress my anger. I thought, "That which I believe in today is the one true God who made the heavens and earth and all things. That which I pursue is the truth, the path I walk is the right path in life, and all these things are bright and just. And yet these devils, so utterly devoid of conscience, keep pursuing and abusing me, restricting my personal freedom, forcing me out of my own home, separating me from my own flesh and blood and trying to force me to betray God. What's wrong with believing in God and seeking to be a good person? Why won't they allow me to follow Almighty God and walk the right path in life? The gang of devils that make up the CCP government are really so reactionary and godless; they are irreconcilable enemies to God and even more so they are enemies with whom I cannot co-exist." In my sadness and resentment, I couldn't help but bring Almighty God's words to mind: **"These lackeys! They repay kindness with hate, they have long since disdained God, they abuse God, they are savage in the extreme, they have not the slightest regard for God, they plunder and pillage, they have lost all conscience, and have not a trace of kindness.... Their**

meddling has left all beneath heaven in a state of darkness and chaos! Religious freedom? The legitimate rights and interests of citizens? They are all tricks for covering up sin! ... Thousands of years of hate are concentrated in the heart, millennia of sinfulness are inscribed upon the heart—how could this not inspire loathing? Avenge God, completely snuff out His enemy, do not allow it to run rampant any longer, and do not permit it to kick up as much trouble as it wishes anymore! Now is the time: Man has long since gathered all his strength, he has devoted all his efforts, paid every price, for this, to tear off the hideous face of this demon and allow people, who have been blinded, and have endured every manner of suffering and hardship, to rise up from their pain and turn their backs on this evil old devil” (“Work and Entry (8)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). From these words of God I understood His will, and there arose in me a bitter hatred of these devils. God created the heavens and earth and all things and He raises mankind; mankind enjoys God’s abundant bounty, and believing in God and worshiping God has always been right and proper. And yet the CCP government does everything it can to brutally repress those who believe in Almighty God; it hunts them wildly, imprisons them illegally, tortures and torments them cruelly, detains them in labor camps and insults and mocks them, hoping in vain to exterminate all those who believe in God and to abolish God’s work to save man in the last days—it really is wicked and despicable in the extreme! Over these years, if it hadn’t been for Almighty God protecting me and caring for me, I would have long ago been cruelly put to death by Satan the devil. In the face of this spiritual battle of life and death, I made the resolution to stand up for the truth and still love God even though I suffer extreme pain. I pledge my life to stand witness for God!

Seeing me glaring at them without saying a word, the evil police raged at me in exasperation: “You won’t talk, eh? Wait until our bosses come to interrogate you themselves, and we’ll see if your mouth stays shut!” Hearing that the chiefs of the evil police were going to interrogate me themselves, I couldn’t help but feel a little nervous. Then I thought of how, in the midst of all this adversity, I had truly experienced God’s sovereignty over all and His administering of all things, and of how God’s words have a unique authority and a powerful vitality. Having realized this, there immediately arose within me the faith and courage to prevail over Satan’s forces of darkness. Though these evil policemen are extremely cruel and merciless, they are just paper tigers—they look strong on the outside but inside they are weak—and they also are manipulated by the hands of the Creator. In my heart, I made

the following resolution to God: “Oh, God, no matter how the devils torment me, I ask only that You steady my faith, strengthen my heart that loves You, and let me become Your victorious testimony even at the cost of my own life.” It must have been after 10 a.m. when there came two men calling themselves deputy directors of the Public Security Bureau. They looked at me without saying a word, then one of them seized me by the hair and pressed me with the question: “Do you still believe in Almighty God?” Seeing that I stayed silent, the other evil police chief roared savagely: “If you don’t talk, we’re gonna put you through hell today!” As he said this, barking like a wild beast, he grabbed hold of my hair and threw me to the ground, and I fell so hard that I was unable to get up again. They then dragged me by the hair and beat and kicked me, shouting as they beat me: “Will you talk?” All at once, my face burned with pain and my scalp hurt unbearably like it had been torn apart. These two beasts in human clothing looked from the outside like respectable gentlemen, but underneath they were as savage and ruthless as wild animals. They made me see even more clearly that this evil political party—the CCP—is the embodiment of Satan, and its pawns are a gang of wicked demons and evil spirits! They will ultimately meet with God’s curses! These two bosses of the evil police saw that I was not willing to surrender to their despotic power, so, in a seemingly maniacal rage, they grabbed hold of my hair and began to press me against the ground, both using their feet to wantonly kick and stomp on me. Then they dragged me up and fiercely stomped on the backs of my legs, kicking me down hard so I fell kneeling to the ground, and they said savagely: “Kneel and don’t move! You can stand up when you come clean. If you won’t talk, then don’t even think about it!” If I moved even slightly, they would violently pull my hair and beat and kick me. I knelt for three or four hours, during which time I was beaten countless times by them because I couldn’t hold myself up. In the end, I collapsed in a daze to the ground, and they scolded me for pretending to be dead while relentlessly and violently pulling my hair so that my scalp felt as if it were being torn from my head. At that moment, it was as if my entire body had fallen to pieces—I couldn’t move a muscle and I was in unbearable pain. I felt like my heart would stop beating at any moment. I kept calling on God to give me strength, and God’s words of exhortation and encouragement drifted into my mind: **“Peter was able to love God unto death. When he died—when he was put on the cross—he still loved God; he did not think of his own prospects or pursue glorious hopes or extravagant thoughts, and he sought only to love God and to obey all of God’s arrangements. Such is the standard**

you must achieve before you can be considered to have borne testimony, before you become someone who has been made perfect after having been conquered” (“The Inside Truth of the Work of Conquest (2)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). God’s words gave me faith and strength. I thought to myself, “Yes! Peter was nailed upside down on the cross for God and he was still able to love God greatly even when his flesh was in unendurable pain. He overcame the flesh, defeated Satan, and only this kind of testimony is resounding and capable of comforting God’s heart. I want to imitate Peter, that God may be glorified in me. Though my flesh is in extreme pain, it is still much less than what Peter went through being nailed upside down on the cross. Satan wishes to make me betray God by torturing my flesh, but God uses this opportunity to perfect my true love for Him. Today, I absolutely will not surrender to Satan and allow its plot to succeed! I want to live for the love of God!” All at once, I was no longer in any fear of dying; I became determined to give myself up to God entirely and I swore on my life that I would be loyal to God! Thereupon, I prayed to God: “Oh, Almighty God, I am a created being who worships You and obeys You as I should. I give You my life, and whether I live or die, I believe in You and love You!” I instantly felt a great easing of the pain in my body, and my entire body and mind had a feeling of lightening and release. At this time, I couldn’t help but hum in my heart a church hymn: “Today I accept God’s judgment and purification, tomorrow I’ll receive His blessings. I’m willing to give my youth and offer up my life to see the day of God’s glory. Oh, God’s love has enchanted my heart. He works and expresses the truth, bestowing new life upon me. I’m willing to drink from the bitter cup and suffer to gain the truth. I will endure humiliation without complaint, I wish to spend my life repaying God’s kindness” (“I Wish to See the Day of God’s Glory” in *Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs*). The evil police bosses were completely exhausted from inflicting suffering on me, and they stood there not saying anything for a long time. In the end, at a loss at what to do, they snapped angrily at me: “You just wait!” Then they left. The other evil police stood around discussing together: “This woman’s so tough, no one can do anything with her. She’s tougher than Liu Hulan...” At that point, I was stirred so much that I couldn’t stop my tears from flowing. God was victorious! If it hadn’t been for the words of Almighty God providing for me over and over, and if it hadn’t been for God sustaining me in secret, I would simply not have been able to stand firm. All glory and praise to Almighty God! In the end, the evil police locked me up in the detention house.

In the detention house, the evil police still weren't willing to let it go, and they questioned me once every few days. Every time they questioned me, they made me sit in the interrogation room before a window with metal bars across it, and the moment they felt dissatisfied with my response, they would reach across and violently thrash my face or grab my hair and slam my head against the bars. Seeing that they still got nowhere, they became frenzied with rage. In the end, they realized that being hard on me was no use, so they switched to soft tactics and tried to entice and persuade me, saying: "Your kids and your husband are all waiting for you at home! And your husband pleaded with us on your behalf. Talk to us and you will soon be back and reunited with them." These false words disgusted me and made me hate them so much that I asked in my heart for God to curse them. I despised this gang of base and shameless evil police. I made a resolve: "No matter what hand they play, I am not going to move an inch! In this life, no one can shake my determination to follow Almighty God!" In the end, the evil police had played all their cards, and so they kept me locked up for 40 days, fined me 2,000 yuan and then released me.

Throughout my experiences, all along the way, I have come to a deep realization that it is entirely through God's wondrous deeds and almighty power that someone like me—an ordinary country woman, who formerly had no insight or courage—can overcome several bouts of being tortured to confess and cruelly tormented and harmed by the CCP police, can see clearly the reactionary essence of the CCP government that stubbornly opposes God and wildly harms God's chosen people, and can perceive how it deceives the public to endorse its own reputation and conceals its evil ways. In my practical experience, I have really come to appreciate that the authority and power of God's words are so very great, that the vitality that God bestows on man is infinite and that it can defeat all the evil forces of Satan! In suffering, I perceived that it was God's love that comforted and encouraged me, and it kept me from losing my way. No matter where I may be or what kind of circumstances I find myself in, God is always watching over me, and His love is with me always. It is my honor to be able to follow this practical, true God. That I was able to experience this kind of persecution and adversity to get a taste of God's wondrousness, His wisdom and His almightiness is even more so my good fortune. From this day on, may I do my utmost to pursue the truth and achieve a true knowledge of God, love God till the end, and be unswerving in my loyalty!

5. Persecution and Suffering Made Me Love God Even More

By Liu Zhen, Shandong Province

My name is Liu Zhen. I am 78 years old, and I am just an ordinary Christian in The Church of Almighty God. I am grateful to Almighty God for choosing me, an elderly woman from a rural village who is unremarkable in the eyes of the world. After I accepted Almighty God's work of the last days, every day I prayed to God, listened to recitations of God's word, and went to meetings and fellowshiped with my brothers and sisters, and gradually, I began to understand some truths and to have a clear comprehension about certain things. I felt filled with joy, and I lived with a happiness I'd never previously experienced. Because I am old and I find walking difficult, I was unable to leave home to attend church meetings, so out of concern for me, my brothers and sisters held the meetings in my home. They never missed a meeting due to winter cold or summer heat, and wind, rain, and snow never stopped them from coming to visit and care for me, just an old woman as I am. Especially when we read God's word, if there was anything I didn't understand, they would always patiently fellowship with me about it, and never ignore me or look down on me. I was deeply moved by this, because if it were not for God's love, who would have shown such patience and affection for me? In my interactions with my brothers and sisters, I saw that they were very different from laypeople. What they lived out were tolerance and love, and they were able to open up their hearts and treat each other with sincerity, without any barriers or distance between them. They were as close as a family, and this made me feel even more certain about Almighty God's work. As I came to understand more truths, I realized that I should fulfill my duty as a created being, so I told the church I wanted to take up duties. Because my age prevented me from performing most duties, however, the church assigned me to hosting duties at my home. I accepted, grateful to God for assigning me a duty based on my capabilities. And so, I got along with my brothers and sisters very well, and I felt a great sense of relief in both body and mind. Some illnesses I had been suffering from also began to get better, and so I was even more grateful to Almighty God for His grace and mercy.

However, the good times didn't last long, because my brothers and sisters in the village and I were reported by an evildoer. My brothers and sisters were all arrested by the police,

and they ordered the village Party secretary to bring me to the police station. Once I got there, the police asked me, "How did you come to believe in God? Why do you believe in God?" I said, "Believing in God is an unalterable principle. By reading God's word every day, we can understand many truths, be good people according to God's word, and walk the right path in life. Believers in God don't beat or curse others, and we always abide by the law, so what's wrong with believing in God? Why are you arresting us?" The officer looked at me contemptuously and asked harshly, "Who preached the gospel to you? Does anyone else in your family believe?" I said I was the only one in my family who believed. They saw that they wouldn't get any information from me, so they released me the same day. After I left, I wondered why the police had released me so easily. It was only once I arrived back home that I learned that, when my family found out that I'd been taken to the police station, they had used their connections and paid 3,000 yuan to the police to release me. But the police were still sowing discord between my family and me, as they'd asked my family to prevent me from believing in God. My daughter-in-law fought with my son about this and threatened to kill herself by drinking pesticide if I continued to believe in God. That was when I realized that the CCP police were rotten to the core. I had a perfectly peaceful family, and yet now they'd stirred things up so much that we were all at each other's throats! I believed in the one true God who created all things in heaven and on earth, and today, Almighty God has come to save us by asking us to understand the truth, live out a human likeness, speak and act in ways which accord with our conscience and what is right, and not do things that go against our humanity or morality. All I did was stay at home and read God's word, hold meetings, and fulfill my duty, but the CCP police actually framed me and charged me with "disturbing public order." They were blatantly distorting the facts, deliberately twisting the truth, arbitrarily accusing people of false crimes! Satan is truly despicable. It was nothing but bald-faced slander and malicious libel. The police had learned from the informant that I hosted meetings with my brothers and sisters at my house, so they didn't stop bothering me after that. Soon after, they brought me in to the police station to question me, and threatened me by saying, "Tell us the names of your church leaders and the people you host at meetings. If you don't tell us, we'll put you in prison!" Sternly yet righteously, I answered, "I don't know anything! I have nothing to say to you!" The police were furious beyond words, but because God protected me, they didn't dare lay a finger on me.

After the police released me, they continued their surveillance of me, vainly hoping to

use me as bait to catch a “bigger fish.” I feared implicating my brothers and sisters, so I no longer dared stay in contact with them, and thereafter I fell out of church life. Without church life, my heart felt empty and without refuge, and I gradually became estranged from God. I spent each day living in panic and dread, deeply afraid the police would come to take me away again. In the past, I had spent each day listening to God’s word and Sermons and Fellowship, but now that was impossible, because if they saw me praying or I even mentioned the word “God,” I would get an earful of complaint from my family. My daughter-in-law spoke coldly to me all the time because I had been fined by the police, and my husband and son scolded me at every turn. The family that once supported my belief in Almighty God now opposed and persecuted me however they could. This made me feel very sad, my spirit felt very oppressed, and I lived in a darkness and pain I had never felt before. Because I had no recitations of God’s word to listen to and was unable to fellowship with my brothers and sisters, my spirit felt incredibly parched. Every night I tossed and turned in bed and couldn’t sleep, and I often missed the happy times I’d spent at meetings with my brothers and sisters. At times like these, I hated the CCP government. It had caused all of this misery, it had caused me to lose the rights of a created being to freely believe in and worship God, it had caused me to lose my church life, stopped me from fellowshiping on God’s word with my brothers and sisters, and stopped me from performing my duties. In my misery, I could only silently pray to God: “O God! I live in darkness, I feel like my spirit has become parched, and I want to live the church life with my brothers and sisters. O God! I beg You to open a path for me!”

I went before God and continued to call out to Him in this manner, and God truly heard my prayers, as He arranged for my brothers and sisters to visit me. One of my sisters knew that I often went to the cotton field to pick cotton, so she secretly went there to see me, and we set a time to hold meetings there. Each time we met, I was out in the field picking cotton early, and while everyone else was eating lunch, I squatted down with my sister in the field to read God’s word. Seeing my sister was like seeing a long-lost relative. I couldn’t stop the tears of happiness from flowing. I told her about the injustice and misery I had endured, as well as my family’s misunderstandings. She comforted me while God’s words watered me, and she fellowshiped on God’s will with me, and gradually, my state began to improve. This was how the CCP government persecution made it so that I could only hold meetings squatting in a cotton field. One day, we read a passage of God’s word: “**There is not one**

person among you who is protected by the law—you are, instead, punished by the law. Even more problematic is that people do not understand you: Be it your relatives, your parents, your friends, or your colleagues, none of them understand you. When you are ‘abandoned’ by God, it is impossible for you to continue living on earth, but even so, people cannot bear to be away from God, which is the significance of God’s conquest of people, and is the glory of God. ... Blessings cannot be obtained in a day or two; they must be earned through great sacrifice. Which is to say, you must possess a love that has undergone refinement, you must possess great faith, and you must have the many truths that God requires you to attain; what is more, you must turn toward justice, without being cowed or evasive, and must have a constant and unabating love for God. You must have resolve, changes must occur in your life disposition, your corruption must be healed, you must accept all of God’s orchestrations without complaint, and you must be obedient even unto death. This is what you ought to attain, this is the final aim of God’s work, and it is what God asks of this group of people” (“Is the Work of God As Simple As Man Imagines?” in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God’s word made me understand that my current suffering was something I ought to endure. China is a country ruled by atheism where believers in God are persecuted and shamed, but this suffering was temporary and limited, and it was carefully arranged by God to perfect my faith and obedience to Him, so that I could better receive God’s promise and blessings in the future. I now had no other desires, because having God was enough. At the same time, I saw that the laws formulated by the CCP government are simply tricks to deceive people. To the outside world it claims to support religious freedom, but in reality, believers in God don’t even have the right to read God’s word or hold meetings. It simply doesn’t tolerate the existence of believers in God, and it doesn’t allow people to follow God or walk the right path in life. Just as Almighty God’s words say: **“Religious freedom? The legitimate rights and interests of citizens? They are all tricks for covering up sin!”** (“Work and Entry (8)” in The Word Appears in the Flesh). The heaven and earth created by God are vast, but in China believers in God don’t even have a toehold. Anyone who believes in God suffers the CCP government’s arrest and persecution and has their freedom restricted. The CCP government wants nothing more than to kill off every believer in God and transform China into a godless nation. It is so corrupt, evil, and reactionary. It truly is irreconcilable with God, an enemy of God that cannot abide His

existence!

And so, I continued to meet with my sister secretly in the cotton field. But time passed, and soon it would be winter. The leaves of the cotton plants withered and fell, and the cotton field no longer provided any cover for us to hold meetings, so I once again found myself without brothers and sisters with whom to fellowship on God's word. At first, I was able to keep God's word and maintain a normal relationship with God, but without the provision and watering of God's word, my spirit became more and more barren and dry, and before long, I again fell into darkness. I felt that I had descended from heaven into hell, and I was in such misery that death would have been preferable. My family believed the police's lies, so they kept watch over me every day, and threatened me with beatings if I continued to believe in Almighty God. At home, I didn't dare to pray. I could only pray hiding under my blankets at night or when no one else was at home, and I passed every day in this manner. Besides enduring the recriminations of my family, I also had to endure the rumors and gossip of the villagers. Facing all this, I felt especially miserable, spiritually I felt weak and helpless, and I was in low spirits every day. I felt that, after losing the church life, being unable to read God's word, and not being able to see my brothers and sisters, simply being alive was misery, that it had lost all its joy. I thought of how in the past, when I felt miserable and weak, God's words always comforted me, my brothers and sisters patiently supported me, and after I'd understood God's will, I would immediately feel at ease and liberated, and my spirits would rise again. But now, because of police persecution and surveillance, I had lost the right to read God's word, and I couldn't even see my brothers and sisters. Every day was a long, bitter struggle, and seeing the way I lived without feeling alive, as if I were dead, and considering how full of life I had been in the past when I'd lived in God's presence in the church, I felt anguished and miserable. And when I thought of how my family had been fooled and deceived by the CCP government, how they didn't understand me, and how they'd gone along with the CCP government in restricting my freedom, I felt even more heartbroken. But just when I was feeling like I had nowhere to turn, I prayed continually to God and begged Him to open a path for me: "O God! Now, I can't read Your word, nor can I live the church life, and this life is too much for me to bear. O God! My family has been deceived by the CCP government and tries with all their strength to prevent me from believing in You. Please, help me, allow me to testify to Your deeds, and stop them from being deceived and used by Satan any longer. O God! I wish to entrust my family to You, and I ask that You show me a

way out.”

Thanks be to God, He genuinely heard my prayers. Some time later, I suddenly passed out in front of my bed one evening. My husband was frightened out of his wits and didn't know what to do, so my son quickly called emergency services. When the first hospital that responded heard the patient was an old woman who was seriously sick, they refused to accept me. My son called another hospital's emergency line, and the doctor said I didn't stand much chance of regaining consciousness, that there was no point in doing anything to save me, and that my family should prepare for the worst. But my son refused to give up, and begged them until they had no option but to relent and bring me to the hospital. However, even after emergency rescue procedures, I remained unconscious. There was nothing the doctors could do, and my family was certain I wouldn't survive. Yet for God, nothing is impossible, because this was when a miracle happened! After being in a severe coma for 18 hours, I slowly regained consciousness. Everyone present was stunned. When I opened my eyes and saw the doctors, I thought I was looking at angels. I asked them where I was, one of them told me I was in the hospital, and as they hurriedly checked my vitals, they kept muttering, "It's really a miracle...." Before long, I sat up, and I felt very hungry. The nurse fed me, and after I finished eating, I felt full of energy and strength. I knew that this was one of Almighty God's miraculous deeds, that God had heard my prayers and opened a way forward for me. As I sat on the bed I couldn't help but sing in praise of God. The surprised doctor couldn't help but ask, "Ma'am, who is this God that you believe in?" I said, "I believe in the one true God who created all things in heaven and on earth—Almighty God!" The doctor responded by looking at me in shock, and my family looked surprised and delighted as they watched me singing. After I got out of the hospital, I went home, and one by one my neighbors came to see me, saying, "It's amazing! The doctors all said there was no hope for you, but you actually woke up. It's a miracle!" I testified to God to them, saying that this was due to God's great power, that God had saved me, that without God I would be dead now, and that it was God who had given me a second chance at life. I told them all of humankind was created by God, that life is given to us by God, that God administers and rules over our lives, and that people cannot turn away from God's guidance, because to turn away from God means death. After experiencing this, my family no longer opposed my belief in God, and God also granted me an unexpected blessing—my husband also accepted God's current stage of work. After that, my husband often went to meetings with me to fellowship,

and I felt incredibly happy, at peace, and secure. I then spent every day living in joy, because I had truly seen God's almightiness and wisdom, and I thanked and praised God from the bottom of my heart!

Through my experience, I genuinely came to appreciate that no matter what God does to a person, He does it out of love. Behind His permitting Satan to persecute me lay God's good intentions. The CCP government wanted to use my arrest and persecution to make me shun God and betray God, but it had no idea that God's wisdom is exercised based on Satan's tricks. The CCP government's oppression not only failed to make me shun God or betray God, but instead it allowed me to clearly see the CCP government's evil essence of resisting God and acting against Heaven, and further solidified my certainty that Almighty God's word is the truth, the way, and the life! It also allowed me to see God's great power and miraculous deeds, thereby strengthening my love and loyalty for God. Just as Almighty God's word says: **"In My plan, Satan has ever snapped at the heels of every step, and, as the foil of My wisdom, has always tried to find ways and means to disrupt My original plan. But could I succumb to its deceitful schemes? All in heaven and on earth serves Me—could the deceitful schemes of Satan be any different? This is precisely the intersection of My wisdom, it is precisely that which is wondrous about My deeds, and it is the principle by which My entire management plan is carried out"** ("Chapter 8" of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). The more the CCP government wildly resists God and persecutes God's chosen people, the more we are able to discern and forsake it, and the more we can understand the truth and know God's wisdom and miraculous deeds. Our faith in following God also grows, and we become more able to produce resounding testimony for God. Through experiencing the CCP government's persecution, I saw clearly that, in God's work, Satan simply acts as a foil, and is a serving object for God, and I also came to know more clearly God's earnest desire to save humankind. In the future, no matter what difficulties or obstacles I face, I wish to fulfill my duties to the best of my abilities and do my part to meet God's will.

6. After Enduring Hardship, My Love for God Is Even Stronger

By Zhou Rui, Jiangxi Province

My name is Zhou Rui and I am a Christian of The Church of Almighty God. From the time I began to understand things, I watched my parents work hard in the fields from morning to night in order to make a living. Despite their significant efforts, they hardly earned any money every year, so our family always lived in considerable poverty. Whenever I saw those people with power and influence who lived quite comfortably without needing to labor hard, I felt envious of them, and so I made a firm resolution: When I grew up, I would definitely be successful in a career or get a government position to remedy the poverty and backwardness of my family so that my parents, too, could live the life of the rich. However, I struggled for this ideal for many years, yet was never able to get what I wanted; I continued to live a poor life. I often sighed in worry over having nothing to show for how busy I'd been, and gradually I lost my faith in life. Just when I began to lose heart and despair of life, Almighty God's salvation of the last days came upon me. From His words I grasped some truths and came to know the root cause of human suffering in the world. I also understood how people needed to live in order to live a life that was most meaningful and worthwhile. From then on, confused and helpless though I had been, I found my direction in life. Leaving depression and dejection behind, I felt a new vitality and lease on life, and saw the hope of life. Afterward, so that those who were still living in suffering and in helplessness could also obtain this extremely rare salvation, I began going from place to place, energetically preaching God's salvation of the last days. What I did not expect, however, was that in the process of spreading the gospel, I was captured twice by the Chinese government and suffered brutal, inhumane torture.... In this dark pit of monstrosities, Almighty God never left my side; His words gave me faith and strength, leading me again and again to victory over Satan's dark forces and reinforcing my love for Him.

It was a day in June of 2003; two of my brothers and I had gone to a village to spread the gospel, when we were reported by a wicked person. Five or six policemen in three police cars sped up to us and placed us in handcuffs without asking a single question. Pushing and kicking us, they forced us into the vehicles and drove us over to the Public Security Bureau. In the car I did not feel much fear at all. I had always felt that the purpose of

spreading the gospel was to bring people salvation, so we had not been doing anything wrong; once we arrived at the Public Security Bureau, I would explain the situation, and the police would let us go. How could I have known, however, that the Chinese government's policemen were crueler and more savage than any ruffians or evil tyrants. After we arrived at the PSB, the police didn't even give us a chance to explain before separating us and questioning us individually. No sooner had I entered the interrogation room than a policeman barked at me, "The Communist Party's policy is 'Leniency for those who confess, and severity for those who resist.' Do you know that?" Subsequently, he asked about my personal information. Seeing that my answers did not satisfy him, another policeman walked up next to me and grunted, "Hmph. You're not playing ball. We'll have to teach you a lesson and see if that will make you tell the truth." Then he waved his hand and said, "Bring a few bricks over so we can punish him!" No sooner had he said this than two policemen walked over, took one of my hands, and yanked it from above my shoulder down along my back while wrenching my other hand upward, and then forcefully cuffed them together. Immediately I felt unbearable pain, as though my arms were about to break. How could such a weak person as I endure such torment? A moment later I collapsed to the ground. Seeing this, the evil police abruptly hauled the handcuffs upward and wedged two bricks between my hands and my back. A sudden, acute pain shot straight through to my heart, as though thousands of ants were chewing through my bones. In utter agony, I used all my remaining strength to implore God: "Almighty God, save me. Almighty God, save me...." Though by then I had only accepted God's salvation of the last days for three months or so, was not yet equipped with many of His words, and only understood a scant few truths, nevertheless, as I continuously supplicated, God granted me faith and strength and planted a firm conviction inside of me: I must stand testimony for God; I absolutely must not surrender to Satan! Thereupon, I gritted my teeth and absolutely refused to say another word. Flustered and exasperated, the evil policemen tried another vicious ploy in an effort to subdue me: They placed two bricks on the floor and forced me to kneel on top of them; at the same time, they pulled up hard on my handcuffs. My arms were immediately in so much unbearable pain it felt like they were broken. I made myself kneel there for a few minutes before again falling motionless to the floor, whereupon the policemen violently lifted me back up by the handcuffs, and forced me to continue kneeling. In this manner they tortured me over and over. It was the height of summer, so I was both in agony and hot; beads of sweat dripped down

continuously from my face. I was having such a hard time holding up that I was having trouble breathing, and I nearly fainted. Even so, this gang of evil policemen merely rejoiced at my misfortune. "Feeling okay?" one of them said. "If you keep on refusing to talk, we have a lot more ways to deal with you!" Seeing that I wasn't answering, they fumed with frustration and said, "So you haven't had enough then? Again!" ... After two or three hours of this torment, I was aching from head to toe and had no strength left. I fell to the floor and could not move, and even lost all control of my bladder and bowels. Up against the savage torture of these evil policemen, I genuinely hated myself for having been so blind and ignorant before; naively, I had assumed that the PSB would be a place of reason and that the policemen would uphold justice and release me. I never expected that they would be so malicious and cruel as to try to extort a confession through torture without a shred of evidence, torturing me almost to death. They really are evil in the extreme! I lay on the floor as if fallen to pieces and could not have moved even if I'd wanted to. I didn't know how they planned to torture me further, nor did I know how much longer I could hold up. In my suffering and helplessness, all I could do was to continuously implore God to give me strength so that I could keep on enduring. God heard my pleas, and took pity on me, causing me to recall one of His utterances: **"Now is a crucial moment. Be sure not to be disheartened or discouraged. You must look forward in everything.... So long as one breath remains to you, persevere to the very end; only this will be worthy of praise"** ("Chapter 20" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words granted me enormous faith and strength. They were so true! Since I was walking the path of light and righteousness, I should have the faith to keep going; even if it came to my final breath, I still had to persevere to the end! God's words hummed with life force, they enabled me to have the faith and courage with which to fight these evil demons to the end, and I slowly regained some of my physical strength as well. After that, the evil police continued to interrogate me, and kept stomping ruthlessly on my feet until they were crushed and mangled. Nevertheless, I felt no more pain. I knew this was due to God's wonderful deeds; having taken pity on me and shown solicitude for my weakness, He had alleviated my suffering. Later, the malicious policemen detained us with the charge of "disrupting public order." That night, they cuffed us each to a separate three- or four-hundred-pound block of cement, to which we remained chained until the following evening, when they again transported us over to the local detention house.

Entering the detention house was like being dropped into a kind of hell. The correctional officers forced me to string together colored light bulbs. At first, I was made to string together six thousand of them per day, but after that, the amount increased each day until it eventually reached twelve thousand. As a result of this excessive daily workload, I wore my fingers to the bone, yet still was unable to complete the task. I had no choice but to keep stringing them together through the night. Sometimes I really couldn't bear it, and wanted to take a nap, but as soon as I was seen by them, I would be viciously beaten. The correctional officers would even incite the jailhouse bullies by saying out loud, "If these convicts can't get the job done or do it right, you should give them a couple shots of 'penicillin.'" What they meant by giving a shot of "penicillin" referred to slamming one's knee into an inmate's crotch, elbowing him hard in the middle of the back while he was bent over in pain, and then using one's heel to stomp on the inmate's foot. This vicious method could sometimes cause a person to faint on the spot and even be left crippled for life. In this devilish prison, I did arduous hard labor every day and still had to take cruel beatings. On top of that, the three meals we were fed each day were not even fit for dogs or pigs: The dishes we ate were made of unseasoned radish leaves and swamp cabbage (which was often interspersed with rotten leaves and roots, sand, and mud), along with about a hundred and fifty grams of rice and a cup of the water that had been used to wash the rice in. All day long, I was so hungry my stomach was constantly growling. In this sort of environment, I only had Almighty God to rely on; whenever I took a beating, I would pray urgently, imploring God to give me faith and strength so that I could overcome Satan's temptations. After more than twenty days of being ravaged and tormented, my body had become emaciated beyond recognition: I had no strength in my arms and legs, I could not stand up straight, and I didn't even have the strength to stretch out my arms. Nevertheless, not only were the perverse guards indifferent to my plight, but they even misappropriated the few hundred yuan my family sent me. As time went on, my physical condition got worse and worse; I got so weak that I could not help complaining to myself, "Why, in this country, does a person who believes in God have to be subjected to such suffering? Isn't the reason I spread the gospel to bring people before God to receive God's salvation? And I have not even committed any crimes...." The more I thought about this, the harder it was to bear and the more wronged I felt. All I could do was continuously pray to God and implore Him to take pity on me and save me. In the midst of my misery and helplessness, God led me to remember a hymn of His utterances: "**2 Perhaps you all**

remember these words: 'For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' These words shall be fulfilled by God during the last days, and they shall be fulfilled in those who have been brutally persecuted by the great red dragon in the land where it lies coiled. The great red dragon persecutes God and is the enemy of God, and so, in this land, those who believe in God are thus subjected to humiliation and oppression, and God's words are fulfilled in you, this group of people, as a result. ³ It is tremendously difficult for God to carry out His work in the land of the great red dragon—but it is through this difficulty that God does one stage of His work, making manifest His wisdom and His wondrous deeds, and using this opportunity to make this group of people complete. It is through people's suffering, through their caliber, and through all the satanic dispositions of the people of this filthy land that God does His work of purification and conquest, so that, from this, He may gain glory, and so that He may gain those who will bear witness to His deeds. Such is the entire significance of all the sacrifices that God has made for this group of people" ("You Are Those Who Will Receive the Inheritance of God" in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). God's words gave me enormous comfort and encouragement, and they enabled me to understand His will. Because we believe in God in an atheist country, we are destined to endure the demon Satan's coercion and persecution; however, our being subjected to this anguish is permitted by God, therefore suffering like this has value and meaning. It is exactly by way of such persecution and suffering that God plants the truth within us, thereby qualifying us to bear His promise. This "suffering" is God's blessing, and to be able to stay loyal to God through this suffering is a testimony to God's victory over Satan, and it is also compelling evidence that I have been gained by God. "Today," I thought, "because I follow God, I suffer such persecution at the hands of the Chinese Communist Party demons, and this is God showing me special favor, so by rights I should submit to God's orchestration and happily face and accept it with steadfast peace of mind." I recalled another of God's utterances, spoken in the Age of Grace: "**Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven**" (Matthew 5:10). In that moment, I had even more faith and strength: No matter how Satan and demons might torture me, I was determined not to give in to them, and I swore that I would stand testimony and satisfy God! Endowed with authority and power, God's words had dispelled the desolation and helplessness I'd felt

inside, and alleviated the ruinous physical suffering I had been subjected to. They allowed me to see the light in the darkness, and my spirit grew stronger and more unyielding.

Later on, despite not having any evidence, the Chinese government imposed a sentence on me of a year of reeducation through labor. When the police transported me to the labor camp, the prison guards there saw that I was barely more than skin and bones and hardly even looked human anymore. Afraid that I would die, they did not dare to accept me, so the policemen had no choice but to take me back to the detention house. By then I had been tortured by those evil police to the point where I wasn't able to eat, yet not only did they not give me medical treatment, but they even said I was faking it. When they saw that I could not get any food down, they got someone to pry my mouth open and forcibly poured it in. When they saw me having trouble swallowing, they beat me. I was force-fed and beaten like a rag doll three times in all. Upon seeing that they could not pour any more food into me, they had no alternative but to take me to the hospital. Examinations revealed that my veins had hardened; my blood had turned into a black paste, and could not circulate properly. The doctor said, "If this man is detained any longer, he will undoubtedly die." Nevertheless, the hateful, evil police still would not let me go. Later, with my life hanging on by a thread, the other prisoners said I was beyond hope and a total goner. By then I was in utter anguish; I felt that being so young and having only recently accepted God's work of the last days, there was still so much for me to enjoy, and I had not yet seen the day of God's glory. I truly was not resigned to being tortured to death by the Chinese government. I absolutely despised this pack of utterly heartless, evil police, and had even more hate for this perverse, Heaven-defying, wicked, satanic regime that was the Chinese government. It was what had deprived me of my freedom to follow the true God, and it was what had brought me to the brink of death and would not allow me to worship the true God. The Communist Party frantically resists God, cruelly persecutes Christians, and wishes to exterminate everyone who believes in God and turn China into a godless region. This wicked demon Satan is indeed the enemy that is irreconcilably opposed to God, and what's more, it is the enemy I can never forgive. I vowed that even if I were to be tortured to death that day, I absolutely would not compromise or give in to Satan! In my grief and indignation, I recalled something God had said: **"Thousands of years of hate are concentrated in the heart, millennia of sinfulness are inscribed upon the heart—how could this not inspire loathing? Avenge God, completely snuff out His enemy, do not allow it to run rampant any longer, and**

do not permit it to kick up as much trouble as it wishes anymore! Now is the time: Man has long since gathered all his strength, he has devoted all his efforts, paid every price, for this, to tear off the hideous face of this demon and allow people, who have been blinded, and have endured every manner of suffering and hardship, to rise up from their pain and turn their backs on this evil old devil (“Work and Entry (8)” in The Word Appears in the Flesh). After pondering God’s words, I saw even more clearly the evil, vicious demonic face of the Chinese government, and recognized that in that very moment, I was facing a spiritual battle between life and death, between good and evil. The Chinese government’s goal in devastating me like this was to force me to forsake God and betray Him, but God had reminded and encouraged me to stand strong, rid myself of the hold death had over me, and bear victorious testimony for God. I could not withdraw into negativity; I had to cooperate diligently with God and submit to His orchestrations and arrangements. Like Peter, I had to submit unto death and, in my last living moment, bear firm, resounding testimony for God and comfort His heart. My life was in God’s hands and, though Satan might injure and slaughter my physical body, it could not destroy my soul, let alone do anything to obstruct my determination to believe in God and pursue the truth. Whether or not I survived that day, my only wish was to entrust my life to God and accept His orchestrations; even if I were to be maimed to death, I absolutely would not surrender to Satan! When I became willing to sacrifice my life and I resolved to stand testimony for God, God opened up a way out for me by rousing the other convicts to feed me. When that happened, I was filled with excitement; deep down I knew God was by my side and had always been with me. All along, He had been watching over me and protecting me, empathizing with my weakness and carefully arranging everything for me. In that dark lair of devils, even though my body had been ravaged, within my heart I no longer felt so much pain and distress. After that, the evil cops kept me detained for another fifteen days, but seeing that my life was just hanging by a thread and that I could die at any time, they finally had no choice but to release me. I had originally weighed more than fifty kilos, but during the nearly two months that I was locked up, I had been tormented until I was just skin and bones, weighing a mere twenty-five or thirty kilos, and my life hung in the balance. Even so, this pack of monsters still wanted to fine me ten thousand yuan. In the end, seeing that my family really had no way of coming up with such a large sum of money, they demanded six hundred yuan to cover my food expenses, and only after it had been paid did they let me go.

Suffering this inhuman torture and cruel treatment at the hands of the Chinese government left me feeling as though I had barely escaped the gates of hell. That I had been able to walk out alive was completely thanks to God's care and protection; it was God showing me His great salvation. Thinking of God's love, I felt doubly moved, and gained an even deeper appreciation for the preciousness of God's words. Thereupon, I avidly read His utterances daily after that, and frequently prayed to God. Gradually, I gained more and more understanding of the work God was doing to save humanity in the last days. After a while, under God's care, my body gradually recovered, and I again began to spread the gospel and bear testimony to God's work of the last days. However, as long as the satanic regime remains standing, it will never stop trying to disrupt and destroy God's work. Later, I was again subjected to frantic pursuit and arrest by the Chinese government's police.

One day in November of 2004, the winter wind was blowing bitter cold and the air was swirling with thick snowflakes. While spreading the gospel, a few of my brothers and sisters and I were secretly followed by the CCP police. At 8 o'clock that evening, we were in the middle of a meeting, when we suddenly heard a burst of urgent knocking and shouting at the door: "Open up! Open the door! We're from the Public Security Bureau! If you don't open this door right now, we'll kick it in! ..." With no time to think, we hurriedly hid away the VCD players, books, and other material. A moment later, five or six policemen burst through the door, charging in like a pack of bandits or robbers. One of them bellowed, "No one move! Put your hands on your heads and squat down by the wall!" Straightaway, a few of the policemen rushed into every room and upturned the entire place. They confiscated four portable VCD players and some books about faith in God. Immediately afterward, they forced us into the police cars and drove us over to the local police station. On the way there, scene after scene of the horrendous torture meted out to me by the evil policemen the previous year flitted through my memory, and I inevitably felt rather nervous, not knowing what else these devilish police might do to torment me this time. Afraid I would not be able to bear their cruelty and that I might end up doing something to betray God, I earnestly prayed in silence to Him. Suddenly I recalled some of God's words that we had read during a congregation a few days previously: **"I am full of hope for My brothers and sisters, and I believe that you are not disheartened or discouraged, and no matter what God does, you are like a pot of fire—you are never tepid and you can persist until the end, until God's work is fully revealed ..."** ("The Path ... (8)" in The Word Appears in the Flesh).

“[M]ay we all swear this oath in front of God: ‘To work unitedly! Devotion until the end! Never part, to always be together!’ May My brothers and sisters set this determination in front of God so that our hearts do not stray and our wills are unwavering!” (“The Path ... (5)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). God’s words shook me to the core. I thought about how God had descended from heaven to earth and undergone so many trials and tribulations in His work to bring salvation to humanity. It is His hope that people will remain unswervingly loyal to Him to the end, no matter how hard their circumstance. As one chosen by God, and one who had enjoyed the provision of His utterances, it behooved me to offer myself entirely up to Him. “No matter how much I might suffer or be tormented,” I thought, “my heart must remain full of faith; my feelings toward God must not change, and my will must not waver. I have to give resounding testimony for God, and absolutely must not surrender or yield to Satan. Moreover, I must not betray God just so I can go on dragging out a meaningless, ignoble existence. God is the One I depend on and, more than that, He is my staunch mainstay. As long as I genuinely cooperate with God, He will certainly lead me to victory over Satan.” Thus, I silently resolved to God, “O God! Even if I must sacrifice my life, I will stand testimony for You. No matter what sort of suffering I endure, I will adhere to the true way. I absolutely refuse to give in to Satan!” Invigorated by God’s words, my faith blossomed a hundredfold, and I found the faith and resolve to sacrifice everything to stand testimony for God.

As soon as we got to the police station, the police rushed over to warm themselves by the stove. Every one of them glared at me, and with brows furrowed and blazing eyes, they questioned me in stern voices: “Start talking! What’s your name? How many people have you spread the gospel to? Who have you been in contact with? Who is the leader of your church?” Seeing that I was determined to remain silent, one of the evil policemen revealed his brutish nature by charging over and fiercely grabbing me by the neck. He then slammed my head into the wall, over and over, until I felt dizzy and my ears were ringing. Next, he raised his fist and pummeled my face and head ferociously while screaming, “You’re the fucking leader, aren’t you? Speak up! If you don’t, I’m gonna hang you from the top of the building and let you freeze to death!” Those evil policemen beat me viciously for a full half hour or more, until I was seeing stars and my nose was streaming with blood. Seeing that they could not get the answers they wanted, they took me over to the PSB. On the way, I thought about the insane beating I had just gotten from the evil policemen, and an

involuntary wave of fear passed through me. I thought to myself, “Since they were that heavy-handed with me right after I got to the local police station, then what sort of cruel lengths will the police at the PSB go to in order to torture me? Things are looking bad for me. I might not get out alive this time....” As I mulled this over, my heart was filled with an indescribable sense of despair and sadness. Amidst my anguish and helplessness, I suddenly remembered how God had allowed me to miraculously survive the previous year when the evil police had tortured me to within an inch of my life. I immediately brightened, and thought, “Whether I live or die is in God’s hands, is it not? Without God’s permission, Satan cannot succeed in killing me no matter what it tries. I have seen God’s wonderful deeds in the past, so how could I have forgotten? How could I be so faithless?” At that moment, I saw that my stature was still too immature—when faced with the trial of imminent death, I still was unable to stand at God’s side. I couldn’t help but recall one of God’s utterances: “[T]o live in your mind is to be taken in by Satan and this is a dead end. It’s very simple now: Look upon Me with your heart and your spirit will immediately become strong, you will have a path to practice and I will guide your every step. My word shall be revealed to you at all times and in all places. No matter where or when, or how adverse the environment is, I will show you clearly and My heart shall be revealed to you if you look to Me with your heart; this way you will run down the road ahead and never lose your way” (“Chapter 13” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God’s words were a beacon leading the way, bringing me more and more clarity of mind. I recognized that God wanted to use this arduous environment to purify me, so that in times of crisis I would abandon my notions and imaginations and my concerns about my flesh, and go forward while only relying on God and depending on God’s words. This was a crucial moment in which God was leading me to experience His work, and I knew that I absolutely must not flinch. I had to place my life and death entirely in God’s hands and rely on God while struggling against Satan to the very end!

When we got to the PSB, the policemen again separated us and interrogated us each individually. As they continuously tried to force me to tell them about matters pertaining to my belief in God, one of the evil police saw that I was insisting on keeping my mouth shut, which caused him to fly into a rage: “You actually think you can get away with playing dumb with us. I have no patience for that!” As he said this, he grabbed me by the collar with both

hands and hurled me to the floor like a sandbag. Then the other wicked policemen surged forward and began kicking and stomping all over me, until I was rolling around in pain. After that, they put their feet on my head and pressed down hard, grinding back and forth.... I still hadn't completely recovered from the savage torture I'd endured the year before, so after again being beaten so viciously, I suddenly felt dizzy and nauseated. In utter agony from head to toe, I curled up into a ball. Next, the evil police went on to tear off my shoes and socks, then forced me to stand barefoot on the floor. It was so freezing cold my teeth chattered involuntarily, and both my feet went completely numb. I felt that I could not hold up any longer, and that I would collapse to the floor at any moment. Faced with these malevolent policemen's cruel torments, I could not help but feel a burning anger and indignation. I despised these thoroughly evil minions of the devil, and loathed the vile, reactionary Chinese government. It opposes Heaven and is the enemy of God, and in order to force me to betray God and reject Him, it was ravaging me and torturing me, hellbent on putting me to death. Faced with Satan's viciousness and cruelty, I thought even more about God's love. I dwelled on the fact that in order to bring salvation to humankind, and for the sake of our future existence, He had put up with extreme humiliation while walking in person among us to do His work. He had given His life for us, and was now patiently and earnestly expressing His words to lead us along the path of pursuing the truth to attain salvation.... Tallying up all the painstaking price God had paid for humanity's salvation, I sensed that no one loved me more than God; God cherished my life more than anyone else. Satan could only injure me, or devour and kill me. Just then, I felt even more fondness and adoration for God blossom in my heart and could not help but pray silently to Him: "God, thank You for guiding me and saving me like this. No matter how Satan tortures me today, I will definitely work hard to cooperate with You. I swear, I will not give in or yield to the devil!" With the encouragement of God's love, even though my physical body was weak and powerless from torment, my heart was firm and strong, and I never once gave in to those wicked policemen. They kept torturing me until one o'clock the next morning when, seeing that they really weren't going to get any answers out of me, they had no choice but to take me over to the detention house.

After arriving at the detention house, the wicked policemen again incited the jailhouse bullies to think up any way they could to punish me. By then I had been tormented so much that my body was covered in cuts and bruises; I was completely limp, and no sooner had I

entered my jail cell than I toppled straight onto the freezing cold floor. Seeing me like this, without another word, the jailhouse bullies picked me up and pummeled my head with their fists. They beat me until my head was spinning, and I again fell heavily to the floor. After that, the convicts all came over to tease me, forcing me to press one hand against the floor and the other over my ear, and to then rotate in circles on the floor like a compass. After seeing me fall dizzy to the floor before completing more than a couple rotations, they kicked and beat me again. One of the convicts even delivered a fierce pounding to my abdomen, causing me to lose consciousness right then and there. After that, the convicts were given instructions by the correctional officers to torture and abuse me in a different manner every day, and to make me do all the daily dirty work chores such as washing all the dishes, cleaning the toilets, and so on. I was even forced to take cold showers on snowy days. Furthermore, every time I took a shower, they all forced me to lather up from head to toe with soap and then let the icy water flow slowly down along my entire body. After showering for nearly half an hour, I was so cold I was purple all over and shivering. Faced with this inhuman torture and cruelty, I prayed to God constantly, terrified that if I left God, I would wholly become a captive of Satan. Through prayer, God's words continuously resounded in me and guided me: **"Those who God refers to as overcomers are those who are still able to stand witness, maintain their confidence, and their devotion to God when under the influence of Satan and under siege by Satan, that is, when within the forces of darkness. If you are still able to maintain a heart of purity and your genuine love for God no matter what, you stand witness in front of God, and this is what God refers to as being an overcomer"** ("You Should Maintain Your Devotion to God" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words were a light, illuminating and calming my thoughts. I knew that being under siege by Satan was exactly the time when I needed to have loyalty and love for God. Even though this miserable environment had brought suffering and torment to my physical body, hidden behind it was God's vast love and blessings. It was God who had given me an opportunity to stand testimony for Him in front of Satan and to thoroughly humiliate and defeat Satan. Therefore, while undergoing this suffering, I warned myself again and again that I must be patient to the end, stand testimony for God by relying on His guidance in this dark lair of demons, and strive to be an overcomer. Guided by God's words, my heart grew steadfast and strong. Despite the weakness and torment racking my physical body, I had faith that I could endure all of it to launch a life-or-death battle against

Satan and stand testimony for God with my dying breath.

After being jailed for more than twenty days, I suddenly caught a severe cold. All four of my limbs became sore and limp, I was completely sapped of strength, and my mind grew muddled. Along with the worsening of my condition and the relentless beatings and torture from the other prisoners, I felt unable to hold up any longer. In my heart, I felt especially weak and depressed, and I thought to myself, "When will this daily torment and cruelty end? It looks like I'm going to be sentenced this time, so there's not much hope that I'll get out of here alive...." As soon as I thought that, my heart suddenly felt as though it had fallen into a bottomless abyss, and I sank into such deep despair and pain that I couldn't find my way out. In my most desperate hour, I recalled a hymn of God's words: **"I do not wish for you to be able to speak many touching words, or tell many exciting stories; rather, I ask that you are able to bear fine testimony to Me, and that you can fully and deeply enter into reality. ... Think no more of your own prospects, and act as you have resolved before Me to submit to God's orchestrations in all things. All of those who stand within My household should do as much as they possibly can; you should offer the best of yourself to the last section of My work on earth. Are you truly willing to put such things into practice?"** ("Can You Really Submit to God's Orchestrations?" in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). Line by line, God's words beat upon my heart, causing me to feel deeply ashamed. I thought about how many times I had wept bitter tears, and grew determined to devote myself to God in all things and submit to His orchestrations and arrangements. I also thought about how, when God's words had guided me while I was enduring suffering and torture, I had pledged on my life before God that I would stand testimony for Him, but that once God truly needed me to pay a real price to satisfy Him, I had instead clung abjectly to life and feared death, caring only about what would befall my physical body. I had completely ignored God's will, and only thought about escaping my predicament and getting to a place of safety as soon as possible. I saw how truly lowly and worthless I was; I did not have enough faith in God, and I was too full of deception. I was unable to give any true devotion to God, and I did not have a genuinely obedient bone in my body. In that moment I understood that in God's work in the last days, what He wanted were humanity's true love and loyalty; these are God's last requests, and the final tasks He has entrusted to humankind. "As a person who believes in God," I thought. "I should completely place myself in His hands. Because my life has been given to me by God, He has the final

say as to whether I live or die. Given that I have chosen God, I should offer myself unto Him and submit to His orchestrations; regardless of what suffering and humiliation I might be subjected to, I ought to dedicate myself to God with my actions. I should not have my own choices or demands; this is my duty, as well as the reasoning I should possess. The fact that I was still able to draw breath and was alive was all due to God's protection and care; this was His provision of life—otherwise, would I not have been ravaged to death by the devil long ago? When I'd first undergone such profound suffering and hardship, God had led me to overcome it. What reason did I now have to lose faith in God? How could I be negative and weak, shrinking back and desiring to flee?" As this thought occurred to me, I silently confessed my guilt to God: "Almighty God! I am so selfish and greedy; I have only wanted to enjoy Your love and blessings, yet have been unwilling to sincerely dedicate myself to You. When I think of having to endure the suffering of long-term prison, I just want to break free and avoid it. I really have hurt Your feelings dreadfully. O God! I do not wish to continue to sink deeper; I just want to submit to Your orchestrations and arrangements and accept Your guidance. Even if I die in prison, I still want to stand testimony for You. Though I might be tortured to death, I will remain loyal to You to the end!" After praying, I felt doubly moved. Even though I was still in pain as before, in my heart I felt faith and determination to not give up as long as I had not yet fulfilled my pledge to satisfy God. As soon as I became resolved and confident that I would stand testimony for God unto death, something miraculous happened. Early one morning, I got out of bed, and discovered I had no feeling in either of my feet. I was completely unable to stand, let alone walk. At first the evil police did not believe me; assuming I was faking it, they tried forcing me to stand up. However, no matter how hard I tried, I could not stand. They returned the next day to examine me again. Noticing that both my feet were icy cold and completely devoid of any blood circulation, they became convinced that I really was paralyzed. After that, they informed my family that they could take me home. On the day I went home, sensation was miraculously restored to my feet, and I had no trouble walking at all! I know deep down that this was all thanks to Almighty God showing compassion for my weakness. He Himself had opened up a way out for me, allowing me to walk free from Satan's lair without a hitch after I'd been illegally detained for a month by the Chinese government.

After having twice been detained and subjected to the Chinese government's inhumane, cruel tortures, even though I suffered somewhat physically and even came close to dying,

both of these extraordinary experiences actually formed a solid foundation upon my path to having faith in God. In the midst of my suffering and tribulations, Almighty God had given me the most practical watering of truth and provision of life, not only allowing me to thoroughly see through the Chinese government, its hatred of the truth, its enmity of God, and its demonic countenance, and become acquainted with its heinous crimes of frantically resisting God and persecuting His believers, but also bestowing upon me an appreciation for the power and authority of God's words. That I had been able to escape the Chinese Communist Party's evil clutches with my life, twice, had completely been a result of God's care and mercy. Moreover, it had been an embodiment and confirmation of God's extraordinary life force. I now profoundly realized that at any time and any place, Almighty God was always my sole support and salvation! In this life, no matter what dangers or hardship I might encounter, I was resolved to remain committed to following Almighty God, actively spreading His word and bearing testimony to God's name, and repay God's love with my genuine devotion!

7. Having Been Devastated by Demons, I Realize Even More How Precious God's Grace Is

By Xu Qiang, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region

My name is Xu Qiang. I used to work as an engineering contractor, heading up large teams of people in engineering projects every year, and I made a respectable income. In the eyes of my peers, I had a perfect family, a smooth career, and limitless prospects; they must have thought me the luckiest of people. However, at the same time that I was enjoying a materialistic lifestyle, I always had an inexplicable feeling of emptiness. This was especially true in my constant efforts to land projects: I had to curry favor with the leaders of the relevant departments, endeavoring to read their thoughts through their body language and always needing to apply just the right amount of obsequiousness and flattery to get what I wanted; otherwise, I would not make any money. On top of all that, I had to deal with scheming among my colleagues, the guard they always kept up against each other, and their calculations. All this had me wracking my brains even more.... For these reasons, I felt very demoralized and extremely exhausted; I seemed to have turned into a puppet, a money-

making machine, and I had completely lost all my dignity and integrity. This went on until 1999, when I accepted Almighty God's work of the last days. I was deeply moved by the release brought by church life and the simplicity and honesty of my brothers and sisters. I wanted very much to live this life of the church, fellowshiping with my brothers and sisters about God's word and talking with one another about our individual experiences and knowledge of God's words. I also cherished times like these very much. As I kept on reading God's utterances and participating in congregations, I came to understand many truths, and my soul found enormous release. I was especially glad that I had finally found the true way to live, and had found true happiness. My heart was filled with gratitude toward God: Had it not been for God's having rescued me from the world's sea of suffering, I would never have had anything to look forward to in life. Later, I began to actively spread the gospel, happily and tirelessly engaging with those people investigating the true way and enabling them, too, to hear God's voice and gain Almighty God's salvation.

However, in the atheistic country of China, citizens do not have any democracy or human rights, and those who believe in God and worship God are especially prone to encounter the Chinese Communist Party government's coercion and persecution. Due to my belief in God, I, too, was seized by the CCP government and subjected to its cruel, inhuman torture, and I spent nearly two years of hellish life in a CCP prison.... After experiencing this difficult and painful period of my life, I saw clearly the demonic essence of the CCP government's frantic resistance against God and hatred of the truth, and gained an even deeper appreciation for the fact that God's words are the truth. His words could be my life, and would point the way ahead for me. Were it not for the constant guidance of God's words, giving me strength and faith, I could not possibly still be alive today. I will never forget the grace of God's salvation for the rest of my life!

It was the morning of December 18th, 2005, and I was in the middle of a gathering with my brothers and sisters. Suddenly, a burst of violent smashing sounds resonated from the door. Before we had time to think, more than ten police officers burst in, each of them glowering with murderous looks in their eyes. The police detail they had mobilized looked like a scene from some movie in which an especially formidable fugitive is being captured. Without giving any explanation whatsoever, they took off our shoes to prevent us from running away, and then pulled out our belts and tied our hands behind our backs. They robbed us of all our personal items, including our cell phones, watches, cash, and so on.

The cops then barked at us to kneel in a line against the wall, and if any of us were slow to move, they shoved and kicked us, forcing us down onto the floor. After that, they did a thorough search, overturning furniture and rummaging through the entire house; after a while, it was a complete mess. After watching all this, I asked angrily, "We haven't broken any laws, so why are you arresting us?" To my utter amazement, a policeman rushed over, punched me to the floor in one hit, and screamed at me, "We're arresting you people who believe in God! We won't be able to get a good sleep until we've rounded up every last one of you!" This eruption of fury stunned me into silence, and it also sobered me: God was what the CCP government hated the most, so how could it let us believers go? I had been so blind and naive! In that moment, I began to silently pray to God, imploring Him to protect us so that we could stand witness and keep from betraying Him. Not long after, the policeman guarding us interrogated me: "Who told you to preach your religion everywhere? Who is your leader?" I said, "Our spreading of the gospel is completely voluntary." He cursed, "Bullshit! Don't try to deny any wrongdoing, boy, or else we'll soon show you what's what!" Just then, I heard a female cop bellow from another room, "Bring me a needle! Just you try to hide from me...." I immediately felt my heart in my throat, for in that moment I realized that a young sister was missing; she had tried to hide to avoid being captured by the police, but had been discovered. The female cop seized her and used a needle to stab her in the quick of her fingernails and the soles of her feet, and even started savagely yanking out her hair one tuft at a time. Finally, they left the young sister there, who by then had passed out, and took us all into custody, along with all the belongings they had plundered, and sped off with us.

By around noon, the police had detained us at the police station, where they soon began to interrogate us separately. The one in charge of questioning me was a strong, burly officer, and no sooner had I entered the interrogation room than he shouted at me to kneel down. I said, "I only worship God; only the Lord of the heavens, earth, and all things deserves to be knelt to. I absolutely refuse to kneel before you!" As soon as he heard this, he pointed a finger at me and roared, "You should know that in here, even the king of hell has to toe the line! Just who do you fucking think you are? If we don't make you suffer a bit, you won't know who's in charge! Now, get down on your damn knees!" As he screamed this, he kicked me to the floor. After that he began to interrogate me: "Tell me truthfully: You're the church leader, aren't you? Where do you keep your church books?" Flustered, I did not know how

to respond, so I just supplicated over and over to God to give me the wisdom with which to contend with this evil policeman. After praying, I felt calmer and revitalized and thought to myself, "I would rather die than sell out my brothers and sisters. I cannot betray God!" So, I said to the cop, "I don't know about any of these things you are asking me. Just what do you want me to say?" No sooner had I said this than the evil policeman punched me hard in the head, and then immediately went on to give me a sound beating with his fists and feet. I was beaten so badly I saw stars and my head began to spin, hurting so badly it felt as though I had a cracked skull. I tumbled headlong to the floor. After that, he held the gospel notepad they had found on me in his hand and threatened, "Look, see? We have evidence, so there's no point in fucking refusing to talk. Say it! You're the leader, aren't you? If you weren't, you wouldn't have these notes!" Seeing that I would not talk, he tried a different tack, urging, "Don't be pig-headed; come on, cooperate with us. Tell us what you know, and you'll be allowed to leave tomorrow." Just then, God enlightened me so that I remembered one passage of His utterances: **"When God and Satan do battle in the spiritual realm, how should you satisfy God, and how should you stand firm in your testimony to Him? You should know that everything that happens to you is a great trial and the time when God needs you to bear testimony. Though they may seem unimportant from the outside, when these things happen they show whether or not you love God. If you do, you will be able to stand firm in your testimony to Him ..."** ("Only Loving God Is Truly Believing in God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). God's words allowed me to clearly see that this was a battle of the spiritual world. I could not fall for Satan's trickery, and absolutely had to stand testimony for God. Regardless of how much so-called evidence they had in hand, I could not disclose any information about the church. This was testimony of my love for God and devotion that I should maintain before God. After that, I prayed, and I gradually calmed down. No matter how much he tortured me, I never said a word. In the end, the evil cop was so exasperated that he slammed the door and left.

A while later, a policeman in his thirties entered and slowly helped me up from the floor and into a chair. He even gave me a cup of water, and then said, "Here, brother; drink some water. You have suffered." I was shocked: What was happening? How could someone in a place like this be calling me "brother"? Before I had time to consider this further, he continued: "Brother, these days we need to live a bit more realistically, and be completely flexible. With a person like yourself, they have no choice but to beat you to death. To be honest, I used to

believe in God, too, so I know having faith is a good thing—but suffering so much because of it, not to mention putting your life on the line, just isn't worth it! If you get sentenced, that will put a black mark on your entire family. Your parents are both still living, I assume? If you spend a few years in prison, then they won't be around anymore by the time you get out. What will your family members think of you? ...” My emotional attachment to my mother and father was deeper than to anyone else, so this person's every word stung me to the core. As images of my elderly parents flitted before my mind's eye, I abruptly felt a wave of darkness and weakness pass through me, and I thought, “It's true; if I am sentenced to prison, then what will mom and dad do? Who will take care of them? ...” The thought caused tears to surge from my eyes, and I could not stop them. The cop immediately seized upon the opportunity, trying to further persuade and entice me by saying, “So, you should do your best to cooperate with them; if you do, then tomorrow you'll be set free.” Hearing these words suddenly shook me awake, and these very distinct words flashed into my mind: You absolutely must not be a Judas who betrays God! Such a close call! This sly policeman was sent by Satan itself, to seduce me into betraying God. In that moment, God's words also gave me guidance: “[O]nly with loyalty can you mount a countercharge against the devil's trickery” (“Chapter 10” of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). I realized that everything the cops had said was the devil's trickery; they wanted to take advantage of the emotional attachments of my flesh to goad me into betraying God. I absolutely could not fall for Satan's deception. Thereupon, I silently prayed to God, believing that my parent's affairs were up to Him to decide and completely in His hands. Entrusting them to God's mighty hand, I resolved to stand testimony for God. Resolutely, I said to the man, “Thank you for your good intentions; I appreciate your kindness. However, I know nothing about church affairs.” Seeing that his ploy had not succeeded, this evil cop suddenly showed his true colors by flying into a rage. Pointing a finger at me, he bellowed venomously, “Just wait here to die then!” and then he left. At around 2 p.m., three or four policemen came. They hauled me off of the chair and dragged me by the collar to the doorway, where they used handcuffs to hang me from the crossbeam. Finally, they made the snide comment of “Here, take your time and ‘enjoy,’” and then left. I was unable to touch the floor with both feet at a time; if I touched it with one foot, I was forced to raise up the other one. My bodily movements caused the handcuffs to bite into my flesh, and it was excruciatingly painful. Nearly an hour later, the evil cops returned, having had their fill of food

and drink. With a sinister grin, they asked me how I was feeling. By then, due to the pain, my cotton trousers and shirt were drenched with sweat, and when I was taken down, my hands were both swollen like loaves of bread and completely numb. This gang of evil cops truly were vicious and merciless. I hated them through and through and had also gotten a clear view of the CCP government's wickedness and cruelty. They were a pack of demons who resisted and hated God, and my hatred toward this evil party was increasing rapidly.

That evening, sometime after seven o'clock, the evil cops jammed me and four of my sisters into a police car to take us to another location. Each of my sisters looked pale; apparently, they, too, had suffered similar cruelty. We gave each other encouragement with meaningful looks of resolve. When we arrived at the detention house, the evil cops let my four sisters get out of the vehicle, but I was told to remain in the car and we soon began driving again. When I asked them where they were taking me, one of the policemen said with a conspiratorial smile, "Even though you haven't divulged any information, we still know you are not a minor player in the church. We didn't want to be bad hosts, so we want to take you out for a bit of a 'midnight snack.' ..." Knowing that this gang of villainous policemen did not harbor any good intentions, I did not dare to let my guard down even for a moment. I kept silently imploring God to give me strength and safeguard me against betraying Him. Soon after, I was taken to the National Security Brigade. I was received by two husky brutes who led me into an interrogation room. The sight of all the instruments of torture littering the floor like silent, ravenous tigers sent a chill up my spine. Just then, one of the evil policemen barked at me, "I hear you're quite stubborn. Well, we absolutely love chewing up stubborn old bones like you!" No sooner had he said this than two wicked cops pounced forward, yelling as they ran, and grabbed me by the ears, pulling with all their might. In the dim lighting, I saw a pair of malevolent, twisted faces, and my heart began to thump uncontrollably. In that moment, I heard another evil cop howl with laughter and say, "It's your bad luck to have crossed my path today. Here, let's start out by giving you a shower." As he said this, they held me in place and tore every shred of my clothing off of me. I stood there completely naked on the ice-cold floor, my whole body shivering and my teeth chattering. The evil cop pulled over a length of hose, aimed it straight at me, and opened the valve. Within a split second I was being pummeled by a bone-chilling blast of freezing water. It was unbearably painful, as though a knife was peeling my skin away; it just felt like the blood running through my entire body was congealing. A moment later, I could feel nothing. While dousing me with

water, the evil cops continued to shout threats at me: "If you know what's good for you, then hurry up and talk; if you don't, then you won't live to see tomorrow's sunrise!" Forcing myself to endure this agony, I hung my head and said nothing. One of the evil cops gnashed his teeth and said that he was going to warm me up, which meant he was going to electrocute me. By then I had been so tormented that I did not even have an ounce of strength left in me. Feeling as though death were closing in step by step, I desperately appealed to God: "God! I am too insignificant to be able to do anything for You, but today I want to use my death to humiliate Satan. All I ask is that You protect my heart so that it never strays from You, and so that I do not betray You." The policemen forced open my mouth and stuffed a wet rag into it, the other end of which was connected to an electric cord. They attached one end of the wire to my ear, and then the one holding the switch turned it on. Suddenly I felt all the blood in my body surging upward, and it felt like my head was about to explode. It was so excruciating I felt like my eyeballs were going to burst, and every single nerve in my body was twitching and it felt as if they were about to snap. Seeing me in so much pain, this pack of evil cops just bellowed with laughter. A moment later, I blacked out. Soon thereafter, I was splashed awake with a bucket of cold water. When I came to my senses, the rag was still in my mouth. A cop chortled nastily and asked, "How does it taste? If you want to say something, just nod your head." Just then, I recalled a passage of God's word: **"When people are ready to sacrifice their lives, everything becomes trifling, and no one can get the better of them. What could be more important than life? Thus, Satan becomes incapable of doing any more in people, there's nothing it can do with man"** ("Chapter 36" of Interpretations of the Mysteries of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words strengthened my resolve to choose to stand testimony rather than bow down to Satan. I thought, "Do whatever you want to me. After all, I only have this one life; at worst, I'll die, but don't think for a second that you'll get a single word out of me!" I did not answer the cop; I just closed my eyes, refusing to look at him. This action infuriated the evil policeman, and he shocked me with another wave of electricity, only this time the electric current was even stronger than before. In silence, I cried out, "God! Save me! I cannot bear it anymore!" Right then, a vivid image of the Lord Jesus' crucifixion appeared before my eyes: the ferocious soldiers driving a half-foot long nail into the Lord's palm, piercing the skin, piercing bone.... The Lord Jesus' suffering caused my heart to ache to no end, and I could not help but burst into tears. In my heart, I prayed to God: "God! You

are holy; You are devoid of sin. To bring salvation to humanity, though, You handed Yourself over to those ruffians and let them nail You to the cross and drain Your every last drop of blood to redeem us humans. God, I am an extremely corrupt person, an object that should be destroyed. I have accepted Your salvation and am fortunate enough to have experienced Your work, so I should offer myself to You. God, I know without a doubt that You are by my side, right now, accompanying me through my suffering. You have always loved me and invested energy in me. I am willing to offer up my all to satisfy You, so that You no longer have to suffer on my behalf or worry about me anymore.” Just then, the two evil cops stopped electrocuting me. Seeing that God had sympathized with me in my weakness, my heart brimmed with gratitude toward Him! After that, despite the fact that the cops did not stop harming me, I no longer felt any pain. Knowing that God was protecting me and had shouldered my suffering for me, I felt deeply moved by God’s love, and continuously shed tears. Later, one of the policemen came in, took one look at me, and said to those two evil cops, “That’s enough; you’ve beaten him senseless, and he isn’t talking. I’m sure he doesn’t know anything.” Only then did they stop torturing me. I knew that this was all part of God’s wonderful orchestration and arrangements; God had not allowed this pack of demons to end my life, and had mobilized someone to come in and stop them. I sincerely appreciated God’s love.

Beaten, the evil cops did not interrogate me any further, and at around midnight, they took me to the detention house. A correctional officer led me to a cell holding more than thirty offenders, and as he opened the door to put me in it, I heard him chuckle insidiously and instruct the head prisoner, “In a little while, keep it down; don’t make too much noise.” The head prisoner eyed me up and down, smirking, and said to the correctional officer, “No worries!” Before I had time to react, the head prisoner’s expression went dark and he ordered the others in a low, menacing tone, saying, “Same as always, brothers. Get him!” All the prisoners sat up and glared at me like a tiger watching its prey, sending a chill down my spine. The second the head prisoner waved his hand, they all converged on me like a pack of vicious wolves. Holding me down, they tore off all my clothes and started flogging me with all their might using the flat soles of their shoes. Eventually, they had beaten me so badly that I passed out. It wasn’t until 6 a.m. the following day that I came to. I noticed that I had been stuffed into a corner, my whole body was so badly swollen, that I couldn’t put on any clothing. And that was how I lay for six days straight on a plank bed with my whole body

badly bruised and battered. On top of that, the inside of my mouth had been roasted by the evil cops' electrocution to the point that all the tissue had necrotized, and I was in so much agony I could not even get down a bite of food. Fearing that my dying would cause trouble for them, the correctional officers sent the other prisoners over in turns to feed me vegetable soup.

Once my wounds had healed somewhat, the prisoners were provoked by the evil cops into resuming their bullying and abuse. Early each morning, they made me recite jail regulations; if I did a poor job, they would beat me. They also made me do the cleaning, and do laundry for prisoners with money. If I made the slightest mistake, I got punched and kicked. They knew that I believed in God, so they would often deliberately say a bunch of things in front of me that were blasphemous to God just to rile me up, and they also humiliated me with words, such as, "Don't people who believe in God feel no pain when they take a beating? And can't you work without feeling tired? You don't care how much you suffer, do you?" In order to torment me, they forced me to dredge the squat toilet by hand, which was so disgusting that it made me want to vomit; they even made me clean the floor tiles with my toothbrush, and intentionally threw my steamed bread rolls into the toilet. When the correctional officer came to inspect the cell for cleanliness, he took off his shoes and walked around in a circle with white socks on. If he discovered any dirt on them, he would give me a thrashing. ... Faced with this endless torture from the evil cops and those prisoners, I felt completely enfeebled and very depressed. I started feeling that it would be better to die than to keep living like this. While in the depths of my weakness and suffering, God's words granted me the faith and motivation to keep on living. I recalled that He had said, **"Perhaps you all remember these words: 'For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' You have all heard these words before, yet none of you understood their true meaning. Today, you are profoundly aware of their true significance. These words shall be fulfilled by God during the last days, and they shall be fulfilled in those who have been brutally persecuted by the great red dragon in the land where it lies coiled. The great red dragon persecutes God and is the enemy of God, and so, in this land, those who believe in God are thus subjected to humiliation and oppression, and God's words are fulfilled in you, this group of people, as a result"** ("Is the Work of God As Simple As Man Imagines?" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words taught me that being able

to suffer humiliation and torture due to my belief was a sign that God had made an exception and exalted me—it was a great honor for me! However, I was cowardly and had no moral backbone; because I had suffered some physical pain and been slightly humiliated, I had lost my faith in God, and was not willing to stand testimony to repay God’s love through suffering. God had paid such a painstaking price in order to save me, so how could I pay Him back in this way? How could I go against my conscience like this and respond with such negativity? It would not do! I absolutely would not be a spineless weakling; I absolutely could not bring shame to God’s name! Thereupon, I hastily prayed to God: “God, I thank You for enlightening me and making me understand the meaning of suffering. For the sake of Your honor, I am willing to endure all manner of suffering; I wish to satisfy You even if it means spending the rest of my life in prison. All I ask is that You remain with me, enlighten and guide me, and enable me to stand firm and resounding testimony for You throughout Satan’s torment.” After praying, I felt completely invigorated, and had the courage to face that arduous environment.

A couple of weeks later, the evil cops returned to interrogate me, saying that it was not too late to cooperate with them, and threatening that if I did not, things would get a lot more difficult for me in the days to come. After having undergone a few sessions of savage torture, I had long since seen through them to their demonic essence and I hated them to the bone. Therefore, no matter how they enticed, threatened, and intimidated me, my faith did not waver an inch. Later on, they started interrogating me once every two weeks until finally, seeing that they really were not going to get any information out of me, they sentenced me to two years’ reeducation-through-labor for the crimes of “causing a public disturbance and engaging in illegal gatherings.”

On February 24th, 2006, I was sent to a labor camp. Because of my belief in God, I had been labeled a “political offender,” and the prison guards deliberately assigned me to the hardest, most exhausting, and most dangerous brick kiln to do my reform labor. My job was to remove baked bricks from the kilns, inside of which the temperature was at least three hundred degrees Celsius (572 degrees Fahrenheit). In the mornings, the temperature was the lowest, but it still was over a hundred degrees (212 degrees Fahrenheit). Despite our having to work with such high temperatures, the guards did not equip us with any heat-resistant work apparel. The safety helmets we wore would melt after just two minutes of being in the kiln area, and to keep from being scalded, we had to hold our breath while

running in and out as fast as we could. Because we had no heat-resistant boots, when we went into the kiln area, we had to alternate between which foot we stood on; if we were not careful, our feet would blister from the burns. New prisoners were not used to this; after going in, they would be unable to remain for more than five seconds before running back out. Our team captain therefore organized the group leaders to each be armed with a PVC pipe filled with sand; whoever ran out would be beaten with the pipe. Although these sorts of pipes were not hard enough to break bones, they caused severe surface welts. The convicts nicknamed them "hide-smackers." When we entered the kiln area, we did not dare to breathe; taking a breath was like breathing fire into our nostrils. After removing a few bricks, we had to quickly haul the wheelbarrows back out, and if one of the tires blew, not only did we get punished, but time would be added to our sentences, chalked up to the crimes of "destruction of production equipment and resistance to reformation." As convicts, our daily task was to fill 115 wheelbarrows full of large bricks and 95 full of little ones. In such heat, this task was impossible to complete, but the guards never asked why you had not been able to complete it; they just asked you why you had antagonistic feelings toward laboring. Because working in the heat made me sweat so much, I ended up suffering a severe potassium deficiency. I fell to the ground unconscious a few times, so they would toss me atop the kiln wall to cool off for a few minutes. After I awoke, they made me drink a cup of salty water, and forced me back to work. This was my first taste of what it meant to hit my limits, what unbearable hardship was, and what it felt like to want to die instead of keeping living. Here, no one cared whether you lived or died; the team captain only cared whether your group had completed its work or not. If it had, he would say nothing, and if it had not, he would likewise say nothing, but would simply point at the kiln door and then leave. After that, the group leader would call any people who had not finished their work over to stand in the kiln area and take a beating; once they fell to the ground, they were burned so badly by the hot ground that blisters rose up all over their skin. In addition, they had to do another twenty wheelbarrows full of bricks each day, and could not stop until they cried out for mercy. Faced with this sort of environment, I felt very weak; just a few days of torture felt like a trip through hell. In my mind, two years felt like a very long time indeed. I did not know how I would make it through all that time, and I was worried that I would either get beaten to death by the evil cops or roasted to death in the extreme heat. The more I thought about my prospects, the more trapped I felt; I felt I really could not bear it in this demonic prison any

longer—and so I thought about dying. Every day from then on, I looked for chances to “be liberated.”

One day at last, my opportunity arrived. Just as a truck full of bricks was driving off, I plunged head-long underneath it. However, the vehicle’s wheels suddenly stopped mere inches from me; as it turned out, the truck had broken down. A few convicts pulled me out, and the head correctional officer said I was refusing to accept discipline and unwilling to change old habits. He then began to punish me. They shoved a sparking electric baton down into the front of my shirt, and it hurt so badly that I fell to the ground in wild convulsions. After that, they cuffed my hands backward to a telephone pole and beat me ruthlessly with electric batons. After dinner, I was subjected to a public castigation to reeducate and “correct” my ideology. ... This endless suffering and torment made me feel an extreme degree of terror, despair, and helplessness. Just when I was grappling with the question of how I would go on living, a passage of God’s words emerged in my mind: **“No matter how God refines you, you remain full of confidence and never lose confidence in God. You do what man should do. This is what God requires of man, and man’s heart should be able to fully return to Him and turn toward Him at every single moment. This is an overcomer. Those who God refers to as overcomers are those who are still able to stand witness, maintain their confidence, and their devotion to God when under the influence of Satan and under siege by Satan, that is, when within the forces of darkness. If you are still able to maintain a heart of purity and your genuine love for God no matter what, you stand witness in front of God, and this is what God refers to as being an overcomer”** (“You Should Maintain Your Devotion to God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). God’s words brought a ray of light and warmth to my heart, just as I was closest to giving up all hope. It was true; ultimately, God wanted to make a group of overcomers who would be able to maintain their faith and devotion to Him in any harsh environment, live according to His words and, finally, bear strong and resounding testimony for God before Satan. The reason Satan had used every possible way to torment and injure me was that it wished to take advantage of my weakness, attacking me while I was down and forcing me to betray God—but I could not become a symbol of God’s humiliation! God’s love for me was so real and practical; when I was at my weakest and longed for death, God was still watching over me in secret, protecting me and keeping me alive. No matter how enfeebled I was, He had never had the slightest intention of abandoning me; His love for me had remained constant

from the beginning, and He was still enlightening me, guiding me, and helping me to find my way out of the pain. I absolutely could not let God down or hurt His feelings. I was grateful for God's guidance; it had again allowed me to see through Satan's trickery and walk back from the brink of death. I could not help but sing a hymn: "I'll give my love and loyalty to God and complete my mission to glorify God. I'm determined to stand firm in testimony to God, and never give in to Satan. Oh, my head may break and blood may flow, but the mettle of God's people can't be lost. God's exhortations rest on the heart, I determine to humiliate Satan the devil. Pain and hardships are predestined by God, I will endure humiliation to be faithful to Him. I will never again cause God to shed tears or worry" ("I Wish to See the Day of God's Glory" in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs).

Once I had submitted and grown willing to endure all suffering in order to satisfy God, God opened up a way out for me: Because the team captain was illiterate, he had me help him with filling out his reports, and from then on, I did not have to do so much brick-hauling work. Sometime later, an elderly sister from the church came to visit me. She held my hand in hers and said tearfully, "Child, you have suffered. Your brothers and sisters are very worried about you, and we all pray for you daily. You must stay strong, and not bow down before Satan. You must stand firm and bear witness for God. We are all waiting for you to come home." In this cold, ruthless human hell, apart from God's consoling words, I had not heard a word of warmth from a single soul. Hearing these kind words from my brothers and sisters, words that I often heard long ago, gave me enormous comfort and encouragement. For a long time afterward, I felt encouraged by God's love; I felt quite a bit more relaxed, and I had a spring to my step while I was working. In all my time in prison, those days passed the most quickly. This was especially true of my last four months. I always lined up first in the monthly-announced list of names of convicts whose sentences had been shortened. In months past, this list of names had only included head prisoners, and team leaders; convicts without any money or power had been left out. For a Christian like me, whom the CCP government had labeled a "political offender," it was even less likely that I might enjoy such treatment. For this reason, the other prisoners always surrounded me and asked, "How did you do it?" Every time this happened, I thanked God deep in my heart, because I knew that this was a result of His great mercy for me; it was God's love that had brought me strength.

On September 7th, 2009, I was released on early parole. Soon after, I returned to the church and resumed church life, and again I joined the ranks of those spreading the gospel.

After undergoing this time of hardship, I was more determined and mature than before, and I cherished even more the chance to fulfill my duty. Because I had seen the true face of the CCP government's resistance to God and cruelty toward people, I had an even deeper sense of how precious God's salvation is. Had God not come in person, in flesh incarnate, to do the work of bringing salvation to humankind, all those living under Satan's domain would be devastated and swallowed up by it. From that point forward, whenever I was fulfilling my duty, my attitude was vastly different from what it had been in the past; I felt that the work of spreading the gospel and saving people's souls was of utmost importance, and I wanted to devote all of my loyalty and spend all my energy for the rest of my life to bring more people before God. I wanted to enable them, too, to awake from this atheist government's shroud of confusion and deception, to accept God's supply of life, and to obtain God's salvation. Looking back on those very long two years of imprisonment, I know that Satan attempted vainly to use its tyrannical abuse to compel me to betray God. However, God used that nasty environment to increase my faith, loyalty, and submission to Him, purifying my love for Him, and allowing me to realize God's wisdom and almightiness and gain a profound appreciation of the fact that God is humanity's salvation, and that He is love! From my heart issued forth boundless worship and praise for God!

8. Sufferings and Trials—the Blessings of Being Favored

By Wang Gang, Shandong Province

I lived in the countryside. Because my family was poor, I earned money by doing temporary jobs wherever I could find them; I thought that I could make a better life for myself through my physical labor. However, in modern Chinese society, I saw that there were no guarantees for the legal rights of migrant workers like me; my salary was frequently withheld for no reason at all. Time and time again I was cheated and taken advantage of by others. After a year's worth of hard work, I didn't receive what I was supposed to receive. I felt that this world is truly dark! Humans treat each other just like animals, where the strong prey on the weak; they contest with each other, fight hand-to-hand, and people simply can't survive. In the extreme pain and depression of my spirit, and when I had lost faith in life, a friend of mine shared the gospel of the last days of Almighty God with me. Afterward, I regularly

gathered, prayed, communicated the truth and sang hymns to praise God together with my brothers and sisters. I felt very happy and liberated. In The Church of Almighty God, I saw that the brothers and sisters didn't try to outwit each other or make social distinctions; they were all purely open and got along with each other. Whenever any brother or sister encountered a difficulty, all the others showed them love and they all helped each other. Everyone was there to diligently pursue truth in order to cast off their corrupt dispositions, live out the likeness of a true person and obtain salvation. This life allowed me to experience happiness and understand the significance and value of life. I saw that I could only attain true happiness by coming before God and pursuing the truth. So that more people who lived in darkness like me could come to God to receive His salvation and see the light again, I joined the ranks of proclaiming the gospel and testifying to God. But unexpectedly, I was arrested by the CCP government for preaching the gospel and I suffered the extreme brutality of torture and imprisonment.

It was during the afternoon in the winter of 2008, when two sisters and I were testifying of God's work in the last days to a gospel target, we were reported by evil people. Six police officers used the excuse of needing to check our residence permits to charge into the home of the gospel target. As they came in the door, they roared: "Don't move!" Two of the police officers seemed completely out of their minds as they pounced on me; one of them grabbed the clothes on my chest and the other grabbed my arms and used all his strength to cinch them behind me, then he fiercely asked: "What are you doing? What is your name? Where are you from?" I asked in reply: "What are you doing? What are you arresting me for?" When they heard me say this, they got really angry and aggressively said: "It doesn't matter what the reason is, you are the one we are looking for and you're coming with us!" Afterward, the police officers took me and the two sisters, pushed us into the police vehicle and took us to the local police station.

After we got to the police station, the police officers took me and locked me up in a small room; they ordered me to crouch on the floor and arranged four of them to watch me. Because I had squatted for a long time, I became so tired that I couldn't take it. The instant I tried to stand up, they scuttled over and pressed my head down to prevent me from standing up. It was only until night time when they came to search me that they allowed me to stand up; when they found nothing in their search, they all left. Not long after, I heard blood-curdling screams of someone being tortured in the room next door, and at that

moment, I became very afraid: I don't know what torture they will use on me next! I began urgently praying to God in my heart: "Oh Almighty God, I am very afraid right now, I ask You to give me faith and power, make me firm and courageous. I'm willing to stand testimony for You. If I can't bear their cruel torture, I would rather commit suicide by biting off my tongue than ever betray You like Judas!" After praying, I thought of God's words, "**Do not fear, Almighty God of hosts will surely be with you; He has your back and He is your shield**" ("Chapter 26" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). Yeah, Almighty God is my support and He is with me; what else is there to be afraid of? I have to rely on God to fight Satan. God's words removed the timidity from my heart, and my heart was set free.

