



Warmolt Houwing (1980)
Captain on Supertanker - age 43
years

Retired sea captain giving away 18 million gospel books

By Michael Ireland
ASSIST News Service

IN 1989, retired sea captain Warmolt Houwing discovered an illustrated Bible story book, entitled *He Lived Among Us*. He obtained the copyrights and started giving the books away to fellow seamen in the Port of Antwerp.

Giving away these books has since become his mission in life. By enlisting the support of others, the Toronto-based evangelist has been able to print more than

18 million copies of this book in 27 languages. He distributes all the books free of charge, with help from many different organizations; and now he displays this book on the Internet in 18 languages for free download at:

www.gospelcomics.com.

Houwing's purpose is to proclaim the gospel in this attractive way, especially into China, the Middle East, Indonesia and India. To spread his website address worldwide, he would like as many Christians as possible to know about it. Houwing is seeking churches and individuals who would be willing to place an announcement in a newsletter or church bulletin, to accomplish just that.

Houwing is a 70-year-old Dutchman with a strong Christian family background. He was in the Dutch Merchant Navy, and sailed from 1953 until 1983. Starting as a cookboy, he finished his last 10 years as captain. Houwing sailed in all kinds of vessels, from freighters and tankers to passenger ships and tugboats.

Houwing recalls: "While sailing I lived like the prodigal son, to my shame!" In 1986, after a dramatic conversion, he gained a totally new, fresh start in life. His conversion led to sailing as relief captain on the [Mercy Ships](#) vessel *Anastasis* and the [Operation Mobilization](#) ship *Logos*.

In 1988, Houwing started to work as an evangelist in the Port of Antwerp among his seamen colleagues. "Our main target group were Russians," he says. "Every day, about 17 Russian ships docked in Antwerp, with approximately 1,000 sailors. I smuggled tens of thousands of Bibles and New Testaments to them.



Warmolt Houwing (1955)
deckhand - age 17 years



Warmolt Houwing
(1964) 2nd Officer - age 26
years

"In 1989, an English pastor gave me two [copies of] *He Lived Among Us* in Russian. When I saw these books, I said to Jesus: 'This book will open their eyes!' That same afternoon, I smuggled one of these books to a Russian ship's officer, Andre, who was 28 years old. The following morning I waited for him, and when he appeared his face and eyes were shining -- and he said two words to me: 'I believe.' That was the clearest confirmation! My heart jumped for joy, and I straight away drove into Antwerp, sold my car and started printing with that second book. Later on I obtained the copyright. Raising funds with Christians, I printed as many as possible and distributed them free of charge!"

In 1993, he printed 1.7 million books in Russian, English, Spanish and Dutch; he then teamed up with the [Open Doors](#) ministry. "We transported 1.2 million copies with trucks to Russia. There they were distributed by Open Doors and their network all over Russia. It

became the most popular book in the Russian prisons. We had lots of feedback and reports telling how many, many children -- and often, through them, their parents -- became believers."

Thereafter came many more translations, including Chinese (Simplified Script), Arabic, Farsi -- and in India, more than 20 local languages like Hindi, Tamil, Bengali, Telugu and Urdu. "In India, we printed and distributed over 15 million copies of *He Lived Among Us*," Houwing continues. "Approximately eight million were given to children, mostly to children attending Vacation Bible Schools in rural areas. [This was] very strategic -- [because] through the children, the parents and other adults are being reached, who often otherwise cannot be approached."

Also, he adds, "many illiterate [people] come to a living faith in the Lord Jesus; others read the book to them, while they study the vivid drawings. A Chinese proverb states: 'One picture tells more than one thousand words.'"

Houwing shared two accounts of those who have been changed through reading the book. Twenty-eight-year-old Soma Palit, who is a physician, stated: "Jesus is the real God for me. This little book is full of divine knowledge, it has saved my life. I want to be baptized."



