



Other Books by Gloria Slater

**Heddy's Miracles ~ A True Story**

Lilo's Family Defies Hitler and

All Natural Laws

In the Deepest Darkness

There is Light at

Albrechstrasse 9

**... and the circle goes round ...**

**The Mino Story**

**GOD  
SPEAKS**

**BY**

**GLORIA SLATER**

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# INTRODUCTION

Sometimes we wait a long time for something to change in our lives. Sometimes it seems like forever. There are those times, however, when everything is changed in an instant. That's what happened to me on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 1997. Even though I conducted my life in the usual manner after that, the irrevocable changes wrought on that day showed up in many ways I had yet to understand.

I originally wrote this book in 1998, then life intervened. When I took it out, dusted it off and began to pore over it again in 2010, I was freshly overwhelmed not only by what had happened to me, but, especially what I had written about it.

Soon after the accident, I met others who had the same experiences in traumatic events. They'll be included in the sequel. In this book I just explain what happened to me. The one reigning difference was that I heard God speak to me, directly to me, out loud or with an inside, internal voice, or a knowing. And I found that the unseen spiritual world was open to me like never before. Did I wake up in a world that was still sound asleep? Was my brain rewired to connect? I really don't know the scientific or the spiritual connotations of all this. I only know what I know and that what I feel is AWESOME! That's all I share with you here. I hope you enjoy reading about it and that it helps you on your journey. Thanks for joining in on mine.





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## Chapter One

### Freaky Friday

It was a lazy Friday afternoon. There I was, on April 4<sup>th</sup>, driving back home after dropping my daughter, Heather, off at her girlfriend's house near our old home. The afternoon light lingered on in the spring air and created a beautiful ambiance that was infectious. I had nothing in particular to do and no pressing engagements.

In spite of the absence of pressure, I was fastidious about my driving. I watched every corner and curve,

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every place where a car could come out of nowhere without warning. My speed was slower than usual. I noticed that. Normally pretty close to the speed limit anyway, there really was a lazy feel in the air and I didn't care if someone came along behind me who wanted to go faster. They'd have to go with my flow.

The intersection I was concerned about was coming up, so I paid very close attention to every spot where a car could possibly snap into view. Curiously, there wasn't a single vehicle in sight. Both the cross street a few yards away and the busy road up ahead were barren. There were no cars coming from any direction that would turn in or out of my path at any point. Even in this small town area, that didn't happen often. I should have known better right then and there. But—it was a lazy, summery Friday afternoon.

As I approached the huge bush to my left that towered above my car, I watched the parking lot of the tiny strip mall to mark any moving objects such as children, dogs or joggers. I always keep an eye out for birds and squirrels, too. Totally satisfied that I would

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not meet with any surprises by the time I reached the other side of that great bush about to entirely block my view, I approached the intersection cautiously. Slightly slowing to leave time to react in case of the unforeseen after clearing the bush, I turned to look to my left.

Before I lost sight of the parking lot on one side of the bush to the point where I regained my view, a whole car materialized out of thin air. A car literally did come out of nowhere! There was no time to think of alternative actions, let alone carry any one of them out. I immediately did a double-take that any actor would have been eternally proud of and then just stared, screamed, and braced.

Impact!

The one thing I am profoundly, incontrovertibly certain of at the moment of impact is that an angel molded himself between me and the driver's side door. He soaked up the largest part of the shock. Glass flying through my hair made me feel as if I were floating. Remembering those few moments, scenes always filter through my head of commercials where women are

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weightlessly running in slow motion across fields of beautiful flowers, hair flying in the luscious air. It was kind of like that. Really. But, the angel was not my imagination. To this day I believe my Guardian Angel saved my life.

The next thing I remember is thinking that the car was moving and I didn't stop it. For a long time, I wondered to myself about why I didn't do it. Months later, I finally realized the reason why. I couldn't figure out how to stop the car from moving, even though, out of habit, my mind was actively engaged in affecting the routine motions of doing so. I couldn't see. I couldn't see the wheel, the gearshift, the road in front of me. It was completely dark. Normally, you look at something to see it before you reach out to do something with it. Therefore, I didn't do it because I couldn't see where to put my hands. I know it seems so simple, but it's an indispensable requirement for taking action.

But, I do remember the bump as the car halted. The sense that I was no longer moving allowed me to rest, also. Even though I didn't know where I was nor why

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I'd stopped, I was grateful that I didn't have to worry about dealing with the growing Friday rush hour traffic on Route 30 only a few yards ahead.

I sat. Dazed, I felt no need to move nor think. I sat.

Out of the corner of my eye, I detected movement to my left and turned my head to look—in extreme slow motion. A tall, young girl gradually made her way along my car up to my window—rather, where the window once was. She stood and stared at me. I smiled. Strange that I should smile at a time like that, I think now. The look on her face didn't even phase me. Her gaping mouth and saucer eyes traveled the length of the car and rested on me. Again, I smiled. I was aware that I didn't move my arms, only my head, very slowly and very, very deliberately.