A little later, four fiendish police officers came over and one of them pointed to me and yelled: "You believers in Almighty God are disturbing the order of society, and are destroying national law. You are criminals of the state!" He yelled as he pushed me into the torture room on the second floor, commanding me to squat. The torture room was arranged with all kinds of torture instruments such as ropes, wooden sticks, batons, whips, guns, etc. They were arranged in a mess. With furrowed brows and blazing eyes, a policeman grasped my hair with one hand, and an electric baton, which made wild "zapping and popping" noises, in the other hand, and made threatening demands for information: "How many people are in your church? Where is your meeting location? Who is in charge? How many people are in the area preaching the gospel? Speak up! Otherwise, you will get what's coming!" I looked at the looming danger of the electric baton and looked again at the room filled with torture instruments; I couldn't help but feel nervous and afraid. I didn't know if I would be able to overcome this torture. Just at this critical moment, I thought of Almighty God's words saying: "**You too must drink of the bitter cup from which I have drunk (this is what He said after the resurrection). You too must walk the path I have walked ...**" ("How Peter Came to Know Jesus" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). I recognized that this was something God entrusted to us and it was the way of life God personally established for us. In walking the path of believing in God and pursuing truth, one must certainly pass through suffering and frustration. This is inevitable, and in the end, these hardships bring blessings from God. Only through suffering can people grasp the true meaning of the truth and receive the way of truth granted by God. I should walk in the footsteps of God and courageously face this; I should not be timid or afraid. In thinking of this, my heart immediately produced a kind of

power and I said in a loud voice: "I only believe in Almighty God, I don't know anything else!" When the policeman heard this, he became flustered and violently jabbed me on the left side of my chest with the electric baton. He shocked me for nearly a minute. I immediately felt like the blood in my body had been boiled; I was in unbearable pain from head to foot and I rolled around on the floor screaming incessantly. He still wouldn't give up on me and suddenly he started dragging me over and used a baton to lift me up by my chin, yelling: "Speak up! You won't confess anything?" He yelled and prodded the right side of my chest with the electric baton, I was so badly electrocuted that I was trembling from head to foot. Later it hurt so bad that I passed out lying on the floor motionless. I didn't know how much time had passed by, but I woke up and heard an evil police officer saying: "Are you pretending to be dead? You're pretending! Go ahead and pretend!" He again prodded me with a baton in the face and kicked me in the thigh. Afterward, he dragged me over and fiercely asked: "Will you tell me?" I still did not answer. He then ruthlessly beat my face with his fists and one of my teeth was knocked out, another tooth was knocked loose. My mouth immediately began to bleed. In facing the insane torture of these demons, I only feared that I would not be able to bear their torture and would thus betray God, and so I desperately prayed to God in my heart. At this time, I thought again about God's words, **"Those in power may seem vicious from the outside, but do not be afraid, for this is because you have little faith. As long as your faith grows, nothing will be too difficult"** ("Chapter 75" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words gave me faith and power again, and I recognized that even though the evil police officers in front of me were crazed and unbridled, they were arranged by the hand of God. At that moment, God was using them to test my faith. As long as I leaned on faith and relied on God and didn't give in to them, they would inevitably fail in humiliation. In thinking about this, I summoned all the strength of my body and replied in a loud voice: "Why have you brought me here? Why are you electrocuting me with an electric baton? What crime have I committed?" The evil policeman suddenly became like a deer in the headlights and weighed down with a guilty conscience. He began stuttering: "I ... I ... Shouldn't I have brought you here?" Then they left with their tails between their legs. In seeing the disgraceful situation of Satan's dilemma, I was moved to tears. In this predicament, I truly experienced the power and authority of Almighty God's words. As long as I put God's word into practice, then I would have God's care and protection and I would see God's deeds. At the same time, I felt

indebted to God because of how little faith I had. Afterward, a tall police officer came in and walked over to me and said: "You only have to tell us where your family lives and how many people are in your family, and we will immediately release you." When he saw that I wouldn't say anything, he became flustered and grabbed my hand and forced my fingerprint onto an oral confession they had written. I saw that the oral confession was not what I had told them, it was an outright counterfeit and fake evidence. I was filled with righteous indignation and I seized it and tore it to pieces. The policeman immediately burst into a rage and struck me with his fist on the left side of my face. Then he slapped me twice in the face so hard I became dizzy. Afterward, they took me back to the small room I was in before.

After returning to the small room, I was bruised and battered, the pain was unbearable. I couldn't help but feel sick at heart and weak: Why do believers have to suffer like this? I preached the gospel with good intentions, I showed people that the Savior had come and that they had to hurry up and pursue the truth and be saved, and yet I have unexpectedly suffered this persecution. In thinking about this, I felt more so that I had been wronged. In my pain, I thought of God's words: **"Since you are a human being, you should expend yourself for God and endure all suffering! You should gladly and assuredly accept the little suffering you are subjected to today and live a meaningful life, like Job, like Peter. ... You are people who pursue the right path, those who seek improvement. You are people who rise up in the nation of the great red dragon, those whom God calls righteous. Is that not the most meaningful life?"** ("Practice (2)" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). Almighty God's words tugged on the strings of my heart. Yes, God has watered and supplied me with His bountiful words of life, He has allowed me to enjoy His abundant grace for free and has allowed me to know the mysteries and the truth that no one since the generations of the past has understood. This is a special blessing God has given me. I should testify for God and endure all pain for God, because it is the most valuable and meaningful thing! Today, I am persecuted for preaching the gospel and not willing to suffer any physical pain for it; I feel wronged and unwilling. Haven't I grieved God in doing this? Am I not lacking conscience? How could I be worthy of God's grace, blessings and provision of life? Generations of saints have borne strong and resounding testimonies for God because they followed God's way; they lived life with meaning. Today I have all these words from God, so should I not more so offer beautiful testimonies for God? In pondering this, my body didn't feel as painful, I deeply knew it was Almighty God's word that gave me the power,

allowing me to overcome the weaknesses of the flesh.

The next day, the police officers had no other strategy left to try. They threatened me saying: "Will you not say anything? Then we will imprison you!" Seeing that I did not surrender, they sent me to a detention house. At the detention house, the police officers continued to use all sorts of torture methods on me and frequently incited the prisoners to beat up on me. In the chilling cold of winter, they instructed the prisoners to pour buckets of cold water on me and forced me to have a cold shower. I was shivering with cold from head to toe. Here, the prisoners were machines making money for the CCP and didn't have any legal rights. They had no other choice but to endure being squeezed and taken advantage of like slaves. The prison guards forced me to print paper money used as burnt offerings for the dead all day and made me work overtime in the night. If I stopped to take a rest, then someone would come over and shower me with beatings. At first, they set a rule that I had to print 2,000 pieces of paper per day, then they increased it to 2,800 pieces per day, and finally to 3,000 pieces. This amount was impossible for an experienced person to complete, let alone an inexperienced person like me. In fact, they intentionally made it so I couldn't complete it all so that they could have an excuse to torment and ravage me. As long as I couldn't meet the quota, the evil police officers would put fetters around my legs that weighed over 5 kg, and they bound my hands and feet together with shackles. All I could do was sit there, bow my head and twist my waist, not able to move. Even more despicable was that these inhuman and unfeeling police officers didn't ask or care about my basic necessities. Even though the toilet was in the jail cell, I was completely unable to walk over and use it; I could only plead with my cell mates to lift me up onto the toilet. If they were slightly better prisoners, then they would pull me up; if nobody helped me, then I would have no other choice but to defecate in my pants. The most painful time was mealtime, because my hands and feet were handcuffed together. I could only lower my head with all my strength and raise my hands and feet. This was the only way I could put a steamed bun into my mouth. I spent a great amount of energy on every bite. The shackles rubbed into my hands and feet causing immense pain. After a long time, my wrists and ankles had developed dark and shiny hard calluses. Often times I couldn't eat when I was locked up, and on rare occasions, prisoners would give me two small steamed buns. Most of the time they would eat my portion and all I got was an empty stomach. I received even less to drink; originally, everyone was only given two bowls of water per day, but I was locked up and couldn't move,

so I was rarely able to drink any water. The inhumane torment was unspeakable. In total, I suffered this four times and each time I was locked up for a minimum of three days and a maximum of eight days. Every time the hunger was hard to bear, I would think of the words God spoke in the past: **“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God”** (Matthew 4:4). I gradually began to realize that God wants to fulfill the fact that **“His word becomes man’s life”** on me through the afflictions of Satan. In understanding the will of God, my heart was liberated and I peacefully prayed to God and tried to understand God’s words. Unwittingly, I no longer felt so painful or hungry. This truly made me feel that God’s word is the truth, the way, and the life and is certainly the foundation I should rely on to survive. Therefore, my faith in God unconsciously increased. I remember one time the prison guards intentionally persecuted me and handcuffed me. For three days and three nights I didn’t drink a drop of water. The prisoner handcuffed next to me said: “There was a young person who was handcuffed and starved to death like this before. I have seen that you have not eaten anything for several days and you are still in such high spirits.” In hearing his words, I thought that even though I had not eaten or drunk anything for three days and three nights, I didn’t feel the discomfort of hunger. I deeply felt that this was the power of life in God’s words supporting me and causing me to truly see God appearing to me in His words. My heart was continually excited; in this environment of suffering I was able to truly experience the reality of the truth that **“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.”** This is truly the most precious wealth of life God has granted me, and is also my unique gift. Moreover, I could never have obtained this in an environment where I didn’t have to worry about food or clothes. Now, my suffering had so much meaning and value! At this time, I couldn’t help but think of God’s words: **“What you have inherited this day surpasses that of the apostles and prophets throughout the ages and is greater even than that of Moses and Peter. Blessings cannot be obtained in a day or two; they must be earned through great sacrifice. Which is to say, you must possess a love that has undergone refinement, you must possess great faith, and you must have the many truths that God requires you to attain; what is more, you must turn toward justice, without being cowed or evasive, and must have a constant and unabating love for God. You must have resolve, changes must occur in your life disposition, your corruption must be healed, you must accept all of God’s orchestrations without complaint, and you must**

be obedient even unto death. This is what you ought to attain, this is the final aim of God's work, and it is what God asks of this group of people" ("Is the Work of God As Simple As Man Imagines?" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). In trying to understand God's words, I recognized that after suffering and trials come blessings from God, and these are God's most practical supply and watering of life for me. Now, even though the words God has given me have surpassed the generations of saints, I still need to have faith and perseverance to be able to be unyielding during my trials and tribulations, to submit to the arrangements of God, and receive God's salvation. Then I will be able to enter the reality of God's word and be able to see the marvelous deeds of God. If it were not for the price of this hardship, I would not be worthy to receive the promises and blessings of God. The enlightenment of God's words led me to be more firm and powerful inside; I set a resolution: Diligently cooperate with God and satisfy God's requirements in the midst of this painful environment, testify for God so that I can have the greatest harvest.

One month later, the CCP police foisted the unwarranted charge on me of "being suspected of disturbing the order of society and destroying the implementation of the law," I was sentenced to one year of reform through labor. When I entered the labor camp, the police officers disseminated rumors and nonsense among the prisoners, saying that I was a believer in Almighty God, which is worse than murder and robbery, and they incited the prisoners to torture me. Therefore I was frequently beaten up and placed in difficult situations by the prisoners for no reason at all. This made me really see that China is a living hell firmly controlled by Satan, the demon. It is dark from every angle, and no light is permitted to exist; there is simply no place for the believers in God to live. During the day, the police officers forced me to work in a workshop. If I did not meet my quota, they would let the prisoners hit me when I got back to my prison cell and proclaim "kill the chicken to scare the monkey." While I was in the workshop counting bags, I would count out 100 bags and then tie them together. The prisoners would always intentionally come and take one or several bags from what I had counted, then they would say that I didn't count right and take that as an opportunity to punch and kick me. When the warden saw me get beaten up, he would come over and hypocritically ask me what was going on and the prisoners would present false evidence that I was not counting enough bags. Then I would have to endure a barrage of stern criticism from the warden. In addition, they would order me to memorize the "rules of conduct" every morning, and if I didn't memorize it, I would be beaten; they also forced me

to sing songs that praised the Communist Party. If they saw that I was not singing or that my lips were not moving, then at night I would unavoidably be beaten up. They also punished me by making me mop the floor, and if I didn't mop to their expectations, then I would be violently beaten. One time, some prisoners suddenly started hitting and kicking me. After beating me, they asked me: "Youngster, do you know why you are being beaten? It is because you didn't stand up and greet the warden when he came over." After each time I was beaten, I became angry but didn't dare to say anything; I could only cry and silently pray to God, telling Him about the resentment and grievance in my heart because of this lawless, irrational place. There was no rationality here, there was only violence. There were no people here, there were only insane demons and scorpions! I felt so much pain and pressure living in this plight every day; I wasn't willing to stay a minute longer. Each time I fell into a condition of weakness and pain, I would think about Almighty God's words: **"Have you ever accepted the blessings that you were given? Have you ever sought the promises that were made for you? You will surely, under the guidance of My light, break through the stranglehold of the forces of darkness. You will surely not, in the midst of darkness, lose the light guiding you. You will surely be the master of all creation. You will surely be an overcomer before Satan. You will surely, at the downfall of the kingdom of the great red dragon, stand up amid the myriad throngs to bear witness to My victory. You will surely stand firm and unwavering in the land of Sinim. Through the sufferings you endure, you will inherit My blessings, and will surely radiate My glory throughout the entire universe"** ("Chapter 19" of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words encouraged me. I understood that, regardless of whether what God was giving to me was grace and blessings or trial and refinement, it was all done to provide for me and save me; it was to put truth into me and make truth my life. God permitted the persecution and tribulation to come upon me, and even though I suffered much physically, it allowed me to be able to truly experience that God is with me; it caused me to truly enjoy God's words becoming the bread of my life and the lamp to my feet and the light to my path, leading me step by step through this dark hell hole. This is the love and protection of God that I enjoyed and obtained during the persecution and tribulation. At this time, I was able to see that I was so blind. In believing in God, I only knew how to enjoy God's grace and blessing and didn't pursue the truth and life in the slightest degree. Once my flesh suffered a little hardship, I would whine incessantly; I simply didn't understand the will of

God and didn't seek to understand the work of God. I would always cause God to feel grief and pain over me. I was truly without conscience! In feeling remorse and self-blame, I silently prayed to God: "Oh Almighty God, I can see that everything You do is to save and obtain me. I just hate that I am so rebellious, blind and have no humanity. I have always misunderstood You and have not been considerate of Your will. Oh God, today Your word has awakened my numb heart and spirit and has caused me to understand Your will. I am no longer willing to have my own desires and requirements; I will only submit to Your arrangements. Even if I have to suffer all hardships, I will still diligently cooperate with You and will bear resounding testimonies to You throughout Satan's persecutions. I will seek to break away from Satan's influence and live out the likeness of a real man to satisfy You." After praying, I understood God's good intentions, and I knew that each environment God allowed me to experience was God's greatest love and salvation for me. Therefore, I would no longer think to cower or misunderstand God. Even though the situation was still the same, my heart was truly full of joy and pleasure; I felt that it was an honor to be able to suffer hardships and persecution for my belief in God, and it was a unique gift for me, a corrupt person; it was God's special blessing and grace for me.

After having experienced a year of hardship in prison, I see that I am so small of stature and that I lack so much truth. Almighty God truly has made up for my deficiencies through this unique environment and allowed me to grow. In my adversity, He has enabled me to obtain the most precious wealth in life, to understand many truths I didn't understand in the past and to clearly see the CCP's heinous crimes of persecuting God and tormenting Christians. I have recognized the repulsive appearance of Satan, the demon, and the reactionary essence of its resistance to God. I have earnestly experienced the great salvation and mercy Almighty God has for me, the corrupt person, and felt that the power and life in Almighty God's words can bring me light and be my life and lead me to prevail over Satan and to tenaciously walk out of the valley of the shadow of death. Likewise, I have also recognized that Almighty God leads me on the correct path of life. It is the bright path to obtain truth and life! From now on, no matter what persecution, tribulations or dangerous temptations I encounter, I am willing to diligently pursue truth and obtain the way of eternal life that Almighty God has given me.

9. In Times of Trouble, God's Word Provided Me With Encouragement

By Chen Hui, Jiangsu Province

I grew up in an ordinary family in China. My father was in the military and because I had been molded and influenced by him from an early age, I came to believe that a soldier's calling and duty was to serve the motherland, follow orders and selflessly serve on behalf of the Communist Party and the people. I also became determined to become a soldier myself and follow in my father's footsteps. However, as time went on and certain events transpired, the course of my life and the orientation of my pursuits were slowly altered. In 1983, I heard the gospel of the Lord Jesus. It was the special guidance of the Holy Spirit that allowed someone like me, who had been poisoned by atheism and Chinese Communist ideology from an early age, to be deeply moved by the Lord Jesus' love. Having heard the gospel, I embarked on a life of belief in God—I began attending church, praying, and singing hymns in praise of the Lord. This new life brought me great serenity and peace. In 1999, I accepted the gospel of the last days of the returned Lord Jesus—Almighty God. Through ceaselessly reading God's word and meeting and fellowshiping with my brothers and sisters, I came to understand many truths and learned of God's urgent intention to save mankind. I felt that God had bestowed on each of us a great vocation and responsibility, and so I eagerly threw myself into the work of spreading the gospel. When I personally witnessed many people coming before God and receiving God's blessings and salvation, my faith grew even stronger.

However, the cruel persecution of the CCP government shattered my serene and happy life. In August of 2002, I traveled to the northwest with my husband to spread the gospel to a few of our co-workers in Christ. One night, while I was meeting with two brothers and sisters who had only recently accepted God's work in the last days, I suddenly heard a loud crash and saw the door being violently kicked down and six or seven fiendish-looking police wielding batons rush in. One of the policemen pointed at me and said with a vicious snarl, "Handcuff her!" Two policemen ordered us to stand by the wall and not to move, while they began to rummage through the boxes and chests in the house like a bunch of raiding bandits. They carefully searched anything that they suspected might be used to conceal things and, in no time, they had turned the whole place inside out and upside down. Finally,

one of the policemen found a gospel pamphlet and a book of God's word in my sister's bag and glared at me with a fierce stare, yelling, "Damnit, are you looking to get yourself killed? Coming up here and spreading your gospel. Where did this come from?" I didn't respond and so he barked at me saying, "Not gonna talk, eh? We'll open that mouth of yours. Get moving! You'll talk where we're going!" With that he dragged me out of the house and threw me into the police car. At that time, I realized that they hadn't just sent six or seven policemen—the road outside was lined on either side with many armed special police. When I saw how much manpower they had deployed to apprehend us, I became very frightened and, without thinking, began praying to God asking for His guidance and protection. Not long after, a passage of God's word came clearly to my mind, **"You should know that all things in the environment around you are there by My permission, I arrange it all. See clearly and satisfy My heart in the environment I have given to you. Do not fear, Almighty God of hosts will surely be with you; He has your back and He is your shield"** ("Chapter 26" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). "That's right!" I thought. "God is my pillar; no matter what kind of situation I may encounter, God, the Ruler and Creator of all things, is always by my side. As long as my heart remains quiet before God, God will lead me to overcome whatever situation I may face. For, God is faithful and it is He who rules over and orchestrates all things." Thinking these things, I regained my sense of calm.

It was around ten o'clock that night when I was brought to the Criminal Police Brigade. My photo was taken, and I was then led into an interrogation room. To my surprise, there were already four or five brutish-looking thugs in there staring me down as I came in. As soon as I entered the room, they surrounded me like a pack of hungry wolves seemingly rearing for the kill. I was incredibly nervous and prayed desperately to God. At first, these police thugs didn't lay a finger on me, but just ordered me to remain standing for three or four hours. I stood so long that my legs and feet started to ache with pain and go numb, and my whole body became extremely fatigued. At around one or two in the morning, the Criminal Police Brigade chief came in to interrogate me. I couldn't help but shake with nerves. He stared at me and began to grill me saying, "Speak! Where are you from? Who is your contact here? Who is your superior? Where have you been meeting? How many people do you have working under you?" When I didn't speak, he blew up in fury, grabbing me by the hair and raining down punches and kicks. Once I had been beaten to the ground, he

continued to kick me even harder. Right away my ears started to ring so that I couldn't hear a thing, and my head felt like it was going to explode with stabbing pain. I couldn't help but cry out in pain. After a few more moments of struggle, I lay on the floor, unable to move. The chief grabbed me by the hair again and dragged me to a standing position, at which point four or five of those brutish thugs swarmed around me and began kicking and punching me; I fell to the ground, my hands covering my head, rolling and lashing around in pain. These police thugs weren't holding anything back—every kick and every punch had deadly force. As they hit me, they yelled, "Are you gonna talk or not? I dare you not to talk! Talk or you're dead!" When the chief saw that I still wasn't talking, he kicked me viciously in the ankle. Every time he kicked me, it felt like someone had driven a nail into my bones, it was excruciatingly painful. After that, they continued to kick me all over until I felt like they had shattered every bone in my body, and the violent spasms that wracked my insides caused me so much pain that I could hardly draw breath. I lay on the ground gasping for air and crying tears of pure agony. In my heart, I called out to God saying, "Dear God! I can't go on. Please protect me as I fear I won't make it through this night. Dear God, grant me strength. ..." I don't know how long the torture went on. I just felt extremely dizzy and I was in such excruciating pain that I felt as if I had been rent limb for limb. The pain was so intense that I actually became numb all over. One of the police thugs said, "Looks like you still haven't had enough. Oh, you'll talk alright!" As he spoke, he picked up what looked like an electric hammer and slammed it against my forehead. I felt every strike deep down in my marrow, and each time he hit me my whole body would go numb, and then I would go limp and tremble ceaselessly. When the police thug saw how much I was suffering, he seemed pleased with his work and started to bellow with laughter. In the midst of my suffering, a passage of God's word welled up within me and gave me guidance and enlightenment: **"You must suffer hardship for the truth, you must give yourself to the truth, you must endure humiliation for the truth, and to gain more of the truth you must undergo more suffering. This is what you should do"** ("The Experiences of Peter: His Knowledge of Chastisement and Judgment" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). God's word gave me incredible strength, and I repeated the passage over and over in my mind. I thought: "I cannot succumb to Satan and disappoint God. In order to obtain the truth, I vow to endure any suffering, and even if it means my death, it will still be worth it and I will not have lived in vain!" This gang of demons interrogated me all through the night until the following

morning, but because I had God's word to encourage me, I was able to withstand their torture! In the end, they had exhausted every last strategy they could think of and said helplessly, "You seem like an ordinary housewife with no particular talents, so how did your God give you such tremendous strength?" I knew that it wasn't me these police thugs were relenting to, but instead were surrendering under the authority and power of God. I personally witnessed that God's word is the truth, that it can imbue people with immense strength, and that by practicing in accordance with God's word one can overcome their fear of death and vanquish Satan. As a result of all this, my faith in God grew even stronger.

On the morning of the second day at around seven, the chief came to interrogate me again. When he saw that I still wasn't willing to speak, he tried to lure me in with yet another cunning trick. A balding, plainclothes policeman came in, helped me get up, and escorted me over to a sofa. He smoothed out my clothes, patted me on the shoulder and, feigning concern, said with a mirthless smile, "Look at you, there's no point in suffering this way. Just talk to us and then you can go home. Why stay here and endure all this torment? Your children are waiting for you at home. Do you know how much it hurts me to see you suffer like this?" Listening to all his lies and looking at that detestable, shameless face, I ground my teeth in anger and thought to myself, "You're just a demon who spouts all kinds of lies to deceive me. Don't you think for one minute that I'm going to betray God. Don't you even dream that I'm going to say one word about the church!" When the policeman saw that I remained unmoved, he fixed me with a lascivious stare and began to paw at me with his hand. I automatically moved away from him, but that scoundrel held me with one hand so that I couldn't move and then he gripped my chest with his other hand. I cried out in pain and felt immense hatred for this man; I was so angry that my whole body shook and tears came streaming down my cheeks. I cast a rage-filled glare at him and, seeing the look in my eyes, he let go of me. I knew that God had taken pity on me in my weakened state and had made that monster shrink back. Through this personal experience, I truly witnessed the evil, reactionary and cruel nature of the CCP government. I saw how the "People's Police" working for the institution of the CCP were really just despicable, shameless thugs and low-lives without any conscience at all!

Because I hadn't had a drop of water for 24 hours, my body was dangerously exhausted and depleted and I really wasn't sure if I could go on any longer. I was suddenly struck by a feeling of profound misery and hopelessness. At that moment, I thought of a church hymn.

“With steadfast will I stand against the demonic legions’ roar. Through the hard slog my heart becomes more resolute. Corrupt mankind is so savage and cruel, how can there be room for God? Now that I’ve seen the appearance of the true light, how can I give up before I’ve gained God? I forsake Satan, with an unshakable heart I follow God. In the land ruled by the king of devils, arduous is the path of believing in God. Satan snaps at my heels, I have nowhere to lay my head. Believing in and worshiping God is Heaven’s law and earth’s principle. The tricks of the king of devils are savage, vicious, and truly contemptible. Having clearly seen Satan’s face, I love Christ even more. I will never give in to Satan or eke out a worthless existence. I will suffer all torment, hardship and pain, and endure through the darkest of nights. I will bear victorious witness, to comfort God’s heart, and to win God’s praise. I have espied righteousness emerging; it’s the black night before the dawn. The devils are in their dying throes, and they render service for God. God has made a group of overcomers and gained His glory. I see God’s wisdom and I praise God’s righteousness. Even more I want to be considerate to His will, and do all I can in God’s family to repay Him with service. Using my heart that loves God, I will emit light and heat. I will be faithful to the very end, and bear witness to glorify God. No matter how God tries me or refines me, I am resolved to stand witness for God and satisfy Him. Using my heart that loves God, I will emit light and heat. I will be faithful to the very end, and bear witness to glorify God, to satisfy God’s will” (“Rising Up Amidst Darkness and Oppression” in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). This sonorous and forceful hymn was great motivation for me: These demons were persecuting the believers of God in this way because they hate God. Their dastardly and evil goal is to stop us from believing in and following God and thus disrupt and destroy God’s work and ruin mankind’s chance to be saved. In this key moment of this spiritual battle, I couldn’t lay down and let myself be the butt of Satan’s joke. The more Satan tormented me, the more clearly I saw its demonic face and the more I wanted to forsake it and stand on the side of God. I believe that God shall overcome, and that Satan is doomed to fall in defeat. I couldn’t give up, and I wished to rely upon God and bear a strong and resounding testimony for Him.

When the police realized that they wouldn’t be getting any information of value from me, they gave up on the interrogation and, that evening, they transported me to a detention house. At that point, I had been beaten beyond recognition—my face was swollen, I couldn’t open my eyes and my lips were covered in sores. The detention house people took one look

at me and, seeing that I had nearly been beaten to death, they didn't want any responsibility for what had happened and refused to accept me. However, after some negotiation, I was finally let in at around seven that evening and I was escorted to a cell.

That night, I ate my first meal since being arrested: a hard, black, and gritty steamed bun that was hard to chew and difficult to swallow, and a bowl of soup of wilted vegetables with dead worms floating in it and a layer of dirt at the bottom of the bowl. None of that stopped me from scarfing down that meal as fast as I could. Because I was a believer, in the days that followed, the correctional officer would often goad the other inmates to make my life hell. One time, the head prisoner of our cell issued a command and her underlings grabbed me by the hair and slammed my head against the wall. They slammed my head so hard that I felt dizzy and couldn't see straight. Also, at night they wouldn't allow me to sleep on the bed and so I had to sleep on the cold concrete floor next to the toilet. What's more, they made me recite the rules of the detention house and, if I recited them wrong or forgot them, they whipped me with a leather belt. Faced with this nearly constant inhuman torture and humiliation, I became weak, and thought that it would be better to just die than suffer like a caged animal day in and day out. On many occasions, just as I was on the verge of slamming my head against a wall and ending it, God's voice would well up inside me and guide me, saying, **"Thus, during these last days you must bear testimony to God. No matter how great your suffering, you should go on to the very end, and even at your last breath, still you must be faithful to God, and at the mercy of God; only this is truly loving God, and only this is the strong and resounding testimony"** ("Only by Experiencing Painful Trials Can You Know the Loveliness of God" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words provided me with encouragement and warmed my heart. As I pondered God's words, tears poured from my eyes. I thought of how when I was being viciously beaten by the police thugs, it was God's love that had cared for me all the while, He had guided me with His words, and He had given me faith and strength, and allowed me to obstinately survive through that awful torture. After having been abused and bullied by the head prisoner of our cell and tortured by the other inmates to the point where I nearly had a nervous breakdown and was contemplating ending my own life, God's words once again gave me the faith and courage to rise up anew. If God hadn't been by my side, watching over me, I would have been tormented to death by those villainous fiends long ago. In the face of God's great love and mercy, I could no longer passively resist and cause

grief to God's heart. I had to stand firm with God and repay God's love with loyalty. Once I had remedied my state of mind, I began to observe God's wondrous works: When the head prisoner tormented me by not allowing me to sleep on the bed, God caused another inmate to rise up and protest on my behalf and the two got into a big fight. Ultimately, the head prisoner relented. Thanks be to God. Were it not for God's mercy, sleeping long-term on the wet, cold concrete floor would have killed me or left me paralyzed, given my weak constitution. In this way, I managed to survive through two grueling months in the detention house. During that time, police thugs questioned me twice more using the same good cop, bad cop strategy. Yet, with God's protection, I was able to see through Satan's cunning plot and foil their wicked scheme. In the end, they simply ran out of strategies and, after all their failed interrogations, they finally sentenced me to three years imprisonment and sent me to the Second Women's Prison to serve out my sentence.

From the first day I arrived at the prison, I was forced to perform exhausting physical labor. I had to work over ten hours a day, and I had to knit one sweater, or make thirty to forty articles of clothing, or package ten-thousand pairs of chopsticks every single day. If I was unable to complete these tasks, my prison term would be extended. As if the extreme physical labor was not exhausting enough, at night we were forced to partake in a kind of political brainwashing intended to break our spirits, in which we were made to study prison rules, the law, Marxism-Leninism, and Mao Zedong Thought. Whenever I heard the correctional officers propounding their atheist absurdities I would feel sick to my stomach and feel pure hatred for their despicable, shameless ways. The entire time I was in prison, I never had a single night of sound sleep—we would often be startled from our sleep in the middle of the night by the whistles of the prison guards. They would either make us get up and stand in the corridor for no apparent reason or assign us tasks like hauling potatoes, corn and feed. Each bag weighed over 50 kilograms. During winter nights, we had to contend with howling, bone-chilling winds. We'd creep and hobble our way along, one foot at a time, sometimes even collapsing under the weight of our loads. Often, I would drag my weary body back to my cell at two or three in the morning, exhausted and teary eyed. On such nights, a mixture of fatigue, cold and anger would keep me from falling back to sleep. Whenever I thought about how I still had to endure three long years of imprisonment, I would fall even deeper into despair and my whole body would feel paralyzed with exhaustion. God was well aware of my suffering, and at my lowest points, He guided me to remember this

passage of His words, **“Do not be discouraged, do not be weak, and I will make things clear for you. The road to the kingdom is not so smooth; nothing is that simple! You want blessings to come to you easily, do you not? Today, everyone will have bitter trials to face. Without such trials, the loving heart you have for Me will not grow stronger and you will not have true love for Me”** (“Chapter 41” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God’s words were a deep comfort for my aggrieved and suffering heart and they allowed me to understand His will. The situation I now found myself in was a real test. God wanted to see if I would remain loyal to Him in the midst of such suffering and whether or not I truly loved Him. Though three years in jail was a very long time, with God’s word to guide me and God’s love to support me, I knew I wasn’t alone. I would rely upon God to endure all of the pain and suffering and overcome Satan. I couldn’t allow myself to become timid; I had to have the resolve and the courage to pursue the truth, and I had to make a stand for righteousness and seek to be a person with truth and humanity.

The darkness and evil of the CCP government were apparent in every aspect of this prison that they oversaw, but God’s love was always with me. One time, a prison guard ordered me to haul a bag of chopsticks up to the fifth floor. Because the stairs were covered in ice, I had to walk very slowly due to the weight of the bag. However, the guard kept telling me to hurry up and, fearing that I would be badly beaten if I didn’t complete my assignment, I became anxious and slipped in my haste, falling down the stairs and breaking my heel bone. I lay sprawled out on the floor, unable to move my leg and in a cold sweat due to the shooting pain from the break. The guard showed not the least bit of interest, however. He said I was faking it and ordered me to get up and keep working, but I was physically unable to stand. A sister from the church, who was serving time in the same prison as me, saw what had happened and immediately carried me over to the prison clinic. At the clinic, the attending doctor just simply bandaged up my foot, gave me a few pills of some cheap medicine and sent me on my way. Afraid that I wouldn’t be able to meet my work quota, the prison guard refused to allow me any treatment, so I had to keep working with my broken foot. Whatever work we were doing, the sister would help me around. Because the love of God had bound our hearts together, whenever she had the opportunity, the sister would fellowship on God’s word with me to encourage me. This was an immense comfort to me at my lowest and most difficult moments. During that period, I don’t know how many times I felt

so pained and weak that I could hardly get up, and barely had the energy to breathe, and so many times I would hide in the quilt tearfully praying to God, but these two hymns always provided me with encouragement and solace: **“That today you are able to accept the judgment, chastisement, smiting, and refinement of God’s words, and, moreover, are able to accept God’s commissions, was predestined by God at the beginning of time, and thus you must not be too distressed when you are chastised. No one can take away the work that has been done in you, and the blessings that have been bestowed within you, and no one can take away all that has been given to you. People of religion brook no comparison with you. You are not possessed of great expertise in the Bible, and are not equipped with religious theory, but because God has worked within you, you have gained more than anyone throughout the ages—and so this is your greatest blessing”** (“You Cannot Disappoint God’s Will” in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). “The road to the kingdom is a rocky one with many ups and downs. From death to life amid countless tortures and tears. Without God’s guidance and protection, who could make it to today? Born in the last days, I’m fortunate to follow Christ, which is God’s ruling and arrangement. God humbles Himself to become the Son of man, and He suffers enormous humiliation. God has suffered so much, how can I be called human if I do not love Him? ... Having stepped onto the path of loving God, I will never regret following Him and testifying to Him. Although I can be weak and negative, with tears my heart still loves God. I endure suffering and give my love to God, never again to cause Him grief. Being tempered in tribulation is as good as gold being tried by fire; how could I not dedicate my heart? The road to heaven is a hard and rocky one. There will be tears, but I shall love God ever deeper and shall have no regrets” (“Song of Loving God Without Regrets” in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). God’s words and God’s love saved me from the depths of hopelessness and, time and again, gave me the courage to keep on living. In this cold, dark, hell on earth, I experienced the warmth and protection of God’s love, and I was determined to keep on living so that I could repay God’s love. No matter how greatly I suffered, I had to continue on; even if I had only one breath remaining, I had to remain loyal to God. In my three years in prison, I was most deeply moved when my sister gave me some handwritten pages of God’s word. That I was able to read God’s word in a prison run by devils that was clamped down tighter than Fort Knox was truly a testament to the immense love and mercy God was showing to me. It was these words of God that encouraged and guided me, allowing me to

endure those most trying of times.

In September of 2005, my term came to an end and I could finally put the dark days of prison behind me. As I walked out of jail, I took a deep breath and thanked God from the bottom of my heart for His love and protection, which had allowed me to survive through my prison term. Because of my personal experience of being arrested and persecuted by the CCP government, I now know what is righteous and what is evil, what is good and what is wicked, and what is positive and what is negative. I know what I should abandon everything to pursue and what I should reject with hatred and curses. Through this experience, I truly came to know that God's word is God's own life and is invested with supernatural powers that can be the driving motivation behind man's life. As long as man lives by God's word, he is capable of overcoming all of Satan's forces and can prevail even in the most adverse of circumstances. Just as Almighty God says, **"My words are the forever unchanging truth. I am the supply of life for man and the only guide for mankind"** ("You Ought to Consider Your Deeds" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). From now on, no matter what obstacles or difficulties I face, I am willing to do my utmost to pursue the truth, to seek to live truly by God's word, and to live out a meaningful life!

10. A Song of Life Amidst the Ruin

By Gao Jing, Henan Province

In 1999, I had the fortune to accept Almighty God's work of the last days. Through reading God's words, I perceived the authority and power they hold, and felt that these words were the voice of God. Being able to hear the words expressed to mankind by the Creator moved me beyond my ability to describe, and for the first time, I felt the sense of peace and joy in the depths of my spirit that the work of the Holy Spirit brings to man. From that moment on, I became an increasingly avid reader of God's words. After I'd joined The Church of Almighty God, I saw that the church was a completely new world, entirely different from that of society. All the brothers and sisters were simple and kind, pure and full of life. Although we weren't related to each other by blood, and we each came from different backgrounds and had our own identities, we were all like kindred spirits who loved each other, supported one another, and were united together in joy. Seeing this really made me feel how happy

and joyful, how beautiful and sweet a life spent worshiping God is. Later, I saw these words of God: **“As members of the human race and devout Christians, it is the responsibility and obligation of us all to offer up our minds and bodies for the fulfillment of God’s commission, for our entire being came from God, and it exists thanks to the sovereignty of God. If our minds and bodies are not for God’s commission and not for the righteous cause of mankind, then our souls will be unworthy of those who were martyred for God’s commission, and much more unworthy of God, who has provided us with everything”** (“God Presides Over the Fate of All Mankind” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). God’s words allowed me to understand that, as a created being, I should be living for the Creator, and that I should be dedicating and expending my all to spread and testify God’s gospel of the last days—only this is the most valuable and meaningful life. And so, when I heard that many people living in far-flung, remote areas hadn’t heard Almighty God’s gospel of the last days, I resolutely said my farewells to the brothers and sisters in my hometown and set out on my journey to spread the kingdom gospel.

In 2002, I arrived in a remote, backward mountainous area in Guizhou Province to preach the gospel. Spreading the gospel there required me to walk many miles along mountain paths every day, and I often had to brave the wind and snow. With God beside me, however, I never felt tired, or that it was a hardship. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit’s work, the gospel work there soon took off, with more and more people accepting God’s work of the last days and the church life overflowing with vitality. Guided by God’s words, I spent six happy, fulfilling years in that place. That is, until 2008, when something extraordinary happened out of the blue, something that would shatter the joy and tranquility of my life ...

It happened around 11 a.m. on the morning of March 15, 2008. Two brothers and I were in a gathering when suddenly four policemen burst through the door and quickly had us pressed down on the floor. They handcuffed us without a word, then shoved and dragged us into a police van. Inside the van, they all sniggered wickedly, waving their electroshock batons at us and occasionally jabbing them into our heads or torsos. They cursed us savagely, saying, “You sons of bitches! You’re so young you could do anything, but oh no, you have to go and believe in God! You really have nothing better to do?” Having been arrested so suddenly left me feeling very nervous, and I had no idea what lay in store for us.

All I could do was call out to God silently in my heart, over and over: “O God! This situation has befallen us today by Your permission. I ask only that You grant us faith and protect us so that we may stand witness for You.” After I prayed, a line of God’s words floated into my mind: **“Be loyal to Me above all else, move forward with bravery; I am your strong rock, rely on Me!”** (“Chapter 10” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). “Yes!” I thought. “God is my support and He is my strong and powerful backup. No matter what situation I find myself in, as long as I can stay loyal to God and stand with Him, then I will surely overcome Satan and bring shame to it.” The enlightenment of God’s words enabled me to find strength and faith, and I silently resolved: I would rather die than abandon the true way and not stand witness for God!

Once we arrived at the police station, the policemen dragged us roughly out of the van, then pushed and shoved us into the station. They thoroughly searched us all over and found some gospel materials and a cellphone in the bags belonging to my two church brothers. Seeing that they hadn’t turned up any money, one of the wicked policemen dragged one of the brothers over and kicked and beat him until he fell to the ground. After that, we were taken to different rooms to be interrogated separately. They questioned me all that afternoon, but they didn’t get a word out of me. It was after 8 p.m. that evening when they noted us down as being three anonymous detainees before sending us all to the local detention house.

As soon as we arrived at the detention house, two female correctional officers stripped me of all my clothes. They cut off anything metal on my clothes and took my shoelaces and my belt. Barefoot and holding my trousers up I made my way with trepidation to my cell. When they saw me come in, the women prisoners surged toward me like lunatics and completely surrounded me, all of them asking about me all at once. The lights were so dim in there that their eyes looked as wide as saucers; they were glaring at me and curiously looking me up and down, while some tugged at my arms, touching here and pinching there. Dumbstruck, I stood rooted to the spot, feeling very afraid and not daring to say a word. At the thought that I would have to live in this hellish place with these women, I felt like bursting into tears at the injustice of it all. Just then, a prisoner who had been sitting on the brick bed not saying a word, suddenly yelled, “That’s enough! She’s just arrived and doesn’t know what’s what. Don’t frighten her.” She then handed me a quilt to put around myself. I felt a surge of warmth in that moment, and I knew well that it wasn’t this prisoner who was being

nice to me, but God who was using the people around me to help and take care of me. God had been with me the whole time, and I was not at all alone. Having the love of God to keep me company inside this gloomy, nightmarish hell on earth, I felt tremendously comforted. Deep in the night after all the other prisoners had fallen asleep, I still had no mind for sleep whatsoever. I thought about how, just that morning, I had been happily performing my duty with my brothers and sisters, and yet that night I was lying in this tomb-like hellish place, with no idea when I'd ever be let out—I felt an inexpressible sorrow and distress. Just as I was immersed in my own thoughts, a freezing cold wind whipped up out of nowhere and I shivered involuntarily. I lifted my head to look around and only then did I realize that the cell was open to the elements. Besides the roof over the sleeping area, the rest of the cell had a mesh above it made of thick metal bars welded together, and the cold wind just rushed right in. Occasionally, I could also hear the footsteps of the policemen on patrol walking on the roof. All I could feel was bone-chilling fear, and my fear, my helplessness, and my feelings of having been wronged all flooded my heart; tears fell unbidden from my eyes. Just at that moment, a passage of God's words floated clearly into my mind: **"You should know that all things in the environment around you are there by My permission, I arrange it all. See clearly and satisfy My heart in the environment I have given to you. Do not fear, Almighty God of hosts will surely be with you; He has your back and He is your shield"** ("Chapter 26" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). "Yes," I thought. "God has permitted the CCP government to capture me. Although this place is dark and terrifying and I have no idea what I will come up against next, God is my backup so there is nothing to fear! It's all or nothing, and I place everything into God's hands." Having understood God's will, I felt much more relaxed, and so I said a silent prayer to God: "O God! Thank You for Your enlightenment and illumination which have enabled me to understand that all of this is happening by Your permission. I wish to submit to Your orchestrations and arrangements, to seek Your will in this predicament, and to gain the truths You wish to give me. O God! It's just that I am of such small stature, so I ask that You grant me faith and strength and protect me so that, no matter what tortures I might be put to, I will never betray You." After praying, I dried my tears and contemplated God's words, as I quietly awaited the coming of the new day.

Early the next day, there was a banging sound and the cell door opened. One of the correctional officers hollered, "Out, Jane Doe!" I lingered for a moment before I finally

realized she was calling me. In the interrogation room, the policemen once again asked me to give my name and address, and to tell them about the church. I said nothing, but just sat on the chair with my head lowered. They questioned me every day for a week, until finally one of them jabbed his finger at me and yelled, "You bitch! We've spent days with you and you haven't said a word. Fine, just you wait. We've got something to show you!" Having said this, the two policemen stormed off, slamming the door behind them. One day as night was falling, the police came again to summon me. They handcuffed me and stuffed me into a police van. Sitting in the back of that van, I couldn't help but feel panic beginning to rise inside me, and I thought: "Where are they taking me? Could they be taking me out to the middle of nowhere to violate me? Will they stuff me in a sack and throw me into the river to feed the fish?" I was incredibly afraid, but just then some lines from a church hymn called "The Kingdom" began to resound in my ears: "God is my support, what is there to fear? I pledge my life to fight with Satan till the end. God lifts us up, we should leave everything behind and fight to bear witness for Christ. God will carry out His will on earth. I'll prepare my love and loyalty and devote them all to God. I will joyfully welcome God's return when He descends in glory ..." (Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). In a second, an inexhaustible strength rose up inside me. I lifted my head to look out the window as I silently pondered the lyrics of the hymn. One of the policemen noticed that I was staring out the window and quickly drew a curtain across it, before bellowing fiercely at me, "What are you looking at? Lower your head!" Being yelled at so suddenly made me tremble with shock, and I lowered my head right away. Four policemen were all smoking inside the van, constantly blowing out clouds of smoke, and pretty soon the air inside the van had become intolerably foul; I began to cough. One of the policemen sitting in front of me turned around and pinched my lower jaw with his fingers before blowing smoke right in my face. He then said maliciously, "You know, you only need to tell us everything you know, and you won't need to suffer at all; you can just go home. You're a young woman, and you're very pretty...." As he said this, he ran his fingers across my face and winked lasciviously at me, then laughed wickedly and said, "Maybe we'll find a boyfriend for you yet." I turned my face away and brought my chained hands up to throw his hand off. Embarrassed into anger, he said, "Oh, you're so strong. Just wait till we get where we're going, and then you'll behave yourself." The van drove on. I had no idea what I was about to face, and so all I could do was call out to God silently in my heart: "O God! I'm ready to risk everything now. No matter

what tactics these awful officers use against me, as long as I have one breath left in my body, I will bear strong and resounding testimony for You before Satan!”

After more than half an hour, the van came to a stop. The policemen dragged me out; I staggered to my feet and looked around. It was already completely dark, and there were only a few empty buildings dotted around without even one light shining—it all looked so gloomy and terrifying. I was escorted into one of the buildings. Inside, there was a desk and a sofa, with an electric bulb hanging from the ceiling which cast a horribly pale light over everything. There were ropes and steel chains lying on the floor, and across the room there was a chair made of thick metal bars. Faced with this frightful scene, I couldn’t help but begin to panic. My legs turned to jelly and I had to sit on the sofa to calm down. Several men then came into the room, and I was loudly scolded by one of them. “What do you think you’re doing, sitting there? Is that yours to sit on? Get up!” While speaking he rushed over to me and kicked me a few times, then grabbed the front of my top, pulled me off the sofa and dragged me over to the metal chair. Another of the policemen said to me, “You know, this is a great thing, this chair. You just have to sit on it for a little while and you’ll ‘get the benefit’ for the rest of your life. This chair has been specially prepared for you believers in Almighty God. We don’t let just anyone sit on it. You just be a good girl, do what we say, and answer our questions honestly, and then you won’t have to sit on it. So tell us, why did you come to Guizhou? Was it to preach your gospel?” I said nothing. A tough-looking policeman standing to one side pointed at my face and swore at me, saying, “Stop playing dumb, damnit! If you don’t speak up, you’ll get a taste of the chair!” I still remained silent.

Just then, a seductively dressed woman came into the room, and it turned out that she had been asked by this gang of policemen to come and persuade me to confess. She exhorted me with false gentleness, saying, “Look, you’re a stranger here, and you don’t have any relatives or friends around. Tell us what we want to know, OK? Once you’ve told us what we want to know, I’ll find you a job, and find you a husband here in Guizhou. I promise I’ll find you a good man, too. But if you don’t want that, then you could come work for me as my nanny. I’ll pay you every month. That way, you could settle down here and put down some roots.” I raised my head and glanced at her, but did not reply. To myself, I thought: “Demons are demons. They don’t acknowledge the existence of God, but just do all manner of terrible things for the sake of money and profit. Now they’re trying to use profit to bribe me and get me to betray God. How could I possibly fall prey to their cunning schemes and

become a shameful Judas?” She saw that her “kind-hearted” words had had no effect whatsoever on me and felt that she had lost face in front of the other police, so she immediately dropped the façade and showed her true colors. She removed a strap from her backpack and cruelly whipped me with it a few times, then aggressively threw her backpack onto the sofa. Shaking her head in exasperation, she went and stood to one side. Seeing what had happened, a fat, evil policeman stormed over to me, caught me by the hair, and smashed my head against the wall several times, yelling at me through gritted teeth, “Don’t you know when someone’s trying to do you a favor? Eh? Don’t you? Are you going to talk or not?” My head was banged against the wall so many times that I saw stars, my head was buzzing, the room was spinning, and I fell to the floor. He then dragged me up and flung me down onto the metal chair as though I were nothing more than a little bird. Only after I had recovered a little did I begin to open my eyes a bit—I saw that in his hand he still clutched a strand of my torn hair. I was strapped to the chair from my head to my feet, and a thick steel plate was set before my chest. My handcuffs were attached to the chair, and shackles weighing tens of pounds were attached to my feet, and then they were also chained to the chair. I felt like a statue, unable to move a muscle. The cold and heavy chains, locks and cuffs held me to the metal chair—my suffering was beyond words. Seeing me in pain, the evil police were pleased with themselves and began to mock me, saying, “Isn’t the God you believe in almighty? Why doesn’t He come to save you? Why doesn’t He save you from this tiger chair? You’d better start talking. Your God can’t save you, only we can do that. Tell us what we want to know, and we’ll let you go. You could have a good life. What a waste believing in some God!” I faced the sarcastic remarks of the wicked police very calmly, for God’s words say: **“In the last days, God uses words, and not signs and wonders, to make man perfect. He uses His words to expose man, to judge man, to chastise man, and to make man perfect, so that in the words of God, man comes to see the wisdom and loveliness of God, and comes to understand the disposition of God, so that through the words of God, man beholds the deeds of God”** (“Knowing God’s Work Today” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). The work God does now is practical work, not supernatural. God uses His words to perfect man and allows His words to become our faith and our life. He uses practical situations to change our life dispositions, and it is this kind of practical work that can better reveal God’s great power and wisdom, and better defeat Satan once and for all. I had been arrested and was being subjected to cruel torture by the CCP

government because God wanted to test my faith in Him and see whether or not I was able to live by His words and stand witness for Him. Knowing this, I wished to submit to any situation God permitted to befall me. My silence enraged the gang of evil police and they surged toward me as though they had all gone crazy. They surrounded me and violently beat me. Some punched me hard on the head with their fists, some kicked wildly at my legs, while others tore at my clothes and groped at my face. I seethed with rage in the face of their cruel beatings and hooliganism. If I hadn't been tightly restrained to that tiger chair, I would have put up a desperate fight! Toward the CCP government, that arch criminal organization, I felt nothing but hatred down to my very bones, and I just had to make a silent resolution: The more it persecutes me, the more my faith will grow, and I will believe in God till my last breath! The more it persecutes me, the more it proves that Almighty God is the one, true God, and the more it proves that I'm following the true way! Faced with these facts, I realized very clearly that this was a war between good and evil, a contest between life and death, and that what I should do was swear to uphold God's name and God's testimony, to shame Satan with practical action, thereby enabling God to gain glory. Those wicked police tried to extract a confession from me over several days of torture and interrogation, but I told them nothing about the church. In the end, they were out of options, and said, "She's a tough cookie, this one. We've been questioning her for days now, but she hasn't said a word." As I listened to them discussing me, I knew that God's words had helped me to pass through every hellish gate these demons had placed before me, and that God had protected me so that I could stand witness for Him. From the bottom of my heart, I silently thanked and praised Almighty God!

Over more than ten days of interrogation, I had been sitting in that freezing tiger chair both day and night, and my whole body felt as though it had been plunged into an icy cavern. The cold had seeped into my very marrow, and every joint in my body felt as though it had been torn apart. One of the evil policemen who was quite young saw me shivering from the cold, and so took advantage of the situation to say to me, "You'd better start talking! Even the sturdiest people can't last long on this chair. If you keep this up, you'll spend the rest of your life a cripple." When I heard him say this, I began to weaken and feel anxious, but then I silently called out to God, asking Him to grant me the strength to endure this inhuman torment and to not do anything that might betray God. After praying, God enlightened me with a church hymn that had always been my favorite one to sing: "I don't care how tough

the path of belief in God is, I only carry out God's will as my vocation; much less do I care whether I receive blessings or suffer misfortune in the future. Now that I am resolved to love God, I will be faithful to the end. No matter what dangers or hardships lurk behind me, no matter what my end will be, in order to welcome God's day of glory, I closely follow God's footsteps and strive onward" ("Marching on the Path of Loving God" in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). Every last word of that hymn inspired me, and I sang it over and over in my mind. I couldn't help but think of the vow I had previously made before God, that no matter what suffering or hardships I had to undergo, I would still expend my life for God and stay loyal to Him till the end. But I was beginning to feel weak and timid after suffering just a small amount of pain—how was this being loyal? Was I not falling prey to Satan's cunning scheme? Satan wanted me to think of my flesh and betray God, but I knew I mustn't let it fool me. That I was able to suffer for my belief in God was the most meaningful, valuable thing, it was a glorious thing, and no matter how much I suffered, I could not allow myself to become a pathetic little person who turned my back on my faith and betrayed God. Once I made this resolution to satisfy God, I gradually stopped feeling so cold and the pain in my heart vanished. Once again, I had witnessed God's wondrous deeds and experienced God's love. Though the police hadn't achieved their goal, they still weren't through with me. They began to take turns torturing me, and they kept me awake all day and all night. If I barely closed my eyes for a second, they would whip me with a switch made of willow, or else they would jab me hard with an electroshock baton. Every time they did that I would feel electricity coursing through me and my whole body would be wracked with convulsions. The pain was so bad that it made me want to die. As they beat me, they shouted, "You still won't tell us everything, damnit, and you even want to go to sleep! Let's see if we can torture you to death today!" Their beatings became more and more intense, more and more vicious, and my forlorn cries echoed around the room. Because I was so tightly strapped to the tiger chair and couldn't move a muscle, I could do nothing but submit to their savagery. Those evil policemen became even more pleased with themselves and would occasionally erupt into raucous laughter. I had been subjected to whippings and electrocution for such a long time that I was covered in welts and cuts, my face, neck, arms and hands were covered in purple bruises, and my whole body was swollen. My body seemed to have gone numb, however, and I wasn't in as much pain anymore. I knew that this was God caring for me and alleviating my pain, and in my heart I thanked God over and over.

I endured this for almost a month until I truly couldn't take it any longer. I so wanted to sleep, even for just a little while. Those demons, however, lacked even the slightest trace of humanity. The moment they saw me close my eyes they would immediately throw a full glass of water in my face to startle me awake, and once again I would have to force my eyes open. My strength was utterly spent—I felt as though my life had reached its end. But God was always protecting me, keeping my mind very clear and alert and my faith strong so that I wouldn't betray Him. Seeing that they hadn't gained any information from me at all and afraid that I might actually die, the only thing they could do was take me back to the detention house. Five or six days passed and I still hadn't recovered from their torture, but they once again dragged me out and chained me back to the tiger chair. They attached the heavy shackles to my feet again, and once more proceeded to try to extract a confession from me through beatings, torture and maltreatment. I was tormented there for around ten more days, and it was only when I really couldn't take it anymore that they finally took me back to the detention house. Five or six more days passed and they played out the entire thing all over again. Six months went by this way, and I don't even know how many times they put me through it—it was the same torture over and over. I was tortured to the point of utter and complete exhaustion, and from the bottom of my heart I gave up all hope of a future life. I began to refuse food and for several days I refused to drink even one drop of water. They then started forcing water into my mouth; one of them held my head while another held my face, opened my mouth and poured water into it. The water flowed around my mouth, down my neck and soaked my clothes. My whole body felt freezing cold and I tried to struggle, but I didn't even have the strength to move my head. Seeing that refusing food was also a useless endeavor, I decided to take the opportunity afforded by going to the toilet to smash my head against the wall and kill myself. Dragging my incredibly heavy shackles along, I staggered one step at a time toward the toilet, clutching at the wall the whole way. Because I hadn't eaten in so long, my eyes were all blurry and I couldn't quite see where I was going; I fell down many times along the way. Through the haze I saw that my ankles had been turned into a mess of bleeding flesh by the steel shackles, and that they were bleeding profusely. When I reached a window, I lifted my head and looked outside. I saw people in the distance walking to and fro, going about their business, and all of a sudden I felt a wonderful stirring deep down inside me, and I thought: "Out of all these millions of people, how many believe in Almighty God? I am one of the lucky ones, for God has plucked me—"

such an unremarkable person—out of the crowd, and has used His words to water and provide for me, leading me every step of the way till now. I've been so greatly blessed by God, so why do I seek death? Wouldn't I really hurt God by doing that?" Just then, God's words came into my mind: **"[D]uring these last days you must bear testimony to God. No matter how great your suffering, you should go on to the very end, and even at your last breath, still you must be faithful to God, and at the mercy of God; only this is truly loving God, and only this is the strong and resounding testimony"** ("Only by Experiencing Painful Trials Can You Know the Loveliness of God" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). Every word, replete with encouragement and anticipation, warmed and inspired my heart, and I felt doubly moved—I'd found the courage to go on. I gave myself an internal pep talk: "The demons can only ruin my body, but they cannot destroy my desire to satisfy God. My heart will forever belong to God. I will be strong; I will never capitulate!" I then made my way back, step by step, dragging my heavy shackles. In my dazed state, I thought of the Lord Jesus, completely covered in wounds, making His tortuous way to Golgotha, utterly exhausted and bearing that heavy cross on His back, and then these words from Almighty God came to mind: **"On the road to Jerusalem, Jesus was in agony, as if a knife were being twisted in His heart, yet He had not the slightest intention of going back on His word; always there was a powerful force compelling Him onward to where He would be crucified"** ("How to Serve in Harmony With God's Will" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). At that moment, I couldn't hold back my tears any longer, and they flowed freely down my cheeks. I said a prayer to God in my heart: "O God! You are so holy, and You are supreme, and yet to save us You personally became flesh. You suffered terrible humiliation and pain and were crucified for our sakes. O God! Who has ever known Your sorrow and Your pain? Who has ever understood or appreciated the painstaking price You paid for our sakes? I suffer this hardship now so that I might attain salvation. Moreover, I suffer it in order to clearly see the CCP government's evil essence while I suffer cruelty at the hands of its demons, so that I'm never deceived or fooled by it again, and so that I might thereby be rid of its dark influence. And yet I've not shown any consideration for Your will, but have only been thinking of my own flesh and wishing to die so that the torment of this pain may come to an end. I'm such a coward and so despicable! O God! You expend Yourself and suffer for us at all times, and You devote all Your love to us. O God! I can do nothing now, but wish only to dedicate my heart wholly to You, to follow You to the end no matter how much I may

suffer, and to stand witness to satisfy You!" I hadn't shed a single tear over several months of cruel beatings and torture, so when I got back to the interrogation room the evil policemen saw that my face was wet with tears and thought that I was ready to crack. The fat one among them looked very pleased with himself and smiled at me, saying, "Have you thought it through? Will you play ball?" I completely ignored him and his face went purple right away. Suddenly, he lifted an arm and proceeded to slap me across the face more times than I could count. My face was left burning with pain while blood trickled from the corners of my mouth and dripped down onto the floor. Another of the wicked policemen threw a glass of water in my face and yelled through clenched teeth, "We don't care if you don't play ball. This world belongs to the Communist Party now, and if you don't talk, we can still sentence you to prison!" But no matter how they tried to threaten and intimidate me, I still didn't say a word.

Although the police couldn't find any evidence to support charging me with a crime, they still wouldn't give up, but continued to try to torture a confession out of me. Late one night, several of them got drunk and staggered into the interrogation room. One of them, eyeing me lasciviously, seemed to come up with an idea and said, "Strip her and hang her up. Then we'll see if she plays ball." Hearing him say this left me terrified, and in my heart I desperately called out to God for Him to curse these beasts and thwart their lustful ploys. They released me from the tiger chair, but I could barely stand with those heavy shackles around my ankles. They surrounded me and began to kick me around like a soccer ball, spitting melon seed husks into my face and yelling over and over, "Will you play ball? If you won't be nice to us, then we'll make sure your life isn't worth living! Where is your God now? Isn't He almighty? Let Him strike us down!" Another said, "Wang needs a wife, how about we just give her to him? Haha ..." Seeing their demonic faces, my hatred for them burned so hot that all my tears were dried away. All I could do was pray to God and ask Him to protect my heart so that I would not betray Him, and so that I might submit to God's orchestrations whether I lived or died. In the end, the evil police had played all their cards but had still not managed to get one word out of me. All out of options, they could do nothing but make a telephone call and report to their superiors. "This woman is as tough as nails. She's a modern-day Liu Hulan. We could beat her to death and she still wouldn't talk. There's nothing else we can do!" Seeing them look so despondent, I thanked God over and over in my heart. It was the guidance of God's words that had enabled me to overcome their cruel torture time and time

again. May all glory be to Almighty God!

Despite the fact that countless interrogations had yielded them nothing, the CCP government charged me with obstructing the enforcement of the law and sentenced me to a fixed sentence of seven years in prison. The two brothers who had been arrested with me were likewise charged and sentenced to five years in prison. After having undergone eight months of inhuman torment, hearing this verdict of seven years in prison not only caused me no pain or distress, but on the contrary, I felt at ease and, even more so, I felt honored. This was because over the previous eight months, I had experienced God's guidance every step of the way and had enjoyed God's boundless love and protection. This had enabled me to miraculously survive the cruel devastation that would otherwise have been beyond the limits of my endurance, and I had been able to stand witness. This was the greatest comfort God could bestow on me, and I offered up my thanks and praise to God from the bottom of my heart!

On November 3, 2008, I was sent to the First Women's Prison to serve my sentence, and thus began my long prison life. There was an incredibly strict regime of rules in the prison; we got up at 6 a.m. and started work, and then worked all through the day till nightfall. Mealtimes and toilet breaks were as fraught as if we were in a warzone, and the prisoners weren't allowed even a modicum of slack. The prison guards overloaded us with work so that they could profit even more from our labor, and they were more merciless to those who believed in God. Living in such an environment, I was always on tenterhooks—each day felt as long as a year. I was given the hardest and heaviest tasks in prison, and the food I was given to eat wasn't even fit for dogs—a half-raw, black, tiny steamed bun and some yellow, dried up old cabbage leaves. In an effort to get my sentence reduced for good behavior, I would often work as hard as I could from dawn till dusk, and would even pull all-nighters to meet the production quota which was beyond my physical ability. I would be on my feet each day for 15 or 16 hours in the workshop, constantly turning the handle on the semi-automatic sweater-making machine. Both my legs swelled up and they would often ache and feel weak. Still, I never dared to slow down, because there were prison guards armed with electroshock batons constantly patrolling the workshop, and they would punish anyone they saw not working absolutely flat out, and withhold good behavior points from the prisoners. The incessant, exhausting labor left me utterly fatigued in body and mind. Though I was still young, much of my hair turned gray, and on many occasions I almost fainted onto the

machine. Had it not been for God watching over me, I might not have survived. Ultimately, under the protection of God, I obtained two opportunities to have my sentence reduced, and I was able to walk out of that hell on earth two years early.

After undergoing as long as eight months of brutal torture and five years of imprisonment at the hands of the CCP government, both my body and mind had become severely damaged. I was terrified of encountering strangers for a long time after my release. In particular, whenever I came across a busy place with lots of people all bustling around, scenes of those evil police torturing me would come flooding back, and I would involuntarily feel a deep sense of terror and uneasiness inside. My menstrual cycles had been thrown into chaos from being chained to that metal chair for so long, and I was ravaged by all kinds of illnesses. Thinking back now over those interminable, painful months, although I experienced a great deal of pain and suffering, I saw clearly that the “freedom of religious belief” and “the lawful rights and interests of citizens are protected by law” often touted by the CCP government are just ploys to conceal their sins and their evil essence. At the same time, I also came to truly experience and appreciate God’s almightiness, sovereignty, authority and power, and I could feel God’s concern and mercy for me. All these things were the precious and bountiful riches of life which God bestowed on me. God’s work is practical and normal, and He permits the persecution of Satan and demons to come upon us. But while the demons frantically wreak their harm upon us, God is always there, silently watching over us and protecting us, using His words of authority and might to enlighten and guide us. God grants us faith and love, and He conquers and defeats the enemy Satan, thus gaining glory. I praise God’s wisdom and loveliness from the bottom of my heart!

I am now back in the church and have returned to be with my brothers and sisters. Under the guidance of God’s love, I live the church life, and together with my brothers and sisters, with one accord, we spread the kingdom gospel. My life is overflowing with vigor and vitality. I am now filled with faith for God’s work. I can practically see the beautiful sight of the kingdom of God manifesting on the earth, and I can’t help but sing God’s praises! “Christ’s kingdom has descended on earth. God’s word has conquered the world, and it has reigned on earth. All is established and completed by the word of God, for us to see with our very own eyes. We cheer! We praise! We celebrate the arrival of Christ’s kingdom on earth! We cheer! We praise! We celebrate a new Jerusalem descending from heaven. God’s word is among us, it lives among us, it’s with us in our every move and thought. ... The beauty of

the kingdom is bright and eternal. All people are proclaiming the word of God, submitting to His word and worshiping Him. The whole universe roils in jubilation. We cheer! We praise! We celebrate God's almightiness and wisdom! We cheer! We praise! We celebrate that His work is done! We cheer! We praise! Almighty God leads us into Canaan Himself, so we can enjoy His riches!" ("Christ's Kingdom Has Descended on Earth" in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs).

11. God's Words Create Life's Miracles

By Yang Li, Jiangxi Province

My mother passed away when I was a little girl, and so I had to bear the heavy burden of household responsibilities from a young age. After I got married, my responsibilities became so burdensome that I could barely breathe under their weight. Having had my fill of the arduousness and misery of life, over time I became depressed and dejected, quiet and reserved, and I frittered away one day after another. In 2002, when some brothers and sisters shared the gospel of Almighty God's work in the last days with me, I happily accepted it and then brought my husband and children before God along with me. From then on, brothers and sisters would often come to our house for gatherings and we would fellowship on God's word, sing, dance and praise God; this brought me incredible enjoyment and I no longer felt depressed or worried. My children said that I seemed to be getting younger and more cheerful all the time. We would often read God's words together as a family and, through His words, we came to understand many truths, as well as God's urgent will to save mankind. I traveled all over, spreading the gospel and bearing witness for God in order to repay God's love and enable those who had, like me, undergone Satan's torment to come before God and be saved by Him as soon as possible. I never imagined that, because of this, I would become the target of the CCP government's cruel persecution ...

On the 23rd of November, 2005 at around 7 p.m. while in a gathering with two sisters, I suddenly heard a violent rapping at the door and, realizing that it might be the police, I hurriedly gathered up all the books of God's words. Just as I had expected, the front door was kicked down very quickly; five police officers burst in frantically and surrounded us. The head officer shouted: "There's no escape! Search the place!" In no time at all, the entire

contents of the house had been upended in a dreadful mess. They then seized all of our bags and a book of hymns, and proceeded to handcuff us and escort us to the police station. I was extremely frightened in the face of this display of force and desperately called out to God for protection. At that moment, a passage of God's words came to mind: **"You should know that all things in the environment around you are there by My permission, I arrange it all. See clearly and satisfy My heart in the environment I have given to you. Do not fear, Almighty God of hosts will surely be with you; He has your back and He is your shield"** ("Chapter 26" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words gave me immense strength and faith, rid me of my timidity and instilled within me poise and groundedness. That's right! All events and things are in God's hands and the police are within God's grasp and orchestrations as well. With God as my strong support, there was nothing to be afraid of. I just had to focus on seeking God's will and relying upon God so I could stand witness in whatever situation I may encounter.

At the police station, ten officers from the Municipal Public Security Bureau and the local police station took turns interrogating us in groups of two. They demanded to know our names, addresses and who the leaders of our church were. When we wouldn't provide any answers, their frustration turned to rage and they handcuffed us to iron tiger benches. Seeing the fierce looks on those cops' faces struck a bit of fear in my heart; I wondered what kind of nasty tactics they would use on us and I wasn't sure if I'd be able to stand my ground. Seeing that I wasn't talking, one of the officers said in an unctuous tone: "It's getting really late. Just tell us your name and address and we'll send you right home." My mind was very clear then because I had God's protection, and I thought to myself, "This is one of Satan's tricks. If I give them my name and address, they'll certainly go and search my house, which would be incredibly damaging to the church." As such, no matter how those awful policemen interrogated me, I wouldn't say a word, but only prayed to God that He would bestow me with the right words to say. The next day, they came back asking the same questions and, again, I didn't say a thing. That evening, a female officer dressed in a rather unbecoming outfit came in, glared at me and fiercely asked, "What's your name? Where do you live?" I didn't respond to her and so she yelled at me angrily: "You people just eat your fill and laze around, not bothering to go make any money. Why the hell do you want to believe in some God?" With that, she strode over to me and began kicking my legs and feet with her high-heeled shoes while yelling, "Practice faith my ass! If you don't give me an honest answer, I'll

have you killed!” My legs and feet hurt unbearably and I was overcome with a wave of weakness within my heart, not knowing what they would put me through next. I hurriedly supplicated to God, asking that He safeguard my heart. After concluding my prayer, my fear subsided. Because their interrogation had failed to yield any answers, the police sent the three of us off to a detention house.

That night, it was snowing heavily and freezing cold. Those maniacal cops confiscated all the winter clothing we had in our bags, forcing us to wear nothing but a single layer of thin clothing, leaving us trembling with cold the entire ride. When we arrived at the detention house, they took us down into a gloomy and terrifying underground prison ward. Occasionally the sounds of cursing and cries of other inmates would float down, making my hair stand on end—I felt as though I had entered into some kind of hell on earth. The three of us were shoved into a cell with about twenty other inmates, from which wave after wave of rancid stink emanated. The cell was lined on either side with cement sleeping platforms and all the inmates sat around a long table threading light bulb filaments. As soon as we entered, the officer said to the head inmate: “Make sure to give them a nice welcoming!” The head inmate, a drug convict, wasn’t even thirty years old; as soon as she heard the officer’s orders, she knocked me to the ground with vicious kicks before I had even had time to get my bearings. It hurt so much that I was rolling on the ground screaming. After that, they tore off all our clothing, dragged us into the bathroom and forced us to take cold showers. The bone-piercingly frigid water sent my whole body into convulsions and my teeth chattered nonstop. My entire body was in unbearable pain as if I had been slashed with a knife and I lost consciousness very quickly. When I came to, I realized I had already been dragged back into the cell. When the head inmate saw that I was awake, she still didn’t ease up on me, but continued to kick and punch me. Only after she had exhausted herself did she throw me off to one side. The two sisters came and held me closely, their tears falling onto my face. Feeling very weak in my heart, I thought to myself: “Why won’t God just let me die? As soon as I die, I’ll be free, but if I go on living, who knows how those demons will beat and torture me, and whether or not I’ll be able to withstand it all.” The more I thought about it the more distressed I became, and the tears came streaming down my face. In the midst of my suffering, God enlightened me to think of a hymn of His words: **“You will surely, under the guidance of God’s light, break through the stranglehold of the forces of darkness. You will surely not, in the midst of darkness, lose the light guiding you. ... You will**

surely be resolute and unwavering in the land of Sinim. Through the sufferings you endure, you will inherit the blessing that comes from God, and will surely radiate His glory throughout the entire universe” (“Song of the Overcomers” in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). My heart was immediately flooded with warmth—God’s promise and His love moved me deeply, allowing me to realize that, even though Satan was inflicting its cruelty upon me, as long as I sincerely relied upon and looked up to God, God would surely lead me to overcome the oppression of the dark forces and come into the light. The suffering I was going through was valuable and meaningful; it was a blessing from God, and it was suffering I had to go through in the process of pursuing the truth and gaining God’s salvation. It was also a strong testimony to God’s defeat of Satan. Satan was tormenting and torturing me in an attempt to get me to deny and betray God; only by staying strong in my devotion to God, bearing all the suffering that I should bear and standing witness for God could I strike back at Satan’s conniving plot, humiliating Satan to bringing glory to God. Once I had thought through all this, I deeply repented to God and made a resolution: “O Almighty God! You have suffered more than any normal person could bear in order to bring salvation to us, such deeply corrupted people. You have made such painstaking efforts for us and Your love for us is truly too great! I should repay Your love, but today, when faced with a trial, when I should have born testimony before Satan, I chose to escape. When I suffered in the flesh just a little bit, I became negative and resisted, wanting more than anything to die and be done with it all. How cowardly and lacking in conscience I am! From now on, no matter what adverse circumstances I may face, I pledge to stand witness for You.” I felt my faith strengthen at that moment and I grasped my sisters’ hands firmly, willing to keep on living to bear witness for God.

After being detained in the detention house for twenty-one days, the police escorted me to the County Public Security Bureau. They strapped me to a tiger bench and interrogated me. Because I steadfastly refused to utter a single word, that night they handcuffed me with studded handcuffs and hung me from the iron grating of a window, leaving my body dangling in the air so I could just touch the ground with my tiptoes. An officer spoke to me arrogantly, saying, “If there’s one thing I have, it’s patience. I’m going to make you beg to me and tell me who your leader is of your own accord!” With that, he left the room, slamming the door on his way out. Not long after, I began to feel a bone-piercing pain in my wrists that left me in unspeakable suffering. In that moment, I suddenly thought of a hymn of God’s words:

“Have you ever accepted the blessings that you were given? Have you ever sought the promises that were made for you? You will surely, under the guidance of God’s light, break through the stranglehold of the forces of darkness. You will surely not, in the midst of darkness, lose the light guiding you. You will surely be the master of all creation. You will surely be an overcomer before Satan. You will surely, at the downfall of the kingdom of the great red dragon, stand up amid the myriad throngs to bear witness to God’s victory. You will surely be resolute and unwavering in the land of Sinim. Through the sufferings you endure, you will inherit the blessing that comes from God, and will surely radiate God’s glory throughout the entire universe” (“Song of the Overcomers” in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). With tears in my eyes, I sang the hymn over and over. The more I sang, the more energized I became and I could feel the powerful life force of God’s words that fortified my heart and gave me staunch faith that God would certainly lead me to overcome the oppression of the dark forces, and help me endure all this cruel torture to stand firm in my witness. With the encouragement of God’s words, my physical pain dissipated and I actually felt myself draw closer to and become more intimate with God. I felt as though God were right by my side, accompanying me. His words moved my heart and I resolved that I would stand witness to satisfy God and would absolutely never capitulate to Satan!

After that, I was brought into the interrogation room where the first thing to come into view was a whole set of different implements of torture: A row of police batons, large and small, were hanging in a row on the wall, and next to the wall were leather batons, leather whips and a tiger bench. A few officers were right in the middle of beating a twenty-something male inmate with electric batons and leather whips. He had been badly cut and bruised and was mangled to an almost unrecognizable extent. A female officer walked in just then and, without saying a word, proceeded to kick me several times before grabbing me by the hair and slamming my head against the wall, which made a terrible thudding sound. My head was spinning, I felt dizzy and my head hurt so much I thought it would split open. As she beat me, she viciously snarled: “If you don’t come clean today, I’ll make sure you don’t live to see another day!” Two other male officers chimed in, threatening: “We’ve summoned officers from all the surrounding police stations. We’ve got all the time in the world to question you, one month, two months.... However long it takes to get the answers we need from you.” Hearing them say this, plus thinking of the cruel tactics those low-lives had used on me

before as well as the scene that had just transpired with that male inmate, my heart began to race and wave upon wave of fear and dread washed over me. All I could do was pray to God urgently. In that moment, God's words guided me, **"When people are ready to sacrifice their lives, everything becomes trifling, and no one can get the better of them. What could be more important than life? Thus, Satan becomes incapable of doing any more in people, there's nothing it can do with man. Although, in the definition of the 'flesh' it is said that the flesh is corrupted by Satan, if people truly give themselves over, and are not driven by Satan, then no one can get the better of them—and at this moment, the flesh will perform its another function, and begin to officially receive the direction of the Spirit of God"** ("Chapter 36" of Interpretations of the Mysteries of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words gave me a path of practice. I thought, "Indeed, Satan has seized upon this weakness of mine, my fear of death, to make me betray God, and God is using this situation to test the sincerity of my faith in Him. If I really think about it, my life is in God's hands, so why should I fear Satan? Now is the time for me to bear witness for God; only by offering up my life and not being constrained by death can I break free from Satan's influence and stand witness for God." Having thought through this, I no longer feared death and decided to offer up my life to satisfy God. When one of those evil policemen saw that I wasn't afraid, he yelled with rage, "If we don't teach you a lesson now, you'll think we don't know what to do with you!" and then they immediately locked me back up with the studded handcuffs, hung me by them high up on the iron grating of the window, and began to prod me with an electric baton. A strong electric current instantly surged through my entire body, causing me to continually shudder and convulse. The more I struggled, the tighter the handcuffs closed around my wrists; it was so painful that I thought my hands were about to fall off and my entire body was wracked with excruciating pain. Those two evil policemen kept taking turns torturing me with the batons which were making constant crackling sounds. Every time I was tased, my entire body would spasm and quake and I slowly began to go numb. Gradually, I began to lose consciousness and, finally, I blacked out. Some time later, I don't know how long, I was awoken by the cold. That pack of wicked officers, seeing that I was only wearing a thin layer of clothing, had intentionally opened all the windows to make me freeze. A frigid wind continually blew in from the window; I was so cold that my body had grown stiff and I could feel myself losing consciousness again, but then I had the clear thought: "I cannot break

down. I must stand witness for God even if it means my death!" Just then, I envisioned the Lord Jesus being crucified to save mankind: The Lord Jesus was beat to a bloody pulp and then nailed to the cross to complete the work of redemption of mankind. If God could give up His life to save mankind, why couldn't I repay just a little bit of God's love? God's love encouraged me and I prayed to God: "Oh God! You have given me this breath that I breathe, so should You wish to take it away, I willingly submit. It would be my greatest pride and honor to die for you!" I then gradually regained full consciousness. Thinking of how Peter, Stephen and other disciples had died in martyrdom, I couldn't help but quietly sing this church hymn that I knew well: "By God's disposing and by His arranging, I meet adversity and undergo trials. How can I lose heart, how can I hide? God's glory comes first. In adversity, God's words guide me and my faith is perfected. To God I give my utmost devotion, what matter if I die, God's will is higher than all. Unheeding the future, not reckoning gain or loss, I ask only that God be satisfied. I bear resounding witness and bring shame down on Satan, to God's greater glory. I pledge loyalty to the death to repay God's love, I praise Him with my whole heart. My eyes have seen the Sun of righteousness, truth reigns supreme on earth. Righteous and holy is God's disposition, worthy of mankind's praise. I love Almighty God with all my heart, I love Him forever" ("I Ask Only That God Be Satisfied" in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). The more I sang, the more moved and encouraged I became and my voice was choked with tears. I could feel God by my side, listening intently as I confided in Him. I had a feeling of warmth in my heart and I knew that God had been propping me up with His mighty hand all along so that I wouldn't fear the cold or dread my own death. In my heart, I made the following resolution: No matter what kind of torture and suffering may lay in wait, I swear on my life to stay loyal to the very end and stand witness to repay God's love!

On the morning of the following day, a policeman aggressively threatened me, saying, "You're lucky you didn't freeze to death last night, but if you don't talk today, I'll make sure your God can't save you!" I chuckled to myself, unperturbed. I thought, "God is the Creator of the heavens and earth and all things, He rules over everything, is all-powerful and full of authority. 'For he spoke, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.' My life is also in God's hands; if He wanted to save me now, wouldn't it be the easiest thing for Him? It's just that He wants to use you, you demon, to do service for Him." Just then, the wicked policeman prodded me again with his baton and a strong electric current surged through my

entire body, causing an excruciating pain that made me struggle and cry out involuntarily. That policeman just laughed uproariously and said: "Go ahead, scream! Call on your God to save you! If you beg me to save you, I promise I'll let you go!" Hearing the monstrous audacity of that officer's words filled me with the utmost rancor and I silently prayed to God: "Oh God! How savage the devil Satan is! It slanders and blasphemes You; it is Your irreconcilable enemy and is particularly my sworn enemy. No matter how Satan tortures me, I will not betray You. I only wish that my heart may be gained by You. These demons can harm my flesh, but they can never destroy my resolve to satisfy You. I would that You bestow me with strength." That heartless and maniacal cop jabbed at me with his baton relentlessly; when the first electric baton ran out of batteries, he switched to a new one and continued tasing me. I lost count of how many batons he went through in total. I felt that death was closing in on me and that there was no hope of survival. Consumed with negativity and despair, I could only desperately call out to God, entreating Him to protect me and save me. In that moment, a passage of God's word came to mind: **"God's life force can prevail over any power; moreover, it exceeds any power. His life is eternal, His power extraordinary, and His life force is not easily overwhelmed by any created being or enemy force. The life force of God exists and shines its brilliant radiance regardless of time or place. Heaven and earth may undergo great changes, but God's life is forever the same. All things may pass away, but God's life will still remain, for God is the source of the existence of all things and the root of their existence"** ("Only Christ of the Last Days Can Give Man the Way of Eternal Life" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words imbued me with limitless strength and immediately gave me incredibly strong faith in the midst of my weakness. I thought to myself: "Yes, I believe in the one and only Almighty God. God's life is everlasting and supernatural, and God's life force transcends everything and conquers all. All that is comes to be through God's words. All aspects of man, including his life and death are subject to God's arbitration. My life, even more so, is in God's hands and so how could Satan possibly exert control over my mortality? Take, for instance, how the Lord Jesus called out to Lazarus, whose body had already begun to rot in his tomb, saying, **"Lazarus, come forth"** (John 11:43) and Lazarus emerged from the tomb, risen from the dead. God's words possess authority and power; He created the world with His words and He uses His words to guide every age. Today, God is using His words to save and perfect us. I mustn't interpret things according to my notions and imagination any longer, but

must live according to God's words. Today, if God doesn't permit me to die, no matter how savagely Satan acts, it cannot take my life. As long as I can bring honor to God, I will die happily and willingly." Once I began living according to God's words and stopped worrying about my own mortality, a miracle took place: No matter how that wicked cop tased me, I no longer felt any suffering or pain and my mind was crystal clear. I was sure that this was God's protection and care—it was God's mighty hand propping me up. I truly experienced firsthand the awesome power of God's words, as well as the supernatural and extraordinary nature of God's life force. God's words are the truth and the reality of life. His life force cannot be suppressed by any force of darkness. No matter how the policemen inflicted all manner of torture and cruelty upon me, taking turns meting out their cruel punishment, I was able to endure all of it. This wasn't my own ability, but was entirely God's might and authority. If it hadn't been for God's words giving me strength and faith, I would have broken down long before. I had the profound sense that, when my flesh was at its weakest and I was plunged in the depths of suffering, God was always by my side, supporting me with His strong and powerful words of life, and safeguarding me at all times, so that my faith grew stronger within me and my resolve was hardened.

That night, they used a different torture technique on me. They handcuffed me in front of the window, exposing me to the frigid outside air and then they watched me in shifts to make sure that I didn't fall asleep. As soon as my eyes would begin to droop, they'd slap me across the face. I hadn't drunk a drop of water or had a morsel of food in two days, my entire body was devoid of strength, and my eyes were so swollen that I could barely open them. I felt a kind of inexpressible misery wash over me and wondered how much longer the torture would go on. The bone-chillingly frigid wind blew upon me continually and I shivered constantly with cold. The police, clothed in knee-length parkas, lounged with legs crossed in chairs before me, awaiting my surrender. In that moment, it was as if a scene of demons torturing someone in Hades was playing out before me, and I couldn't suppress my rage: Man was created by God and it is natural and right to worship Him, but the lowly, shameless, CCP government does not permit people to worship the true God. In order to establish a zone of atheism in the world and achieve their diabolical goal of controlling people perpetually and making them follow and worship them, they aggressively resist, disrupt and destroy God's work, using every despicable method at their disposal to cruelly persecute Almighty God's followers. That old demon has perpetrated the most monstrous of crimes—

it should be cursed and damned! Suddenly, a hymn of God's words came to mind, **"For thousands of years this has been the land of filth, it is unbearably dirty, misery abounds, ghosts run rampant everywhere, tricking and deceiving, making groundless accusations, being ruthless and vicious, trampling this ghost town and leaving it littered with dead bodies; the stench of decay covers the land and pervades the air, and it is heavily guarded. Who can see the world beyond the skies? How could the people of a ghost town such as this have ever seen God? Have they ever enjoyed the dearness and loveliness of God? ... Why put up such an impenetrable obstacle to the work of God? Why employ various tricks to deceive God's folk? Where is the true freedom and legitimate rights and interests? Where is the fairness? Where is the comfort? Where is the warmth? Why use deceitful schemes to trick God's people? Why use force to suppress the coming of God? Why hound God until He has nowhere to rest His head? How could this not incite fury? Thousands of years of hate are concentrated in the heart, millennia of sinfulness are inscribed upon the heart—how could this not inspire loathing? Avenge God, completely snuff out His enemy. Now is the time: Man has long since gathered all his strength, he has devoted all his efforts for this, to tear off the hideous face of this demon and allow people, who have been blinded, and have endured every manner of suffering and hardship, to rise up from their pain and turn their backs on this evil old devil"** ("Those in Darkness Should Rise Up" in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). I sang the hymn over and over in my heart. As I sang, the blood boiled in my veins and a fiery wrath welled inside of me; I vowed on my life to forsake Satan, that old demon, and I cried out in my heart: "You demon! If you think I'm going to betray God and abandon the true way, you've got another thing coming!" I knew clearly that it was God that had bestowed me with strength, that Almighty God's words had bolstered my spirit.

