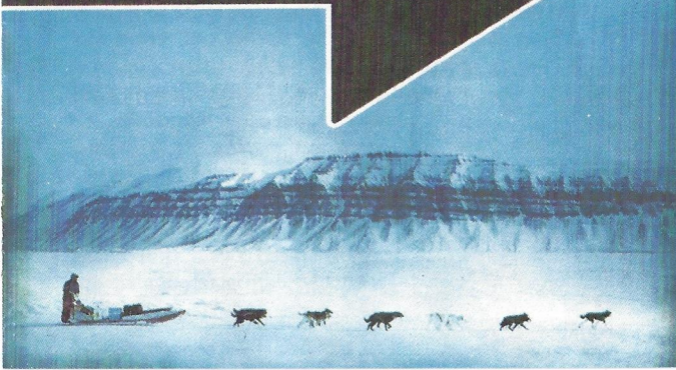


**A RACE**  
FOR **LIFE**



**E**ven in our modern times, no roads exist that connect Nome to the rest of Alaska. In January 1925, when car and air travel were impossible, Dr. Curtis Welch of Nome diagnosed an outbreak of diphtheria—a deadly and contagious disease. Sadly, Dr. Welch had none of the needed antitoxin serum. He sent out an urgent telegraph pleading for help. Every hour without the serum increased the death toll.

This dreadful disease reminds us of sin. Sin has infected every one of us, and if we don't use the right treatment for it, sin will eventually cause our eternal death. The Bible makes it clear how dangerous sin really is: **"The wages of sin is death"** (Romans 6:23).

Who is the only one who can remove the problem of sin? Before His birth an angel announced, **"Thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins"** (Matthew 1:21). When Jesus died on the cross, He shed His precious blood. God says, **"The blood of Jesus Christ [God's] Son cleanseth us from all sin"** (1 John 1:7).

The antitoxin serum was located in Anchorage and was sent by train to the town of Nenana—still 650 miles away from Nome. More than twenty dogsled teams were ready, spaced out along the route to Nome.

The crate containing the vials of serum was carefully lashed onto the first sled, and the driver yelled, "Mush!" The dogsled race to save lives had begun.

After harrowing adventures, the serum was lashed to Gunnar Kaasen's next-to-last dogsled. With the command "Mush!" his team of dogs sprinted away. Shortly after this team started, a severe

snowstorm blew in. Snow fell so fast that Gunnar could no longer tell if he was headed in the right direction. He had to trust his lead dog to guide them. The lead dog made his way through the blizzard until he lost his sense of direction and stopped. Worried that they would never reach Nome, Gunnar got off the sled.

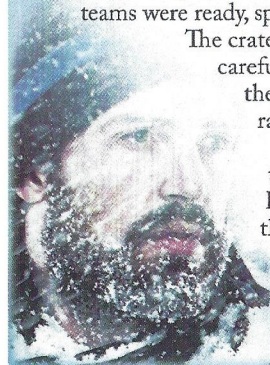
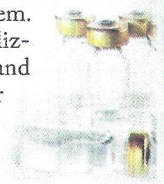
The snow was blowing so thick that Gunnar could barely see the faint outlines of his dogs in their harnesses. His glance fell on one of the dogs that was hitched at the back of the team. Instead of standing still, this dog Balto was jumping against the braces of the harness. He seemed to be saying, I know the way; trust me! Gunnar switched Balto to the lead spot. The dog paused for a moment, just long enough for Gunnar to get behind his sled, and then surged forward into the storm.

The wind blew at forty miles an hour. The temperature was minus forty and falling, and snow continued to fall fast. Balto led them through the terrible storm. At one point, a strong gust of wind hit them and lifted Gunnar, the sled and all the dogs off the ground before slamming them back down again.

## **THE HOME STRETCH**

When they neared the last relay station, Gunnar saw no lights in the roadhouse. Instead of losing precious time in rousing the sleeping driver, Gunnar kept going on the last twenty-mile leg of the journey. Even after working all day, Balto ran like the wind.

At 5:30 a.m., Balto led the team to the front of the tiny hospital in Nome. They had traveled over twenty hours through some of the worst conditions known to man. Gunnar put his arm around his lead dog and then



noticed that Balto's feet were bleeding. Despite danger and incredible hardships, Balto had gotten the sled carrying the antitoxin serum through to Nome.

Did you know that Jesus left His home in heaven and came here to earth to face dangers and incredible hardships so that you could be saved? The words He spoke were so powerful that they struck men deep in their hearts. Because He spoke about sin, He earned the hatred of many who **"loved darkness rather than light."** At last they took Him and nailed Him to a cross. God knew that it was only through the death of His dear Son that sin could ever be put away. In His own body at the cross, He carried those sins which were bringing us down to death and judgment. **"He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed"** (Isaiah 53:5).

The Lord Jesus Christ died for you on the cross. After His death, He was laid in a grave, but a grave couldn't hold Him. He rose from the dead. If you believe on this Saviour, you will receive the forgiveness of your sins and the gift of eternal life. Won't you trust the Lord Jesus to save you?