Her mother came alongside and looked flabbergasted, just as her daughter, but was sputtering words in short sentences and interjections. I didn't say much. She offered me her phone to call someone to come and help. I thought for a moment and couldn't decide what to do. After a few minutes, I decided to call

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my husband who worked a couple of miles down the road.

After an awkward struggle with the operation of the cell phone, I was able to pull myself together enough to make the call and was content to wait for his arrival. That was when I began to observe cars rolling by at well below the break-neck speed of Amish buggies. It was the stares of the drivers that caught my attention, though. What a pickle! Odd that I, that proverbial Type A personality, wasn't as moved as everyone else seemed to be.

It was a pleasant surprise to see my sister-in-law among the awed faces driving by. A familiar face certainly perked me up. Her look of warmth and genuine concern incited me to at least desire to move from the car.

That was when I became aware of my physical impairment. Reaching down for the door handle to my left, I could see the entire door was jammed tightly into the opening. No hope of getting out that way. As I looked to my right over the passenger seat to the only

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way out of my two door sport vehicle, I heaved an inner sigh of defeat. It might as well have been the Grand Canyon. It seemed miles away. I actually debated whether I should even attempt it. This from one who was no longer challenged after two years of Jane Fonda's Workout Challenge and truly physically fit after 24 years of rigorous exercise. From one to whom staying in shape was a way of life.

After a few moments of deliberation, I bowed to the requisite: exiting the car and getting on with the tasks at hand. Awkwardly I began to lift my legs and move my arms. It felt like something wasn't firing right in the process. Hurdling the console between me and freedom was grueling. Not only did I feel double my weight, I felt like I extended far beyond my usual girth in every direction. It was a brand new perception of those slow motion scenes in cartoons and movies. And it took forever—a relative term, but appropriate. Every change of position coupled with insignificant progress and forced constant reassessment.

It was nauseating. Infinitesimal progress dealt one

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jabbing blow after another. On top of all that, it took a great deal more thought, contemplation, endless maneuvering and intense concentration than would be generally essential for such an casual activity. In the back of my mind, unable to break through all the thought processes spawning confusion and continual frustration at my travail, was my wonder over why this was happening at all. Indeed, why?!

Mercifully, I don't even remember all that I had to go through to scale the console. Folding myself into a pretzel and then disgustingly carefully untying the knot barely touches a cursory description of the operation. Finally, sitting on the passenger seat, no sooner had I rested from my travail and gloried in the thrill of accomplishment when I realized that I had more to do. Judging from how far I'd come in the past fifteen minutes, I was crushed. Although not recalling how long it took, it did seem like I had a greater feel of forever. Gauging by this recent performance, to turn my body, grasp the door and actually open it, then push it outward enough to let my entire torso pass, was simply

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beyond my grasp. It was enough to bring me to tears. Nonetheless, this, too would pass. Or so I thought.

Nothing could equal the fervor of utter triumph in finding myself standing on the curb, door still open, but clear of the death trap; upright and standing. Eureka. I had done it! And not a scratch on me. That had to be some amazing accomplishment. In the intervening weeks, I would learn a lot more about just how much a feat it really was and that there would be far greater hurdles to overcome which I couldn't yet imagine. Nor could I possibly even yet conceive of how all that pain would transfer into the greatest joys of my life.

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## **Chapter Two**

### **Damage Control**

Honestly, the last thing on my mind at that time was God. Perhaps, that's why we don't involve Him in most of our lives, or don't think we do. We're busy figuring out what's next ourselves. Most of us usually only include God in the process when all is said and done and we look back. Tortuously dedicated to the baby steps of extricating myself from the mess at hand, God was not in my thinking process at all.

So, later on at the scene, my husband had arrived and stood in the middle of the intersection, hands on hips, as if I had done something grievously wrong. He never

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once came over to me to inquire about my health nor to look me over to see if something was wrong. He never touched nor soothed me.

Esther, my sister-in-law, had driven by staring. I must have been a forlorn sight, judging by the look in her eye. Not long after, she came walking up, put her arms around me and gave me a long hug. You can get lost in Esther's hugs. She sensed that I was cold. Of course, shock had set in. Then she gave me a sweater on a lovely, warm, sunny, spring afternoon, and helped me put it on. I needed that. Thank you, Esther.

From thirty feet away, the investigating police officer asked me if I was all right.

I thought. No broken bones. No bleeding. I didn't even realize I was numb. But, then, I didn't know that for months. "No—nothing's wrong." I called back to him. He seemed relieved that I didn't need an ambulance.

In the evening, I was wistfully lying in bed after talking to family. It was quiet. Everyone I had spoken with was shocked and worried. I was exhausted. Unsure

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about what to do, I tried to think. The first step was to see a doctor—just in case, to make sure there were no real injuries. Unmistakable inklings made it evident that something was not right, but I found it extremely difficult to determine exactly what was wrong.

The next day at my doctor's office I specifically requested the main physician. In waltzed his newest assistant. I needed the doctor I'd become comfortable with and made my request again. He flatly refused. In the back of my head I could hear the wheels turning in their heads. They considered me one of those proverbial whiplash victims who was only after quick cash. A fuse snapped inside. I stood in the main office and railed against the inconsiderate ignorance and thoughtlessness that wounded me worse than the accident itself. They were insistent that I was after a diagnosis to get money wrongfully. Incensed, I left, never to return.