On the fifth day, my hands were engorged with blood, numbed and badly bloated from the handcuffs. I felt as if my body was coming apart at the seams, that thousands of insects were devouring me from the inside out. There are no words to describe the pain and agony. I prayed nonstop in my heart, begging God to give me the strength to overcome the weakness of my flesh. Time passed excruciatingly slowly and, gradually, the sky began to darken. I was thirsty and hungry, I was cold and shivering all over, and had been sapped of every last ounce of energy—I felt that I wouldn't be able to take it much longer. If this

continued any longer, I would certainly die of starvation or thirst. It was only then that I understood what that evil officer had meant when he said, “I’m going to make you beg to me.” He was trying to use his despicable tactics to force me to betray God. I couldn’t fall for his tricks; I had to rely upon God. As such, I called out to God again and again: “O Almighty God! I beg that You instill me with strength, so that I may rely upon You to overcome Satan’s cruel punishment and torture. Even if it means my death, I mustn’t betray You and become a Judas.” At that moment, God’s words enlightened me: **“Man’s life originates from God, the existence of heaven is because of God, and the existence of earth stems from the power of God’s life. No object possessed of vitality can transcend the sovereignty of God, and no thing with vigor can elude the domain of God’s authority”** (“Only Christ of the Last Days Can Give Man the Way of Eternal Life” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). God’s authoritative words gave me faith and strength. “It’s true,” I thought to myself, “God is the source of my life: As long as God doesn’t withdraw this breath from me, no matter how Satan tortures me and doesn’t allow me to eat or drink, I still won’t die. My life is in God’s hands, so what do I have to fear?” At that moment I became ashamed and embarrassed at my lack of faith in and understanding of God. I also realized that God was using this difficult environment to instill me with the following truth: **“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God”** (Matthew 4:4). I thus prayed to God: “Almighty God, Ruler of all! My life is in Your hands to manage and I am willing to submit to Your orchestrations and arrangements. No matter whether I live or die, I will accept all Your orchestrations.” After finishing my prayer, I felt my body become suffused with strength and I didn’t feel as hungry or thirsty as I had. It wasn’t until 8 p.m. that night that one of those wicked cops returned. He pinched my chin and, with a sinister grin, said to me, “So how’s it going, enjoying yourself? Are you ready to beg to me and tell me what I want to know? If you don’t talk, I have plenty of ways of dealing with you!” I closed my eyes and ignored him, and this sent him into a rage—he hurled insults and profanities at me as he grabbed me by the collar with one hand and viciously slapped me across both sides of my face with the other. I could feel my face swell up instantly, and it burned with pain. The wicked policeman’s savagery allowed me to clearly perceived his demonic essence; I hated him even more and felt even more driven to not capitulate to Satan’s tyranny. I became steadfast in my resolve to stand witness and satisfy God. In that moment, I no longer cared about my fleshly pain, but glared furiously at the policeman, thinking to myself, “You think you can

force me to betray God? Quit dreaming!” With God’s guidance, my heart was filled with faith and strength; no matter how the officer beat me, I never gave in to him. In the end, it was only after the officer had completely exhausted himself that he finally stopped.

After that, the policemen kept an even tighter watch on me. They worked in shifts, keeping a close eye on me at all times and if my eyes even slightly began to droop, they’d beat me awake with a rolled-up magazine. I clearly understood that they were doing this to wear down my resolve and take advantage of my compromised mental state to milk me for information on the church. At that point, I was already extremely physically weak and was starting to become dazed. The combination of cold, hunger and fatigue was overwhelming to the point that I wished for death. I felt as though I couldn’t hang on much longer; I was afraid that I wouldn’t be able to endure the pain and would unwittingly betray God. With this thought, I longed for death, thinking that at least if I died, I wouldn’t sell out the church and betray God. So I prayed to God: “Dear God, I can’t take it much longer. I’m afraid that I’ll give in and betray You. I pray that You safeguard my heart. I would rather die than become a Judas.” After that, I gradually began to lose consciousness, and in that daze my body suddenly felt very light, as if the cold wind had blown it dry. The handcuffs seemed to loosen around my wrists and I couldn’t tell if I was alive or dead. It wasn’t until early morning of the sixth day that I was smacked into consciousness by one of the officers; I realized I was still alive and was still hanging there by my handcuffs. That evil cop roared at me: “You’ve really done us in. Not a single one of us has had a good sleep, accompanying you in this little game all this time. If you don’t open your mouth today, I’ll see to it that you never open your mouth again!” Since all I wanted to do was die, I fired back at him fearlessly: “If you want to kill me or hack me to pieces, go right ahead!” That evil cop, however, just sneered and said: “So you want to die? No such luck! That would be making it far too easy on you! I’m gonna torture you nice and slow until you lose your mind, so that everyone knows that believing in Almighty God will make you go crazy, and then everyone will abandon your God!” When I heard him spew this demonic filth, I was thunderstruck and utterly speechless: This devil was incredibly ruthless and sinister! Immediately after that, the wicked cop ordered a subordinate to fetch a bowl of dark black liquid. My heart leaped up into my throat when I saw it and I urgently prayed to God: “O Almighty God! This wicked policeman is about to drug me to make me lose my mind. I beseech You to safeguard me. I would rather be poisoned to death than driven mad.” In that moment, God’s words floated up into my mind:

“His deeds are omnipresent, His power is omnipresent, His wisdom is omnipresent, and His authority is omnipresent. ... All things exist beneath His gaze, and moreover, all things live under His sovereignty. His deeds and His power leave mankind with no choice but to acknowledge the fact that He really does exist and holds sovereignty over all things. Nothing apart from Him can command the universe, much less endlessly provide for this mankind” (“Man Can Only Be Saved Amidst God’s Management” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). God’s words once again instilled me with faith and strength. I realized that God’s authority, power and deeds are all ubiquitous. He presides over the entire universe and, what’s more, He rules over the proliferation of all creatures in the universe. God is the eternal Ruler of all things and the power which He brandishes in ruling over all things is beyond the comprehension of a mere human. The life which God bestows upon man is not constrained by space or time. The devil Satan can only harm the flesh of human beings, but it entirely lacks control over our lives and our spirits. During Job’s trial, Satan could only torment Job and harm his flesh, but because God did not permit it to take his life, Satan was completely incapable of doing so. I thought to myself: “Today, the devils of Satan are trying to use their sinister tactics to destroy my flesh and get me to betray and abandon God. It vainly hopes to use drugs to turn me into a raving lunatic or a half-wit to shame God’s name, but what authority does Satan have? Without God’s permission, its every act is ineffectual—Satan is doomed to be defeated at God’s hand!” Realizing this left me with a sense of peace and serenity. Just then, that maniacal cop took hold of my jaw and forced that drug, both bitter and sour, down my throat. It quickly took effect; it felt like all of my internal organs were cramping up, squeezing against each other, as if they were being torn apart. That pain defies compare. I began to have trouble breathing and I took in big, deep breaths, gasping for air. I couldn’t move my eyes and I began to see double. Soon after, I lost consciousness. After some amount of time, who knows how long, I finally came to and seemed to vaguely hear someone say: “That bitch will either go insane or become a half-wit after taking that drug.” When I heard that, I knew that I had survived once again. I was very pleasantly surprised that I hadn’t gone crazy at all; rather, my mind felt crystal clear. This was certainly all due to God’s almightiness and wondrousness. I felt that this was Almighty God’s words working within me and that, once again, God had reached out His almighty hand and wrested me back from the devil’s clutches, enabling me to survive through this perilous situation. In that moment, I personally experienced the

credibility and authenticity of God's words and witnessed His supreme power and authority. What's more, I saw how God is the Creator of all things, and the one and only God Himself, Ruler of all things. I saw how my life, my everything, including every last nerve in my body, are all under God's control. Without God's permission, not a hair will drop from my head. God is my support and my salvation at every moment, in every place. That day in the demon's dark lair, Almighty God's words displayed their awesome power, showing me how God creates life's miracles time and again, and they allowed me to escape from the brink of death. I fervently sang Almighty God's praises within my heart and vowed to rely upon God to stand witness throughout this life-and-death battle.

The police tortured me for six whole days and nights. Not having had even a morsel of food or a drop of water during that whole time, I was extremely depleted, and when they saw that I was nearly at my last breath, they locked me up in a prison cell. Those six days of torture were like a trip through hell, and the fact that I was able to survive was entirely due to God's mercy and protection, and was an embodiment of the power and authority of His words. After a few days had passed the police came to interrogate me again. Because I had witnessed God's wondrous deeds on several occasions, plus I had experienced firsthand how God is my backup and all things are in God's hands, I felt calm and fearless in the face of another interrogation. In the interrogation room, I learned from an officer that they had already figured out my name and address and had gone to search my house. However, because my husband had long ago taken our kids and fled from home, they didn't find a single thing. He then once again tried to force me to divulge information about the church, but since I still wouldn't say anything, he became enraged and said: "You're a leader and a tough nut to crack at that! Because of you, I haven't had a good night's sleep in six days and you still haven't given us anything to work with." Seeing that he wasn't going to get anything out of me, he seemed to lose interest after that and carried out the rest of the interrogation in a hasty, perfunctory manner, and then all they could do was send me back to my cell. Seeing that God had prevailed and Satan had been vanquished left me indescribably elated—I thanked and praised God. I knew that the reason I had been able to stand witness before Satan was that God had guided me step by step, and God's word had enlightened me time and again, investing me with strength, bestowing me with wisdom, and giving me the power to overcome Satan and not capitulate to its tyranny.

After being detained in the detention house for four months, the CCP government

trumped up a charge of believing in a xie jiao and sentenced me to a year and a half in prison. I was sent to a women's prison in March of 2006 to serve out my sentence. While in jail, even though I was treated like an animal and often saw other inmates being beaten to death for no apparent reason, with God's safeguarding and protection as well as the guidance of His words, I managed to survive through a year and a half of torture and make it out of that hellish prison alive. After I was released, the wicked cops continued to dispatch officers to monitor me. They would often come to my house to harass me and, as a result, none of us in my family could practice our faith or perform our duties normally. Later on, thanks to the care and assistance of our brothers and sisters in the church, we were able to leave our house and move into a new house owned by one of the sisters. Relying upon the wisdom granted to us by God, we once again were able to perform our duties.

Undergoing the CCP government's cruel persecution gave me a clear and thorough view of Satan's demonic essence of brutal tyranny, sinister treachery, and maniacal resistance of God. What's more, I experienced God's supernatural and awesome vitality firsthand. Even though the wicked police subjected me to relentless beating and torture, cruel punishment and injury time and time again, seeking to rob me of my life, Almighty God's words revealed their supernatural vitality, allowing me to miraculously survive. In the midst of all these difficulties and this persecution, I truly experienced how God is the source of my life and God's grace and sustenance are at the root of my life continuing on. Without God's mighty hand propping me up, I would have been devoured by those demons long ago. God accompanied me the entire time, guiding me to overcome Satan time and again and stand witness for Him! Though I was subject to the inhumane torment of those demons and my flesh suffered greatly, this was all actually very beneficial for my life. It allowed me to see that not only is God mankind's life sustenance, but He also provides us with constant aid and support. As long as we live by God's words, we can overcome any satanic dark force. God's words really are the truth, the way and life! They possess the highest authority and most awesome power and can create miracles of life! May all glory, honor and praise go to the God of almighty wisdom!

12. God's Words Led Me to Bear Witness

By Xiao Min, Shandong Province

I was born in a poor, backward part of the countryside and lived a hard, impoverished life as a child. In order to achieve a better life as soon as possible, after I got married, I began to work like crazy. I ended up, however, getting sick from overwork, and I went from being fit and healthy to being wracked with illnesses. I lived in a state of pain caused by my illnesses and I sought medical advice and treatment wherever I could. I ended up spending a lot of money, but my illnesses never got any better. In the spring of 1999, two sisters preached the gospel of Almighty God's work of the last days to me. By reading Almighty God's words, I perceived the authority and power of God's words, I knew that no human being could possibly have spoken them, and that the words of Almighty God are indeed the voice of God. I became absolutely certain that Almighty God is the Lord Jesus returned, and that He can save us from all our pain. As I read God's words more and more, I came to understand some truths and I came to a thorough understanding of many things in the world. My pained, stifled spirit felt liberated, and I gradually recovered from my illnesses. My gratitude to God knew no bounds, and I began to actively preach the gospel and bear witness to God's work of the last days.

It was not long after, however, that I was arrested three times in succession by the CCP government for preaching the gospel, and each time I was arrested, Almighty God guided me to overcome the persecution of Satan. In 2012, in the course of performing my duty for the church, I once again fell into that monster's den and was subjected to torment at the hands of the devil Satan ...

Toward evening on September 13, 2012, I returned to my host home and, just as I always did, I parked my scooter outside and pressed the doorbell. To my surprise, no sooner had I opened the door than four burly men pounced on me like wolves. They twisted my arms behind my back and handcuffed me, then shoved me down onto a chair and pinned me there. Several policemen immediately began rummaging through my bag.... Faced with this sudden and ferocious display of force, I was dumbfounded with fright, and felt like a pitiful little lamb caught by vicious wolves, without any strength to resist whatsoever. They then took me out and put me into the back of a black sedan car. Inside the car, the police chief, looking like a pathetic little man intoxicated with his own success, turned and grinned

slyly at me, saying, “Hah! Do you know how we caught you?” Afraid that I might try to make a run for it, police officers held me down on either side, as though I were a dangerous criminal. I felt both angry and panicked, and I couldn’t guess how the police would punish and torment me. I was deeply afraid that I would not be able to withstand their torture and would become a Judas and betray God. But then I thought of God’s words: **“As long as you pray and supplicate before Me frequently, I will bestow all faith upon you. Those in power may seem vicious from the outside, but do not be afraid, for this is because you have little faith. As long as your faith grows, nothing will be too difficult”** (“Chapter 75” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). Almighty God’s words gave me faith and strength and, gradually, they helped me to calm down. “Yes,” I thought. “No matter how savage and fierce the wicked police are, they are just pawns in God’s hands and they are in God’s orchestrations. As long as I pray and call on God with a true heart, then God will be with me and there is nothing to worry about. If these wicked policemen torture and beat me cruelly, then that will just be God wanting to test my faith. No matter how they might torment my flesh, they can never stop my heart from looking to God and calling on God. Even if they kill my flesh, they cannot kill my soul, as everything I am is held in God’s hands.” Once I’d thought this, I no longer feared Satan the devil and I became resolved to stand witness for God. I therefore called out in my heart, “O Almighty God! No matter what they do to me today, I am willing to face it all. Though my flesh is weak, I wish to live in reliance on You and not give Satan even one chance to exploit me. Please protect me, let me not betray You, and let me not become a shameful Judas.” As we were driving along, I kept singing in my mind one of the church hymns: “By God’s disposing and by His arranging, I meet adversity and undergo trials. How can I lose heart, how can I hide? God’s glory comes first. In adversity, God’s words guide me and my faith is perfected. To God I give my utmost devotion, what matter if I die, God’s will is higher than all” (“I Ask Only That God Be Satisfied” in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). As I silently sang, my heart filled with inexhaustible strength, and I became determined to rely on the wisdom and strength God was giving me to fight Satan to the death. Once they had taken me into the interrogation room, I was surprised to see that a sister who performed the same church duty as me, the sister from my host home, and a church leader were there as well. They had all been caught too! One of the police officers saw me looking at my church sisters and he fixed me with his gaze and scolded me, saying, “What are you gawking at? Get in there!” To stop

us from talking to each other, the police locked us up in different interrogation rooms. They roughly searched me, undid my belt and frisked me all over. It felt like such a gross insult, and I saw how truly evil, despicable and mean these CCP government demon underlings are! I felt furious, but I had to choke on my fury, as there was no place in this den of monsters for reason. After they had confiscated a new scooter that belonged to the church and over 600 yuan I had on me, they began to question me. "What's your name? What's your position in the church? Who's your leader? Where are they now?" I made no answer, so the policeman roared at me, "Do you think we won't find out if you don't tell us? You have no idea what we can do! You should know that we've arrested your upper level leaders too!" They then proceeded to list a few names and asked if I knew any of them, and they continued to question me. "Where is all your church's money kept? Tell us!" I rebuffed everything they said, saying, "I don't know anyone! I don't know anything!" When they saw that their first round of questioning had failed, they decided to play their ace, and they began to take turns to interrogate and torment me in an attempt to wear me down. The police questioned and tormented me non-stop for three days and four nights. During this difficult time, I called on God in earnest, and God's words guided me: **"You shouldn't be afraid of this and that. No matter how many difficulties and dangers you face, you shall remain steady before Me; do not be obstructed by anything, so that My will can be carried out. This shall be your duty.... Be not afraid; with My support, who could ever block the road? Remember this! Remember! Everything that occurs is by My good intention and all is under My observation"** ("Chapter 10" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). "Yes!" I thought. "Almighty God is my strong tower, and with Almighty God as my staunch support, I have nothing to fear! As long as I have the faith to cooperate with God, then I believe that God will help me overcome Satan's temptations and get through this difficult time."

Because on the first day the police hadn't managed to get the information they wanted from me, they were shamed into anger, and a chief among them said fiercely to me, "I'm not going to give in to her recalcitrance. Torture her!" When I heard him say this, my spirit faltered and I began to be afraid, and I worried that I was already crumbling under their torment. All I could do was to call sincerely on God: "O Almighty God! I feel so weak right now and all strength has left me. But the police want to torture me and I really don't know if I can stay standing firm. Please be with me and give me strength." The police took my handcuffed

hands which were still behind my back and hung them on a broken table, then they forced me to maintain a half-squat position. They eyed me hostilely and pressed me with questions. “Where is your leader? Where is all the church’s money?” They were just itching for me to break under the pressure of that torture and capitulate to them. After the wicked police had continued this torment for about half an hour, my legs began to ache and tremble. My heart was beating hard and my arms were hurting badly too. I was at the limit of my endurance and I felt as though I couldn’t last a moment longer, and so I called out in earnest in my heart: “O Almighty God! Please save me. I can’t take it anymore. I don’t want to betray You as a Judas. Please protect me.” Just then, these words of God came to mind: **“Behind every step of work that God does in you is Satan’s wager with God—behind it all is a battle. ... When God and Satan do battle in the spiritual realm, how should you satisfy God, and how should you stand firm in your testimony to Him? You should know that everything that happens to you is a great trial and the time when God needs you to bear testimony”** (“Only Loving God Is Truly Believing in God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). God’s words awakened me and enabled me to realize that Satan was tormenting me in this way to make me betray God and give up pursuing the truth. This was a battle being waged in the spiritual realm: It was Satan trying to tempt me, and it was also God’s way of trying me. This was the very moment that God needed me to bear witness. God had expectations of me and so many angels were watching me right now, as was Satan the devil, all waiting for me to declare my position. I simply could not give up and lie down and I could not surrender to Satan; I knew I had to allow God’s work to be carried out through me in order to meet God’s will. By unalterable principle, this was the duty I should be performing as a created being—this was my calling. At this crucial juncture, my attitude and my behavior were to have a direct impact on my ability to bear victorious witness for God, and even more so were to have a direct impact on my ability to become a testimony to God’s defeat of Satan and His gaining of glory. I knew I could not cause God grief or disappoint Him, and I could not allow the cunning schemes of Satan that afflicted me to succeed. Thinking these thoughts, strength suddenly rose up in my heart and I said staunchly, “You can beat me to death, but I still don’t know anything!” Just then, a female police officer came into the room. She saw me and said, “Quickly, let her down. What are you trying to do, kill her? It’s on your head if something happens to her!” I knew in my heart that Almighty God had heard my prayers and had kept me safe from harm in this moment of danger. When the wicked

policemen let me down, I immediately crumpled to the floor. I couldn't stand, and my arms and legs had totally lost all feeling. I barely had the strength to breathe and couldn't feel my four limbs at all. I felt so scared right then and tears rolled ceaselessly from my eyes. I thought: "Am I going to end up crippled?" Despite this, however, the wicked policemen still didn't let me go. With one on either side of me, they took hold of my arms and dragged me like a corpse over to a broken chair, and pushed me down onto it. One of the policemen said viciously, "If she doesn't speak then hang her up with rope!" Very quickly, the other wicked policeman took out a thin nylon rope and used it to hang my handcuffed hands onto a heating pipe. My arms were immediately pulled straight, and my back and shoulders soon began to hurt. The wicked policemen kept on questioning me, asking, "Are you going to tell us what we want to know?" Still, I made no answer. They got so angry that they threw a cup of water in my face, saying it was to wake me up. By this time, I had already been tortured to the point where I had not even an ounce of strength left, and my eyes were so tired I couldn't even open them. Seeing that I remained silent, one of the wicked policemen meanly and shamelessly forced my eyes open with his hands to make fun of me. After undergoing several hours of interrogation and torture, the wicked policemen had gone through every trick in their book, but their attempts to make me talk had, once again, all ended in failure.

Seeing that they couldn't get anything out of me by questioning me, the wicked policemen decided to employ a devilish plot: They had someone from the city who called himself an "interrogation expert" come to deal with me. They took me to another room and ordered me to sit on a metal chair, then they chained my ankles tightly to the chair legs and my hands to the chair arms. A little while later, a bespectacled, refined-looking man came in with a briefcase. He smiled broadly at me and, pretending to be nice, he undid the chains holding my hands and ankles to the chair and allowed me to sit on a cot bed to one side of the room. One moment he was pouring me a cup of water, then he was treating me with sweets. He came up to me and said with feigned friendliness, "Why suffer like this? You've suffered so much, but actually it's not that big a deal. Tell us what we want to know, and everything will be alright..." Faced with this new situation, I didn't know how I should be cooperating with God, so I hurriedly prayed to God in my heart and called on Him to enlighten me and guide me. Just then, I thought of Almighty God's words: "**[Y]ou must endure any trials, and accept all that comes from Me. You must follow whatever the Holy Spirit does to lead you. You must have a keen spirit and the ability to distinguish things.**"

You must understand people and not blindly follow others, keep your spiritual eyes bright and possess a thorough knowledge of things” (“Chapter 18” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God’s words showed me the path of practice and helped me to realize that a devil will always be a devil, and that a devil can never change its demonic God-resisting, God-hating essence. Whether they use hard tactics or soft tactics, their goal is always to make me betray God and forsake the true way. Thanks to the warning of God’s words, I came to have some discernment of Satan’s cunning schemes, my mind cleared, and I was able to take a firm stand. The interrogator then said to me, “The CCP government forbids people from believing in God. If you continue to believe in Almighty God, then your whole family will be implicated, and it will affect the futures, the employment prospects, and the civil service prospects of the children in your family. You’d better think it over carefully...” After he’d said this, a battle began to rage within me, and I felt doubly disturbed. Just as I was feeling lost, I suddenly thought of Peter’s experiences when he successfully stood witness before Satan; Peter always tried to understand God through every cunning scheme Satan threw at him. And so, deep in my heart, I looked to God and entrusted everything to Him, and I sought God’s will. Without being aware of it, Almighty God’s words came into my mind: **“Only God consoles this mankind, and only God cares for this mankind night and day. Human development and progress are inseparable from the sovereignty of God, and the history and future of mankind are inextricable from the designs of God. ... God alone knows the fate of a country or nation, and God alone controls the course of this mankind”** (“God Presides Over the Fate of All Mankind” in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God’s words filled me with light. “Yes!” I thought. “God is the Creator and our fate as mankind is in God’s hands. Satan the devil is of the ilk that defies God. If they can’t even alter their own destiny of being doomed to hell, then how could they rule the fate of man? Man’s destiny is predestined by God, and whatever jobs my children might do in the future and however their prospects will be is up to God—Satan has no control over these things whatsoever.” Thinking this, I became able to see even more clearly how despicable and shameless Satan and demons are. So as to force me to deny God and reject God, it was employing insidious and vile tactics—these “mind games”—to lure me into being duped. Had it not been for the timely enlightenment and guidance of Almighty God, I would already have been overthrown and taken captive by Satan. Now that I knew how despicable and evil Satan was, my confidence to not give in to

its cunning schemes was strengthened. In the end, the wicked policeman was at a loss and didn't know what else to do, and so he left in dejection.

On the third day, the chief of the police saw that they'd gotten no information out of me and became furious, complaining about his underlings for their incompetence. He came to me and, with a mirthless smile on his face, spoke sarcastically, saying, "Why haven't you come clean yet? Who do you think you are, Liu Hulan? You think we've already done our worst so you're not afraid, huh? Why doesn't your Almighty God come and save you? ..."

As he spoke, he frightened me by waving a small taser in front of my eyes that crackled and flashed with blue light, then he pointed at a large taser that was currently being charged and threatened me, saying, "Do you see that? This small taser will soon run out of power. In a moment, I'll use that fully charged large taser to electrocute you, and then we'll see if you talk! I know you'll start talking then!" I looked at the large taser and I couldn't help but begin to panic: "This wicked policeman is so fierce and diabolical. Will he end up killing me? Will I be able to endure this torment? Will I be electrocuted to death?" In that moment, weakness, cowardliness, and the pain and helplessness I felt all flooded my mind.... I hurriedly called on God: "O Almighty God, though my flesh is in great pain and is so weak, I'm still not willing to give Satan what it wants. My flesh is lowly and worthless, and I wish only for You to gain my heart and to accept my heart. Please protect me and keep me from betraying You and becoming a traitorous Judas." As I called on God, several lines from a hymn of God's words drifted into my mind: **"Faith is like a single log bridge, those who cling abjectly to life will have difficulty in crossing it, but those who are ready to sacrifice themselves can pass over without worry. If man has timid and fearful thoughts, they are being fooled by Satan. It fears that we will cross the bridge of faith to enter into God"** ("The Onset of Illness Is God's Love" in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). These words of the Lord Jesus also came to mind: **"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell"** (Matthew 10:28). God's words caused my tears to flow freely—I felt incredibly moved. The strength in my heart was like a raging fire. "Even if I die today," I thought, "what is there to fear? It is a glorious thing to die for God, and I will give up everything to fight with Satan to the death!" Just then, some lines from another hymn of God's words came to mind: **"On the road to Jerusalem, Jesus was in agony, as if a knife were being twisted in His heart, yet He had not the slightest intention of going back on His word; always there was a**

powerful force compelling Him onward to where He would be crucified. Ultimately, He was nailed to the cross and became the likeness of sinful flesh, completing the work of the redemption of mankind” (“Emulate the Lord Jesus” in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). I sang and sang in my heart, and tears fell ceaselessly down my cheeks. The scene of the Lord Jesus Christ being crucified played before my very eyes: The Lord Jesus was mocked, reviled and slandered by the Pharisees, His executioner lashed Him with an iron-clasped whip until He was covered in cuts and bruises, until finally He was cruelly nailed to the cross, and yet He never made a sound.... Everything the Lord Jesus went through was suffered for the sake of His love for mankind, and this love overcame His love for His own life. At that moment, my heart was inspired and moved by God’s love, and I was filled with tremendous strength and faith. I felt unafraid of anything, and I felt like it would be glorious to die for God, whereas to be a Judas would be the greatest shame. To my surprise, when I decided I would stand witness for God even at the cost of my own life, God aided me once again to escape the clutches of death, and He opened up a way out for me. At that moment, a wicked policeman ran into the room, saying, “There’s trouble at the city square, we have to mobilize the police force to suppress it and maintain public order!” The wicked policemen hurried away. By the time they got back, it was late into the night, and they didn’t have the energy to interrogate me anymore. They said viciously to me, “Since you won’t talk, we’ll send you to the detention house!”

On the morning of the fourth day, the wicked policemen took my photo and hung a big square sign around my neck with my name written on it with a brush. I was like a denounced criminal, being mocked and ridiculed by the wicked police. I felt like I was being subjected to the greatest humiliation, and I felt very weak inside. I realized that my state of mind was not right, however, and so I hurriedly called on God silently in my heart: “O God! Please protect my heart and enable me to understand Your will and not fall prey to Satan’s cunning schemes.” After praying, a passage of God’s words appeared clearly in my mind: **“You are a created being—you should of course worship God and pursue a life of meaning. ... Since you are a human being, you should expend yourself for God and endure all suffering! You should gladly and assuredly accept the little suffering you are subjected to today and live a meaningful life, like Job, like Peter. ... You are people who pursue the right path, those who seek improvement. You are people who rise up in the nation of the great red dragon, those whom God calls righteous. Is that not the**

most meaningful life?” (“Practice (2)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). God’s words carried authority and might, they filled my heart with light and dispelled all darkness, and they enabled me to understand the meaning and value of life. They allowed me to understand that, to be able to pursue the truth as a created being, and to live to worship God and satisfy God, was the most meaningful and worthwhile life. To be able today to be captured and detained for my belief in God, to suffer all this humiliation and pain, and to be able to share in the tribulations and in the kingdom of Christ, was not a shameful thing, but a glorious one. Satan does not worship God; on the contrary, it does all it can to interrupt and obstruct God’s work, and this is what is most shameful and despicable. Thinking these thoughts, I became filled with strength and joy. The wicked policemen saw the smile on my face and gazed at me in amazement, and said, “What do you have to be happy about?” I replied justly and forcefully, “It is perfectly justified to believe in God and worship God. There is absolutely nothing wrong with doing so. Why shouldn’t I be happy?” Under the guidance of God, I was once again able to rely on God to overcome Satan.

I was then taken into the detention house. Everything in that place was even more gloomy and frightening, and I felt like I’d descended into some sort of hell. For every meal, I was given a small black piece of steamed bread and some boiled bok choy in a bowl of clear soup with a few vegetable leaves floating on the top. I was so hungry all day every day, my stomach was crying out for food. Despite this, however, I still had to work like a beast of burden, and if I didn’t meet my quota, I was beaten or made to stand guard as a punishment. Because this cruel torment went on for days and days, I was bruised and injured from head to toe, and it became hard even to walk, but the correctional officers still forced me to carry heavy loads of copper wire. Because of this heavy work, my injured back became unbearably painful, and all I could do at the end of each day was crawl onto my bed. But at nighttime, the wicked police would make me stand guard for the prisoners as well, and this excessive and exhausting work was impossible to bear. One night while I was on guard duty, I took advantage of the wicked police’s absence and, stealthily, I crouched down, hoping to have a rest. Unexpectedly, however, a wicked policeman saw me on camera in the surveillance room and stormed over to me bellowing, “Who said you could sit down?” One of the other prisoners whispered to me, “Hurry and apologize to him, or else he’ll make you ‘sleep on the wooden bed.’” By this, she meant the torture where a wooden door board is taken into the prisoner’s cell, their legs and feet are chained to it, and their wrists are

roped to it. The prisoner is then tied to the board, and they are not allowed to move again for two weeks. Hearing this, I was filled with both anger and hatred, but I knew I couldn't show even the slightest bit of resistance—all I could do was swallow my anger. I found such bullying and torture hard to bear. That night, I lay on my freezing cold bed crying at the injustice of it all, my heart filled with complaints and demands toward God, thinking: "When will this end? Just one day in this hellish place is one day too many." I then thought of God's words: **"If you understand the significance of human life and have taken the right path of human life, and if in the future, no matter how God deals with you, you will submit to His designs without any complaints or choices, and you will not have any requirements of God, this way you will be a person of value"** ("How You Should Walk the Final Stretch of the Path" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). God's words made me ashamed of myself. I thought of how I always said that I would endure any pain for God, that I would always obey God in every way, like Peter did, no matter how great the pain or hardship, and that I would make no decisions or demands for my own sake. When persecution and hardship befell me, however, and I had to suffer and pay the price, I wholly failed to live out my words in reality. I was filled with unreasonable demands for God and opposition to God, and I just wanted to escape this predicament so that my flesh would no longer suffer—how could I possibly gain the truth and life God was giving me by doing that? Only then did I finally understand God's good intentions: God was allowing this misery to befall me to temper my resolve to endure suffering, and to allow me to learn how to obey in my suffering, so that I would be able to submit to God's orchestrations and be qualified to receive His promise. Everything God was doing to me was being done out of love, it was being done to save me, and it was being done to change me into a genuine human being. My heart was thereafter liberated, and I no longer felt wronged or pained. All I wanted was to submit to God's orchestrations and arrangements, to cooperate in earnest with God in this situation, and to seek to gain the truth.

A month later, although they hadn't gotten much evidence out of me, the police let me go. They did, however, label me with the charge of "disrupting enforcement of the law and taking part in a xie jiao organization" so as to restrict my personal freedom. For one year, I was not permitted to leave the province or the municipality, and I had to be at the police's beck and call whenever they wanted me. Only after I got back home did I find out that all the belongings I had kept at the host home had been robbed and taken by the police. Besides

this, the wicked police had ransacked my home like brigands, and had threatened my family, saying that they had to hand over 25,000 yuan before they would let me go. My mother-in-law couldn't stand the fright of it all and had a heart attack, and only recovered after being admitted to hospital and receiving treatment, at the cost of over 2,000 yuan. In the end, my family was forced to ask everyone they knew to lend them money so they could scrape together 3,000 yuan for the police, and only then was I released. Due to the cruel tortures inflicted on me by the wicked police, my body has been left suffering with severe aftereffects: My arms and legs often swell up and become sore due to the severe stress put on them during my incarceration; I cannot even lift two and a half kilos of vegetables or wash my clothes, and I have completely lost the ability to work. The cruel persecution inflicted on me by the CCP government has made me hate Satan even more—I hate this reactionary, heaven-defying devil Satan.

Through experiencing this persecution and hardship, I have truly come to appreciate that God's work really is so practical and wise. During my suffering, God instilled the truth in me, little by little, thus enabling me to leave the darkness behind, escape death, and win freedom and liberation in the truth. This is how God guided me to overcome Satan, again and again, through the persecution and hardships inflicted on me by Satan. He allowed me to gain the watering and supply of His words, to understand the truth and develop discernment, and He tempered my will, perfected my faith, taught me to look to Him and rely on Him, and my life gradually grew and matured. I truly came to see that God is already victorious and that Satan is already defeated, just as it is sung in this hymn of God's words: **"Proof of the great red dragon's progressive collapse can be seen in the continued maturation of the people. This can be obviously seen by anyone. The maturation of the people is a sign of the enemy's demise. God personally goes to the place where the great red dragon lies coiled, to do battle with it. And when all of humanity comes to know Him from within the flesh, and is able to see His deeds from within the flesh, then the great red dragon's lair will turn to ashes and vanish without a trace"** ("The Great Red Dragon Collapses as God's People Grow" in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs).

13. Spending the Prime of Youth in Prison

By Chenxi, Hebei Province

Everyone says the prime of our youth is the most splendid and purest time of life. Perhaps for many, those years are full of beautiful memories, but what I never would have expected was that I spent the prime of my own youth in prison. You might think me strange for this, but I do not regret it. Even though that time behind bars was full of bitterness and tears, it was the most precious gift of my life, and I gained a great deal from it.

I was born into a happy family, and as a child I worshiped Jesus along with my mom. When I was fifteen, my family and I, convinced that Almighty God is the returned Lord Jesus, gladly accepted His work of the last days.

One day in April of 2002, when I was seventeen, a sister and I were out fulfilling our duties. At 1 a.m. in the morning, we were soundly asleep at our host's house when we were suddenly awakened by some loud, urgent bangs on the door. We heard someone outside yelling, "Open the door! Open the door!" No sooner had the sister who was hosting us opened it than several police officers abruptly pushed the door open and swarmed inside, saying aggressively, "We're from the Public Security Bureau." Hearing these three words, "Public Security Bureau," made me immediately nervous. Were they here to arrest us for our belief in God? I had heard about some brothers and sisters being arrested and persecuted over their faith; could it be that this was now happening to me? Just then my heart began to beat wildly, and in my panic, I didn't know what to do. I therefore hurriedly prayed to God: "God, I implore You to be with me. Give me faith and courage. No matter what happens, I will always be willing to stand witness for You. I also beseech You to give me Your wisdom and grant me with the words I should say, and please keep me from betraying You and from selling out my brothers and sisters." After praying, my heart gradually calmed down. I saw the four or five evil policemen rifling through the place like bandits, searching through the bedding, through each cabinet and box, and even what was under the bed until finally they came up with some books of God's words as well as some CDs of hymns. The chief said to me in a deadpan voice, "Your possession of these things is evidence that you believe in God. Come with us and you can make a statement." Shocked, I said, "If there is something to say, I can just say it here; I don't want to go with you." He immediately put on a smile and replied, "Don't be afraid; let's just take a little trip to make a

statement. I'll bring you back here very soon." Taking him at his word, I went with them and got into the police car.

It never occurred to me that that little trip would be the beginning of my life in prison.

As soon as we entered the courtyard of the police station, those evil police officers started shouting at me to get out of the vehicle. Their facial expressions had changed very quickly, and suddenly they seemed to be completely different people from who they had been before. When we got to the office, several burly officers came in after us and stood to my left and right. Their power over me now secured, the chief of the group of evil policemen bellowed at me, "What are you called? Where are you from? How many of you are there altogether?" I had just opened my mouth and was in the middle of responding when he lunged at me and slapped me twice in the face—smack, smack! I was stunned into silence. I wondered to myself, "Why did you hit me? I didn't even finish answering. Why are you being so rough and uncivilized, completely different from what I'd imagined the People's Police to be like?" Next, he went on to ask me how old I was, and when I answered honestly that I was seventeen, he twice smacked my face again and scolded me for telling lies. After that, no matter what I said, he indiscriminately delivered slap after slap to my face to the point where I was seeing stars, my head was spinning, there was a ringing sound in my ears, and my face was on fire with pain. It was then that I finally understood: These evil policemen had not brought me there to ask me any questions at all; they simply wanted to use violence to force me into submission. I recalled having heard my brothers and sisters say that trying to reason with these vicious policemen wouldn't work, but instead would just cause no end of trouble. Now, having experienced this for myself, from then on I didn't utter a word no matter what they asked. When they saw that I wasn't talking, they screamed at me, "You bitch! I'll give you something to think about, otherwise you won't give us a truthful account!" As this was said, one of them punched me fiercely two times in the chest, causing me to stagger and fall heavily to the floor. He then kicked me hard a couple of times, pulled me back up from the floor, and yelled at me to kneel down. I did not obey, so he kicked me a few times in the knees. The wave of intense pain that swept over me forced me to fall to my knees on the floor with a thump. He grabbed me by the hair and pulled downward forcefully, and then suddenly yanked my head backward, forcing me to look up. He cursed at me while slapping my face a couple more times, and my only sensation was that the world was spinning. Presently, I fell to the floor. Just then, the head of the evil police suddenly spotted

the watch on my wrist. Staring at it covetously, he shouted, "What are you wearing there?" Right away, one of the policemen grabbed my wrist and forcefully pulled the watch off it, then gave it to his "master." Seeing such despicable behavior filled me with hatred for them. After that, as they asked me more questions, I just glared at them in silence, and that aggravated them even further. One of the vicious policemen grabbed me by the collar as if he were picking up a little chicken, and raised me up from the floor to roar at me, "Oh, you're so big and strong, aren't you? This is what you get for staying quiet!" As he said this, he hit me fiercely a couple more times, and I again was beaten to the floor. By then my whole body was aching unbearably, and I no longer had any strength to struggle. I just lay on the floor with my eyes closed, not moving. In my heart, I urgently supplicated to God: "O God, I don't know what further savage acts this gang of evil policemen is going to do to me. You know I am small in stature, and that I am physically weak. I implore You to protect me. I would rather die than be a Judas and betray You." After concluding my prayer, God invested me with faith and strength. I would sooner die than be a Judas by betraying God and selling out my brothers and sisters. I would resolutely stand witness for God. Just then, I heard someone next to me say, "How come she's not moving anymore? Is she dead?" After that, someone deliberately stepped on my hand and pressed down hard on it with his foot while bellowing ferociously, "Get up! We're gonna take you somewhere else. If you still won't talk when we get there, you'll get what's coming to you!" Because God had granted me faith and strength, I was not at all frightened by their intimidation. In my heart, I was prepared to fight against Satan.

Later, I was escorted to the County Public Security Bureau. When we got to the interrogation room, the head of those evil policemen and two others surrounded me and questioned me repeatedly, pacing back and forth in front of me and trying to force me to sell out my church's leaders and my brothers and sisters. When they saw that I still wasn't going to give them the answers they wanted to hear, the three of them took turns slapping me in the face over and over. I don't know how many times I was hit; all I could hear was the smacking sound as they hit my face, a sound that seemed to ring out against the quiet of the dead of night. Their hands now sore, the evil police began to hit me with books. They beat me until I finally couldn't even feel the pain anymore; my face just felt swollen and numb. In the end, seeing that they weren't going to get any valuable information out of me, the vicious policemen took out a contact book and, pleased with themselves, said, "We found

this in your bag. Even if you won't tell us anything, we still have another trick up our sleeve!" Suddenly, I felt extremely anxious: If any of my brothers or sisters answered the phone, it could lead to their being arrested. It could also link them to the church, and the consequences could be disastrous. Just then, I recalled a passage of God's words: "**Of everything that occurs in the universe, there is nothing that I do not have the final say in. What exists that is not in My hands?**" ("Chapter 1" of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). "That's right," I thought to myself. "All things and events are orchestrated and arranged in God's hands. Even whether or not a phone call goes through is entirely up to God to decide. I am willing to look up to and rely upon God and submit to His orchestrations." I therefore repeatedly prayed to God, imploring Him to protect these brothers and sisters. As a result, they dialed once through those phone numbers, and some of the calls rang out without anyone answering while others could not get through at all. In the end, spitting curses in frustration, the evil cops tossed the contact book on the table and stopped trying. This was truly an example of God's almightiness and sovereignty and of His wondrous deeds; I could not help but express my thanks and praise to God.

Nevertheless, they had not given up, and continued to interrogate me about the church's affairs. I did not answer. Flustered and exasperated, they came up with an even more despicable move to try to make me suffer: One of the evil policemen forced me to maintain a half squat position, and I had to hold my arms out level with my shoulders and was not allowed to move at all. Before long, my legs began to tremble and I couldn't hold my arms out straight anymore, and my body involuntarily began to stand back up. The policeman took an iron bar and glared at me like a tiger eyeing its prey. No sooner had I stood up than he brutally beat me on the legs, causing so much pain that I nearly fell back onto my knees. Over the next half hour, whenever my legs or arms moved even the slightest bit, he would immediately beat me with the bar. I don't know how many times he hit me. Due to having maintained this half squat position for such a long time, both of my legs grew extremely swollen, and they hurt unbearably as though they had fractured. As time went by, my legs were shaking even harder and my teeth were chattering continuously. Just then, it felt like my strength was going to give out and that I might faint. However, the evil police just mocked and ridiculed me from one side, constantly sneering and laughing nastily at me, like people cruelly trying to get a monkey to do tricks. The more I looked at their ugly, despicable

faces, the more hatred I felt for these evil policemen. I suddenly stood and said to them in a loud voice, "I will not squat anymore. Go ahead and sentence me to death! Today I have nothing to lose! I am not even afraid to die, so how could I be scared of you? Such big men you are, yet all you seem to know how to do is bully a little girl like me!" To my surprise, after I said this, the group of evil police shouted a few more curse words and then stopped interrogating me. At that point I felt very excited, and I understood that all things and events are orchestrated in God's hands: Once I had rid my heart of fear, my situation changed accordingly. Deep in my heart I truly realized the significance of God's words: **"The king's heart is in the hand of Jehovah, as the rivers of water: He turns it wherever He will'; then how much more so with those nobodies?"** ("Only by Knowing God's Almightyness Can You Have a True Belief" in Records of Christ's Talks). I understood that today, God had allowed Satan's persecution to befall me, not to intentionally cause me to suffer, but rather to use it to allow me to realize the power of God's words, lead me to break away from the control of Satan's dark influence, and moreover, to let me learn to rely on God and look up to God in this dangerous situation.

This pack of evil policemen had tormented me most of the night; by the time they stopped, it was daylight. They had me sign my name and said they were going to detain me. After that, an elderly policeman, feigning kindness, said to me, "Miss, look, you are so young—in the flower of your youth—so it is best if you hurry up and tell us all you know. I guarantee that I will make them release you. If you have any trouble, do not hesitate to tell me. Look, your face has swollen up like a loaf of bread. Haven't you suffered enough?" Hearing him speak in this way, I knew he was just trying to lure me into making some sort of confession. I also recalled something my brothers and sisters had said during meetings: In order to get what they wanted, the evil police will use both carrot and stick and resort to all manner of tricks to deceive people. Thinking of this, I replied to the elderly policeman, "Don't act like you are a good person; you're all part of the same group. What do you want me to confess? What you're doing is called extorting a confession. This is illegal punishment!" Hearing this, he put on an innocent expression and argued, "But I haven't hit you once. They are the ones who hit you." I was grateful for God's guidance and protection, which allowed me to once again prevail over Satan's temptation.

After leaving the County Public Security Bureau, straight away they locked me up in the detention house. As soon as we walked in the front gate, I saw the place was surrounded

by very tall walls with electrified concertina wire on top of them, and in each of the four corners was what looked like a sentry tower, within which armed policemen stood guard. It all felt very sinister and terrible. After passing through iron gate after iron gate, I arrived at the cell. When I saw the dilapidated, linen-covered quilts atop the freezing cold kang bed, which were both dark and dirty, and smelled the pungent, foul scent coming from them, I could not help but feel a wave of disgust pass through me, quickly followed by a wave of sadness. I thought to myself: "How can people live here? This is nothing more than a pigsty." At mealtime, each prisoner was only given a small steamed bun that was sour and half-raw. Even though I hadn't eaten all day, seeing this food really made me lose my appetite. On top of that, my face was so swollen from being beaten by the police, and it felt taut as though wrapped in tape. It hurt even just opening my mouth to talk, let alone to eat. Under these circumstances, I was in a very gloomy mood and felt much wronged. The thought that I would actually have to stay here and endure such an inhuman existence made me so emotional that I involuntarily shed some tears. Just then, I recalled God's words: **"It can be said that whenever you encounter things that do not fit with your notions and that require you to put yourself aside, those things are your trials. Before God's will is revealed, everyone goes through a rigorous test and an immense trial. Can you fathom this?"** ("Only Putting the Truth Into Practice Is Possessing" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). As I contemplated God's words, I understood God's will. He had allowed this environment to befall me, and this was Him trialing and testing me to see if I could stand witness for Him. In this evil, dark time, had I not been fortunate enough to be lifted up by God so that I could follow Him, then there was no telling what sort of situation I would have been in, or whether or not I would even have still been alive. That I felt wronged and sad over this little bit of suffering, and unwilling to accept it, showed that I really lacked conscience and reason. Realizing this, I stopped feeling wronged, and within me I began to resolve myself to endure my hardship.

Two weeks went by, and the head of those evil policemen again came to interrogate me. Seeing me remain calm and composed, without any fear at all, he shouted my name and yelled, "Tell me truthfully: Where else have you been arrested before? This is certainly not your first time inside; otherwise, how could you act so calm and seasoned, as if you're not afraid in the least?" When I heard him say this, I could not help but thank and praise God in my heart. God had protected me and given me courage, thus allowing me to face these

evil policemen with complete fearlessness. Just then, anger welled up from within my heart: You are abusing your power by persecuting people for their religious beliefs, and you arrest, bully, and injure those who believe in God without reason. You abide by no law, neither earthly nor heavenly. I believe in God and I walk the right path, and I have not broken the law. Why should I be afraid of you? I will not succumb to the evil forces of your gang! I then retorted, "Do you think everywhere else is so boring that I'd actually want to come here? You have wronged me and pushed me around! Any further efforts of yours to extort a confession or frame me will be useless!" Upon hearing this, he grew so angry that smoke seemed about to billow out of his ears. He screamed, "You're too goddamned stubborn to tell us anything. You won't talk, will you? I'm going to give you a three-year sentence, and then we'll see whether you start behaving. I dare you to keep being stubborn!" By then I felt beyond indignant. In a loud voice I replied, "I'm still young, so what is three years to me? I'll be out of prison in the blink of an eye." In his anger, the evil policeman stood abruptly and growled at his lackeys, "I quit. You go ahead and interrogate her." He then left, slamming the door behind him. Seeing what had happened, the two policemen did not question me any further; they just finished writing a statement for me to sign and then walked out. Seeing how defeated the evil police looked made me very happy, and in my heart I praised God's victory over Satan.

During the second round of interrogation, they switched tactics. As soon as they walked in the door, they pretended to be concerned about me: "You've been in here for so long. How come none of your family members have come to see you? They must have given up on you. How about you give them a call yourself and ask them to come visit you?" Hearing this made me feel sick at heart and upset, and I wondered: "Could Mom and Dad really have stopped caring about me? It's been two weeks already, and surely they know about my being arrested. How could they have the heart to let me suffer in here without even coming to see me?" The more I thought about this, the lonelier and more helpless I felt. I was homesick and missed my parents, and my desire for freedom was growing more and more intense. Involuntarily, my eyes brimmed with tears, but I didn't want to cry in front of this gang of evil policemen. Silently, I prayed to God: "O God, right now I feel so miserable and in pain, and I feel very helpless. I beseech You to stop my tears from falling, for I do not want to let Satan see my weakness. However, right now I cannot grasp Your will. I beg You to enlighten and guide me." After praying, an idea suddenly flashed through my mind: This was Satan's

cunning ruse; the police had sown dissension, attempting to twist my view of my parents and stir up hatred of them, so that I might be unable to withstand this blow and thereby betray God. Furthermore, their trying to make me contact my family might well have been a trick to get them to bring ransom money, thus achieving their goal of raking in some money; or perhaps they might have known that my family members all believed in God and had wanted to use this opportunity to arrest them. These evil policemen really were full of schemes. Had it not been for God's enlightenment, I might have telephoned home. Would I not then have indirectly been a Judas? So, I secretly declared to Satan: "Vile devil, I simply will not allow you to succeed in your deception. From now on, whether it be blessings or calamities that befall me, I will bear them alone; I refuse to involve my family members, and absolutely will not interfere with my parents' faith or the fulfillment of their duties." At the same time, I also silently supplicated to God to stop my parents from visiting me, lest they fall into the trap laid by these evil policemen. I then said nonchalantly, "I don't know why my family members haven't come to see me. I don't care no matter what you do to me!" The evil police had no more cards to play. After that, they didn't interrogate me again.

A month went by. One day, my uncle suddenly came to visit me, saying he was trying to get me out of there, and that I should be released a few days later. When I walked out of the visitation room, I felt extremely happy. I thought I would finally be able to see the light of day again, as well as my brothers, sisters, and loved ones. So I started daydreaming and looking forward to my uncle coming to get me. Every day, I kept my ears open for the sound of the guards' calling to me that it was time to leave. Sure enough, a week later, a guard did come calling. My heart felt about to beat right out of my chest as I joyously arrived at the visitation room. However, when I saw my uncle, he hung his head down. It was a long time before he said in a dispirited tone, "They've already finalized your case. You've been sentenced to three years." When I heard this, I was stunned and my mind went completely blank. I fought back the tears, and managed to keep from crying. It was like I couldn't hear anything my uncle said after that. I stumbled out of the visitation room in a trance, my feet feeling as though they were filled with lead, with each step heavier than the one before. I have no recollection of how I walked back to my cell. When I got there, I collapsed to the floor. I thought to myself, "Each day of the past month and more of this inhuman existence has felt like a year; how will I be able to make it through three long years of this?" The more I dwelled on it, the more my anguish grew, and the more indistinct and unfathomable my

future began to seem. Unable to keep them back any longer, I burst into tears. In my heart, however, I knew without a doubt that no one could help me anymore; I could only rely on God. In my grief, I again came before God. I opened up to Him, saying, “O God, I know that all things and all events are in Your hands, but right now my heart feels like it’s been completely hollowed out. I feel like I’m about to fall apart; I think it’s going to be very difficult for me to endure three years of suffering in prison. O God, I beg You to reveal Your will to me, and I implore You to grant me faith and strength so that I can completely submit to You and bravely accept what has befallen me.” Just then, I thought of God’s words: **“For all people, refinement is excruciating, and very difficult to accept—yet it is during refinement that God makes plain His righteous disposition to man, and makes public His requirements for man, and provides more enlightenment, and more actual pruning and dealing; through the comparison between the facts and the truth, He gives man a greater knowledge of himself and the truth, and gives man a greater understanding of God’s will, thus allowing man to have a truer and purer love of God. Such are God’s aims in carrying out refinement”** (“Only by Experiencing Refinement Can Man Possess True Love” in The Word Appears in the Flesh). **“[D]uring these last days you must bear testimony to God. No matter how great your suffering, you should go on to the very end, and even at your last breath, still you must be faithful to God, and at the mercy of God; only this is truly loving God, and only this is the strong and resounding testimony”** (“Only by Experiencing Painful Trials Can You Know the Loveliness of God” in The Word Appears in the Flesh). Thanks to God’s enlightenment and guidance, I began to reflect upon myself, and gradually discovered my shortcomings. I saw that my love for God was impure, and that I had not yet given my absolute submission to God. Ever since I was arrested, and during my struggles against those evil police, I had shown bravery and fearlessness, and I had not shed a single tear throughout those torture sessions. That was not my actual stature, however. It had all been the faith and courage given to me by God’s words that had enabled me to overcome Satan’s temptations and assaults time and time again. I also saw that I had not thoroughly understood the evil police’s essence. I’d thought the CCP police were law-abiding, and that as a minor I would never be sentenced, or at most would only be locked up for a few months. I’d thought I’d just have to endure a little more pain and hardship and stick it out a bit longer, and then it would be over; it had never even occurred to me that I might actually have to spend three years living this inhuman life

in here. Just then, I didn't want to continue suffering or submitting to God's orchestrations and arrangements. This outcome was not what I had imagined, and it revealed precisely my true stature. Only then did I realize that God really does look deep into people's hearts, and that His wisdom truly is exercised based on Satan's cunning schemes. Satan wished to torment me and thoroughly wear me down with this prison sentence, but God had used this opportunity to allow me to discover my shortcomings and recognize my insufficiencies, thereby enabling me to truly submit and allowing my life to progress more quickly. God's enlightenment had guided me out of my predicament and given me boundless strength. My heart suddenly felt bright and full, I understood God's good intentions, and I no longer felt miserable. I resolved to follow Peter's example by allowing God to orchestrate everything, without a single complaint, and to calmly face whatever might come from that day forward.

Two months later, I was transported to a labor camp. When I received my verdict papers and signed them, I discovered that the three-year sentence had been commuted to one year. In my heart I thanked and praised God over and over. God was orchestrating all of this, and within it I could see the immense love and protection He had for me.

In the labor camp, I saw an even meaner and more brutal side of the evil police. Very early in the morning we would get up and go to work, and we were severely overloaded with tasks to do each day. We had to labor for very long hours every day, and sometimes would work around the clock for several days and nights in a row. Some of the prisoners got sick and needed to be hooked up to an IV, and had to have the drip rate turned up to the fastest notch so that, as soon as it was finished, they could quickly return to the workshop and get back to work. This led to the majority of convicts subsequently getting some illnesses that were very difficult to cure. Because they worked slowly, some people were frequently subjected to verbal abuse from the guards, their foul language simply unbearable to hear. Some people violated the rules while working, so were punished. For example, they were "put on the rope," which meant they had to kneel on the ground and have their hands tied behind their backs, their arms forcibly raised up painfully to neck level. Others were tied to trees with iron chains like dogs and were flogged mercilessly with a whip. Some people, unable to bear this inhuman torture, would try to starve themselves to death, only to have the evil guards put cuffs on both their ankles and wrists and then hold their bodies down tightly, forcing feeding tubes and fluids into them. They were afraid these prisoners might die, not because they cherished life, but because they were worried about losing the cheap

labor they provided. The evil deeds committed by the prison guards really were too many to count, as were the horrendously violent and bloody incidents that occurred. This all made me see very clearly that the CCP government is the earthly embodiment of Satan who dwells in the spiritual world; it is the evilest of all devils and the prisons under its regime are hell on earth—not just in name, but in reality. I remember the words on the wall of the office in which I was interrogated: “It is forbidden to beat people arbitrarily or subject them to illegal punishment, and it is even more forbidden to obtain confessions through torture.” Nevertheless, in reality, their actions were in open defiance of these rules. They had wantonly beaten me, a girl who was not even an adult yet, and subjected me to illegal punishment; what’s more, they had sentenced me merely because of my belief in God. All of this had enabled me to see clearly the tricks used by the CCP government to hoodwink people while presenting a false appearance of peace and prosperity. It was just as God had said: **“The devil tightly trusses all of man’s body, it puts out both his eyes, and seals his lips firmly shut. The king of devils has rampaged for several thousand years, right up until today, when it still keeps a close watch on the ghost town, as if it were an impenetrable palace of demons.... Forefathers of the ancient? Beloved leaders? They all oppose God! Their meddling has left all beneath heaven in a state of darkness and chaos! Religious freedom? The legitimate rights and interests of citizens? They are all tricks for covering up sin!”** (“Work and Entry (8)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). After experiencing the evil policemen’s persecution, I was utterly convinced of this passage of words spoken by God, and now had some real knowledge and experience of it: The CCP government is truly a demonic legion that hates and opposes God, and that advocates evil and violence, and living under the suppression of the satanic regime is no different from living in a human hell. At the same time, in the labor camp, I had seen with my own eyes the ugliness of all kinds of people: the repulsive faces of those smooth-talking opportunistic snakes who curried favor with the head guards, the devilish faces of ferociously violent people who ran amuck bullying the weak, and so on. For me, who had not yet begun life as an adult, during this year of life in prison, I finally saw clearly the corruption of humanity. I witnessed the treachery in people’s hearts, and realized how sinister the human world could be. I also learned to distinguish between positive and negative, black and white, right and wrong, good and evil, and between what was great and what was despicable; I saw clearly that Satan is ugly, evil, brutal, and that only God is the symbol of holiness and righteousness.

Only God symbolizes beauty and goodness; only God is love and salvation. Watched over and safeguarded by God, that unforgettable year passed very quickly for me.

Now, looking back on it, although I underwent some physical suffering during that year of prison life, God used His words to lead and guide me, thus enabling my life to mature. I am grateful for God's predestination. That I was able to set foot upon the right path in life was the greatest grace and blessing bestowed upon me by God, and I will follow and worship Him for the rest of my life!

14. The CCP Government's Harsh Persecution Only Strengthens My Love for God

By Li Zhi, Liaoning Province

In the year 2000, I was fortunate enough to hear the kingdom gospel of Almighty God. By reading God's words, I came to understand the mystery of God's names, the mystery of God's incarnations, and the truths regarding things such as how God's three stages of work save mankind, and how they thoroughly change, purify and perfect man. I became certain that Almighty God is the Lord Jesus returned, and I gladly accepted God's kingdom gospel. After that, I actively joined in with the church life, and with spreading the gospel and bearing witness for God. In 2002, I became known around the local area for preaching the gospel and was in constant danger of being arrested by the CCP police. I had no choice but to flee my home so that I could continue to perform my duty.

The CCP government has always used telephones as a means to monitor and arrest Christians, so I didn't dare call my family after I left home. By early 2003 I had been apart from my family for almost a year, so I went to my mother-in-law's home to see my husband because I missed them so much. When he saw that I had gone back my husband's younger brother called my mom and told her that I was at my mother-in-law's house. To my surprise, three hours later, four policemen from the Municipal Public Security Bureau came to my mother-in-law's house in a police car. The moment they entered the house, they said to me fiercely, "We're from the Municipal Public Security Bureau. You're Li Zhi, right? You've been on our wanted list for almost a year, and now we've finally got you! You're coming with us!" I was incredibly afraid; and I prayed to God in my heart nonstop: "O Almighty God! The CCP

government is arresting me today by Your permission. But I'm of such small stature, and I feel timid and afraid. Please guide me and protect me, and grant me faith and strength. No matter how they treat me, I wish to rely on You and stand witness. I'd rather go to prison than be a Judas and betray You!" After praying, I thought of these words from God: **"His disposition is the symbol of authority, the symbol of all that is righteous, the symbol of all that is beautiful and good. More than that, it is a symbol of Him who cannot be^[a] overcome or invaded by the darkness and any enemy force ..."** ("It Is Very Important to Understand God's Disposition" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). "That's right," I thought to myself. "God holds sovereignty and rules over all things. Over the past few years, the CCP government has done all it can to disrupt and obstruct the spreading of God's kingdom gospel, and yet those of every religion and denomination who sincerely believe in God and hear God's voice have returned before His throne to accept His salvation in the last days. It's clear from this that no force can halt God's work, and no human being can stand in its way. Although I have now fallen into the hands of the CCP police, they themselves are in God's hands, and with God by my side there is nothing to fear!" God's words gave me faith and strength, and I gradually began to calm down.

I was escorted to an interrogation room after we arrived at the Municipal Public Security Bureau. The police took away my belt, removed my clothing, shoes and socks, and then searched me. Afterward, one of the policemen shouted, "You just be quick and tell us everything you know. How many years have you been a believer? Who preached it to you? Who are your church leaders? How many people have you preached it to? What do you do in the church?" I didn't answer his questions, immediately embarrassing him into anger, and he yelled, "If you don't start talking, then we have plenty of ways to make you talk!" While saying this he aggressively dragged me from the chair down onto the floor. Two officers treaded on my legs while two others stomped hard on my back. My head was nearly slammed into the floor and I was finding it hard to draw breath. One of the policemen then took a pencil and lightly drew it back and forth along the arches of my feet, hurting and tickling me at the same time. It was unbearable; it was so hard to breathe that I was on the verge of suffocating, and the fear of death came upon me. One of them proceeded to

Footnotes:

a. The original text reads "it is a symbol of being unable to be."

threaten me: “Are you going to talk or not? If not, we’ll torture you to death!” I felt really afraid in the face of the torment and intimidation of this police gang; I was worried that they would torture me to death. All I could do was keep praying to God, asking Him to grant me faith and strength, and to protect me so that I might stand witness and never become a Judas and betray Him. After praying, these words of God came to mind: **“Faith is like a single log bridge, those who cling abjectly to life will have difficulty in crossing it, but those who are ready to sacrifice themselves can pass over without worry. If man has timid and fearful thoughts, they are being fooled by Satan. It fears that we will cross the bridge of faith to enter into God”** (“Chapter 6” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). Inspired by God’s words, I immediately felt strength rise up within me, and I realized that my timidity and fear of death were the result of being toyed with by Satan. The CCP government was vainly hoping to subject me to cruel torture as a way to force me to give in to its despotic power, to make me sell out the church and become a God-betraying Judas because I was afraid of dying or I didn’t want to suffer any pain. There was no way I could allow Satan’s cunning plot to succeed, and I decided I would stand witness for God even at the cost of my own life. The police continued torturing me the same way, but I no longer felt so afraid. I knew then that this was God showing me His mercy and protection, and I felt incredibly grateful to Him.

Two of the policemen then cuffed me back on the chair and sternly asked me the same questions again. Seeing that I still made no answer, they intensified the torture. They pulled my arms out straight and then forcefully pulled them back and up behind me. Instantly, they felt like they were going to snap and the rending pain of it made me break out in a full-body sweat; I couldn’t help but let out a scream. They then pulled up my legs so that my feet were above my head, and then pulled my legs in opposite directions. The tearing agony of it caused me to almost black out. In my heart, I just kept praying to God: “O Almighty God! Please grant me faith and strength and the determination to endure this pain. May You be my staunch backup that gives strength to my spirit. No matter what cruel tricks this gang of demons uses on me, I will always rely on You and stand witness.” After I’d prayed, a hymn of God’s words appeared in my mind: **“While undergoing trials, it’s normal for people to be weak, or have negativity within them, or to lack clarity on God’s will or their path for practice. But in any case, you must have faith in God’s work, and not deny God, like Job. ... This way, what is perfected are people’s faith and aspirations. You cannot**

touch or see it; it is under these circumstances that your faith is required. People's faith is required for when something cannot be seen by the naked eye, and your faith is required for when you cannot let go of your own notions. When you are not clear on God's work, what is required is your faith and that you take a firm stance and stand witness. When Job reached this point, God appeared to him and spoke to him. That is, it is only from within your faith that you will be able to see God, and when you have faith God will perfect you" ("Trials Call for Faith" in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). God's words gave me great faith and strength. I thought of the immense trials Job went through, when his whole body was wracked with painful boils and he suffered terrible pain. And yet, despite his pain, he was still able to seek God's will; he didn't sin with his words or deny God, but instead he obeyed God and extolled God's holy name. Job possessed true faith and reverence for God, and that is why he was able to stand witness for God and utterly shame and defeat Satan—ultimately, God appeared and spoke to him. The adversity and trial that had now befallen me had also been permitted by God. Although I didn't fully understand God's will and my flesh was suffering extreme pain, yet it was God who had the final say on whether I lived or died, and without His permission, the police could never take my life no matter how much they tortured me. These policemen looked ferocious on the outside, but before God they were just paper tigers, just tools in God's hands. God was using their brutality and persecution to perfect my faith, and I wished to stay loyal to God, to hand myself over completely into His hands, and to rely on God to overcome Satan and no longer to fear the policemen.

The police tortured me repeatedly. Seeing that I still wasn't talking, one of the policemen picked up a white steel ruler about 50 cm long and began to viciously hit me across the face with it. I've no idea how many times he hit me with it; my face swelled up and it was burning with pain. All I could see was stars floating before my eyes and my head was buzzing. Two of the policemen then used the heels of their leather shoes to stomp down on my thighs. Each blow left me wracked with excruciating pain. In my suffering, all I could do was call out to God in earnest in my heart, asking Him to protect me so that I might overcome the cruel torture inflicted on me by the CCP police.

At 8 a.m. the next morning, the head of the Criminal Police Brigade entered the interrogation room. Upon learning that the police hadn't been able to get any information out of me, he said fiercely, "You're refusing to talk, aren't you? Hmph! We'll see about that!" And

then he left. That afternoon, a fat officer with an ID card in his hand came up to me and asked, “Do you know this person?” I immediately saw that it was a church sister from the same village as me. I thought to myself: “No matter what, I must not sell out my sister.” And so, I responded, “No, I don’t know her.” His eyes narrowed, and he picked up an electroshock baton that was lying on the table. Waving it before my face, threateningly he said, “You’re a stubborn one. We know you’re a leader in the church, so fess up! How many members are there in your church? Where is the church’s money? If you don’t tell me, I’ll give you a taste of this electroshock baton!” Looking at the policeman’s malevolent face, I felt extremely afraid and hurriedly said a silent prayer to God. Just then, God’s words came to mind: **“Do not fear, Almighty God of hosts will surely be with you; He has your back and He is your shield”** (“Chapter 26” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). Possessed of authority, God’s words gave me faith and strength and I instantly felt like I had something to lean on. I thought to myself: “God is almighty, and no matter how fiendish Satan and demons are, are they not also in God’s hands? With Almighty God as my staunch backup, I have nothing to fear!” I therefore replied casually, “I don’t know anything.” The fat policeman said maliciously, “This is what you get for not knowing anything!” As he said this, he touched my handcuffs with the electroshock baton and a powerful surge of electric current shot through my whole body in an unbearably painful wave—the agony was indescribable. The policeman continued to shock me with the baton, and just when I nearly couldn’t stand it any longer, a miracle happened: It ran out of power! I had witnessed God’s almightiness and sovereignty, and moreover I had experienced the fact that God is always by my side, watching over me, protecting me, and taking my weakness into consideration. My faith grew and my resolve to stand witness for God was strengthened.

The police later saw that I still wasn’t going to talk, and so in twos they took it in turns to watch me. They wouldn’t let me eat, drink or even sleep. The moment I began to doze off, they would beat and kick me, hoping that this would break my will. God guided me to see through their cunning scheme, however, and I prayed silently to God, sang hymns in my mind and contemplated God’s words and, before I knew it, my spirits rose. These policemen, on the other hand, were constantly drinking coffee and yet were still so tired that they kept yawning. One of them said in astonishment, “She must have some kind of magical power keeping her going, otherwise how else is she finding all this energy?” Hearing the policeman

say this, I praised the great power of God over and over, for I knew well in my heart that all of this was down to the guidance of God's words, and that it was God's own life force holding me up and granting me faith and strength. Although I didn't then know what other kinds of cruel torture the police had in store for me, I had the faith to rely on God to face the interrogations to come, and I resolved: I will never submit to the despotic power of the CCP government, but will stand witness for God!

On the evening of the third day, the head of the Criminal Police Brigade poured me a cup of hot water and, feigning concern, said, "Don't be stupid now. Someone else has sold you out already, so what's the point in enduring all this for other people? Just tell me everything you know and I promise to let you go. Your son is still young and needs his mother's love. You could have a good life, and yet you waste it believing in some God! God cannot save you, but we can. We can help you with any difficulty you may have, and we can help you find a good job when you get out of here...." As I listened to him talk, I couldn't help but think of my young son, wondering how he had been since my arrest. Would my unbelieving friends and relatives mock him? Would his classmates at school bully him? Just as I was beginning to weaken, God enlightened me with a passage of His words: "**You must be awake and waiting at every moment, and you must pray more before Me. You must recognize the various plots and cunning schemes of Satan, know the spirit, know people and be able to discern all kinds of people, matters and things ...**" ("Chapter 17" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). Inspired by God's words, I came to the clear realization that Satan was using my feelings for my family to lure me into betraying God. Satan knew that I loved my son most of all and was using the police as its mouthpiece to attack and tempt me, and to make my love for my son cause me to sell out my brothers and sisters. I would then become a God-betraying Judas who would ultimately end up being cursed and punished by God—Satan is so insidious and malicious! I thought about how I couldn't be with my son to look after him, but wasn't it all because the CCP government was the enemy of God, and because it frantically arrests and persecutes Christians? And yet the police were saying that it was because I believed in God. By saying this, were they not turning the truth on its head and distorting the facts? The CCP government is so shameless and wicked! And so, no matter what the policeman said, I paid him no attention whatsoever. Seeing that I couldn't be swayed either by the carrot or the stick, he stalked off in a huff. Under the guidance and protection of God, I had once again

overcome Satan's temptations.

It was after 8 p.m. that evening when the fat policeman returned with a large electroshock baton in hand and three underlings trailing along behind him. They took me to a gym and stripped my clothes off (leaving me just in my underwear), then tied me to a treadmill with a rope. Looking at their faces, each one more malevolent than the last, left me feeling incredibly fearful and helpless, and I had no idea what cruel torture they were going to inflict on me next or how long it would go on for. I felt so weak at that moment and began to have thoughts of death. But straight away, I knew that these thoughts were wrong, and so I hurriedly prayed and called out to God: "O Almighty God! You know my heart, and I don't want to be a Judas who betrays You and go down in history as a traitor. But my stature is so small, and I feel so pained and weak in the face of this torment—I'm afraid that I won't be able to stand it and will betray You. O God! Please protect me and grant me faith and strength. Please be with me, guide and lead me, and enable me to stand witness through this cruel torture." After praying, I thought of God's words that say: **"Thus, during these last days you must bear testimony to God. No matter how great your suffering, you should go on to the very end, and even at your last breath, still you must be faithful to God, and at the mercy of God; only this is truly loving God, and only this is the strong and resounding testimony"** ("Only by Experiencing Painful Trials Can You Know the Loveliness of God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). God's words brought me comfort and encouragement. They allowed me to understand that God was permitting this cruel torture to be inflicted upon me so that true faith and love might be wrought within me, so that I might continue to stay loyal to God through my suffering, submit to God's orchestrations and arrangements, and stand witness by leaning on God's words no matter how great the trial or how terrible the pain. Having understood God's will, the courage and resolve to fight Satan to the bitter end instantly arose within me, and I made this resolution: No matter what torture I still have to go through, I wish to keep on living, and no matter how great my suffering becomes, I will follow God till my very last breath!

Just then, the fat policeman, a cigarette dangling from his mouth, came over and asked, "Will you talk or not?" Resolutely, I replied, "You can beat me to death, but I still don't know anything." In a fury, he flung his cigarette onto the floor and, seething with rage, he jammed the electroshock baton into my back and thighs over and over again. The excruciating pain made me break out in a cold sweat all over my body, and I just kept wailing pitifully. While

jamming the baton into me, he roared, "This is what you get for not talking! I'll make you scream, and we'll see how long you last!" The other officers in the room standing off to the side laughed raucously and said, "How come your God doesn't come to save you?" They also said many other things blaspheming God. Seeing their demonic faces, I called earnestly on God to grant me the faith and strength so that I might endure the pain and wipe that smile off Satan's face. After praying, I clenched my mouth shut and refused to make another sound no matter how they tormented me. They electrocuted me constantly. When one electroshock baton ran out of power, they swapped it for another, and I was tortured to the point that my mind was all a blur and death seemed preferable to life. I couldn't move a muscle and, seeing me become still, they thought I'd passed out. They threw cold water over me to wake me and then continued to electrocute me. In my pain, I thought of God's words that say: **"This gang of accomplices!^[1] They come down among the mortals to indulge in pleasures and stir up disorder. Their disturbance causes fickleness in the world and brings panic in the heart of man.... They even wish to assume power as tyrants on earth. They impede the work of God so that it can barely move forward and close off man as if behind walls of copper and steel. Having committed so many sins and caused so much trouble, how could they expect anything other than to wait for chastisement? Demons and evil spirits have been running amok on earth and have closed off the will and painstaking effort of God, making them impenetrable. What a mortal sin! How could God not feel anxious? How could God not feel wrathful? They cause grievous hindrance and opposition to the work of God. Too rebellious! Even those demons big and small become haughty on the strength of the more powerful devil and begin to make waves"** ("Work and Entry (7)" in The Word Appears in the Flesh).

The enlightenment of God's words allowed me to see clearly the true face of the CCP government. It utterly hates the truth and God, and it is terrified of Almighty God's words spreading far and wide. To maintain its rule forever, it does all it can to stop God's kingdom gospel from spreading, and it stops at nothing to arrest, torture and brutalize God's chosen ones. The CCP government ravages and persecutes us believers like this because it wants to destroy God's work in the last days. It does this in an attempt to utterly eradicate religious

Footnotes:

1. "Accomplices" are of the same ilk as "a band of hoodlums."

belief, to stop people from believing in and following God, and to turn China into an atheistic zone, thereby achieving its insane objective of controlling the Chinese people forevermore. Despite the fact that the CCP government proclaims to the outside world that there is “freedom of belief” and “the citizens of China enjoy lawful rights,” in truth, these are all outright lies intended to cheat, dupe and ensnare people, and they are ploys to conceal its evil ways! The CCP government behaves perversely and acts contrary to Heaven, and its essence is that of the devil Satan, of an enemy of God! Right at that moment, I absolutely had to silently make a resolution: I must not allow the painstaking price God has paid for me to have been in vain; I must have determination and a conscience, and no matter what cruel torture I have yet to endure, I will always stand witness for God. Just then, an awesome feeling of justice and righteousness rose up within me, and I felt God by my side, giving me strength. Afterward, no matter how the policemen electrocuted me, I felt no pain. I had once again witnessed God’s wondrous deeds; I became profoundly aware of God’s presence, that it was God protecting me and watching over me. The policemen tortured me for four hours but still obtained no information from me. Out of options, they could do nothing but untie me from the treadmill. I had not an ounce of strength anywhere in my body and I flopped down onto the floor. Two policemen dragged me back to the interrogation room and put me in a chair, then handcuffed me to a central heating pipe. Seeing them look so deflated, I couldn’t stop myself from expressing thanks and praise to God: “O Almighty God! I have experienced Your almightiness and sovereignty, and I see that Your life force can defeat all other forces. Thanks be to God!”

On the fourth day, five policemen came into the interrogation room. One of them carried an electroshock baton and made it crackle with electricity. Days of brutal torture had filled me with terror at the sight of a baton emitting that terrible blue light. An officer who hadn’t questioned me before came and stood before me, jabbed me with the electroshock baton and said, “I hear you’re a tough nut to crack. Today, I’ll see exactly how tough you are. I don’t believe we can’t fix you. Are you going to talk or not? If not, then you’ll meet your end this very day!” I replied, saying, “I don’t know anything.” This embarrassed him into a rage, and he violently dragged me off the chair onto the floor and held me there. Another policeman shoved the electroshock baton up under my shirt, yelling as he shocked my back, “Are you going to talk or not? If not, we’ll kill you!” Faced with their brutality and their hideous, leering faces, I couldn’t help but slip down into a state of terror, and hurriedly I called out to God: “O

Almighty God! Please guide me! Please grant me true faith and strength!” The police continued to electrocute me while I wailed nonstop. It felt as though all the blood in my body was running into my head, and it hurt so much that I was covered in sweat and almost blacked out. Seeing that I still wasn’t going to talk, the police began to curse me in their rage. A little later when I was on the verge of passing out, they dragged me back up and cuffed me to the chair again, after which two of them took it in turns to watch me to make sure I didn’t fall asleep. By that time, I hadn’t eaten any food, drunk any water, or had any sleep for four days and nights. Adding to that the cruel torture they were inflicting on me, my body had reached its weakest state. I was both cold and hungry, and the pain of being both starving and freezing cold joined with the throbbing pain of my wounded body—I felt as though my life was nearing its end. In my extremely weakened state, a line of God’s words appeared in my mind: **“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God”** (Matthew 4:4). Pondering this, I understood that only the words of God could be my support to carry on living in such a situation as this, while at the same time I also realized that it was precisely this situation that God was using to perfect my entry into this aspect of the truth. As I contemplated this over and over, I unknowingly forgot all about my suffering, my hunger and the cold.

On the fifth day, the police saw that I was remaining steadfastly silent, and began to threaten me maliciously, saying, “You just wait until you’ve been sentenced. You’ll get seven years at least, but there’s still a chance to avoid it if you start talking now!” I then silently said a prayer to God: “O Almighty God! The CCP police say they will sentence me to seven years in prison, but I know that they don’t have the final say, as my fate is in Your hands. O God! I would rather be imprisoned for the rest of my life and stay on the true way than ever betray You!” After that, the police tried to lure me into betraying God by bringing in my unbelieving husband. When he saw me wearing handcuffs with cuts and bruises all over my whole body, he said miserably to me, “I’ve only ever seen handcuffs on TV. I never thought I’d see them on you.” Hearing him say this and seeing his sorrowful expression, I hurriedly prayed to God, asking Him to protect me so that I wouldn’t be caught by Satan’s trap because of my feelings for my family. After I’d prayed, I said calmly to my husband, “I believe in God, I don’t steal things or rob people. I just go to gatherings and read God’s words, and try to be an honest person as God requires. I haven’t committed any crime, but they want to sentence me to prison.” My husband replied, “I’ll find you a lawyer.” Seeing that my husband wasn’t trying to

get me to hand over information about the church and my brothers and sisters, but was instead offering to hire me a lawyer, the policemen dragged him out of the room. I knew that this was God protecting me, because my feelings for my family ran very deep, if my husband had said anything that showed concern for my physical state, I don't know whether I would have been able to stay strong. It was the guidance and protection of God that enabled me to overcome Satan's temptation.

The police saw that they hadn't caught me out and, spluttering with rage, they said, "We'll give you an injection in a minute which will drive you mad. Then, we'll let you go, and you won't even be able to die!" This immediately threw me into a state of anxiety, and terror gripped me once again. I thought about how cruel and evil the CCP government is: Once they arrest someone in charge in the church, and when they still can't get anything about the church out of them after vicious beatings and torture, they forcibly inject them with drugs that drive them mad and cause them to become schizophrenic—some brothers and sisters have been cruelly tortured and persecuted in this way by the CCP government. My heart began to pound in my chest at that thought, and I wondered: "Will I really be tormented by these CCP minions until I lose my mind and end up wandering around like a lunatic?" The more I thought about it, the more afraid I became, and I couldn't stop the cold sweat from soaking my body. Hurriedly, I prayed and called out to God: "O Almighty God! The CCP minions want to inject me with drugs to drive me mad, and I'm afraid I'll become a lunatic. O God! Although I know that I'm supposed to stand witness for You, I feel so timid and fearful right now. O God! Please protect my heart, and grant me true faith so that I might entrust my life and my death to You, and submit to Your orchestrations and arrangements." Just then, the Lord Jesus' words came to mind: "**And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell**" (Matthew 10:28). The Lord's words gave me faith and strength. "Yes," I thought. "These devils may be able to kill and maim my body, but they cannot kill or maim my soul. Without God's permission, I will not go crazy even if they do inject me with those drugs." I then thought of God's words that say: "**When people are ready to sacrifice their lives, everything becomes trifling, and no one can get the better of them. What could be more important than life? Thus, Satan becomes incapable of doing any more in people, there's nothing it can do with man**" ("Chapter 36" of Interpretations of the Mysteries of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). As I

pondered God's words, the fear I felt deep inside me slowly vanished and I no longer felt that terror. Instead, I became willing to place myself in God's hands and submit to God's sovereignty whether I lived or died, and whether I became a lunatic or a simpleton. Just then, a policeman brought over the needle and the drug, and threatened me, saying, "Will you talk or not? If you don't talk, I'll inject you with this!" Utterly without fear, I said, "Do what you want. Whatever happens is on you." Seeing that I wasn't afraid, he said cruelly, "Go fetch the one with the AIDS virus! We'll inject her with that." As I still showed no fear, he clenched his teeth in anger, and said, "You bitch. You're tougher than Liu Hulan!" He then threw the needle onto the table. I felt elated. Having witnessed how God's words had guided me to once again humiliate Satan, I couldn't help but offer up a prayer of gratitude to God. In the end, the police realized that they wouldn't get the information they wanted out of me, so they walked away dejectedly.

Having played all their cards to no avail, the police could do nothing but send me to a detention house. As soon as I got there, the prison guards incited the other prisoners, saying, "She's a believer in Eastern Lightning. Give her 'a warm welcome'!" Before I'd even had a chance to react, several of the prisoners surged toward me and dragged me to the toilet and then, after stripping me of my clothes, proceeded to wash me in freezing cold water. Every pot of cold water poured over me felt like a rock hitting my body, freezing cold and painful, and I became so cold that I was shivering all over. I squatted down on the floor, my head in my hands, calling out to God over and over within my heart. After a while, one of the prisoners said, "OK, OK, that's enough. Don't want her getting sick." The prisoners who were meting out this punishment on me only stopped when they heard that prisoner say this. When she learned that I hadn't eaten anything in five days, at dinnertime she gave me half of a bun of steamed cornbread. I was well aware that this was God's consideration for my weakness, moving this prisoner to help me. I saw that God was with me always, and from the bottom of my heart I thanked God for His mercy and salvation.

Inside the detention house, I lived together with all sorts of other prisoners. Every one of our three meals consisted of a piece of steamed cornbread and two strips of salted turnip, or else it was a bowl of cabbage soup with bugs floating in it with hardly any cabbage at all. Once a week, we were given a meal of fine grain, which was still just one steamed bun the size of a fist—it didn't fill me up at all. Besides reciting the prison rules, every day in that place we were given work quotas for making small handicrafts that were impossible to meet.

Because my hands had been damaged by the tight handcuffs and had been electrocuted to the point where I'd lost all feeling in them, and on top of that the handicrafts we had to make were so small, I couldn't hold them, and was incapable of completing my overload of work. One time, because I hadn't completed my work, the prison guards made the other prisoners watch me all night to prevent me from falling asleep. I was also frequently punished by being made to stand sentry duty, and was only allowed to sleep for four hours a night. During this time, the CCP police kept questioning me constantly. They had even put my son up to writing me a letter, trying to trick me into betraying God. But under the protection and guidance of God, I was able to see through Satan's cunning schemes and stand witness time and time again. Despite the fact that they hadn't managed to obtain anything incriminating, they still charged me with "disrupting public order" and sentenced me to three years of reeducation through labor.

On December 25, 2005, my sentence was served in full and I was released. Having experienced this struggle between justice and wickedness, though I had suffered in both body and mind, I still came to understand many truths, and I saw clearly the God-opposing, demonic essence of the CCP government. I also came to have some real understanding of God's almightiness, sovereignty, wondrousness, and wisdom, and I truly experienced God's love for me and His salvation. While those devils were torturing and persecuting me, it was the timely enlightenment and guidance of God's words that formed my staunch support and that gave me the resolve and the courage to fight with Satan to the bitter end. When Satan was trying all manner of cunning schemes to tempt me and lure me into betraying God, it was God who used His words in the nick of time to caution me and guide me, and to wipe clean the dust from my spiritual eyes so that I could see through Satan's schemes and stand firm in my testimony; when those demons inflicted terrible torture on me to the point that death seemed preferable and my life hung by a thread, God's words became the foundation of my survival. They bestowed tremendous faith and strength on me, and enabled me to break free from the hold death had on me. All of these things allowed me to truly see God's beautiful and kind essence—only God most loves mankind. The CCP government, on the other hand, this gang of Satan and demons, can only corrupt, harm and devour people! Today, in the face of the increasingly savage attacks inflicted upon The Church of Almighty God by the CCP government, I am steadfastly resolved to utterly forsake this old devil the CCP government, to give my heart to God, and to do my utmost to pursue the truth and seek

to love God. I will spread God's kingdom gospel and bring back before God all those who sincerely believe in God, who yearn for the truth, and who have been so deeply deceived by the CCP government, so that I may repay Him for gracing me with His salvation!

15. God's Love Has Fortified My Heart

By Zhang Can, Liaoning Province

In my family, everyone has always gotten along very well. My husband is a very considerate and caring man, and my son is very sensible and always respectful to his elders. What's more, we've been pretty affluent. In theory, I should have been very happy, but reality didn't play out that way. No matter how well my husband and son treated me and no matter how well off we were, none of that could make me happy. I was never able to sleep at night because I developed arthritis and also suffered from severe insomnia, which led to reduced blood circulation to my brain and overall weakness in my limbs. The torment of these illnesses combined with the constant pressure of running a business caused me to live in unspeakable suffering. I tried to overcome it in many different ways, but nothing ever seemed to work.