Warmolt Houwing (2001)
Missionary to India

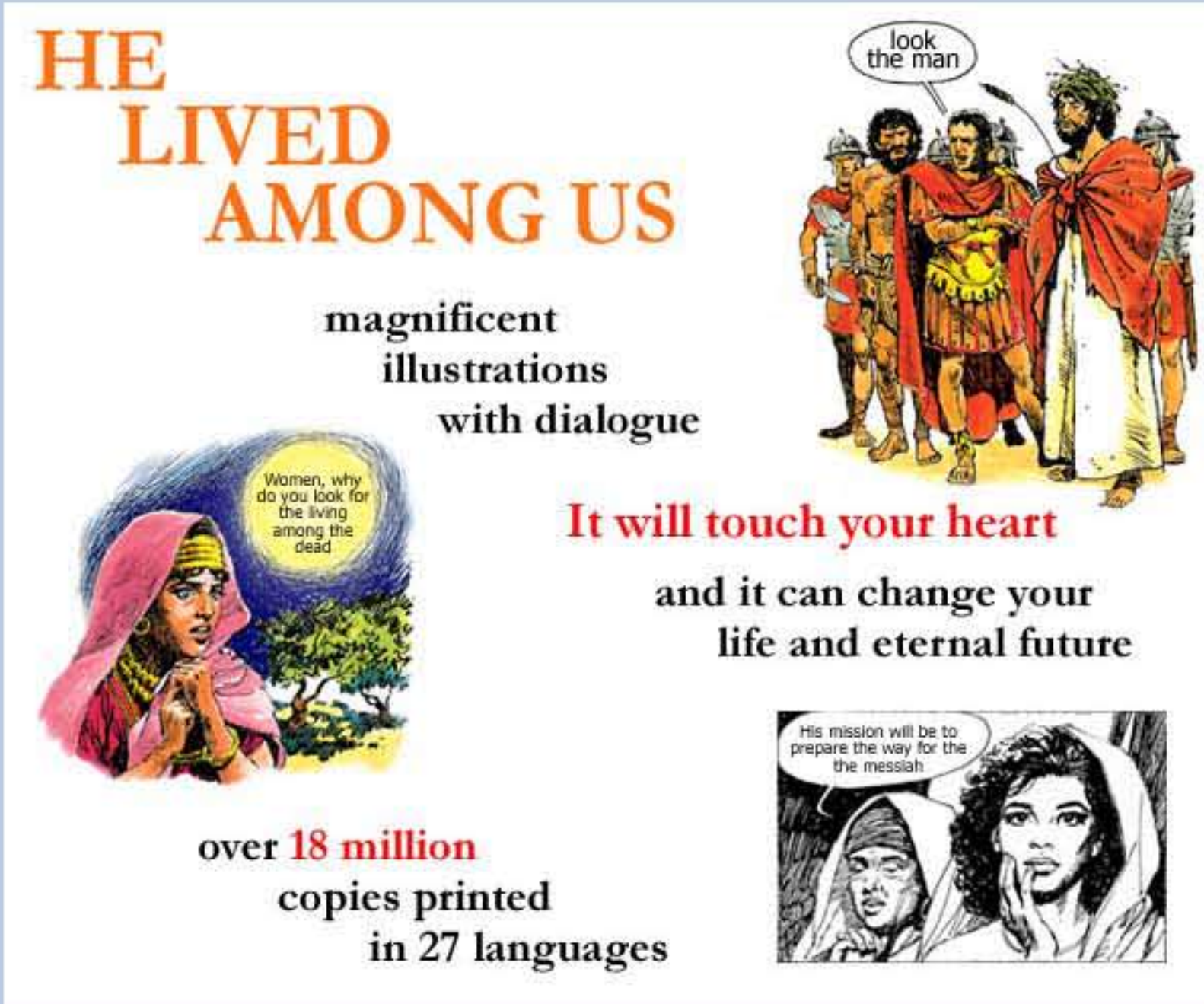
Dulip Dutta, a 45-year-old Catholic businessman in Calcutta, said: "As soon as I finished reading *He Lived Among Us*, I surrendered my life to Christ. I shared the truths and joy of experience with my wife Latika and two sons and two daughters; all of them received Jesus into their hearts and became children of God. I went to my bishop and asked him if he had read this book. He said no. I left the book for him to read. He was blessed and shared it with others, and wants to have more copies. So far, at least 70 persons have read that one copy within 80 days."

Houwing says the book was originally written in French. Its author is Pierre Thivollier and the artist is Noel Gloesener. The book has 128 pages, 109 of which are graphic pages showing the main episodes of the life of Jesus; the last 17 pages contain James, Romans 1-8, 1 Peter, 1 Corinthians 15, and the parables of the rich man and Lazarus, and the prodigal son.

"By displaying it on the Internet in about 18 languages we proclaim the gospel in this attractive way," Houwing says. "In the meantime, I keep busy raising funds to print more books while we still can."

For further information, contact:

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