It felt like a two ton elephant was draped around my neck and shoulders, forcing me to lumber about under a very real strain. Nothing imagined here. Every time I

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think of me in that state, I always see myself as being at least two hundred pounds heavier. Any quick or awkward movement commenced searing pain all through my entire neck and shoulders and down my back. It took only a short time to learn how to accommodate my body and walk in a fashion that would keep the pain at bay. Yet, I inherently knew that if I broke out of my new mode of travel I would immediately pay a dear price. In spite of all this duress, I remained positive and believed that all would be well in a week or two. Perhaps it was a way of keeping me from losing heart entirely. Perhaps it was merely simple denial. In the end, I was as ignorant as they were.

Adding to it the faint-hearted nausea of not having a single professional to turn to in a dismaying time of need was a blow I hadn't anticipated. I'm not sure how I got through the weekend, but I learned a very important life lesson: just as when the blood comes when the body is cut, so God comes when there's no one else to turn to. When the situation is over our heads, Gods come in to balance everything out and do

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the damage control. It's nearly ten years later and it makes me cry once again. It doesn't matter what faith you are, God Is there for each and every one of us. Of this I have no doubt. I have the miracles to prove it.

God showed up for me in miracle after miracle. At least, I call them miracles. Nothing like these unexplainable moments had ever happened to me before, that I knew of. Maybe they happen to us all the time, we just don't notice them. These I noticed.

The day of the accident, at the moment of impact, I knew instantly that an angel was between me and my car door. I can still see him in my mind as he was that day. I didn't see him with my physical eyes. Yet, I'm certain of what I did see. I've often wondered about it. Was it because I couldn't see due to the impact? Or was it something more than that? Was it because of the impact that I COULD see?

The next day, I felt strongly that God was, in some way, urging me—seriously urging me—to contact a lawyer. I shrugged this feeling off for a long time, as though it were merely a nuisance, a gnat, a gnawing

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uncertainty. Then, it became so persistent that I knew it was God and I shouldn't ignore Him anymore. This must be a natural way we all deal with that fluttery, curious feeling that grows on us until we simply are unable to ignore it anymore. Hey, everyone, maybe sometimes it really is God. Well, I know it was God in this instance.

After pursuing the matter for some days, I spoke with a lawyer who educated me about certain aspects of my auto insurance and found out why hiring a lawyer was an essential aspect of my recovery. Then, I knew, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that it was God. At a time like that you can only be in awe.

Closely tied into this was another incident. It was an actual healing. Not a complete healing, but a tiny bit of a healing that allowed me to put into place the lawyer's suggestion. Here's a good way to put it. A still, small healing. Without that healing I would not have been able to mount an important part of my case. Happily, it was also the beginning of a habit that I have maintained to this day: Journaling!

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Four doctors worked me over on their way through the medical payments on my auto insurance. When that was gone, they were gone. Yet—I could not rid myself of the gnawing necessity to have an MRI done. I couldn't have told you any reason why or have meaningfully argued or discussed any rationality for my requisite. I only knew that an MRI would tell the story. Every doctor refused to order the procedure. No discussion. No if's, and's or but's. The miracle happened months later when someone recommended I see a doctor they had liked. When I did, I got my MRI. Pronto. That led to life-saving surgery and the end of my pain, nearly a whole year after the accident.

One of the most fascinating of my miracles has to do with a practice I had been utilizing since I was a teenager. Of course, the obvious reason for fasting as a teen is to lose weight. Since then, it has become a comfortable way of life as I've learned of all the benefits of fasting throughout many years of personal application and research. Soon after the accident, it was firmly established that fasting was not going to be

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beneficial at this juncture of my life. Furthermore, eating in a timely manner would behoove me in staying pain-free. At those times, however, when I found it indispensable to fast for purely spiritual reasons, I sailed through a number of them as I had never been able to heretofore. One of the most marvelous was a three day total fast. Quite a feat. Especially considering my condition. If you have never fasted, you couldn't know how multi-faceted this wonder truly is. If you have fasted at all, then you understand.

Finally, a particular fast became one of the most challenging feats I've ever undertaken and only two weeks after my cervical surgery. It was the first time I heard the audible voice of God. Yes, it still brings tears to my eyes. And—He called me by my name. Wonder of wonders. He calls us by name! I stepped out in total faith in Him and did as He asked, in spite of the grave implications for the recovery and the delicate nature of my condition at the time. This one miracle alone showed me how God comes through when no one else can or will. And it continues to be a testimony of God's

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love for all of us.

Along this path, it seemed to me that if God were so intricately involved in the life of this one unknown and inconsequential person, He certainly must be at least this involved with everyone else. It sounds reasonable. But, then, why don't we hear more about it than we do? Wouldn't there be a plethora of people like me who joyously sing the praises of a God Who could do such amazing things? Well, I guess that's what I'm doing. Shouting out loud!

## Chapter Three

### THE MIRACLES

# **My Guardian Angel**

George Muller wrote in his autobiography that he found a myriad of coincidences in our everyday lives, so many that we couldn't possibly count them all. It's been true in my life and it has been a challenge to write down and share as many of them as possible.