In March of 1999, a friend spread Almighty God's gospel of the last days to me. Through reading God's word every day, consistently attending gatherings, and fellowshiping with my brothers and sisters, I came to understand some truths, learned of many mysteries hitherto unknown to me, and I became firm in my belief that Almighty God is the returned Lord Jesus. I was extremely excited by all of this and hungrily devoured God's word every day. I also engaged in church life, often gathering, praying, and singing hymns and dancing in praise of God with my brothers and sisters. I felt a sense of peace and happiness in my heart and my morale and outlook improved with every passing day. Slowly but surely, I also began to recover from my various ailments. I often offered up my thanks and praise to God for these positive developments in my life and I wanted to spread Almighty God's gospel to even more people so that they could all attain God's salvation. Not long after that, the church put me in charge of its work to spread the gospel. I poured myself into this work with ardent fervor, but something happened that I had never imagined ...

On the evening of December 15th, 2012, just as I had finished meeting with four sisters

and was about to leave, we heard a loud cracking noise as the front door was kicked open and seven or eight plainclothes policemen burst into the room, yelling at us: “Nobody move, put your hands up!” Without showing any documentation, they proceeded to forcibly search us, seizing my ID card and a receipt of a 70,000-RMB transaction of the church’s funds. They got really excited as soon as they saw the receipt and proceeded to push and drag us into a police car and take us to the station. At the police station, they seized our cell phones, MP5 players and 200 RMB in cash from our bags. At the time, they suspected that one of the sisters and I were leaders in the church, so they transferred the two of us to the Criminal Investigations Unit of the Municipal Public Security Bureau that night.

When we arrived, the police separated us and interrogated us individually. They handcuffed me to a metal stool and then an officer harshly questioned me: “What’s the story with the 70,000 RMB? Who sent the money? Where is it now? Who is the leader of your church?” I continually prayed to God in my heart: “Dear God! This policeman is trying to force me to rat out the leaders of the church and hand over the church’s money. I absolutely cannot become a Judas and betray You. O God! I am willing to put myself in Your hands. I beg You to grant me faith, courage and wisdom. No matter how the police try to extort information from me, I am willing to stand witness for You.” I then resolutely declared to them: “I don’t know!” This infuriated the policeman; he picked up a slipper from the ground and began viciously beating me on the head while angrily berating me: “Just try and keep quiet. Just try and believe in Almighty God! We’ll see how long you keep believing!” My face smarted painfully from the beating and quickly began to swell up, and I had a throbbing headache. Four or five policemen took turns beating me in order to force me to tell them where the church’s money was kept. Some of them kicked my legs, some grabbed my hair, pulling at it and shaking it back and forth, and others smacked me in the mouth. I started to bleed from the mouth, but they just wiped away the blood and continued to hit me. They also randomly jabbed at me with an electroshock baton and, as they beat me, they yelled: “Are you gonna talk or not? Fess up!” When they saw that I was still refusing to talk, they tased me in the groin and chest—the pain was excruciating. My heart was pounding, I began to have trouble breathing and I curled up in a ball, shuddering. It felt as though death was inching toward me, step by step. Though I clamped my mouth shut and didn’t utter a word, I felt incredibly weak in my heart and thought that I wouldn’t be able to hold out much longer. In the midst of my suffering, I never stopped praying to God: “O God! Though I have resolved

to satisfy You, my flesh is weak and powerless. I pray that You imbue me with strength so that I may stand witness for You.” At that moment, I suddenly thought of how, before the Lord Jesus was nailed to the cross, He was badly beaten by Roman soldiers: He was beaten and mangled to a bloody pulp, His entire body covered in wounds..., and yet He uttered not a word. God is holy and guiltless, yet He suffered immense humiliation and torment and was willing to be crucified in order to redeem mankind. I thought to myself: “If God could offer up His body to save corrupt mankind, I should also undergo suffering to repay God’s love.” Encouraged by God’s love, my confidence was restored and I made an oath to God: “Dear God, whatever suffering You undergo, so too should I. I must drink from the same cup of suffering as You. I will offer up my life to stand witness for You!”

After this torture had gone on for most of the night, I had been beaten to the point that not even an ounce of strength remained in my body. I was so tired that I could barely keep my eyes open, but as soon as I began to shut my eyes, they’d splash me with water. I was shivering with cold. When this pack of beasts saw me in that state, they viciously snarled: “You still don’t want to open your mouth? In this place, we can torture you to death and no one will ever know!” I ignored them. One of those evil cops then took a husk of sunflower seeds and forced it into my fingernail; this was unbearably painful and I couldn’t stop my finger from shaking. They then proceeded to splash water on my face and pour it down my neck. The bone-chillingly frigid water left me shivering with cold; I was in utter agony. That night, I continually prayed to God, fearing that if I left Him, I would be unable to go on living. God was always at my side and His words provided me with constant encouragement: **“When people are ready to sacrifice their lives, everything becomes trifling ...”** (“Chapter 36” of Interpretations of the Mysteries of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). **“Faith is like a single log bridge, those who cling abjectly to life will have difficulty in crossing it, but those who are ready to sacrifice themselves can pass over without worry”** (“Chapter 6” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God’s words gave me inexhaustible strength. I thought to myself, “That’s right, God rules sovereign over all and all things are in His hands. Even if the evil police torture my flesh to death, my spirit is under God’s control.” With God to support me, I no longer feared Satan, much less was I willing to be a traitor and live a meaningless life of pandering to the flesh. As such, I made an oath to God in prayer: “Dear God! Though those demons are tormenting my flesh, I am still willing to satisfy You and put

myself entirely in Your hands. Even if it means my death, I will stand witness for You and will never kneel before Satan!" With the guidance of God's words, I felt full of confidence and faith. Even though the police were tormenting and torturing my flesh and I had already been pushed to the limits of my endurance, with God's word propping me up, before I knew it I was in much less pain.

The next morning, the evil police continued to interrogate me and also threatened me, saying: "If you don't talk today, we'll hand you over to the special police unit—they have 18 different implements of torture waiting for you there." When I heard that they were going to hand me over to the special police unit, I couldn't help but become frightened, thinking to myself: "The special police are certainly much more hardcore than these guys; how will I survive through 18 different forms of torture?" Just as I was entering into panic mode, I thought of a passage of God's word: **"What is an overcomer? The good soldiers of Christ must be brave and rely on Me to be spiritually strong; they must fight to become warriors and battle Satan to the death"** ("Chapter 12" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words quickly calmed my frantic, panicked heart. They helped me to realize that this was a spiritual battle and that the moment in which God wanted me to bear witness had come. With God supporting me, there was nothing to fear. No matter what kinds of deranged tactics the evil police used, I had to rely upon God to be a good soldier of Christ and fight Satan to the death without ever giving in.

That afternoon, two officers in charge of religious affairs from the Municipal Public Security Bureau came in to interrogate me: "Who is your church leader?" they asked. "I don't know," I replied. Seeing that I refused to speak, they alternated between soft and hard tactics. One of them dug his fist into my shoulder really hard while the other began spouting absurd theories denying God's existence to try to cajole me: "All things in the universe arise out of natural processes. You've got to be more practical: Believing in God isn't going to help solve any of the problems in your life; you can only do that by relying on yourself and working hard. We can help find jobs for you and your son...." I just kept communing with God within my heart, and I then thought of a passage of His word: **"You must be awake and waiting at every moment, and you must pray more before Me. You must recognize the various plots and cunning schemes of Satan, know the spirit, know people and be able to discern all kinds of people, matters and things ..."** ("Chapter 17" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words enlightened me right away,

allowing me to see through Satan's conniving scheme. I thought to myself: "The evil policeman is trying to deceive me with his absurd theories and bribe me with petty favors—I mustn't fall for Satan's tricks, and, even more so, I must not betray God and become a Judas." God's enlightenment allowed me to see into the evil police's sinister intentions, so no matter what kind of soft and hard tactics they used on me, I just ignored them. That night, I heard that someone else was coming to interrogate me and that they were claiming I had a criminal record. I didn't know what to expect or what was going to happen, so all I could do was call out to God in my heart for guidance. I knew that no matter what kind of persecution and difficulties I was facing, I couldn't betray God. A little later when I was using the bathroom, I suddenly started having heart palpitations; I became dizzy and passed out on the floor. When the police heard something amiss, they immediately came rushing in and gathered around me. I heard someone say sinisterly: "Take her to the crematorium, burn her up and be done with it!" However, fearing that I might die and that they would then be held responsible for my death, they ended up calling emergency services and had an ambulance take me to the hospital to get checked out. As it turned out, I had previously had a heart attack and had residual myocardial ischemia. Since the interrogation had to be called off, they took me to a detention house. Seeing the frustrated looks on the faces of the evil police, I was overjoyed—God had opened up a way out for me, so that, for the time being, I wouldn't have to undergo any further interrogation. Being able to dodge that bullet allowed me to witness God's deeds; I gave thanks and praise to God from the bottom of my heart.

Over the following ten-odd days, knowing that the CCP government would not give up before they had gotten the location of the church's money out of me, I prayed to God every day, asking Him to safeguard my mouth and heart, so that no matter what, I would stand fast by God's side and would absolutely not betray Him and abandon the true way. One day after a prayer, God enlightened me, allowing me to recall a hymn of His words: "**No matter what God asks of you, you need only give it your all. Hopefully you are able to show your loyalty to God before Him in the end, and as long as you can see God's gratified smile upon His throne, even if it is the time of your death, you should be able to laugh and smile as your eyes are closed. You must do your final duty for God during your time on earth. In the past, Peter was crucified upside down for God; however, you should satisfy God in the end, and exhaust all of your energy for God**" ("A Created Being Should Be at the Mercy of God" in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). I sang and

contemplated the hymn over and over in my heart and, through God's words, I came to understand God's demands and expectations of me. I thought of how, of all the creatures in the universe that live under God's rule, and of all the people on earth that follow God, only an extremely small number are able to truly stand before Satan and bear witness for God. That I was lucky enough to face this kind of situation was God lifting me up in an exceptional way, and it showed His favor for me. These words from God in particular were profoundly encouraging for me: **"In the past, Peter was crucified upside down for God; however, you should satisfy God in the end, and exhaust all of your energy for God."** I couldn't hold back a prayer to God: "O Almighty God! In the past, Peter was able to be nailed upside down to the cross for You, bearing witness to his love for You before Satan. And now, my arrest by the ruling party in China contains Your good intentions. Though my stature is far too small and I could never compare to Peter, it is my great honor to have the opportunity to stand witness for You. I am willing to hand my life over to You and will readily die to bear witness for You, so that You may gain some comfort through me."

On the morning of the 30th of December, the Municipal Public Security Bureau sent some officers over to interrogate me. As soon as I entered the interrogation room, an evil cop made me take off my cotton-padded trousers and jacket, and said to me: "We now have your little sister and your son detained. We know your whole family are believers. We went to your husband's work place and found out that you started believing in Almighty God in 2008...." His words exploited my greatest weakness and wreaked havoc on my state of mind; I never thought that they would also take my son and sister into custody. Suddenly overcome with emotion, I began to worry for their well-being and my heart unwittingly drifted from God. I kept wondering over and over: "Are they being beaten? Can my son endure such treatment? ..." Just then, I recalled a passage of God's word: **"[H]owever much an individual must suffer and however far they must walk on their path is ordained by God and that no one can really help anyone else"** ("The Path ... (6)" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words immediately wrested me from my emotional state and allowed me to realize that every person's path of faith is predetermined by God. Everyone should stand witness to God before Satan—would that not be a great blessing for them to stand witness to God before Satan? Having thought of this, I stopped worrying and was no longer concerned for them; I felt willing to hand them over to God and let God rule and make His arrangements. Just then, another cop said the names of a few other sisters and asked if I

recognized the names. When I said I didn't recognize any of the names, he jumped out of his chair, angrily dragged me over to a metal stool by a window, handcuffed me to it, and hurriedly opened the window so that the frigid outside air began to blow on me. He then proceeded to throw cold water on me while cursing me with vile words before smacking me across the face with a slipper dozens of times in a row. He beat me so badly that I began to see stars, my ears rung and blood dripped from my mouth.

That night, a few policemen transferred me to the coldest room; the windows were completely covered in ice. They forcibly removed all of my clothes and made me sit, completely naked, on a metal stool by the window. They handcuffed my hands behind my back to the backrest of the stool so that I couldn't move an inch. One of the wicked cops said to me in an icy, sinister tone: "We don't alter our investigation tactics based upon gender." He opened the window as he said this and a bone-chilling wind swept over me; it felt like my body was being carved by a thousand knives. Shivering with cold, I said through chattering teeth: "I can't be exposed to this kind of cold, I have post-partum rheumatoid arthritis." He replied savagely: "Oh, this will take care of your arthritis alright! You'll get diabetes and kidney disease in the process too! No matter how many doctors you see, you'll never recover!" With that, he had someone bring over a bucket full of cold water and made me put my feet in it. He then ordered me, "Don't you let even a drop of water splash out of that bucket." He splashed more cold water on my back and then fanned my back with a piece of cardboard. The temperature was -4 degrees Fahrenheit; that bone-chilling water froze me so that I instinctively drew up my feet from the bucket, but an officer immediately forced them back in and forbade me from moving them again. I was so cold that my entire body clenched up and I couldn't stop shivering. It felt as though the blood had congealed within my veins. They were thrilled to see me like that, and erupted in hideous laughter while mocking me by saying: "You're 'dancing' right on the beat!" I hated this gang of sub-human demons and beasts to no end; I was suddenly reminded of a video that portrayed demons of hell that tormented people for fun, and derived enjoyment out of the suffering of others. They were devoid of feelings and humanity, knowing only violence and torment. These evil cops were no different from the demons of hell—in fact, they were even worse. Over the course of one day and night, they had slapped me across the face countless times, trying to force me to divulge information about the church's money. When my face swelled up from their beatings, they applied ice to bring the swelling down and then continued their beating.

If not for God's protection, I would have died long before then. When those evil officers saw that I still wasn't willing to speak, they started tasing my thighs and groin with an electroshock baton. Each time they tased me, my entire body would convulse and spasm with pain. Because they had handcuffed me to the metal stool, it wasn't possible to duck out of the way, so I had just had to take whatever vicious beatings, trampling and humiliation they doled out. Words cannot describe the intense agony that I was experiencing, and yet, through it all, the policemen just laughed uproariously. Even more horrifying, a younger cop used a pair of chopsticks to clamp down on my nipple and then twist it as hard as he could. It hurt so much that I was screaming at the top of my lungs. They also put an ice cold bottle of water up between my legs against my groin and then forced water with wasabi powder dissolved in it into my nose. My entire nasal cavity was on fire and the searing heat seemed to be shooting right up into my brain. I didn't dare to inhale. Another wicked cop took a big drag from his cigarette and blew the smoke right up my nose, sending me into a frightful fit of coughing. Before I had had a chance to catch my breath, another one upended a wooden stool and put my legs on it so that the soles of my feet were exposed. Then he took a steel rod and struck the soles of both my feet dozens of times. It was so excruciatingly painful that I thought my feet would break clear off; I screamed out in pain over and over. Not long after, the soles of my feet swelled up and turned red. The wicked police tortured me unrelentingly. My heart was pounding heavily and I thought I was on the verge of death. They then gave me a kind of fast-acting traditional Chinese heart medication, and as soon as I had begun to recover, they began beating me again and threatening me, saying: "If you don't talk, we'll freeze you and beat you to death! After all, no one will know! If you don't fess up today we can keep hanging out for a few more days and see who can outlast who. We'll bring your husband and child in to see what you look like now and if you still don't tell us, we'll make sure that they're both fired from their jobs!" They even made sarcastic jabs at me, saying: "Don't you believe in God? Why doesn't your God come and rescue you? I guess your God isn't that great after all!" I despised this gang of hostile, evil and savage beasts with all my heart and soul. It was extremely difficult to withstand their cruel torture and even more difficult to bear their slander of God. As such, I called out desperately to God, entreating Him to safeguard me, imbue me with faith, strength and the will to endure suffering, so that I could stand firm. Just then, God's words appeared in my mind: **"[D]uring these last days you must bear testimony to God. No matter how great your suffering, you should go**

on to the very end, and even at your last breath, still you must be faithful to God, and at the mercy of God; only this is truly loving God, and only this is the strong and resounding testimony” (“Only by Experiencing Painful Trials Can You Know the Loveliness of God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). I thought to myself: “That’s right! God will is for me to bear witness to Him before Satan, so I ought to endure all this pain and humiliation to satisfy God. Even if I have only one breath remaining, I must remain faithful to God, for this is what a strong and resounding testimony is made up of, and this is what will shame the old devil.” With the guidance of God’s word, I felt a renewed sense of confidence and faith within my heart. I was willing to break through the forces of darkness; even if it meant my death, I had to satisfy God this time. A church hymn then came to mind: “I’ll give my love and loyalty to God and complete my mission to glorify God. I’m determined to stand firm in testimony to God, and never give in to Satan. Oh, my head may break and blood may flow, but the mettle of God’s people can’t be lost. God’s exhortations rest on the heart, I determine to humiliate Satan the devil. Pain and hardships are predestined by God, I will endure humiliation to be faithful to Him. I will never again cause God to shed tears or worry” (“I Wish to See the Day of God’s Glory” in *Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs*). “That’s right!” I thought to myself. “I shouldn’t pander to my flesh. As long as the opportunity exists for me to humiliate Satan and bring comfort to God’s heart, I am willing to offer up my life to God.” Once I had become resolute in my intentions, no matter how those demons tortured me or tried to deceive me with their conniving plots, I relied upon God in my heart from beginning to end. God’s words enlightened and guided me from within, giving me faith and strength, and allowing me to overcome the weakness of my flesh. The evil police continued to torture me with the cold: They rubbed ice cubes all over my body, leaving me so cold and shivery that it felt as if I’d been locked in a cave of ice. My teeth chattered loudly and my skin turned blue and purple. At around two in the morning, having been tortured to the point that I was longing for death, I couldn’t help but start becoming weak once again. Not knowing how much longer I would have to endure that suffering, I could only beseech God over and over in my heart: “Dear God, my flesh is far too weak and I can’t take it much longer. Please save me!” Thanks be to God for answering my prayer; just when I couldn’t take it any longer, the evil police decided to call off their interrogation because it wasn’t yielding any results.

Sometime after 2 in the afternoon on the 31st of December, the evil police dragged me back to my cell. I was bruised and battered from head to toe. My hands had swollen up like

balloons; they were all blue and purple. My face had swollen a third larger than its normal size, was bluish-green, hard to the touch, and completely numb. Several places on my body had burn wounds from being tased. There were more than twenty inmates in the cell at the time, and when they saw how I had been tortured by those demons, they all cried. Some of them didn't even dare look at me, and a young Communist Party member said: "When I get out of here I will withdraw my membership." A legal representative asked me, "Which station do the people that beat you work at? What are their names? Tell me, I'll post everything on foreign websites and expose them. They say China is a humane place, but where's the humanity in this? This is pure savagery!" My plight stoked the rage of many of the inmates, and they angrily exclaimed: "I never imagined the Communist Party could be so cruel—I can't believe they committed such treacherous acts. Believing in God is a good thing, it keeps people from committing crimes. Don't they say that China has freedom of religion? This certainly isn't freedom of religion! In China, if you have money and power, then you have everything. The real criminals are still on the loose and no one dares arrest them. Inmates on death row are set free as soon as they pay off government officials. There is no justice or equality to be found in this country! ..." At that moment, I couldn't help but recall these words from God words: **"Now is the time: Man has long since gathered all his strength, he has devoted all his efforts, paid every price, for this, to tear off the hideous face of this demon and allow people, who have been blinded, and have endured every manner of suffering and hardship, to rise up from their pain and turn their backs on this evil old devil"** ("Work and Entry (8)" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). **"Do you truly hate the great red dragon? Do you truly, sincerely hate it? Why have I asked you so many times? Why do I keep asking you this question, again and again? What image is there of the great red dragon in your heart? Has it really been removed? Do you truly not consider it your father? All people should perceive My intention in My questions. It is not to provoke the anger of the people, nor to incite rebellion among man, nor so that man may find his own way out, but is to allow all people to liberate themselves from the bondage of the great red dragon"** ("Chapter 28" of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words were a great comfort to me. I never imagined that the cruel, evil, demonic essence of the CCP government could be exposed through the cruel torture I suffered, that this could allow the unbelievers to see the CCP government for what it really is, and rise up together to detest

and forsake that old devil. This was truly the work of God's wisdom and almightiness. In the past, I had seen the CCP as the great red sun, as the savior of the people, but after falling victim to the CCP government's inhumane persecution and torment, my view of it has thoroughly changed. I truly saw its utter disregard for human life, how it savagely abuses God's chosen, goes against Heaven, and is an evil spirit perpetrating monstrous crimes—it is a reincarnation of the devil and a God-resisting demon. God is the Lord of creation, and humans are created beings. It is natural and right to believe in God, and yet the CCP government trumps up false charges to wantonly arrest and torment God's followers, desperately hoping to make a clean sweep of every last follower of God. In so doing, they have thoroughly exposed the devilish nature of their God-hating and God-antagonizing ways. With the CCP government serving as a foil, the essence of God's goodness and love became even more apparent to me. God incarnated in the flesh twice and, in both instances, has suffered through immense persecution and difficulties as well as pursuit by the devil. Yet, through it all, God quietly endured all attacks and suffering, performing His work to save mankind. God's love of mankind is truly great! At that moment, I despised that pack of demons with all my heart and soul and felt true regret that in the past I hadn't earnestly pursued the truth or fulfilled my duty to repay God's love. I thought to myself that if, one day, I made it out of that place alive, I would devote myself even more to fulfilling my duties and let God gain my heart.

Later on, the evil police interrogated me four more times. They couldn't get anything out of me, so they just trumped up a charge of "disturbing public order" and released me on one year of bail, set at 5,000 RMB, pending trial. I was finally released on the 22nd of January, 2013, after my family posted bail for me. After returning home, whenever I saw ice on the windows my heart would begin to race. My eyesight was significantly reduced, my arthritis also got worse, and I did develop a kidney problem. I constantly felt cold, was prone to panic attacks, I had numbness in both hands, my face had shed a layer of skin, and I often had unbearable pain in my inner thighs to the point where it would wake me from sleep. This was all evidence of those devils' torture.

After undergoing the inhumanely cruel persecution of the CCP government, though I had suffered all manner of torture of the flesh, I grew closer in my relationship to God, gained a more practical understanding of God's wisdom, almightiness, love and salvation, and strengthened my resolve to follow Almighty God. I resolved to follow God for the rest of my

life and seek to become one who loves God. Through the cruel persecution of the CCP government, I personally experienced God's love, care and protection. If God's word had not guided me every step of the way, giving me strength and faith, I never would have been able to endure all the inhumane torment and torture I suffered. Through my experience of this unique situation, I came to fully see that the CCP government is none other than the God-resisting, God-antagonizing devil Satan. In its endeavor to turn China into an atheistic country and take over the world, it stops at nothing and does everything in its power to drive God out of this world. It frantically pursues, arrests and persecutes those who follow God with the goal of eradicating all of God's followers, sweeping them all up in its net and, in so doing, abolish God's work entirely. The CCP government truly is incredibly evil! It is nothing more than a demonic beast that swallows people whole—it's a perverse, heaven-defying, justice-thwarting, evil-enabling satanic force of darkness. In China, the CCP government lets the evildoers who oppress and abuse good everyday people to run free, even giving them a share in legal and political power. They fraternize and gallivant about with the gangsters and crooks engaging in prostitution, gambling and drug-smuggling; they even help protect their interests. It is only the followers of God who walk the right path in life that the CCP government takes as its enemy, wantonly suppressing and arresting them, and cruelly persecuting them to the point that many believers' families are torn apart, loved ones scatter to the winds, and they're unable to return home. Many of them are unable to settle down, but must lead a life of vagrancy far from home. Still others are subjected to cruel torture and are even beaten to the point of paralysis or death for their belief in God. ... It is abundantly clear that the CCP government is the savagely inhuman, butcher of man, the devil, Satan. In the end, it will not escape God's righteous punishment for the monstrous sins it has perpetrated. For, Almighty God said long ago: **"The demons' nest will surely be torn to pieces by God, and you will stand beside God—you belong to God, and do not belong to this empire of slaves. God has long since loathed this dark society to His very bones. He gnashes His teeth, desperate to plant His feet upon this wicked, heinous old serpent, so that it may never rise again, and will never again abuse man; He will not excuse its actions in the past, He will not tolerate its deceit of man, He will settle the score for every one of its sins throughout the ages; God will not be in the least bit**

lenient toward this ringleader of all evil,^[1] He will utterly destroy it (“Work and Entry (8)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). God’s righteousness is worthy of praise and commendation and He will banish and destroy Satan’s kingdom. God’s kingdom will be established here on earth and God’s glory will certainly pervade the entire universe!

16. Guided by God’s Words, I Overcame the Repression of the Forces of Darkness

By Wang Li, Zhejiang Province

I believed in the Lord Jesus along with my mother since I was a little girl; in my days of following the Lord Jesus, I was often moved by His love. I felt that He loved us so much that He was crucified and shed His very last drop of blood to redeem us. At that time, the brothers and sisters in our church were all loving and supportive of one another, but unfortunately our faith in the Lord met with persecution and repression at the hands of the CCP government. The CCP government defines Protestantism and Catholicism as “xie jiaos,” and labels meetings held by house churches as “illegal gatherings.” The police used to raid our meeting places frequently, telling us that we had to first gain approval from the government and obtain a permit before we could hold gatherings, otherwise we would be arrested and fined or sent to prison. One time, my mother and five or six other brothers and sisters were arrested and questioned for a whole day. In the end, the police investigation confirmed that they were all just ordinary Christians, and they were released. From that time on, however, we had to meet in secret to avoid the government raids; in spite of all this, our faith never weakened. In late 1998, a relative of mine preached to me that the Lord Jesus had returned as Almighty God who had become flesh in the last days. This relative also read many of Almighty God’s words to me, which were utterly thrilling for me. I became certain that the words of Almighty God are the utterances to the churches by the Holy Spirit, and that Almighty God is the Lord Jesus returned. To think that I could actually be reunited with the Lord during my lifetime moved me beyond my ability to describe, and I wept tears of joy. From then on, I avidly

Footnotes:

1. “Ringleader of all evil” refers to the old devil. This phrase expresses extreme dislike.

devoured God's words every day, and from them came to understand many truths and mysteries—my parched spirit thus gained watering and sustenance. Basking in the delight and comfort brought to us by the Holy Spirit's great work, my husband and I immersed ourselves in the happiness and joy of being reunited with the Lord. We would often learn to sing hymns and dance in praise of God with other brothers and sisters, and we frequently gathered together to fellowship on God's words. My spirit felt refreshed and invigorated, and I felt as though I could already see before my eyes the beautiful scene of the kingdom manifesting on earth and everyone rejoicing. There was no way I could have anticipated, however, that just as we were following God and walking the right path in life with soaring faith, the CCP government would begin to cruelly persecute us ...

On October 28, 2002, I and several other sisters were holding a gathering. During the gathering, another sister and I went out to run an errand, but before we'd gotten very far, I heard her say behind me, "What are you arresting me for?" Before I had any chance to react, a plainclothes police officer approached and took hold of me, saying, "You're coming with me to the police station!" before escorting me to a police car. We were driven to the police station and as soon as I got out of the car, I saw that the six other sisters who had been at the gathering had also been arrested and brought in. The police ordered us to strip and submit to a body search. They found two pagers on me, thereby identifying me as a church leader and, as such, they ranked me as a high priority for interrogation. A policeman shouted at me, "When did you start believing in Almighty God? Who preached it to you? Who have you met with? What is your position in the church?" Being questioned so aggressively by him made me very nervous, and I had no idea how to deal with it. All I could do was pray silently to God, asking Him to protect me so that I would not betray Him. After praying, I slowly pulled myself together and decided to keep silent. Seeing that I wasn't talking, the policeman became angry and struck me violently on the head. I instantly felt dazed and dizzy, and my ears began to ring. They then brought in one of the sisters and told us to identify each other. Seeing that we weren't going to do what they said, however, they became enraged and ordered me to take off my cotton-padded shoes and stand barefooted on the freezing cement floor. They also made me stand with my back straight against the wall, and they would kick me hard if my posture faltered even slightly. It was well into the fall at that time; the temperature was dropping and it was raining lightly. I was so cold that my whole body was shaking, and my teeth chattered incessantly. The policeman paced back

and forth and, banging the table, threatened me, “We’ve been following you for a long time. We have plenty of ways to make you talk today, and if you don’t talk then we’ll leave you to freeze to death, or we’ll starve you, or we’ll beat you to death! Let’s see how long you last!” I felt a little afraid when I heard him say this, and so I called out to God in my heart: “O God! I don’t want to be a Judas and betray You. Please protect me and grant me the courage and faith I need to battle Satan, so that I might stand witness for You.” After praying, I thought of God’s words that say: **“His disposition is the symbol of authority, the symbol of all that is righteous, the symbol of all that is beautiful and good. More than that, it is a symbol of Him who cannot be^[a] overcome or invaded by the darkness and any enemy force, as well as a symbol of Him who cannot be offended (nor will He tolerate being offended)^[b] by any created being”** (“It Is Very Important to Understand God’s Disposition” in The Word Appears in the Flesh). “Yes,” I thought. “God is possessed of authority and power, and His authority and power cannot be toppled by any enemy force or darkness. No matter how cruel the CCP’s minions are, they are all in God’s hands, and as long as I rely on God and cooperate with Him, then I will surely overcome them.” With the clear guidance provided by God’s words, I suddenly found my faith and courage, and I no longer felt so cold. After I’d been standing there for more than three hours, the police escorted me back out to a police car and took me to a detention house.

On the afternoon of the day after I arrived at the detention house, two police officers, a man and a woman, came to question me. In the accent of my own hometown, they called me by my name and tried to sound like they were on my side. The man introduced himself as the chief of the Public Security Bureau’s Religion Section, and he said, “The police officers at the station have already gathered information on you. What you’ve done isn’t actually a big deal, and we’ve made a special trip here to take you back home. If you tell us everything when we get there, then you’ll be fine.” I didn’t know what kind of trick they had up their sleeves, but when I heard him say this, a ray of hope entered my heart. I thought to myself: “The locals where I’m from are good people, so maybe they’ll let me go even if I

Footnotes:

a. The original text reads “it is a symbol of being unable to be.”

b. The original text reads “as well as a symbol of being unable to be offended (and not tolerating being offended).”

don't tell them anything." Contrary to my expectations, however, as we were heading back to my hometown, the police exposed their true beast-like natures and tried to force me to hand over the keys to my house. I knew that they wanted to search my home, and I thought about all the books of God's words and the lists of brothers' and sisters' names that I had there. And so, I said an earnest prayer to God: "O Almighty God! Please protect the books of God's words and the lists I have at home so that they don't fall into Satan's hands...." I refused to hand over my keys. The police drove me to my building and kept me locked inside the car while they stormed off up to my apartment. As I sat in the car, I prayed continuously to God, and every second that passed was a torment. After a long while, the police returned and said angrily, "You're really stupid, you know that? There isn't a single book in your place, and yet you try so hard to help those church people." When I heard them say this, my anxious heart finally began to relax, and I thanked God for His protection from the bottom of my heart. It was only later that I learned that the police never found any books in my home, and they just took over 4,000 yuan in cash, a cellphone, and all the photos of me and my family. Luckily, my younger sister was there when the police arrived and, as soon as they left, she rushed to hand all the books of God's words and faith materials left there over to the church. The next day, the police went back to search the place again, but they left empty-handed once more.

As evening fell, the police took me to my local police station and proceeded to ask me the same questions I'd been asked before. Seeing that I still wasn't talking, they called in a pastor from the Three-Self Church to try to persuade me. "If you're not a Christian in the Three-Self Church, then you're following the false way," she said. I ignored her, and just prayed silently to God to protect my heart. The more she talked, the more outrageous her claims became, until she began to wantonly slander and blaspheme God. Filled with indignation, I retorted, "Pastor, you arbitrarily condemn Almighty God, but doesn't the Book of Revelation very clearly state '**which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty**' (Revelation 1:8)? Aren't you afraid of offending the Holy Spirit by recklessly condemning God like that? The Lord Jesus once said, '**[W]hoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come**' (Matthew 12:32). Are you not afraid?" The pastor was left speechless and could only leave after such a rebuke. In my heart, I thanked God for leading me to triumph over this obstacle. When they saw that their ploy hadn't worked, the police asked me to write something down

on a piece of paper. I couldn't figure out why they were asking me to do this, and so I silently prayed to God; I then realized that this was one of Satan's cunning schemes and refused to write anything, saying that I didn't know how to write. I later found out from a conversation between the two police officers that they had asked me to write something so they could check my handwriting and thereby confirm that the notebooks they'd found at our gathering place had been written by me, and then use this to bring charges against me. This showed me that those officers were nothing more than running dogs and lackeys trained by the CCP government, who were capable of going to any lengths and engaging in any underhanded methods they could think of in order to persecute the faithful—they truly are so insidious, crafty, evil and hateful! Once I'd clearly seen the vile faces of the running dogs who persecute those who believe in God, I silently made a resolution: I will never bend the knee or kowtow to Satan!

They questioned me nonstop for hours until around midnight, but the chief of the Religion Section couldn't get anything out of me. All of a sudden, he seemed to turn into a ravening beast and yelled angrily at me, "Damn it, I'm supposed to clock off at 11 p.m. You're being such a pain that I've had to stay here, and if I don't make you suffer for it then you won't fully understand the situation!" As he said this, he pulled my right hand onto the table and pressed down on it firmly. He then picked up a thick rod about five or six centimeters in diameter and brought it down hard on my wrist. After the first whack, the major veins in my wrist began to swell up, and then all the surrounding muscles began to swell up too. I cried out in pain and tried to pull my hand back, but he held it fast. While striking me he yelled, "This is for refusing to write! This is for refusing to talk! I'll hit you so hard that you'll never write another word!" He kept hitting my wrist like that for five or six minutes before finally stopping. By that time, my hand had swollen up like a grapefruit, and when he let go of me, I quickly withdrew my hand behind my back. But the evil policeman went behind me, grabbed my hands and began frantically beating them both as they hung there in the air while saying, "You use these hands to do things for your God, right? I'll break them, I'll cripple them, and then we'll see how you do anything! Then we'll see whether those believers in Almighty God want you anymore!" Hearing him say this left me filled with hatred for this gang of evil police. They behave so perversely and act contrary to Heaven; they only permit people to be the slaves of the CCP government and to work themselves to the bone for it, but they don't allow people to believe in God or worship the Creator. In an attempt to force me to betray God,

that policeman had no misgivings then whatsoever about tormenting me with cruel torture—they really are a horde of beasts and demons in human form, and they are so evil and reactionary! The policeman beat me three times that way; my hands and arms were beaten black and blue, and my wrists and the backs of my hands were so swollen they looked about to explode—the pain was unbearable. Just as I was languishing in extreme pain, a few lines from a hymn of God’s words came to mind: **“Thus, during these last days you must bear testimony to God. No matter how great your suffering, you should go on to the very end, and even at your last breath, still you must be faithful to God, and at the mercy of God; only this is truly loving God, and only this is the strong and resounding testimony”** (“Seek to Love God No Matter How Great Your Suffering” in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). God’s words stirred my heart, and I thought: “That’s right. God works tirelessly day and night to save us. He watches over us and stays with us always, and He shows us boundless love and mercy. Now, when Satan is trying to coerce me into betraying God and selling out my brothers and sisters, God is fervently hoping that I will bear staunch and resounding witness for Him. How could I possibly let Him down or hurt Him?” Thinking this, I held back my tears and told myself to be strong, not to be timid or cowardly. The CCP government wasn’t persecuting and harming me so cruelly because it hated me personally, but because of its God-resisting, God-hating essence. Its goal in treating me that way was to make me betray and reject God, and to make me accept its control and enslavement of me forever. I knew, however, that I could never yield to it, but that I had to stand firmly on the side of God and shame Satan. I sang that hymn over and over again in my mind and I felt my spirit gradually grow stronger. After beating me, that wicked policeman ordered several police to guard me, and they ended up keeping me awake all night long. If they saw me even begin to close my eyes, they would yell at me or give me a kick. But being moved by the love of God as I was, I did not give in to them.

The next day, the chief of the Religion Section came to question me again. Seeing that I still wasn’t talking, he grabbed a rod and smacked it hard across my thighs. After several whacks, my legs began to swell up to the point that I could feel my trousers begin to tighten around my swollen legs. Another evil policeman stood to one side taunting me, saying, “If the God you believe in is so great, why won’t He come help you now that we’re torturing you?” He also said a number of other things slandering and blaspheming God. I was hurting and angry, and in my heart I responded to his blasphemies by thinking: “You legion of devils,

God will exact retribution on you in accordance with your evil deeds! Now is the time when God exposes you and gathers the facts of your wicked deeds!" I then thought of these words from God: **"Thousands of years of hate are concentrated in the heart, millennia of sinfulness are inscribed upon the heart—how could this not inspire loathing? Avenge God, completely snuff out His enemy, do not allow it to run rampant any longer, and do not permit it to kick up as much trouble as it wishes anymore! Now is the time: Man has long since gathered all his strength, he has devoted all his efforts, paid every price, for this, to tear off the hideous face of this demon and allow people, who have been blinded, and have endured every manner of suffering and hardship, to rise up from their pain and turn their backs on this evil old devil"** ("Work and Entry (8)" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). From God's words, I perceived His urgent will and ardent call, and I understood that the CCP government is doomed to be destroyed by God. Although I was being subjected to the CCP government's cruel persecution at that time, God's wisdom is exercised based on the cunning schemes of Satan, and God was using what was happening to me so that I could clearly see its demonic essence, and so that I might be able to discern good from evil. Thus, true love and true hate could arise within me; I would then be able to forsake and reject the CCP government once and for all and turn my heart to God, so that I might bear witness for God and shame Satan. Once I'd understood God's will, a tremendous feeling of strength rose up within me, and I became determined to swear loyalty to God and to forsake Satan. Although I was constantly being subjected to cruel torture, and although my whole body was sapped of energy and my legs were in unbearable pain, by relying on the strength God gave me, I was still able to say nothing (I discovered later that my legs had been beaten black and blue, and even now one of the muscles in my right leg remains atrophied). Ultimately, the chief of the Religion Section could do nothing but storm off in exasperation.

On the third day, the evil police interrogated and beat me once again, stopping only when they'd sworn at me enough times and gotten tired from hitting me. Afterward, a female police officer approached me and, feigning concern, said, "We had someone who believed in Almighty God brought in before. They didn't tell us anything and were sentenced to 10 years in prison. How does keeping quiet help you out at all? You could waste 10 whole years in this place, and then when you get out your God won't want you anymore anyway, and it'll be too late for regret...." She said a number of other things to try to lure me into talking, but

I just kept praying silently, asking God to protect my heart so that I wouldn't fall prey to Satan's cunning schemes. After praying, a part of a hymn flashed into my mind: **"I myself am willing to pursue You and to follow You. Now You want to abandon me but I still want to follow You. Whether You want me or not, I will still love You, and in the end I must gain You. I offer up my heart to You, and no matter what You do, I will follow You for my entire life. No matter what, I must love You and I must gain You; I will not rest until I have gained You"** ("I Am Determined to Love God" in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). "Yes," I thought. "I now believe in God and follow God because it's what I want to do. It doesn't matter whether God wants me or not—I'll still follow God till the very end!" God's words brought clarity to my mind and I realized that Satan was doing all it could to sow discord between me and God so that I would become dispirited, deny God, and finally betray God as a Judas. Right then, the only way I could defeat Satan and become a testimony to God's victory over Satan was to keep faith in Him and stay loyal to Him. "Whether I am sent to prison or not, and whatever my outcome will be is all in God's hands," I thought to myself. "However God decides to arrange and orchestrate my life, I have no say in the matter, and I trust deeply that everything God does is done to save me. Though I may have to do without the comforts of the flesh in prison, what I would gain would be spiritual contentment. Furthermore, going to prison on behalf of God would be my honor, whereas if I betrayed God for the sake of my lust for physical comforts, then I would lose all dignity and integrity, and my conscience would never know peace again." I therefore silently resolved: Even if I am sent to prison, I will remain loyal to God till the end; I dedicate my true love to God so that Satan may be humiliated and defeated once and for all! The wicked police tried both good cop and bad cop routines on me, and they subjected me to cruel tortures for three days and three nights, but they gained no leads from me. Out of options, all they could do was take me, battered and bruised as I was, and lock me up in the detention house. As they locked me in, one of the policemen said maliciously, "We'll let you catch your breath and then we'll interrogate you again!"

Five days later, the evil police came to question me once again, only this time they took it in turns to wear me down. They ordered me to sit on a freezing cold metal chair and then they cuffed my right hand to it. They fixed a metal bar in front of my chest to stop me from moving, with my feet dangling above the ground. They made it so that I wasn't able to move a muscle, and before long, both my hands and my feet had gone numb. The wicked police

said to me, “Every single person who’s been chained to this chair ends up telling us everything they know. If you don’t talk in one day, then you’ll be chained here for two days. If you don’t start talking in two days, then it’ll be three days. I don’t want much from you. I just want you to tell me who the leaders in your church are.” Thanks be to God for granting me strength, as all along I clung only to one thought: I will never sell anyone out! They questioned me repeatedly, they gave me nothing to eat nor even anything to drink, and they wouldn’t let me use the bathroom. That evening, to stop me from falling asleep, they kept me cuffed to the chair by one hand, but made me stand next to it while they continued to question me. I was both exhausted and hungry, and my whole body had gone numb. I simply couldn’t stand on my own and could only remain standing up at all by leaning on the chair. But the second I leaned on the chair or even thought about falling asleep, a policeman would wave a long bamboo chopstick in front of my face and whack me with it, and they didn’t let me close my eyes once all night. This went on for two days and I became so weak that my whole body became limp and feeble. I had no idea how long they would continue to put me through this; I was afraid that I wouldn’t be able to stand it, that I would betray God and become a Judas, and so I called out to God over and over: “O God! My flesh is so weak and my stature is so small. Please keep me from becoming a Judas.” Just as I was calling urgently to God, one of the wicked policemen took out a book of God’s words and read: **“Toward those who showed Me not the slightest loyalty during times of tribulation, I shall be merciful no more, for My mercy only extends so far. I have no liking, furthermore, for anyone who has once betrayed Me, much less do I like to associate with those who sell out the interests of their friends. This is My disposition, regardless of who the person may be. I must tell you this: Anyone who breaks My heart shall not receive clemency from Me a second time, and anyone who has been faithful to Me shall forever remain in My heart”** (“Prepare Sufficient Good Deeds for Your Destination” in The Word Appears in the Flesh). Light filled my heart—wasn’t God showing me the way? I saw that God truly was filled with hope and concern for me and, to keep me standing strong, He had used this evil policeman here in this nest of demons to read God’s words to me. Through this, God was clearly telling me that He loves and blesses those who stay loyal to Him through adversity, and that He hates and rejects those weak enough to betray Him. How could I fail to live up to God’s expectations in the face of His love and mercy? When the evil policeman had finished reading, he asked, “Is this what your God has you do? That

is, stay silent?" I didn't answer and, surprisingly, the policeman thought that I hadn't heard him, and so he read the passage again many times, and asked me the same question over and over again. I saw how wise and almighty God is: The more the evil policeman read God's words, the more each word became etched into my heart, and likewise, the stronger my faith grew. I resolved that no matter how those demons might try to extract a confession from me, I would never become a Judas!

On the third day, the evil police made me walk up and down the stairs, going from one interrogation room to another, in order to sap all of my remaining energy. This torment went on until my body was utterly depleted and my legs were wobbling, and it became incredibly difficult to lift them to climb the stairs. Because of the faith and strength God's words had given me, however, I still refused to open my mouth. They questioned me until nightfall but still had nothing to show for it, and so they threatened me, saying, "Even if you don't say a word, we can still get you convicted. We'll fix you!" Hearing them say this aroused some fear in me and I thought to myself: "How else can they torture me? I'm utterly spent and can't go on much longer...." I then called out to God, saying: "O God! Please help me. I'm really afraid that I can't hold out any longer. Please protect me and guide me so that I may know how to cooperate with You." I felt strength rise up inside me after this prayer, and I no longer felt in as much pain. And so, in my most painful and difficult moment, through continuous prayer, God granted me the faith and strength to keep going.

Early in the morning on the fourth day, seeing that three straight days of interrogation had yielded no results, the evil police angrily undid my handcuffs and shoved me to the floor. They then ordered me to kneel and not get up. Taking advantage of the fact that I was on my knees already, I began a silent prayer to God: "O God! I know that Your protection has allowed me to overcome these past few days of torture, interrogation and attempts to extract a confession and I have no words to thank You for Your love and mercy. O God! Though I have no idea how the evil police will torture me next, no matter what happens I will never betray You, nor will I ever sell out my brothers and sisters. I ask that You continue to grant me faith and strength and keep me standing strong." The moment my prayer ended, I felt a great surge of strength rise up within me, and I became keenly aware that I was being held in God's love. No matter how those devils might torment me, I knew that God would guide me to overcome it all. After some time, the wicked police perhaps guessed that I was praying to God and, spluttering with rage, they yelled and shouted curses at me. One of them took

a newspaper, rolled it up into a sort of club and brutally slammed it against my temple. Everything went black and I fell to the floor unconscious. They threw freezing cold water on me to wake me and, through the fog clouding my mind, I heard one of the evil policemen threatening me. "If you don't tell us everything you know, I'll beat you either until you die or until you're left a cripple! No one will ever know if I beat you to death anyway, and none of your brothers or sisters would dare to come here." I also heard another one of them say, "Forget about it. If you keep beating her like that then she really will die. She's a hopeless case. We won't get anything out of her." I couldn't help but sigh with relief when I heard that, for I knew that it was God showing understanding for my weakness, and that He had once again opened a way out for me. The evil police still weren't willing to admit defeat, however, and so they brought in my younger sister and my son, neither of whom were believers in God, to try to get me to talk. When my sister saw my black eyes and my swollen, bruised hands, not only did she not try to get me to talk as the police had wanted, but instead she wept and said, "Li, I believe that you're incapable of doing anything bad. Stay strong." Seeing my sister encouraging me, the policeman turned to my son and said, "You'd better talk to your mom and get her to cooperate with us, and then she can go home and look after you." My son looked at me and made no response to the officer. Just as he was about to leave, he walked up to me and then said suddenly, "Mom, don't worry about me. You take care of yourself, and I'll take care of myself." Seeing how mature and sensible my son was, I was moved beyond words, but just vigorously nodded my head and cried as they escorted him and my sister from the room. This event allowed me to experience God's love and care for me once again. God was showing understanding for my weakness as, over those past few days, the one I'd been worried most about had been my son. I'd been afraid that, without me there, he wouldn't be able to cope on his own. What had worried me even more was that, being so young, when he came to the police station to see me, he would be brainwashed into hating me for believing in God. To my surprise, however, not only had he not been taken in by the slanderous and poisonous talk of the evil police, but on the contrary had actually comforted me instead. I saw then how truly wondrous and almighty God is! The heart and spirit of man are indeed orchestrated by God. After my son and sister had gone, the evil police once again threatened me, saying, "If you still won't talk, believe it or not, we'll torture you for a few more days and nights. And even if you still don't talk then, we can still get you sentenced to three to five years in prison...." Having experienced many of God's

deeds, I was filled with faith in God and so I said with decisiveness and determination, “The worst that can happen is that I die at your hands! You can torture my flesh, but you can never sway my heart. Even if my body dies, God will still have my soul.” Seeing that I remained adamant, there was nothing the wicked police could do except end their interrogation and take me back to my cell. Witnessing the sorry figure cut by Satan in its utter defeat brought me unparalleled joy, and I truly understood that only God is the Sovereign of all things and that our lives and deaths are entirely in His hands. Although I hadn’t been allowed any food or water for days and my body had been devastated, God’s love was with me always. His words were a constant source of faith and strength, enabling me to tenaciously defeat Satan’s attempts to extract a confession from me by the police taking turns to wear me down. This allowed me to truly appreciate how transcendent and great God’s life force is—the strength God gives us is inexhaustible and is not subject to the constraints of the flesh.

Several days later, the CCP government cooked up the charge of disrupting public order, and after sentencing me to three years of reeducation through labor, the police escorted me to a labor camp. I lived an inhuman existence there, working nonstop from dawn till dusk. Because my hands had been maimed by all those beatings, the muscles on the backs of my hands were strained so tightly for the first six months of my sentence that I didn’t even have the strength to wash my clothes. Whenever it was rainy, my arms would hurt and swell up because the blood vessels couldn’t circulate my blood properly. Despite this, the prison guards would force me to exceed my daily quota every day, otherwise my sentence would be increased. What’s more, they kept a very strict watch over those of us who believed in God; there was always someone watching us when we ate our meals, when we washed, and even when we went to the toilet.... The pain in my body, being overloaded with work, plus the psychological torment all caused me to suffer unspeakably. I felt like three years in that place would be too much for me and that I couldn’t possibly go on. On many occasions I thought about suicide as a way to end my suffering. In extreme pain, I said a prayer to God: “O God, You know how weak my flesh is. I’m suffering so much right now and I really can’t stand it any longer. I even want to die. Please enlighten and guide me, grant me strength of will, and give me the faith I need to go on....” God showed me kindness then, as He made me think of a hymn of God’s words: **“God has become flesh this time to do such work, to conclude the work that He has yet to complete, to bring this age to a close, to judge this age, to save the deeply sinful from the world of the sea of**

affliction and utterly transform them. Many are the sleepless nights that God has endured for the sake of the work of mankind. From up high to the lowest depths, He has descended to the living hell in which man lives to pass His days with man, has never complained of the shabbiness among man, has never reproached man for his disobedience, but endures the greatest humiliation as He personally carries out His work. ... [S]o that the whole of mankind can find rest sooner, He has endured humiliation and suffered injustice to come to earth, and personally entered into 'hell' and 'Hades,' into the tiger's den, to save man" ("Every Stage of God's Work Is for the Life of Man" in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). As I contemplated these words, my heart was inspired and reformed by God's love. I thought about how, in order to save mankind, which is so profoundly corrupt, God became flesh and descended from the highest heights down to the lowest lows, risking great danger to come to China—this devil's lair—to perform His work. He has suffered great humiliation and pain, persecution and adversity, and yet God is always expending Himself silently, without complaint and without regret, for the sake of mankind. God performs all this work just so that He may gain a group of people who can be considerate of His will, who set their face toward justice, and who never surrender and never give in. I had found myself in that situation because God wanted to use it to temper my will, and to perfect my faith and my obedience to God; He had allowed this situation to befall me to make me understand and enter into the truth. The tiny amount of suffering I was undergoing was not worth even mentioning next to the pain and humiliation God has suffered. If I couldn't even stand such a small amount of suffering in prison, would I not be proving myself unworthy of the painstaking efforts God had gone to for my sake? Moreover, God's guidance had enabled me to overcome all the cruel torture meted out to me by the evil police when I was first arrested. God had long since allowed me to see His wondrous deeds in action, so shouldn't I have an even stauncher faith and continue to bear beautiful testimony for Him? Thinking this, my strength returned, and I made up my mind to emulate Christ: No matter how painful or how hard things got, I would keep living doggedly on. After that, whenever I felt that my life in the labor camp was getting to be too much for me, I would sing that hymn, and each time I did, God's words provided me with inexhaustible faith and strength, and I was inspired to carry on. At that time, there were a number of other sisters from the church also being held at the labor camp. By relying on the wisdom God granted us, whenever we had the chance, we would write God's words on notes and pass them to

each other or fellowship a few words with each other when chance allowed—we supported and encouraged each other. Despite the fact that we were all being held in that lair of CCP government demons, locked within those tall walls and completely cut off from the outside world, it was precisely because of this that we came to cherish every one of God’s words that much more, and treasure even more the inspiration God gave each one of us, and it was because of this that our hearts clove together as closely as they did.

On October 29, 2005, my sentence was served in full and I was released at last. Despite being let out of prison, however, I still wasn’t able to regain my freedom. The police were always sending people to monitor my movements, and they ordered me to personally report to the police station every month. Although I was in my own home, it felt like I was being held inside an invisible prison, and I had to be constantly on my guard against CCP informers. Even though I was at home, I still had to be incredibly careful when reading God’s words, afraid that the police would come bursting in at any moment. Furthermore, because I was being monitored so closely, I had no way to see my brothers and sisters or live the church life. This was excruciating for me, and every day felt like a year. In the end, I couldn’t stand to live a life of being monitored and suppressed, of having to leave the church and all my brothers and sisters, and so I left my hometown and found a job elsewhere. I was finally able to make contact with the church and once again I began to live the church life.

Having experienced persecution at the hands of the CCP government, I thoroughly and clearly saw its hypocritical, demonic essence that deceives the public so as to win praise for itself, and I became certain that it is nothing more than a gang of devils that blasphemes against Heaven and sets itself against God. The CCP government is indeed the embodiment of Satan, the incarnation of the devil itself; my hatred for it runs deep and I vow to remain its mortal enemy. Throughout this adversity, I also truly came to appreciate God’s almightiness and sovereignty and His wondrous deeds, I experienced the authority and might of God’s words, and I truly felt God’s love and His great salvation: When I was in danger, it was God who was always by my side, enlightening me and illuminating me through His words, granting me faith and strength, guiding me to overcome one cruel torture after another and getting me through three long, dark years in captivity. Faced with the vast salvation of God, I am overcome with gratitude, my faith is redoubled, and I have resolved: No matter how great the hardships I must undergo in the future, I will always rely on the guidance and leadership of God’s words to cast off all the influences of darkness, and I will steadfastly follow God to the very end!

17. God Is My Strength in Life

By Xiaohe, Henan Province

In what feels like the blink of an eye, I have followed Almighty God for 14 years. Throughout these years, I have experienced ups and downs, and the path has often been difficult, but because I have had God's word, as well as God's love and mercy to accompany me, I have felt especially fulfilled. In these 14 years, the most memorable experience was my arrest in August of 2003. While I was in custody, I was brutally tortured by the CCP police, and was left nearly disabled. It was Almighty God who watched over me and protected me, and who time and again used His words to guide me, which finally allowed me to overcome being tortured by those demons, stand firm, and testify. During this experience, I felt deeply the extraordinary power of Almighty God's words and the might of His life force, by which I determined that Almighty God is the one true God who holds sovereignty over all and rules over all things. Even more so, He is my only salvation, the only One I can rely on, and no enemy force can take me away from God or stop me from following His footsteps.

I remember that evening, when myself and two of my sisters were meeting together, when suddenly we heard the dog barking outside, as well as the sound of people coming over the courtyard wall. Shortly after, we heard someone banging urgently on the door, shouting, "Open the door! You're surrounded!" We quickly gathered our things and put them away, but just at that moment, the door crashed inward with a bang, and the glare of several flashlights shone straight toward us, blinding us so that we had to close our eyes. Immediately, more than a dozen people rushed into the room and forcefully pushed us toward the wall as they shouted, "Don't move! Play nice!" After that, they searched the house, tearing through it like bandits. At just that moment, I heard the pops of two gunshots from outside, which was followed by one of the police inside shouting, "We have them! Three of them!" They handcuffed us, then roughly shoved us into a police van. By now, my senses had returned, and I realized we had been arrested by the police. Once we were in the vehicle, one of the police, electric baton in hand, shouted, "All of you, listen here: Keep still, because I'll shock anyone who moves, and even if it kills you, I won't be breaking the law!" On the way, two of these evil police had squeezed me into the middle of the seat between them,

and one of them held onto my legs in his lap and pulled me to his arms. He said lecherously, "I'll be wasting my chance if I don't take advantage of you!" He clung to me tightly, even though I struggled with all my strength until another one of the police said, "Stop playing around! Let's hurry up and finish the mission so we can be done with it." Only then did he let go.

They brought us to the police station and locked us in a tiny room, after which they separately cuffed each of us to metal chairs. The person assigned to guard us sternly asked us our names and where we lived. I was nervous and didn't know what I should say, so I silently prayed to God, asking Him for wisdom and for the right words to say. This is when God's words enlightened me: **"[A]lways having the interests of God's family as the most important thing no matter what you are doing, accepting God's observation, and submitting to God's arrangements"** ("How Is Your Relationship With God?" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). Right! I had to put the interests of God's family first. No matter how they might torture or torment me, I couldn't sell out my brothers and sisters, nor could I become a Judas and betray God. I had to stand firm and testify for God. After that, no matter how he questioned me, I ignored him. The next morning, as they were about to take us to the detention house, the lecherous police officer said, "We put out the dragnet to catch you! We had to keep looking until we found you!" As he handcuffed me, he groped my breasts, which made me furious. I never imagined that the People's Police would harass me like that in broad daylight. They were nothing but gangsters and bandits! It was truly disgusting and hateful!

At the detention house, to make me tell them my home address and information about my belief in God, the police first sent a female officer to persuade me and flatter me by playing good cop. When they realized that wasn't working, they forcibly took a video of me, and then said they would take the video to the TV station and ruin my reputation with it. I knew, however, that I was simply a believer in God who pursued the truth and walked the correct path in life, and that I hadn't done anything disgraceful, nor had I done anything illegal or criminal, so in an offended tone, I answered, "Do whatever you like!" When they saw that their trick wasn't working, these evil police decided to torture me viciously. As if I were a hardened criminal, they put me in handcuffs and shackles that weighed 5 kg, and then escorted me to a vehicle to take me to be interrogated. Because the shackles on my feet were so heavy, I had to drag them along as I walked. Walking was very difficult, and it

only took a few footsteps before the skin on my feet was rubbed raw and broken. Once in the vehicle, they immediately put a black bag over my head, and I was squeezed between two officers. I suddenly thought to myself in shock, "These evil police lack all humanity, and there's no telling what vicious things they'll do to torture me. What will happen if I can't take it?" So, I quickly prayed to God: "Almighty God! My flesh is weak in the face of the circumstances I'm about to endure. Please protect me and give me faith. No matter what tortures befall me, I wish to stand firm in my testimony to satisfy You, and I absolutely refuse to betray You." We entered a building and they removed the bag from my head, then ordered me to stand for a whole day. That evening, a police officer sat in front of me, crossed his legs, and said to me in a savage tone, "Answer my questions cooperatively, and you'll be released! How many years have you believed in God? Who preached it to you? Who is the leader of your church?" When I didn't answer, he shouted angrily, "It looks like you won't answer unless we make the alternative clear!" He ordered me to raise my hands above my head and not move as I continued to stand. Before long, my arms began to ache, and I couldn't hold them above my head, but he wouldn't allow me to lower them. Only when I was sweating and trembling all over and I couldn't hold them up any longer did he allow me to lower my arms, but he still wouldn't allow me to sit. I was required to stand until dawn, by which point my legs and feet were numb and swollen.

On the morning of the second day, they began to question me again, but I still refused to tell them anything. They removed one side of my (chained) handcuffs, and then their leader hit me violently in the back of my knees with a 10 cm thick, 70 cm long wooden pole, forcing me to kneel. He then jammed the pole into the crevice behind my knees, then pulled my arms under the pole and forced me to put the handcuffs back on. Immediately, my chest felt compressed, it was hard to breathe, and the tendons in my shoulders felt stretched to the breaking point. My calves were so tense they felt ready to snap. It was so painful that I trembled all over. About three minutes later, I tried to adjust my position, but couldn't support myself, and with a thump I fell backward onto my rear, my face pointing upward. One of the four police in the room directed two of the others to go to either side of me and pull the wooden pole downward with one hand while pushing my shoulders forward with the other, and instructed the third to hold my head in his hands while kicking my back with his foot, putting me into a squatting position, which they then ordered me to maintain. But my whole body was in unbearable pain, and before long I fell over again, at which point they again put

me into a squatting position. I continued to fall over and be pushed upright into a squat position over and over, and this torment continued for about an hour, until finally, once they were all out of breath and sweating, their leader said, "Enough, enough, I'm too tired for this!" Only then did they remove the torture implement. I felt weak all over, and lay on the floor gasping for breath, completely limp. By this point, the handcuffs had abraded away the skin on my wrists, and below the shackles my ankles were covered in blood. I was in such pain that I was sweating all over, and as my sweat seeped into my wounds, the pain was like being cut with a knife. In such misery, I couldn't help but keep crying out in my heart, "O God! Save me, I can't bear this much longer!" And at that moment, God's words enlightened me: **"When people are ready to sacrifice their lives, everything becomes trifling, and no one can get the better of them. What could be more important than life?"** ("Chapter 36" of Interpretations of the Mysteries of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words immediately made everything clear to me. Satan knows people treasure their flesh, and that they fear death even more, so it was hoping to cruelly hurt my flesh in order to make me fear death, and to thereby make me betray God. This was its scheme, but God was also using Satan's scheme to test my faith and my loyalty to Him. God wanted me to bear witness for Him in the presence of Satan, and thereby humiliate Satan. Once I understood God's will, I again found my faith and strength, as well as the determination to stand firm and testify for God even at the cost of my own life. Once I swore the oath to put my life on the line to satisfy God, my pain felt greatly lessened, and I also didn't feel so distressed and miserable. After that, the police ordered me to stand, and said angrily, "I thought I told you to stand! Let's see how long you last!" And so, they forced me to stand there until dark. In the evening, when I went to the bathroom, my feet were swollen and covered in congealed blood because of the shackles, so I could only drag my feet across the floor a short distance at a time. It was incredibly difficult to move, as each time I moved I felt a cutting pain from my feet, and with each footstep there was a clear trail of fresh blood. It took me nearly an hour to walk the 30 meters to the toilet and back. That night, I couldn't help but rub my swollen legs with my hands, and they were uncomfortable no matter whether I drew them close to me or stretched them out. I was in extreme pain, but what consoled me was that, because I had God's protection, I had not betrayed God.

On the morning of the third day, these evil police again used the same method to torture me. Each time I fell over, the lead policeman would laugh maliciously and say, "That was a

pretty tumble! Let's have another!" And then they would pick me up, and I would fall again, and he would say, "I like you in that position, it looks good. Do it again!" They tortured me over and over like this for roughly an hour, until they finally stopped, sweating from their foreheads and exhausted. I collapsed to the floor, my head facing upward, feeling as though the sky was spinning. I couldn't stop shaking, streams of salty sweat made it impossible to open my eyes, and my stomach was churning so badly I wanted to vomit. I felt like I was about to die. This was when God's words flashed into my mind: **"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' ... The great red dragon persecutes God and is the enemy of God, and so, in this land, those who believe in God are thus subjected to humiliation and oppression, and God's words are fulfilled in you, this group of people, as a result"** ("Is the Work of God As Simple As Man Imagines?" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words made me understand that in China, a nation ruled over by demons where believing in God and following God ensures you will suffer a great deal of humiliation and harm, God intends to use this persecution to make a group of overcomers and thereby defeat Satan, and these are precisely the times we are to manifest God's glory and bear witness for Him. That I was able to do my part for God's glory is my honor. Guided by God's words, I not only discovered a powerful strength, but I also declared to Satan in my heart, "Vile demon, I've steeled myself, and no matter how you torture me, I won't submit to you. Even if I die, I vow to stand with God." When the head officer saw that I still wasn't answering their questions, he angrily removed the pole, and then said in a rage, "Go on, stand up! We'll see how long your stubbornness lasts. We'll play the long game with you. I'm sure we'll break you yet!" I had no choice but to agonizingly rise to my feet, but my legs were so swollen and painful that I couldn't stand up straight, and I had to lean on the wall. That afternoon, the head officer said to me, "When other people 'ride the swing' they all talk the first time. You can take quite a bit of abuse! Look at the state of your legs, and you still won't talk. I don't know where you get the strength...." After that, he looked at me again and yelled, "I've made so many people spill their secrets, and you have the gall to fight me? Hah! Even if we don't loosen your mouth, we can still sentence you to 8 to 10 years, and we'll make the prisoners curse you and beat you every day! We'll fix you!" When I heard him say that, I thought, "God is with me, so even if you sentence me to 8 to 10 years, I'm not afraid." When I didn't respond, he angrily slapped his thigh, stomped his foot, and said, "We've spent days trying to break you.

If everybody was like you, how could I ever do my job?" I smiled inside when I heard him say that, because Satan was impotent, defeated soundly by God's hand! At that moment, I couldn't help but think of God's words: **"God's life force can prevail over any power; moreover, it exceeds any power. His life is eternal, His power extraordinary, and His life force is not easily overwhelmed by any created being or enemy force"** ("Only Christ of the Last Days Can Give Man the Way of Eternal Life" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). Every word of God's is the truth, and that day I experienced it personally. I hadn't eaten or drunk anything or slept for three days, and I had been tortured so badly, and I was still resisting, and this was entirely due to the strength given to me by God. It was God watching over me and protecting me. Without God as my strong support, I would have been broken long before. God's life force truly is extraordinarily powerful, and God is truly almighty! After witnessing God's deeds, my faith to bear witness for God before Satan grew stronger.

On the morning of the fourth day, the evil police forced me to stretch my arms forward and level with my shoulders and maintain a half squat, after which they placed a wooden rod on the backs of my hands. It wasn't long before I couldn't maintain the position. My hands fell, and the pole dropped to the floor. They picked up the pole and used it to savagely hit the joints of my fingers and knees, each blow causing piercing pain, and then they forced me to continue doing a half squat. After several days of torture, my legs were already swollen and in pain, so after squatting for just a moment, my legs couldn't support my weight, and I collapsed heavily onto the floor. They picked me up again, but the minute they let go I collapsed again. This continued several times. My buttocks were already so bruised that they couldn't stand to bump against the floor like this, and I was in such pain that I began to sweat all over. They tormented me in this fashion for about an hour. Afterward, they ordered me to sit on the floor, then brought in a bowl of thick salt water and told me to drink it. I refused, so one of these evil police grabbed the sides of my face, while another put one hand on my forehead and pried my mouth open with the other and poured it down my throat. The salt water felt bitter and astringent against my throat, my stomach instantly felt like it was on fire, and it was so unbearable that I wanted to cry. When they saw my discomfort, they said viciously, "You don't bleed as easily when we hit you after you drink salt water." I could barely contain the rage I felt when I heard that. I never imagined China's supposedly upright People's Police could be so sinister and malicious. These vicious demons not only meant to toy with me and harm me, they were out to humiliate me. That night, one of these

evil police came up to me, squatted down, and touched my face with his hand as he spoke filthy words to me. I was so furious that I spat directly into his face. He became furious and slapped me hard, making my eyes see stars and my ears ring. In a threatening tone he then said, "You still haven't experienced the rest of our interrogation techniques. If you die here, no one will ever know. Confess, or there's a lot more fun we can have with you!" That night, I laid on the floor, unable to move at all. I wanted to go to the bathroom, so they told me to get up on my own. Using all my strength, I was able to slowly stand up, but I collapsed again after taking just one step. I couldn't move, so a female officer had to drag me into the bathroom, where I passed out again. When I awakened, I was back in my own room. I saw that my legs were so swollen that the skin was shiny, the handcuffs and shackles were embedded deeply into the skin on my wrists and ankles, blood and pus seeped from the wounds, and it was more painful than I could describe. I thought of the rest of the torture techniques the officer who touched my face had just said they would use on me, and I couldn't help but feel weak, so I prayed to God: "God! I don't know what else these devils will do to torment me, and I can't hold on much longer. Please guide me, give me faith, grant me strength, and allow me to stand witness for You." After I prayed, I remembered the suffering God endured the two times He came incarnate in order to save humankind: In the Age of Grace, in order to redeem humankind, the Lord Jesus was toyed with, beaten, and insulted by the soldiers and the crowds, was made to wear a crown of thorns, and finally was nailed to the cross while He was still alive; today, God has taken an even bigger risk by coming incarnate to work in an atheist country and, silently and without complaint, He endured being persecuted and arrested by the CCP government, as well as enduring the wild resistance, rejection, and condemnation of the religious world. I again recalled God's words: **"Is not the suffering you encounter now the very same suffering of God? You are suffering along with God, and God is suffering along with people. Today you all have a part in Christ's tribulation, kingdom, and patience, and in the end you will obtain glory. This kind of suffering is meaningful, but you absolutely must be resolved. You must understand the significance of today's suffering and why you must suffer so. Seek a little truth from this, and understand a little of God's intention, and you will then possess the resolve to endure suffering"** ("Only by Pursuing the Truth Can You Obtain Changes in Your Disposition" in Records of Christ's Talks). It's true, God long ago endured the suffering I was undergoing. God was innocent, yet to save corrupt humankind,

God bore every torment and humiliation, whereas the suffering I was enduring was purely so that I myself could attain true salvation. Considering the question closely, I realized that my own suffering was hardly worth mentioning next to the suffering God endured. I finally understood the immensity of the torment and humiliation God endured to save us, and I felt that God's love for humankind truly is powerful and selfless! In my heart, I felt a longing and yearning for God. Through my suffering, God allowed me to see more of His power and authority, and to appreciate that His words are the life force of man, and could lead me to overcome any difficulty; through this suffering, God was also refining my faith, tempering my will, and allowing me to make up what I lacked and bring my own deficiencies to perfection. I understood God's will, and realized that the suffering I endured that day was a great gift of God's grace, and that God was with me, so I wasn't alone. I couldn't help but recall a church hymn: "God is my support, what is there to fear? I pledge my life to fight with Satan till the end. God lifts us up, we should leave everything behind and fight to bear witness for Christ. God will carry out His will on earth. I'll prepare my love and loyalty and devote them all to God. I will joyfully welcome God's return when He descends in glory, and meet with Him again when the kingdom of Christ is realized" ("The Kingdom" in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs).

On the fifth day, these evil police continued to make me assume the half squat position. My legs and feet were already so swollen that I couldn't stand at all, so the police surrounded me and pushed me from one to the other. Some of them also took advantage of my condition to grope me. I could only numbly let them play with me like a doll. I had already been tormented to the point that my head was spinning and my vision was blurry. But just when I couldn't bear it any longer, I suddenly heard footsteps outside the door, which was followed by them running to the door, closing it, and ceasing their cruel game. I knew that this was God showing me mercy, and that He was alleviating my pain. That night, one of the evil police came to me, took off his shoe, and put his stinking foot in front of my face while saying lecherously, "What are you thinking about while you sit there? Is it about men? Well, how's this? How do you like the stink of my foot? I think my foot stink is exactly what you've been missing!" His filthy language filled me with rage. I glared at him furiously, and as I looked at his shameless, disgusting face, I thought back on how again and again I had been capriciously tormented and humiliated. They lacked all humanity, they were worse than beasts, they were nothing but a pack of demons utterly devoid of reason, and I hated these

devils to my core! Through my personal experiences over the past several days, I saw that the People's Police whom I had considered the very models of respectability in the past were nothing but shameless villains, and this gave me the determination to forsake Satan and stand firm and testify to satisfy God.

By the sixth day, I began to involuntarily fall asleep. The head officer proudly declared, "You're finally starting to fall asleep! You want sleep? Forget it! It's sleep deprivation until we break you! Let's see how long you last!" They watched me in shifts, and the moment I closed my eyes or nodded off, they banged on the table with their whips, or they used a thin wooden rod to hit my legs, which were so swollen that the skin was shiny, or they violently pulled my hair, or stomped on my foot, and each time I was startled awake. Sometimes they kicked my shackles, and when my shackles touched my festering wounds, the pain was enough to shock me awake. Finally, my head hurt so much it felt like it would explode, the room felt like it was spinning, and I collapsed head-first onto the floor and passed out.... Through my unconscious haze, I heard the doctor say, "You haven't let her eat or sleep for days? You're being too harsh. And these shackles are already embedded in the flesh. She can't wear them anymore." After the doctor left, the police put me in shackles weighing 2.5 kg and applied medicine, and only then did I return to consciousness. I knew I had survived only because of God's omnipotence, and because God was secretly protecting me, easing my pain and lessening my torture by speaking through the doctor. I had more faith in God than ever, and I found the determination to battle Satan to the end. God was my strong support and my refuge. I knew that without God's permission, no matter how Satan tortured me, it could not take my life.

On the morning of the seventh day, I was too fatigued to endure it any longer, and I kept falling asleep. One of the evil police saw my condition and constantly stepped on my toes, pinched the backs of my hands, and slapped my face. That afternoon, the evil police again asked me for information about the church. I quickly prayed to God, "O God! I'm so sleep-deprived I can't think clearly. Please protect me and give me a clear mind, so that I can stand witness for You at all times." Thanks to God's protection, despite being awake for seven days and six nights, without food, water, or sleep, my mind became entirely clear, and no matter how they tempted me, I still didn't tell them anything. After that, the head police officer brought out a list of missionary workers I had written, and then tried to force me to divulge other names. But after experiencing the cruelty meted out by these devils, I wasn't about to

let any of my brothers and sisters fall into their hands, so I called out to God to give me strength, and when the police officer wasn't paying attention, I lunged forward, grabbed the name list, stuffed it in my mouth, and swallowed it. Two of the evil police angrily cursed me as they rushed forward and tried to pry my mouth open and hit me viciously in the face. The blows caused blood to flow from the corners of my mouth, and they sent my head spinning, and made my face swell up.

After several rounds of futile interrogation, they had no choice but to give up, so they sent me back to the detention house. The police at the detention house saw how badly I was injured, and were afraid of bearing responsibility if I died there, so they refused to accept me. In frustration, the evil interrogators were forced to take me to the hospital for oxygen intubation. After that, they returned me to the detention house, and I was in a coma for four days and nights. After the other prisoners wakened me, I again passed out twice more. Finally, the CCP government sentenced me to a year and nine months of reeducation through labor for the crime of "joining a xie jiao organization." However, because I had been tortured so badly, I was paralyzed and couldn't walk, and the labor camp wouldn't accept me, so the police published a video of me on television. Three months later, my husband finally learned what had happened to me and spent 12,000 yuan as a bond to bring me out of prison for supervised release. When my husband came to pick me up, I was hurt too badly to walk, so he had to carry me to the car. After I returned home, the doctors who examined me determined that I had two dislocated spinal disks, that I would be unable to care for myself in the future, and that I was paralyzed for life. I thought I would spend the rest of my life lying on a bed, but thanks to God's mercy and continued treatment, a year later, my body slowly began to recover. I genuinely witnessed God's omnipotent power, as well as His love for me. Thanks be to God, I could resume my duties as a created being!

Through these sufferings and difficulties, even though I tasted pain to the fullest, I also gained the wealth of life. I not only saw clearly the demonic essence of the CCP government but, more importantly, I saw God's wondrous deeds, I saw the authority and power of God's words, and I felt the extraordinariness and vastness of God's life force: At my weakest and my most helpless, it was God's words that gave me strength and courage, and that gave me the faith to break free of Satan's forces of darkness; when my flesh couldn't bear any more torture and torment, God arranged people, matters, and things to ease my burden; when I was tormented by demons into unconsciousness, God's wondrous work opened a path and

delivered me safely out of danger.... After experiencing these things, I saw that God had always been by my side, watching over me, protecting me, and walking with me. God's love for me is great indeed! God is my strength in life, my aid and support whenever I need them, and I wish to devote myself body and soul to God, seek to know God, and live out a meaningful life!

18. Tasting the Love of God in the Midst of Adversity

By Chen Lu, Zhejiang Province

I was born in the 1980s in a village—we had been a family of peasants for generations. I threw myself into my studies so that I could test into college and escape the village life of poverty and backwardness. When I started high school, I encountered The History of Western Art, and when I saw so many beautiful paintings such as “Genesis,” “The Garden of Eden,” and “The Last Supper,” only then did I realize that there was a God in the universe who had created all things. I could not help but have a heart full of veneration for God. After graduating from college, I found a good job very easily, and then I found a great partner. I had finally realized my own hopes as well as those of my forebears: I had escaped the life of keeping our face to the ground and our back to the sky. In 2008, the birth of a child added much more joy to my life. Looking at everything I had in my life, I believed that I should have a happy, comfortable life. However, while I was enjoying that enviable, beautiful life, I could never shake that vague feeling of emptiness deep in my heart. This made me feel very confused and helpless.

In November of 2008, my family spoke to me of the gospel of the last days of Almighty God. Through the words of God I finally understood that He is the source of mankind's life, and that His words are the driving force and the pillar of our lives. If we abandon God's sustenance and nourishment for our lives, our souls will be empty and alone, and no matter what material enjoyments we have we will never be able to satiate the needs of our souls. Just as Almighty God said: **“Man, after all, is man, and the position and life of God cannot be replaced by any man. Mankind does not just require a fair society in which everyone is well-fed and is equal and free; what mankind needs is the salvation of God and His provision of life to them. Only when man receives God's provision of life**

and His salvation can the needs, the yearning to explore, and the spiritual emptiness of man be resolved" ("God Presides Over the Fate of All Mankind" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). His words washed over my soul like a spring in the desert, and they released the confusion in my heart. From then on, I read God's words with a great hunger and thirst, and there was always an inexpressible feeling of ease in my heart that my soul had finally come home. Before long, the church arranged for some brothers and sisters to meet with me, and they did so continuously no matter how fierce the weather was. During that time, there were a lot of things I didn't understand and the brothers and sisters always patiently communicated with me. There wasn't even a modicum of irritation or just humoring me, and through this I deeply felt the sincerity and love of these brothers and sisters. As I understood more of the truth, I began to understand God's urgent desire to save mankind, and I saw that the brothers and sisters were very eagerly expending themselves and preaching the gospel of the kingdom for God. I also wanted to perform my own duty, but my child was small and I didn't have another caretaker, so I just prayed for God to give me a way out. Later, I learned that there was a sister who was in charge of a preschool, so I sent my child to her. She promised to help me look after my child without hesitation, and she wouldn't even accept tuition or meal expenses. From then on, that sister not only helped me watch my child during the day, but sometimes she helped in the evenings as well. That sister's actions really deeply moved me, and I knew this all came from God's love. In order to repay His love, I joined the ranks of those preaching the gospel without hesitation. While preaching the gospel, I saw the sorrowful states of person after person who had not been illuminated by the brilliance of God. I heard the laments of their bitter courses in life, and I also saw their faces filled with joy and happiness after they had gained God's salvation of the last days. This excited my passion for evangelism even more, and I resolved to bring the gospel of God to even more people living in darkness who thirsted for the light! But during that time, the CCP government's oppression and pursuit of believers was even more severe; many brothers and sisters were arrested, and I myself could not escape this fate.

That was the morning of December 21, 2012. Over a dozen brothers and sisters were having a meeting when there was a sudden burst of knocking and shouting at the door: "Open the door! Open the door! Inspection of the house!" Just as a sister was opening the door, six or seven policemen wielding batons forced their way in. They roughly pushed us apart and then began to rummage through drawers and search everywhere. A young sister

came forward and asked them: “We haven’t broken the law. Why are you searching the house?” The police replied fiercely: “Behave! If we tell you to stand there, just stand there. If we don’t ask you to speak, keep your mouth shut!” Then they brutally threw her to the ground, and yelled aggressively: “If you want to resist we’ll beat you!” Her fingernail had been broken off and her finger was bleeding. Seeing the vicious faces of the police, I felt both hatred and fear, so I silently prayed to God to give me strength and confidence, to protect me to stand witness. After praying, my heart settled considerably. The police confiscated many evangelical materials and collections of God’s words, then they ushered us into police vehicles.

As soon as we arrived at the station, they confiscated everything we were carrying and interrogated us for our names, addresses, and who our church leaders were. I was afraid to implicate my family so I didn’t say anything; another sister didn’t say anything either, so the police saw us as ringleaders and intended to try us separately. I was very scared then—I had heard that the police were particularly brutal with believers in God, and I had been classified as a target for interrogation. That would certainly be fraught with grim possibilities. Just as I was in a terrible state and living in fear, I heard my sister who was very close to me praying: “Oh God, You are our rock, our refuge. Satan is under Your feet, and I am willing to live according to Your words and stand witness to satisfy You!” After hearing that, my heart brightened. I thought: It’s true—God is our rock, Satan is under His feet, so what am I afraid of? As long as I rely on God and cooperate with Him, Satan can be vanquished! Suddenly I was no longer afraid, but I also felt ashamed. I thought of the fact that when that sister encountered this, she could live based on God’s words and not lose confidence in God, but I had been timid and cowardly. I hadn’t had even a bit of the backbone of someone who believes in God. Thanks to God’s love and through that sister’s prayer that had motivated and helped me, I was no longer in fear of the police’s despotic power. I quietly resolved: Now that I have been arrested, I am determined to stand witness to satisfy God. I absolutely will not be a coward who lets God down!

Around ten o’clock, two of the police handcuffed me and brought me to a room to interrogate me alone. One of the police interrogated me in the local dialect. I didn’t understand, and when I asked him what he had said, unexpectedly this question angered them. One of the police standing by yelled: “You don’t respect us!” As he was speaking he ran over and grabbed my hair, tossing me back and forth. I was dizzy and thrown all around,

and my scalp felt like it was being peeled off and some of my hair was being pulled out. Right after that, another cop ran up to me and yelled: "So we have to play rough? Speak! Who had you preach the gospel?" I was full of anger and replied: "Preaching the gospel is my duty." The second I said this, the first cop once again grabbed me by the hair and slapped my face, hitting me and yelling: "I'll have you preach more! I'll have you preach more!" He hit my face until it was beet red and in pain, and it started swelling up. When he tired of beating me he let me go, then took the mobile phone and MP4 player they had found on me and asked me for information about the church. I relied on wisdom to deal with them. Out of nowhere, a cop asked: "You're not from here. You speak Mandarin so well—you're definitely not an average person. Be honest! Why did you come here? Who sent you here? Who is your leader? How did you get in touch with the church here? Where do you live?" Hearing that these police saw me as an important person and they insisted on gathering information about the church from me, my heart went to my throat and I called out to God to give me confidence and strength. Through prayer, my heart was slowly calmed, and I responded: "I don't know anything." When they heard me say that, one of them pounded the table furiously and shouted: "Just you wait, we'll see how you feel in a bit!" Then he picked up my MP4 player and pressed play. I was very scared. I didn't know what means he would employ to deal with me, so I made an urgent cry to God. I hadn't imagined that what was played was a recording of a sermon: "Do you think that type of person can be saved? He does not have devotion to Christ; he is not of one mind with Christ. When he encounters adversities he parts ways from Christ and goes his own way. He turns his back on God, thus following Satan. ... During the reign of the great red dragon, while experiencing God's work, if you are able to turn your back on the great red dragon and stand on God's side, no matter how it persecutes, pursues, or oppresses you, you absolutely can obey God and can be devoted to God to the death. Only this type of person is worthy of being called an overcomer, is worthy of being called someone who is of the same mind with God" (Sermons and Fellowship on Entry Into Life). When I heard the words "parts ways," I felt a stab of pain in my heart. I couldn't help but think that when the Lord Jesus was working, those who followed Him and enjoyed His grace were many, but when He was nailed to the cross and the Roman soldiers were arresting Christians right and left, many people fled out of fear. This brought God great pain! But then, what difference was there between me and those ungrateful people? When I enjoyed God's grace and blessings, I was full of confidence in following

God, but when I faced adversities that required me to suffer and pay a price, I was timid and afraid. How could that comfort God's heart? I thought of the fact that in order to save us, corrupt human beings, the supreme God became flesh—humbly and secretly coming to China, this atheist-ruled country, tolerating the pursuit and condemnation of these demons, and He personally led us onto the path of the pursuit of truth. Seeing that God had done everything to save us, why couldn't I, as someone who enjoyed the grace of His salvation, pay a small price to bear witness to Him? In my conscience I felt rebuked and I hated that I was so selfish, so worthless. I really deeply felt that God was full of hope and concern for me. I felt that He knew well that I was immature in stature and fearful in the face of Satan's despotism; He allowed me to hear this through the means of the police playing that recording, allowing me to understand His will, so that in the midst of adversity and oppression I could stand witness for God and satisfy Him. For a moment, I was so moved by God's love that tears were running down my face, and I silently said to God: "Oh God! I do not want to be someone who parts with You and hurts You; I want to stay with You through the joys and the sorrows. No matter how Satan tortures me, I am determined to stand witness and comfort Your heart."

