



Prologue



'Enough's enough!'

My father's strict voice cut through the noise the three of us children were making as we rough-housed together. Silence fell at once – Father was being disturbed by our noise.

'Helen, you've had enough.'

My mother's gentle voice made me draw my hand back, as I stretched out for another chocolate biscuit. Her tone of voice said: 'You don't need another; your hunger has been satisfied. To take another is greed.'





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‘Have I cut off *enough*?’ queried the nervous hairdresser, seeking to please both her young client’s request to ‘cut it short’ and Mother’s warning not to cut it too short!

Waiting anxiously for the results of recent exams to go up, everyone was poised, with eyes fixed on the boards. And then the excited whistles, laughs and exclamation of joy (mixed with the tears of those who had not made the necessary grades). ‘I’ve *enough*!’ *Enough* to make it possible to go on to the next year’s studies – or to gain the coveted place at the chosen university.

Mother’s gentle whispered ‘FHB!’ to her three excited children one evening. Father had come home with unexpected guests and Mother was afraid the food prepared for the evening meal would not be *enough* for everyone to have all they might wish. So it was ‘Family Hold Back!’

Being interviewed before the senior members of the mission organisation WEC International¹ to determine whether I was a suitable candidate for acceptance into their missionary family, I nervously answered each

1 WEC International is an international movement committed to the gospel of Jesus Christ, aiming to reach people and to plant churches in over 70 countries in the world.



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question put to me and watched their faces, trying to see if my answers satisfied them. I had been at the mission's headquarters for five months, taking part in the daily life of the family each day – sometimes being allotted to the kitchen, at other times to the laundry or to general household duties, and every morning at the daily prayer session. Had I shown *enough* dedication, *enough* maturity, *enough* willingness to do anything asked of me, to be accepted into the family?

A year later, all my gathered possessions were packed into tea-chests and duly labelled, I had received all the necessary 'jabs' (inoculations and vaccinations) and was waiting for the travel documents and tickets. Would I have *enough* to pay for the journey?

One could go on and on. Would my stamina be *enough* in Congo's heat to work 18 hours a day? Would my brain be resilient *enough* to learn the Swahili language? Even, dare I say it, would my love for the Lord Jesus be *enough* to take me through the initial culture shock and loneliness? Oddly enough, I never even asked any of these questions at the time. But I expect my dear mother pondered them and wondered if I could stand up to all the new



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stresses and difficulties. Had her upbringing of her children been *enough* to prepare them for all the world would throw at them?

Years later, faced with the horror of captivity in the civil war of the sixties, filled with fear at the ferocity of our captors and the atrocities we had to witness, had I *enough* resilience, had I *enough* faith, to trust God absolutely? To be so sure of his almighty power and omnipotence, as to be able to rest in him, even when the world seemed to be falling apart? And then, in the night that I was first taken captive, feeling desperately alone and wondering where God was in the midst of all the evil, being conscious of his quiet voice into my heart, 'Can you thank me?' and feeling, 'No, God, I can't possibly. This is all too awful.' And then realising that what he was actually saying to me was, 'Can you thank me for trusting *you* with this experience?' As I caught the import of his words, 'I thought you knew me well *enough*, to trust me even when you couldn't understand the outcome or the reason,' I was overwhelmed at the privilege of being trusted by him, to go through whatever was coming next, because it was all part of his perfect plan. He didn't have to explain to me the why and wherefore of that plan.



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Later still, because of the needs of my frail mother and also my own physical needs, I had to leave Congo – and the people and work that I loved – and come back to the UK. I found it desperately difficult to come to terms with the fact that God (not the mission, nor my mother) had called me home to lead me into a new ministry. The same question came back at me with renewed vigour: ‘Can you thank me?’ It took nearly eight years before I could honestly thank him for trusting me with this change of direction. The work was hard and often very lonely, travelling endlessly, living out of a suitcase, relating to a new group of people every day. Eventually there came a day when I felt like telling our patient loving heavenly Father, ‘I’ve had *enough!*’ But his quiet reply, as ever, ‘Can you not thank me for trusting you with this task, even if I never tell you why?’

Ten different uses of the same English word ‘enough’ with several different nuances. It is a word that might well be translated by many different words or phrases – but I do believe that they can all be summed up in the one word: ‘sufficiency’.

Just as there are many ways of using the word ‘enough’ in our everyday lives, so there



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are many ways of understanding this in our spiritual lives. There is a wonderful truth that God has *enough* to supply all our needs. *Enough* for salvation, *enough* for forgiveness, *enough* to overcome temptations, *enough* to persevere in adversities, *enough* to calm our fears and anxieties. *Enough* grace, *enough* love, *enough* power. His supply is sufficient to meet not only all our needs, but the needs of everyone else in the world, now and at all times. This is summed up in the promise: 'My grace is sufficient for you' (2 Cor. 12:9). That is to say, it is *enough*. By his grace we have everything we need to live the life he has planned for us, everything we need to live a life that is pleasing to him.

Sufficient grace – that means there is always *enough* for all our needs. This thought is summed up in Graham Hobson's words

Grace sufficient he'll provide you,
Grace in just the way you need;
Grace to save you, grace to guide you,
Grace from sin to keep you freed;
Grace that you may stand unmoving,
Grace in conflict to succeed;
Grace sufficient, always proving
His is wondrous grace indeed.