I'm convinced that we all experience lots of miracles

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each day we're never even aware of. Some of them are unnoticed because they avert dangers, injuries and accidents we could not have seen coming. If we don't know what **could** have happened, we don't know what **didn't** happen. So, we go blissfully on our way in peace and contentment. Some of these miracles may receive a cursory acknowledgment because we see something, but don't fully understand the impact of what happened, or didn't happen, as a testament that you narrowly missed a crisis. Others we did see coming, but God intervened and danger was averted right before our eyes. These are the miracles we hear about, talk about, make a note of as remarkable and think of as awe-inspiring.

Truly, God speaks to us in so many ways that we couldn't keep track of them all. I know now that my accident was an awakening. An opening of my eyes that caused me to see more of what was really happening around me. Along with an appreciation of all that goes with it. Here and in the following chapters are a few of the moments that I shared with The Lord that made me

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really sit up and take notice. These are The Miracles.

Even though this accident was a terrifying experience, it precipitated something so wonderful in my life that it will remain a constant comfort and infallible guide as long as I live.

First—the terror. There was absolutely no time to react. I turned, saw the car nearly upon me, opened my mouth and screamed. That was all the time I had before the impact. I could make out her startled look. Now it seems bizarre. There was no time for her, either. No time. All I remember after that is a dream state. Everything slowed down to that dirge speed we're all familiar with from movies and TV. Like the playing of taps at grave side. Then there was only darkness.

I do remember the my hair flowing. Such a lovely thing for a woman. And I'm a blonde. A woman whose hair is the color of flax. I was born blonde and, as it gradually turned brunette, I retrieved my identity from within the contents of a blessed bottle and was myself, once again. My hair was also very long—down my back long. Just like the woman running through a field in a

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gentle breeze, my hair was sweeping to my right. It was a soft and dreamy flowing. Not at all harsh. I felt the glass in my hair as it floated past my head. Almost suspended in midair, yet, as if one with my hair. Talk about a bad hair day! Of course, I gave no thought to how my hair looked at that particular moment. I was one with my hair and the universe.

Another sensation I was keenly aware of was that I was moving, but I had no idea where I was headed nor how. Again, there was only blackness. I saw nothing. I could have been drifting through space in “2001: A Space Odyssey.” It was both disconcerting and frustrating to want to make attempts to do something about it, yet to see no way to do it. I think I would have moved my hands toward anything that might have done the job, but there was nothing to move my hands to. There was the added concern of where I was headed and what was out there in the darkness . . . and how I might find out.

Then—the wonder. It was after I noted these things—her face, flowing hair, floating glass, absence of

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light, movement, no direction—that I saw him. I felt the presence of . . . something . . . next to me. He was fully present. Fully involved in what he was doing. And I could see him clearly. I saw nothing with the naked eye, but I saw him filling in the gap between me and that door. He was real, strong, confident. I still have a snapshot of him in my mind as if out of a picture album.

He moved his head and was watching me, totally unconcerned about the crushing blow he was subject to on the other side of the stressed car door, only entirely absorbed with what I was experiencing. There was great concern on his face. No concern for himself. Only for me. Reminds me of . . . yes! Superman. The way he'd save people from hideous death with aplomb and nonchalance. The strangest part? This angel was far more real to me than Superman. The rest of his massive body was conformed to the exact dimensions of the doorway being crushed by the heavy weight and speed of the vehicle hitting my car. How does he do that?! My Hero!

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Actually, he was like any super hero we have come to know and love. Like any of them. Not one in particular. More the essence and core of all super heroes and what they have come to mean to us. At the end, with an expression of easy calm, he courteously acknowledged me as he gazed my way. He might have tipped his hat, if he had been wearing one. What a guy!

He was definitely a male figure. Very much the male. Strong. Virile. Young. Not sassy at all, but thoroughly confident. A John Wayne type—steady and immovable, but never combative. No need. He was the best definition of manhood. Cavalier without being arrogant nor ignorant. Solid. Dependable. He might have been saying “Just doin’ my job, Ma’am.” But, with love. A great, deep, abiding love. My hero. My angel. I know now—He’s my guardian angel.

That’s probably his most endearing quality—his loving-kindness. He was there for me with incredible care and candor. Intimately involved with no strings attached. No payback. No tabs, checks, balances, no ‘I told you so.’ I understand that he was there for me and

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always would be.

Now that I'm focusing on him for the purposes of this book, I'm seeing and feeling a lot more about him than I have since it happened over ten years ago. And a comforting memory it is. Especially in the light of what I heard not long after the accident. Only a few days later, my mother called me and told me about an article she read in the local newspaper. It was about an accident that happened just like mine. A local policeman was driving his car and was hit by another vehicle at his driver's side door. The only difference that she could see was that the policeman had died. We were both shaken and full of marvel.

Yes, that horrific day produced a profound level of satisfaction and solace. When I needed him, he was there. He was the silver lining in the gray cloud. The light in the dark. The half full in the glass that I'm still drinking from.

He was 'All That!'