Then there was a sudden bang as the cop turned off the player, then rushed toward me and said hatefully: "That's right, I am the great red dragon, and today I have come to torture you!" Then they ordered me to stand on the ground with bare feet and handcuffed my right hand to an iron ring in the middle of a concrete block. They asked me to stand bent over because the block was so small. They didn't allow me to crouch down, nor did they allow me to use my left hand to support my legs. I couldn't continue to stand after a while and wanted to crouch, but the police shouted: "No crouching! If you want to suffer less, hurry up and confess!" All I could do was grit my teeth and bear it. I don't know how much time passed. My feet were like ice, my legs were sore and numb, and when I truly could no longer stay standing, I crouched down. The police picked me up, brought over a cup of cold water, and poured it down my neck. I was so cold I started to shiver. They then removed my handcuffs, pushed me down onto a wooden chair, cuffed my hands to opposite ends of the chair, and opened the windows and turned on the air conditioning. There was a sudden gust of cold wind that hit me and I was shuddering from the cold. I couldn't help but have some weakness in my heart, but in the midst of this suffering I was praying nonstop, begging for God to give me the will and the strength to bear this pain, to allow me to overcome the

weakness of the flesh. Just then, the words of God guided me from within: **“Even when your body endures suffering, take no ideas from Satan. ... Faith is like a single log bridge, those who cling abjectly to life will have difficulty in crossing it, but those who are ready to sacrifice themselves can pass over without worry”** (“Chapter 6” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God’s words made me understand that Satan wanted to torture my flesh in order to have me betray God, and if I paid any mind to the flesh I would fall prey to its trickery. I kept going over these two sentences of God’s words in my mind, telling myself that I had to stand guard against Satan’s trickery and refuse its ideas. Later, the police took a large pot of cold water and poured the entire thing down my neck. All of my clothing was completely soaked. At that moment I felt as if I had fallen into an ice box. Seeing the police, so despicable, so evil, I was full of resentment. I thought: This pack of demons will take any measures to get me to betray God—I absolutely will not allow their schemes to succeed! Seeing me shivering terribly, one of the evil policemen grabbed a handful of my hair and forced my head up for me to look at the sky through the window, then said mockingly: “Aren’t you cold? Then let your God come save you!” He saw that I wasn’t reacting, so he once again poured a large pot of cold water over me and put the air conditioner on its coldest setting, then blew right on me. Gust after gust of bone-piercing cold air blown on me along with the cold wind hit me. I was so cold I had curled up into a ball and was practically frozen solid. I felt that my entire body had hardened. My confidence started to ebb away bit by bit, and I couldn’t help but think crazy thoughts: Such a cold day, but they soak me with cold water and turn on the air conditioning. Are they trying to freeze me alive? If I die here, my relatives won’t even know about it. Just as I was sinking into the darkness and despair, I suddenly thought of the suffering the Lord Jesus endured while being nailed to the cross to redeem mankind. And I also thought of God’s words, **“Love that has experienced refinement is strong, not weak. Regardless of when or how God subjects you to His trials, you are able to lay down your concerns about whether you live or die, to gladly cast aside everything for God, and to happily endure anything for God—thus your love will be pure and your faith real”** (“Only by Experiencing Refinement Can Man Possess True Love” in The Word Appears in the Flesh). These words from God really galvanized me—yes! That day being able to bear witness for God was Him uplifting me—how could I pay any mind to the flesh? Even if it meant losing my life, I was determined to be faithful to God. Suddenly, there was a surge in my heart and

I felt very inspired. I silently prayed to God: "Oh God! You have given me this breath, I would rather die than cling to life and act as a traitor to You!" Slowly, I no longer felt quite as cold, which allowed me to really feel God's companionship and comfort. From midday all the way until around seven in the evening, the police continued to interrogate me. They saw that I wouldn't open my mouth at all, so they locked me in the interrogation room and continued to blow cold air on me.

After dinner, the police stepped up the intensity of their interrogation. They viciously threatened me, saying: "Tell us! Who is the leader of your church? If you don't tell us, we have other means, we can make you drink the juice of hot peppers, soapy water, make you eat feces, strip you naked, throw you to the basement, and make you freeze to death! If you don't talk today, we'll ask you again tomorrow. We have time on our side!" When the evil police said this, I really saw that they weren't people at all, but they were a pack of demons in human flesh. The more they threatened me that way, the more I hated them in my heart, and the more I determined to never yield to them. When they saw I wouldn't give in, they found a cloth bag, soaked it with water, and put it over my head. They pressed it down on my head and wouldn't let me move, then tightened it. I couldn't move at all because my hands were cuffed to the chair. Before too long, I was on the verge of being suffocated; I felt that my whole body had become stiff. But that still wasn't enough to dispel their hatred. They picked up a pot of cold water and poured it into my nose, threatening me, saying that if I didn't talk, I would be suffocated. The wet bag itself didn't let air through, and on top of that water was being poured into my nose. Breathing was so difficult, and it felt like death was closing in on me. I silently prayed to God: "Oh God, this breath of mine was given to me by You, and today I should be living for You. No matter how the evil police torture me, I will not betray You. If You require me to sacrifice my life, I am willing to obey Your designs and arrangements without the slightest complaint...." Just when I started to lose consciousness and was about to stop breathing, they suddenly released their hands. I couldn't help but continue to give thanks to God in my heart. I had vividly experienced that God is the Lord of everything, that He is always watching over and protecting me, and even though I fell into the hands of the evil police, God only allowed them to torture my flesh but did not allow them to grab hold of my life. After that, my confidence grew.

The next day around midday, several of the police took me and another sister into a police vehicle and took us to the detention center. One of them said to me intimidatingly:

“You’re not from around here. We’ll lock you up for six months, then we’ll sentence you to 3–5 years, in any case no one will know.” “Sentence?” As soon as I heard that I would be sentenced, I couldn’t help but become weak. I wondered how I could show my face if I really were sentenced to do time in prison and how people would see me; they would certainly look down on me. Just as I was in pain and weak, God once again showed me His grace. The other people in the cell I was put into were all sisters who believed in Almighty God. Although they were in that den of demons, they didn’t show the slightest fear. They encouraged and supported each other, and when they saw that I was negative and weak, they spoke with me about their personal experiences and bore witness, giving me confidence in God. They also sang a hymn to encourage me: “God humbly became flesh to save mankind, walking among the churches, expressing the truth, painstakingly watering us, guiding us every step. This He has done every day for decades, it’s all to purify and perfect man. He has seen many springs, summers, autumns, winters, happy to take the bitter with the sweet. He’s selflessly sacrificed all without any regret, He’s given all of His love to mankind. I’ve undergone God’s judgment and tasted the bitterness of trials. The sweet follows the bitter, my corruption has been cleansed, I offer up my heart and body to repay God’s love. I go from place to place toiling, expending myself for God. Loved ones discard me, others defame me, but I will unwaveringly love God till the end. I am utterly devoted to following God’s will. I endure the persecution and tribulations, experience the ups and downs of life. Even if I endure a life of bitterness, I must follow God and testify to Him” (“Repaying God’s Love and Being His Witness” in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). Thinking about this song, I felt the life force from these sisters, and I was greatly encouraged. It was true, we were following the true God and walking the right life path in a country under the reign of an atheist party that saw God as the enemy. We were destined to suffer many hardships, but all of this had meaning, and even sitting in jail was a glorious thing because we were being persecuted for the sake of pursuing the truth and following God’s way. It was entirely different from worldly people being imprisoned for committing terrible crimes. I then thought of generation after generation of so many saints who had suffered persecution and humiliation for the sake of holding to the true way. But now, I had been freely provided with so much of the word of God—I understood truth that generations of people had not been able to understand, I knew mysteries that generations had not known, so why was I not able to tolerate a bit of suffering to bear witness to God? When I thought of this, I once again

crawled up out of my state of weakness, my heart was full of confidence and strength, and I determined to rely on God and meet tomorrow's torture and demands for confession with my head held high.

Ten days later, the police sent me to the detention house alone. I saw that all the other people there were held for fraud, theft, and illegal businesses. As soon as I went in, they said to me: "Anyone who comes in here generally doesn't come out. We are all waiting for our verdicts, and some of us have been waiting for months." Looking at these people, I was so nervous my heart was about to burst. I became afraid that they would treat me poorly, and then when I thought about the fact that the police would keep me locked up with them, I thought that they would most likely give me the sentence of a felon. I had heard that some brothers and sisters had been imprisoned for as long as eight years. I didn't know how long my sentence would be for, and I was only 29 years old! My youth couldn't possibly be spent locked in this dark cell? How would my days from here on out be spent? At that moment, it seemed that my hometown, parents, husband, and child were suddenly all so far away from me. It was like a knife twisting in my heart, and tears pooled up in my eyes. I knew that I had fallen into Satan's trickery, so I fervently called out to God, hoping for Him to lead me to escape from this suffering. In the middle of my prayer, I felt clear guidance within me: When you face this, you have permission from God. Just like Job being tested, do not complain. Right away, God's words brought enlightenment to me: **"Would you rather submit to My every arrangement (even if it be death or destruction), or flee midway to avoid My chastisement?"** ("What Do You Know of Faith?" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). The judgment and chastisement in God's words made me feel ashamed. I saw that I was not remotely sincere toward God, but I just said that I wanted to be a good witness for Him. However, when I actually faced the peril of being imprisoned, I only wanted to escape. There was no practical ability to suffer for the sake of the truth. Thinking back to that moment when I was arrested, God was by my side at all times. He did not abandon me any step of the way for fear that I would lose my way or stumble on the path. God's love for me was utterly sincere and not at all empty. But I was selfish and self-interested, and all along thought of my own fleshly gains and losses. I was not willing to pay any price for God—how could I have any humanity? Any conscience? When I thought of that, I felt full of regret and indebtedness. I silently prayed to God and repented: Oh God! I was wrong. I can no longer pay You lip service and cheat You. I am willing to live out the reality to satisfy You. No matter

what my sentence turns out to be, I will certainly stand witness for You—I only ask that You protect my heart. Just then, the head of the prisoners came in and said to me: “I don’t know why you’re here, but we have a saying: ‘Confess for a break and you’ll do time until the end; fiercely resist and you can go live out your life.’ If you don’t want to talk, don’t talk.” I gave thanks to God for this incredible arrangement and the wisdom imparted on me by the head of the prisoners, so that I knew how to deal with the interrogation that followed. Besides, the other inmates not only did not hassle me, but actually took care of me, giving me clothing, giving me extra food at mealtimes, and sharing with me fruit and snacks they had bought themselves, and they also helped me with my daily labor. I knew that all of this was God’s design and arrangement; it was God’s compassion for my small stature. Facing His love and protection, I set my resolve: No matter how long my sentence is, I will stand witness for God!

In the detention house, the police would interrogate me once every few days. When they realized that taking a hard line wasn’t working with me, they switched to being soft. The policemen interrogating me purposely put on an easygoing manner and chatted with me, gave me good food to eat, and said they could help me find a good job. I knew this was Satan’s trickery, so every time they interrogated me I just prayed to God, asking Him to protect me and not allow me to fall prey to these tricks. One time when a policeman was interrogating me, he finally revealed their sinister intentions: “We don’t have a bone to pick with you, we just want to crack down on The Church of Almighty God. We hope you can join us.” When I heard these evil words, I was deeply angry. I thought: God created man and has continued to provide for and lead us all the way until now. And now He has come to save those He created and help us escape from our abyss of suffering. What on earth is wrong with that? Why is it so hated, so vilified by these devils? We are God’s creation. Following God and worshiping Him is right and proper, so why would Satan thwart us this way, and try to take away our freedom of following God? Now they try to get me to become a puppet in their quest to strike down God. The CCP government truly is a pack of demons determined to defy God. They are such evil reactionaries! I was full of resentment and I hated the CCP even more, and all I wanted was to stand witness for God and comfort His heart. When the police saw that I still wouldn’t talk, they started to use psychological methods against me. They found my husband through China Mobile and brought him and my child to persuade me. My husband had originally been fine with my belief in God, but after being deluded by the police, he told me over and over: “I’m begging you to give up your faith. At least think of

our child if not me. Having a mother in prison will have such a terrible impact on him. ..." I knew that my husband was saying this out of ignorance, so I cut him off and said: "You still don't understand me? We lived together for so many years, when did you ever see me do anything wicked? If you don't understand something then don't just shoot your mouth off." When my husband saw that his words couldn't change my mind, he dropped these cruel words: "You're so stubborn and won't listen—I'll just divorce you, then!" This word, "divorce," deeply pierced my heart. It made me hate the CCP government even more deeply. It was its defamation and sowing of discord that made my husband hate God's work that way and say such unfeeling words to me. The CCP government truly is the culprit that calls on the common people to offend Heaven! It was also the culprit in undermining our feelings as husband and wife! At this thought, I didn't want to say anything more to my husband. I just calmly said: "Then hurry up and take our child back home." When the police saw that this tactic hadn't worked, they were so angry that they paced back and forth in front of their desk and screamed at me, saying: "We've worked so hard and haven't gotten a single response from you! If you continue to refuse to speak we'll label you as the head of this region, as a political prisoner! If you don't talk today, there won't be another chance!" But no matter how they ranted and raved, I just prayed to God in my heart, asking Him to strengthen my faith.

During my interrogation, there was a hymn of God's word that continued to guide me from within: **"In the work of the last days, great faith and great love are required of us. We may stumble from the slightest carelessness because this stage of work is different from all the previous ones. What God is perfecting is mankind's faith—one cannot see or touch it. What God does is convert words to faith, to love, and to life. People must reach a point where they have endured hundreds of refinements and possess faith greater than Job's. They need to endure incredible suffering and all kinds of torture without departing from God at any time. When they are obedient until the death, and have great faith in God, then this stage of God's work is complete. God's work is not as simple as you imagine it to be. The less in line it is with people's notions the deeper the significance is, and the more in line it is with people's notions, the less valuable it is, and without actual significance. Consider these words carefully"** ("What God Makes Perfect Is Faith" in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). Because of the faith and strength I received from God's words, while I was being interrogated I appeared very staunch. But when I returned to my cell, I couldn't help but be a bit weak

and hurt. It seemed that my husband was actually going to divorce me and I wouldn't have a home anymore. I also didn't know how long my sentence would be. Amidst this pain, I thought of these words from God: **"You should experience Peter's mood at the time: He was stricken with sorrow; he no longer asked for a future or any blessings. He did not seek profit, happiness, fame, or fortune in the world; he only sought to live the most meaningful life, which was to repay God's love and dedicate what he held most precious to God. Then he would be satisfied in his heart"** ("How Peter Came to Know Jesus" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). I was deeply moved by Peter's deeds, and this also stirred up my will to give up everything to satisfy God. It was true. When Peter reached his most grief-stricken point, he was still able to withstand it and satisfy God. It was not for his own prospects or destiny, or his own benefit, and in the end when he was nailed upside down to a cross he bore a good and resounding witness for God. But I then had the good fortune to follow God incarnate, to enjoy God's endless provision to my life as well as His grace and blessings, but I had never paid any real price for God. And then when He needed me to stand witness for Him, I couldn't satisfy Him just that once? Would missing this opportunity be something I regretted for a lifetime? When I thought of that, I determined my will in front of God: Oh God, I am willing to follow the example of Peter. No matter what my outcome is, even if I have to get divorced or serve time in prison, I will not betray You! After praying, I felt a wave of strength rise up within me. I would no longer think of whether I would be sentenced or not or how long the sentence would be, and I would no longer think of whether or not I could return home and be reunited with my family. I would only think that another day in the demons' den was another day of standing witness for God, and even if I did serve time until the very end, I would not yield to Satan. When I did give myself up, I truly had a taste of God's love and affection. A few days later on one afternoon, a guard suddenly said to me: "Get your things together, you can go home." I simply didn't dare to believe my ears! Before being released the police made me sign a document. I saw these words written very clearly: "Not guilty due to insufficient evidence, release." Seeing this, I was immeasurably excited. I once again saw the omnipotence and faithfulness of God, that **"those who are ready to sacrifice themselves can pass over without worry."** This battle in the spiritual war had been lost by Satan and God was glorified in the end!

After undergoing 36 days of detention and persecution by the CCP police, I had a true understanding of the cruel tyranny, and the rebellious and reactionary essence of the CCP

government. From then on I developed a deep hatred for it. I know that during those adversities, God was always with me, enlightening me, guiding me, and allowing me to overcome Satan's cruelty and tests every step of the way. This gave me a true experience of the fact that God's words truly are mankind's life and our strength. It also made me truly recognize that God is our Lord and rules over everything, and no matter how many tricks Satan has, it will always be defeated by God. The CCP attempted to torture my flesh to force me to betray God, to forsake Him, but its cruel torture not only didn't break me, but it strengthened my resolve and allowed me to thoroughly see its evil countenance, to experience God's love and salvation. I give thanks to God from the bottom of my heart for everything He has arranged for me, allowing me to gain the most precious riches of life! My personal resolution is: No matter what oppression or adversity lies on the road ahead, I am willing to resolutely follow God and to continue to spread the gospel as before to repay His great love!

19. The Glimmering Light of Life in the Dark Monsters' Den

By Lin Ying, Shandong Province

My name is Lin Ying, and I am a Christian in The Church of Almighty God. Before I started believing in Almighty God, I always wanted to rely on my own abilities and work hard in order to make my life better, but things did not turn out the way I wanted; instead, I ran up against wall after wall, and suffered setback after setback. Having had my fill of the bitter hardships of life, I felt exhausted in both body and mind and I suffered unspeakably. In the midst of my pain and despair, a sister preached Almighty God's gospel of the last days to me. When I read God's words that said, "**When you are weary and when you begin to feel something of the bleak desolation of this world, do not be lost, do not cry. Almighty God, the Watcher, will embrace your arrival at any time**" ("The Sighing of the Almighty" in The Word Appears in the Flesh), I couldn't stop my tears from flowing. Almighty God's motherly words consoled me greatly, and I felt like an orphan who had wandered for many years and finally found her way back to her mother's embrace—I no longer felt lonely and helpless. From that day on, I avidly read God's words every day. Through attending meetings and fellowshiping with the brothers and sisters in The Church of Almighty God, I

came to understand many truths, and I saw that these people were all so good and so honest. There were no jealous disputes between them and no scheming against each other, and whenever someone had a problem, all the brothers and sisters would fellowship about the truth in earnest to help them resolve it. Help was always given unconditionally, and no one ever asked for anything in return, and among them I felt a sense of liberation and joy I had never felt before. I had a deep sense that The Church of Almighty God was a place of purity, and I became certain that Almighty God is the one true God who can save mankind from the sea of suffering! Just when I was enjoying God's love, however, the CCP government arrested and persecuted me unlawfully, and it destroyed my happy, joyful life.

In the middle of the night on August 12, 2003, I was sleeping soundly when I was suddenly startled awake by a tremendous banging on the door, and I heard someone shouting, "Open up! Open up!" Before I'd even managed to get dressed, I heard a loud thumping sound, the door to my apartment burst open, and six violent and brutish policemen came charging in. Shocked, I asked, "What's all this about?" The lead policeman scolded me, saying, "Don't play dumb!" Then with a wave of his hand, he yelled, "Turn this place upside down!" Several policemen then began rummaging through my closets and cupboards like they were robbers. Within moments, my pots and pans, my clothes, my bedsheets, my food—all of it was thrown all over the floor, and my apartment was in a total mess. After they'd searched my home, they shoved and dragged me into a police car. They took a CD player I'd only just bought that was worth 240 yuan, and they took 80 yuan in cash and a stack of books of God's words. Not even in my dreams could I have imagined such a scene: This was something that only happened in TV programs, and yet now it was happening to me. I felt incredibly panicked and afraid, and my heart was beating hard. I prayed constantly to God, asking Him to protect me so that I might stand witness for Him, and so that I might die before ever selling out my brothers and sisters and becoming a Judas. Just then, Almighty God's words suddenly sprang to mind: **"You shouldn't be afraid of this and that. No matter how many difficulties and dangers you face, you shall remain steady before Me; do not be obstructed by anything, so that My will can be carried out. ... Be not afraid; with My support, who could ever block the road? Remember this! Remember!"** ("Chapter 10" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words comforted me a great deal and they helped my heart to gradually calm down. They made me realize that the One I believed in was the Ruler who created all things in

heaven and on earth, that all things are in His hands, that Satan and demons are beneath His feet and that, without God's permission, there was nothing Satan could do to me. I now found myself at a crucial moment in God's battle with Satan: This was when God needed me to stand witness, and it was time for me to experience God's words and gain the truth; I knew I had to make a stand and practice according to God's words, and never would I kowtow or give way to Satan!

The police car wailed and screamed into the courtyard of the police station. No sooner had we stopped than the police roughly pushed me out of the car. I went careening forward with hands outstretched and only stopped when I slammed into a wall. I could hear them laughing hysterically behind me. They then shoved me into a small room and, before I'd had time to catch my breath, one of the policemen read out a list of names and asked me if I knew any of them. Seeing that I made no response, they proceeded to surround me, punching and kicking me, and calling me names as they did so. A wicked policeman then grabbed hold of my hair and dragged me up, then slapped me hard twice across the face. My head spun and my eyes grew blurry, and bright red blood trickled from the corner of my mouth.

One of the policemen then took out a piece of paper with a list of names and threw it before me, saying fiercely, "You know these people's names, don't you? What's your name?" I was in such pain right then that I couldn't even speak and, seeing that I wasn't going to reply, three wicked policemen pounced on me and beat and kicked me again until I fell unconscious.

Early the next morning, the wicked police took me to an interrogation room at the Criminal Investigation Section of the Public Security Bureau. When I was taken into the room, I saw several burly men all staring at me as though they wanted to kill me. The room was filled with all sorts of implements of torture, and the scene that confronted me instantly made me feel anxious—I felt as though I had fallen into a pit of demons. I was absolutely terrified, and feelings of fear and insecurity hit me again. I thought to myself: "Yesterday, they tortured me like that and that wasn't even the official interrogation. It looks like there's no way to escape what's going to happen today. Will I be able to withstand it if they put me to cruel torture?" I said a sincere prayer to God: "O God, I'm so scared right now, and I'm afraid that I won't be able to bear the torture these demons will put me through and that I will lose my testimony. Please protect my heart. I would rather be beaten to death than

betray You!" A line of God's words then appeared in my mind: **"Those in power may seem vicious from the outside, but do not be afraid, for this is because you have little faith. As long as your faith grows, nothing will be too difficult"** ("Chapter 75" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words carry authority and power. They instantly filled me with inner strength, and I thought: "With God beside me, I shall fear nothing. No matter how they may throw their weight around, they are just paper tigers who only look fierce on the outside. There is nothing to fear from them, as they have already been defeated by God." Just then, one of the wicked policemen yelled, "Tell us what your position is in the church! Who do you report to?" Because I had God's words as my support, I didn't feel afraid at all, and so I didn't answer his questions. Seeing how I refused to answer, he roared at me like an enraged beast: "Get this stinking bitch on her feet! Get her on her tiptoes so she gets a sharp taste of how serious we are!" Two wicked policemen then descended upon me and roughly twisted my arms behind my back and lifted them up. I instantly felt a tearing pain and let out a scream, and then I passed out.... When I awoke, I saw that I was lying on the floor and that my nose had been bleeding. It was clear to me that, after I fell unconscious, the wicked police had simply flung me to the floor. Seeing that I had woken up, they then dragged me into a room that was so dark I couldn't even see my hand in front of my face. The room was pitch black, cold and damp, it stank of urine and I could hardly breathe. One of the wicked policemen said acidly as he shut the door, "Think it over. If you don't fess up, we'll starve you to death." I slumped to the freezing floor. My body hurt all over, and I couldn't help but feel weak and sick at heart. I thought: "It's an unalterable law for a created being to believe in God and worship God, so what could be wrong with believing in Almighty God? Believing in God allows us to walk the right path, and this is neither illegal nor is it a crime. And yet this gang of devils is treating me as though I've committed a crime worthy of the death sentence. This is simply intolerable!" As I suffered in my pain, I thought of a hymn of God's words: **"No one can take away the work that has been done in you, and the blessings that have been bestowed within you, and no one can take away all that has been given to you. ... Because of this, you must be even more dedicated to God, and even more loyal to God. Because God raises you up, you must bolster your efforts, and must ready your stature to accept the commissions of God. You must stand firm in the place God has given you, pursue becoming one of the people of God, accept the training of the kingdom, be gained by God and**

ultimately become a glorious testimony to God. If you are possessed of such resolves, then ultimately you are sure to be gained by God, and will become a glorious testimony to God. You should understand that the principal commission is being gained by God and becoming a glorious testimony to God. This is the will of God (“You Cannot Disappoint God’s Will” in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). I kept on singing it in my head and warmth spread throughout my whole body. I felt as though God was standing right beside me, comforting me and encouraging me like a loving mother, afraid that I might become weak, fall down, and lose my faith, and tenderly admonishing and enjoining me. It was as though He was telling me that this painful situation I was in was training for the kingdom, that it was a testimony of victory over Satan in order to receive God’s eternal blessing, that it was the most precious wealth in life that God could ever give, and that it was a beautiful testimony borne especially for entry into the kingdom. I was so moved that tears fell from my eyes, and I thought: “O Almighty God, I will remember well what You have entrusted me to do and I accept to undertake this training. I shall cooperate with You in earnest and bear glorious testimony for You, and I shall not be spineless and allow myself to become Satan’s laughingstock!”

On the morning of the third day, several policemen took me into the interrogation room once again. A wicked police official rapped me on the head with his baton, and said with a false smile, “Have you thought it over?” He then showed me a list of names of church members and asked me to identify them. I said a silent prayer to God: “O Almighty God, Satan has come to tempt me once again, and is trying to make me betray You and sell out my brothers and sisters. I absolutely refuse to drag out an ignoble life as a Judas. I ask only that You protect my heart, and may You curse me if I do anything to betray You!” I instantly felt strength rise up within me, and I said staunchly, “I don’t know any of them!” No sooner had I said this than two wicked policemen pounced on me. One of them pulled at one of my legs, and the other stomped on my knee with a hard leather shoe. As he stomped, he said fiercely, “Don’t know anyone, huh? You really don’t know anyone?” The exquisite pain caused me to fall unconscious again. I don’t know for how long I was unconscious before they woke me up by throwing freezing water over me. As soon as I awoke, a wicked policeman raised his fist and thumped me in the chest, and he hit me so hard that it was a long time before I was able to draw breath again. Another wicked policeman then grabbed me by the hair, dragged me over to a metal chair and handcuffed me to it so that I couldn’t

move. He then blindfolded me with a filthy rag. They alternated between pulling upward on my ears with all their might, and stomping on my feet as hard as they could—the rending pain of it all made me cry out spasmodically. Seeing me overcome with pain and grief, the gang of wicked police laughed uproariously. Their laughter sounded as if it rang out from the bowels of hell—it was terrible to hear, and it made my heart quake. Faced with such cruelty, I truly saw clearly that these “People’s Police,” as they were proclaimed to be by the CCP government, were all just cruel, evil beasts. They were just ghouls who were only out to hurt people! I always used to think of the police as heroes who championed justice, who locked away the bad people and kept the good people safe, and that people could look to the police whenever they were in danger or in trouble. Even though I had been subject to being arrested and persecuted by them ever since I began to believe in God, I never really thought of them as devils of Satan. Now, Almighty God had personally revealed to me the factual truth, and only then did I see that they wore the fierce and malevolent faces of satanic demons. In my heart, I silently thanked Almighty God for opening my spiritual eyes at last and enabling me to see clearly the difference between right and wrong; I felt that suffering all this pain was worth it to know this! If God hadn’t done this, I never would have woken from the lies and deception of Satan, and it would have been nigh impossible for me to escape the dark influence of Satan and attain God’s salvation.

After a while, the wicked police official asked, “Still not talking? Will you talk or not?” Seeing that I said nothing, two wicked policemen came toward me, held my head and began to pluck out my eyebrows. One of the men who held me slapped me hard a couple of times, hitting me so hard that I became dizzy. The humiliation and pain caused me to feel both sadness and hatred, and I burst into tears from the shame of it all. Oh, how I hated these conscienceless brutes who blasphemed God! In my pain, I thought about how the Lord Jesus endured the humiliation, the scorn and the beatings meted out by the soldiers in order to redeem mankind, and how He was crucified on the cross, and I thought about God’s repeated warnings and exhortations: **“Perhaps you all remember these words: ‘For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.’ You have all heard these words before, yet none of you understood their true meaning. Today, you are profoundly aware of their true significance”** (“Is the Work of God As Simple As Man Imagines?” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). God’s words brought great comfort to my heart, and I realized that the humiliation

and pain I was suffering now would be remembered by God; this pain was being suffered to attain the truth, it was a glorious testimony, and it was a blessing in my life. "Seeing as I believe in God," I thought, "then I must have the faith and the courage to accept God's blessing, and I must have the backbone to be a testimony for God's victory." Just then, the police official's facial expression changed, and he said, "Tell us what we want to know and I'll let you go right now." I looked at him with contempt and said, "Over my dead body!" Incandescent with rage, he instructed the two wicked policemen to drag me back to the dark cell.

After several sessions of cruel torture, I was battered and bruised, and had no strength left. My arms and legs in particular had become so badly swollen that I dared not move them at all. Without any strength, I huddled there, like a lamb waiting to be slaughtered. Whenever I thought of the wicked policemen's brutish faces and hideous grins when they wielded those implements of torture, my mind would inevitably flood with anxiety. Especially when I heard footsteps approaching my cell, my heart would thump faster and faster. Terror and fear were all about me then, and I felt helpless and forlorn. I wept; oh how I wept! And I confided in God: "O Almighty God! I'm so scared right now, and I feel very weak. I don't know which way to turn. Please save me. I really don't want to be in this hellish place any longer." Just as I was feeling weak and dispirited, God's words rose up within me, encouraging me and comforting me: **"In this vast world, who has personally been examined by Me? ... Why have I made repeated mention of Job? And why have I referred to Peter many times? Have you ever perceived My hopes for you? You should spend more time pondering such things"** ("Chapter 8" of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words brought me faith and strength. "Yes!" I thought. "In all of heaven and earth, who among mankind can do as we do and personally accept God's test in this lair of devils? Who can be raised up by God and have the fortune to undergo this trial of fire, beleaguered on all sides by legions of devils? I am so weak and impotent, and yet today God is giving me such love. To be chosen by God is the blessing of my life and it is my honor. I cannot evade this trial, nor should I try to get out of it. Instead, I must have dignity, take a firm stand before Satan like Job and Peter did, use my life to bear witness for God and to uphold God's name, and not cause God to be grieved or disappointed." At that moment, my heart was filled with gratitude and pride. I felt like my having been fortunate enough in this life to undergo this kind of suffering and trial was so incredibly extraordinary

and worthwhile!

The fourth day came and, once again grasping the list of church members, the wicked police official stabbed his finger at me, saying, "Tell me all the ones you know and tell me who your leader is. If you tell me, I'll let you go. If not, then you'll die here!" He saw that I was still not going to tell him anything, so he roared, "Come on, hang her up with her hands behind her back. Just kill her already!" Two underlings immediately tied my hands behind my back and hung me up by them with a rope so that I could only stand on tiptoes. The police official then used both threats and inducements on me, saying, "Why bother holding out like this? You need to understand the reality of the situation you're in. China belongs to the Communist Party and what we say goes. If you tell us what we want to know, I'll let you go straight away, and I can even fix you up with a job. If not, I'll tell your son's school about you and get him expelled...." As I listened to his shameless words, I felt both grieved and indignant. In order to interrupt and destroy God's work and to ruin our chances to attain salvation, the CCP government will go to any length and commit any evil! Just as the words of Almighty God say: **"In a dark society such as this, where the demons are merciless and inhumane, how could the king of devils, who kills people in the blink of an eye, tolerate the existence of a God who is lovely, kind, and also holy? How could it applaud and cheer the arrival of God? These lackeys! They repay kindness with hate, they have long since disdained God, they abuse God, they are savage in the extreme, they have not the slightest regard for God, they plunder and pillage, they have lost all conscience, and have not a trace of kindness, and they tempt the innocent into senselessness. ... Religious freedom? The legitimate rights and interests of citizens? They are all tricks for covering up sin!"** ("Work and Entry (8)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). Just then, I got a crystal-clear view of the ugly countenance of the CCP government, and I saw its perverse and heinous crimes against Heaven. The CCP government is the enemy that hates God and that is implacably opposed to God, and it is my absolutely irreconcilable arch enemy—I could never give in to it! Seeing that I stayed silent, they left me hanging there and I slowly lost consciousness: They left me hanging there for one whole day and one whole night. When they got me down, all I could feel was someone touching my nose. When whoever it was saw that I was still breathing, he just left me there on the floor. Through the fog clouding my mind, I heard them say, "I'm all out of ideas. I'm surprised this bitch has been so tough. She's tougher than the Communist Party. These believers in

Almighty God really are something else!” When I heard them say this, I felt an inexpressible feeling stirring within me, and I couldn’t help but express my thanks and praise to God, for it was God who had led me to overcome Satan.

I was locked up in the dark cell at the Public Security Bureau for eight days. The CCP government thought up every ploy and used every trick in the book, and yet still they didn’t get any of the information they wanted out of me. In the end, all the wicked police could do was send me to the detention house. During this time, they took the opportunities afforded by my family visiting me to extort 3,000 yuan out of my husband. I had thought that the detention house would be a little better, but I was wrong. In this God-hating nation of China, every corner is pitch black and filled with violence, cruelty and murder. Such a place as this simply does not allow the truth to exist, much less is there any place for a believer in Almighty God to gain a foothold. Being in the detention house was like escaping the frying pan only to fall into the fire. The wicked police were still unwilling to admit defeat, and so they continued to question me after I got there. Because they hadn’t gotten any of the information they wanted out of me, three policemen immediately stormed over to me and gave me a good beating. I was left with new cuts and bruises on top of the old ones that had yet to heal, and I was beaten very badly until they left me prostrate on the floor and unable to move. The police chief squatted down, pointed at my head and threatened me, saying, “If you don’t confess, then don’t expect to survive in here!” A wicked policeman came over to me and kicked me hard a few more times, then two underlings dragged me into the courtyard and tied me to a telephone pole. I was left tied up there for a whole day without taking even a drop of water, and my body was covered in cuts and bruises. Afraid that I might die there, they threw me into a cell. Just when I was at death’s door and I was feeling at my weakest, two sisters who believed in Almighty God and who were also imprisoned at the detention house rushed over to me. They unzipped their clothes, opening them up and holding me close, using their own body warmth to warm me up. Though we were total strangers to each other, God’s love brought our hearts close together. I could hear the indistinct cries of my sisters, and the other prisoners discussing us, saying, “These police are so ruthless! The people who believe in Almighty God are so compassionate. I thought you all belonged to the same family, but actually you don’t know each other at all.” I also heard the two sisters say, “God created man and we are all one family....” I ended up getting a high fever, I became very sick and felt like I was close to death. The wicked police took no notice whatsoever, but

the sisters paid an extortionate price to buy some clothes and medicine from them. Carefully, they treated my wounds and took care of me every day. Under their attentive care, I slowly began to get better. I knew this to be God's love: Although God had permitted tribulation to befall me, He was always mindful of my weakness and pain, and He had arranged everything for me in secret, and orchestrated these two sisters to take care of me and comfort me. We comforted and encouraged one another, and with the same wishes and goals in mind, we each prayed in secret for the others, asking God to give us faith and strength so that we may become testimonies to God's victory in this lair of demons.

Going into the detention house was like entering a hell on earth; inside those walls, we lived an inhuman life. We never had enough to eat and we had to work ourselves ragged, working from seven in the morning till ten at night before being able to go back to our cells—every day we were utterly exhausted and all our energy was spent. But because I was able to fellowship often about God's words with the two sisters, although my flesh suffered greatly and was always exhausted, my heart felt at ease and filled with light. Often during that time, I thought of this hymn of God's words: **“Thus, during these last days you must bear testimony to God. No matter how great your suffering, you should go on to the very end, and even at your last breath, still you must be faithful to God, and at the mercy of God; only this is truly loving God, and only this is the strong and resounding testimony”** (“Seek to Love God No Matter How Great Your Suffering” in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). Whenever I sang this hymn, I felt an incredible power supporting me, and without being aware of it, the exhaustion, the depression, and the pain I felt inside me would all vanish. At the same time, I also came to realize that my being able to suffer this pain was the greatest kindness and the greatest blessing God could bestow on me. No matter how great my suffering became, I was determined to follow God till the end, and even if I had just one breath left, I would seek to love God and satisfy God. Encouraged by God's love, I lasted 20 almost unendurable days in the detention house. In that dark den of monsters, it was the light of life from Almighty God that dispelled the darkness and which enabled me to continue praising God and enjoying the supply of life from God's words—this was the greatest love and salvation God could give me. When I was finally being released, the wicked police still threatened me shamelessly, saying, “Don't even think about telling anyone what happened to you here when you get home!” Looking at the wicked police with their human faces and beastly hearts, the ugliness of their being willing to do evil things but

not to accept responsibility for them, further strengthened my faith and my resolve to forsake Satan and to follow God and bear witness for God. I made a resolution to cooperate with God and spread the gospel, to bring more fellow souls living under the domain of Satan the devil into the light, so that they, too, might receive the love and salvation of the Creator.

Throughout this experience of being cruelly persecuted by the CCP government, it was Almighty God who led me one step at a time to overcome the demons' siege, and led me out of Satan's den of monsters. This made me come to an earnest realization: No matter how savage, cruel and rampant Satan may be, it will forever be God's vanquished foe, and only Almighty God is the highest authority who can be our staunch backup, who can lead us to be victorious over Satan and victorious over death, and who can enable us to live with tenacity in God's light. Just as Almighty God says: **"God's life force can prevail over any power; moreover, it exceeds any power. His life is eternal, His power extraordinary, and His life force is not easily overwhelmed by any created being or enemy force. The life force of God exists and shines its brilliant radiance regardless of time or place. Heaven and earth may undergo great changes, but God's life is forever the same. All things may pass away, but God's life will still remain, for God is the source of the existence of all things and the root of their existence"** ("Only Christ of the Last Days Can Give Man the Way of Eternal Life" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). From this day forth, I wish to steadfastly follow Almighty God, do my utmost to pursue the truth, and win the eternal life which God bestows on man.

20. Living Through Cruel Persecution Has Strengthened My Faith in God

By Zhao Rui, Shanxi Province

My name is Zhao Rui. Due to the grace of God, my entire family began following the Lord Jesus in 1993. In 1996, when I was sixteen, I was drawn in by the love of the Lord Jesus and began to work in the church and give sermons. However, not long after, I began to observe many things within the church which left me bitterly disappointed: Co-workers engaged in intrigue against each other, excluded each other, and vied for power and profit. It was as if the Lord's teaching that we should love one another had long ago been forgotten.

Those giving sermons seemed to have nothing to say and there was no enjoyment to be had in living the church life. Many sisters and brothers had become negative and weak and had even stopped attending meetings.... Faced with the bleak and desolate state of the church, I felt particularly anguished and helpless. In July of 1999, by God's miraculous orchestration and arrangement, I welcomed the return of the Lord Jesus—Almighty God. Through reading Almighty God's words and engaging in church life, I once again enjoyed the work of the Holy Spirit. When I attended meetings with my brothers and sisters, the religious style of life I had once led was swept away; every person could say what they really felt, and we fellowshiped on the light provided us by the Holy Spirit's enlightenment and discussed how we experienced God's word, as well as how to rely upon God to rid ourselves of corruption. What's more, the brothers and sisters lived in a very devout and dignified way; they were forgiving and tolerant of each other's shortcomings and displays of corruption and provided each other with loving assistance. If someone was going through difficulties, no one would look down on or belittle them, but would seek the truth with them to find a solution to their problems. This was the church life that I had always wanted—the true way for which I'd searched for many years! I'd finally returned before God after having been lost for years on end! I made a resolution to God: "I will bring those innocent souls who still live in darkness before God, enable them to live with the guidance and blessing of the work of the Holy Spirit, and be watered by God's living water of life. This is my calling as a created being and is the most meaningful and valuable way to live my life." With that, I threw myself into performing my duties.

However, the CCP government, that hater of the true God, that truth-detesting atheistic government, would not allow us to follow God nor bear testimony to or spread God's gospel, much less would it tolerate the existence of God's church. In the spring of 2009, the CCP government carried out a large-scale campaign of arrests targeting the main leaders of The Church of Almighty God. Leaders from churches all over the country were arrested and thrown into prison one after another. At around 9 p.m. on the 4th of April, I and a sister with whom I was collaborating in performing our duties had just left our hosting house and walked to the road when three men in plain clothes suddenly leaped up behind us and dragged us forcefully by the arms, yelling, "Let's go! You're coming with us!" Before we even had time to react, we were thrown into the back of a black sedan that was parked by the side of the road. It was just like in the movies when gangsters come and abduct someone in broad

daylight, except now it was happening to us in real life, and it was absolutely terrifying. I was completely overwhelmed and all I could do was call silently out to God over and over: “Dear God! Save me! O God, please save me....” Before I had recovered my composure, the sedan pulled into the main courtyard of the Municipal Public Security Bureau. It was only then that I realized that we had fallen into the hands of the police. Soon after, the sister from our hosting house was also brought in. The three of us were taken to an office on the second floor and an officer, without the slightest explanation, seized our bags and made us stand facing the wall. He then forced us to strip naked and performed a body search, forcibly seizing some materials about our work in the church, receipts for church money that was kept, our cell phones, over 5,000 RMB in cash, a bank card and a watch, among other personal belongings which we had on us and in our bags, in the process. While all this was happening, seven or eight police officers kept coming in and out of the room and two of the officers that were monitoring us even burst out laughing and pointed at me, saying, “This one’s a big wig in the church, looks like we caught ourselves a big one today.” Soon after, four plainclothes police officers put me in handcuffs, covered my eyes with a blindfold, and escorted me to a Public Security Bureau branch far outside the city.

When I entered the interrogation room and saw that high-up, iron-grated window and that ghastly, cold-looking tiger chair, the gruesome stories of brothers and sisters who had been tortured in the past came floating into my mind. Thinking of the unknown torture that the evil police officers would subject me to next, I became extremely frightened and my hands began to shake involuntarily. In this desperate situation, God’s words suddenly appeared in my mind: “[Y]ou are still carrying fear in your heart, and isn’t your heart still filled with thoughts from Satan?” “What is an overcomer? The good soldiers of Christ must be brave and rely on Me to be spiritually strong; they must fight to become warriors and battle Satan to the death” (“Chapter 12” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). The enlightenment of God’s words gradually calmed my panicked heart and allowed me to realize that my fear had its source in Satan. I thought to myself: “Satan wants to torture my flesh so that I capitulate to its tyranny. I can’t fall for its conniving plot. No matter what may come, I trust that God is with me in secret, watching over and protecting me. At all times, God will always be my staunch backup and my eternal support. Now is a key moment in the spiritual battle and it is imperative that I stand witness for God at this time. I must stand at God’s side and I cannot

give in to Satan.” Having realized this, I quietly prayed to God: “O Almighty God! It is with Your good intentions that I’ve fallen into the hands of these wicked policemen today. However, my stature is far too small and I’m panicked and frightened. I pray that You give me faith and courage, so that I may break free from the strictures of Satan’s influence, not submit to it and resolutely stand witness for You!” After finishing my prayer, my heart was full of courage, and I didn’t feel quite as frightened by those malicious-looking evil policemen.

Just then, two officers shoved me into the tiger chair and locked my hands and feet. One of the officers, a tall, hulking brute, pointed at some words on the wall that read “Civilized Enforcement of the Law” and then slammed the table and yelled, “Do you know where you are? The Public Security Bureau is the branch of the Chinese government that specializes in violence! If you don’t come clean, you’ll get what’s coming to you! Speak! What’s your name? How old are you? Where are you from? What’s your position in the church?” His aggressive nature coupled with his frank, personal acknowledgment of the true nature of this national enforcement agency, the Public Security Bureau, filled me with rage. I thought to myself: “They always claim to be the ‘People’s Police’ and that their goal is to ‘root out the wicked and let the law-abiding live in peace,’ but in reality they’re just a bunch of thugs, bandits and underworld hit-men. They are demons waging a targeted assault on justice and punishing good, upstanding citizens! These policemen turn a blind eye to those who break the law and commit crimes, allowing them to live beyond the arm of the law. Yet, despite the fact that all we do is believe in God, read God’s word and walk the right path in life, we have become the prime target of this pack of savages’ violence. The CCP government truly is a perverse inverter of justice.” Though I hated those evil policemen with all my heart, I knew that my stature was too small and I would be unable to withstand their cruel punishment and torture, so I called out to God again and again, entreating Him to grant me strength. Just in that moment, God’s words enlightened me: **“Faith is like a single log bridge, those who cling abjectly to life will have difficulty in crossing it, but those who are ready to sacrifice themselves can pass over without worry”** (“Chapter 6” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). The consolation and encouragement of God’s words helped to ground me, and I thought to myself: “Today I should be ready to risk everything—if worst comes to worst and I die, then so be it. If this band of demons thinks they’re going to find out about the church’s money, work or our leaders from me, they can think again!” With that, I prayed to God: “Dear God! You are the

Ruler of all things, and Satan is also in Your hands and subject to Your orchestrations. Today You are using Satan to test my faith and devotion. Though my flesh is weak now, I am not willing to collapse before Satan's feet. I wish to rely upon You to become strong. No matter how Satan tortures me, I will never betray You or cause You grief!" Because of the guidance of God's words, no matter how they interrogated me or tried to extort information from me, I didn't say a word.

Seeing that I was refusing to talk, one of the officers became enraged and, after slamming the table, stormed over to me, kicked the tiger chair I was sitting in and then shoved my head while yelling, "Tell us what you know! Don't think we don't know anything. If we didn't know anything, then how do you think we were able to capture the three of you so decisively?" Another tall police officer roared, "Don't test my patience! If we don't give you a little taste of pain, you'll think we're just making empty threats. Stand up!" No sooner had he spoken than he dragged me from the tiger chair over beneath a window, which was very high up on the wall and had an iron grating. They used one pair of spiked handcuffs for each hand, with one end locked around my hands and the other attached to the iron grating so that I hung by my hands from the window and could only touch the ground with the balls of my feet. One of the evil policemen turned on the air conditioner to decrease the temperature in the room and then viciously smacked me on the head with a rolled-up book. When he saw that I still remained silent, he shouted in a fit of rage: "Are you gonna talk or not? If you don't talk, we'll give you a 'go on the swing!'" With that, he used a long military-grade packing belt to tie up my legs and then fastened the belt to the tiger chair. Two officers then pulled the tiger chair away from the wall so that I was hanging in the air. As my body moved forward, the handcuffs slid down to the base of my wrists and the spikes inside the handcuffs dug into the backs of my hands. I was in excruciating pain, but I bit down hard on my lip to prevent myself from screaming out because I didn't want to let those wicked policemen have a laugh at my expense. One of them said with a sinister grin, "Looks like it's not painful! Let me crank it up a little bit for you." With that, he lifted up his leg and stepped down hard on my calves and then rocked my body from side to side. This caused the handcuffs to grip tighter and tighter around my wrists and the backs of my hands and it was finally so painful that I couldn't help but scream out in agony, which sent those two wicked policemen into a fit of laughter. Only then did he stop pressing down on my legs, leaving me suspended there in mid-air. After about twenty minutes, the officer suddenly kicked the tiger chair back toward

me, making a horrible screeching noise and I screamed as my body dropped back into position, hanging from the wall with only the balls of my feet touching the ground. Simultaneously, the handcuffs slid back up onto my wrists. With the sudden loosening of my handcuffs, the blood rapidly circulated out of my hands and rushed back into my arms, causing a throbbing pain from the pressure of the returning blood. Those two wicked policemen cackled sinisterly at the sight of my suffering and then proceeded to interrogate me, asking, "How many people are there in your church? Where do you keep the money?" This last question plainly revealed Satan's despicable motive: The reason they were putting me through all this torture and torment, the reason they were using such diabolical and ruthless methods was all so that they could steal the church's money. They vainly and shamelessly hoped to use the church's money for their own purposes. Looking at their greedy, wicked faces, I felt enraged and continually beseeched God to not let me become a Judas and to curse this gang of bandits and brigands. After that, no matter how they questioned me, I refused to talk until they became so angry that they began to hurl profanities: "Damnit! You're a tough nut to crack! We'll see how long you hold out!" With that, they once again pulled the tiger chair away from the wall, suspending me again in mid-air. This time, the handcuffs caught tightly on the already open wounds on the backs of my hands, and my hands rapidly swelled and engorged with blood, feeling as if they were about to explode. The pain was even more intense than the first time. The officers painted vivid portrayals for each other of their "glorious past exploits" in torturing and punishing prisoners. This went on for all of fifteen minutes before they finally kicked the chair back over to the wall and I resumed my former position hanging straight down from the window with only the balls of my feet touching the ground. In the process, a rending pain swept through me once again. Just then, a short, pudgy male officer walked in and asked, "Has she talked yet?" The two officers replied, saying, "This one's a real Liu Hulan!" That fat, evil policeman walked right up to me and slapped me hard across the face, viciously hissing, "Let's see how tough you are! Let me loosen up those hands of yours." I looked down at my left hand and saw that it was badly swollen and had turned purplish-black. Just then, the evil policeman grabbed the fingers of my left hand and began shaking them back and forth and rubbing and pinching them until the numbness once again gave way to pain. Then he adjusted the handcuffs so that they were at their tightest setting and signaled to the two other officers to pull me up into the air again. I was, once again, suspended in mid-air and left in that position

for twenty minutes before being let down. They kept on pulling me up into the air and then letting me back down over and over, torturing me to the point where I wished I could die to escape the pain. Each time the handcuffs slid up and down my hands it was more painful than the time before. In the end, the spiked cuffs dug deep into my wrists and broke through the skin on the backs of my hands, causing profuse bleeding. The circulation in my hands had been completely cut off and they had swollen up like balloons. My head was pounding due to a lack of oxygen and felt like it was about to explode. I really thought I was going to die.

Just as I thought I couldn't take it anymore, a passage of God's words suddenly resounded in my mind: **"On the road to Jerusalem, Jesus was in agony, as if a knife were being twisted in His heart, yet He had not the slightest intention of going back on His word; always there was a powerful force compelling Him onward to where He would be crucified"** ("How to Serve in Harmony With God's Will" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). God's words gave me a sudden surge of strength and I thought of how the Lord Jesus had suffered on the cross: He was whipped, mocked and humiliated by the Roman soldiers and was beaten bloody. And yet He was still made to carry that heavy cross, the same one that they eventually nailed Him to alive. He hung from the cross in excruciating pain for 24 hours, until every last drop of blood in His body had been shed. What cruel torture! What unimaginable suffering! Yet the Lord Jesus endured it all in silence. Even though the pain was surely immense beyond words, the Lord Jesus willingly put Himself in Satan's hands for the redemption of all mankind. I thought to myself: "Recently, God has incarnated for a second time and come to the atheistic country of China. Here, He has met with dangers vastly more perilous than what He faced in the Age of Grace. Ever since Almighty God appeared and began performing His work, the CCP government has used every means possible to slander, blaspheme, maniacally pursue and capture Christ, vainly hoping to tear down God's work. The suffering that God has gone through in His two incarnations is beyond what anyone could imagine, much less endure. In comparison with what God has endured, the suffering that I face now is not even worth mentioning. What's more, the reason why these demons are persecuting me like this today is because I am God's follower. In reality, God is who they really hate and are trying to persecute. Given that God has endured so much suffering for us, I should have more of a conscience; I must satisfy God and bring Him comfort, even if it means my death." In that moment, the travails

of all the saints and prophets through the ages flashed through my mind: Daniel in the lion's den, Peter hung upside down on the cross, James beheaded.... Without a single exception, these saints and prophets all stood resounding witness to God on the brink of death, and I realized that I should aim to emulate their faith, devotion and submission to God. Thus, I quietly prayed to God: "Dear God! You are innocent of sin but were crucified for our salvation. You were then incarnated in China to perform Your work, risking Your life. Your love is so great that I could never repay You. It is my greatest honor to suffer alongside You today and I am willing to stand witness to comfort Your heart. Even if Satan takes my life from me, I will never utter a single word of complaint!" With my mind focused on God's love, the pain in my body seemed to diminish significantly. In the latter half of that night, the wicked policemen continued to torture me in shifts. Only at around 9 a.m. the following morning did they finally untie my legs and leave me hanging from the window. Both of my arms were completely numb and without feeling and my entire body was swollen. At that time, the sister I had been fulfilling duties with had been brought into the adjacent interrogation room. All of a sudden, eight or nine officers filed into my interrogation room, and a short, stout police officer entered in a huff and asked the evil policemen who were handling me: "Has she spoken yet?" "Not yet," they replied. As soon as he heard their reply, he bounded over to me, smacked me twice across the face and yelled at me irately, "You're still not cooperating! We know your name, and we know you're an important leader in the church. Don't be under the mistaken impression that we know nothing! Where did you put the money! How is your work scheduled and arranged?" Seeing me stay silent, he threatened me, saying, "If you don't fess up, it will be even worse for you when we find out ourselves. Given your position within the church, you'll be sentenced to twenty years in prison!" These evil police were in an utter frenzy to get their hands on church funds. Looking at their brutish features, my blood boiled with rage, and I couldn't help but entreat God to curse them to the darkest pits of hell. Later on, they held up my bank card and asked for the name on the card and the pin number. I thought to myself, "Let them see, who cares. My family didn't transfer much money into that account anyway. Maybe if they see, they won't keep pestering me about church funds." Having decided, I told them the name and pin number.

Later on, I asked to go to the bathroom and it was only then that they finally let me down. At that point, I had completely lost control of the use of my legs, so they carried me to the bathroom and stood guard outside. However, I had already lost all feeling in my hands

and the commands from my brain were just not reaching them, so I just stood there leaning against the wall, utterly unable to undo my pants. When I still hadn't come out after some time, one of the policemen kicked open the door and yelled at me with a lascivious grin, "You're still not done?" Seeing that I couldn't move my hands, he walked up to me and undid my pants and then refastened my pants when I was done. A group of male officers had gathered outside the bathroom making all kinds of snide comments and humiliating me with their filthy language. The injustice of these thugs and demons humiliating an innocent, twenty-something young girl like me suddenly overwhelmed me and I began to cry. It also occurred to me that, if my hands were really paralyzed and I was unable to take care of myself in the future, I would be better off dead. If I had been able to walk properly at that moment, I would have jumped out of the building and ended it right there. Just as I was at my weakest, a church hymn "I Wish to See the Day of God's Glory" came to mind: "I'll give my love and loyalty to God and complete my mission to glorify God. I'm determined to stand firm in testimony to God, and never give in to Satan. Oh, my head may break and blood may flow, but the mettle of God's people can't be lost. God's exhortations rest on the heart, I determine to humiliate Satan the devil. Pain and hardships are predestined by God, I will endure humiliation to be faithful to Him. I will never again cause God to shed tears or worry" (Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). God's enlightenment and illumination once more invested me with faith and my spirit was strengthened. I thought to myself: "I can't be fooled by Satan's tricks and I shouldn't end my life over something like this. They are humiliating and taunting me so that I'll do something that would hurt and betray God. If I were to die, I'd just be falling right into their conniving plot. I can't allow Satan's conspiracy to succeed. Even if I really have been crippled, as long as I still have one breath left within me, I must keep on living to bear witness for God."

When I returned to the interrogation room, I collapsed on the floor out of exhaustion. Several policemen encircled me and yelled at me, commanding me to stand back up. That short, fat officer that had smacked me across the face bounded over to me, gave me a vicious kick and accused me of faking it. At that moment, my body began to tremble, and I became short of breath and started hyperventilating. My left leg and the left side of my chest began to convulse and contract toward each other. My whole body went cold and stiff and no matter how two officers pulled and pried, they were unable to straighten me out. In my mind, I knew that God was using this pain and affliction to open up a way out for me,

otherwise they would have continued to cruelly torture me. Only after seeing the precarious state I was in did those evil officers finally stop beating me. They then locked me into the tiger chair and went next door to torture my church sister, leaving two officers behind to watch me. Hearing my sister cry out over and over in blood-curdling shrieks, I wanted so badly to charge over to those demons and fight them to the death, but as things were, I was collapsed in a heap and utterly exhausted, so all I could do was pray to God and beg God to grant my sister strength and safeguard her so that she could stand witness. At the same time, I rancorously cursed that evil, wicked party that had plunged its people into the depths of suffering and asked God to punish these beasts in human form. Later on, seeing me collapsed there, seemingly on my last breath, and not wanting to have to deal with someone dying on their watch, they finally sent me to the hospital. After I arrived at the hospital, my legs and chest began convulsing and contracting toward each other again and it took several people to pry my body back into a straightened position. Both of my hands had swollen up like balloons and were covered in clotted blood. My hands were all distended with pus and they were unable to start an IV because as soon as they inserted the needle, the blood would come flowing out of the vein, perfuse the surrounding tissue and bleed from the site of injection. When the doctor saw what was happening, he said, "We've got to get these handcuffs off!" He also recommended to the police that I be sent to the municipal hospital for further testing, because he was worried that I had a heart condition. Those wicked police didn't want to do anything to help me, but after that they didn't handcuff me anymore, and I knew that God had worked through the doctor to open up a way out for me. The next day, the officer that was interrogating me wrote up a statement full of blasphemy and slander about God to be used as my verbal deposition and demanded that I sign it. When I refused to sign the statement, he became exasperated, grabbed my hand and forced me to mark my fingerprint on the statement.

Toward evening on the 9th of April, the division director and two other male police officers escorted me to the detention house. When the doctor at the detention house saw that my entire body was swollen, and that I was unable to walk, had no feeling in my arms and seemed to be hanging on by a thread, they declined to admit me, afraid that I may die there. Afterward, the division director negotiated with the detention house governor for nearly an hour and promised that if anything were to happen to me, the detention house would not be held responsible, and only then did the governor finally agree to take me into custody.

More than ten days later, over a dozen evil police were transferred from other precincts and were temporarily stationed at the detention house to interrogate me in shifts all day and night. There are set limits on the amount of time a prisoner can be interrogated, but the police said that this was a big, important case of a very serious nature, so they just wouldn't leave me alone. Because they were afraid that, if they questioned me for too long I might, given my frail state, have some kind of health emergency, they would conclude their interrogation at around 1 a.m. and send me back to my jail cell, summoning me the following morning at daybreak. They interrogated me for about 18 hours a day, three days straight. However, no matter how they grilled me, I didn't say a word. When they saw that their hard tactics weren't working, they switched over to soft tactics. They began to show concern for my injuries and would buy me medicine and apply ointments to my wounds. Faced with this sudden display of "kindness," I let down my guard, thinking: "If I just tell them something inconsequential about the church, it'll probably be alright..." Instantly, God's words appeared in my mind: **"Do not mess it up, but get close to Me more when things befall you; be more careful and cautious in all respects to avoid offending My chastisement, and to avoid falling into Satan's cunning schemes"** ("Chapter 95" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). I suddenly realized that I had fallen for Satan's cunning plot. Weren't these the same people who'd been torturing me just a few days ago? They could change their demeanor, but their evil nature was unalterable—once a demon, always a demon. God's words awakened me to the fact that they were just wolves in sheep's clothing, and that they always harbored ulterior motives. Going forward, no matter how they tempted me or grilled me, I wouldn't say another word. Soon after, God revealed their true colors; an officer whom they called Captain Wu fiercely questioned me: "You're a leader in the church, and yet you don't know where the money is? If you don't tell us, we have our ways of finding out!" An old, gaunt police officer burst into a storm of abuse, yelling, "Damn it, we give you an inch and you take a mile! If you don't talk, we'll send you out and hang you up again. We'll see if you still want to be a Liu Hulan and withhold information from us then! I've got plenty of ways of dealing with you!" The more he spoke in this way, the more determined I was to stay silent. He finally became exasperated and walked over and shoved me, saying, "With this kind of behavior, twenty years would be a light sentence!" With that, he stormed out of the room in frustration. Afterward, an officer from the Provincial Department of Public Security in charge of affairs of national security came to question me.

He made many statements attacking and resisting God and continually bragged about how experienced and knowledgeable he was, which led the other officers to lavish praise on him. Observing his smug, self-satisfied ugliness, and hearing all of his truth-perverting, rumormongering lies and false-incriminations, I felt both hate and disgust for this officer. I couldn't even bear to look at him and so I just stared straight ahead at the wall in front of me and refuted each of his arguments in my head. His diatribe lasted the entire morning and when he was finally done, he asked me what I thought. I said impatiently: "I'm uneducated, so I don't have a clue what you've been rambling on about." Enraged, he said to the other interrogators, "There's no hope for her. I think she's already been godized, she's done for!" With that he slunk off dejectedly. I was overjoyed and thanked God for leading me to overcome crisis after crisis.

In suffering through the cruel persecution of devils, I experienced the hellishness of life devoid of any human rights in this country ruled over by the evil party of the CCP. For the CCP government, believers in God are like barbs in their eyes and thorns in their sides; they used every trick in their book to punish and torture me in the vain hope of putting me to death. However, God is my staunch backup and my salvation; He rescued me from the jaws of death time and again, allowing me to experience God's true love and to see the kindness and goodness of God's heart. When the evil police dragged me into my jail cell in the detention house and I saw that my sister from the hosting house was there in the same cell, the sight of this loved one sent warmth surging into my heart. I knew that this was God's orchestration and arrangement and that God's love was looking out for me, and I knew that God had done this because, at that time, I was practically crippled—my arms and hands were badly swollen and distended with pus, I had no feeling in my fingers, which were as thick as sausages and hard to the touch, I could barely move my legs and my entire body was weak and wracked with pain. For six months, I almost never moved from my brick bed and was unable to take care of myself. Only after six months did I regain some movement in my hands, but I was still unable to hold things (to this day, if I try to hold a plate with one hand, the hand becomes sore, weak and numb, and if I don't use my other hand for support, I wouldn't be able to even hold the plate up). During that time, my sister took care of me every day—she brushed my teeth for me, cleaned my face, bathed me, combed my hair and fed me.... One month later, my sister was released, and I was informed that I had been formally arrested. After my sister was released, thinking of how I was still unable to take care

of myself and having no idea how much longer I'd be locked up, I felt incredibly helpless and bleak. I couldn't help but call out to God: "O God, I feel like a cripple—how am I supposed to go on like this? I beg You to safeguard my heart, so that I may overcome this situation." Just as I was at my wit's end and feeling utterly lost, God's words guided me exceptionally clearly from within: **"Have you considered that one day your God will put you in a most unfamiliar place? Can you imagine what would become of you one day when I might snatch everything from you? Would your energy on that day be as it is now? Would your faith reappear?"** ("You Must Understand the Work—Do Not Follow in Confusion!" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words were like a shining beacon illuminating my heart and allowing me to understand His will. I thought to myself: "The environment I am now faced with is the one with which I am least familiar. God wants me to experience His work within this kind of environment to perfect my faith. Though my sister has left me, God certainly has not! Thinking back over the path that I have walked, God has guided me each and every step of the way! With God's presence, there is no difficulty that cannot be overcome. With God, there is always a way out. Given how cowardly and lacking in faith I am, how can I expect to comprehend God's wisdom and almightiness in my experiences?" I therefore prayed to God: "Dear God, I am willing to put myself entirely in Your hands and submit to Your orchestrations. No matter what situations I may face in the future, I know that You will open a way forward for me. I will submit to You and not complain any longer." After concluding my prayer, I felt a sense of serenity and calm, but I still didn't know what God had planned or how He would guide me. On the afternoon of the next day, the correctional officer brought in a new inmate. When she saw my situation, she began taking care of me without my even asking. In this, I saw God's wondrousness and faithfulness; God hadn't abandoned me—all things in heaven and on earth are in God's hands, including the thoughts of man. If it hadn't been for God's orchestrations and arrangements, why would this woman whom I had never met be so nice to me? After that, I witnessed even more of God's love. When that woman was released from the detention house, God raised up one woman after another whom I had never met to take care of me, and they handed over my care from one to another as though they were passing on a relay baton. There were even some inmates who transferred money into my account after they were released. During this time, though my body did suffer somewhat, I was able to experience the sincerity of God's love for man firsthand. No matter what kind of situation man is cast into, God never abandons him, but

serves as his constant aid. As long as man doesn't lose faith in God, he will certainly be able to witness God's deeds.

I was detained for one year and three months and then charged by the CCP government for "working through a xie jiao organization to obstruct the enforcement of the law" and was sentenced to three years and six months imprisonment. Following my conviction, I was transferred to the Provincial Women's Prison to serve out my sentence. In prison, we were subject to even more inhuman treatment. We were forced to do manual labor every day and our daily workload requirements were far in excess of what anyone could reasonably complete. If we were unable to finish our work, we would be subjected to corporal punishment. Virtually all of the money earned through our labor went into the jail guards' pockets. We were only given a few yuan each a month for a supposed living allowance. The official line that the prison used was that it was reeducating inmates through labor, but in reality, we were just their money-making machines, their unpaid servants. By all appearances, the prison's rules for reducing inmates' sentences seemed very humane—by meeting certain conditions, inmates could qualify for a suitable reduction of their sentence. But in truth, this was just a front and was just for appearance's sake. In all actuality, their so-called humane system was nothing more than empty words on paper: The orders personally issued by the guards were the only real laws of the land. The prison strictly controlled annual sentence reduction totals to ensure sufficient "labor" capacity and to guarantee that the prison guards' income would not decrease. The "sentence reduction list" was a technique employed by the prison to increase labor productivity. Of the several hundred inmates in the prison, only ten or so would make the "sentence reduction list" and so people would work themselves to the bone, engaging in intrigues against each other to earn a spot on the list. However, most of the inmates that would end up making the list were those with police connections who didn't have to perform manual labor in the first place. Inmates had no choice but to keep their resentment about this to themselves. Some committed suicide in protest, but after the fact, the prison would just randomly make up stories to appease the families of the victims, and so their deaths were all in vain. In prison, the guards never treated us like human beings; if we wanted to talk with them, we had to squat on the ground and look up at them, and if anything wasn't to their liking, they'd berate and insult us with foul obscenities. If high-ranking officials came to perform inspections, we were made to play along with their pretenses, as they would threaten us beforehand, saying that we had to say

nice things about the prison, such as: “Our meals are delicious, the guards are always showing concern for us, we never work more than eight hours a day and entertainment is often laid on for us....” At times such as these, I would become so angry that my entire body would shake. These demons were such hypocrites: They were clearly nothing more than man-eating ghouls, but they insisted on pretending that they were the kindest and most compassionate of people. How sinister, despicable and shameless! When the three and a half long years of my sentence finally came to an end and I returned home, my family could not disguise the anguish they felt in seeing me looking like a human skeleton, so frail and depleted that I was barely recognizable, and many tears were shed. However, our hearts were full of gratitude for God. We thanked God that I was still alive and for having protected me so that I was able to emerge from that hell-on-earth in one piece.

Only after I returned home did I learn that while I was being detained, the wicked police had come twice and wantonly ransacked and searched through the house. My parents, who both believe in God, had fled their home and spent nearly two years on the run to evade capture by the government. When they finally returned home, the weeds in the courtyard had grown as high as the house itself, parts of the roof had collapsed and the whole place was a dreadful mess. The police had also gone around our village spreading lies about us: They said that I had cheated someone out of their money to the tune of a million to upward of a hundred million RMB (about 150,000-15,000,000 USD) and that my parents had cheated someone out of several hundred thousand RMB to send my little brother to college. This gang of demons was a bunch of certified professional liars, the best in the game! In fact, because my parents had fled from home, my little brother had to use scholarship money and loans to pay his tuition and finish college. What’s more, when he went away from home for work, he first had to save up for travel expenses a little at a time by selling the grain crops our family raised and picking hawthorn berries to sell. Yet those devils acted unconscionably, framing my family with false incriminations, the rumors of which still circulate to this day. Even now, I am still spurned by my village because of my reputation as a convicted political offender and scam-artist. This gang of demons that murders without blinking an eye, this devilish government which shows scant regard for human life, these underlings of Satan making false incriminations and whipping up public opinion—I despise them all! Though the devil falsely incriminates, slanders and persecutes us, this only allowed me to see more clearly the God-resisting, perverse and heaven-defying evil nature and repulsive true face

of the CCP government. It further enabled me to experience God's love and salvation. The more the devil persecutes us, the more it strengthens our resolve to follow Almighty God to the very end. If I hadn't experienced being subjected to cruel persecution at those demons' hands, who knows when my spirit would have awakened or when I would have come to truly despise Satan and forsake it once and for all. Thinking back over my years spent following God, I had only accepted God's words which expose the demonic nature and essence of the CCP government on a theoretical level, but had never truly understood them. Because, from a young age, I was instilled with the tenets of "patriotic education," which conditioned and systematically deceived me into thinking a certain way, I even thought that God's words were an exaggeration—I just couldn't bring myself to abandon my idolization of our country, thinking that the Communist Party was always right, that the army protected our homeland, and that the police punished and eradicated evil elements from society and safeguarded the interests of the public. Only through experiencing persecution at the hands of those demons did I come to see the true face of the CCP government; it is supremely deceptive and hypocritical and has hoodwinked the people of China and the entire world with its lies for years. It repeatedly professes to uphold "freedom of belief and democratic legal rights," but in reality it wantonly persecutes religious belief. All it really upholds is its own tyranny, forced control and despotism. In China, those who believe in the true God have to be extremely careful, and if they let down their guard just a little, they will likely find themselves in jail. As a result, in order to avoid being captured and arrested by the police, we have to spend all of our time hiding or fleeing and we can never stay in one place for too long. Even if we're just listening to hymns in our own houses we have to keep the volume low. Just as when we fellowship God's word with family members, we have to keep our voices down, and when we read God's word we have to first lock our doors shut, for fear that the police might be monitoring and eavesdropping on us and may, at any time, burst right through the door. What's more, in China's prisons, the more one believes in God, the more likely they are to be persecuted, bullied and scorned. By contrast, the gangsters, murderers, thieves and embezzlers often have privileged relationships with the police, and act as their hitmen and head prisoners. These facts have long ago exposed China as a country that admires and abets evil while attacking and suppressing justice. The more evil someone is, the more likely they are to receive the praises of the CCP government, whereas the more morally good someone is and the more they walk the right path, the more the CCP will suppress and

persecute them. When God came to do His work and save mankind, Satan was certainly not content to let us follow God and walk the right path, so it used every method possible to obstruct and persecute me. Though my flesh has been badly injured in the course of its cruel persecution, I understand that I was meant to endure this suffering, because I am a child of Satan, its many poisons course in my veins, and I have been subject to its deception and torment all along. It is precisely because I was unable to discern Satan's essence and cunning plots that God permitted it to persecute me, thus allowing me to understand, through my suffering, what this Chinese government that I've always thought of as my "savior" is really all about. This has allowed me to see the base, despicable and corrupt inside story behind its claims of "greatness, glory and rectitude." At the same time, it has allowed me to comprehend the magnitude of God's saving grace, which, in turn, has motivated me to diligently pursue the truth, thoroughly renounce Satan and turn my heart toward God.

During that most difficult and agonizing period in my life, God's love was always with me even when I was weak and in pain. When I felt weak, God's words enlightened me and gave me faith and strength, allowing me to break free from the constraints of darkness and death. When Satan hatched its conniving plots, God's timely warnings awakened me from my befuddlement, allowing me to see through Satan's schemes and ploys, so that I could stand witness for God. When I was being cruelly tortured by those demons to the point where I wished for death, it was God's miraculous orchestrations that opened up a way out for me, making me appear as if I were on the brink of death and, in so doing, causing the demons to cease perpetrating their violence against me. When I was suffering, helpless and unable to take care of myself, God raised up inmate after inmate to take up the cause of attending to my daily needs for six months, as though passing the relay baton of my care from one to another, after which point I recovered some feeling in my hands and was able to do some light work. This unique experience gave me a profound sense of God's love and kindness and allowed me to clearly see Satan's essence as the enemy of God. With these experiences, God has bestowed upon me the most precious wealth of life, thereby strengthening my resolve to pledge my life to forsake Satan and follow God to the very end. Just as Almighty God's word says: **"Now is the time: Man has long since gathered all his strength, he has devoted all his efforts, paid every price, for this, to tear off the hideous face of this demon and allow people, who have been blinded, and have endured every manner of suffering and hardship, to rise up from their pain and turn**

their backs on this evil old devil" ("Work and Entry (8)" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). I have now returned to the church and have once again joined the ranks of those performing their duties. I am fulfilling my duty by preaching and spreading God's kingdom gospel, wishing only that even more people can escape Satan's torment and receive God's eternal salvation.

21. God's Light Guides Me Through Adversity

By Zhao Xin, Sichuan Province

When I was a child, I lived in the mountains. I'd never seen much of the world and I didn't really have any greater aspirations. I got married and had children, my two sons grew up to be sensible and obedient, and my husband was a hard worker. Although we never had much money, we lived together in harmony as a family, and I felt very happy and content. In 1996, I suddenly developed a serious illness which led to me gaining faith in the Lord Jesus. From then on, I read the Bible frequently and actively attended church gatherings. To my surprise, my illness gradually began to get better, and so my faith to follow the Lord Jesus grew even stronger.

Something I really couldn't have foreseen happened in 1999, however, when I was arrested by the police for my faith in the Lord Jesus. I was locked up for a whole day and fined 240 yuan. Although this may not sound like a lot of money, to us poor farmers living in an impoverished mountainous region, that's no small sum! In order to get enough money together, I sold all of the peanuts I had painstakingly planted in my plot of land. What I really couldn't understand was why the CCP government labeled me as a criminal who "took part in counter-revolutionary organizations." They also menaced my whole family, saying that even if my sons were to graduate from college, they still wouldn't be able to get a job. Therefore, my husband, my parents, my relatives and friends all began to put pressure on me, they tried to suppress and stand in the way of my faith. They made me do all the hard, exhausting work, and all I could do was endure it in silence.

In 2003, I was fortunate enough to accept Almighty God's work of the last days. Through reading the words of God, I became certain that Almighty God is the Lord Jesus returned. I was absolutely thrilled, and I felt that to be able to be reunited with God in my own lifetime

was indeed the greatest blessing ever! From then on, however, the pressure exerted on me both by the CCP government and by my own family became even greater. Faced with this kind of environment, I made a resolution to God: “No matter how hard it gets or how much I suffer, I will follow You till the very end!” The CCP police later came to my home and threatened me, saying, “Did you know that your belief in God is illegal, that it’s not allowed in this country? If you keep your faith you’ll end up doing time!” When my husband heard this, he began to heap more and more pressure on me. He would often beat and scold me, and he wouldn’t even let me stay in our home. With no other option, all I could do was suppress the pain I felt inside and leave home to avoid persecution and arrest by the CCP government. At that time, although I had been forced out of my hometown and into a life of vagrancy by the CCP government’s persecution, I still had no discernment regarding the sinister hand behind it that had caused the breakup of my family. Only when I personally experienced life in prison and the unbridled attacks and false charges laid against me by the CCP government did I come to have some true understanding of its perverse and reactionary essence, and I realized that the CCP government is the chief culprit that destroys people’s happy families and wreaks terrible disasters upon people!

On December 16, 2012, five brothers and sisters and I were preaching the gospel when suddenly four policemen raced up to us in a car and arrested us. They took us to the police station and, after they’d put me in handcuffs, one of them yelled, “Let me tell you people, you can go steal and rob things, you can commit murder and arson, and you can go sell your bodies, we don’t care. But believing in God is the one thing you cannot do! By believing in God, you are setting yourselves against the Communist Party, and you need to be punished!” He slapped me hard and viciously kicked me while he spoke. I felt I wouldn’t be able to take much more after that beating, so I called out to God in my heart over and over: “O God! I have no idea how long these evil policemen will torture me for, and I feel like I can’t hold on much longer. But I’d rather die than become a Judas—I will not betray You. Please watch over me, protect me and guide me.” After I’d prayed, I silently resolved in my heart: “I’ll stay loyal to God to my last breath, I’ll fight with Satan to the very end, and I’ll stand witness to satisfy God!” Afterward, one of the police searched me and found 230 yuan I had in cash. Grinning wickedly, he said, “This money is stolen goods and should be confiscated.” As he was speaking he stuffed the cash into his own pocket and kept it for himself. They then began to question us. “Where are you people from? What are your

names? Who sent you here?” After I told them my name and address, they quickly found the details of my entire family on their computer. I just gave them my basic personal information, but refused to answer a single question about the church.

The police then played one of their tricks. They found over ten people on the street who didn't believe in God and had them testify that I had been preaching Almighty God's kingdom gospel. Then they told those people a bunch of lies and false accusations of me. All those people mocked me, slandered me and insulted me; I felt really wronged. I had no idea how I was supposed to get through this situation, so I just continued to call out to God in my heart to give me faith and strength. Just then, part of a hymn of God's words floated into my mind: **“The incarnate God undergoes all kinds of sneering, reviling, judgment, and condemnation. He is also pursued by the devil and is rejected and opposed by religious circles. No one can make up for this hurt in His heart! He saves corrupt mankind through extreme patience; He loves people with a bruised heart. This is the most painful work. Mankind's ferocious resistance, condemnations and slanders, false accusations, persecutions and their hunting and slaughtering cause God's flesh to face extreme dangers in doing this work. He suffers these pains, yet who can understand Him and who can comfort Him?”** (“God Loves Man With Wounds” in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). Before, I only ever understood in theory the pain God suffers in order to save mankind, and only then, finding myself in an actual situation like that, did I finally begin to appreciate how great God's suffering must be! God, righteous and holy, has become flesh in order to live alongside us, filthy and corrupt people; He has endured all manner of ridicule and insults, condemnation and slander, persecution and pursuit in order to save us. Even those of us who do believe in God often don't understand Him, and we even misunderstand Him and blame Him. All these blows are very painful for God, and yet He still bears His scars and loves mankind—His disposition is so great, so honorable! Though I'd read this in the Bible in the past: **“For as the lightning, that lightens out of the one part under heaven, shines to the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in His day. But first must He suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation”** (Luke 17:24–25). Only today did I see that these words had indeed come to pass! This made me really sad, and I regretted never having shown consideration to God's will before.... Before I was able to regain my composure, the police hung a sign saying “XIE JIAO MEMBER” around my neck and took my picture. They then ordered me to squat down

and point at some gospel materials while they took several more photos. My legs hurt so much that I could hardly stay squatting. Just at that moment, my cell phone began to ring, and startled, I thought: "It must be a brother or sister from the church calling. I absolutely cannot implicate them!" I quickly grabbed hold of my cell phone and smashed it hard down onto the floor, breaking it into pieces. This incensed the police immediately. They seemed to have lost their minds—they lifted me up by my collar, then hit me hard several times across the face. My face started burning like fire right away and my ears were buzzing so much that I couldn't hear a thing. They then proceeded to kick my legs with all their might and, still not done venting their rage, those evil police dragged me into a dark room and made me stand with my back against a wall as they hit me across the face. They then gave me another good beating. I managed to hold back the tears while this was going on, and I silently prayed to God: "O Almighty God, I believe that Your good will is behind everything that is happening to me now. No matter how these evil policemen torment me, I will always stand witness for You and I will not surrender to Satan!" To my surprise, when I said this prayer, I suddenly regained hearing in my ears, and all I could hear was one of the evil police saying, "This woman's really stubborn. She hasn't shed a tear or made a peep. Maybe we just haven't laid into her enough. Get the electric baton and then we'll see if she makes some noise!" Another policeman grabbed an electric baton and jammed it hard down onto my thigh. Intense pain ripped through me right away, hurting so much that I immediately fell to the floor. My head hit the wall and blood started to pour from it. The policemen pointed at me and hollered, "Stop pretending. Get up! We'll give you three minutes. If you don't stand up, we'll beat you again. Don't even think about playing dead!" But no matter how they shouted, I really couldn't move, and so in the end they gave me another vicious kicking before they stopped.

I really couldn't hold out any longer against the brutal and inhuman torture meted out by those police. I prayed to God in earnest: "O Almighty God! I can't hold out much longer. Please give me faith and strength!" In the midst of my intense suffering, a hymn of God's words came to mind: **"Since you believe in God, you must hand over your heart before God. If you offer up and lay your heart before God, then during refinement it will be impossible for you to deny God, or leave God. ... When the day comes and God's trials suddenly befall you, you will not only be able to stand by God's side, but will also be able to bear testimony to God. At that time, you will be like Job, and Peter.**

Having borne testimony to God you will truly love Him, and will gladly lay down your life for Him; you will be God's witness, and one who is beloved by God. Love that has experienced refinement is strong, and not weak. Regardless of when or how God subjects you to His trials, you are able to care not whether you live or die, to gladly cast aside everything for God, and to happily endure anything for God—and thus your love will be pure, and your faith real. Only then will you be someone who is truly loved by God, and who has truly been made perfect by God" ("Give Your Heart Before God If You Believe in Him" in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). God's enlightenment enabled me to understand His will, and it also gave me inexhaustible faith and strength. I prayed to God again: "O God! I believe that everything that is happening to me today is happening with Your consent, and Your good will is behind it all. Through the performance put on by these devils, I finally see that the law enforcement agencies working under the CCP government are violent organizations and I cannot surrender to them. I just wish to give You my heart and stand on Your side. O God! I know that it is only through experiencing such trials and refinement that my love for You can be strengthened. If Satan takes my life today, I still won't utter a word of complaint. To be able to bear witness for You is my honor as a created being. In the past I haven't fulfilled my duty well and I owe You so much. Having the chance to die for You today is the most meaningful thing. I wish to obey You." I felt very moved after this prayer, and I felt that to suffer this pain for the sake of following God was an incredibly meaningful thing, and that it was worth it even if I were to die!

It was perhaps more than 10 minutes later that a female police officer came and helped me up and, feigning kindness, said, "Look at you at your age, with your children both at college. Is it really worth it to suffer all this? Just tell us what we want to know and then you can go right away." She saw that I made no response, and so she continued, "You're a mother, so you should think of your sons. We live now in the domain of the Communist Party, and the CCP government opposes and suppresses all religious belief. It especially hates those of you who believe in Almighty God. If you insist on going up against the government, aren't you worried about incriminating your entire family? At some point, your parents and your husband will all be implicated, and your sons and grandsons can forget about ever joining the army, becoming a cadre or becoming a civil servant. No one would even hire them to be security guards. Do you want your sons to be just laborers when they grow up, and just do odd jobs like you and be poor all their lives?" Just as Satan was carrying out its

cunning scheme against me, God's words flashed through my mind: **"Of everything that occurs in the universe, there is nothing that I do not have the final say in. What exists that is not in My hands? All that I say goes, and among men, who is there who can change My mind?"** ("Chapter 1" of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words allowed me to see through Satan's cunning scheme, and I realized that they were trying to coerce me into talking by using my children's futures as leverage. I knew, however, that our fates as human beings are not in our own hands, nor are they in the hands of the police, but are held in the hands of God. Whatever jobs my children would have in the future and whether they would be rich or poor was all up to God. Thinking through this, I didn't feel constrained by the police one little bit. The guidance of God's words allowed me to truly perceive that God was by my side, protecting me, and I began to trust in God even more steadfastly. And so, I turned my head to one side and remained silent. The officer gave me a good scolding and then stalked off.

Evening was drawing on. Seeing that they couldn't get anything out of me or my church sisters, all they could do was send us to the County Detention Center. But the police there said that our case was very serious, and that we had to go to the Municipal Detention House. By the time we got there, it was already past 1 a.m. and all I could see was row after row of large gates made of metal bars—it all looked so gloomy and terrifying. At the first gate, we had to remove every item of clothing and submit to having our bodies searched. They then cut off all my buttons and zippers and I had to wear the shredded clothes; I felt like a beggar. At the second gate, we had to undergo a physical examination. They saw the bruises on my legs from being beaten by the police and that I was finding it hard to walk, but they just stared and told lies, saying, "This is all perfectly normal. Nothing to worry about." It clearly states in the prison regulations that treatment should be prescribed if any illness or injury is discovered during the physical examination, but in reality, they don't care whether the prisoners live or die. They said to me sarcastically, "You believers in Almighty God have God to protect you. You can handle it." I was taken to a cell, and a prisoner poked her head from under her sheets and yelled at me, "Strip off all your clothes!" I implored her not to make me take off my underwear, but she just grinned maliciously at me and said, "If you come to this place then you have to follow the rules." All the other prisoners then popped their heads up from under their bedsheets and began to make all sorts of terrible noises. There were 18 prisoners locked up in that cell of just over 20 square meters: They were drug dealers,

murderers, embezzlers and thieves. The work of the “boss” of the place, the shot caller, was to punish people in all manner of ways every single day—she just tormented people for fun. In the morning, her second-in-command taught me the rules and told me that I had to mop the floor twice every day. She was constantly finding things for me to do, and she told me that I always had to meet my production quota, and that I had to speed up, otherwise I would be punished. The prison guards acted like wild beasts and would often punish the prisoners for no reason as well. One of them threatened me, saying, “What I say goes. I don’t care if you report me. Go make a report if you want, and I’ll give you more than you bargained for! ...” These evil prison officers were utterly without restraint and totally rampant. In there, money made the world go round, and as long as one gave the prison officers money, they were not subject to the “law.” One prisoner was an official’s wife who had embezzled a large sum of money. She often gave the prison guards money, and every day she would buy the “boss” some small fried snacks. By doing that, she didn’t have to do any work for the whole day, and she would get others to wash her dishes and fold her bedsheets. Although I was living in this hellish prison cell, with no money and no rights, and I had to put up with all kinds of bullying and torment every day, the only thing that comforted me was that two church sisters were in there with me. We were like family. Through this difficult time we would fellowship with each other whenever we had the chance; we supported and helped each other. We relied on God all the time, asking Him to give us faith and strength. We each helped and supported the others, and together we got through this terrible time.

I was questioned by the police four more times while I was in the detention house. One of those times, the men who came to question me introduced themselves as being from the Municipal Public Security Bureau and from the National Security Team. I thought to myself: “Someone from the Municipal Public Security Bureau will surely be of higher caliber and more educated than the police at my local police station. They must enforce the law in a just way.” But the reality was not as I had imagined. No sooner had the man from the Municipal Public Security Bureau entered the room than he lay flat on a chair with his feet on the table. His whole body emanated pride, and he swept his eyes over me with a look of contempt. He then stood up and walked over to me. He took a deep drag on his cigarette and then spat the smoke into my face. Seeing this, I finally realized that the CCP police were all alike, and I couldn’t help but laugh at myself for thinking this man would be any different. I didn’t know what ploys they would try on me next, so I silently said a prayer to God: “O Almighty God.

