

The Jamaican Express

2006 RESOLUTION

"I arrived at Mr. Goudas' place of business at about 1:30 p.m. on the third day of the new year 2006, to conduct some on-going business with Mr. Goudas.

I talked with his son Panos for a brief moment, as we always enjoy sharing ideas together. I must say I always like to talk to Panos, and we have many things in common, including the skin complexion as his mother is from Barbados.

He is a brilliant young man who has a deep love for knowledge, and I personally complimented him for that attitude. When I was called in the office by Mr. Goudas, he was working on the computer. We wished each other happy new year.

Mr. Goudas is a thinker and he is always reading something or sharing ideas about creating new food products. He asked me to read some text he had on the computer. I thought for a moment that it was about another food product he wanted to share with me.

As I started reading, I realized and I was surprised to see, that the information that I was reading was of a profound nature and had a spiritual approach to it. I have known Mr. Goudas for years, and I don't remember him talking to me about anything spiritual.

I have always been about business and making Mr. Goudas food line of products always better, not about reading or listening to a great spiritual Japanese hymn.

I was also taken aback when Mr. Goudas took out his harmonica and started playing along with the hymn in Japanese. I did not know that he can play music, so I felt very surprised to see that. Listening to the melody, I realized it was a familiar song titled "What a Friend We Have in Jesus", and interestingly enough, I found out that the lyrics in English have been written by a man who spent most of his life in Port Hope, Ontario.

I can't even imagine how this song happened to become a Japanese tune! Apparently it is very popular around the world. For my part, I was happy to finally read all the lyrics of the song, as I couldn't figure all of them out before, everytime I would hear the song in the church or the radio.

The article written by Mr. Goudas fascinated me so much, and triggered my spirituality, to the point I decided to do my best and join Mr. Goudas when he visits the memorial site of the man who wrote the lyrics, so Jamaican Express can have a full coverage of the event. The following article, printed exactly as Mr. Goudas wrote it, can also be found in the Goudas Foods website, in the Events section, as of January 1st, 2006."

Today is Sunday, January 1, 2006, the first day of the New Year. What a proponderous day. Many unexpected things may occur throughout the next 364 days. I will not pretend to be a psychics or fortune-teller; I will live each day as it comes.

So let us see what has happened today.

Although it is not an official working day, as usual I am in the office first thing in the morning, and with no one to make me my coffee. So I made one myself, feeling quite happy with my pets close to me, especially Irma who stills suffers the consequences of the car accident a few years ago, but made it through another year.

I then proceeded to the computer to check on my e-mails.

There were hundreds of spam and junk mail but somewhere along the line this one caught my interest:

Tsuki naki misora ni, kirameku hikari, Aa sono hoshikage, kibou no sugata. Jinchu wa hate nashi, mukyu no ochi ni, Iza sono hoshikage, kiwamemo ikan.

Kumo naki misora ni, yokotou hikari, Aa youyoutaru, ginga no nagare.

Aogite nagamuru, banri no anata, Iza saosase yoya, kyuri no fune ni.

These words meant nothing to me, but luckily a link provided underneath enabled me to actually listen to the song by clicking on it:

When I was listening to this melody in the Japanese language, I felt very incompetent for not being able to understand.

The voices sounded very angelic, and it felt like the music was coming directly from heaven. Almost instinctively, I reached for the harmonica in my pocket and eventually I was slowly able to play a melody as an accompaniment to the chorus. I felt the need to know more about the melody and the lyrics, and after an insisitive search, I discovered that it was no other but the song "What a friend we have in Jesus", which goes as follows:

What a Friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear. What a privilege to carry, everything to God in Prayer O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear All because we do not carry, everything to God in Prayer.

Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere? We should never be discouraged; take it to the Lord in prayer. Can we find a friend so faithful, who will all our sorrows share? Jesus knows our every weakness; take it to the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care? Precious Savior, still our refuge, take it to the Lord in prayer. Do thy friends despise, forsake thee? take it to the Lord in prayer; in his arms He'll take and shield thee, thou wilt find a solace there.

With curiosity fully aroused, I was determined to discover the author. I found out it was a gentleman by the name of Joseph Scriven (portrayed in the picture), with a very interesting biography.

Scriven was born in Dublin, Ireland, in 1819.

He fell for a lovely young woman, but on the eve of their wedding she accidentally drowned. Scriven never recovered from the shock.

The Irishman began to wander, hoping to forget his sorrow.

At age 25, he finally settled in Canada. His faith led him to do menial tasks for the poor and the sick. He often worked for no wages and was regarded by the people of the community as a kind man. He later fell in love again and planned to marry a Canadian woman. But again, tragedy struck: his fiancée died after contracting pneumonia.

A friend visited an ill Scriven in 1855, and discovered a poem that he had written for his ailing mother in faraway Ireland. Scriven didn't have the money to visit her, but he sent her the poem as an encouragement. He called it "Pray Without Ceasing".

When the friend inquired about the poem's origins, Scriven reportedly answered, "The Lord and I did it between us". Scriven never intended for the poem to be published, but it made its rounds, and was set to music in 1868 by a musician named Charles Converse, who titled it "What a Friend We Have in Jesus."

" It has since become one of our greatest hymns. Scriven died in 1886, ironically in an accidental drowning. The town of Port Hope, in his memory, erected a monument near Toronto, four miles north, in Pengally's Cemetery, with this inscription from Scriven's famous song:

"In His arms He'll take and shield thee. Thou wilt find a solace there".

I have made it one of my New Year's resolutions, that upon perfecting the melody on my harmonica I will visit the above cemetery and monument so that I will be able to give my respect by playing to the man who, unknowingly, has given so much to the world.

HEALTHY NEW YEAR EVERYONE From: Spyros Peter Goudas