## My Guardian Angel!

## God Speaks

## Chapter Four

### THE MIRACLES

#### *The Lawyer*

While was sitting on my bed the Wednesday following the accident, there was much speculation about what was wrong with me and what I could do about it. No doctor. No help. No real medical knowledge of the body, outside of my own reading for the past 24 years on nutrition, diet and exercise. I was in over my head.

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Through all this jumble of thoughts and pain and insecurities, I had faintly noticed a slight—possibly, you could call it a murmuring—that kept at my brain like a drip from a faucet. At first, it seemed so very far away. So inconsequential. Just another wispy breeze rustling in the trees that were dozens of thoughts riddling my mind with confusion. It got louder and louder, but I suppose I was determined to keep it from derailing my drive to discover how to help myself out of this indeterminable mess. Sound familiar? It reached the point where I was completely unnerved and actually shouted out loud “O-**kay!** I’ll look for a lawyer!” I was more irritated than profoundly touched, but ended up with an increasing determination to follow through on the task set before me.

Leafing through the yellow pages in my worn phone book, I felt like it was more of a haystack. How to find the ONE lawyer for this situation was not something I could sink my teeth into. But, reluctantly, I gave it a try. After calling a few names and setting forth my predicament, my half-hearted efforts felt like a series of

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dead ends or a loose cannon slogging around in a field. *What could come of this?* I thought glumly.

Finally, somewhere around the fifth lawyer, the futile banter broke into terms I could understand. He helped me see that I was immersed in a bona fide plight. Since my policy had limited tort, in spite of the fact that the woman who hit my car was at fault and had been cited by the police, **I** was the one who had to **legally prove** my injuries and would get nothing, absolutely nothing, from the other insurance company until I could do just that. How would I do that? How could I prove that I was injured? Then it struck me. I needed a lawyer.

My medical payments came directly out of my own pocket for all the doctors I was seeing. Doctors who ignored my complaints. Doctors who treated me in their own limited understanding of my medical needs. Chiropractors who may have understood more, but were just as restricted in their scope of what I was suffering. On top of all that, I wasn't getting any better. I was still moving so slow a turtle would chuckle. My range of motion was worse—almost nonexistent.

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Strength was a joke. I was a mere shadow of my former self.

Surely I had been going through the motions of being obedient to the voice that was now silent, of appeasing Someone for the sake of scratching the itch. It was very clear at that point that only a lawyer could represent me in a serious case that needed as much attention as my body. Then, the admiration seeped into every pore of my being and I felt humble; contrite; appreciative. The wonderment of a God Who can get my attention, with all the world buzzing around me and thoughts whirring in my head, and let me know what I really needed to do to take care of myself (Look at that! I coined a new word!) in the best way possible. That's practical!

The second marvel this lawyer laid on me was that I should start keeping a daily journal in which every ache, pain, irritation and physical event that was precipitated by my injuries was carefully detailed and explained, put on record. *This* would create credibility in court. Upon *this* he could build a case. Having always done everything I'm told, *this* would be done,

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too, and done well. I've been very glad for such a skill ever since, as my journal now spans more than a decade and I often look back with the aid of readings in my journal and find things that make me happy. It had always been my intention to start writing a daily journal, but, life being what it is, I, of course, never got around to it. This is a terrific miracle for me, also. A silver lining.

Although there were more gray days ahead, each one would have its own special sparkle.

## Chapter 5

# THE MIRACLES

### *The Still Small Healings*

Two days later, the first week's anniversary of the accident, I set about this lawyer's project with all the vigor I could muster first thing in the morning. Ideas had plenty of time to stew in my head the last couple of days and come up with some good concepts from which to start my new venture. Now I was ready.

Having been refreshed by a good night's sleep,

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success was at my door. Picking up the pen and notebook, it wasn't hard to begin. I'm a writer. Putting pen to paper was child's play for me, even though there was much to write. I literally had all the time in the world and not a single thing to bog me down nor sway me from my appointed task.

Some time after my imperious beginning, thoroughly exhausted, I put the pen down and eagerly perused my work. Shock and sickening sadness rent me. Only one paragraph stared back. Haunting feelings reverberated inside. *I can't write!* It stung. *I'm a writer. I write. I write all the time. I write in the middle of the night when everyone else is asleep. I write in my head until the chance comes along to put pen to paper and it goes down for all posterity. BUT—I can't write.* The next couple of days were spent escaping the hollow in my stomach.

The actions of getting ready for church on Sunday morning were hollow, too. *Was God not there anymore? Does He flirt with us and then abandon us?* This was my line of questioning on the way to church.

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Oh, I knew better, but I also knew nothing of how to deal with this, just as with the lawyer. What could God do about this? Just wondering. Mere musings. In the lobby, a good friend exclaimed that there would be an unplanned healing service, but, oddly, I felt that God was telling me this was not what I should seek out. There was that urgency again, filling me with passion and uncertainty.

As the sermon wore on, my neck felt like it was made of alternate hanks of lead and putty. Try as I might, I couldn't find the best way to accommodate my impaired neck and back—a never-ending search for a peace that perhaps could not exist in any pose. It sounds like that universal search for the meaning of life, but some are ever more crucial than others.