Please give me the wisdom to defeat Satan and enable me to glorify You and stand witness for You!" Just then, the policeman from the National Security Team said, "We already know all about you. Cooperate with us and we will let you go." I glanced at him and gave a mirthless laugh. Thinking I was willing to make a compromise, they said, "You're willing to cooperate now?" I replied, "I said everything I need to say a long time ago." This instantly set evil police into a frenzy of rage, and they started yelling obscenities at me. "We try to give you a dignified way out, and you refuse! If you're not going to talk today, I have all the time in the world to spend with you. I'll pull your sons out of school and make sure they can't finish their educations." They then brought out my cell phone and threatened me, saying, "Whose numbers are those on your SIM card? If you don't tell us today you'll get a seven- or eight-year prison sentence. We'll have the other prisoners torment you constantly, and you'll wish you were dead!" No matter how he pressed me for answers, I made no response. I didn't even feel afraid, for God's words were enlightening me deep inside: "**Because you must withstand such suffering in order to be saved and survive; moreover, this is predestined by God. Thus, for this suffering to befall you is your blessing. ... The meaning behind it is so profound, and extremely significant**" ("Those Who Have Lost the Work of the Holy Spirit Are Most at Risk" in Records of Christ's Talks). That round of interrogation lasted for two and a half hours. Seeing that they'd gotten nothing out of me, they leveled more threats at me and then left looking dejected.

On January 6, 2013, the police played a different hand and said they were going to take me home. They made me wear a prisoner's uniform and handcuffs, and I was taken back to my local police station in a prison van. When I got there, I was told that those evil police had found my sons and my parents-in-law, had searched our home, and had asked around and gotten a good understanding of what I'd been doing over the past few years. One of the policemen there said, "We'd been hunting this woman for years and never caught her. When her husband died, she only stayed one night at home. We wasted days at her house waiting for her. When her son had heart surgery, we went to the hospital to catch her, but she never showed. She believes so strongly in God that she's abandoned her whole family. Now that we have her, we have to sort her out once and for all!" When I heard him say this, my heart began to cry out: "When did I ever not want to go home? My husband's death was devastating, and I was so terribly worried when my son had heart surgery. I wanted to be by my son's side so much. It wasn't that I'd abandoned them, it was that the CCP government

was relentlessly persecuting me and hunting me, making it impossible for me to go home!" The van sped along the highway toward my home, and I wept silently in my heart. I prayed to God nonstop: "O God! I've been away from my home for years because of the CCP government's persecution. I will soon see my family, and I'm afraid that I will weaken when I see them and that I will fall prey to Satan's cunning scheme. Please help me and enable me to live with the dignity and backbone of one of God's faithful even in the face of Satan. Let me not be fooled by them. I ask only to stand witness for You to satisfy You!" When my prayer was finished, I felt much more relaxed and I felt a sense of release. I knew that this was God accompanying me and giving me strength. When we were almost to my house, the police pulled over to the side of the highway. Wearing my prisoner's uniform and handcuffs, I was made to lead them on foot to my home. All my neighbors stood at a distance gazing at me and gesturing in my direction; I could hear them insulting me and mocking me behind my back. When we entered the gate that led into the courtyard, I immediately saw my son there washing clothes. He heard me come in but didn't raise his head, and I knew then that he hated me. My parents-in-law's hair had gone gray, and my mother-in-law came out and greeted those evil officers, but then remained silent. An evil policeman asked, "Is this woman your daughter-in-law?" She gave a slight nod. He then began to threaten my parents-in-law, saying, "If she doesn't cooperate with us, we will have to call the school and pretty soon her sons will be kicked out. We will even cancel your social security payments along with every other benefit you receive." The faces of my two elderly parents-in-law turned ashen as he was threatening them, and their voices trembled as they spoke. They hurriedly acknowledged that I had been away for six or seven years and that I had been practicing my faith elsewhere. The police then bellowed at them, "The Party and the people have taken care of you so well all these years. Tell us, is the Communist Party good?" My mother-in-law was so frightened, she replied straight away, "Yes, it's good." The police then asked, "And are its current policies good?" She replied, "Yes, they're good." "And all the catastrophes that have occurred in your family," the policeman went on, "and your son's death, was it not all brought about by your daughter-in-law? Has she not been the bearer of ill-fortune to your family?" My mother-in-law lowered her head and gave a slight nod. Seeing that their scheme had worked, the police dragged me inside and made me look at all the awards my son had won that were affixed to the wall. One of them then put on airs and pointed at me, scolding me and saying, "Never in my life have I come across anyone as

lacking in humanity as you. Such a good son and you just abandon him and run off to believe in God! What do you gain by doing that?" Looking at all the awards my son had won covering the wall, I thought about how my faith was now affecting his studies, and about how my parents-in-law were being intimidated and threatened—my family had been torn apart! But who was the cause of it all? Was it just because of my faith? My belief in God is pursuing the truth and walking the right path in life. What's wrong with that? If it hadn't been for the CCP government hunting me and persecuting me, would I have had to stay away from my own home and go into hiding for all those years? And yet they were falsely accusing me of not caring about my family and not living my life. By doing this, weren't they clearly distorting the facts and turning the truth upside down? Right at that moment, the hatred I felt inside for these demons of Satan rose up and was about to burst out of me like an erupting volcano—I wanted to cry out: "Demons of Satan! I hate you! I hate you down to the very marrow of my bones! Hasn't it been the CCP government's persecution that has kept me away from my own home all these years? Didn't I want to be by my son's side to give him a mother's love and warmth? Didn't I want to live in peace and happiness with my own family? And yet you devils of Satan now suddenly transform and pretend to be good people, remonstrating with us and laying the blame for everything bad that's happened to our family at God's door, and pushing the responsibility for it all onto my shoulders. You really do turn the truth on its head and spout utter nonsense! You evil spirits are so perverse, and you play the innocent when you are the worst criminals of all. You are the real bad luck charms, the evil omens, the bearers of ill-fortune! The CCP government is the chief culprit responsible for destroying my family! What happiness is there to speak of for the people living in this country?" Once they had finished their charade, they shouted "Move it!" at me, and ordered me out of the house. I give thanks to Almighty God for protecting me and enabling me to see through Satan's cunning schemes, to clearly see the reactionary wickedness of the evil CCP, and to stand firm in my testimony!

On January 12, the police questioned me for the final time. Two policemen once again tried to force me to sell out my brothers and sisters, but no matter how they threatened and coerced me, I just said I didn't know. When they heard me say that I knew nothing, they instantly grew enraged and began to slap my face hard, and they pulled on my hair as if they'd gone crazy. They stood on either side of me, pushing me this way and that and kicking my legs as hard as they could. They then hit me over the head with a copper pipe, shouting,

“Do you think I won’t hit you? What are you going to do about it anyway? Let’s see how tough you are!” Thank Almighty God for protecting me. Although they put me through such torture, all I could feel was my body going numb; I felt very little pain. Those two evil policemen tortured me for four hours until they were utterly spent and sweating profusely, and only then did they stop. They sat on a couch, gasping for breath and saying, “Fine, you just wait until you’re spending the rest of your life in prison. Then you will never be free again, even if you die!” I felt nothing when I heard them say this, as I had already hardened my heart and vowed never to capitulate to these devils even at the cost of my own life. I said a silent prayer to God: “O God, I wish to give myself to You. Even if the evil police lock me away for the rest of my life, I will still follow You till the very end. I’ll praise You even if I’m put in hell!” When I got back to my cell, I fully expected to be sent to prison for the rest of my life, so it came as a surprise when God opened up a way out for me. On the afternoon of January 16, the police unexpectedly let me go without any charges.

This heart-rending experience was like a bad dream that I can’t bear to look back on. Never in my wildest dreams could I have imagined that such an ordinary woman as me would become an “object of interest” by the police simply for believing in God, or that I would be regarded as an enemy by the CCP government and exposed to such mortal danger. Once, during an interrogation, I asked them, “What have I done wrong? What law have I broken? What things have I said against the Party or against the people? Why have I been arrested?” The police were unable to answer my questions, and so they just yelled at me, “You can go steal and rob things, you can commit murder and arson, and you can go sell your body, we don’t care. By believing in God, you are setting yourself against the Communist Party, and you must be punished!” Such high-handed, tyrannical, truth-distorting words came straight from the mouth of the devil! Believing in God and worshiping God is an unalterable principle; it is in line with the will of Heaven and in accord with the people’s hearts. The CCP government resists God and forbids people from following the right path. Instead, it puts the blame on its victims and shamelessly claims that we are its enemies, thus completely exposing its demonic essence! The CCP government not only frantically resists God’s work and arrests the faithful, but it also fabricates rumors to deceive the people so that everyone believes its lies and denies God, resists God; it also destroys people’s chances to attain true salvation. The evil things the CCP government has done truly are too numerous to list, and it has incurred the wrath of both man and God! After undergoing the

suffering caused by those demons, I came to see with absolute clarity the God-opposing, reactionary essence of the CCP government that runs counter to the will of Heaven, and I truly came to appreciate God's love and care. I saw that the essence of God is beauty and goodness; each time I was in the most pain or I found my suffering hardest to endure, God's words were within me, guiding me and enlightening me, granting me strength and giving me faith, and they enabled me to see through Satan's cunning schemes and to take a firm stand. I truly felt God's presence and guidance, and only then was I able to overcome every difficulty and stand firm in my testimony—God's love is so great! From this day forth, I shall dedicate my all to repay God's love, and I shall seek to gain the truth and live out a meaningful life.

22. God's Word Is My Strength in Life

By Xu Zhigang, Tianjin Municipality

In the past, I was deeply influenced by China's traditional values, and made purchasing real estate for my children and grandchildren my life goal. To accomplish this, I devoted myself to learning about automotive repair technology. I also opened a repair garage, and business went very well. At that time in my life, I believed I controlled my own fate, so when my sister-in-law preached the Lord Jesus' gospel to me, I not only refused to accept it, I actually mocked her, because I felt that I could live just as well without believing in the Lord. However, the good times didn't last. Business got worse and worse at my garage, and no matter how hard I worked, I couldn't turn things around. I ran myself ragged trying to change the situation, and I was exhausted and miserable, so I turned to drinking alcohol all day to relieve my anxiety. In turn, one day, I wasn't paying attention as I was driving and ended up being involved in an accident. My car was smashed beyond recognition, but fortunately and miraculously, I survived. Not long after, in the spring of 1999, my wife preached Almighty God's gospel of the last days to me. I came to understand some truths by reading Almighty God's words, and I learned that the reason I had been living in such a miserable, helpless state was that I had accepted the principles of life that Satan indoctrinates people with. I had wanted to rely on my own effort to create a happy home for myself, and the result was that I was played for a fool to the point where I found myself in extreme suffering, and nearly lost

my life. It was Almighty God who brought me back from the brink of death and brought me into His house, and I was incredibly grateful to Him for showing me mercy. From then on, each day I read God's word, as well as attended meetings and fellowshiped with my brothers and sisters, and light filled my heart. I enjoyed it, and rejoiced that I had found the genuine path in life. However, before long, I became a target for arrest by the CCP government for my belief in God, and I was forced to leave my family and go into hiding. At that time, even though I underwent periods of weakness, I believed that no matter where I went and no matter how demons of Satan might pursue me, God's words would guide me. More than ten years later, through the guidance and provision of God's word, I gradually came to understand some truths, and my life was very fulfilling. Throughout the time that followed, during which I was arrested and subjected to persecution, I experienced even more practically that God's word is my strength in life, for it was God's word which allowed me to stand strong, upright, and without fear amidst Satan's cruel torture and torment, so that I was able to finally completely humiliate Satan. After this experience, I treasured God's word even more, and I couldn't be apart from God's word even for a moment.

On a day in February of 2013, I was out spreading the gospel with several brothers and sisters, but on our way back, we were stopped by a sedan. Three police officers got out of the car and asked our identities, and when they heard my non-local accent, they forcibly searched me without even giving a reason. They seized from my pockets a card of the Agricultural Bank of China which held more than 700 yuan, over 300 yuan in cash, a cell phone, an MP5 player, and some gospel information. The instant one of the officers learned I believed in Almighty God, his demeanor became very fierce, and he forcibly handcuffed me and shoved me into the car. At the police station, they ordered me to stand against the wall, where one officer asked me sternly, "What's your name? Where is your home? Who preached about belief in God to you?" When he saw I wouldn't answer, he instantly flew into a rage, ripped my feather down coat off me, then turned me around and pulled my sweater up from my back over my head, and beat my back viciously with his baton. Every few strikes, he would ask me, "Will you talk now?" After repeatedly hitting me fifteen times, the flesh on my back felt lacerated, and my spine felt like it had been broken, it hurt so much. But no matter how he beat me, I refused to speak. Finally, spluttering with rage he yelled, saying, "Fine, I give up! Hitting you like this is making my wrist hurt, and you still won't talk!" In my heart, I knew God was protecting me. I couldn't have withstood such a violent beating by

myself. I silently gave thanks to God.

They saw that beating was ineffective against me, so they changed tactics. One of these evil police brought in a rod about one meter long and six centimeters in diameter, and with a sinister grin said, "Let's have him 'sample the delights' of kneeling on this and then see if he talks!" I had heard that after kneeling on a rod like this for 30 minutes, a person couldn't stand up straight or walk. Faced with this kind of torture, I felt that my spiritual stature was too small, and that my flesh wouldn't be able to endure it. I was afraid, so with all my strength I called out to God, "God! My stature is too small, and I fear I can't withstand this kind of torment. Please protect my heart and give me the strength to endure this torment and not betray You." I called out to God again and again, and God knew my flesh was weak. He heard my prayer, because in the end, these evil police decided not to use this kind of torture. The facts before my eyes demonstrated God's mercy and protection for me, which both increased my faith in Him and greatly lessened my fear. Although they decided not to use that method of torture, they still weren't willing to release me. Instead, they thought of another method of torture. They forced me to kneel on the ground with my waist held straight, and then made a hulking male officer more than 1.8 meters tall stand on my calves with both feet and stomp down as hard as he could. The moment he stood on them, I felt a searing pain, then prayed to God with all my strength, "God! I can't withstand such inhuman torture, but I wish to satisfy You, so I beg You to give me faith, strength, and the will to bear suffering. I wish to stand firm in my testimony for You." Thanks be to God, for once again He heard my prayer. That fat police officer couldn't maintain a stable stance on my calves, so before long he stepped off of me. The evil police officer next to him flew into a rage and said, "You useless fool! Why are you getting off of him so soon?" These demons truly were wicked and vicious beyond compare. They thought of every possible method to torture me, and were just itching to kill me, as if only my death would satisfy them. They forced me to stay in an upright kneeling position and wouldn't allow me to move. Later, one of the police officers gave others a meaningful look, and then the rest all went out, leaving me alone in the room with that police officer keeping watch. He came over to me and tried to ingratiate himself with me, smiling falsely as he said, "My mother also believes in God. Tell me how you came to believe. I'd like to believe in God with you, so take me to meet your superiors." Hearing his lies and looking at his disingenuous smile, I suddenly felt utterly disgusted. Just as I was about to expose his trick, I suddenly recalled God's word: "**You must have My courage**

within you.... But for My sake, you must also not yield to any of the dark forces. Rely on My wisdom to walk the perfect way; do not allow the conspiracies of Satan to take hold” (“Chapter 10” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God’s words provided timely guidance for me, allowing me to understand that, even more than courage, I need wisdom in the presence of Satan. At all times we must rely on God to grant us wisdom to contend with Satan. Through the enlightenment and guidance of God’s word, I knew what to do, so I said, “If you really want to believe, you only need to read God’s word at home. You don’t need to go out and see anyone.” Just after I finished speaking, the evil police officer who beat me entered and said maliciously to me, “You’re one hell of a headache to work with!” I knew Satan had failed and was humiliated, so I silently thanked God. I saw that God was always with me, guiding me, encouraging me, and miraculously warding off the violence of the devil’s black hand. God’s love for me is so great! At that moment, although I was trapped in a cell, I felt that my relationship with God was closer than ever before, and I felt very much supported and at ease. They forced me to kneel for more than two hours. Finally, after one in the morning, as they realized the interrogation wasn’t producing results, they could do nothing but leave in dejection.

On the morning of the second day, the police brought me to a branch office of the Public Security Bureau. After I went into the interrogation room, the chief of the criminal police asked me furiously, “What is your name? Where is your home? Who introduced you to belief in God? How long have you believed in God for? Who are your contacts? Tell me everything, or I promise you’ll be sorry!” But no matter what he asked, I didn’t tell him anything. All day he questioned me using both rough and gentle tactics, but he got nothing from me, and finally, enraged, he shouted, “You won’t talk?! Then let’s see how you like life in the detention house! If you want things to be difficult, we can certainly do that! If you don’t give us the answers we want, we’ll keep you locked up in there forever!” And so, I was taken to the detention house and locked in the cell which housed the largest number of serious offenders. The moment I entered the cell, my blood ran cold because of the gloomy and terrifying atmosphere of the place. The walls of the cell were four meters high, it was dark and damp, only a single small window allowed in scant rays of sunlight, and there was a thick, rancid odor that made the air nearly impossible to breathe. This tiny room was crammed full of criminals; there were murderers, drug users, and robbers, all serious offenders. Each of them appeared savage and fiendish, and several were tall, thickly muscled, with stringy, ugly

faces, and bodies covered in tattoos of dragons, phoenixes, snakes, and the like. Some of the prisoners were as thin as rakes, like living skeletons, and they made me shiver just looking at them. There was a pecking order among the detainees, and believers in Almighty God were at the very bottom, with absolutely no rights to speak of. The emergency call button installed on the wall was originally meant to be used by prisoners in emergency situations to call for the correctional officer, but believers in Almighty God didn't have the right to "enjoy" its use at all. No matter how inhuman the abuse, no one would ever respond.

On my first day in the cell, the chief prisoner mocked me after he learned about my situation, saying, "Since you believe in Almighty God, have Him get you out of here. If your God is so good, why would He let you end up in this place?" The vile prisoner beside him joined in the mockery, "Who do you think is better, our chief here or your God?" Hearing them slight and insult God made me furious. I wanted to argue with them, but was helpless to do so. I recalled that Sermons and Fellowship on Entry Into Life states that the essence of evildoers is that of demons, and this is absolutely right! These demons were completely unreasonable, and deserved to be cursed! When I didn't respond, the chief prisoner flew into a rage and viciously slapped me twice, after which he punched me hard on the chin, knocking me to the floor. I was very afraid being faced with these devils, and I couldn't help but call out to God, "O God! You know I am cowardly and weak, and that I have always feared thugs and gangsters. Please protect me, give me faith and strength, and allow me not to lose my testimony in this situation." These devils saw that I wouldn't speak, so they thought of a different way to torment me. A criminal who looked like a skeleton came up to me and forced me to back up against the wall. He then got two other prisoners to hold my shoulders against the wall, after which he pinched my inner thigh as hard as he could, first left, then right, and each time I would feel shooting pain that was unspeakably painful. (Afterward, my legs were covered in some large bumps, which even today haven't disappeared). Then, he viciously hit the outside of my thighs with his fists. Soon after, I squatted on the floor, and it was nearly impossible for me to stand up again. Even then, they didn't stop tormenting me. It was the middle of winter and bitterly cold, but these devils ordered me to take off my clothes and squat against the wall under a faucet. They continually poured water on me and deliberately opened the window, making me so cold I couldn't stop shivering. When one of the prisoners saw that I was clenching my teeth to endure the torture, he grabbed a piece of foam board and waved it at me like a fan to blow cold air toward me,

instantly making me feel like my blood was frozen solid, and my teeth couldn't stop chattering. I couldn't help but silently pray to God, "O God! I know Your good intentions are behind what's happening to me now, so I beg for Your guidance in understanding Your will, because alone, I really can't bear the torment of these devils. O God! Please give me greater faith and strength, so that I have the will and determination to overcome these difficulties." After I prayed, I recalled God's words: **"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' You have all heard these words before, yet none of you understood their true meaning. Today, you are profoundly aware of their true significance. These words shall be fulfilled by God during the last days, and they shall be fulfilled in those who have been brutally persecuted by the great red dragon in the land where it lies coiled. The great red dragon persecutes God and is the enemy of God, and so, in this land, those who believe in God are thus subjected to humiliation and oppression, and God's words are fulfilled in you, this group of people, as a result"** ("Is the Work of God So Simple As Man Imagines?" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). By contemplating God's words, I understood God's will. The fact that I was now suffering for my belief in God was something glorious and it was my honor. Satan was tormenting me with the goal of making me betray and deny God because I couldn't withstand fleshly suffering, so I absolutely could not submit to Satan. At that moment, I suddenly remembered how the evil police officer had threatened me with life in the detention house, and I had a sudden realization—the prisoners were so mercilessly tormenting and abusing me because they had been ordered to do so by the evil police! It was only then that I clearly saw that these sanctimonious "People's Police" are actually incredibly sinister and despicable. They were using these prisoners to do their dirty work. They are utterly vicious down to the core, and are nothing but devils who can commit murder without even having to spill the blood themselves! Satan was trying every method it could to make me submit to them, but God's wisdom is exercised based on Satan's tricks. God was using this environment to give me true faith in Him, to allow me to clearly see Satan's ugly face and evil essence, and thereby arouse true loathing for them in my heart. Once I understood God's will, my heart was brightened and I found my strength. I could not allow myself to be fooled by Satan. No matter how much fleshly pain or weakness I felt, I had to stand firm in my testimony for God. I was grateful to God for giving me the strength to overcome the torture and torment of these devils, and to once again defeat Satan.

At the detention house, our daily meals consisted of frozen cabbage boiled in water, pickled vegetables, and a small steamed cornbread, which in no way filled the stomach. At night, the chief prisoner and his retinue slept on the sleeping platform while the rest of us had to sleep on the floor. As I laid on the icy floor, looking at the prisoners around me, I thought of my pitiable circumstances and immediately felt a lonely chill grip my heart. I thought when I had been with my brothers and sisters, and every day had been happy and full of joy. But now, I spent every day with these criminals, and I also had to endure their bullying and insults, and I felt unspeakably, excruciatingly miserable.... I went before God and prayed to Him, "O God! I don't know how much longer I will have to live like this, and I don't know how to get through the days ahead. Now, my flesh is weak, and I don't wish to face this situation anymore. O God! Please give me the determination to bear suffering, and guide me in understanding Your will, so that I can satisfy You in this situation." After I prayed, God's words flashed clearly into my mind: **"Many are the sleepless nights that God has endured for the sake of the work of mankind. From up high to the lowest depths, He has descended to the living hell in which man lives to pass His days with man, has never complained of the shabbiness among man, has never reproached man for his disobedience, but endures the greatest humiliation as He personally carries out His work. ... [F]or the sake of all mankind, so that the whole of mankind can find rest sooner, He has endured humiliation and suffered injustice to come to earth, and personally entered into 'hell' and 'Hades,' into the tiger's den, to save man. How is man qualified to oppose God? What reason does he have to once more complain about God? How can he have the gall to look upon God again? God of heaven has come to this most filthy land of vice, and has never vented His grievances, or complained about man, but instead quietly accepts the ravages^[1] and oppression of man. Never has He hit back at the unreasonable demands of man, never has He made excessive demands of man, and never has He made unreasonable demands of man; He merely does all the work required by man without complaint: teaching, enlightening, reproaching, the refinement of words, reminding, exhorting, consoling, judging, and revealing"** ("Work and Entry (9)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). I

Footnotes:

1. "Ravages" is used to expose the disobedience of mankind.

considered God's words, and thought of the suffering God endured for mankind's sake both times He came incarnate into the world, and my eyes involuntarily became wet with tears. The Lord Jesus was nailed to the cross, using His own life to redeem mankind which had been corrupted by Satan. Today, Almighty God has again incarnated and has come to China, the nation that most resists God, where He risks His life to speak His words and save us. Who could know the difficulties and suffering He has endured to do that? Who could appreciate it? Meanwhile, I, a member of corrupt mankind, felt unbearably miserable and wanted nothing more than to escape my situation after spending only a few days with those criminals. God, who is holy and righteous, has lived with us in this evil, fallen world for decades. Hasn't God suffered far more? Moreover, I was suffering to rid myself of corruption and attain true salvation. But God is innocent and not of this world, nor of this hell on earth, yet purely out of His love for humankind, He came into the depths of the great red dragon's lair, willing to sacrifice His life to save mankind. God's love is truly incredible! If I had any love for God at all, I ought not feel that my own circumstances were insufferable, and I shouldn't feel too aggrieved. In the face of God's love, I felt nothing but regret and shame. And as I contemplated God's love, I felt waves of warmth in my heart. God is truly great, and His love for mankind is so deep and so true! If I hadn't personally experienced such circumstances, I wouldn't know God's dearness and loveliness. Although experiencing these circumstances devastated my body, it was incredibly beneficial for my life. Thinking of this, my heart filled with gratitude to God, and I found the determination to stand firm in my testimony for God despite the extreme pain.

At the detention house, the chief prisoner often told me about all the means the correctional officers used to torment "criminals" who believe in God: They stab thumbtacks into the fingers of believers, causing unspeakable pain; they fill a water bottle with boiling water and force a believer to insert one of their fingers, and after the skin is burned, they make the believer take out their finger and then they rub chili powder on the blisters.... As I listened to these blood-curdling tortures being described, I burned with rage, and my loathing for the CCP government, this satanic regime, only deepened. It describes itself in every positive manner while committing every villainous act. It declares "freedom of religious belief," and "all people enjoy the legitimate rights and interests of citizens," and "prisoners are treated like family," while secretly abusing and torturing people, showing no regard for human life, and not treating people as human beings. For someone who believes in God,

entering their world is the same as entering hell, a place where they will be tormented and debased, and where they can never know if they will emerge with their lives. The thought of it terrified me, because I feared those tortures would be used on myself. Each time I heard the correctional officers open the tiny window on the metal door, my heart leaped into my throat, because I was afraid I would be dragged out and tortured. I spent every day overwhelmed by fear, and I felt inextricably trapped. In my misery, I could only silently pray to God: "O God! My heart is weak now, and I feel so timid, but I wish to satisfy You, so please give me faith and strength. I wish to rely on You to overcome Satan's temptation!" After I prayed, I found guidance in God's word: **"Do not fear, Almighty God of hosts will surely be with you; He has your back and He is your shield"** ("Chapter 26" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). **"When people are ready to sacrifice their lives, everything becomes trifling, and no one can get the better of them. What could be more important than life? Thus, Satan becomes incapable of doing any more in people, there's nothing it can do with man"** ("Chapter 36" of Interpretations of the Mysteries of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's word gave me incredible comfort and encouragement. "Yes," I thought. "The God I believe in is the Lord of creation who created the heavens and earth and all things therein, who is sovereign over all things, and who controls everything and everyone. Moreover, isn't the life and death of every single person held in God's hands? Without God's permission, Satan the devil wouldn't dare do anything to me. Isn't the fact that I spent all day in a state of timidity and terror simply my fear of death and fear of physical suffering? Satan was using this weakness to attack me, to make me succumb to it and betray God. This is Satan's trick to devour people. But if I am willing to give up my life, would there truly be anything I couldn't bear?" I thought of Job's experience: When Satan made its wager with God, Job experienced fleshly suffering, but without God's permission, no matter how Satan tortured Job, it could not take his life. Now, I wanted to follow Job's example and have true faith in God, because even if my body was tortured to death by demons, my soul was in God's hands. No matter how these demons might torture and torment me, I would never give in to its tyrannical abuse. I swore I would never become a Judas! I am grateful to the timely guidance I found in God's word for leading me out of the bondage and constraints of death and not allowing me to fall prey to Satan's scheme. Thanks to God's protection, I didn't suffer those kinds of torture, and in this, I again saw God's love and mercy for me.

A few days later, that evil police officer came again to interrogate me, hoping to get information about church leaders from me, but when I didn't answer, he became utterly savage. He glared at me as he grabbed my chin and tilted my head to the left and right, then said through gritted teeth, "Is there anything human in you at all? Go ahead then, believe in God! I'll put a picture of you on the Internet and invent a few stories about you, and I'll make everyone who believes in Almighty God think you betrayed God and sold out your brothers and sisters. No one will ever talk to you again. And then, I'll take you to a place no one knows, dig a hole, and bury you alive, and no one will ever find out." In his rage, this devil explained their shameless secret tricks and schemes, and this was also their typical means of manipulating people—framing, libeling, making false accusations of crimes, and murder. They show absolutely no regard for people's lives, and there's no saying how many inhuman, ruthless deeds they have done in secret! This time, hearing his shouted threats, I was calm, and I didn't feel afraid at all, because God was my strong support. God was with me, so I had no need to fear anything. The more savage Satan becomes, the more it reveals its ugliness and impotence; the more it persecutes believers, the more it exposes its evil, reactionary essence of making an enemy of God, doing immoral things, and going against Heaven and nature; the more it harms believers in God, the more it inspires my determination to believe in God and follow God to the end: I want to devote my life to God and forsake Satan once and for all! As God's word says: **"Man has long since gathered all his strength, he has devoted all his efforts, paid every price, for this, to tear off the hideous face of this demon and allow people, who have been blinded, and have endured every manner of suffering and hardship, to rise up from their pain and turn their backs on this evil old devil"** ("Work and Entry (8)" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). At this point, my blood was boiling with rage, and I silently swore an oath: No matter how long I had to stay there, and no matter how those devils tortured me, I would never betray God. The policeman saw that I wouldn't answer, and in the end took me back to the cell. And so, thanks to the guidance of God's word, I overcame these demons' repeated attempts to force a confession out of me and their torture. I never revealed any information about the church, and after spending more than 50 days at the detention house, the police were forced to release me without charge.

Having experienced being arrested, I saw clearly the demonic essence of the CCP government. It fights against Heaven and makes an enemy of God. It refuses to worship

God, and also uses all possible means to deceive and control people, to stop people from believing in or worshiping God. It attempts to make people shun God and resist God, so that they are eventually destroyed in hell alongside it. It is so despicable, vicious, and evil! But more importantly, this experience gave me genuine understanding of God's wondrousness and wisdom and the authority and power of His word. In such a country, where God is seen as a bitter enemy, believers in God are thorns in the eyes and flesh of the atheist government. However, it is utterly unable to restrict those who truly believe in God. No matter how it oppresses, imprisons, and harms our flesh, it cannot banish our desire to go toward the light and pursue the truth, and it cannot shake our resolve to believe in and follow God. I was arrested and personally experienced the savage cruelty of these demons. Satan vainly desired to make me succumb to its despotic rule by arresting and persecuting me, but God's word continually guided me, and gave me wisdom, faith, and strength that allowed me to stand strong amidst Satan's cruel persecution. Through my actual experience, I saw God's wondrous deeds, my faith in God greatly increased, and I gained a more practical understanding of God's word. I experienced that God's word is the truth, and that it is the strength in and the source of people's lives. With the guidance of God's word, I need not fear anything, and no matter how many difficulties and obstacles I may face on the road ahead, I wish to follow God to the very end!

23. God Guides Me to Overcome the Demons' Cruelty

By Wang Hua, Henan Province

My daughter and I are both Christians belonging to The Church of Almighty God. While we were following God, my daughter and I were both arrested and sentenced to reeducation through labor by the CCP government. I was sentenced to three years, and my daughter was sentenced to one year. Although I was subjected to inhuman persecution and harm by the CCP government, each time I found myself despairing and in danger, God was there, secretly watching over me, protecting me, and opening a way out for me. It was the words of Almighty God which gave me the courage and motivation to go on living, which guided me to overcome the torment of being cruelly tortured, and which helped me to persevere through three years in that hellish prison. In the midst of adversity, I witnessed Almighty

God's love and salvation, and I experienced the authority and power of God's words. I feel favored to have gained so much, and I am resolved to follow God unswervingly and to walk the right path in life.

Before I believed in God, I ran a business. I was pretty good at it and I made a decent amount of money. But while busying about making my livelihood, I also experienced the vicissitudes of life to the fullest. Not only did I have to wrack my brains figuring out how to make money day in and day out, but I also had to deal with all sorts of item inspections from all manner of government departments. I had to engage in insincere talk all day long and put on a false front in my interactions with others. I felt this way of life to be both painful and exhausting, but I had no other option. Just as it had gotten to the point where I had become completely emotionally and physically exhausted from work, I accepted Almighty God's gospel of the last days. I saw that the words expressed by Almighty God reveal life's mysteries and expose the source of all mankind's pain, as well as the truth of mankind's corruption by Satan. They also show man the path of light to be followed throughout life, and my heart immediately took to God's words. From the bottom of my heart, I became certain that this was the work of the true God, and that faith in God was the only right path through life. I felt so fortunate to be able to accept God's work of the last days, and I thought about all the people in the world who were just like me, who were living empty lives, who couldn't find direction in their lives, and who needed the last days' salvation of Almighty God. I therefore wished to preach the gospel of the last days to more truth-seekers, so that even more people could attain the salvation of God. Moved by God's love, whenever I talked about God's work or His salvation, I could never say enough, and I was able to win some genuine truth-seekers over by preaching to them—I was thrilled. At that time, my daughter had only just graduated from high school. She saw how happy I'd become after I began to follow Almighty God, and she also saw that the brothers and sisters who came to our home were all pure and kind, that everyone gathered together to talk openly, to sing hymns, and to dance, and that there was always an incredibly kind and joyful energy. Consequently, she began to yearn for this life and very much wanted to believe in and follow God. From that point on, we ran our business during the day, and then prayed together, read God's words together, learned hymns together, and fellowshiped about our understanding of God's words at nighttime; our lives were filled with joy.

Just when we were feeling most immersed in and warmed by God's love, unexpectedly,

the demon claw of the CCP government lashed out at the two of us and caused us nightmarish, heartrending pain—it was a moment I’ll never forget. It was December 7, 2007, my daughter was doing laundry at home, and I was just getting ready to go out to perform my duty for the church, when all of a sudden, five or six plainclothes policemen burst in. One of them shouted, “You are believers in Almighty God! And, what’s more, you’re going around preaching to others!” He then pointed at my daughter and said to another two policemen, “Take her first!” and my daughter was immediately taken away by the two policemen. The remaining police then began to search my home from top to bottom, rummaging through the boxes and chests and even checking every pocket of our clothes. In moments, the beds and the floor were covered in mess, and they even trampled all over the beds with their leather shoes on. In the end, they took books of God’s words, some discs, two CD players, two MP3 players, 2,000 yuan in cash and a pair of gold earrings. They then shoved me along and put me in a police car. I questioned them, holding them to account, “What law have we broken by believing in God? Why are you arresting us?” To my surprise, they brazenly declared in front of all the people looking on, “Catching you believers in God is our specialty!” I was indignant. They were not the “People’s Police.” They were just a gang of bandits, ruffians and criminal underworld goons specially tasked with cracking down on the righteous!

When we arrived at the Public Security Bureau, I was handcuffed and led to an interrogation room. Seeing how fierce they looked, I couldn’t help but feel afraid, and I thought: “Now that I’ve fallen into the hands of these devils and they’ve found so many books of God’s words and discs at my home, they surely won’t let me go now. If I fail to withstand their torture and become a Judas, then I’ll be known for all of time as a traitor who betrayed God!” I prayed silently to God in my heart, asking Him to protect and guide me. Just then, I thought of God’s words that say: **“Toward those who showed Me not the slightest loyalty during times of tribulation, I shall be merciful no more, for My mercy only extends so far. I have no liking, furthermore, for anyone who has once betrayed Me, much less do I like to associate with those who sell out the interests of their friends. This is My disposition, regardless of who the person may be”** (“Prepare Sufficient Good Deeds for Your Destination” in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God’s words made me realize that His righteous disposition brooks no offense, and that God does not love those who betray Him. I then thought of God’s words that say: **“Those in power may seem vicious from the outside, but do not be afraid, for this is because you have little faith. As long as your**

faith grows, nothing will be too difficult” (“Chapter 75” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). “Yes!” I thought. “I must not fear them. No matter how formidable this bunch of evil policemen is, they are still in God’s hands, and without God’s permission they cannot harm a hair on my head no matter how terrible they are.” God’s words gave me faith and courage, and so I made a resolution to God: “O God! The time for You to test me has come. I wish to stand witness for You, and I swear on my life to never become a Judas.” After concluding my prayer, my heart grew calmer. At that moment, one of the evil police who seemed like a leader among them, scolded me, saying, “You stupid woman! All of the things you could have done, but of course you had to get your daughter to believe in God too, didn’t you? She’s a beauty, that one. She could make tens of thousands of yuan a year by selling herself to rich men, and yet she believes in God like a fool! Tell us now, when did you start believing in God? Who got you into it? Where did you get those books from?” Listening to him shoot his mouth off, I became furious. I couldn’t believe that a supposedly dignified official of the government could say such despicable and shameless things! In their eyes, selling one’s body is a good thing, and they even encourage people to go and do such wicked things. And yet we who believe in God and worship God, and seek to be honest people, are labeled as criminals who act wrongfully, and we become targets for severe crackdowns and arrests. By acting this way, are they not upholding evil, suppressing goodness and smothering justice? The CCP government is so wicked and corrupt! Seeing how they persisted in talking such nonsense and were deaf to all reason, I knew that there was no way to make them see sense, and so I kept my mouth shut. When they saw that I refused to speak, they escorted me back to a police car and threatened me, saying, “We found so much evidence in your home that if you don’t behave and tell us everything, we’ll drag you out to be shot!” Hearing them say this, I couldn’t help but feel terrified, and I thought: “These people are capable of anything. If they really do shoot me, then I’ll never see my daughter again.” The more I thought about it, the more distressed I felt, and I continually called on God in my heart, asking Him to protect my heart and rid me of the fear and worries I had inside. Just then, God’s words came to mind: **“Of everything that occurs in the universe, there is nothing that I do not have the final say in. What exists that is not in My hands?”** (“Chapter 1” of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). **“Faith is like a single log bridge, those who cling abjectly to life will have difficulty in crossing it, but those who are ready to sacrifice**

themselves can pass over without worry. If man has timid and fearful thoughts, they are being fooled by Satan. It fears that we will cross the bridge of faith to enter into God” (“Chapter 6” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). At that moment, everything became clear: “Yes,” I thought. “My life and my daughter’s life are in God’s hands, and God has the final say on whether we live or die. These demons of Satan have no control over our fates. Without God’s permission, no one could even think about taking our lives. Satan is today trying to use my Achilles’ heel to threaten and intimidate me, hoping to make me fall prey to its cunning scheme and surrender to it. But I must not let it dupe me. Whether to die or live, I am willing to obey, as I would rather die than betray God.” Thinking this, I instantly found the determination to fight with Satan till the very end, and I no longer felt timid or afraid.

The police took me to the detention house. As soon as I was led into the courtyard, the correctional officers roughly searched me and ordered me to take off my shoes and clothes. They then made me stand in the freezing cold yard for near on 30 minutes. I was so cold that I could barely keep my balance, my whole body trembled violently, and my teeth chattered ceaselessly. Seeing that they hadn’t found anything on me, one of the correctional officers took me to a cell, and incited the head prisoner of the cell and the other inmates, saying, “This is a believer in Almighty God....” No sooner had she said this than the prisoners piled over to me and made me pull my trousers down to my ankles and then back up again. They made me do this again and again while they all laughed at me. After being teased and insulted, the head prisoner had me learn how to make things out of chicken feather down. But as this job required some skill and practice, I still hadn’t mastered it by the second day, and so the head prisoner took up a bamboo stick and savagely beat my hands. My hands were beaten until they had become numbed with pain, and I couldn’t even pinch chicken feathers together. When I moved to pick up the feathers that had fallen to the floor, the head prisoner stood on my hand and ground it down with her foot, which sent a searing pain through my fingers, as if they had been snapped apart. She still wasn’t done with me, however, as she took up her bamboo stick again and hit me over the head with it several times until my head grew dizzy and my eyes blurred over. Finally, she said cruelly, “Your punishment will be to take the night shift tonight. You’ll be questioned by the police tomorrow, so you have to do tomorrow’s work today. If you don’t get it all done, tomorrow night I’ll make you stand up all night long!” At that moment, I felt inexpressibly sorrowful and depressed. I

thought about how I couldn't bear it already, with the evil police joining up with the prisoners to hurt me in this way, so how on earth was I supposed to get through the days ahead? In distress, I wept at the injustice of it all, tears flowing down my face, and I confided silently in God, telling Him of my difficulties: "O God! Faced with the mockery and torment meted out to me by this gang of monsters, I feel so alone, helpless and afraid, and I don't know how I'll get through it. Please guide me and let me be strong." After praying, God made me think of a passage of His words to enlighten me: **"Those who God refers to as overcomers are those who are still able to stand witness, maintain their confidence, and their devotion to God when under the influence of Satan and under siege by Satan, that is, when within the forces of darkness. If you are still able to maintain a heart of purity and your genuine love for God no matter what, you stand witness in front of God, and this is what God refers to as being an overcomer"** ("You Should Maintain Your Devotion to God" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). I derived a great deal of comfort from God's words, and they enabled me to understand God's will. God uses the siege and persecution of Satan to perfect man, to enable man to escape Satan's influence so that we can be made by God into overcomers and enter into His kingdom. In this dark and evil country ruled over by the CCP government, people are only allowed to walk the path of evil and not the right path. The CCP government's aim in doing this is to corrupt people so much that they can no longer tell good from evil or right from wrong, to make people advocate wickedness and forsake justice, until finally they perish along with it for having resisted God. Only by not capitulating when beleaguered on all sides by dark influences, by holding onto one's faith, devotion and love before God, and by standing witness for God can one become a genuine overcomer, and only by doing this can one shame Satan and enable God to gain glory. I then said a prayer to God: "O God! You are using these demons of Satan in Your service in order to test my faith and to give me a chance to bear witness for You. In doing this, You exalt me, and I believe that everything that is happening to me now is orchestrated by You, and that You secretly scrutinize everything. I wish to stand witness for You and satisfy You in this trial. I ask only that You give me faith and strength, and the resolve to endure suffering, so that no matter what torment I may face, I will not fall or lose my way!"

At 9 a.m. on the morning of the third day, the police took me to an interrogation room. Brandishing my daughter's cell phone, they began to question me. "The messages on this phone were sent by you. You said to your daughter that you were going to buy a house, so

it seems as though you're not short on cash." These evil policemen were truly despicable—they left no stone unturned in their endeavor to squeeze every last penny out of me. I replied, "I was just joking around with her." The policeman's expression abruptly changed and, taking up a notepad, he began to smack it violently over my head and across my face until I felt dizzy and my face burned with pain. Through clenched teeth, he said, "Tell us! Where is your money? If you don't tell us everything, we'll drag you out and have you shot! Or else you'll be sentenced to eight to ten years in prison!" I said I didn't know anything. A tall and imposing policeman grew angry, launched at me and, grabbing hold of the back of my top, flung me a couple of yards across the floor. He then began to savagely kick my head, back and legs, saying as he did so, "This is what you get for not fessing up! You say you don't know anything, but only a fool would believe you! If you don't tell us what we want to know, then I'll beat you to death this very day!" I gritted my teeth and bore the pain, calling on God constantly in my heart: "O God! These devils are so vicious. Please give me the strength to overcome their beatings and protect me so that I might stand witness for You." Just then, I thought of God's words that say: "**The good soldiers of Christ must be brave and rely on Me to be spiritually strong; they must fight to become warriors and battle Satan to the death**" ("Chapter 12" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). "**If you have but one breath, God will not let you die**" ("Chapter 6" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words gave me faith and strength, and they gave me the courage to overcome the hold that death had over me. I felt God's love in that moment and saw that God was always beside me. I thought: "The more you beat me like this, the more I see your true colors as enemies of God. Even if I am to die, I will never surrender to you. If you think I'll ever betray God, you can think again!" I instantly felt my body relax all over after thinking this. They alternated between beating me and questioning me that morning, and in the afternoon they made me kneel on the freezing, hard floor. They tortured me all that day until nightfall, and in the end I had been beaten so hard that my entire body ached unbearably and I hadn't the strength to stand. They saw that they couldn't get anything out of me by questioning me, so they escorted me back to the detention house.

Back in the detention house, the hard-hearted correctional officer never allowed me enough food but overloaded me with work tasks. She made me work for over 15 hours every day, and if I didn't get all the work done, then she would have the head prisoner torment me.

Because I'd only just begun to do this work and wasn't performing quite up to speed, the head prisoner took the steel hammer I used in my work and hit me over the head with it. A large lump formed immediately on my head, after which she kicked and beat me until I was in unbearable pain all over my body and blood came trickling from my mouth. Being subjected to such cruel torture, I couldn't help but think of my daughter. From the time she was arrested, I'd had no idea what tortures the evil demons were putting her through, much less how she was getting on in prison. Just then, I heard a sudden scream coming from the men's cell next to mine, and one of the women in my cell said, "In here, killing someone is like killing an insect. One of the male prisoners couldn't stand the torture so he ran away to the hills behind the prison. When the policemen found him, they beat him to death and then told his family that he'd killed himself. Just like that, it all ended in a cover-up." This story terrified me, and I felt even more worried about my daughter. She'd only just turned 19 and had never had to suffer her whole life, much less had she experienced any kind of difficulty like this. These devils who could murder someone without blinking an eye were capable of any despicable act one could think of, and I didn't know whether my daughter would be able to endure the torture and cruelty of these devils. Because I had no idea whether my daughter was even alive or dead, I felt deep anguish, and even in my dreams at night I would see terrible scenes of her being tortured by those demons. I would often wake from these dreams with a start, and then would be so upset that I wouldn't be able to sleep again the entire night.

The next day, the correctional officer found some excuse to say that I wasn't working hard enough and hit me across the face for no reason at all. She struck me so hard that my face burned and my ears were ringing. That wasn't enough for her, though, as she yelled at me, "I don't believe we can't correct you in here, so I'll give you a taste of the dreaded 'iron maiden'!" She then gave an order and five or six others came and cut off so much of my hair that I no longer resembled myself. They then held me down on the floor and made me wear the most terrible tool of torture in all the prison—the "iron maiden." They placed an iron ring on my head, one on each hand and again one on each foot, which were linked together by iron bars. Once I was all shackled with these implements of torture, I couldn't even stay standing, but had to lean against the wall. The correctional officer made me wear these implements of torture every day from 5 a.m. to midnight (I had to remain standing for the full 19 hours), and ordered the head prisoner, saying, "Watch her for me. If she tries to sleep,

give her a kick!” The head prisoner thereafter watched me every day and wouldn’t let me close my eyes for a second. Because these rings were made of iron and they were all over my body, it felt like they were cutting off my circulation. I ended up being totally unable to keep my eyes open, and so the head prisoner cursed me and, one time, she gave me a kicking as well. My whole body began to tremble and I could hardly bear the pain. When it came time to sleep at night, four prisoners would lift me up onto a large board I used to work on during the day, and the next morning they would come and lift me back down. Over those few days, there just so happened to be a terrible snowstorm outside, and the weather was unusually cold. To torment me, the hateful correctional officer made me wear these iron rings for seven days and seven nights. I couldn’t eat, drink, or go to the toilet by myself. When I had to go to the toilet, other prisoners who hadn’t managed to finish their work had to help me. All the prisoners were busy every day, and so every time they fed me food, they did so carelessly, and very seldom did they give me any water to drink. I truly suffered from the hunger and the cold, and every day felt like a lifetime. Early every morning when they lifted me down off the large board, I would feel incredibly anguished, not knowing how I would be able to endure another day. I longed only for night to fall, and it would have been fine by me if the sun never rose again. Because the iron rings were so heavy, on the second day that I was made to wear them, my hands swelled and turned black and purple, and the skin looked like it was about to split open. My whole body was swollen up like a balloon, and the swelling still hasn’t gone down completely even after ten months. I was under such torment then that death seemed preferable to life, and I was at the limit of my endurance of pain. And so, I begged God in prayer: “O God! I really cannot take this torment. I don’t want to live but I can’t die either. I just ask that You take my living breath, as I don’t wish to live one more minute.” Just as I was making this unreasonable request of God, wishing to die as a way to escape my pain, I thought of God’s words that say: **“Today, most people don’t have that knowledge. They believe that suffering is without value.... The suffering of some people reaches a certain point, and their thoughts turn to death. This is not the true love of God; such people are cowards, they have no perseverance, they are weak and powerless! ... Thus, during these last days you must bear testimony to God. No matter how great your suffering, you should go on to the very end, and even at your last breath, still you must be faithful to God, and at the mercy of God; only this is truly loving God, and only this is the strong and resounding testimony”** (“Only by

Experiencing Painful Trials Can You Know the Loveliness of God” in The Word Appears in the Flesh). **“Since you are a human being, you should expend yourself for God and endure all suffering! You should gladly and assuredly accept the little suffering you are subjected to today and live a meaningful life, like Job, like Peter. ... You are people who pursue the right path, those who seek improvement. You are people who rise up in the nation of the great red dragon, those whom God calls righteous. Is that not the most meaningful life?”** (“Practice (2)” in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God’s words fell upon my parched heart like sweet dew. “Yes,” I thought. “This is the moment when God needs me to bear witness for Him. If I die because I’m unwilling to suffer pain, wouldn’t that make me a coward? Although I’m now suffering cruelty and torment at the hands of these devils, is it not the most meaningful and worthwhile thing to be able to bear witness for God and to be called righteous by God? I’ve followed God for all these years and have enjoyed so much grace and so many blessings from Him, so, today, I should bear witness for God before Satan—it is my honor to do so. I will cling to life no matter how much I suffer or how hard it gets, that God’s heart may be satisfied.” God’s words awakened both my heart and my spirit and enabled me to understand His will. I no longer wished to die, but instead wished only to endure any pain and submit to God’s orchestrations and arrangements. At last, seven days and nights of physical punishment came to an end. I had been tortured nearly to the brink of death, the skin on my heels had rubbed off and layer after layer of skin around my mouth had peeled away. I later heard a male prisoner in the cell next door say, “A strong and robust thirty-something male prisoner died under that torture.” When I heard this, I kept thanking God in my heart, as I knew that I hadn’t survived just because I’d been lucky, but because of God’s guidance and protection. It was God’s words imbued with life force that had kept me going, or else, given my frail, female constitution, I would have died from that torture long ago.

Having undergone that cruel torture, I truly witnessed the omnipotence of God and, even more so, I came to appreciate how powerless I am. During that trial, I couldn’t even take care of myself, and yet I had worried about whether or not my daughter would be able to stand firm—hadn’t I been just fretting over things of my own imagining? My daughter’s fate was in God’s hands and my worrying about her could not help her in the slightest. All it did was give Satan an opportunity to get to me and make me vulnerable to its deception and harm. All things are orchestrated and arranged by God, and I knew then that I should entrust

my daughter to God and look to Him, trusting that, however God might lead me through this adversity, He would also be leading my daughter through this terrible time. And so, I said a prayer to God and thought of God's words that say: **"Why don't you commit them into My hands? Do you not believe in Me enough? Or is it that you're afraid I will make inappropriate arrangements for you? Why do you always miss your home? And miss other people! Do I occupy a certain position in your heart?"** ("Chapter 59" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words remedied my state. "That's right," I thought. "The hardships people go through and the pain they suffer are all predestined by God. The suffering my daughter is going through has been permitted to befall her by God. Though I may not understand it and I don't know what's happening to her, God's love is surely behind it all, for the love God has for man is the realest, the truest love. I wish to entrust my daughter to God for Him to rule over and make arrangements for her, and I am willing to obey all that comes from God." Just when I let go of all these things and became willing to submit to God's orchestrations, I saw my daughter in court. She surreptitiously told me that God had guided her to overcome some hardships and tortures, and that she had witnessed God's blessings: God had mobilized some wealthy prisoners to help her, with some giving her clothes and some buying her things to eat and drink; when the head prisoner came to bully her under some flimsy pretext, someone stood up for her. These are just some of the blessings God bestowed on my daughter in prison. Through these experiences, my daughter came to have some understanding of God's wondrous and wise work, and she came to appreciate that the love of God can never be put into words. I was overjoyed to hear these things from her, and my eyes filled with tears of gratitude to God. In my daughter, I saw once again God's almighty sovereignty and wondrous deeds, and I saw that God had always been guiding and protecting us both so that we could pass through this adversity and persecution. My faith in God was thereby strengthened even further.

Over the days that followed, the correctional officer paid no attention to the fact that my body was swollen and in pain but continued to force me to work. Before long, I became so exhausted that I ended up with a whole host of new injuries on top of my existing ones, and my lower back hurt so much that I couldn't stand up straight. The moment I moved or turned, I would feel shooting pains throughout every bone and every joint in my body, as though they were all being torn apart, and so it became difficult to fall asleep at night. Despite this,

the correctional officer still didn't let up on me, but instead made the head prisoner bully me at every opportunity. Because I had no money to buy them things to eat, the head prisoner violently kicked my lower body, at which I instinctively ducked away and tried to hide. Her frustration turned to rage and she kicked and stomped on me with abandon. As there was no oil used in the dishes we ate, I was often constipated, and if I spent a long time squatting over the toilet, they would curse me and punish me by making me empty the toilet bucket for over ten days. They would find any arbitrary reason to punish me by making me take others' shifts and stand guard all night. They also said that I used too much raw material when I worked, and so they fined me 50 yuan. The correctional officer used the opportunity to take me to the office, and tried to lure me in by saying, "If you can tell me who else you believed in God with, I'll ask the president of the court to reduce your sentence, and we won't fine you this 50 yuan either." These evil police had so many cunning schemes up their sleeves, alternating between soft and hard tactics, and trying every strategy they could think of to make me betray God, but all in vain! I refused her offer.

On August 25, 2008, the CCP government charged me with "joining a xie jiao organization and obstructing the enforcement of the law" and sentenced me to three years' reeducation through labor. They then escorted me to the Provincial Women's Labor Camp to serve my sentence. My daughter was sentenced to one year of reeducation through labor, to be served in the local detention house.

After two weeks in prison, the prison guards wanted to separate the prisoners into different work groups. I'd heard that the work done by the elderly prisoners was a little lighter, and I thought about how my body had been badly damaged, and almost ruined at the detention house, and about how I hadn't the strength to do hard physical work any longer. I prayed to God about this, asking Him to open up a way for me. If He truly needed me to continue experiencing that kind of situation, then I would be willing to obey. Thanks be to God for hearing my prayer, as sure enough I was sent to the elderly prisoners' work group. Everyone else said this was unheard of, but I knew well in my heart that this was all being orchestrated by God, and that God was showing me compassion for my weakness. In the elderly prisoners' group, the prison guards spoke very pleasantly, "Whoever works hard and makes a good effort will have their sentence reduced. We will not show favor to anyone...." I believed them when they said this, thinking that the guards here were a little better than the correctional officers in the detention house. And so, I threw myself into the work and

ended up in the top ten most productive workers out of almost 300 people. When it came time to announce the list of people whose sentences were to be reduced, however, the prison guards only arranged to reduce the sentences of those who liked to fight and who bought them gifts—my sentence wasn't reduced even by one day. One prisoner worked herself to the bone in order to get her sentence reduced, but to her surprise the prison guards just said, "We ought to keep someone as capable as you in here for life!" When I heard this, I hated myself for my foolishness, for not understanding the cruel and brutal essence of the CCP government, and for having been so taken in by their lies. In fact, God said long ago: **"For the sky above all mankind is turbid and dark, without the slightest impression of clarity, and the human world is plunged into pitchy darkness, so that one living in it cannot even see his outstretched hand before his face or the sun when he lifts up his head"** ("What It Means to Be a Real Person" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). Comparing the revelations of God's words against the facts of reality, I finally saw that the CCP government is nothing but darkness and filth from the very top to the very bottom and has not the slightest trace of fairness or justice. Those evil police could only cheat and fool people with lies and were simply incapable of treating us like human beings. To them, the prisoners were nothing more than tools for making money—the more capable the prisoners were, the less likely they were to have their sentences reduced. The prison guards wanted people to render service to them all the time and to work like mules so they could make even more money out of them. To increase work output, the evil police wouldn't even let us use the bathroom, and several times I just couldn't hold it and urinated in my trousers. Because I stood out for the amount of work I could get through, the main work team arranged to have me transferred to become a "pacesetter." I had already seen their ugly faces clearly, and I knew that if I was transferred then they would surely exert more pressure on me to work even harder. I was afraid to be transferred, and so I constantly called on God: "O God! I know this is a trap that the demons have laid for me, but there is no way to escape it. Please open up a way out for me." To my surprise, after saying this prayer, despite the hot weather my hands grew cold and my fingers became inseparably clenched tightly together and turned blue. The correctional officer for the main work team said I was faking it and forced two others to carry me upstairs to work. All I could do was cry desperately to God, with the result that I ended up falling from the third floor down to the second floor. Seeing this, they became afraid, and so they made me go back to join the elderly work group. Afterward, I

realized that my body was not actually injured at all—once again I'd witnessed God protecting me.

In prison, believers in Almighty God are labeled as political prisoners and the CCP devils watch us all the time, meaning that we don't even have the right to speak. If I spoke to someone, the prison guards would see and then question us as to what we'd been saying. At night, they made the head prisoner watch me to see whether I was discussing matters of faith with other people. Whenever anyone in my family came to visit me, the prison guards made me learn to say some phrases that slandered God, and if I didn't say them then they would purposefully disrupt my conversations with my family (which meant that I would have less time to talk with them). Because I knew that to say such things would offend God, whenever I came across this situation, I would pray silently to God, and say, "O God! This is Satan trying to tempt me. Please protect me and keep me from saying anything that might offend Your disposition." Because I never said anything they wanted me to say, there was nothing the prison guards could do about it in the end.

Three years in prison allowed me to see clearly the true colors of the CCP government. It acts one way to people's face and then another way behind their back; to the outside world, it vaunts "freedom of religion," but behind the scenes it persecutes and disrupts God's work in every way possible, and it frantically arrests believers in God, extracts confessions from them through torture, and cruelly abuses them. It uses the most despicable means imaginable to force people to reject God, betray God and surrender to its despotic power in order to achieve its evil objective of subjugating and controlling people for all time. Mankind was created by God and is supposed to worship God. And yet the CCP government does all it can to banish the coming of God, it obstructs people from believing in God, preaching the gospel and testifying to God, and by doing so it completely exposes its evil essence that is both perverse and runs contrary to Heaven. After experiencing this persecution and adversity, although my flesh suffered some pain, I have no complaints and no regrets, for I have gained so much from God. When I was feeling weak and powerless, it was God who granted me faith and strength time and time again, enabling me to find the determination to battle with Satan till the very end; when I felt sorrowful and dejected, sad and despairing, it was God who used His words to comfort and encourage me; when I was at the brink of death, it was the words of God which gave me the motivation to survive and the courage to keep on living; whenever I was in danger, God stretched forth His hand of salvation in the

nick of time, protecting me, helping me to escape danger and delivering me to safety. Through this experience, I not only came to see more clearly the God-opposing essence of the devil Satan, and came to hate it more deeply and more completely, but at the same time, I also came to have some true understanding of God's wondrous deeds, as well as God's love and salvation. I came to have a real appreciation for the goodness and humility of Christ and for the suffering He endured to save mankind, and my faith and love for God were deepened.

After I was released from prison, because the CCP devils drove wedges between us, my friends and family all rejected and shunned me. My brothers and sisters in the church, however, all cared for me and looked after me, and they gave me everything I needed to start life again—by doing this, they gave me a feeling of warmth that I would be hard pressed to find anywhere else. Thanks be to God for saving me: No matter how hard the road ahead might be, I will follow God till the very end and seek to live out a meaningful life to repay Him for His love.

24. Rising Up From Dark Oppression

By Mo Zhijian, Guangdong Province

I was born in a poor, remote mountain area where we have burned incense and worshiped Buddha for many generations. There are Buddhist temples all over the land where all the families would go to burn incense; no one had ever believed in God. In 1995, my wife and I were working in another part of the country where we started believing in the Lord Jesus; after we returned we began sharing the gospel and the number of people who accepted it slowly grew to over 100 people. Because more and more people were believing in God, it alarmed the local government. One day in 1997, the police summoned me to go to the local police station, where the chief of the County Public Security Bureau, the chief of the Security Bureau, the chief of the Bureau of Religion and the head of the police station as well as a few police officers were waiting for me. The chief of the Public Security Bureau asked me: "Why do you believe in God? Who do you have contact with? Where did the Bibles come from? Why don't you go to the Three-Self Church for gatherings?" I said: "People were created by God, everything they enjoy is created by God, such as the sunlight,

air and water; it is the law of heaven and earth that people believe in God and worship Him. The national constitution also expressly stipulates that citizens have freedom of religion; why don't you permit us to freely believe in God?" The chief of the Bureau of Religion said: "There are limits to religious freedom, just like a little bird inside a cage; even though its wings and feet are not bound, it can only move within the cage." When I heard him speak these fallacies, I became indignant and angrily said: "Then the national government is lying to its people!" When they heard me say this, they knew that they were wrong and didn't have anything to say, so they just let me go home. I wasn't aware of the substance of the CCP government's resistance to God until 1999 when I accepted Almighty God's work of the last days. Only through reading God's words and experiencing even more cruel persecution from the CCP government was I able to see clearly that the CCP was the embodiment of Satan the evil spirit; it was the enemy of God as spoken of in the Bible: **"And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceives the whole world"** (Revelation 12:9).

Just after 5:00 in the morning of June 28, 2002, I was preparing for a gathering with some brothers and sisters when suddenly we heard a pounding noise on the door. We quickly hid the books of God's word and then opened the door. Unexpectedly, when the door opened, a dozen or so police came rushing in. They had electric batons and guns in their hands and forced us together, making us squat down and put our hands on our heads. After these policemen restrained us, like bandits entering a village, they went into each room and made a mess of everything; they took our bedding and clothes and threw them all over the floor. In the past I had watched scenes on TV of organized crime and bandits looting and robbing, but I never expected that the "people's police" would act just like the evil tyrants and bandits on TV. At that time I was extremely afraid and worried that they would discover the books of God's word. I continuously prayed in my heart and asked God to watch over and protect us. After praying, I saw the marvelous deeds of God. They rummaged through the entire house and searched and confiscated our personal belongings, but they didn't find the books of God's word. I knew that this was God's almightiness and protection and I knew that God was with us, and my faith in God increased. Afterward, they took us to the police station and at night, they transferred us to a detention education center and locked us up. Three days later, without any evidence, the police gave each of us a 300 yuan fine that we had to pay in order to be released. In seeing the CCP government act like such perverse

predators that stripped people of their freedom of religion, I felt deep resentment and I couldn't help but think of God's words: **"For thousands of years this has been the land of filth, it is unbearably dirty, misery abounds, ghosts run rampant everywhere, tricking and deceiving, making groundless accusations,^[1] being ruthless and vicious, trampling this ghost town and leaving it littered with dead bodies; the stench of decay covers the land and pervades the air, and it is heavily guarded.^[2] Who can see the world beyond the skies? ... Religious freedom? The legitimate rights and interests of citizens? They are all tricks for covering up sin!"** ("Work and Entry (8)" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). In this demon metropolis that is China, the CCP government hangs banners promoting "freedom of religion and freedom of human rights," but they wantonly arrest and persecute people who believe in God. They don't allow people to believe in God or walk the correct path of life; they are itching to eliminate all the believers in one fell swoop. In our faith in God, we had not broken the law or done anything bad; all we did was share the gospel to allow people to come to know God and worship God, so that they could obtain the truth, be free from Satan's affliction, and break away from their lives of darkness and pain. Yet the CCP government wouldn't permit us to preach the gospel and wanted to arrest us, detain us and fine us, rather than do something about those evil people involved in prostitution, murder and arson, and fraud and swindling; they allowed these evil people to get away with their crimes. In light of the facts, I was able to see clearly the wicked substance of the CCP government that hates the truth, resists God, blinds people, and cheats people; they are the enemy of God.

On November 28 of that same year, a few brothers and sisters and I were sharing the gospel with a religious leader. But we were reported by a wicked person and a dozen or so police surrounded our building and broke through the door. They had guns and batons in their hands and they yelled: "Nobody move! Put your hands up!" Then, they searched our bodies and robbed of our money and valuables worth over 5,000 yuan. They ordered us to put our hands on our heads and squat facing the wall. At that time, two young sisters were

Footnotes:

1. "Making groundless accusations" refers to the methods by which the devil harms people.
2. "Heavily guarded" indicates that the methods by which the devil afflicts people are especially vicious, and control people so much that they have no room to move.

afraid and I said to them: “We haven’t done anything bad, don’t be afraid.” As soon as I said that, several policemen immediately rushed upon me and beat me with their fists and feet, knocking me onto the floor. They ransacked all the rooms and turned them upside down, scattering everything around in a mess. They were more barbaric and ferocious than bandits looting a village. One sister in the room didn’t come out and a policeman rushed over and grabbed her tightly and pulled her out. Another evil policeman saw that she was quite pretty and started molesting her by groping her all over. The sister helplessly wailed, and fortunately the landlord arrived just in time to put a stop to it, which allowed the sister to escape the coercion. At this time, I could clearly see that slogans such as “The people’s police are for the people” and “The police are the guardians of the people” were all lies. These evil policemen were purely a gang of local ruffians and gangsters! From the bottom of my heart I felt even more disgust and hatred for these beasts!

Afterward, they locked us up in the police vehicle and took us to the police station. They then handcuffed us in the corridor for two days and two nights, giving us nothing to eat or drink. I could only persistently pray in my heart and ask God to guide us and give us faith and strength so that we would be able to stand witness for Him in this environment. Later, the police interrogated a brother, and when they were not satisfied with his answers, a few policemen firmly pushed him down to the ground while one evil policeman stuffed dog feces into his mouth. The brother’s mental state had been severely provoked. In seeing this miserable situation, my heart became extremely distressed and a rage flared up inside of me. I wished I could charge up and tear them to pieces, but God’s words guided me within: **“I feel a bit of sympathy for My brothers and sisters also living in this land of filth, so I have developed a hatred for the great red dragon. ... All of us are its victims. For this reason, I hate it from My very core and I cannot wait to destroy it. However, when I think again, this would be to no avail and it would only bring trouble to God, so I come back to these words—I set My heart on doing His will—loving God. ... [T]hus live out a life full of meaning and brilliance. In this, I will be able to die without regrets, with a heart full of gratification and comfort. Would you like to do that? Are you someone with that kind of resolution?”** (“The Path ... (2)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). God’s words caused me to cool down, and in pondering God’s words, I understood God’s will. God already extremely despises these evil devils, He wishes to immediately destroy them all, but in order to make us complete, He needs to utilize the efforts of Satan. God uses its

persecution to allow us to discern it, allowing us to thoroughly see the repulsive face and demonic substance of the CCP government. Thereby we can break relations with it and completely turn our sincere hearts to God. God is always enduring the CCP government's frantic pursuit in order to obtain better results in His work, so what is it that I should suffer a little hardship so that I can obtain salvation as a created being? The enlightenment and guidance of God's words have given me faith and strength; I want to emulate Christ and be firmly resolved to satisfy God! At this time, I only wished that God would lead and preserve us to stand witness for God through the persecutions of Satan; I wished that we could take practical action to counterattack Satan's tricks so that it would fail shamefully.

On the third night, the police transferred us to the County Public Security Bureau and interrogated us through the night. A deputy director first used flattering words to entice me, saying: "Speak up! You have wife, kids, and parents at home who need you to take care of them; if you hurry and speak up, then you can go home, OK?" After hearing these words, I was somewhat tempted, and I thought: "If I tell them some insignificant things, then I can go and wouldn't have to stay here and suffer." At that moment, I was awakened by God's words: **"Toward those who showed Me not the slightest loyalty during times of tribulation, I shall be merciful no more, for My mercy only extends so far. I have no liking, furthermore, for anyone who has once betrayed Me, much less do I like to associate with those who sell out the interests of their friends. This is My disposition, regardless of who the person may be"** ("Prepare Sufficient Good Deeds for Your Destination" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). Through God's majestic words, I felt like God was gazing down at me, waiting for me to reply. This also made me realize that my thoughts were betraying God. Consequently, I quickly wiped out the thought and in stern righteousness I said: "I haven't planned on leaving since I got here!" When the policeman saw that his trick wasn't working, he exposed his original demonic face, and the deputy director lifted a bucket of pig slops over my head as if to pour it on me. I said to him: "This is the torture you are using to extort a confession." When he heard me say this, he suddenly stopped and put the slops down without pouring it on me. Another evil policeman wearing leather shoes stomped on my big toe with his heel and rolled it around and around with as much pressure as he could. The acute pain transmitted throughout my entire body and I couldn't help but cry out in pain. My clothes were soaked in sweat, but the evil policeman fumed with rage and continued to stomp and roll until my big toenail was ripped loose. By this time, my toe was already

mutilated and bloody. In my extreme pain, I persistently cried out to God, asking God to protect my heart so that I wouldn't give in to Satan and so that I would be able to stand witness for Him. Thanks be to God's guidance and protection, in the end I said nothing. The evil police got none of the information they wanted from me, but were unwilling to give up. Later, they took me with a brother and a sister to the city's SWAT team for further interrogation.

When we arrived at the SWAT team, the evil police forced us to strip all of our clothes off and then they handcuffed our hands and put shackles around our feet. They then forced us to skip three laps around the courtyard to humiliate us. Afterward, they separated us into prison cells. The people locked up in the prison cells were all murderers, they were all like demons and monsters. The evil police commanded the prisoners to torment me, so I kept praying to God in my heart. Because of God's protection, the prisoners not only wouldn't bully me, they actually took care of me. After four days, the evil police tried to force me to betray God and sell out my brothers and sisters, but I wouldn't talk. They took me and another brother and dragged us into the courtyard where they handcuffed us and put fetters around our feet. Black bags were placed over our heads and they suspended us from a tree in the center of the courtyard. In a craze of cruelty, they placed ants all over the tree, which continuously crawled on our bodies biting us. The torture of thousands of ant bites was similar to the torture of thousands of arrows through the heart, which made death seem more appealing than living. I felt like I couldn't hold on any longer and I didn't know when this pain would end. In such terrible suffering, I could only pray to God to protect my heart and spirit with all my might, so that He would give me strength and the will to suffer, and keep me from betraying Him. At this time, God's words appeared in my mind: **“[S]o that My glory may fill the cosmos, all people suffer the last hardship for Me. Do you understand My will? This is the final requirement I make of man, which is to say, I hope that all people can bear strong, resounding testimony to Me before the great red dragon, that they can offer themselves up for Me a final time, and fulfill My requirements one last instance. Can you truly do this? You were incapable of satisfying My heart in the past—could you break this pattern in the final instance?”** (“Chapter 34” of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words caused my heart to be filled with strength. I thought about how God had become flesh and had come to earth and suffered being pursued in every possible way by

the CCP government in order to save us. He had no place to call home. Today I am able to suffer with Christ; this is God's love and is God's exaltation for me. As long as I am able to give glory to God, I will be happy and willing to die. I relied on God's word to get through each minute and second of the pain. We were suspended on the tree for two days and two nights. On the third day, I really couldn't take it anymore. It was early winter at the time and it was raining and all I was wearing was a single unlined garment. I was hung from the tree by my bare feet and I had not had anything to eat or drink and was in great pain. The suffering of starvation and cold as well as the unbearable pain made me want to die; all I could do was pray to God with all my might. I was deeply afraid that because of the weaknesses of the flesh, I wouldn't be able to handle the torment and would betray God like Judas. In the midst of my pain, I remembered the apostle Stephen from the Age of Grace. He was stoned to death by the multitude because of spreading the gospel of the Lord Jesus. Before he died, he asked God to accept his spirit. Then, I prayed to God: "Oh God, my flesh is too weak and now I have taken on more pain than I can bear. I desire that You would take my spirit, for I would rather die than betray You." After praying, the most unexpected miracle happened: I actually had an out-of-body experience and I was brought to a field of grass. There was lush, green grass everywhere and cattle and sheep all around. My frame of mind was especially at ease and I couldn't help but praise God aloud: "God incarnate has appeared in China, expressing the truth to judge and cleanse people. Like a sharp sword, His words are replete with authority, judging, cleansing, and bringing salvation to His people. Praise God's almightiness and wisdom for using the great red dragon in His service, making a group of overcomers, and defeating the forces of Satan. Praise God's righteous disposition for having been completely revealed. Praise Almighty God for being humbly hidden and so lovable! Praise Almighty God! Your deeds truly are wonderful! Praise Almighty God for the glory He has gained. The lightning flashes from the East to the West, and wise virgins are drawn to the light. People of every nation and land return before God, bowing down to worship God and accepting His judgment. Praise God for returning in the last days to bestow upon humanity the way of eternal life. Praise God's righteous judgment for cleansing and bringing salvation to humankind. Praise God for having completed His great work and for His words having accomplished everything. All nations and all peoples are singing praise to dear Almighty God. God's every creation comes to praise Almighty God. Praise You, Almighty God! All come to praise You! Praise You! Praise Almighty God!" ("All Nations and

All Peoples Praise Almighty God” in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). While I completely immersed myself in this incomparable joy and lived in the boundaries of freedom, the pain, hunger and cold of being hung from the tree as well as the pain of the biting of the ants all disappeared. When I awoke, it was already the third night and the evil police took me down from the tree. I was hung for three days and not only didn't die, I was also full of spirit. This truly was the almighty power and miraculous protection of God! I gave heartfelt thanks and praise to God.

On the fourth day, the evil police interrogated me again and tried to force me to sell out my brothers and sisters; they also forced me to admit that I believed in a xie jiao, making me betray God and abandon the true way. Under the enlightenment of God, I thought of God's words: **“While undergoing trials, it's normal for people to be weak, or have negativity within them, or to lack clarity on God's will or their path for practice. But in any case, you must have faith in God's work, and not deny God, like Job”** (“Those Who Are to Be Made Perfect Must Undergo Refinement” in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words gave me the courage to put truth into practice and to testify of God. No matter what, I couldn't resist God or blaspheme against God. I was undaunted and calmly said: “I believe in Almighty God, who is the only true God ruling over all things! I don't believe in a xie jiao, you are distorting the truth and framing me!” After hearing this, one evil policeman flew into a rage and grabbed a long wooden stool and began crazily beating me to death with it. He hit me to the point that I was spitting out blood. I lay paralyzed and knocked out on the floor. Then, they splashed cold water on me to wake me up and continue beating me. During this demonic and inhuman beating, the front of my chest and my back were completely black and blue and I had suffered much internal damage. One week later, my urine was all blood and my right kidney was seriously damaged (even today it is still very painful). One month later, the evil police couldn't find any evidence, so they made up some false materials and forced me to sign it. Then they locked me up in the city detention house. Three months later, they charged me with “undermining the enforcement of the law” and sentenced me to a year of reform through labor. At the labor camp, I lived an inhuman life. Every day I was hungry and I had to work a dozen or so hours a day. I was frequently bullied and insulted by the prison police; they were either using electric batons on me or locking me up in a small, dark room. If it were not for God watching over and protecting me, I would have been tormented to death by the evil police. On November 7, 2003, my sentence was

fulfilled and I was released from the hell on earth.

After experiencing that cruel persecution, I finally saw clearly that the CCP government's proclamations "The Communist Party is great, glorious and correct" and "China has freedom of religion" among other sayings, are really expressions in a sinister plot to deceive the public and fool the citizens. It speaks fine words and does extremely evil things. In order to ban God's work of the last days and make China an atheistic place, it pursues and harms believers without restraint. Its level of cruelty has already reached great heights and has made people boil with anger! I really hate this old devil from the depths of my heart. I think back about how I was constantly cruelly tortured and forced into confession and cruelly tormented by demons during my interrogation process. I was knocked out on several occasions and if it weren't for God's protection, I would have been tortured to death by those demons. In the time of my greatest weakness, Almighty God's words continually encouraged me: **"Have you ever accepted the blessings that you were given? Have you ever sought the promises that were made for you? You will surely, under the guidance of My light, break through the stranglehold of the forces of darkness. You will surely not, in the midst of darkness, lose the light guiding you. You will surely be the master of all creation. You will surely be an overcomer before Satan. You will surely, at the downfall of the kingdom of the great red dragon, stand up amid the myriad throngs to bear witness to My victory. You will surely stand firm and unwavering in the land of Sinim. Through the sufferings you endure, you will inherit My blessings, and will surely radiate My glory throughout the entire universe"** ("Chapter 19" of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words became a firm shoulder for me to lean on. The enlightenment and guidance of God's words helped me through those darkest days that dragged on and on. Even though I have experienced being arrested and persecuted multiple times by the CCP government, and my flesh has suffered ruthless cruelty and torment, I truly understand many truths that I didn't understand in the past and I see clearly the CCP government's reactionary, evil, and demonic substance. I have also experienced God's true love for me and have tasted of God's almightiness and wisdom and wonderful deeds. Furthermore, it arouses me to seek to love God and satisfy God. Today, I still fulfill my duty in the church as I did in the past; I follow God on the correct path of life, I pursue truth and seek to live a meaningful life!

25. Awakening Amidst Suffering and Difficulty —A 17-Year-Old Christian’s True Experience of Persecution

By Wang Tao, Shandong Province

I am a Christian in The Church of Almighty God. I was the most fortunate among children of the same age, because I followed my parents in accepting Almighty God’s work of the last days at the age of eight. Although I was young at that time, I was quite happy to believe in God and read God’s word. By continuing to read God’s word and fellowship with older members of the church, after several years, I came to understand some of the truth. Particularly when I saw my brothers and sisters all pursuing the truth and working to be honest people, and saw everyone getting along peacefully, I felt that these were the happiest, most joyful times. I later heard in a sermon, “In mainland China, believing in God, pursuing the truth, and following God is really putting your life on the line. This is hardly an exaggeration” (Sermons and Fellowship on Entry Into Life). At the time I didn’t understand what this meant, but through the fellowship of my brothers and sisters, I learned that believers in God are arrested by the police, and that because China is an atheistic country, there is no freedom of religious belief. However, at the time I didn’t believe these words. I thought that because I was a child, even if I was arrested, the police wouldn’t do anything to me. That changed on the day I personally experienced arrest and cruelty at the hands of the police; I finally saw clearly that the police, who I had looked up to as if they were uncles, were actually a pack of vicious devils!

When I was 17, on the evening of March 5, 2009, an older brother and I were on our way home from preaching the gospel when suddenly our path was blocked by a police vehicle. Five police officers immediately leaped out of the car and without even a warning, grabbed our electric scooter away like bandits, shoved us to the ground, and forcibly handcuffed us. I was dazed by the suddenness of what had just happened. I had often heard my brothers and sisters talk about how believers in God were arrested, but I never imagined it would actually happen to me that day. I was seized with panic; my heart was beating so hard it felt like it would leap out of my chest. I called out continually to God in my heart, “Almighty God! The police have arrested me, and I am very afraid. I don’t know what I should do or what they plan to do to me, so I beg You to protect my heart.” I felt much calmer after

praying. I thought that the police wouldn't actually do anything to a child like me, so I didn't feel very nervous. But the situation wasn't nearly as simple as I expected. When the police found books about belief in God on us, they used this as evidence to justify taking us to the police station.

It was early spring in the north of China, and the weather was still very cold, getting down to negative 3–4 Celsius at night. The chief of the police station forcibly took away our coats and shoes and even our belts, and had our hands handcuffed tightly behind our backs. It was very painful. He ordered several officers to hold us down on the floor, after which our faces and heads were viciously whipped with leather straps, which immediately caused splitting pain in my head—it felt like it was about to explode and tears started to roll down my face involuntarily. I was furious at that moment, because the slogan “Be Civilized in Handling Cases” was written clearly on the wall, but they were treating us like savage highway robbers or murderers! It wasn't civilized at all! In anger, I demanded, “What crime have we committed? Why are you arresting us and beating us?” As he continued to whip me, one of these evil police said maliciously, “You little bastard, don't you take that tone with me! We're here to catch believers in Almighty God! You're a young man who could have done anything, why this? Who is your leader? Where did you get these books? Answer me! If you don't answer, I'll beat the life out of you!” I then noticed that my older brother was clenching his teeth and refusing to say a single word, so I swore an oath to myself: “I also refuse to be a Judas! Even if they beat me to death, I won't talk! My life is in God's hands, and Satan and devils have no power over me.” When he saw that neither of us were speaking, the station chief flew into a rage, and bellowed, pointing at us, “Alright then! You want to play tough? You're not talking? Give them a good beating! Really show them what's up and give them a taste of what tough is!” These evil police instantly pounced on us, grabbing us by the chins while viciously punching us in the face so hard that I saw stars and my face burned with stinging pain. I had been pampered and cared for by my parents since childhood; I had never experienced such violence. I was so humiliated I couldn't help but cry, and I thought, “These police are so cruel, and so unreasonable! In school, our teachers always told us to go to the police if we were in trouble. They said the police ‘served the people’ and were ‘heroes who protected good people from violence,’ but now, just because we believe in Almighty God and walk the correct path in life, they arrest us arbitrarily and beat us mercilessly. How could these be the ‘People's Police’? They're nothing but a pack

of devils! No wonder in a sermon it's said, 'Some say the great red dragon is an evil spirit, some say it is a pack of evildoers, but what is the great red dragon's nature and essence? That of an evil demon. They are a pack of evil demons who resist and attack God! These people are a physical manifestation of Satan, Satan made flesh, the incarnation of evil demons! These people are none other than Satan and evil demons' (Sermons and Fellowship on Entry Into Life). In the past, I was deceived by their lies, believing that the police were 'good people' who worked on behalf of ordinary people. I didn't realize that was a false image, but today I finally see they really are a pack of evil devils who resist God!" I couldn't help but begin to hate them from the bottom of my heart. When the station chief saw that we still weren't talking, he shouted, "Give them another good beating!" Two of his lackeys rushed over to us. They ordered us to sit on the floor with our legs outstretched, and then kicked our legs viciously with their leather shoes, as well as stood on our legs and stomped as hard as they could. My legs were in such pain it felt as if they were about to break, and I couldn't stop myself from screaming, but the more I screamed, the more viciously they beat me. I had no choice but to endure the pain as I called out to Almighty God in my heart, "God! These devils are too cruel! I really can't bear this. Please, give me faith and protect me so that I don't betray You." Just then, this passage of God's words flashed through my mind, **"You should know that all things in the environment around you are there by My permission, I arrange it all. See clearly and satisfy My heart in the environment I have given to you. Do not fear, Almighty God of hosts will surely be with you; He has your back and He is your shield"** ("Chapter 26" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words were a source of great faith and strength for me. I understood that the circumstances I was experiencing were happening with approval from God's throne, and that this was the time I was required to stand firm and testify for God. Although I was young, I had God as my strong support, so I had nothing to fear! I was determined to stand firm and testify for God, to absolutely not be a coward, and not submit to Satan! Through the instruction and guidance in God's word, I found the confidence and determination to bear suffering and stand firm and testify for God.

That evening after 7 p.m., the station chief came to interrogate me again. He ordered me to sit on the ice-cold cement floor in a deliberate attempt to freeze me. Only when I became so cold that both of my legs had gone numb and I was shaking all over did he order his lackeys to pick me up and lean me against the wall, after which he mercilessly

administered shocks to my hands and chin with an electric baton. The shocks covered my hands with blisters and made all my teeth numb with pain (even today it still hurts my teeth to chew). But even then, this devil, still frantic with rage, hadn't had enough; he just started using his electric baton on my groin. The torment left me in unspeakable pain, but he threw his head back and laughed. At that moment, I hated this demon, completely lacking in humanity, to my core. But no matter how these evil police questioned or tortured me, I clenched my teeth and refused to say a word. It continued until two or three in the morning, by which point my entire body was numb—I had no sensation anywhere. Finally, after they had tired themselves out beating me, they dragged me back to a small room and handcuffed me to the older brother who had been arrested along with me. They ordered us to sit on the icy floor, and then two of them were assigned to watch us to ensure we didn't sleep. The moment one of us closed our eyes they would punch and kick us. Later that night I had to go to the bathroom, but these evil police bellowed at me, "You little shit, until you tell us what we want to know, you aren't going anywhere! You get to pee in your pants!" In the end, I really couldn't hold it any longer, and I had to relieve myself in my pants. In that freezing weather, my padded pants were soaked through with urine, leaving me so cold that I couldn't stop shivering.

After enduring such cruel torture by these devils, I was in unbearable pain all over, and I couldn't help but begin feeling weak and negative, "I really don't know what tortures they'll use on me tomorrow. Will I be able to withstand it?" But at that moment, the older brother, concerned that I wouldn't be able to withstand the suffering and was feeling negative, whispered to me with concern, "Tao, how are you feeling about those evil devils torturing us like this today? Do you regret believing in Almighty God and doing your duty?" I said, "No, I just feel humiliated for being beaten by these devils. I thought they wouldn't do anything to me because I'm just a child. I had no idea they would actually be willing to kill me." My older brother fellowshiped earnestly, "We have taken the path of belief in God, and we walk the correct path in life thanks to God's guidance, but Satan doesn't want us to follow God or be fully saved. No matter what happens, we need to stand firm in our faith. We must never submit to Satan; we cannot break God's heart." This brother's words were very encouraging. I felt consoled, and couldn't help but think of God's words, "**What is an overcomer? The good soldiers of Christ must be brave and rely on Me to be spiritually strong; they must fight to become warriors and battle Satan to the death**" ("Chapter 12" of Utterances

of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). At that moment, I understood God's will and felt strength within my heart. I no longer felt humiliated or miserable, but became willing to face this trial bravely. No matter how Satan the devil tortured me, I would rely on God to overcome Satan; I would show Satan that all believers in Almighty God are His elite soldiers, unbreakable warriors to the last.

