

## Greasy the Robber A True Story

It was 1897 in Russia and, because of several bad harvests, several families considered moving to Siberia to try and start over. Some land was found in the government of Tomsk, so several families family sold their land and made the move. Among the families was the Tichomirow family, a husband and wife along with their two children, ten-year-old Shura (Alexandra) and eight-year-old Pasha (Paul). It was a harsh winter and the trains made slow headway as there were long stops; the moving farmers had to wait weeks to get trains and would spend days and nights in railroad stations. As a result of several unfortunate circumstances, Mr. Tichomirow contracted cholera and died. Days later Mrs. Tichomirow also died; the children were now alone. While the parents were in a special place for people with infectious diseases, the children found refuge behind the snow fences along the railroad tracks. Shura and Pasha tried in vain to find out about their mother but were always driven away from the building she was in. Finally a guard told them the fate of the parents. Returning to where they had been staying behind the snow fences, what little baggage they had was gone; someone had taken it! The children were devastated. They tried to find out where the parents were buried but were always driven away; at night they returned to their refuge behind the snow fences. Eventually they decided to follow the railroad tracks down to beg for bread; an unknown uniformed guard appeared and, what happened next was a truly heart breaking; the children were separated and sent to different orphanages that were miles apart.

The condition of the orphanage Pasha was in was such that he could not stay there; he just had to get away and get away he did as he ran away. He had hoped to find his way back to his home village of Sosnovka. He would beg for food but, with the exception of one village, he avoided homesteads. Pasha ended up deep in the woods of a forest and while asleep one night, he was awakened by a loud voice. The loud voice was that of a robber who was just one of many who lived in the forest. The robbers took Pasha to live with them and because he was so dirty and greasy, they decided to name him Greasy. By the time he was sixteen-years-old, he was taking a lively part in the robberies and plundering of the band.

Two men were passing through the forest when one part of the band with Greasy as its leader, overtook them; the men were robbed and killed. Later, while going through the belongings of one of the murdered men, Greasy found a couple of books, one of which was a New Testament {NT}. To pass away the time at night, Greasy began to read the NT and, as he did so, God began to open his eyes to what a wretched sinner he really was. He read verses from Romans 3:11, 13-18; I Corinthians 6:9, 11. The more he read, the more God the Holy Spirit worked in his heart, eventually bring him to the place of repentance and faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Having become a Christian, Greasy could no longer continue in the trade of being a robber. His comrades at first did not understand what could be in the little book to so change Greasy; some wanted it burned but others wanted to look into it. Greasy read to them those parts that had so moved him; the others listened silently. After a month had passed the Holy Spirit had done such a great work in the hearts of the men that they agreed they could no longer engage in being robbers; the band of robbers disbanded and at least seven of the men surrendered to the local magistrate; that made quite a stir in the village. Justice was done and the men ended up going to prison for several years until an amnesty was granted and they were released. While incarcerated Greasy preached the Gospel to all who would listen and "...even the prison management noticed that the usually unruly convicts had become quiet and that the behavior of the prisoners had become faultless." All of this as the result of reading God's Word and the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart of a sinner.

Friend, what you have been reading is a true story extracted from the booklet, "*Greasy the Robber*," the **TRUE** story about Pasha Tichomirow. God's Word clearly says that, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." {Romans 10:17} It is in the pages of God's Word that we learn that we are all sinners by birth; we have a sin nature and from that nature we commit various acts of sin. We also learn that, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." {Romans 6:23} Pasha read about how much God loved him and that Jesus Christ died for him, just as He did for you. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have

everlasting life." {John 3:16} Salvation and the forgiveness of sin is **NOT** of works of any kind; it's all by faith in Jesus Christ alone. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." {Ephesians 2:8-9} **ALL** of us are redeemed from the slave market of sin by the blood of Jesus Christ: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:" {1 Peter 1:18-19} Every person, any person who repents of sin and trusts Jesus Christ as personal Saviour spiritually becomes a new person, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away, all things are become new." {2 Corinthians 5:17}

What God did for Pasha, He can do for you. Pasha was a really wicked individual who learned that, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." {Romans 10:13} " And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." {1 John 5:11-15} God said it and that settles it; will YOU now believe it!?

~Richard A. Ciarrocca/2017

All Scripture references are KJV

The complete story of "*Greasy the Robber*" is available from Pilgrim Fundamental Baptist Press