The need to rest my head as best I could kept me gradually lowering it until my chin reached my chest. Of course, I could only hope, (or did I care at all? No, I didn't care at all.) that no one noticed my head was at a right angle with my neck. After an all-too-short respite, pangs of pain and strains made me painstakingly pull it

## God Speaks

back upright. To the right side. To the left side. Down to the chest once more. To the back. Such nonstop harassment was totally exasperating. Of note, there was no real comfort zone, but making the rounds, so to speak, did provide a modicum of relief from the stress on the pathetic musculature.

In the middle of all this aggravation an announcement caught my complete attention. The healing service would directly follow the sermon. Having grown accustomed to the unusual noises, exclamations and outcries of the charismatic church over the past year, I was suddenly overwhelmingly curious about what God might do here. My grandmother had spoken in tongues and prayed miracles through WWII in my mother's life. What could I expect here and now from the same God? Great expectations, indeed!

After the events of the past week, my faith had certainly been elevated a notch. I actually asked God what He wanted during the service and perceived Him answering very strongly. His plan of action was still up

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to Him and I shouldn't expect anything in particular. I steeled myself to remain in my seat, but, as the time drew near, I more genuinely entreated God about what I should do. Should I go forward for a healing, one that may or may not happen? Should I remain in my seat, an obedient child of God? It was clearly a quandary.

As people started wandering up to form a line in the center aisle, I grew miserably unsettled. Then God told me decisively to go forward, albeit with a caveat: I must not expect anything and be happy no matter what happened. So, what do you do with that? It let both of us off the hook. And that was fine with me.

When I was at the front of the line, I could see that the one person who prayed intensely, like my grandmother, would be free for me. Relief bathed my languishing muscles as I stood close and wondered again what God would do, yet, trying so hard not to put Him in a box. Happily, I moved forward. As soon as he put his hand on my shoulder, I felt it. Something burst through me: strong, zesty, refreshing, delightful, electric! Like a bolt of lightning without the jolt and

## God Speaks

only the joy. I knew instantly that the prayer following his touch was an aftermath.

Walking back to the seat, there didn't seem to be any difference. With a mental keenness born out of the injuries I had sustained, I started sorting every shred of me. Moving my head to and fro without arousing suspicions of lunacy from the crowd, I knew something was different, but what? All the rest of the day, that search went on. To no avail. What happened? Remembering God's stipulations, I gave it up and was glad I had worked well with Him, anyway. Trust is everything. I had a restful Sunday afternoon.

The next morning, I dutifully picked up the pen and notebook for another try. Suspecting that it might be a long process, I was less primed for success and more in it for the long haul than I might have been on Friday. To my utter enchantment and surprise, I discovered what I hadn't noticed since his hand landed on my shoulder. I could write. I could write volumes! I was healed. Not entirely. Not completely. In fact, it was nearly imperceptible. But, there was a marked difference.

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Another miracle. And isn't that what a miracle is? Something we can't understand by our human standards.

When we have questions, we get answers. In the 1970's, my husband and I were alternately amused, disgusted and bewildered by all the hullabaloo about Christian healers. We asked all the questions that were on everyone's minds. Can healing really happen? Could it happen here in the USA? Could it happen to us? Why doesn't it? Why hasn't it? Is it real or someone's sick imagination? Or are we the problem that is blocking what God can do in our lives? Are we being duped or is God all He says He Is? On and on . . .

THIS moment of healing was a REAL healing. When you're the recipient, you have no more doubts that God IS all that He says He Is and much much much MORE! And , yes, there were more still, small healings to come for me.

# God Speaks

Chapter Six

THE MIRACLES

**The MRI**

Four doctors worked me over on their way through the medical payments on my auto insurance. When that was gone, they were gone. Yet – I could not rid myself of the gnawing necessity to have an MRI done. I couldn't have given any reason why or have argued or meaningfully discussed any rationale for my requisite. I only sensed that an MRI would tell the story. Every

## God Speaks

single physician I saw flatly refused to order the procedure. No discussion. No if's, and's or but's.

Of course, the first doctor I visited about my pain and cumbersome gait refused to see me at all. He was someone I had trusted for years with my daughter's health and was quite satisfied with his treatment of her migraine headaches and adolescent quirks. But, when I sat on the table myself, he was not even able to look me in the eye. He sent me an assistant in training. What was I to do?

The second doctor was an orthopedic surgeon. A specialist. Surely he would be able to make sense of this predicament, sort things out and make me better, I thought. Surely. I went to see him with the highest of hopes. He was one of the Yellow Pages' finest. Step right up and get your fix. I was ready and I was going to get it. Right here and now. This is it. I should have done this in the first place. What was I thinking?!? I should have known better than to skulk over to a general practitioner and expect him to know what only a specialist would have a grasp of. Yes, this was the

## God Speaks

answer. This would be my panacea. Now I could get on with my life. Just as I'd thought all along. And, only a few weeks after the accident. As they say, "Now you're cookin' with gas."