The next morning, those evil police brought me back to the interrogation room and that devil of a station chief again tried to force a confession out of me. He pounded on the table as he pointed straight at my nose and cursed at me, saying, "Did you reconsider last night, boy? How long have you believed in Almighty God? How many people have you preached to? Answer our questions, or you'll feel a lot more pain!" I thought, "I can't be afraid of Satan anymore. I need to be a man and have courage!" So, I said resolutely, "I don't know anything!" The evil station chief flew into a rage and shouted, "Boy, do you want to die? Because I'll kill you before we're done, and then you'll really clam up!" While shouting this he charged toward me, then viciously grabbed my hair and bashed my head against the wall. My ears immediately began to ring, and the pain was so intense I couldn't help but cry out and tears rolled down my face. Finally, after those devils realized they wouldn't get what they wanted from me, they had no choice but to send me back to the little room. They then took the older brother to be interrogated. Before long, I heard him scream in pain, and I knew they had done something horrible to him. I was curled up in the little room like a lamb surrounded by vicious wolves feeling heartbroken and helpless, and as tears streamed down my face, I prayed to God to ask Him to protect this brother from those evil devils as they tried to force him to confess through torture. They interrogated us this way for three days and nights, not even giving us a single bite of food or a drop of water. I was cold and hungry, I was in a daze, and my head was swollen and incredibly painful. Afraid they would kill us, they had no choice but to stop their torture.

After the CCP government's brutal and inhumane torture, I genuinely experienced what I had heard about in a sermon: "In the prisons of the great red dragon, no matter if you are a man or woman, they can abuse you any way they like. They are scoundrels and beasts. They capriciously abuse people with electric batons, and do to you whatever it is you fear most. Under the dominion of the great red dragon, people cease to be human and are even less than animals. The great red dragon is precisely this cruel and inhumane. They are beasts, devils, completely devoid of reason. There is no way to reason with them, because

they have no reason” (“The True Significance of Forsaking the Great Red Dragon to Receiving Salvation” in Sermons and Fellowship III). At that moment, I finally saw clearly the CCP government’s reactionary essence as an enemy of God. It truly is a manifestation of Satan, a demon that murders without blinking an eye! They are without morals or scruples, not even sparing me, an underage child. They are all the more ready to murder me purely because I believe in God and walk the correct path in life. They are nothing but cruel monsters without principles, ethics, or humanity. I no longer entertained any false hopes that the police would treat me mercifully because of my age; I only begged that Almighty God would protect me and lead me to overcome the cruel torture of Satan and demons, that I could endure all the suffering, and that I could be a resounding witness for God.

On the afternoon of March 9, when the evil police saw that they really wouldn’t get anything out of us, they physically grabbed our hands and forced us to sign forged confessions, charging us with the crimes of “damaging national law, disturbing social order, and subverting state power,” and then sent us to the detention house. As soon as we arrived they shaved our heads completely bald, stripped our clothes from us, and then returned them to us after cutting them nearly to ribbons. I didn’t have my belt anymore, so I had to tie plastic bags into a rope to hold my pants up. Even in that freezing weather, the police ordered other detainees to wash us by pouring basin after basin of cold water over our heads. I felt frozen to the point that I was shaking from head to toe, and my blood felt as if it had solidified in my veins. I couldn’t even stand after that. The prisoners held in that jail were all rapists, thieves, robbers, and murderers.... Each appeared more malicious than the last, and the thought of being trapped in that hellish place with them made me tremble with fear. At night, more than 30 of us slept together on a hard concrete platform, and the blankets stank with a vile odor that made it nearly impossible to sleep. The meals given to us by those evil police were nothing but a small steamed bun and a bit of thin corn gruel, far from enough to feed us sufficiently, and during the day we were overloaded with grueling physical labor. If we didn’t finish our tasks for the day, they punished us by making us stand overnight on the night cell watch shift, meaning we had to stand for four hours and only got two hours of sleep. Sometimes I was so tired that I fell asleep while standing. Those evil police also told the cell’s head prisoner to find ways to torment me, such as giving me workloads over my quota or making me stand sentry duty overnight. I felt as though I was about to collapse. So many times I had been tormented and abused by those demons, it felt as though I had less

freedom than a stray dog in the street, and I wasn't even eating as well as a pig or a dog. Thinking of these things, I missed my home and parents terribly and felt that the detention house was no place for people to live. I didn't want to stay there for another single moment. I wanted nothing more than to leave that horrible place immediately. At the height of my misery and weakness, I could only pray earnestly to God, and this is when Almighty God's words enlightened me and provided guidance: **"Do not be discouraged, do not be weak, and I will make things clear for you. The road to the kingdom is not so smooth; nothing is that simple! You want blessings to come to you easily, do you not? Today, everyone will have bitter trials to face. Without such trials, the loving heart you have for Me will not grow stronger.... Those who share in My bitterness will certainly share in My sweetness. That is My promise and My blessing to you"** ("Chapter 41" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words were a great source of consolation and encouragement. They helped me understand the suffering and difficulties I was enduring were a blessing from God. God was using these difficult circumstances to refine and perfect me, and to make me someone whose love of and loyalty to God are worthy of God's promise. Thinking of how I had been pampered since childhood and had never been able to bear suffering or even the slightest insult, I saw that if I wanted to gain the truth and life, I needed to have the determination to bear suffering and I needed resolute faith. Without experiencing this suffering, the corruption within me could never be purified. My suffering was indeed a blessing from God, and so I ought to have faith, cooperate with God, and allow God to work His truth within me. Once I understood God's will, a prayer to God spontaneously arose within me, "God! I no longer feel weak and negative. I will stand strong, resolutely rely on You, battle Satan to the end, and seek to love and satisfy You. I ask that You give me faith and fortitude." In the days I suffered abuse and humiliation at the detention house, I prayed and relied on God more than at any time since I had gained my faith in Almighty God, and it was the closest I had ever been with God. During that time, my heart didn't leave God even for a moment, and I always felt Him with me. No matter how much I suffered, it didn't feel like suffering at all, and I clearly understood that all of this was God caring for me and protecting me.

One morning a month later, the prison guards suddenly called the older brother and me out. I felt a surge of excitement when I heard the call, thinking that they might be releasing us and that I wouldn't need to suffer in that hell anymore. The truth couldn't have been further

from my hopes. The police station chief greeted us with a sinister smile and written judgments, saying, “You two have been sentenced to a year of reeducation through labor for believing in Almighty God. Even though you wouldn’t talk, we can sentence you all the same. The Communist Party rules this nation, and even a lawsuit will get you nowhere!” Seeing how happy he was at our misfortune made me furious: The CCP government follows no law or ethics, and beyond just cruelly torturing an underage child like me, it was giving me a sentence for no crime at all! The other brother and I were brought to the provincial labor camp that day. During our health checkup, the doctor found that the brother suffered from high blood pressure, a heart condition, and other health issues. The labor camp guards feared being held responsible if he died at their facility, so they refused to accept him; the police had no choice but to take him back, which meant I was left there alone. I started crying then—I cried bitterly. I missed my home and my parents, and considering that I was left without my brother to fellowship with, how was I going to make it through such a long year? In the previous month of being tormented and brutalized by those devils, whenever I felt negative and weak because I couldn’t bear their cruelty, he would fellowship with me on God’s word to encourage and comfort me, helping me gain strength through understanding God’s will. Also, seeing his determination gave me the faith and strength to fight and overcome those demons alongside him. But at that point, I was left to fight that battle alone. Could I really stand strong? ... The more I thought, the more miserable I felt, and the more negativity, loneliness, bitterness, and humiliation took root in my heart. When my misery pushed me to the brink of hopelessness, I urgently called out to God, “God! My stature is too small. How will I be able to withstand such an immense trial? How should I get through this long year of reeducation through labor? God! I beg You to guide and aid me, give me faith and strength....” Tears streamed down my face as I cried without a sound. As I prayed, I suddenly remembered Joseph’s experience of being sold into Egypt at the age of seventeen. Although he was alone in Egypt and he endured humiliation and suffering, he never abandoned the true God or surrendered to Satan. Although I was then being made to suffer by the demons in prison, it was happening with God’s permission, and as long as I truly relied on God and refused to give in to Satan, God would also lead me in overcoming Satan and leaving the demons’ lair. At that moment, I again recalled God’s words, **“Don’t belittle yourself because you’re young; you should offer up yourself to Me. I don’t see what people are like on the surface or how old they are. I see only whether or not they**

love Me sincerely, and whether or not they follow My way and practice the truth disregarding all other things. Don't worry about what tomorrow will be like or how the future will be. So long as you rely on Me to live every day, then I will surely lead you" ("Chapter 28" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words warmed my heart like the summer sun. They allowed me to see that God favors no one, and even though I was young, as long as I had a heart of sincere love for God and could live by God's word, I would always receive God's guidance. I thought of how, since the moment of my arrest, God had been with me at every moment, helping me get through every difficulty and making it possible for me to stand strong. Without God's presence and guidance, how could I have endured the vicious beatings and brutal torment of those demons? I had survived such great difficulty by relying on God, and I was facing a year of reeducation through labor, so why did I lack faith? Wasn't God all I needed to rely on? God was with me, and would provide me with guidance at every moment, so why should I feel alone or afraid? Those circumstances were an opportunity for me to practice living independently and becoming mature in life. I could no longer see myself as a child, nor could always I rely on other people while not looking up to God. I ought to grow up, rely on God to walk my own path, and trust that I would certainly be able to continue down that path, leaning on God. Satan is never able to defeat people who have the determination to rely on God and love Him! It was time for me to have a man's courage, and to allow God to gain glory through my actions. Once I understood God's will I felt as though there was a powerful force supporting me, and deep in my heart I had the resolve to face my life in prison.

When the guards at the labor camp learned that I believed in Almighty God they started deliberately tormenting me. They assigned me to heavy physical labor, carrying heavy-duty bags weighing more than 50kg from the third floor to the first from five in the morning to past eleven in the evening, and if I didn't finish my work quota, I would have to work overtime late into the night. I had never done physical labor before, and I could never eat my fill at the detention house, so I was always exhausted. At the beginning, I couldn't lift the bags at all, but later on, through earnestly relying on God, I gradually became able to lift them. The heavy labor left me unspeakably exhausted every day, and left my waist and legs aching. The guards often ordered the other detainees to viciously beat me, frequently leaving me covered in wounds and bruises. Once the guards ordered the head prisoner to beat me because I returned late from fetching water. During the beating my eardrum was punctured

and ruptured, it became infected, nearly leaving me deaf. I clenched my teeth in resentment at having to bear this kind of bullying and abuse, but I was helpless to resist. I was miserable and bore grievances, but I had no place to seek redress. I could only come before God and share my misery with Him in prayer. In that dark prison, I learned to be close to God, to rely on and look to God in all things—what brought me the most joy in life was praying to God to share my innermost thoughts. Every time I felt sad or weak, the hymn I most loved to sing was “I Am Determined to Love God”: **“Oh God! I have seen that Your righteousness and holiness are so lovely. I resolve to pursue the truth, and I am determined to love You. I wish for You to open the eyes of my spirit, I wish for Your Spirit to touch my heart, so that before You I am divested of all passive states, and unconstrained by any person, matter, or thing; my heart I completely lay bare before You, such that my entire being is devoted before You, and You may test me however You wish. Now, I give no thought to my prospects, nor am I bound by death. Using my heart that loves You, I wish to seek the way of life. All things and events are in Your hands, my fate is in Your hands, and, moreover, my life is controlled by Your hands. Now, I pursue the love of You, and regardless of whether You let me love You, regardless of how Satan interferes, I am determined to love You”** (Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). Singing and singing, I would be moved to tears, and it would bring immense consolation and encouragement to my heart. Almighty God had time and again aided and supported me, allowing me to genuinely experience God’s true love for me. Like a merciful mother, God stood watch beside me, comforting me and supporting me at all times, giving me faith and strength, and guiding me through that year I’ll never be able to forget.

After experiencing the darkness of my time in prison, I became much more mature in life, and also gained much knowledge of the truth. I was no longer a naïve, innocent child. It was Almighty God’s words that guided me in overcoming the evil police’s torture and torment time after time, and time and again allowed me to emerge from weakness and negativity, rise up, and stand strong. It allowed me to understand how to be considerate of and comfort God’s heart, as well as how to rely on God and stand firm, and how to testify for God to repay God’s love. It also allowed me to see clearly the brutality and viciousness of Satan and demons as well as their evil reactionary essence as enemies of God. It gave me discernment over the false image of the “People’s Police who love the people.” I have never again been deceived by Satan’s lies. The persecution and suffering I endured not only failed

to break me, but they became the foundation upon which I walk the path of faith. I am grateful to Almighty God for leading me through this arduous, rocky path and allowing me to learn to bear cruel torment at such a young age. Through this, I saw God's almightiness and sovereignty, and that this was God's special salvation for me! I felt deeply that in an evil world ruled by demons, only God can save people, only God can be our support and aid us whenever we need Him, and only God truly loves people. The persecution and difficulties I endured became a valuable treasure of growth in life for me, and were very beneficial to my attaining full salvation. Though I suffered during that time, that suffering was incredibly valuable and meaningful. It's just as God's word says, **"If you are willing to be in this stream and enjoy this judgment and this immense salvation, enjoy all of this blessing that cannot be found anywhere in the human world, and enjoy this love, then stay submissively in this stream to accept the conquering work so you can become perfected. Though now you are suffering some pain and refinement because of the judgment, this pain is valuable and meaningful"** ("The Inside Truth of the Work of Conquest (4)" in The Word Appears in the Flesh).

26. The Transcendence and Greatness of God's Life Force

By Lin Ling, Shandong Province

I was born into a poor rural family, and because our family lacked power or status, I was looked down on by others from a young age, and was often bullied. Each time this happened, I felt especially humiliated and miserable, and I longed for the day a savior would come to change my fate. After I got married, because life was difficult, and my son was often sick, my neighbors talked to me about believing in Jesus, and when I learned that the Lord Jesus could save those in torment from their suffering and troubles, I was very moved. I felt I had finally found my Savior, and so from then on I believed in Jesus, and passionately attended meetings and listened to sermons everywhere I could. But afterward, I realized that the churches were ever more desolate, and that the jealousy, disputes, and scheming within believers were becoming ever more serious. It was no different than the wider society. I couldn't help but be greatly disappointed, the faith I felt at first gradually faded, and I no longer went to meetings.

In the year 2000, a sister preached Almighty God's last-days' gospel to me. When I learned that Almighty God is the returned Lord Jesus, words could not express the joy I felt in my heart. Every day, whenever I had time, I held God's word in my hand and read it as a starving man eats. The sincerity in God's words warmed and consoled me. I felt the Creator's care, mercy, and salvation for me, and my thirsty spirit gained watering and provision. After that, I lived among the large family of The Church of Almighty God, where I attended meetings and performed my duties alongside my brothers and sisters. We all strove to pursue the truth amidst the watering and provision of Almighty God's word, there was love between my brothers and sisters, and we all helped one another. There was no scheming, deceit, or disdain of poverty and love of wealth, and much less was there abuse or oppression. In The Church of Almighty God, I genuinely enjoyed a happiness and joy I had never experienced before. However, because I believed in Almighty God, I was arrested and brutally tortured by the CCP government, and then imprisoned for a year. In that dark demon's lair, it was Almighty God's word which gave me faith and strength, and which step by step led me to overcome Satan and rise above the constraints of death.

On the night of August 24, 2009, I had just gone to sleep, when I was suddenly awakened by a furious rapping at the door. Before I had time to react, 7–8 police broke down the door and entered the room. As soon as they entered, they shouted, "Don't move! Get out of bed and come with us!" Before I even had time to put on my clothes, I heard the click of a camera shutter as my photo was taken. The police then turned the house upside down as they searched it, not missing a single scrap of paper. Before long, the house was a mess, as if it had been rummaged through by bandits. Everything was on the floor, and there was no place to walk. Afterward, three police forcibly brought me to a van waiting outside.

After bringing me to the police station, they forced me to stand facing a wall. One police officer interrogated me in a stern voice, saying, "Tell us the truth about your belief in Almighty God! What is your role in the church? Who is your leader? Where is he? Tell us everything!" I said, without fear, "I don't know anything!" Their frustration immediately turned to rage. They kicked me as they shouted abuse at me and viciously threatened me, "If you tell us, we'll let you go, but if not, we'll beat you to death!" As they spoke, they pushed me into a metal chair with a large restraining bar, which they then locked in place. Seeing the way these evil police arrested me with such a show of force, as well as the fiendish expressions and angry gazes they directed at me, and how they treated me, a defenseless woman, as if

I had committed a horrendous crime, I couldn't help but feel panicked and afraid. I thought, "How do they plan to torment me? If they actually torture or beat me, what will I do?" I couldn't help but pray frantically to God in my heart, "Almighty God! My stature truly is too small, and, surrounded by Satan's forces of evil, I've become frightened. I beg You to give me faith and strength. Protect me, so that I don't bow my head to Satan and these demons, and so that I can stand firm and testify for You!" This is when I recalled God's words, "**You should know that all things in the environment around you are there by My permission, I arrange it all. See clearly and satisfy My heart in the environment I have given to you. Do not fear, Almighty God of hosts will surely be with you; He has your back and He is your shield**" ("Chapter 26" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). Yes, everything happening to me that day had the permission of God's throne, so although I was trapped in a demon's lair and faced a pack of vicious, demonic fiends, I was not fighting alone; Almighty God was with me. I could rely on Him, and He was my strong support, so what did I have to fear? Thinking of these things, I no longer felt timid or afraid, I had the strength to battle Satan to the end, and I swore that I would stand firm and testify for God even if it cost me my life!

After that, the police began trying to extort a confession from me through torture. The morning of the first day, they handcuffed me, and when the police brought me for a blood test, they pulled me forcefully along, causing the sharp edges of the handcuffs to bite into my flesh. Before long, the skin on my wrists was punctured, and the pain was cutting and intense. After that, they handcuffed me to a radiator, and fearing I would run away, they tightened the handcuffs so much that my wrists were ground into a bloody mess. These evil police officers questioned me time and again, vainly attempting to force me to divulge church information, but because each time I said I didn't know anything, they became furious and lost their tempers. One of them angrily marched forward and slapped me heavily across the face. I instantly saw stars, I nearly passed out, my teeth rattled in my gums, and tears involuntarily streamed from my eyes. When the police officer saw me crying but still refusing to talk, he grimaced in rage, callously grabbed several strands of my hair on my forehead and wound them around his hand, and then forcefully slammed the back of my head into the wall. This vicious blow made me dizzy and my ears ring. His rage still not sated, he slapped me several times in a row and shouted angrily, "I'll make you cry! This is what you get for not talking!" As he spoke, he ferociously stomped down on my foot with his shoe.

After being subjected to the vicious beatings and torment of these devils, I was in pain and limp all over. I laid on the floor, unmoving, as if I were about to die. Seeing my condition, the police let fly a stream of expletives and marched off, slamming the door on their way out. In the afternoon, they subjected me to more of the same vicious beatings as they tried to force me to divulge church information. After several rounds of this, I felt dizzy and nauseous, and my body hurt so much it felt ready to simply come apart. I felt as though I might die at any moment. But those evil police didn't scale back their interrogation in the slightest. With an utter lack of humanity, they used a lighter to burn my feet, causing two large blisters to form immediately. It hurt so much I couldn't stop myself from crying. In pain, I sat down on the floor and looked at these evil police, every one of them glaring at me with beastly rage like underworld demons who wanted nothing more than to rip me to shreds, and I couldn't help but begin to feel weak. I silently complained to God, "Almighty God, when will these evil police stop tormenting me? I really can't hold on any longer...." I felt so weak I was ready to collapse, and I couldn't help but think, "What if I just tell them one thing? Then I won't have to suffer...." But then I immediately thought, "If I say even one thing, I'm a Judas, which means I'm betraying God." A bitter struggle raged in my heart, and it was then that I remembered God's words, "**[Y]ou should do that which is pleasing to all, that which brings benefit to all, and that which benefits your own destination, otherwise the one who suffers in the midst of disaster will be none other than yourself**" ("Prepare Sufficient Good Deeds for Your Destination" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). "**Toward those who showed Me not the slightest loyalty during times of tribulation, I shall be merciful no more, for My mercy only extends so far. I have no liking, furthermore, for anyone who has once betrayed Me, much less do I like to associate with those who sell out the interests of their friends. This is My disposition, regardless of who the person may be**" ("Prepare Sufficient Good Deeds for Your Destination" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words were a sudden flash of awareness. I couldn't help but be startled by my previous thoughts. I reflected, "Satan's persecution has befallen me today, and rather than think about how to rely on God to overcome these devils and stand firm and testify for Him, I was instead concerned for my own flesh. Doesn't that make me selfish and despicable? God is righteous and holy, and if I were to sell out my brothers and sisters and become a deplorable Judas, wouldn't I be offending God's disposition, and thereby sending myself to destruction? God's will in allowing these evil police to torture me today is to allow

me to clearly see the CCP government's demonic essence of wildly resisting God and making an enemy of God, so that I am more able to turn my heart to God, maintain my loyalty to God, and stand firm and testify for God." Having come to these conclusions, I felt regret and guilt for my disobedience. I wished to repent to God. No matter how the police harmed or tortured me, I would refuse to pander to my flesh. I only wanted to obey God's orchestrations and arrangements, bear all suffering, and stand firm and testify for God to prove my loyalty to Him through my actions. Even if it cost me my life, I would not become a Judas and betray God! As long as I had a single breath left within me, I would never surrender or give in to Satan! That evening, these evil police ordered me to sit on the floor with my legs outstretched, and then forcefully lifted my arms, handcuffed behind me, up into the air, and I immediately felt an intense pain in my arms and my already wounded wrists. The police, mad with rage, set a fan on high and aimed it at me, blowing a stream of chilly air over my body. I was so cold I shivered constantly, and my teeth clattered in my mouth. I was currently menstruating, and rather than allow me to change my pad, these evil police demanded I "resolve" it in my pants. But even with that, these evil police didn't stop. They brought a switch of soft tree branch and whipped me with it everywhere, each stroke leaving a bloody imprint. It was so painful I tried to squirm out of the way, but when they saw me dodging the blows, the police beat me even more viciously, as they did so saying, "Let's see if you'll talk now! I'll leave you a crippled wreck tonight!" The cruelty and viciousness of these evil police officers was abominable, but thanks to God's guidance and protection, I didn't submit to them, and they gained nothing from that round of interrogation.

In the midst of several days of brutal interrogation, an officer from the National Security Brigade kept pretending to be a "good cop," vainly trying to make me sell out the church with soft tactics. He had a sweet, gentle expression, poured water for me, brought me an apple, and with false kindness said, "It's such a shame to suffer like this at such a young age. Just tell us what we want to know, and it can stop. You can go home. Your husband and son are looking forward to seeing you!" I originally thought he seemed nice, but he was more vicious and sinister than any of them. When he saw that I wasn't going to tell him, his expression twisted into a ferocious snarl, completely revealing his true beastly nature, and he began to torture me even more cruelly and mercilessly. He brought me into the police station's main hall, where he forced me to sit alone in the corner for two hours in the freezing air, and then after he came back and shouted for me, he thought I hadn't answered loudly enough, so he

forced me to extend my legs, and then viciously stomped on my kneecaps, then roughly lifted up my hands which were handcuffed behind my back. I heard a crack from my waist, then I felt a heart-splitting pain and screamed, after which I lost all feeling in my waist. I never imagined my scream would enrage this devil. He furiously bellowed at one of his lackeys, "Get a rag and stuff it in her mouth so she doesn't scream again!" They brought a stinking, filthy rag and stuffed it into my mouth, which made me want to vomit. He shouted at me, "Hold it with your teeth! Don't you dare drop the rag!" as he continued to stuff it in my mouth. Faced with these vile animals, there was nothing in my heart but bitter hatred. I hated them so deeply I had no tears left. Next, this devil officer continued to interrogate me, and when he saw that I still wouldn't tell him, he again pressed down on my legs as he lifted my handcuffed arms into the air. It was so painful that I broke out in a cold sweat, and involuntarily screamed again. When he saw that I still wouldn't talk, he said to his lackeys, "Take her away!" Two evil police lifted me up from the ground, but by this point my waist couldn't stand up straight. I had to walk slowly, back bent, one step at a time. In extreme pain, weakness, hopelessness, and helplessness again crept into my mind. I didn't know how much longer I could hold on, so time and again I prayed to God in my heart, calling out for Almighty God's protection, so that even if I had to die, I wouldn't betray Him.

After that, I saw that Almighty God understood my weakness in every way, and had been merciful and protected me in secret the entire time. When these evil police again came to interrogate me, they threatened me, "If you don't talk, we'll take you to another place and put you in an electric chair. Once we turn on the power, you'll pass out, and even if you don't die, you'll be crippled!" Hearing the evil officer's words, I couldn't help but be afraid. I thought I really couldn't withstand such inhumane treatment, so I urgently prayed to God, and at that moment, I remembered God's words, "**When people are ready to sacrifice their lives, everything becomes trifling, and no one can get the better of them. What could be more important than life?**" ("Chapter 36" of Interpretations of the Mysteries of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). Yes, my life was in God's hands. God controls and rules over it, and whether I lived or died wasn't up to the police. If I truly put my life on the line, I could overcome Satan. At that moment, I was filled with faith, and willing to put my life on the line, to put it in God's hands, and to obey God's orchestrations and arrangements. I never imagined that just then, I would hear one of those evil police say that the electric chair was actually broken, and that the power couldn't be turned on. At that

moment, I deeply felt that Almighty God was with me at every moment. Even though I was in a lair of demons, God remained by my side. He allowed me to experience suffering, but He didn't allow these satanic demons to take my life. I thanked Almighty God for His miraculous protection, and for allowing me to escape! My faith became firmer, and I was willing to bear any suffering to stand firm and testify for God. These frenzied evil police tortured and interrogated me for six days and five nights, not allowing me to eat, drink water, or sleep. This allowed me to see clearly that the CCP government is nothing but a group of thugs and mobsters. Being in their grip meant being in the grip of cruel, violent devils, and without Almighty God's care and protection, they would have tortured me to death. Despite the fact that these evil police didn't allow me to eat, drink, or sleep for several days, and also tortured me in all manner of ways, I never felt thirsty, hungry, or tired at all. The National Security Brigade officers said they had never seen someone young make it through so many days. I understood deeply that this was Almighty God's immense life force supporting my fleshly husk, providing me with life, and giving me the strength to persist to the end. Just as the Lord Jesus said, **"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God"** (Matthew 4:4). Almighty God's words say, **"God uses His life to supply all things, both living and lifeless, bringing all to good order by virtue of His might and authority. This is a truth that can be conceived or comprehended by none, and these incomprehensible truths are the very manifestation of, and testament to, the life force of God"** ("God Is the Source of Man's Life" in The Word Appears in the Flesh).

After that, when the police saw that hard tactics weren't working, they decided to try soft tactics. The National Security Brigade chief came himself to interrogate me. He ingratiatingly and gently took off my handcuffs, invited me to sit, and said in a "gentle" voice, "You're very foolish. You aren't any kind of officer or authority in the church. They sold you out, and you're here resisting us on their behalf. Is it really worth it? Also, if you believe in Almighty God, in the future your son will be limited from testing into university, joining the army, or becoming a public servant. And your husband doesn't care about you. He may have already found someone else and abandoned you.... The fact is, we already know everything about your situation. Even if you don't tell us anything, we can charge you with a crime all the same, because this is the CCP's country. We decide what happens. We also decide how many days to detain you. Even if you die here, nothing will happen to us, so you might as well confess! China is different from other countries. Even if you don't tell us anything, we can

still charge you with a crime and sentence you.” Hearing all the different ways he tried to tempt me with kindness, my heart leaped and fell in turns, and I was especially miserable. I didn’t know what to do, so I called out in my heart, “Almighty God! You know my stature is too small and that I lack so much. I don’t know how to experience or face such circumstances. I beg for Your guidance.” That was when I again found direction in God’s words: **“At all times, My people must be on guard against the cunning schemes of Satan..., which will stop you falling into Satan’s trap, at which time it will be too late for regrets”** (“Chapter 3” of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). **“[F]or My sake, you must also not yield to any of the dark forces. Rely on My wisdom to walk the perfect way; do not allow the conspiracies of Satan to take hold”** (“Chapter 10” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God’s words brightened my heart, and I found a path of practice. I thought to myself, “Of course! This was Satan using emotional hooks to mislead and deceive me. I should see through its tricks, defeat it with wisdom, and not allow myself to be fooled. All things and all affairs are in God’s hands. Even if I sit in jail so long the bars rust away, I must never submit to Satan and betray God!” Now, I was much more clear about what to do. In the face of his provocations and temptations, I sat in silence, prayed, and quieted my heart in God’s presence. Then, I angrily said to him, “I’m going to sue you! Not only have you tried to torture me into a confession, you’ve also falsely accused me of a crime!” With a sinister chuckle he said, “Well, I didn’t hit you. Go ahead and sue. This is the CCP’s country. No one will speak up for you.” His words made me despise the evil CCP government to my bones. And this old devil truly had no regard for the law or morality. After that, he brought out a large pile of ID cards of my brothers and sisters for me to identify, asking me if I knew them and hoping in vain that I would sell them out. I bitterly answered, “I don’t know a single one of them!” When he heard that, his face turned purple with rage. He saw that I really wouldn’t tell him anything, and he left in a huff. That afternoon, they brought me to the detention house, and viciously threatened me, saying, “At the detention house we’ll make you squat by the water and peel garlic, and after a few days of that, your hands will be all rotted!” They sneered and laughed with pride as they spoke, and in their beastly expressions, I saw Satan’s demonic face, cruel and vicious!

After being kept for a month at the detention house, the police claimed that if I paid 20,000 yuan, I could go home. I said I didn’t have it, and as if to bargain, they said 10,000

would do just as well. When I said I didn't have a penny, their annoyance immediately turned to anger, and they said with a sneer, "If you don't have any money, it's reeducation through labor for you! When you come out, your husband won't even want you!" I resolutely said, "Fine then, I don't care!" And so, without a second thought, they charged me with the crimes of "disturbing social order" and "obstructing the enforcement of the law" and sentenced me to a year of reeducation through labor. This showed me even more clearly that the CCP government is a satanic devil with no regard for human lives that makes an enemy of God! In this hell on earth ruled by demons, where God is viewed as a mortal enemy, the party in power is divine writ and law, and those who live under its power have no human rights or freedom at all, to say nothing of religious freedom! At that moment, I couldn't help but be reminded of Almighty God's words, **"[I]t is to give vent, without reservation, to the hate that swells your breast, to eradicate those moldy germs, to allow you to leave this life that is no different from an ox or horse's, to no longer be a slave, to no longer be freely trampled upon or ordered about by the great red dragon; you will no longer be of this failed nation, will no longer belong to the heinous great red dragon, you will no longer be enslaved by it. The demons' nest will surely be torn to pieces by God, and you will stand beside God—you belong to God, and do not belong to this empire of slaves. God has long since loathed this dark society to His very bones. He gnashes His teeth, desperate to plant His feet upon this wicked, heinous old serpent, so that it may never rise again, and will never again abuse man; He will not excuse its actions in the past, He will not tolerate its deceit of man, He will settle the score for every one of its sins throughout the ages; God will not be in the least bit lenient toward this ringleader of all evil,^[1] He will utterly destroy it"** ("Work and Entry (8)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). At that moment, I was filled with both sorrow and anger, because I saw how truly insidious, cunning, and deceitful the Chinese government was. It claims to abide by such slogans as "freedom of religious belief, safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of citizens," but underneath, it unscrupulously disturbs and destroys God's work, arrests, beats, fines, and kills those who believe in Almighty God whenever it likes, and ruthlessly forces people to reject God, betray God, and submit to its dark governance.

Footnotes:

1. "Ringleader of all evil" refers to the old devil. This phrase expresses extreme dislike.

Humankind was made by God, and it is natural and right to believe in God and worship Him, but the reactionary CCP government goes against Heaven and nature, trying to drive away the coming of the true God. It inhumanly persecutes believers in God, using threats, inducements, false incriminations, extorted confessions, and torture. Its crimes are heinous, horrible, and hateful! Its baseness and evil made me loathe it to the core, and I became more determined than ever to die before I followed it, and my faith and resolve to follow Almighty God and walk the correct path in life were firmer than ever.

In August 2010, I was released after fulfilling my sentence. When I returned home, I learned that while I was serving my sentence, my husband was also under police surveillance for a year. During that year, in the evening there would often be plainclothes police monitoring his actions behind our house, snooping on him, and surveilling the house, making it impossible for my husband to return home or have a place where he could feel safe. During the day, he had to work outside, and at night he had to sleep in the pile of firewood near our home, making it impossible for him to sleep soundly. After I was released, I discovered that these police lackeys also spread rumors about me in the village, incited everyone in the village to abandon me, and sent the Village Women's director to keep watch on me. They also asked me to write a statement promising that I wouldn't leave the city. They denied me all personal freedom. After staying at home for a month, I was again forced by 3–4 police officers to go to the National Security Brigade for an interrogation. They again locked me to a metal chair and tried to force me to tell them information about The Church of Almighty God. When my family members came to get me out, they arrogantly stated, "If you want her released, you'll need to pay a fine of 20,000 yuan, or make her tell us information about The Church of Almighty God. Otherwise, she'll be sentenced to five years of reeducation through labor!" My family didn't have that much money, so they had to return home in helpless frustration. I understood deeply that these demons again wanted to use their arrest to force me to betray God, so in my heart I called out urgently to God in prayer, "Almighty God, Satan is playing its tricks again today, hoping in vain to force me to betray You, but I won't let them fool me. No matter how many years of labor I have to do, I will stand testimony to satisfy You." Just as I swore the oath in my heart to stand testimony no matter how much I had to suffer, I saw God's miraculous works: When these evil police saw that they would gain nothing from their interrogation, they released me that evening. I thanked Almighty God for opening a path for me, and again saving me from the clutches of Satan.

In the midst of cruel persecution by the CCP government, I never dared imagine I would emerge with my life. Without the guidance of Almighty God's word, without Almighty God's care and protection, and without the endless strength given to me by God, my own weak life could have been snuffed out and swallowed at any time by these inhumane devils, and I never would have been able to stand firm before Satan. This made me genuinely understand the authority and power of Almighty God's words, allowed me to feel the transcendence and greatness of Almighty God's life force, and allowed me to experience God's real love and selfless provision of life for me! It was Almighty God who led me time and again to overcome Satan's temptations, rise above my fear of death, and emerge from that hell on earth. I deeply experienced that only Almighty God's love for humankind is genuine, that Almighty God is the only One I can rely on, and that He is my only salvation. I have made a mortal oath to forsake and reject Satan, pursue the truth, and eternally follow Almighty God and walk the bright, right path in life!

27. Tribulation Inspired My Love for God

By Meng Yong, Shanxi Province

I am by nature a nice person. In this dark and evil society, I have always been bullied by other people, so I have tasted the coldness of the world of man and felt that my life was empty and without meaning. After I started believing in Almighty God, through reading God's words and living the church life, I enjoyed an earnestness and joy in my heart I had never felt before. Seeing the brothers and sisters of The Church of Almighty God love each other like a family made me realize that only God is righteous, and that only in The Church of Almighty God is there light. Through several years of personally experiencing Almighty God's work, I have come to truly appreciate that the words of Almighty God can indeed change people and save people. Almighty God is love, and He is salvation. So that more people can enjoy God's love and receive God's salvation, my brothers and sisters and I all try to do our best to spread the gospel, but we never expected to be captured and persecuted by the Chinese Communist Party government.

On January 12, 2011, several brothers and sisters and I drove to a place to spread the gospel, and ended up being reported by wicked people. Not long after, the county

government deployed officers from the criminal police brigade, national security forces, the anti-drug squad, armed police forces, and the local police station, to come around in more than 10 police vehicles to arrest us. When a brother and I were just about to drive away, four policemen ran over quickly and cut off our car. One of them pulled out the car key without letting us say a word, and ordered us to stay in the car and not move. By then, I saw that that seven or eight policemen wielding batons were furiously beating another brother, and that brother had already been beaten to the point that he was unable to move. I could not help but be filled with righteous indignation and rushed out of the car, trying to stop their violence, but the policemen twisted my arm and pushed me aside. I tried to reason with them: "Whatever it is, we can talk about it. How can you just start beating people?" They viciously yelled back: "Hurry up and get back to your car, you're going to get yours soon!" Later, they took us to the police station, and our car was also impounded.

After nine o'clock that night, two criminal policemen came to interrogate me. When they saw that they could not get any useful information out of me, they grew flustered and exasperated, gnashing their teeth in anger as they cursed: "Damn it, we'll take care of you later!" They then locked me in the interrogation waiting room. At 11:30 p.m., they took me into a room without surveillance cameras. I had a feeling they were going to use violence against me, so I started praying to God repeatedly in my heart, begging for God to protect me. At this time, a police officer surnamed Jia came to interrogate me: "Have you been in a Volkswagen Jetta in these last few days?" I answered no, and he furiously yelled: "Other people have already seen you, and yet you still deny it?" After saying it, he slapped me viciously across the face. All I felt was the burning pain on my cheek. He then roared loudly: "Let's see how tough you are!" He picked up a wide belt as he spoke and kept whipping it across my face, I don't know how many times I was whipped, but I could not help but scream out in pain time and time again. Upon seeing this, they pulled the belt around my mouth. A few policemen then put a quilt over my body before beating me furiously with their batons, only stopping when they became too tired to catch their breath. I had been beaten so badly that my head was spinning and my body hurt like every bone had scattered apart. At the time I did not know why they were beating me up in this way, but later on I found out that they had put a quilt over me to prevent the beating from leaving marks on my flesh. Putting me in a room without surveillance, gagging my mouth, and covering me with a quilt—it was all because they were afraid that their wicked deeds would be exposed. The CCP police are

so treacherous and vicious! When the four of them got tired from beating me, they changed to another method to torture me: Two policemen twisted one of my arms back and forcefully tugged it upward, while another two policemen lifted my other arm over the shoulder to the back and pulled it down hard. (They called this type of torture method “Carrying a Sword on the Back,” which an average person would not be able to endure at all.) But my two hands could not be pulled together no matter what, so they drove a vicious knee into my arm. All I heard was a “click,” and my two arms felt like they had been torn off. It hurt so much that I nearly expired. It did not take long for me to lose sensation in both my hands. This was still not enough for them to give up, so they ordered me to kneel down to add to my suffering. I was in so much pain that my whole body broke out in a cold sweat, my head was ringing, and my consciousness began to grow a little blurry. I thought: “Over all these years in my life, even though I’ve constantly suffered from chronic illnesses, I’ve never had the feeling of being unable to control my own consciousness. Am I about to die?” Later on, I really couldn’t take it anymore, so I thought of seeking relief through death. In that moment, the words of God enlightened me from within: **“Today, most people don’t have that knowledge. They believe that suffering is without value.... The suffering of some people reaches a certain point, and their thoughts turn to death. This is not the true love of God; such people are cowards, they have no perseverance, they are weak and powerless!”** (“Only by Experiencing Painful Trials Can You Know the Loveliness of God” in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God’s words made me suddenly awaken and realize that my way of thinking was not in line with God’s will and would only make God sad and disappointed. Because amid this pain and tribulation, what God wants to see is not me seeking death, but that I can rely on God’s guidance to battle Satan, to bear witness to God, and make Satan ashamed and defeated. Seeking death would be falling right into Satan’s scheme, and it couldn’t be considered bearing witness for God, but would instead become a mark of shame. After understanding God’s intentions, I prayed to God silently: “Oh God! Reality has shown that my nature is too weak. I don’t have the will and courage to suffer for You and wanted to die just because of a bit of physical pain. Now I know that I cannot do anything to shame Your name and must stand witness and satisfy You no matter how much suffering I have to endure. But at this time, my body is in extreme pain and weak, and I know that it is very difficult to overcome the beatings of these demons on my own. Please give me more confidence and strength so that I can rely on You to defeat Satan. I swear on my life

that I will not betray You or sell out my brothers and sisters.” As I repeatedly prayed to God, my heart slowly became at ease. The wicked police saw that I was barely breathing and were afraid they would have to bear responsibility if I died, so they came to release my handcuffs. But my arms had already stiffened, and the cuffs were so tight that they became very hard to undo. The four wicked policemen took several minutes to release the handcuffs before dragging me back to the interrogation waiting room.

The next afternoon, the police arbitrarily pinned a “criminal offense” on me and took me back to my home to raid it, and then sent me to a detention house. As soon as I entered the detention house, four correctional officers confiscated my cotton-padded jacket, trousers, boots, and watch, as well as the 1,300 yuan in cash I had on me. They made me change into their standard prison uniform and forced me to spend 200 yuan to buy a quilt from them. Afterward, the correctional officers locked me up with robbers, murderers, rapists, and drug smugglers. When I entered my cell, I saw twelve bald prisoners eyeing me with hostility. The atmosphere was gloomy and terrifying, and I felt my heart suddenly rise up to my throat. Two of the heads of the cell walked up to me and asked: “What are you in here for?” I said: “Spreading the gospel.” Without another word, one of them slapped me across the face twice, and said: “You’re a religious head, aren’t you?” The other prisoners all started laughing savagely and mocked me by asking: “Why don’t you let your God rescue you from here?” Amid the jeering and the ridiculing, the cell head slapped me across the face a few more times. From then on, they nicknamed me “religious head” and often humiliated and mocked me. The other cell head saw the slippers I was wearing and arrogantly shouted: “You don’t know your own place at all. Are you worthy of wearing these shoes? Take them off!” As he said it, he forced me to take them off and change into a pair of their worn-out slippers. They also gave away my quilt to the other prisoners. Those prisoners fought back and forth for my quilt, and in the end left me with an old quilt that was thin, torn, dirty, and smelly. Instigated by the correctional officers, these prisoners subjected me to all sorts of hardships and torment. The light was always on in the cell at night, but a cell head said to me with an evil grin: “Turn that light off for me.” As I could not do it (there wasn’t even a switch), they started laughing at me and mocking me again. The next day, a few juvenile prisoners forced me to stand in a corner and memorize the prison rules, threatening: “You’re going to get it if you don’t memorize it within two days!” I could not help but be terrified, and the more I thought about what I had been through the last few days, the more frightened I became. The

only thing I could do was to keep calling out to God and beg for God to protect me so I could overcome it. At this moment, I thought of a hymn of God's words: "**[W]hether you face imprisonment, illness, ridicule, or slander from others, or seem to have no way out, you can still love God. This means your heart has turned to God**" ("Has Your Heart Turned to God?" in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). God's word gave me power and pointed out a path for me to practice—seeking to love God and turning my heart to God! In that moment, it suddenly became crystal clear in my heart: God allowing this suffering to befall me was not to torment me or intentionally make me suffer, but to train me to turn my heart to God in such an environment, so that I can resist the control of Satan's dark influences and so my heart can still be close to God and love God, never complaining, always accepting and obeying God's orchestrations and arrangements. With this in my mind, I was no longer afraid. No matter how Satan treats me, all I shall care about is giving myself to God and doing all I can to pursue loving God and satisfying God, never yielding to Satan.

Life in prison is practically hell on earth. The prison guards kept coming up with ways to torture me: When I was sleeping at night, other prisoners would crowd up against me so I could hardly turn over, and they made me sleep right up against the toilet. After being captured, I didn't sleep for several days and became so sleepy that I couldn't take it and would doze off. The prisoners on duty who were standing guard would come to harass me, intentionally flicking me on the head until I woke up before they would leave. Once, at around three in the morning, a prisoner woke me up on purpose and forcefully stole the long john top I was wearing, then gave me a dirty, ragged, and thin long john top. Those were the coldest days of the year, but this prisoner still took away the only long john top I had on me. The people in there were as barbaric as beasts. They were vicious and sinister, without a shred of humanity, like demons who torture people in hell for fun. Moreover, the food there was even worse than what was fed to dogs and pigs. The first time, I received half a bowl of congee, and saw that there were many black spots in it. I didn't know what they were, and the color of the congee was also blackish. It was very difficult to swallow. I really wanted to fast at the time, but God's words enlightened me: "**[D]uring these last days you must bear testimony to God. No matter how great your suffering, you should go on to the very end, and even at your last breath, still you must be faithful to God, and at the mercy of God; only this is truly loving God, and only this is the strong and resounding testimony**" ("Only by Experiencing Painful Trials Can You Know the Loveliness of God" in

The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words were full of love and affection like the comforting of a mother, arousing my courage to face suffering. God wants me to keep on living, but I was too weak, constantly wanting relief through death. I don't even cherish myself; it is still God who loves me the most! A warmth suddenly surged in my heart, making me so emotional that tears burst from my eyes. Being moved by God's love once again gave me energy, and I must eat this meal regardless of how it tasted. So I finished off the congee in one breath. After breakfast, the cell head made me scrub the floors. These were the coldest days of the year and there was no hot water, so I could only use cold water for the cleaning cloth. The cell head also ordered me to scrub like this every day. Then, several convicted robbers made me memorize the prison rules. If I couldn't memorize them, they would punch and kick me; getting slapped in the face was even more common. Facing such an environment, I often wondered what I would have to do to be able to meet God's will. At night, I pulled my quilt over my head and prayed silently: "Oh God, You allowed this environment to befall me, so Your good intentions must lie therein. Please reveal Your intentions to me." At that moment, God's words enlightened me: **"I admire the lilies blooming in the hills. The flowers and grass stretch across the slopes, but the lilies add luster to My glory on earth before the arrival of spring—can man achieve this much? Could he testify to Me on earth prior to My return? Could he dedicate himself for the sake of My name in the country of the great red dragon?"** ("Chapter 34" of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). Yes, the flowers and grass and I are all God's creation. God created us to manifest Him, to glorify Him. The lilies are able to add luster to God's glory on earth before the spring arrives, meaning they have fulfilled their responsibility as a creation of God. My duty today is to obey God's orchestration and to bear witness to God before Satan, to let everyone see that Satan harms and devours man, while God is the one true God who loves and saves man. Enduring all this suffering and humiliation now is not because I committed an offense, but is for the sake of God's name. Enduring this suffering is glorious. The more Satan humiliates me, the more I have to stand on God's side and love God. That way, God can gain glory, and I would have fulfilled the duty I should have fulfilled. As long as God is happy and pleased, my heart will also receive comfort. I am willing to endure the final suffering to satisfy God and submit to God's orchestrations in all things. When I started to think this way, I felt especially moved in my heart, and was once again unable to control my tears. I prayed to God silently: "Oh God,

You truly are worthy of love! I have followed You for so many years, but never had I felt Your tender affection like I have today, or felt as close to You as I do today.” I completely forgot my own suffering and became immersed in this moving feeling for a long, long time ...

On my third day at the detention house, a correctional officer took me to their office. I saw more than a dozen people staring at me with peculiar looks. One of them held a video camera in front of me to my left, while another walked up to me with a microphone, asking: “Why do you believe in Almighty God?” That was when I realized that this was a media interview, so I answered with proud humility: “Since I was little, I have often been subject to people’s bullying and cold shoulders, and I’ve seen people mutually deceive and take advantage of each other. I felt that this society was too dark, too perilous; people were living empty and helpless lives, with nothing to look forward to and with no life goals. Later, when someone preached the gospel of Almighty God to me, I started believing in it. After believing in Almighty God, I have felt other believers treat me like family. No one in The Church of Almighty God plots against me. Everyone is mutually understanding and caring. They look after each other, and are not afraid to speak what’s on their minds. In Almighty God’s word I have found the purpose and value of life. I think believing in God is pretty good.” The reporter then asked: “Do you know why you are here?” I responded: “Since believing in Almighty God, I have cared less about worldly name and benefits, and I feel that these things are empty and meaningless. Only if I can be a good person and take the right path can I live in a righteous way. My heart is turning more and more toward kindness, and I am more and more willing to be a good person. Seeing how Almighty God’s word can truly change people and lead people to take the right path, I thought that if all of mankind can believe in God, then our country would be much more orderly and the crime rate would drop. Hence, I decided to tell this good news to other people, but I never knew that such a good deed would be banned in China. And so I was arrested and brought here.” The reporter saw that my responses were not advantageous toward them, so he immediately stopped the interview and left. At that moment, the deputy head of the National Security Brigade was so furious that he kept stomping his feet. He stared at me viciously, gnashing his teeth and whispering: “You just wait and see!” But I was not at all afraid of his threats or intimidation. Conversely, I felt deeply honored to have been able to bear witness to God on such an occasion, and moreover I gave glory to God for the exaltation of God’s name and the defeat of Satan.

Temperatures were very low on the day of January 17. As the wicked police had

confiscated my cotton-padded coat, I only wore a set of long johns and ended up catching a cold. I came down with a high fever and also could not stop coughing. At night, I wrapped myself up in a worn quilt, enduring the torment of illness while also thinking about the endless mistreatment and abuse of the prisoners toward me. I felt very desolate and helpless. Just as my misery reached a certain extent, I thought of Peter's genuine and sincere prayer before God: **"If You give me sickness, and take my freedom, I can continue living, but were Your chastisement and judgment to leave me, I would have no way to go on living. If I were without Your chastisement and judgment, I would have lost Your love, a love that is too deep for me to put into words. Without Your love, I would live under the domain of Satan ..."** ("The Experiences of Peter: His Knowledge of Chastisement and Judgment" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). These words inspired me, giving me faith and strength. Peter was never driven by the flesh. What he loved dearly and valued was God's chastisement and judgment. As long as God's chastisement and judgment did not leave him, his heart would receive its greatest comfort. I should now follow the example of Peter's pursuit and understanding. The flesh is corrupt and will inevitably decay. Even if I encounter illness and lose my freedom, it is suffering I should bear. But if I lose God's chastisement and judgment, that is equivalent to losing God's presence and love, and also means losing the chance to be cleansed. That is what is most painful. Under God's enlightenment, I once again experienced God's love. I also hated my own weakness and worthlessness, and saw that my nature is too selfish, never showing any consideration toward God's feelings of sadness. At that moment I felt full of indebtedness to God, so I quietly set my resolve: No matter how great my suffering, I will stand witness for God and satisfy Him. The next day, several other prisoners in the same cell fell ill, but my high fever miraculously receded. I felt God's care and protection toward me and also saw His wondrous deeds. I couldn't help but praise and thank God silently.

One night, a vendor came to the window and the cell head bought a lot of ham, dog meat, chicken thighs, and so forth. In the end, he ordered me to pay. I said I didn't have the money, so he said viciously: "If you don't have the money I will slowly torment you!" The next day, he made me wash the bedsheets, clothes, and socks. The correctional officers in the detention house also made me wash their socks. In the detention house, I had to endure their beatings nearly every day. Whenever I could bear it no longer, I would always be guided inside by God's words: **"You must do your final duty for God during your time on earth.**

In the past, Peter was crucified upside down for God; however, you should satisfy God in the end, and exhaust all of your energy for God. What can a creature do for God? So you should give yourself to the mercy of God sooner rather than later. As long as God is happy and pleased, then let Him do whatever He wants. What right do men have to complain?” (“Chapter 41” of Interpretations of the Mysteries of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God’s words gave me infinite power. Even though from time to time I would still be subject to the attacks, abuse, condemnation, and beatings of the prisoners, my heart was able to achieve comfort and joy. Like a powerful warm flow, God’s love encouraged me to continue on, enabling me to truly feel that God’s love is too great.

One morning, a correctional officer specifically delivered a sheet of newspaper. The prisoners grinned hideously as they used a mocking tone to read out words from the newspaper slandering and blaspheming Almighty God. I was so furious that I began gnashing my teeth. The prisoners came over to ask me what it was all about, and I said loudly: “This is a smear by the Communist Party!” Listening to these prisoners all just parroting what the newspaper said, saying untrue things and blaspheming God by speaking the same language as the devil, I seemingly saw the coming of their end. As the sin of blaspheming God shall never be forgiven, anyone who offends God’s disposition will receive the punishment and retribution of God! By doing this, the Communist Party is taking all the people of China to their ultimate doom, completely exposing its true face as a soul-eating demon! Later the police officer in charge of my case interrogated me again. This time, he did not use torture to try to force a confession, and instead changed to using a “kind” face to ask me: “Who is your leader? I’ll give you another chance. If you tell us, you’ll be all right. I will show you great leniency. You were actually innocent, but other people ratted you out. So why cover for them? You seem like such a nice person. Why give your life for them? If you tell us, you can go home. Why stay here and suffer?” These two-faced hypocrites saw that the hard approach didn’t work, so they decided to try the soft approach. They really are full of cunning tricks and old masters of machinations and maneuvers! That hypocritical face of his filled my heart with hate for this pack of demons. I said to him: “I’ve told you everything I know. I don’t know anything else.” He saw my resolute stance and that he couldn’t get anything out of me; he walked away dejectedly.

After being held at the detention house for half a month, I was released only after the

police asked my family to pay 8,000 yuan in bond money. But they warned me not to go anywhere and that I must stay at home and guarantee to be on call. On the day I was released, the prisoners said: “Your God is amazing. We were not sick people, but we all became sick people here. You came here full of illnesses, but now you’re leaving without any illness. Good on you!” In this moment, my heart became even more thankful and full of praise toward God! My uncle is a prison guard. He kept suspecting that I was released because my father has a special connection to someone powerful, or else there’s no way I would have been released from a high-security prison within half a month—at the very least it should have been three months. My whole family knew very well that this was determined by God’s omnipotence and that it was God revealing His wonderful work on me. I saw clearly that this was the contest between God and Satan. No matter how savage and vicious Satan is, it will always be defeated by God. From then on, I became convinced that everything I encountered was part of God’s arrangement. In late May, 2011, on a groundless accusation of “disturbing social order,” the CCP got me sentenced to one year of re-education through labor, to be served outside prison under surveillance, and suspended for two years.

After experiencing this persecution and tribulation, I had an understanding and could discern the devilish face and the evil essence of the atheist Communist Party of China, and developed a deep-seated hatred toward it. It uses violence and lies to protect its own position of dominance; it madly suppresses and persecutes the people who believe in God. It uses every trick in the book to hinder and disrupt God’s work on earth, and hates the truth to an extreme. It is the greatest enemy of God and also the enemy of those of us who are believers. After going through this tribulation, I can see that only God’s word can bring people life. When I was at my most desperate or at the brink of death, it was God’s word that gave me faith and courage, and allowed me to tenaciously hold on to life. Throughout this half-month of prison life, if God had not been with me, using His words to remind, enlighten, and encourage me, there was no way I, with a weak nature, could have stood firm in such a tribulation. If it were not for God looking after and protecting me, there was no way my weak and fragile body could have withstood the torture and ill-treatment of the CCP, which, even had it not tormented me to death, would have left my body sick and wounded. But God wonderfully protected me through those darkest, most difficult days, and even cured my original illness. God really is too almighty! His love for me is really too deep, too great! I really don’t know how to express my gratitude toward God, and can only say from the bottom

of my heart: “Oh God, I hope to love You ever deeper! No matter how rough and bumpy the road ahead is or how much suffering I must endure, I will obey Your orchestration and be determined to follow You to the end!”

This experience is not only a treasure, but also a new starting point for my path of faith. I feel deeply that, in the ten years I have believed in God, I have never appreciated God’s love as deeply as I do today or truly felt that the value and meaning of believing in God, following God, and worshiping God is so great; and moreover, I have never been as willing to pursue loving God and offer my remaining life to repay God’s love as much as I do today. I would like to take this opportunity to offer my heartfelt appreciation and praise. All glory and praise to Almighty God!

28. A Deeper Experience of God’s Love Through Entering a Lair of Demons

By Fenyong, Shanxi Province

Despite being raised under the loving care of my parents since I was a child, in my heart, I often felt lonely and that I had no one to rely on. I always seemed to be gripped by some inexplicable affliction that I was unable to overcome. I often asked myself: Why are people alive? How should we live? But I could never find an answer. In 1999, I finally had the good fortune to accept Almighty God’s work of the last days. The nourishment and provision of God’s word comforted my lonely heart, and I felt that I had finally come home. I felt especially safe and secure. Only then did I finally know what it was to be happy. Later, I read in God’s word that: **“Without God in his heart, man’s inner world is dark, hopeless and empty. ... [T]he position and life of God cannot be replaced by any man. Mankind does not just require a fair society in which everyone is well-fed and is equal and free; what they need is the salvation of God and His provision of life to them”** (“God Presides Over the Fate of All Mankind” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). Here, I finally discovered that eating well, wearing fancy clothes, and enjoying oneself aren’t what people need to live. What people need are God’s salvation and God’s supply of life. Only with these things can the emptiness in people’s spirits be resolved. The questions that had troubled me for so long were finally answered: God cares for every living being in creation—people should live by

relying on God and they should live for God, for only by living in this way are people's lives meaningful. As I read more of God's word, I gradually came to understand some of the truth, and later I took up duties in the church. I often went to meetings and fellowshiped with my brothers and sisters, and I passed my days feeling as though I was living a full, satisfying life. But, a sudden arrest shattered my quiet life and cast me into a lair of demons ...

It was a rainy, summer day on July 17, 2009, when I and three of my sisters awoke from our afternoon naps to hear the dog in the courtyard suddenly begin to bark continually. I looked out to see what was going on, and I saw more than 20 plainclothes policemen climbing over the wall into the courtyard. Before I had time to react, they rushed into the house and dragged us into the living room. The sudden change in circumstances left me panicked as I wondered how I would answer the police's interrogation. But then, a notion came to me: God had allowed these circumstances to occur, so I must submit. After that, the police ordered us to squat down and two of them twisted my arms behind my back, pressed an electric baton to my neck, and put a coat over my head. They kept pressing down on me and my legs went numb. The slightest movement brought forth a tide of profanity and berating. These evil police wildly rummaged through the house like bandits, and I continually prayed to God in my heart saying, "God! I know everything is in Your hands and it is through Your good intentions that I've been faced with this situation. Even though I don't understand right now, I am willing to submit. God! I feel very panicked now, I am very afraid, and I don't know what kind of circumstances I'll have to face next. I know my stature is too small, and that I understand too little of the truth, so I beg for Your protection and guidance. Give me faith and strength, so that I can stand firm, and not become a Judas and betray You." I prayed time and again, not daring to leave God for even a moment. In their search, the police found four laptop computers, several cell phones, several thumb drives and MP3 players, and more than 1,000 RMB in cash. After they finished searching the house, they seized everything they found, took pictures of each of us, and then forced us into their vehicle. On my way out, I saw more police cars and police than I could count.

The police took us to a hostel in a military subarea, where they separated us to interrogate us individually. There were two police guarding the door. Immediately after they shoved me into the room, three male officers and one female officer began questioning me. One of the male officers began by asking, "Where are you from? What is your name? What are you doing in this area? Where is the church's money?" I continually prayed to God in my

heart, and no matter what they asked me, I refused to utter a sound. Upon seeing this, they all lost their temper. They ordered me to stand up rigidly straight and wouldn't let me lean on the wall. In this way, they continued to take turns interrogating me for three days and three nights and, during that time, they wouldn't allow me to eat or sleep. My already thin, weak body couldn't withstand such abuse. My head felt ready to explode, I felt as if my heart had been hollowed out, I was tired and hungry, and I couldn't keep my balance. But every time I closed my eyes, they poked me and said, "You're not sleeping before you answer our questions! No way! We have all the time in the world. Let's see just how long you can last!" They often asked me questions about the church. I was very nervous throughout the ordeal, and terrified that I might let something slip in a moment of carelessness. I felt physically and spiritually tormented, but when I thought I had borne all I could bear and couldn't endure, God enlightened me by making me recall this passage of His word, **"When you face sufferings you must be able to not consider the flesh and not complain against God. When God hides Himself from you, you must be able to have the faith to follow Him, to maintain your previous love without allowing it to falter or disappear. No matter what God does, you must submit to His design, and be more willing to curse your own flesh than to complain against Him. When you are faced with trials you must satisfy God in spite of any reluctance to part with something you love, or bitter weeping. Only this can be called true love and faith. No matter what your actual stature is, you must first possess the will to suffer hardship as well as true faith, and you must have the will to forsake the flesh"** ("Those Who Are to Be Made Perfect Must Undergo Refinement" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). Each line of God's words gave me encouragement. That's right, Satan was using my physical weakness to attack me. It hoped to use my desire to protect my flesh and live in comfort and ease to make me submit to it. I couldn't allow it to deceive me and make me live as a cowardly, debased Judas. I was willing to live by God's word, forsake the flesh, and practice love of God. I would rather curse my own flesh than complain against or betray God. God's words were a source of bottomless strength, and gave me the determination to bear my suffering. At midnight on the third day, a middle-aged man came, apparently their superior, and upon seeing that they hadn't been able to get a word from me, he came to stand directly in front of me and said, "You're a young woman, and not bad-looking. You could do anything you want. Why do you insist on believing in God? Why not just tell us what you know? Delaying things won't do you any

good. The longer you delay, the more you'll have to suffer." At that moment, my flesh was extremely weak, and my determination began to shake. I thought, "Maybe I should just tell them something unimportant. If I keep putting things off like this, who knows what other means they would use to torture me?" But I immediately thought, "No! I can't say anything! If I let anything slip they'll ask more and more. There won't be any stopping it once I do, and then I really will be a Judas." When I realized this, I understood that I had nearly fallen for Satan's trick. This was dangerous! What sinister, despicable devils! They were exploiting my weakness, using both hard and soft techniques to make me betray the church. I couldn't allow myself to be tricked by Satan. I would die before I did anything to betray God.

On the fourth day, when these evil police saw that I still hadn't told them anything, they tried another tactic. They brought me into another room and closed the door. Then, I remembered I had once heard someone describe how the police brought a sister into a jail cell full of men and allowed the male prisoners to humiliate her. I felt deeply afraid, as if I was a lamb in a tiger's maw with no hope of escape, and I thought, "How are they going to torture me now? Am I going to die in this room? ... God, please protect me and give me strength!" Time and again I prayed and called out to God, not daring to leave Him for a moment. The evil police sat down on the bed. They told me to stand in front of them and asked me the same questions, and when they saw I still wasn't speaking, one of them became furious. He grabbed my arms, twisted them behind my back, handcuffed me, and ordered me to stand in a horse stance. My legs were already limp by this point. They were too weak to even stand, let alone support me in the horse stance. I couldn't maintain the position for even a minute. When my posture didn't meet their requirements, one of them kicked me ferociously in the shin, knocking me to the floor. Another large male police officer stepped forward and hoisted me up by my handcuffs, then lifted my arms behind me high into the air, chiding me as he did, "Will you talk now? Don't test my patience!" The higher he lifted me, the tighter the handcuff became, and I screamed in pain. The more I screamed, the higher he lifted me and the more viciously he berated me, but I could sense nothing except that my arms and wrists were ready to snap. In my misery, a passage of God's word appeared in my mind. **"[D]uring these last days you must bear testimony to God. No matter how great your suffering, you should go on to the very end, and even at your last breath, still you must be faithful to God, and at the mercy of God; only this is truly loving God, and only this is the strong and resounding testimony"** ("Only by

Experiencing Painful Trials Can You Know the Loveliness of God” in The Word Appears in the Flesh). In that moment, I sincerely felt God’s comfort and encouragement. I felt that God was by my side, that He was with me, encouraging me to stand firm no matter how great the suffering, and to be loyal to Him to the end, because only this is strong, resonant testimony. I silently prayed to God, “God, now You require me to stand firm and testify for You. No matter how much I suffer, I will testify for You in the face of Satan, and even if I die I will not betray You! I will not submit to Satan!” After another round of torment, the policeman saw that I still wasn’t speaking, so he flung me viciously to the floor. Afterward, I saw that the handcuffs had cut two deep gashes into my wrists, and the pain seemed to rip through me. Even today, I can’t lift heavy things with my right wrist.

The police tortured me intermittently over ten days to get information about the church. When they saw that their aggressive tactics weren’t working, they tried a different strategy. One day, they sent a female officer to get close to me. She brought me some daily use products, and then tried to ingratiate herself with me, saying, “Look at yourself—a young woman, good-looking, with what must be a good diploma. If you didn’t believe in God, we could be friends. If you don’t have anywhere to go, you could stay at my house. I can help you get a good job here, and introduce a good boyfriend. You could have your own home, your own husband, a child, and enjoy your days with your family. Wouldn’t that be nice? As things are now, you’re unable to go home. Don’t you miss your home and your parents?” The male officer next to them joined in, saying, “That’s right. Why do you spend your days in hiding, moving from place to place? Why put yourself through that? As long as you cooperate with us, I promise there’s a way out of all this for you.” I heard them tempting me, and my heart couldn’t help but become weak, “They’re right. I’ve spent the last years in hiding, afraid of being arrested by the police. I’ve had no fixed address, and I’ve been constantly afraid. When will these days of persecution come to an end? Living like this really is miserable!” But that thought instantly brought darkness into my heart, so I cried out to God, “God! I know my state is incorrect. I’m making demands of You and complaining about You. This is my rebelliousness and resistance. God! I beg You to enlighten me so that I can turn away from this incorrect state, stop Satan’s scheme from succeeding, and prevent myself from falling into Satan’s snare.” After I prayed, I remembered a passage of God’s word, **“Perhaps you all remember these words: ‘For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.’ You**

have all heard these words before, yet none of you understood their true meaning. Today, you are profoundly aware of their true significance. These words shall be fulfilled by God during the last days, and they shall be fulfilled in those who have been brutally persecuted by the great red dragon in the land where it lies coiled. The great red dragon persecutes God and is the enemy of God, and so, in this land, those who believe in God are thus subjected to humiliation and oppression, and God's words are fulfilled in you, this group of people, as a result" ("Is the Work of God As Simple As Man Imagines?" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). The enlightenment in God's words brightened my heart. I came to understand the significance of experiencing persecution and tribulation. God uses the persecution of these demons to give us the determination to bear suffering and perfect our sincerity and faith in following Him, so that our experience and testimony can become powerful proof of God overcoming Satan, and so that all people can see such testimony that Almighty God's work of the last days is not the work of man, but is the work of God Himself. Without God's work and the guidance and provision of God's words, no person could bear long-term humanity-crushing cruelty and torment of these demons. Being able to believe in God and follow God even at the cost of one's own life is the effect achieved by Almighty God's work upon people. It is the testimony of the glory gained by God, and God's almighty power. In this last stage of His work, God wants to gain a group of overcomers who can withstand Satan's persecution and cruel harm and dauntlessly turn toward righteousness. These are the overcomers God ultimately wishes to gain! God's word says, **"I have bestowed all My glory unto you, I have bestowed unto you the life that the chosen people, the Israelites, never received. By rights, you ought to bear witness to Me and devote to Me your youth and lay down your life. Whomsoever I bestow My glory unto shall bear Me witness and give their life for Me. This has long been predestined by Me. It is your good fortune that I bestow My glory upon you, and your duty is to testify to My glory"** ("What Do You Know of Faith?" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). In His six-thousand-year management plan, God has done three stages of work and has incarnated twice. In His final incarnation, He has come to work in China, an atheist land which persecutes God most heavily, and He accomplishes a portion of the glory He gains in the last days upon those of us deeply and brutally harmed by Satan, thereby defeating Satan, and at the same time working the truth and life within us. We truly gain much from God, and so should testify for God. This is God's commission, as well as

His grace and exaltation, and it is our honor. So, the suffering we bear today is meaningful and valuable, and represents God's favor for us. Through the enlightenment and guidance of God's words, I understood God's will, saw through Satan's tricks, and found the determination to bear any suffering to stand firm and testify for God. After that, the police continued to question me for another two weeks, but I never told them any information about the church.

Afterward, I was transferred to the local detention house. As soon as I arrived, a female police officer ordered me to strip naked to be searched, and she seized the money I carried as well. When I entered the cell, the stench was awful. More than twenty people were squeezed onto a single sleeping platform. We all ate, drank, urinated, and defecated in the same room. In the month that followed, I was ordered by these evil police to work overtime and take extra duties every day. They had taken my glasses, so everything was a blur to me, and I had to draw things very close to my eyes as I worked to see clearly. On top of that, the detention house's lights were small and dim. While others slept, I had to continue working late into the night because it took me so long to complete my tasks. My eyes were extremely exhausted, and I feared the work would make me go blind. I couldn't sleep well at night, and each night I had to do an hour of shift duty in the cell. Beyond the heavy workload every day, I was also interrogated twice a week, and each time, these evil police would put me in handcuffs and shackles, as well as the "imperial yellow" prisoner's uniform. I remember, on one such day, it was raining. I walked beside a male police officer, who held an umbrella over himself. I walked with extreme difficulty, handcuffed and shackled in my thin prison uniform, shivering as the cold rain fell on me. The shackles were very heavy, and scraped my ankles and clanked loudly with every step. In the past I had only seen such things on TV, but now I was experiencing it personally. I couldn't help but despise my situation, and I cried out within my heart, "This is how murders and rapists are interrogated! What did I do to deserve this?" It was then that God enlightened me and I remembered God's words, **"Forefathers of the ancient? Beloved leaders? They all oppose God! Their meddling has left all beneath heaven in a state of darkness and chaos! Religious freedom? The legitimate rights and interests of citizens? They are all tricks for covering up sin! ... Now is the time: Man has long since gathered all his strength, he has devoted all his efforts, paid every price, for this, to tear off the hideous face of this demon and allow people, who have been blinded, and have endured every manner of suffering and**

hardship, to rise up from their pain and turn their backs on this evil old devil" ("Work and Entry (8)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). When I compared God's words to the reality I faced, I finally saw that although the CCP government declares in every way to the outside world that all people deserve religious freedom, the moment anyone really believes in God, it responds with all variety of persecution, arrest, violence, insult, condemnation, and imprisonment. It doesn't treat people in a humane fashion. The values of "freedom of religious belief" and "democracy and human rights" are tricks intended purely to deceive, blind, and toy with others! This evil party beautifies itself with all manner of eloquence, but in truth is as cruel and brutal as a demonic beast, truly as sinister and vicious as they come! The CCP government willfully ignores and turns a blind eye to the villains and evildoers in the world who cheat, defraud, murder, and rob, and at times even protects them, yet it ruthlessly persecutes and kills people who believe in God and walk the right path. It truly is a demon that makes itself an enemy of God! As I thought of these things, I couldn't help but despise this vile demon. I swore to rebel against it even if it cost me my life, and I gave myself over to God! After a month, despite lacking any evidence, the police sentenced me to a year of reeducation through labor for the charge of "disturbing public order."

When I arrived at the labor camp, I realized that this was an even darker place. Here, there was no freedom at all. Detainees could only eat, drink, or go to the toilet at the order of their unit guards, and we had to obey the guards in everything or we were punished. When we entered and left the room, we had to number off, and if anyone reported the wrong number, the entire unit was punished by spending two hours under brutal sun or being soaked in the rain. When we went to the cafeteria to eat, if anyone reported the wrong number, the entire unit was punished by being forced to wait outside and not being allowed to eat. We could only look on helplessly as the other detainees ate their meals. We also had to sing a military song before every meal, with all our strength, and if anyone sang out of tune or not loud enough, we had to start the song over, once, twice.... We were only allowed to eat once our unit guards were satisfied. This so-called "management system" exists purely to satisfy the desires of those evil guards to lord over others, to order others around, and to enjoy status. They every day put others on edge. Here, beyond cleaning up for the guards and folding their quilts, the detainees had to fetch water for their footbaths and massage their backs. The guards acted like emperors and queens, smiling at you if you served them well, but scolding viciously or beating if you served them badly. No matter what we were

doing, even if we were in the bathroom, the moment we heard the guards shouting, we had to loudly answer “present” and hurry over to hear their instructions. These are how labor camps under the CCP regime are run. They are dark, oppressive, cruel, and humiliating. Faced with all this, I felt nothing but resentment and helplessness. And beyond that, these evil police treated the labor camp detainees as draft animals and slaves, as merely tools for making money. They overloaded us with work every day, to the point that aside from eating and sleeping, we spent the rest of our time working to create wealth for them. Every day, beyond the various regulations we had to follow, we also had to deal with a heavy workload, and there was no saying when we would be punished and scolded, I really couldn’t stand living like that, and I don’t know how many times I thought to myself, “Will I die in this labor camp? Every day they drive us to exhaustion. How will I make it through such an arduous year? When will this finally be over? I can’t stand another minute, another second, in this hellish place....” On top of that, there was no one who I could openly share my feelings with. Every day, I had to bear everything in silence and work ceaselessly, and I felt miserable. At night, when everyone was asleep, as I looked out through the barred window at the stars, I was overcome with sorrow. I felt isolated and alone, and I couldn’t help but sob into my pillow. But at the moment I felt weakest, I suddenly remembered God’s word, **“Many are the sleepless nights that God has endured for the sake of the work of mankind. From up high to the lowest depths, He has descended to the living hell in which man lives to pass His days with man, has never complained of the shabbiness among man, has never reproached man for his disobedience, but endures the greatest humiliation as He personally carries out His work. How could God belong to hell? How could He spend His life in hell? But for the sake of all mankind, so that the whole of mankind can find rest sooner, He has endured humiliation and suffered injustice to come to earth, and personally entered into ‘hell’ and ‘Hades,’ into the tiger’s den, to save man”** (“Work and Entry (9)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). Every line of God’s word comforted my tormented heart. Yes! I felt so alone and isolated in this demonic prison because I had no one to confide in, but God descended to earth from heaven and endured horrendous insult and torment to save us, mankind, who rebelled against and resisted Him, and not a single person could understand Him or be considerate of His will. Instead, He was faced with people’s misunderstanding, complaints, neglect, attacks, deceit, and betrayal. Did God not feel the same isolation and loneliness? Was God not also tormented and hurt? But

despite this, I wasn't considerate of God's will at all, and became negative and weak after only a little suffering. I wanted only to withdraw and escape. I truly was rebellious! God allowed the persecution of these devils to fall upon me not because He deliberately wanted to make me suffer, but because He wanted me to clearly see the CCP government's evil face through experiencing its cruel persecution, become able to truly forsake it, and finally turn entirely to God. All this was done with God's good intentions and salvation. And at any rate, Christ was suffering with me now, so I was no longer alone. It was only then that I felt that in all God does to man, there is only salvation and love. Although I suffered torment in the flesh, it was incredibly beneficial to my life entry! Once I understood these things, I slowly began to emerge from my negative, weak state, and I found the determination to be content with suffering to bear witness for God.

At the end of June 2010, I was released one month early. Through experiencing this persecution and difficulty, I truly felt that God's salvation for people is sincere and practical, and that God's love for people is deep and genuine! If I hadn't experienced persecution and arrest by these devils, my faith, courage, and determination to suffer could not have been perfected, and I would never be able to clearly see the demon's real, ugly face. I would never sincerely despise it, and I would never be able to turn my heart over to God and give myself entirely to God. Without real experience of the bitterness of persecution and difficulty, I would never be able to understand or appreciate the misery God feels or the price He pays in coming incarnate to this filthy place to save us. This allowed me to feel God's love more deeply and brought my heart closer to Him. I am thankful to God's words for the guidance they provided me time and again, and for accompanying me through a year of living in darkness in prison. Today, I have returned to the church, I read God's word and fellowship on the truth with my brothers and sisters, I have again taken up my duties, and my heart is filled with endless joy and happiness. I am grateful to God from the bottom of my heart, and I have sworn an oath to myself: No matter what circumstances or trials befall me in the future, I wish only to pursue the truth with all my strength and follow God to the end!

29. I Come to Clearly Distinguish Love and Hate by Undergoing the Bitterness of Persecution

By Zhao Zhi, Hebei Province

My name is Zhao Zhi and I'm 52 this year. I've been a follower of Almighty God for 14 years. Before gaining my faith I was in business; I was often busy entertaining, sending people gifts, and socializing. I was constantly in and out of entertainment venues like karaoke places and gambling parlors. My wife was constantly arguing with me over this and eventually ended up threatening to divorce me and leave our home. At the time, I was completely stuck in this mire and couldn't extricate myself, and even though I did my best to take good care of our family, I just couldn't do it. I felt like life was really miserable; I was exhausted. In June of 1999, the grace of Almighty God's salvation came upon us, and through reading God's words and having fellowship with brothers and sisters, my wife realized that the darkness in the world and human corruption are entirely due to Satan harming us and toying with us. She expressed understanding of my situation and opened up her heart in fellowship with me. Through the guidance of God's words, I also saw that I was wallowing in a cauldron of sin, and that God was disgusted by it and hated it. Even more than this, I saw that I had not been acting like a human being at all. I felt remorseful and guilty, and so I resolved before God to become a new man. From then on, my wife and I prayed and read God's words every single day, and we often gathered with brothers and sisters for fellowship. Before we knew it, the conflicts between us and the distress we had felt dissipated like a cloud of smoke, and our lives became full of peace and joy. I was deeply aware that Almighty God had saved our family when it was on the verge of ruin, and had brought us completely new lives. On top of feeling incredibly grateful, I also quietly resolved to offer up the entirety of my being to repay God's grace. After that I started to throw myself into doing my duty and sharing the gospel so that more people could gain the salvation God has brought to us in the last days. However, the atheistic Chinese Communist Party government doesn't allow people to worship God or take the right path, and it particularly doesn't allow people to spread the gospel and bear witness to God. Because I believed in God and spread the gospel, I was subjected to arrest and persecution by the CCP government ...

It was a spring day in 2002. A brother and I were reported to the police by a malicious

person while sharing the gospel in a village. The police came immediately and, without ascertaining the situation at all, slapped handcuffs on me, dragged me into a police car, and took me back to the station. As soon as we got into the interrogation room, before I even had a chance to react, an officer charged toward me, grabbed hold of my collar, and slapped me hard several times. I immediately became dizzy and started seeing stars, and I couldn't help but stumble and fall headlong onto the floor. I was bleeding from the mouth and nose and my face was burning with pain. When he saw this, the evil policeman kicked me viciously and fumed at me through gritted teeth, "You piece of shit, don't you pretend with me. Get up!" Two other officers came over, yanked me up by the arms, and threw me to one side, and then the three of them started punching and kicking me. I was in unbearable pain all over my body; I fell to the floor and couldn't get back up. They eyed me with murderous stares, glaring at me like a tiger eyes its prey. One of them barked at me, "What's your name? Where are you from? Why were you at that man's house? If you don't talk, you'll really get it from me!" I silently prayed to God, asking Him to protect my heart so I could remain quiet before God, and to give me faith and courage to not be cowed by their threats. Seeing that I wasn't talking, a really ferocious-looking officer picked up an electric baton and waved it back and forth in front of my face, intentionally making it crackle. He then pointed at me and said threateningly, "Will you talk or not? If you don't, I'll tase you to death." I was somewhat frightened by this and quickly prayed to God. "Oh God! All things are in Your hands, including this pack of evil officers. No matter how they treat me, it's with Your permission. I'm willing to submit to Your orchestrations and arrangements. It's just that my stature is too small and I'm feeling weak and timid. Please give me faith and strength and protect me so I don't become a Judas. Let me not lose my testimony before Satan." After praying, a passage of God's words surfaced in my mind: **"The life of the resurrected Christ is within us. We really lack faith in the presence of God, and may God put true faith within us. The word of God is sweet indeed! God's word is potent medicine! Put to shame the devils and Satan! If we grasp God's word we will have support and His word will quickly save our hearts! It dispels all things and sets all in peace. Faith is like a single log bridge, those who cling abjectly to life will have difficulty in crossing it, but those who are ready to sacrifice themselves can pass over without worry. If man has timid and fearful thoughts, they are being fooled by Satan. It fears that we will cross the bridge of faith to enter into God"** ("Chapter 6" of Utterances of Christ in the

Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). “It’s true!” I thought. “I feel so afraid because I’ve been taken in by Satan’s trickery. In spite of the officers’ ferocious appearance, everything is in God’s hands and God is my backup. I have to rely on my faith and lean on God’s words to overcome Satan!” So, I kept my mouth shut, and when he saw that I wasn’t uttering a single word, that officer swung his baton up and jabbed it toward me. I clenched my eyes shut and gritted my teeth in preparation for the torment of intense pain, but surprisingly, though the baton was jabbed into me again and again, I didn’t feel a thing. They all thought it was really odd and said, bewildered, “Why isn’t this thing working today? It must be broken—try another one.” Then they got another to tase me with, but that one didn’t work either. I was continually exclaiming within my heart, “Oh God, thank You! You heard my prayer and You are secretly protecting me. You are so lovely, so faithful! God, no matter what kind of cruel torture I shall face in the future, I’m willing to trust in You with all my heart. I am determined to stand firm in my testimony!” Seeing that their batons weren’t yielding any results on me, they still weren’t at all willing to leave it at that, so they handcuffed and shackled me, dragged me into a police car, and drove me to a two-story building far away from the village.

When we went inside, an officer smiled coldly and said menacingly, “You can see there’s nothing here and no one will ever find this place. Now that you’re here, if you still don’t talk, it’ll be the end of you. You’ll be buried here, and no one will ever know. Think it over for yourself—if you’re smart, you’ll tell us what we need to know.” My heart leaped into my throat when I heard that. I really couldn’t imagine what these bloodthirsty-looking “People’s Police” standing before me, who acted just like underworld thugs, would do to me. I quickly called out to God within my heart, asking Him to give me strength and the resolve to withstand suffering so that I could bear the cruel torture that was to come. Seeing that I still refused to say a word, two of the officers viciously threw themselves on me and ripped off my outer clothing, then had me stand to one side. One of them pointed at my nose and said mockingly, “Look at that—you really know no shame.” Another one started going through my clothing inside and out just like a hungry dog looking for food. He ended up finding just 30 yuan, then swiveled his head around and spat out the words “You’re just a poor bastard!” while shoving the cash into his own pocket. This left me feeling anger and hatred. I thought, “How are these police ‘serving the people’? They’re simply a pack of rogues and bandits who tyrannize the people and exploit the common folk. If I hadn’t seen this with my own eyes today, I don’t

know how much longer I would have continued to be fooled by the CCP's lies." I then realized that God's good will was behind my arrest that day; God was not making me suffer on purpose, but instead this was happening so that I could clearly see the evil face of the CCP government. After another 10 minutes or so, another officer came in with two electric wires and wearing a wicked smile on his face, and he gestured at me threateningly and said, "Scared? The year before last there was another criminal who didn't want to talk, but he couldn't stand being electrocuted. He ended up spilling everything. I'm sure we'll pry open that mouth of yours!" Seeing that they were going to electrocute me, I felt both hatred and fear. If that kind of torture were to go on long enough, I was sure to die. I quickly said a prayer to God: "God, these evil officers are so vicious—I'm afraid I won't be able to overcome this. Please protect me and give me strength so that I don't become a Judas and betray You because of the weakness of my flesh." After I prayed, God enlightened me to think of this church hymn: "[M]y head may break and blood may flow, but the mettle of God's people can't be lost. God's exhortations rest on the heart, I determine to humiliate Satan the devil. Pain and hardships are predestined by God, I will endure humiliation to be faithful to Him. I will never again cause God to shed tears or worry" ("I Wish to See the Day of God's Glory" in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). "It's true," I thought. "The people of the kingdom have to have the integrity and the fortitude of someone of the kingdom—being greedy for life and fearing death is cowardice. Satan foolishly thinks that it can get me to betray God through torture and by doing so ruin my chance to attain salvation. I absolutely cannot let its scheme come to fruition, and I absolutely cannot allow God's name to be shamed because of me." Once I had thought through all of this, I felt a burst of strength within me and I found the courage to face the torture.

Just as I was thinking all of this, two of the officers rushed up to me, pressed me down onto the floor on my stomach, and then pressed a chair down on top of me. Two more officers came over, one on each side of me, each grinding a foot down onto one of my hands. It felt like my hands had been nailed to the floor—I couldn't move at all. The policeman with the electric wires took two wires from the circuit box and tied one to a finger on my left hand, one to a finger on my right hand, then turned on the power from the circuit box. A wave of electrical current instantly coursed through every single nerve in my body; it was both numbing and painful and I couldn't help but go into full-body spasms. It was so painful that I screamed. The evil police shoved a foam slipper into my mouth. They shocked me over

and over that way, causing such pain that I was completely drenched in sweat, and before long it was soaking through all of my clothing, as though I had been drenched with water. While administering the electric shocks, the officer kept yelling at me, “Are you going to talk or what? I’ll electrocute you to death if you don’t speak up! This is what you get for not talking!” I clenched my teeth hard and forced myself to endure the pain without making a sound. When they saw this, they started keeping the electricity on for longer. Finally, I felt I couldn’t bear it any longer and just wanted to die. I used every last ounce of strength in my body to push off the two officers pressing the chair down on top of me and then banged my head against the floor hard. But oddly, that hard concrete floor suddenly felt as soft as cotton, and no matter how hard I hit my head against it there was no effect. Just then, a couple of lines from God’s words that had frequently come up in fellowship before suddenly came clearly to mind: **“The suffering of some people reaches a certain point, and their thoughts turn to death. This is not the true love of God; such people are cowards, they have no perseverance, they are weak and powerless!”** (“Only by Experiencing Painful Trials Can You Know the Loveliness of God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). **“Even though your flesh suffers, you have God’s word and you have God’s blessing. You cannot die even if you want to: Can you resign yourself to not knowing God and not obtaining truth if you die?”** (“Only by Pursuing the Truth Can You Obtain Changes in Your Disposition” in *Records of Christ’s Talks*). God’s words served as a gentle reminder for me that I wanted to die because I was unable to bear the suffering, and that I wouldn’t be bearing witness to God, but would be shaming and betraying God. It would be gutless, it would be cowardly, and it would not shame Satan at all. God’s enlightenment allowed me to realize that the floor suddenly feeling soft was God quietly stopping me, protecting me, and not allowing me to die, in the hope that I might stand witness in the midst of this terrible situation, thus shaming Satan and bringing glory to God. Seeing God’s love and protection was immensely inspiring for me and I silently made a resolution: No matter how these evil police torture me, I will keep going, and even if I’m at my very last breath I will spend it well and stand witness for God, and I absolutely will not let Him down. My entire body surged with strength—I gritted my teeth and prepared to receive even more brutal electrical torture.