It was definitely refreshing. A doctor who not only would see me, but spend time with me and listen to my story and even make more appointments. There was a four month therapy session ordered at a nearby medical facility. I could feel there was something happening. There was hope in the air when I made my way to the medical facility and did my little exercises exactly as I was instructed. Exercise I could understand. This should help. I went through the whole course prescribed by my new doctor, my cohort in wellness. We were on this path of recovery together and we would finish it together. Of that I was certain. What a great feeling to finally find someone who understood and would help me. I was on my way.

My last visit with him brings back that atmosphere of utter aloneness. We had completed a usual appointment and were about to go through the walk to the lobby. I

## God Speaks

was sitting on the edge of the table and worked up the nerve to ask about that silly idea I had of thinking that an MRI would help me somehow. Somehow, though, I must have known inside how he would react. I really didn't want to bring it up because I thought he'd think I was silly, or some such thing. So I hesitated. Like I had for the last four months. Would he listen to me or would he laugh out loud? Would he brush me off like he had once before, in the beginning? Or would he see, after so many weeks of careful consideration, that I had a valid need; that it wasn't a wacky, airheaded, unfounded claim for me to want to experience some dreadful medical procedure that most people regard as torture? Ah, the choices. Not good. So, I plunged right in.

Well, it wasn't at all what I'd expected. It was worse. He carefully explained to me that he'd used up all the medical expenses on my auto insurance, so I no longer had funds available for an MRI. Nor, as it turned out, did I have funds to continue to see him. And, of course, it was his studied medical opinion that there were no grounds for ordering the procedure, anyway. That was

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all he could do for me. Drained, I made my way the short distance back home and gave up.

Instead, I informed my husband that we would need to seek out counseling. Something would have to change to accommodate my losses. Over the next few months, we found a counselor from our church and made it through several visits before she inquired about my course of action right after the accident. I explained the bittersweet trajectory of my ineffective search for the answers to my deep set quest and how it ended too abruptly to appease the nagging inside. Much to my sweet surprise, she had an answer. There was a chiropractor in our church who she had seen on occasion for some of her own problems. She advised that he was personable and efficient and was probably more reliable than many doctors. I couldn't argue on that one.

Since nothing had come of my past attempts, it seemed that something was better than nothing. The information was hastily transferred and I had soon made my first appointment. At this juncture, however,

## God Speaks

there were no more hopes for me to get up, so there were no concerns about dashing them. It was simply an exercise in futility. Something to do. Another round. I had already seen a couple of chiropractors and was not impressed by their treatment for this particular problem. What would it hurt to get another zany opinion?

He was nice enough. Capable. Started right in on a thorough examination. Laying flat on my back, I awaited his perfunctory commands. As he was writing down his findings, it became quite apparent that my stomach was getting queasy. After a couple more minutes, the developing nausea was more than threatening. Rapidly increasing uneasiness moved me to request a rapid run for the nearest bathroom. It felt like I couldn't get there fast enough and was focusing on the quickest path to reach that objective.

What he did next, followed by his serious concern and authoritative statement, left me so stricken that I nearly forgot my condition. No other doctor has heretofore instilled such a reverent response in me. His back was turned when I asked to leave the room. When

## God Speaks

he slowly turned around, he looked more stricken than he made me feel. I'll never forget the look on his face. But, it was what he said that stopped me in my tracks. "That you are nauseated while lying flat on your back indicates that the spinal cord is directly involved. You need an MRI."

In a moment like that, there's so much going on that you can hardly comprehend what it all means. It was crystal clear that what I had been experiencing since the accident was something inside that knew even more than any human could possibly know. And God led me all the way to a place where He could get the diagnosis He was looking for. God speaks.

Needless to say, I got my MRI. Pronto. That led to life-saving surgery and the end of my pain. Another miracle.

# God Speaks

## Chapter Seven

# THE MIRACLES

### *Fasting*

One of the most fascinating of my miracles has to do with a practice I had been utilizing since I was a teenager. Of course, the obvious reason for fasting as a teen is to lose weight. Since then, it has become a comfortable way of life as I've discovered all the benefits of this rich activity throughout many years of personal application and research.

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A few days after the accident, an incident firmly established that fasting was not going to be beneficial during this period of my life. Furthermore, eating in a timely manner would behoove me in staying pain-free. Coming home from grocery shopping, (Can you believe it? I was still actually doing this **normal** chore! I'm telling you, I was **fit**!) I had all the bags on the counters and was about to distribute everything when I had a tremendous stab of pain below my heart in the middle of my chest. Grabbing the island was entirely a reflex action, but I held on for dear life. Literally. Everything went dark; I squinched my eyes and held on so tight because it seemed like I was being jettisoned. It took a couple of minutes, but it gradually subsided enough so I could let go.

I breathed in deeply. Dealing with the persistently sharp residual pain, I tried to think of what might have happened. It was frightening and left me with another mystery to solve on my own, which made me even more shaky. Realizing that I hadn't eaten most of the day, I quickly threw together a simple sandwich and

## God Speaks

chowed it down. By the time I had finished it, the pain had gone completely, but, in its wake I was well aware of its import. Eating would be on the primary list for the duration of this disability. The last time I had to do that was for both of my pregnancies. Eat or be sick. Eating won over my complete attention then and it did here, too. Being lackadaisical about my eating habits was unacceptable. That's pretty hard for someone with a lot on their mind already. It would take added forethought and preparation to keep up with it in a timely manner. Another circumstance of colossal proportions on my plate.