Seeing that I still wasn’t yielding, the officers were so angry that their veins were bulging out. They had fierce looks in their eyes, they were grinding their teeth and clenching their fists, looking like they were itching to devour me. One of them, thoroughly exasperated,

stormed over to me and grabbed a handful of my hair, yanked my head up forcefully, leaned over my face and shouted at me with a fiendish look, “You piece of shit, are you going to talk or not? If you don’t, I’ll peel off your skin and leave you at death’s door. That’s what you get for not talking!” He then let go of my hair, and frantically yelled at another evil policeman, “Give him a lethal voltage of electricity!” Unable to withstand this higher voltage, I passed out. They splashed me with cold water to revive me, then continued their torture. After several more shocks I was in unbearable pain throughout my entire body. I really couldn’t stand it anymore and felt like I could die at any second. In this crisis, God guided me to think of this church hymn: “In adversity, the leading of God’s words strengthens my heart; I cannot hold the plough and look backwards. It is so rare to be able to accept the training of the kingdom and I absolutely cannot miss this chance to be perfected. Failing God, I would be regretful for the rest of my life. If I turn my back on God I will be condemned by history. ... My heart treasures only the truth and is devoted to God, I will never again rebel and cause God grief. I am resolved to love God and remain utterly devoted to God and nothing and no one can stop me. And I will stand testimony to glorify God no matter how hard the trials and tribulations are. I will live a meaningful life by obtaining the truth and God’s perfection” (“Resolved to Remain Utterly Devoted to God” in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). I also thought of these words of God: “**If you have but one breath, God will not let you die**” (“Chapter 6” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). Guided by God’s words, my weak heart was once again strengthened. I thought to myself, “No matter how savage you pack of demons are, you can only torture my flesh and make my life worse than death, but you can never, ever change my desire to follow God. The more you torment me, the more clearly I see your evil faces, and the firmer I am in my resolve to follow God. Don’t you dare imagine that you can get me to sell out a single brother or sister—even if it means I die today, I will satisfy God this once!” Once I’d become willing to sacrifice my life, I once again witnessed God’s almightiness as well as His mercy and care for me. They electrocuted me several more times, and when they saw that I was going into really serious, full-body spasms, they didn’t dare continue, afraid that I would die and they’d be held responsible. But they still wouldn’t give up—they hoisted me up from the ground again, forcefully twisting my arms behind my back and tying them tightly with a rope. It was so tight that my wrists were in a lot of pain, and before long my hands became cold and swollen; they went so numb that I lost all feeling in them. The evil policemen wanted to hang me up

to further torture me, but every time they pulled the rope up it would loosen. They tried to do this many times, but each time ended in failure. Perplexed, they said, “What’s going on today? The rope is so hard to handle—it’s really weird! Maybe it’s a sign we shouldn’t do this guy in?” One of them said, “Forget it! That’s enough for today. It’s getting late.” That terrible officer who wanted to string me up had no choice but to give in, but he pointed at me and said menacingly, “You’ve been really lucky today, but just wait and see what I have in store for you tomorrow!” I knew that God had protected me once again, and I thanked Him over and over within my heart. Just then, these words from God occurred to me: **“All things in the universe are within My hands. If I speak, it will be. If I ordain it, thus it shall be. Satan is beneath My feet, it is in the bottomless pit!”** (“Chapter 15” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). **“I am your backup and you must have the spirit of the male child! Satan is lashing out in its final death throes but it will still be unable to escape My judgment. Satan is beneath My feet and it is also trodden underneath your feet—it’s true!”** (“Chapter 17” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). That day, I personally witnessed God’s wondrous protection of me, and I personally experienced that God truly is almighty and that He rules over everything, that absolutely everything in heaven and earth is within His hands, and that all things, alive or not, are entirely ruled by God. I saw that those evil police officers were particularly subject to God’s orchestrations, and though they may have seemed savage on the outside, without God’s permission they weren’t able to touch a hair on my head. As long as I kept my faith in God and was willing to let go of my life to satisfy Him, and was willing to stand witness for Him, those demons would certainly be shamed and defeated. This was the embodiment of God’s almightiness and His total triumph!

Those officers tortured me in that little two-story building nonstop from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. before taking me back to the police station. When we got back, they put me inside an iron cage and wouldn’t give me anything to eat or drink. Cold, hungry, and physically weak, I leaned against the bars of the cage and thought back over everything that had happened that day. Some of God’s words arose in my mind: **“This gang of accomplices!^[1] They come down among the mortals to indulge in pleasures and stir up disorder. Their**

Footnotes:

1. “Accomplices” are of the same ilk as “a band of hoodlums.”

disturbance causes fickleness in the world and brings panic in the heart of man, and they have distorted man so that man resembles beasts of unbearable ugliness, no longer possessing the slightest trace of the original holy man. They even wish to assume power as tyrants on earth. They impede the work of God so that it can barely move forward and close off man as if behind walls of copper and steel. Having committed so many sins and caused so much trouble, how could they expect anything other than to wait for chastisement?" ("Work and Entry (7)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). Comparing God's words with the facts, I finally saw clearly that the police officers I had looked up to in the past were actually incredibly savage and vicious. They appear very dignified and are always spouting off about duty and integrity, putting on a face of benevolence as "servants of the people," but in fact, they're a pack of brutal and unfeeling beasts, demons who can murder someone without batting an eye. What was wrong with me having faith? What was wrong with me worshiping God? Those evil officers saw me as a mortal enemy and treated me with such inhumane brutality, pushing me to the brink of death. How could a human being be capable of such things? Aren't they things that only a demon could do? Only then did I realize that those police officers looked human on the outside, but on the inside, their essence was that of demons and evil spirits who hate the truth and hate God, and who are the natural enemies of God. They have come into the world specifically as living ghosts to harm people and devour people. I was filled with hatred for them and at the same time I came to have a deep sense of God's kindness and loveliness. Though I had fallen into a den of devil, God was always with me and was quietly protecting me, encouraging and consoling me with His words, and giving me faith and strength so that I could make it through time after time of those demons torturing and ravaging me. Even several times when I was on the brink of death, God protected me with His great power, saving me from my demise. God's love for me is so very real! I quietly exhorted myself: No matter how these demons torture me in the future, I will stand witness and satisfy God. The enlightenment and guidance of God's words comforted my heart and my physical pain was significantly eased. Accompanied by God's love, I made it through the long night.

The next day, two of the officers came to stand in front of the cage after they had eaten breakfast. One of them smiled slyly and said, "How ya doin'? Did you have some time to think things over last night? So, will you talk or not?" I glanced at him but made no response.

Upon seeing this he immediately changed his tune—he stuck a hand into the cage, grabbed a handful of my hair, and yanked me right in front of his face. He then burned my nose with the tip of his cigarette and, looking at me savagely, said, “I’m telling you, a lot of criminals come through here and even the most reluctant to talk can’t escape my grasp. Even if you don’t die here, I’m still going to skin you alive!” Two other officers came in before long; they opened up the cage and pulled me out. By then my legs felt rubbery and weak and I was unable to stand up. I collapsed onto the floor. One of the officers thought I was faking it, so he came up to me and savagely kicked me a few times, screaming, “You think you’re going to play dead with me?” Two other officers hoisted me up and swung their fists at me, punching my face and upper body. After they had been at it for a while, they saw that my body was sagging like a corpse, there was blood coming out of my nose and mouth, and my face was beaten to a bloody pulp and unresponsive. One of them said, “Forget it, let’s stop. It looks like he won’t last long and if he dies in our hands then that’ll cause us a lot of trouble.” Only then did they stop their violent assault on me and cast me off to the side. I could hear them quietly talking amongst themselves, and one of them said, “I’ve never seen someone as hard as him the whole time I’ve been a police officer. He hasn’t said a single word the entire time—it’s really something!” I felt I could hear the sound of Satan hanging its head, sighing dejectedly in their words, and I could see it fleeing in panic in the face of failure. I could also see God smiling from having gained glory and I felt an indescribable joy. I silently gave thanks to God and couldn’t stop myself from singing out a church hymn “The Kingdom” within my heart: “God is my support, what is there to fear? I pledge my life to fight with Satan till the end. God lifts us up, we should leave everything behind and fight to bear witness for Christ. God will carry out His will on earth. I’ll prepare my love and loyalty and devote them all to God. I will joyfully welcome God’s return when He descends in glory, and meet with Him again when the kingdom of Christ is realized. ... Out of adversity come many victorious good soldiers. We are victorious with God and become God’s testimony. Look to the day God gains glory, it comes with irresistible force. All peoples flow to this mountain, walking in God’s light. The unparalleled splendor of the kingdom must manifest throughout the world” (Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). The more I sang, the more energized I felt. I felt that in following God, being able to experience this kind of oppression and hardship was truly an honor for me. My faith grew exponentially, and I swore to do battle against Satan until the end. This is how I made it through another day.

A police officer came in around 9 a.m. on the third day. The moment he walked in he introduced himself to me and said he was the chief of police at that station. He stood in front of me and, with feigned gentleness, said, “You’ve really suffered. I’ve been at the county in meetings for the last couple of days; I just got back and heard about what’s been going on with you. I reprimanded them really harshly—how could they just beat someone up so arbitrarily without first understanding the situation? That was really out of line.” I couldn’t help but feel confused in the face of this unexpected “kindness” from an evil police officer, but just then I got a reminder from some of God’s words: **“At all times, My people must be on guard against the cunning schemes of Satan ...”** (“Chapter 3” of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). I realized that this was one of Satan’s tricks—when it sees that the stick isn’t working, it tries the carrot in an attempt to get me to betray God and sell out the church. My heart brightened and I felt a sense of inner confidence. I thought, “God’s wisdom is exercised based on Satan’s trickery. So no matter how cunning and crafty you are, you old devil, I have God’s words to guide me. You’re dreaming if you think your tricks will succeed!” No matter how many “nice things” he said to entice me, I wouldn’t pay him any mind. Seeing it was all fruitless, he eventually had no choice but to leave. After that, two other officers came in and yelled at me, enraged, “You little shit, just you wait. If you don’t talk you’ll never get out of here! We can get you sentenced without any evidence at all. You just wait and see!” I was very calm in the face of their threats, thinking to myself, “I believe that everything is in God’s hands, and whether or not I receive a sentence is also in His hands. These demons don’t have the final say, God has the final say. No matter what happens, I believe that there is meaning to everything God does and I’m willing to obey to the very end.”

The police didn’t have any evidence for a conviction, but they still weren’t willing to let me go. They had refused me food and water for several days in a row. That evening I was so hungry that I had no physical strength at all, and I wondered if I would end up starving to death if things continued on that way. Just then I thought, “People’s fates are within God’s hands, so if God doesn’t want someone to die, they won’t die. All I have to do is submit to God’s arrangements and orchestrations.” Not long after, the police brought in six people who had been caught gambling. The six of them had the officers buy each of them about a pound of dumplings, and the officers brought back about seven pounds. They ended up paying their fines and were quickly released; right before they left, they gave their leftover dumplings

to me, unbeknownst to the police. I saw once again that all people, events, and things are orchestrated within God's hands. My eyes welled up with tears and I was moved in a way I can't explain. I felt only how lovely and how wondrous God is! Even though I had fallen into a demons' lair, God had been by my side all along, caring for me and watching over me, acting as my inner life force, supporting me to overcome being tempted by Satan again and again. He also showed compassion for my weakness, helping me get through these hardships. God is so practical, and His love is so real!

By the sixth day, the police had been totally unable to find any evidence to convict me of a crime, so they ended up fining me 200 yuan and letting me go. I was deeply aware that God was ruling over all this, and that God knew for certain how much suffering I should bear and how many roads I should walk—God wouldn't allow me to suffer a single day I didn't need to suffer. I knew that the police hadn't wanted to let me go that day as, because of their devilish, sinister natures, they would never let me go so easily. But God would no longer allow it, so they had no say in the matter. This also allowed me to see that Satan and demons are rendering service to God as He perfects His chosen people, and although they may appear very fierce, God rules over everything. As long as we truly lean on God and submit to Him, He will protect us so that we may overcome all demonic forces, and pass through danger into safety.

I was tortured for a full six days at the police station, and the extraordinary experience of those six days helped me truly see the ugly countenance of the CCP government and its evil, reactionary nature and essence. I saw that it is a demon that is an enemy to God, and that it is made up of a gang of rogues. It also allowed me to understand God's almightiness, sovereignty, wondrousness, and wisdom, and to personally experience God's love and salvation; I came to understand that God is an almighty, faithful, great, and lovely God, and that He is the One eternally worthy of mankind's trust and worship. Even more so, He is worthy of mankind's love. That experience became a turning point in my life of faith because, without it, I never would have developed true hatred for Satan, nor would I have gained true understanding of God. Then my faith in God would have been very empty and I would not have been able to achieve full salvation. Only by going through that brutal persecution and oppression by the CCP government did I come to know what Satan and demons are, what hell on earth is, and what dark, evil forces are. And only through that experience could I perceive what enormous grace and compassion God was showing to me that I—born in

China, in such a dark, evil, filthy land—could escape from Satan’s claws and come to walk the path of faith and seek the light in life! I also experienced the authority and might of God’s words. His words truly can become a person’s life, and they can save people from Satan’s influence and help them overcome the strictures of death. I also genuinely experienced that only God is capable of true love for people, and true salvation of people, while all Satan and demons can do is deceive people, harm them, and devour them. I give thanks to God for using the CCP government’s oppression to allow me to distinguish between right and wrong, to clearly see good and evil. From this day forth, I wish to seek to understand and gain more of the truth in order to achieve true knowledge of God, and to actively spread the gospel of God and bear witness to His name so that more people may come before God and worship Him!

30. Through Hardship, God’s Love Is With Me

By Li Ling, Henan Province

My name is Li Ling, and I turned 76 this year. I gained faith in the Lord Jesus in 1978 after falling ill, and during that period I received a great deal of His grace. This really inspired me to enthusiastically work for the Lord; I went all over the place delivering sermons and sharing the gospel, as well as hosting brothers and sisters in my home. Our church very quickly grew to a congregation of over 2,000 people, and, as a result, the Chinese Communist Party government began to oppress us soon after. The police came and searched my home a number of times in an effort to prevent me from practicing my faith and spreading the gospel, and every time they came, they’d take anything of value and anything that could be carried off—even lightbulbs. What’s more, I was arrested by Public Security Bureau (PSB) officers and detained over a dozen times. I accepted Almighty God’s work of the last days in 1996, and two years after that I once again suffered arrest and persecution by the CCP government, but this time it was even more crazed. I experienced firsthand how incredibly difficult it was to put one’s faith in God in an atheist country like China. Despite all these difficulties, I could still feel God’s salvation and love for me.

In the middle of the night one day in May 1998, a little after 2 a.m., the sound of someone pounding on my door started me out of a deep sleep. I couldn’t help but become nervous

and thought, “It’s probably the police! There are five brothers and sisters here from out of town to spread the gospel. How can I protect them?” I was panicked. Before I could even get to the door, the police kicked it open with a loud bang. The chief of the PSB Political Security Section, gun in hand, and over a dozen police officers with electric batons burst in aggressively. As soon as he crossed the threshold one officer turned to me, kicked me ferociously and yelled, “What the hell? You’ve been arrested so many times, but you still have the gall to believe in God! Mark my words, I’m going to make sure you lose everything you have and your family is destroyed!” The evil officers started shouting in the bedrooms. “Police, get up right now!” Without even waiting for the other brothers and sisters to put their clothing on, they handcuffed us together, two by two, searched us, and also took a ring that I was wearing. They then started ransacking the entire place, even going through my flour storage and getting it all over the floor. They just threw stuff all over the entire floor. They ended up carting off eleven tape recorders, a television, a fan, a typewriter, and over 200 books of God’s words. They even pried open my son’s drawers and stole over a thousand yuan he had just received for his salary. Just as the dozen or so officers were about to take us all to the police station, my son was getting back home from work. As soon as he saw that his wages had been stolen he ran over to the officers and asked them for his money back. One of the officers said slyly, “We’ll check it out at the station, and if it’s yours, we’ll give it back to you.” But instead, that evening they came to arrest my son for the crime of “obstructing official business.” Luckily, he had already gone into hiding, otherwise he would have been arrested as well.

The police took the confiscated books and other items to the station, and then kept all six of us locked up separately at the County Public Security Bureau overnight. Sitting there, I just couldn’t find a place of calmness for a long time. I thought back to my arrest in 1987; I was abused physically and verbally by the police and was practically tortured to death. I also saw with my own eyes a young man in his 20s was beaten to death by the police in less than two hours, and a woman said she had been raped by two officers in turns during interrogation. Officers would also put people on tiger benches, burn them with a soldering iron, and electrocute their tongues with electric batons to the point that there was no blood left. They used all sorts of despicable, monstrous tactics to torture people—it’s an absolute outrage. Over my dozen or so arrests I personally witnessed and personally experienced this cruel and merciless torture on the part of the police. They are capable of any atrocities.

Once again being at this “gate of hell” and hearing the police say that I would be “skinned alive” left me terrified. They had taken so many things in my home that day and had also arrested several other brothers and sisters. There was no way they’d let me off easily. And so I prayed to God within my heart. “Oh God! I know we’ve fallen into the police’s hands today with Your permission. I’m feeling very weak because they’re all demons completely lacking any humanity, and so I beg for You to give me courage and wisdom, and to provide me with the right words to say. I am willing to stand witness for You—I absolutely will not be a Judas and betray You! I hope even more that You may protect the others who were arrested so that they may be able to stand firm through this situation. God, You are the King of the entire universe, and all events, all things are subject to Your rule and arrangements. I firmly believe that as long as I can genuinely lean on You, You will certainly lead us to overcome Satan’s influence of darkness.” God enlightened me as I was praying, bringing these words of His to mind: **“The transcendent life of Christ has already appeared, there is nothing for you to be afraid of. Satan is under our feet and their time is limited. ... Be loyal to Me above all else, move forward with bravery; I am your strong rock, rely on Me!”** (“Chapter 10” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God’s words filled me with faith. It’s true—God is almighty and Satan will always be defeated at God’s hands. Without God’s permission it can’t touch a hair on my head. I thought about how I had been arrested so many times by the CCP government since gaining my faith; hadn’t I overcome these challenges time after time under God’s protection? I also thought about the prophet Daniel, how he and three of his friends were framed by evil people, then thrown into the lions’ den and burned in a fiery furnace, all because they upheld the name of Jehovah and worshiped Jehovah God. However, they had the protection of God and they were unscathed. Thinking through all this, courage suddenly welled up within me and I felt full of strength. I knew that no matter how Satan oppressed or harmed me, with God as my strong rear guard, I had nothing to fear. I was willing to rely on my faith and cooperate with God, to stand witness for God before Satan.

The police began interrogating me the following morning. An officer who had questioned me on a number of previous occasions glared at me, smacked the tabletop and barked, “So, it’s you again, you old bitch. You’ve fallen into my hands again. If you don’t spill what you know this time you’re going to land yourself in serious trouble! Talk! Where are all those people from who were staying at your place? Who is the church leader? Where did those

books come from? Who does the typewriter belong to?" I couldn't help but start to feel nervous; that officer was just so vicious, so overbearing, and wouldn't hesitate to beat someone to death. I timidly lowered my head and didn't make a sound, all the while silently praying to God to watch over my heart. Seeing that I wasn't talking, the officer started shouting abuse at me. "You old crone, there's no point threatening a dead pig with scalding water!" He rushed toward me while yelling and took a flying kick at my sternum. I flew back several meters and crashed down onto the floor, facing up. It hurt so much that I couldn't catch my breath. Unwilling to let go of me, he rushed over, hoisting me up from the floor by my clothing and said, "You stupid old bitch! I'm not going to let you die today, but I'll make sure your life isn't worth living. You're going to live a life of suffering!" Saying this, he held up his electric baton like he was about to tase me with it, and seeing the blue light it emitted was really frightening for me. I silently prayed to God over and over, and just then some of His words came to mind for me: **"You must endure all, you must relinquish everything you have and do everything you can to follow Me, pay all the costs for Me. This is the time that I shall test you, will you offer your loyalty to Me? Will you follow Me to the end of the road with loyalty? Be not afraid; with My support, who could ever block the road? Remember this! Remember! Everything that occurs is by My good intention and all is under My observation. Can your every word and action follow My word? When the trials of fire come upon you, will you kneel and call out? Or will you cower, unable to move forward?"** ("Chapter 10" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). Through God's words, I not only felt strong and emboldened, but gained understanding of His will. The trial I was undergoing right then was a time for God to test me. That officer was torturing me physically in an attempt to get me to betray God, but God's will was for me to offer up my devotion and love to Him. He was placing His hopes on me, and so I simply couldn't give in to the flesh and bow to Satan's forces. I knew I had to resolutely stand on God's side and bear a resounding witness for Him. The officer struck out at me wildly with his baton and wave after wave of the electrical current coursed through me, forcing my body to seize up and contract into a ball. While tasing me he shouted, "Speak up! If you don't talk I'll tase you to death!" I clenched my teeth and still didn't say a word. Seeing this, he went off the deep end with rage. At that moment, I hated that deranged demon to the very marrow of my bones. Man was created by God; believing in Him and worshiping Him is right and proper without question, but the CCP government madly resists

God, brutally oppressing and persecuting believers, not even sparing me, an elderly 60-year-old woman. They even wanted to cause my demise! The more harm they did to me the more I clenched my teeth with hatred and I swore within my heart: Even if it's the death of me, I will stand witness for God. I will not be a traitor who lives a shameful existence, inspiring Satan's sneers. The officer wore himself out beating me and yelling at me, so seeing I still wouldn't say anything, one of the officers tried to cajole me: "You're already this old—what is all this for? Just tell us what we want to know, who gave you those things and where those people live and we'll take you home." God enlightened me to see through this trickery of Satan, so I still didn't say anything. Seeing I wouldn't open my mouth he suddenly turned hostile and started threatening me. "Tell the truth and you won't get such a bad sentence, but otherwise, you'll get harsher treatment. If you don't talk you'll get 12 years and you'll be locked up for the rest of your life!" I felt a buzzing in my head when I heard him say I'd get 12 years and thought, "I'm in such a poor physical state I couldn't hold on for a single year, much less 12. Maybe I'll end up dying in prison." The thought of spending the rest of my days in a gloomy prison devoid of sunshine made me incredibly sad. Would I be able to hold on without the life of the church and the sustenance of God's words? Feeling lost, I silently prayed to God. He immediately enlightened me, making me think of these words from Him: **"Of everything that occurs in the universe, there is nothing that I do not have the final say in. What exists that is not in My hands?"** ("Chapter 1" of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). It's true! Human beings' fates are in God's hands, and all events and all things are subject to His rule and arrangements. Without exception, what God says goes; if God doesn't allow me to go to prison, the police have no say in it, but if He does, then I will submit to going to prison without complaint. Peter was able to submit to God's judgment and chastisement, to trials and tribulations. He didn't have a choice himself, and he handed himself over to God completely and obeyed God's arrangements. In the end he was crucified upside down for God—he obeyed to the point of death and became a vanguard of love for God. I knew that I needed to learn from Peter's example that day and put myself in God's hands. Even if it meant a life sentence, I still had to submit to God. The police ended up sending me to a detention house.

At the detention house, I felt like I was in a living hell. There were no windows in the cells, there was no electric lighting, and more than 20 people were crammed into a cell just 10-odd square meters. We had to eat, drink, and relieve ourselves entirely within the cell.

There were little puddles of water all over the floor and there were some mats rolled out, but there were no blankets or sheets. All of us had to lie on those puddles of water to sleep. There was a bucket for a toilet in the corner, and there were mosquitoes and flies everywhere. The stench was so bad I could barely breathe; everyone grappled for space near the iron gate so they could get some air through the less than one foot opening. It was really hot in the summer and there were so many people crammed into that tiny cell, so many inmates would go naked, not wearing anything. Fights often broke out between prisoners over trifles and they were constantly using obscenities. Our daily meals were made up of half-cooked flour soup and thin noodles, and boiled vegetables without any oil or salt. There was always sludge left at the bottom of the bowl, and all the prisoners had diarrhea. One day during roll call when we were out for some fresh air, I accidentally reported the wrong prisoner number. The correctional officer became furious, yelling "Look at you, so pathetic! And you're a believer in God!" He then took his leather shoe and hit me across the face with it ten times, leaving my face black and blue. All of my cellmates then got in trouble because of me, and were all hit ten times. Their faces were all black and blue, too; they were covering their faces and crying in pain. From then on the correctional officer made me wash their uniforms and shirts, and the beddings. One of the top guards ran a hostel out of his home and he'd bring in all the beddings that had been stripped to have me wash them, and then once they were clean I had to mend them all by hand. I was so utterly exhausted by the end of every day that my entire body was sore and in pain; I really felt like I was falling apart. In just a few days my hands became swollen. At times when I truly couldn't stand it and I rested for a moment, the correctional officer would reprimand me viciously, so I had no choice but to keep working, shedding tears. When it was time to rest at night, even though I was both sleepy and physically tired, I still wasn't able to sleep well. My arms were sore and painful and my back hurt so much I couldn't straighten it. My legs were also numb. Even to this day I can only lift my arms up forty or fifty degrees—I can't even hold them straight out. I developed serious gastrointestinal problems from doing so much hard labor without ever being able to get enough to eat, causing me to have frequent diarrhea. On top of that, the wounds left behind from being beaten by those evil police officers had never fully healed. My health grew worse and worse. Later on I developed a persistent low-grade fever and the prison guards refused to allow me treatment. In spite of myself, I became weak and thought, "At this age if this kind of torture continues I could die in here any day now." A sense of

desolation and helplessness welled up within my heart and in my pain I prayed to God. "Oh God, I'm really weak right now and I don't know what Your will is. God, please guide me so that I can stand witness for You through this and satisfy You." I called out to God from my heart over and over, and without me realizing it, God enlightened me, bringing a hymn of God's words to my mind. I quietly hummed this hymn: **"God has become flesh this time to do such work, to conclude the work that He has yet to complete, to bring this age to a close, to judge this age, to save the deeply sinful from the world of the sea of affliction and utterly transform them. Many are the sleepless nights that God has endured for the sake of the work of mankind. From up high to the lowest depths, He has descended to the living hell in which man lives to pass His days with man, has never complained of the shabbiness among man, has never reproached man for his disobedience, but endures the greatest humiliation as He personally carries out His work. How could God belong to hell? How could He spend His life in hell? But for the sake of all mankind, so that the whole of mankind can find rest sooner, He has endured humiliation and suffered injustice to come to earth, and personally entered into 'hell' and 'Hades,' into the tiger's den, to save man"** ("Every Stage of God's Work Is for the Life of Man" in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). As I hummed and hummed tears continually rolled down my face, and I thought of how God is supreme, and yet He has humbled Himself twice to become flesh, enduring endless suffering and humiliation to save mankind. Not only has He been subjected to the resistance and condemnation of corrupt mankind, but He has also suffered oppression and pursuit by the CCP government. God is without guilt and His suffering is so that mankind may lead good, happy lives in the future. The pain and the humiliation He has endured have been enormous, but He has never grumbled about it or complained to anyone. The pain I was suffering then was God's blessing coming upon me, and behind all of it was God's will. It was so that I could see into the evil essence of those demons and then rebel against Satan, escape Satan's dark influence and achieve full salvation. However, I hadn't understood God's kind intentions, becoming negative and weak after just a bit of suffering. Comparing this with the love of God, I saw that I was incredibly selfish and rebellious. And so I set my resolve that no matter how bitter or how hard things became, I would satisfy God and no longer do anything to hurt Him. I swore on my life that I would stand witness for God. Once I submitted, I saw God's deeds. After the police locked me up, God raised up my sister, who wasn't a believer, to pay the

police a 16,000 yuan fine as well as another 1,000-odd yuan for my room and board, and I was released.

Although I suffered torture of the flesh over my three months in prison, I had seen the true face of the pack of CCP government demons and their resistance to God. Undergoing multiple arrests by the CCP government also gave me some practical understanding of God's work, His almightiness and wisdom, and His love. I saw that God is watching over me and protecting me at all times, and He never leaves my side, not even for a moment. When I was undergoing all manner of torture by those demons and was in agony, it was God's words that led me time after time to triumph over Satan's harm and devastation, giving me the faith and courage to overcome the influence of darkness. When I was weak and helpless, it was God's words that immediately enlightened and guided me, acting as a true pillar for me and accompanying me through one unendurable day after another. Going through such oppression and hardship has allowed me to gain a treasure of life that can't be gained in times of peace and comfort. Through this experience, my resolve in my faith has strengthened and no matter what kind of atrocious things I may face in the future, I will pursue the truth and I will pursue life. I give my heart to God because He is the Lord of creation, and He is my one and only Savior.

31. At the Brink of Death, Almighty God Came to My Aid

By Wang Cheng, Hebei Province

During my time as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, I was persecuted by the CCP government. The government used the "crime" of my belief in the Lord Jesus as a reason to often give me a hard time and oppress me. They even ordered the village cadres to make frequent visits to my house to inquire into my belief practices. In 1998, I accepted the work of Almighty God in the last days. When I heard the words of the Creator uttered in person, I was excited and moved in a way that I can't even describe. With the encouragement of God's love, I made a resolution: I would follow Almighty God to the very end, no matter what. During that time, I enthusiastically attended meetings and spread the gospel, which once again attracted the attention of the CCP government. This time, their persecution of me was worse than ever. It got so bad that I couldn't practice my faith normally in my own house and

was forced to leave my home in order to fulfill my duties.

In 2006, I was responsible for the printing operations for books of God's words. One time while transporting books, a few brothers and sisters and the printing company's driver were unfortunately apprehended by the CCP police. All ten-thousand copies of *The Word Appears in the Flesh* which were in the truck were confiscated. Later on, the driver ratted out more than ten other brothers and sisters and they were all taken into custody one after another. This event caused a major stir in two provinces and the case was directly overseen by the central authorities. When the CCP government found out that I was the leader, they spared no expense, deploying the armed police force to investigate all areas of operation related to my work. They confiscated two cars and one van from the printing company we worked with and also misappropriated 65,500 RMB from the company on top of the more than 3,000 RMB they stole from the sisters and brothers who were in the truck that day. Additionally, the police also came and searched my house twice. Each time they came, they would kick down the front door, smash and break my belongings and turn my whole house inside out. They were worse than a band of roving bandits! Afterward, because the CCP government was unable to find me, they rounded up all my neighbors, friends and relatives and interrogated them about my whereabouts.

I was forced to escape to a far-flung relative's house to evade being arrested and persecuted by the CCP government. It was beyond my wildest reckoning that the CCP police would continue to track me over such a vast distance in order to make my arrest. Yet, on the night of the third day after I had arrived at my relative's house, a detail of around 100 officers comprised of a police unit from my home town in cooperation with the local criminal police and armed police completely surrounded my relative's house and then proceeded to apprehend and arrest all my relatives. I was surrounded by over ten armed police officers, all with guns aimed at my head, shouting angrily, "One move and you're dead!" Next, a few of the police officers jumped on me and all began trying to handcuff my arms behind my back. They pulled my right hand over my shoulder and then manipulated my left arm behind my back and viciously yanked my hand upward. When they were unable to cuff my hands together, they stomped down on my back and pulled even harder until my hands were finally forced together. The searing, excruciating pain was more than I could stand, but no matter how I yelled, "I can't take the pain," the officers showed no concern, and all I could do was pray to God to give me strength. They seized 650 RMB from me and then grilled me about

where the church kept its money, demanding that I turn all funds over to them. I was absolutely irate and thought contemptuously to myself, "They call themselves 'the People's Police' and 'the protectors of people's life and property,' and yet the reason they've deployed a detail of this magnitude on such a long-distance manhunt to arrest me is not only to obstruct God's work, but also to plunder and pocket church funds! These evil police have an insatiable lust for money. They wrack their brains and stop at nothing to fill their coffers. Who knows how many unconscionable acts they've committed in the pursuit of wealth or how many innocent people's lives they've ruined to enrich themselves?" The more I thought about it, the angrier I became, and I vowed to myself that I would sooner die than betray God. I swore to myself that I would fight these demons until the bitter end. When one of the officers saw how I was angrily staring at them in silence, he came over and smacked me twice in the face, which caused my lips to become swollen and bleed profusely. Not satisfied with that, however, the evil policemen followed up by kicking me savagely in the legs and swearing at me until I fell to the ground. They continued to kick me around like a soccer ball as I lay on the ground until, after some indeterminate period of time, I finally passed out. When I awoke, I was already in a car headed for my hometown. They had shackled me with an enormous steel chain that attached my neck to my ankles so that I was unable to sit upright, but was forced to face downward, curled up into a fetal position, barely supported by my chest and head. When the officers saw that I was in obvious pain, they just cackled with laughter and sarcastically remarked, "Let's see if your God can save you now!" along with some other humiliating remarks. I clearly understood that the reason they were treating me in this way was because I was a believer of Almighty God. It was just as God had said in the Age of Grace: **"If the world hate you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you"** (John 15:18). The more they humiliated me, the more clearly I saw their demonic substance as enemies of God and their God-hating evil nature, which made me despise them even more. At the same time, I continually called out to God, praying, "Dear Almighty God! It is certainly by Your good intentions that You have allowed me to be apprehended by the police, and I am willing to submit to You. Today, though my fleshly body is in pain, I am willing to stand witness for You to shame the old devil. I will not submit to it under any circumstance. I pray that You give me faith and wisdom." After finishing my prayer, I thought of this passage of God's words: **"Be quiet within Me, for I am your God, your only Redeemer. You must quiet your hearts at all times, live within Me; I am your rock, your**

backer” (“Chapter 26” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God’s words gave me even greater strength and resolve. God rules sovereign over all things and man’s life and death are in His hands. With Almighty God as my staunch backup, I had nothing to fear! After this, I had renewed faith and a path to practice, and I was prepared to face the cruel torture that awaited me.

During that 18-hour-long escort back to my hometown, I lost count of how many times I passed out from the pain, but none of those police thugs showed the least bit of concern. When we finally arrived, it was past two in the morning. I felt as if all the blood in my body had congealed—my arms and legs were all swollen and numb and I couldn’t move. I heard one of the policemen say, “I think he’s dead.” One of them grabbed the steel chain and yanked down on it with brute force, causing the serrated edges to bite into my flesh. I tumbled out of the car and passed out once again from the pain. The policemen kicked me until I woke up and then yelled, “Damn it! Trying to fake death, eh? Once we’re rested up, you’re in for it!” Then they violently dragged me into a cell on death row and, as they left, said, “We arranged this cell especially for you.” Several inmates were disturbed from their sleep as I was dragged in and their vicious stares had me so scared that I cowered in a corner, afraid to move. It felt as though I had walked into some kind of hell on earth. At daybreak, the other inmates all crowded around me, looking at me as if I were some kind of alien. They all pounced at me, frightening me so much that I promptly squatted down on the floor. The commotion woke up the head prisoner—he took one look at me and said coldly, “Have your way with him, just don’t beat him to death.” The inmates responded to the head prisoner as if he had issued an imperial decree. They surged forward, ready to give me a beating. I thought to myself, “Now you’re in for it. The cops handed me over to these death-row inmates to do their dirty work—they are intentionally sending me to my death.” I felt utterly terrified and helpless, and all I could do was entrust my life to God and accept His orchestrations. Just as I was bracing myself for the beating, something incredible happened: I heard someone urgently shout, “Hold up!” The head prisoner came running over, hauled me up and looked at me for what seemed like a couple minutes. I was so scared that I didn’t even dare to look back at him. “How does a good guy like you find yourself in a place like this?” he asked. When I heard him speak to me, I took a close look at him and realized that he was a friend of a friend that I’d met one time in the past. He then addressed the other inmates, saying, “This man is my friend. If anyone touches him, you’ll have to answer to

me!” Next, he hurried off to buy me a meal and helped me to get hold of various toiletries and everyday items I would need in jail. After that, none of the other inmates dared pick on me. I knew that everything that had happened was the result of God’s love and that it was God’s wise arrangement. The police had originally wanted to use the other inmates to torture me mercilessly, but they never imagined that God would move the head prisoner to help me dodge this bullet. I was moved to the point of tears and couldn’t help but cry out in praise of God in my heart, saying, “Dear God! Thanks be to You for showing me Your mercy! It was You who came to my aid through this friend when I was at my most fearful, helpless and weak, allowing me to witness Your deeds. It is You who mobilizes all things to render service to You so that those who believe in You may benefit.” In that moment, my faith in God grew even greater, because I had personally experienced His love. Though I had been cast into the belly of the beast, God did not desert me. With God at my side, what was there to fear? My friend comforted me, saying, “Don’t be sad. No matter what you did, don’t tell them a word, even if it kills you. But you must prepare yourself mentally, and know that, given that they’ve put you in here with a bunch of death-row inmates, they’re not going to let you off easy.” From my friend’s words I felt even more that God was guiding me at every moment and that He had spoken through my cellmate to warn me of what was to come. I fully prepared myself mentally and silently vowed to myself: No matter how those demons torture me, I will never betray God!

On the second day, over ten armed police arrived and escorted me from the detention house like I was a prisoner on death row to a remote location in the countryside. The facility they took me to was a high-walled compound with a large courtyard that was heavily guarded by armed police. A placard on the main door read, “Police Dog Training Base.” Every room was filled with all different kinds of instruments of torture. It seemed that they had brought me to one of the CCP government’s secret interrogation and torture facilities. As I looked around me, my hair stood on end and I trembled with fear. The evil policemen made me stand still in the middle of the courtyard and then they released four vicious-looking, abnormally large hounds from a steel cage, pointed at me and ordered the well-trained police dogs, saying, “Go kill!” Immediately, the dogs came charging at me like a pack of wolves. I was so terrified that I squeezed my eyes shut. My ears began to ring and my mind went blank—the only thought in my head was, “O God! Please save me!” I continuously called out to God for help and, after around ten minutes, I could only feel the dogs biting at

my clothes. One particularly large hound stood on my shoulders, sniffed me and then licked at my face, but he never bit me. I suddenly remembered a Bible story in which the prophet Daniel was cast into a pit of hungry lions because he worshiped God, but the lions didn't harm him. Because God was with him, God sent an angel to close the jaws of the lions. Suddenly, a deep sense of faith welled up within me and dispelled all the fear in my heart. I had the deep conviction that all is orchestrated by God and man's life and death are in God's hands. Besides, if I were to be bitten to death by vicious dogs for my belief in God and die a martyr, this would be a great honor and I would have absolutely no complaints. When I was no longer constrained by fear of death and was willing to give my life to bear testimony to God, I once again witnessed God's almightiness and miraculous deeds. This time the police rushed over to the dogs in utter hysterics, yelling, "Kill! Kill!" However, all of a sudden it was as if these highly trained hounds couldn't understand their masters' commands. All they did was tear at my clothes a little bit, lick at my face and then disperse. Some of the evil police tried to stop the dogs and send them to attack me again, but the dogs suddenly got scared and scattered away in all directions. When the police saw what had happened, they were all astonished and said, "How strange, none of the dogs would bite him!" I was suddenly reminded of God's words as follows: **"Man's heart and spirit are held in the hand of God, everything of his life is beheld in the eyes of God. Regardless of whether or not you believe this, any and all things, whether living or dead, will shift, change, renew, and disappear in accordance with God's thoughts. Such is the way in which God presides over all things"** ("God Is the Source of Man's Life" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). **"God created all things, and so He makes all creation come under His dominion, and submit to His dominion; He will command all things, so that all things are in His hands. All creation of God, including animals, plants, mankind, the mountains and rivers, and the lakes—all must come under His dominion. All things in the skies and on the ground must come under His dominion"** ("Success or Failure Depends on the Path That Man Walks" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). From my own experience, I had seen in real life how all things—no matter whether they are living or dead—are all subject to God's orchestrations and all move and change with God's thoughts. I was able to survive unscathed after being attacked by the police hounds because Almighty God had sealed their mouths shut and made it so that they didn't dare bite me. I was profoundly aware that this had come about through God's immense power and that God had revealed

one of His miraculous deeds. Be it those police thugs, or the trained police dogs, they all had to submit to God's authority. No one can supersede God's sovereignty. That I had fallen into the diabolical hands of the CCP government and had experienced a trial similar to that of the prophet Daniel was no doubt because God had made an exception to exalt me and bestow His grace upon me. Through witnessing God's almighty deeds, I came to have even greater faith in Him and vowed to fight the devil to the very end. I swore to believe in and worship God forever and bring glory and honor to Him!

When the police were unable to achieve their desired goal using the attack dogs, they brought me to the interrogation room. They hung me by my handcuffs on the wall and I instantly felt a searing pain in my wrists, as if my hands were about to be severed off entirely. Big beads of sweat began dripping down my face. However, those police thugs weren't done yet, and began raining savage kicks and punches down on me. As they beat me, they angrily barked, "Let's see if your God can save you now!" They took turns beating me—when one of them got tired, another would set right in. They beat me until I was covered from head to toe with gashes and bruises and I was bleeding profusely. That night, they still hadn't let me down from the wall and wouldn't allow me to close my eyes. They had assigned two subordinates with tasers to watch over me. Whenever I closed my eyes, they would tase me to keep me from falling asleep. They tortured me the entire night in this way. While one of the subordinates was beating me, he stared me down with beady eyes and yelled, "When they beat you till you pass out, I'll beat you till you wake up again!" Because of God's enlightenment, I was completely aware of what was going on: Satan was trying to use all different kinds of torture techniques to get me to compromise myself. The idea was to torture me until my spirit was broken and I lost control of my mental faculties, at which point I might divulge the information they were looking for. Then they could arrest God's chosen people, disrupt God's work in the last days, and plunder and seize The Church of Almighty God's assets to enrich their own coffers—these were the wild ambitions of their beastly nature. I gritted my teeth and withstood the pain. I swore to myself that I wouldn't make a compromise with them even if it meant my being hung to death. The next morning, at daybreak, they still showed no signs that they would be letting me down and I was already completely exhausted; I felt as though I'd be better off dead, and I no longer had the willpower to keep going. All I could do was to call out to God for help, praying, "O God! I know that I deserve to suffer, but my body is so weak and I really can't last much longer. While I'm still breathing

and conscious, I want to ask that You escort my soul from this world. I don't want to become a Judas and betray You." Just as I was on the verge of breaking down, God's word once again enlightened and guided me: **"Coming into flesh this time is like falling into the tiger's den.' What this means is that because this round of God's work has God coming into flesh and being born in the dwelling place of the great red dragon, His coming to earth this time is accompanied even more so with extreme dangers. What He faces are knives and guns and clubs; what He faces is temptation; what He faces are crowds wearing murderous looks. He risks being killed at any moment"** ("Work and Entry (4)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). God is the supreme Sovereign of all creation—coming down amongst the most profoundly corrupted of all mankind in order to save us was already an incredible humiliation, but He also had to endure all manner of persecution at the hands of the CCP government. The suffering that God has undergone is truly immense. If God has endured all this pain and suffering, why couldn't I sacrifice myself for Him? The only reason I was still alive was because of God's protection and care, without which I would have been tortured to death by this demonic band long ago. In that demon's den, though those fiends used every method at their disposal to inflict cruel torture upon me, yet God was with me, and every time I made it through one bout of torture I would witness God's miraculous deeds, as well as His salvation and protection. I thought to myself, "God has done so much for me, how ought I to comfort His heart? Given that God has granted me this opportunity today, I should continue to live for God!" At that moment, God's love reawakened my conscience and I deeply felt that I must satisfy God no matter what. I affirmed to myself, "It is my honor to suffer alongside Christ today!" Seeing that I still wasn't talking and hadn't begged for mercy, but afraid that I might die in this place without divulging any information and they would then be in trouble with their superiors, the evil policemen stopped beating me. After that, I was hung from a wall by my handcuffs and left there for another two days and two nights.

During that time, it was bitterly cold, I was soaked to the skin, my clothes were too thin to provide any insulation, I hadn't eaten for several days and I was hungry and cold—I really couldn't take it anymore. Just as I was on the verge of breaking down, that gang of police thugs seized on my diminished state to hatch another conniving plot: They brought in a psychologist to try to brainwash me. He said, "You're still young and you've got your parents and children to support. After you were brought in, your fellow believers, and especially the

leaders of your church, haven't shown the slightest bit of concern and yet here you are suffering for them. Don't you think you're being a bit foolish? These police have had no choice but to torture you...." Listening to his lies, I thought to myself, "If my brothers and sisters were to come see me here, wouldn't that be tantamount to turning themselves in? You're just saying this to deceive me, to sow discord between me and my brothers and sisters, and to make me misunderstand, blame and abandon God. I'm not going to fall for it!" After that, they brought out food and drink for me, trying to woo me with their apparent generosity. Faced with the sudden "kindness" of these police thugs, my heart clung even closer to God, because I knew that I was at my weakest in that moment, and Satan was ready to pounce whenever the opportunity presented itself. My experiences during those days allowed me to see through to the substance of the CCP government. No matter how it pretended to be kind and caring, its evil, reactionary and demonic substance was unchanging. The devil's strategy of "conversion through loving compassion" only further exposed the depths of its treachery and deceitfulness. Thanks be to God, for guiding me to see through Satan's cunning plot. In the end, the psychologist failed to make any headway and shook his head, saying, "I can't get anything out of him. He's stubborn as a mule, a hopeless case!" With that, he left in dejection. Seeing Satan flee in defeat, my heart filled with an indescribable joy!

When those wicked policemen saw that their soft tactics had failed, they immediately revealed their true colors, once again hanging me from the wall for another whole day. That night, as I hung there shaking in the cold, my hands in such pain that it felt as if they would break off, I thought to myself in my delirium that I really might not make it. Just then, several officers entered and I was once again left wondering what kind of torment they had in store for me. In my weakness, I again prayed to God, saying, "O God, You know I am weak and I really can't take it any longer. Please take my life right now. I would rather die than be a Judas and betray You. I will not allow the cunning plot of these demons to succeed!" The policemen brandished their clubs which were a little less than a meter long, and began striking the joints of my legs and feet. Some of them laughed maniacally as they hit me, others tried to tempt me, saying, "Well aren't you just a glutton for punishment. You haven't committed any major crime, you haven't murdered anyone or committed arson. Just tell us what you know and we'll let you down." When I still wouldn't speak, they became apoplectic and yelled, "Do you think the dozens of policemen standing in front of you right now are all

incompetent? We've questioned countless death-row inmates here and we always get a confession out of them, even if they've done nothing wrong. When we tell them to talk, they talk. What makes you think you're any different?" Some of them then came up to me and began pinching and twisting my legs and waist until I was covered in bruises. In some places they pinched me so hard that it drew blood. After having been hung from the wall for so long, I was already incredibly weak, and this exacerbated the pain from their wanton beatings to the point that I yearned for my own death. At that moment, I was completely broken—I couldn't take it any longer and I at last broke down in tears. As the tears flowed, thoughts of betrayal sprung up in my mind: "Maybe I should just tell them something. As long as it doesn't get any of my brothers and sisters in trouble, even if they charge me or execute me, then so be it!" When that gang of evil police saw me crying, they roared with laughter and, thoroughly pleased with themselves, said, "If you had said something sooner, we wouldn't have had to beat you like that." They took me down from the wall and had me lie on the ground. They gave me some water and allowed me to rest for a moment. Then they took the pen and paper that had been prepared all along and got ready to record my statement. Just as I was falling prey to Satan's temptation and was on the verge of betraying God, God's words once again clearly appeared in my mind: **"Toward those who showed Me not the slightest loyalty during times of tribulation, I shall be merciful no more, for My mercy only extends so far. I have no liking, furthermore, for anyone who has once betrayed Me, much less do I like to associate with those who sell out the interests of their friends. This is My disposition, regardless of who the person may be. I must tell you this: Anyone who breaks My heart shall not receive clemency from Me a second time, and anyone who has been faithful to Me shall forever remain in My heart"** ("Prepare Sufficient Good Deeds for Your Destination" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). In God's words, I saw God's disposition that brooks no offense and the consequences of betraying God. I also became aware of my own rebelliousness. My faith in God was far too weak and I had no real understanding of Him, much less was I truly obedient to Him. As such, I was sure to betray God. I thought of how Judas had sold Jesus out for a mere thirty silver coins and how, right now, I was ready to betray God just for a moment's comfort and ease. If it hadn't been for the timely enlightenment of God's words, I would have become one of God's betrayers to be condemned for all time! After understanding God's will, I came to see that God had made the best possible arrangements. I thought to myself, "If God permits me to

suffer or die, I am willing to submit and put my life and death in God's hands. I have no say in the matter. Even if I have only one remaining breath, I must endeavor to satisfy God and stand witness for Him." At that moment, a church hymn came to mind: "[M]y head may break and blood may flow, but the mettle of God's people can't be lost. God's exhortations rest on the heart, I determine to humiliate Satan the devil" ("I Wish to See the Day of God's Glory" in Follow the Lamb and Sing New Songs). As I hummed the hymn to myself in my mind, my faith was reinvigorated, and I resolved that if I were to die, it would be for God. No matter what, I couldn't give in to that old devil, the CCP government. Seeing that I just lay there on the ground without moving, the evil police began to tempt me, saying, "Is all this suffering worth it? We're giving you the opportunity to do a good deed here. Tell us everything you know. Even if you don't say anything, we've got all the witness testimony and evidence we need to convict you." Seeing how these man-eating demons were attempting to make me betray God and sell out my brothers and sisters to ruin God's work, I could no longer contain the rage that boiled within me and I shouted back at them, "If you already know everything, then I guess there's no reason to question me. Even if I knew everything, I'd never tell you!" The police furiously fired back, yelling, "If you don't fess up, we'll torture you to death! Don't think you'll be getting out of here alive! We make all those death-row inmates talk, you think you're harder than them?" I responded, saying, "Now that you have me captive, I don't plan on leaving with my life!" Without saying another word, the policeman charged over to me and kicked me square in the stomach. It hurt so bad that it felt like my intestines had been severed in two. With that, the remaining officers all surged toward me and beat me until I passed out again.... When I came to, I found that they had hung me up like before, but this time they had hung me even higher. My entire body was swollen and I couldn't speak, but because of God's protection, I didn't feel the slightest amount of pain. That night, most of the officers left and the four that were assigned to keep watch on me had fallen fast asleep. All of a sudden, my handcuffs miraculously opened and I fell lightly to the floor. At that moment, I snapped back into awareness and suddenly thought of how Peter had been saved by the Lord's angel during his incarceration. The chains fell from Peter's hands and the iron gate of his cell opened by itself. It was by God's great exaltation and grace that I could experience God's miraculous deeds as Peter had. I immediately knelt to the floor and offered up a prayer of thanks to God, saying, "Dear God! Thank You for Your mercy and tender care. Thank You for the ceaseless vigil which You keep over me. When my life was on the line

and death was at hand, You guarded me in secret. It was Your great power that protected me and allowed me to witness once again Your wondrous deeds and almighty sovereignty. If I hadn't experienced this myself, I never would have believed that this was real!" Through my suffering, I had once again witnessed God's salvation and I was deeply moved and filled with an infinite warmth. I wanted to leave that place, but I was so hurt that I couldn't move and so I just went to sleep right there on the floor and slept until I was kicked awake at daybreak. When the wicked policemen saw me lying on the floor, they began to argue amongst themselves, trying to ascertain who had let me down. The four policemen that had been responsible for watching me overnight all said that they didn't have the keys to my handcuffs. They all stood around the handcuffs staring blankly—they all looked over the handcuffs one by one, but couldn't find any trace of a crack in them. They asked me how the handcuffs had opened and I said, "They opened by themselves!" They didn't believe me, but in my heart I knew: This was due to the great power of God, and it was one of His miraculous deeds.

Later on, seeing that I was so weak that I might perish at any moment, the wicked police didn't dare hang me up any longer, and so they switched to a different form of torture. They dragged me into a room and made me sit on a torture chair. My head and neck were held down with a metal clamp and my arms and legs were all tied up so that I couldn't move a muscle. In my heart, I prayed to God, saying, "O God! All is within Your control. I have already made it through several life-or-death tests and now I entrust myself to You once again. I am willing to cooperate with You to stand witness and humiliate Satan." After concluding my prayer, I felt calm, composed, and without the slightest hint of fear. At that moment, one of the officers flipped on the power switch, and all the underlings looked on with bated breath to see how I would be electrocuted. When I made not the slightest reaction, they went to check the connection. When I still didn't react, they could only look at each other in disbelief, unable to believe their eyes. Finally, one of the underlings said, "Maybe there's a faulty connection in the torture chair." Having said this, he walked over to me and as soon as his hand touched me, he let out a scream—the electric shock knocked him back a full meter and he fell to the ground, crying out in pain. When the dozen or so other lackeys saw what had happened, they were all scared half to death and dashed out of the room. One of them was in such a state of fright that he slipped and went crashing to the ground. A long while passed before two of the underlings came in to unbind me, trembling with the dread of being

shocked themselves. In the whole half hour that I spent tied to the torture chair, I never once felt any electric current. It was as if I was sitting on just a regular chair. I had once again witnessed God's great power and I gained a profound sense of His loveliness and kindness. Even if I lost everything I had, including my own life, as long as I had God with me, I had everything I needed.

After that, the wicked police then took me back to the detention house. I was covered from head to toe in cuts, bruises and injuries, my arms and legs were swollen terribly—I was utterly debilitated and couldn't even stand up, sit down, or even eat. I was utterly on the verge of collapse. When the other death-row inmates in the cell learned that I hadn't sold anyone out, they looked at me in a new light and said approvingly, "You're the real hero, we're fake heroes!" They even vied with each other to give me food and clothes to wear.... When the wicked policemen saw how God had worked within me, they no longer dared to torture me and even took off my handcuffs and shackles. From that time on, no one dared interrogate me again. Despite that, the police still hadn't given up, and so, in order to extract information about the church from me, they tried to incite the other inmates to get me to give in. They tried to instigate the other inmates by saying, "Those who believe in Almighty God should be beaten!" However, to their surprise, one of the prisoners who was a murderer said, "I'll never do what you say. Not only will I not beat him, no one in this cell is going to beat him! We're all in here because someone else sold us out. If everyone was as loyal as this guy, none of us would have been sentenced to death." Another of the death-row inmates said, "We were all arrested because we did some really bad stuff, and so we deserve to suffer. But this guy is a believer in God and has committed no crime, yet you've rendered him nearly unrecognizable with your torture!" One by one, the inmates all spoke up against the injustices I had suffered. Seeing what was happening, the police didn't want things to get out of hand and so they didn't say anything else, but just slumped off dejectedly. In that moment, I thought of a passage from the Bible, which reads, "The king's heart is in the hand of Jehovah, as the rivers of water: He turns it wherever He will" (Proverbs 21:1). Witnessing how God had moved the other inmates to come to my aid, I had the deep conviction that these were all God's deeds and my faith in Him grew even stronger!

When one strategy didn't work, those evil police hatched yet another plot. This time, they had the detention house warden assign me the most back-breaking labor: I was made to make two whole rolls of paper money per day (paper money is part of a Chinese tradition

in which people burn the money to give to their deceased ancestors. One roll of paper money is made of 1,600 sheets of tin foil and 1,600 sheets of flammable paper stuck together). My workload was twice that of the other inmates and, at the time, my arms and legs were in such unbearable pain that I could barely lift or hold anything. So even if I were to work all night, there was no way I could complete my assignment. The police used my inability to complete my work as an excuse to inflict corporal punishment upon me in all kinds of ways. They forced me to take cold showers when the temperature was -4 degrees Fahrenheit; they made me work late into the night or stand guard and, as a result, I never got more than three hours of sleep per night. If I was continually unable to complete my work, they would round up all of the inmates from my cell, take us outside, surround us with their guns in hand and make us squat on the ground with our hands behind our heads. If anyone was unable to hold the position, they would shock them with an electroshock baton. Those wicked cops used every method at their disposal to make the other inmates hate me and abuse me. Faced with this situation, all I could do was come before God in prayer: "Dear God, I know that these wicked policemen are provoking the other inmates with the aim of making them hate me and torture me so that I will betray You. This is a spiritual war! O God! No matter how the other inmates treat me, I am willing to submit to Your orchestrations and arrangements and I pray that You grant me the resolve to endure this suffering. I wish to stand witness for You!" After that, I once again witnessed God's deeds. Not only did those death-row inmates not hate me, they even organized a strike on my behalf and demanded that the officers halve my workload. Ultimately, the police had no choice but to relent to the inmates' demands.

Even though they were forced to halve my workload, the police still had other tricks up their sleeves. A few days later, a new "inmate" would arrive in the cell. He was very kind to me, he bought me anything I needed, he got me food, inquired after my well-being and also asked why I had been arrested. At first, I didn't think anything of it and told him that I was a believer in God and had been arrested for printing religious materials. He kept asking me about the specifics of my book-printing operation and, when I saw how he kept pressing me with questions, I began to feel uneasy and prayed to God saying, "Dear God, all people, things and situations that surround us are permitted by You. If this man is an informant sent by the police, I pray that You reveal his true identity to me." After finishing my prayer, I remained quiet before God and a passage of His words came into my mind: "**Remain quiet**

in My presence and live according to My word, and you will indeed remain watchful and exercise discernment in the spirit. When Satan arrives, you will be able to guard against it at once, as well as sense its coming; you will sense real uneasiness in your spirit" ("Chapter 19" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). I pondered over and over the questions that the supposed "new inmate" had asked me and realized that they had all been exactly about what the police had wanted to know from me. At that moment, it was as if I had awoken from a dream: This had all been another one of the wicked police's plots and this man was an informant. The "inmate" saw that I had suddenly gone quiet and asked me if I was feeling alright. I said I was feeling just fine and then, both sternly and justly, I told him, "Let me just save you the trouble and let you know you're wasting your time. Even if I knew everything, I wouldn't tell you!" The other inmates all lauded my behavior, saying, "We could all learn from you believers. You have real backbone!" The informant couldn't think of anything to say in reply and, two days later, he snuck away.

I survived through one year and eight months in that detention house. Though those police thugs thought up every way possible to make life difficult for me, God moved the death-row inmates to take care of me. The head prisoner was later transferred and the inmates elected me as the new head prisoner. Whenever any of the inmates ran into trouble, I did my best to help them. I told them, "I am one of God's faithful. God demands that we live with humanity. Even though we've been imprisoned, as long as we're alive, we must live with a semblance of humanity." After I had made this statement, those death-row inmates stopped bullying new inmates. The name "cell number 7" had once struck fear in the hearts of inmates, but, under my tenure, it had become a civilized cell. The inmates all said, "These people from The Church of Almighty God are a good bunch. If we ever get out of here, we'll definitely put our faith in Almighty God!" My experience in the detention house reminded me of the story of Joseph. During his imprisonment in Egypt, God was with him, God bestowed him with grace, and everything went very smoothly for Joseph. During this time, all I'd done was to act in accordance with God's requirements and submit to His orchestrations and arrangements. God was therefore with me and He enabled me to head off disaster at every turn. I thanked God from the bottom of my heart for the grace He had bestowed upon me!

Later on, without the slightest shred of evidence, the CCP government cooked up false charges and sentenced me to a three-year fixed term imprisonment, only finally releasing

me in 2009. After I got out of jail, the local police kept a very close watch on me and required that I be at their beck and call. My every movement became subject to the control of the CCP government and I had no personal freedom whatsoever. I was forced to flee my hometown and fulfill my duties elsewhere. What's more, because I was one of God's faithful, the CCP government refused to process my family's household registration records (to this day, my two sons' registration records are still being processed). This made it even more clear to me that life under the rule of the CCP government is a living hell. I will never, ever forget the cruel torment that the CCP government inflicted upon me. I despise it with all my being and would rather die than be held by it in bondage. I completely renounce it!

This experience has given me a much greater understanding of God. I have witnessed His almightiness and wisdom and the substance of His goodness. I have also seen that no matter how much the demonic CCP government persecutes God's chosen people, it remains nothing more than a serving object and foil to God's work. The CCP government is and will always be God's vanquished foe. So many times, God's miraculous protection saved me in times of desperation, allowing me to break free from the clutches of Satan's claws and regain life on the brink of death; so many times, God's words comforted and revived me, and became my backup and support when I was at my weakest and most hopeless, allowing me to transcend my flesh and wrest myself from the clutches of death; and so many times, when I was at my last gasp, God's life force propped me up and gave me the strength to go on living. It is just as God's words say, **"God's life force can prevail over any power; moreover, it exceeds any power. His life is eternal, His power extraordinary, and His life force is not easily overwhelmed by any created being or enemy force. The life force of God exists and shines its brilliant radiance regardless of time or place. Heaven and earth may undergo great changes, but God's life is forever the same. All things may pass away, but God's life will still remain, for God is the source of the existence of all things and the root of their existence"** ("Only Christ of the Last Days Can Give Man the Way of Eternal Life" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). All glory be to the almighty true God!

32. God's Love Knows No Bounds

By Zhou Qing, Shandong Province

I have suffered the miseries of this life to the fullest. I hadn't been married many years before my husband passed away, and from that point on the heavy burden of caring for the family fell squarely upon my shoulders. Having a young child, I lived a hard life. I was always a target for the derision and contempt of others; weak and helpless, I washed my face with my tears every day, feeling as though life in this world was just too hard. Just when I was wallowing in the depths of pessimism and despair, a sister shared the gospel of Almighty God's work of the last days with me. My heart was filled with warmth when I read these words from Almighty God: **"When you are weary and when you begin to feel something of the bleak desolation of this world, do not be lost, do not cry. Almighty God, the Watcher, will embrace your arrival at any time"** ("The Sighing of the Almighty" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God called to me like a loving mother and I felt like I'd finally found my home, found my support, and found the resting place for my spirit. From then on, I read God's words every day, and I came to learn that God is the source of all life, that God rules the fate of every person, and that Almighty God is mankind's one and only support and salvation. So that I might come to understand more truths, I actively attended church meetings and, in The Church of Almighty God, I witnessed the brothers and sisters all being simple and open with each other. When I was with them I felt at ease, I felt a great sense of release in my heart, and I enjoyed a happiness and joy I'd never felt before in the world. I therefore became filled with confidence and hope for my future. I began to perform my duty in the church in order to repay God's love. To my surprise, however, the CCP government simply doesn't allow anyone to believe in the true God or follow the right path, and I was subjected to brutal and inhuman capture and persecution at the hands of the CCP government simply because of my faith.

One afternoon in December 2009, I was doing some laundry at home, when all of a sudden five or six plainclothes policemen burst into my courtyard. One of them yelled, "We are from the Criminal Police Brigade specially tasked with cracking down on believers in Almighty God!" Before I could regain my composure, they began turning everything in my house upside down like a gang of robbers. They rummaged through my house, both inside and outside, and confiscated some books about belief in God, a DVD player, and two CD

players that they found. They then escorted me to a police car and took me to the police station. On the way there, I thought about how the brothers and sisters had described being arrested and cruelly tortured by the wicked police, and my heart leaped into my throat; I was so afraid. In dire straits, I urgently prayed to God: "O Almighty God! I feel so weak right now. The thought of being tortured leaves me so afraid. Please give me faith and strength and drive away my fear." After praying, I thought of two passages of God's words: **"Those in power may seem vicious from the outside, but do not be afraid, for this is because you have little faith. As long as your faith grows, nothing will be too difficult"** ("Chapter 75" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). **"In all of My plans, the great red dragon is My foil, My enemy, and also My servant; as such, I have never relaxed My 'requirements' of it"** ("Chapter 29" of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). As I contemplated God's words, it occurred to me that I was afraid of the cruel tortures of Satan because I did not possess true faith in God. "Satan is in fact a foil which renders service to God's work," I thought. "No matter how savage and cruel it is, it is still in God's hands, and it has no choice but to obey God's orchestrations and arrangements. What's more, the more savage and cruel Satan is, the more I have to rely on my faith to bear witness for God. At this crucial moment, I absolutely cannot be cowed by Satan's despotic power, but instead must lean on the faith and strength God gives me to defeat Satan." Thinking this, I no longer felt so afraid.

When we got to the police station, two policemen slapped handcuffs on me without a word, and they kicked and shoved me up to the second floor before snarling at me, "We have some 'special treatment' for the likes of you to enjoy!" I knew in my heart that this "special treatment" meant torture. Just then, I kept praying to God in my heart, and I dared not leave God even for a moment, afraid that I would lose His care and protection and be taken in by Satan's cunning schemes. As soon as I entered the interrogation room, one of the wicked policemen told me to kneel. When I didn't, he aimed a vicious kick at the back of my knee, and I involuntarily fell to my knees with a thud. They then surrounded me and began to beat and kick me until my head spun and my eyes grew blurry, and blood was pouring from my nose and mouth. They still weren't done, however, as they ordered me to sit on the floor and placed a chair in front of me. One of the evil policemen then began to strike me hard on the back, and with every strike my face and head would crash against the chair. My head was ringing, and the pain was unbearable. One of the policemen gave me a

wicked grin and said, "Someone has already sold you out. If you don't start talking, we'll beat you to death!" After he said this, he punched me full in the chest, which hurt me so badly that I couldn't draw breath for a long while. Another policeman then shouted, "Do you really think you're some kind of Liu Hulan? Sooner or later we'll beat the truth out of you!" The gang of wicked policemen tortured me in all kinds of ways, only stopping when they grew tired. Just when I was thinking I might be allowed some time to breathe, a policeman in his fifties came over to try and trick me with his good cop routine. "Someone has now told us that you're a church leader. Do you think we won't be able to charge you with anything if you don't talk? We've been following you for a long time, and we only arrested you because we now have enough evidence. So start talking!" I was shocked to hear him say this: "Could it be true?" I thought. "If someone really has been a Judas and sold me out, then wouldn't they already know everything about me? Can I get away with not telling them anything? What should I do?" In my desperation, Almighty God's words came to mind: **"You think of all the grace you have gained, all the words you have heard—could you listen to them in vain? No matter who runs away, you can't. Other people don't believe, but you must. Other people abandon God, but you must uphold God and bear witness to Him. Others slander God, but you cannot. No matter how unkind God is to you, you still must treat Him right. You should repay His love and you must have a conscience, because God is innocent. His coming to earth from heaven to work amongst mankind was already a great humiliation. He is holy without the slightest filth. Coming to a land of filth—how much humiliation has He endured? Working in you is for your sake"** ("The Significance of Saving the Descendants of Moab" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*). Every one of God's words beat upon my numbed heart and my conscience felt greatly reproved. I thought about how I had followed Almighty God for years, how I had enjoyed endless love and warmth from God, obtained the plentiful life supply of God, understood truths no one throughout history had been able to understand, realized the meaning and value of life, and rid myself of my past dark life of pain, desolation and despair. God had given me such tremendous love—how could I possibly forget that? How could I find myself at a loss and even have thoughts of betraying God the moment I heard that someone else had betrayed Him? Thinking these thoughts, I wept and wept, and hated myself for being so lacking in conscience and humanity. Whenever someone showed me kindness, I would think of every possible way to return the kindness. God, however, had given me so much grace

and so many blessings, and had bestowed such great salvation upon me, and yet my conscience remained numb. Not only had the thought to repay God not occurred to me, but instead when I found myself in dire straits, I was even thinking of betraying God. I was causing God's heart so much grief! At that moment, I felt such deep remorse for having wavered. If someone else truly had just betrayed God, then God would surely now be feeling extremely pained and grieved, and I should now be trying to comfort God's heart with my own loyalty. And yet I was being so selfish and despicable that not only had I not stood on the side of God, but I had thought of betraying God just so that I could go on dragging out a pathetic and ignoble life. I had thought only about myself, without any conscience or reason whatsoever—I was causing God's heart so much grief and making Him hate me so! In my self-reproach and remorse, I silently said a prayer to God: "O Almighty God! I'm so lacking in conscience and humanity! All You have given me is love and blessings, and yet all I've given You in return is hurt and pain. O God! Thanks be to Your guidance for allowing me to know what to do now. I now wish to satisfy You this once with real action. No matter how Satan may torment me, I would rather die than fail to stand witness for You, and I will never betray You!" The wicked policeman saw how much I was crying and thought that I was beginning to crack, so he walked up to me and said with feigned gentleness, "Tell us what we want to know. Tell us, and then you can go home." I fixed my gaze on him and said furiously, "No way will I ever betray God!" Hearing me say this utterly enraged him; he began to slap my face and yell hysterically, "So you'd prefer the stick over the carrot, hm? I tried to give you a way out with some dignity, but you throw it back in my face. Do you think there's nothing we can do to you? If you don't start behaving and fess up, we'll lock you up in prison for five years and your child won't be allowed to go to school." I replied, "If I'm to spend five years in prison, then that is just something I'll have to endure. You can stop my child from going to school, but his fate remains his fate. I will submit to God's sovereignty." The gang of devils became even angrier, and one of them grabbed me by the collar and dragged me over to a concrete platform. They then made me sit on the floor with my legs outstretched. One policeman stomped on one of my legs, while another forced his knee into my back, pulling both my arms roughly backward. My arms were immediately in unbearable pain as though they had both snapped, and my head lurched involuntarily forward and banged against the concrete platform, immediately causing a huge lump to form. It was the middle of winter at that time, with bone-chilling winds and every drop of water turning to ice, and yet

these evil policemen were torturing me to the point that I was sweating buckets, soaking my clothes through and through. Seeing that I still wasn't giving in, they tore off my cotton-padded jacket and made me lie face-up on the freezing floor wearing only my thin underclothes, and they continued to question me. When I still wouldn't answer any of their questions, they gave me another kicking. This gang of devils tortured me until evening had fallen and they were all worn out, but they'd still gotten nothing out of me. When they went to have their evening meal, they threatened me, saying, "If you continue to keep your mouth shut tonight, we'll just handcuff you to a tiger bench and leave you to freeze to death!" After saying this, they stormed off in a rage. I began to feel afraid just then, and I thought to myself: "What other tortures will these evil police put me through? Will I be able to hold out?" Especially when I thought of their savage faces and the scenes of them torturing me, I felt even more distressed and helpless. I was afraid that I wouldn't be able to endure the cruel torture and that I would betray God, and so I kept on praying to God. At that moment, God's words gave me a reminder: **"If man has timid and fearful thoughts, they are being fooled by Satan. It fears that we will cross the bridge of faith to enter into God"** ("Chapter 6" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). God's words cleared my mind and I knew then that my fear was because Satan had deceived me, and thus I had lost my faith in God. I also realized that I really needed to experience this kind of situation in order to be tempered and edified, or else I would forever be unable to develop true faith in God. Even more, I realized that I was not fighting alone through this adversity, but that I had Almighty God as my staunch backup. I then thought of when the Israelites were led out of Egypt and were being hunted by the Egyptian soldiers all the way to the Red Sea. By that time, there was no going back, and they obeyed God's word and relied on their faith to cross the Red Sea. To their surprise, God parted the Red Sea and turned it into dry land; they passed over in safety and escaped danger, thus evading being pursued and slaughtered by the Egyptian soldiers. Me facing the cruel torture of the CCP police right now was just the same. As long as I had faith and relied on God, I would surely defeat Satan! And so, strength returned to my heart and I no longer felt so timid and afraid. I said a prayer to God in my heart: "O Almighty God! I wish to do battle with Satan while relying on You and not be cowed ever again by the despotic power of the wicked police! I will stand witness for You!" At this time of danger, not only did Almighty God act as my powerful backup, but He also showed mercy and compassion for my weakness. The police did not come to question

me again that evening, and I passed the night safely.

Early the next morning, several policemen with murderous looks in their eyes came and began to intimidate me, saying, "If you don't play ball, you'll pay for it! We'll give you a taste of death! Your Almighty God cannot save you now. You wouldn't get through this even if you were Liu Hulan! If you don't start talking, don't expect to get out of this alive." They then made me take off my cotton-padded jacket again and lie on the freezing floor while they questioned me. Seeing each one of them fixing their gazes on me, permeated with evil, all I could do was call desperately on God and ask Him to keep me standing firm in my testimony. Seeing that I was remaining silent, they were shamed into anger. One of the policemen began to hit me viciously on the head with a file folder until I felt dizzy and woozy. While striking me he called me filthy names and threatened me, saying, "Let's really give her a taste of the gallows today. Where does her son go to school? Notify the school principal and bring her son here. We'll make her wish she was dead." They then questioned me about the things they'd found at my home, but because I didn't answer to their satisfaction, they began to smash the file folder against my mouth until blood trickled from the corners of my lips. They then beat me fiercely all over my body, only stopping when they grew tired. Just then, a policeman came into the room and saw that I'd made no confession, then four or five of them came over to me and undid my handcuffs, then handcuffed my hands again behind my back. They made me sit before a large desk, with my head level with the edge of the desk and my legs outstretched. When they thought my legs weren't straight enough, they would stomp on them and press down on my shoulders. For a long time, they held my arms and handcuffs aloft behind me and made me stay absolutely still in the posture they had prescribed for me. If I moved forward, I would hit my head on the desk, if I moved left, right, or backward, I got severely punished. This despicable tactic of theirs left me in so much pain that I just wanted to die and I let out one blood-curdling shriek after another. Only when they saw that I was close to death did they let me go and allow me to lie flat on the floor. After a little while, that gang of inhuman devils began to torture and wreak havoc on me again. Four or five evil policemen stood on my legs and arms so that I couldn't move, then they held my nose and squeezed my cheeks to get me to open my mouth while they poured a constant stream of cold water into it. Suffocating, I struggled desperately, but they still didn't let me go, and I gradually lost consciousness. I have no idea how long I was out for, but I suddenly awoke, choking with water, and began to cough violently. Water came out of my mouth, my

nose and my ears and my chest was in agony. The only thing I could sense was utter darkness surrounding me and it felt like my eyes were bulging out of their sockets. I was choking so much that I could only exhale and not inhale. My eyes were blank, and I felt as though death would soon come for me. Just as my life was hanging by a thread, I suddenly had another violent fit of coughing and convulsions, and I was able to spit out some water. I felt a little better after that. One of the wicked policemen then dragged me by the hair into a sitting position and yanked roughly at my handcuffs. He then ordered one of his underlings to fetch an electroshock baton to use on me. To my surprise, when the underling came back, he said, "I could only find four. Two of them don't work and the other two need charging." Hearing this, the officer roared in fury, "You're too stupid to do anything! Bring some chili pepper water!" I prayed nonstop to God in my heart, asking Him to protect me so that I might overcome all the cruel torture inflicted on me by those wicked police. Just at that moment, something unexpected happened: One of the policemen actually said, "That's too much. We've already tortured her badly. Don't do that anymore." When this policeman heard this, all he could do was relent. At that moment I truly perceived God's sovereignty and rule over all things, as it was God protecting me and giving me this reprieve. These wicked policemen were not ready to let me go just yet, however. They handcuffed my hands behind my back again, stood on my legs and pulled my handcuffed hands upward with all their strength. All I could feel was unbearable pain as though my arms were breaking, and I screamed without stopping. In my heart, I kept calling on Almighty God, and without realizing it I blurted out, "Almi ..." But then I immediately lowered my voice and just said, "All I know ... I'll tell you all I know." That gang thought I really wanted to tell them everything, and so they unhandcuffed me and yelled, "We're all professional case investigators. Don't even think about tricking us. If you don't behave and tell us everything now, you can forget about living much longer or ever leaving this place. We'll give you some time to think about it!" I was incredibly distressed in the face of their torture and threats, and I thought to myself: "I don't want to die here, but I really don't want to betray God or sell out the church either. What should I do? What if I told them about just one brother or sister?" But I suddenly realized that I could never do this, and that to tell them anything would be to betray God, and would make me a Judas. In my pain, I prayed to God: "O God! What should I do? Please enlighten me and guide me, and please give me strength!" After praying I thought of God's words that say, "**[T]he church is My heart.**" "**You must give everything you have to protect My testimony. This shall be the**

goal of your actions—do not forget this” (“Chapter 41” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). “Yes,” I thought. “The church is the heart of God. To sell out a brother or sister would be to wreak havoc in the church, and that is the thing that most grieves God. I must not do anything to hurt the church. God came to the earth from heaven to work to save us, and Satan keeps its greedy eyes fixed upon those of us chosen by God, vainly hoping to catch us all in one go and destroy God’s church. If I sell out my brothers and sisters, would I not be allowing Satan’s insidious plot to succeed? God is so good and everything He does on man He does out of love. I must not hurt God’s heart. I cannot do anything for God today, so I ask only to be able to stand witness to repay God’s love—this is the only thing I can do.” Once I had understood God’s will, I said a prayer to God: “O God! I have no idea what kind of torture they still have in store for me. You know that I am of such small stature and that I often feel timid and afraid. But I believe that You hold everything in Your hands, and I wish to make a resolution in Your presence to stand witness for You, even at the cost of my own life.” Just at that moment, one of the wicked policemen shouted angrily at me, “Thought it over yet? If you don’t behave and tell us everything then I’ll make sure you die here this very day! Even omnipotent God cannot save you!” I closed my eyes tight and, clinging to my resolve to stand witness at the cost of my own life, I said not a word. The policemen gnashed their teeth in their fury, rushed toward me, humiliating me and torturing me nonstop just as they had before, by stomping on me and beating. They viciously beat me in the head until it began to spin. Everything went black before my eyes and my head felt like it had split open. I gradually began to feel that I couldn’t move my eyes, my body became numb to the pain, and I couldn’t hear anything clearly. All I could perceive were their voices which seemed to be coming from a long way away. My mind was crystal clear, however, and I kept on silently repeating these words: “I’m not a Judas. I’ll die before I become a Judas....” I have no idea how much time went by, but when I awoke, I saw that I was soaked in water, and four or five evil policemen were squatting all around me, as though checking to see whether I was alive or dead. As I looked at this gang of officers who were no better than beasts, I felt great indignation rise up within me: These were the “People’s Police” who “loved the people like their own children”? These were the enforcers of the law who “upheld justice, punished the wicked and helped the good”? They were all just demons and monsters of hell! Just then, I thought of a passage from a sermon: “The great red dragon resists and attacks God most viciously and frantically, and it harms

God's chosen people most fiendishly and terribly—these are the facts. The great red dragon persecutes and coerces God's chosen people, and what is its purpose in doing this? It wishes to utterly eradicate God's work of the last days and eradicate God's return. This is the maliciousness of the great red dragon, and it is the cunning scheme of Satan" (Sermons and Fellowship on Entry Into Life). Looking at the facts around me in light of these words, I saw with crystal clarity that the CCP government is the embodiment of Satan and that it is the evil one that has opposed God since the beginning. It is because only the devil Satan hates the truth and fears the true light, and wishes to banish the coming of the true God, because only it can cruelly hurt and so inhumanly torture those who follow God and who walk the right path. God has now become flesh and has come to work within its lair, and He arranged such a situation for me to undergo so that I, as profoundly deceived by it as I was, could realize that it is the devil Satan that harms and devours people, that there is light beyond its dark rule, and that there is a true God who watches over us and provides for us day and night. The coming of Almighty God has brought truth and light to me, and has allowed me finally to see the demonic face of the CCP government that flaunts itself every day as being "great, honorable, and right," arousing bitter hatred toward the CCP government in me. His coming has also allowed me to realize the meaning and value of pursuing the truth, and to see the path of light in life. The more I thought about it the more I understood it, and I felt a strength rise up within me, helping me to face the officers' cruel torture. My physical pain also diminished, and I knew deep down that this was God protecting me and helping me to get through the police's attempts to extort confessions from me through torture.

In the end, the police saw that they could get nothing out of me, so they charged me with "disrupting public order" and escorted me to the detention house. The CCP government makes prisoners work like machines in those places, forcing them to work nonstop all day long. I couldn't even get a meager five hours' sleep every night, and every day I would get so utterly exhausted that I felt like my whole body was falling to bits. Despite this, the correctional officers would never let me eat my fill. I was given only two small steamed buns and some vegetables without a drop of oil for each meal. During the time I spent locked up there, the evil police came to question me several times. The last time they interrogated me, they said they were going to sentence me to two years of reform through labor. Boldly, I asked them, "Doesn't state law make a provision for freedom of belief? Why sentence me

to two years of reform through labor? I'm sick. If I die, what will my child and parents do? With no one to look after them, they'll starve." A policeman in his fifties said sternly, "You'll be sentenced because you've broken state law, and the evidence is irrefutable!" I retorted, "Believing in God is a good thing. I don't commit murder, I don't commit arson, I don't do anything bad. I just seek to be a good person. So why won't you let me have my faith?" They were shamed into a rage at my retort, and one of them came over to me and gave me a slap, knocking me to the floor. They then forced me to lie flat. One of them held my shoulders down while another held my legs down. Yet another stomped hard on my face with his leather shoes, and shamelessly declared, "It just so happens that there's a market on today. We'll strip you naked and parade you around the market!" Having said this, he stomped hard on my lower body and on my chest. He stood on my chest with one foot and raised the other foot menacingly, and then did this repeatedly, occasionally stomping on my thighs. My trousers had become torn from being trampled on and the crotch was ripped as well. I was so humiliated that tears poured ceaselessly from my eyes, and I felt like I would go to pieces. I simply couldn't stand being humiliated by those devils in this way. I felt that it was just too hard to live like this, and that I would rather be dead. Just as I was feeling this terrible distress, I thought of God's words that say: **"The time has come for us to repay God's love. Although we are subject to no small amount of ridicule, slander, and persecution because we follow the path of belief in God, I believe this is a meaningful thing. It is a thing of glory, not shame, and no matter what, the blessings we enjoy are not paltry at all"** ("The Path ... (2)" in The Word Appears in the Flesh). **"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake"** (Matthew 5:10). God's words immediately jogged my memory. "Yes," I thought. "The pain and humiliation I suffer today is of the utmost meaning and value. I'm suffering this because I believe in God and walk the right path, and it is suffered for the sake of gaining the truth and gaining life. This suffering is not shameful, but instead is a blessing from God. It's just that I don't understand God's will, and when I suffer this pain and humiliation, I want to die to put an end to it, and I cannot see God's love or blessings at all. How could I not be causing God grief?" Thinking these things, I felt so indebted to God, and silently I made a resolution: "No matter how these devils may shame me and torment me, I will never kowtow to Satan. Even if I have only one breath left, I will still spend it well and bear witness for God, and absolutely will not disappoint God." After torturing me for two days and nights, they still got nothing out of me, and so they sent me to

the Municipal Detention House.

At the detention house, I thought about everything I'd experienced over the past few days and, slowly, I understood that undergoing such persecution and adversity was God's more profound love and salvation for me. God wanted to use this situation to temper my will and my resolve to suffer and to instill true faith and love inside me so that I could learn to be obedient in such dire straits and be able to stand witness for Him. In the face of God's love, I remembered how I had become weak and rebellious time and time again while I was being cruelly tortured, and so I came before God in profound repentance: "O Almighty God! I'm so blind and ignorant. I didn't recognize Your love and blessings, but always thought that physical suffering was a bad thing. Now I see that everything that is happening to me now is Your blessing. Although this blessing is at odds with my own notions, and it may look from the outside as though my flesh is suffering pain and humiliation, in truth this is You bestowing life's most precious treasure on me, it is a testimony to Your victory over Satan, and even more, it is You showing me the truest, realest love. O God! I have nothing to repay You for Your love and salvation. All I can do is give You my heart and suffer all this pain and humiliation to stand witness for You!"

What came as a complete surprise was that, just when I had prepared myself to go to jail and became determined to satisfy God, God opened up a way out for me. On my 13th day at the detention house, God raised up my brother-in-law to invite the police out and give them some gifts, costing him 3,000 yuan. He also handed 5,000 yuan over to the police so that they would let me out on bail pending trial. When I got home, I saw that the flesh on my legs had become necrotic from how much the evil police officers had stomped on me. It had gone hard and black and it took me three months to recover. The torture meted out to me by the police also caused severe damage to my brain and heart, and I have been left with the aftereffects. I still endure the torment of this pain until this very day. Had it not been for God's protection, I would perhaps have been paralyzed and bed-ridden, and the fact that I can now live a normal life is entirely down to the great love and protection of God.

After experiencing this persecution and adversity, I truly came to see the God-resisting, demonic essence of the CCP government. I also came to clearly see that it is the evil one and the irreconcilable enemy of God. I harbor an undying hatred for it deep within my heart. At the same time, I also came to have a deeper understanding of God's love than I had before, and I came to understand that all the work God does in people is done to save them

and is done out of love for them. Not only does God show His love for us through grace and blessings but, even more so, He shows it through suffering and adversity. Being able to stand firm throughout the cruel torture and insults the police heaped on me, and being able to walk out of the demons' lair, I came to truly appreciate the fact that this was all down to Almighty God's words giving me faith and strength. Even more so, it was because I was inspired by Almighty God's love, which enabled me to overcome Satan one step at a time and walk free from the demons' lair. Thanks be to God for loving me and saving me, and all glory and praise be to Almighty God!

If you want to read more of God's words and know God's work of the last days, please contact us.

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