What was intriguing in the ensuing weeks and months, though, was that at those times when I found I absolutely needed to fast for purely spiritual reasons, I sailed through a number of them as I had never been able to heretofore. One of the most marvelous of these was a three day total fast. Quite a feat. Especially taking into account the demands of my situation. If you have never fasted, you couldn't know how multi-faceted this wonder truly is. If you have fasted at all, then you're

## God Speaks

picking your way through all the implications right now.

When you fast, exercise and watch what you put in your body, you become inclined to acknowledge your body's needs. Truly, there is a cognizance of what your body is asking for in any situation. As in any relationship, you, yes, the word is **listen**, to the part you're in relationship with, whether it be another person, a group, a company you're working for, a wife or husband, mother, father . . . well, you get the idea. You listen to your counterpart. You're in relationship with your body, as well. The more in tune you are with that concept, you know relationships, the better off you and your body will be.

And, as in any relationship, your body will actually let you know what it needs. You got it! Just listen. That's all it takes. I guess it's something like listening to God speak. You have to be listening, have your ears on, and open. You have to be open to listening, both your soul and your ears, spiritual and physical. But, I'll explain that further in a later chapter. Suffice to say

## God Speaks

there is listening involved and fasting will facilitate that listening stature, like plugging into a wall outlet or cocking your ear to hear.

You can do spiritual fasts and fasts solely for cleansing the body, like an inner shower. There are probably as many reasons for fasting as there are for eating. What I had experienced indicated a valid reason for eating regularly due to the changed condition of my body, whatever that was. My normal habit of letting my stomach be my food alarm wasn't sufficient. It had to be altered to fit into a regular schedule that would be dictated by my injuries, instead. Fasting obviously didn't fit.

So now you can understand a little bit better why this was a formidable chore for me. I may have considered fasting at some point in my ongoing personal investigation of my problems, to clear my head and really focus on the problem. After this, it would be a far more difficult undertaking because of my body's changing environment inside. I really didn't know what to think when this happened. Could I fast or couldn't I?

## God Speaks

Would I fast or wouldn't I? Would my own probe be seriously hampered because I wouldn't be able to use one of my most important tools? It was flabbergasting.

The answers came along in stages. I'd find a reason to do a spiritual short fast, talk to God about it and do it. They worked out fairly well. Yet, if I ever just forgot to eat, the pain would return with a vengeance. I thought that was interesting. Far more so was the one three day fast God and I started together, mutually, when the first counselor hit a snag with us and we ventured three hours away to Pillow, PA to see a special counselor. Now that was another story.

The feelings I had about this new counselor were similar to the feelings I had about the MRI. The gnawing knowing inside didn't let up and I found myself doing the total fast so that it would be exactly three days before we met the counselor. Once again, I had no concerns the entire period and went about my daily routine with little or no thought of it. Solid as a rock. Peaceful . . . calm . . . balanced. What a freedom it is not to think about food: what to buy, frozen or

## God Speaks

thawed or whatever, what to cook, how to cook, when to cook, watching the cooking, where to keep the leftovers, and all the questions that sweep away our time and mental energy. It's all freed up to focus on more important parts of our lives.

Three hours for our trip to the middle of PA and four hours for the first visit. It was a piece of cake for me. After we left, I spied a McDonalds and was suddenly hungry. That's when you know it's time to break a fast. You wouldn't usually do it with McDonald's, but those French fries were the best I've ever eaten, to this day. I'm not sure what God did with the relationship between me and my husband, but satisfaction and contentment were palpable for me that evening. Yum!

Finally, another fast became one of the most challenging feats I've ever undertaken and only two weeks after my cervical surgery, nearly a full year after the accident. This is where God chose to introduce one of the most awesome aspects of how God speaks.

## God Speaks

Chapter Eight

THE MIRACLES

*The Agreement*

On the day I was to get the results of my MRI, I was terribly eager, of course. I'd waited impatiently a whole two weeks already and couldn't wait any longer. It wasn't possible. I met my husband there and we sat across from the doctor's desk trying not to jump all over him.

He took out the report and placed it in front of him

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with grave eyes. I'd not seen him this somber. He was always upbeat, a can do kind of guy. My demeanor continued in the realm of the positive, however. I'd heard bad news before and this would not deter me from keeping the faith.

I was unprepared for the severity of his voice and for the words he spoke. The disc between vertebra C - 5 and C - 6 was pushing halfway into the spinal cord. If it had been less than halfway, he would have been able to do some manipulation. This required surgery. He solemnly warned me to be extremely cautious with every move I made. If I turned the wrong way at any particular point, I could be paralyzed, barely doing a thing.

It was as if I'd known the whole time. It didn't phase me. I accepted it and would roll with the punches, as I had so many times in my, as yet, young life. We spoke softly about the possibilities and what I might have to look forward to. He suggested an excellent surgeon who I immediately got information for in order to contact him. My husband and I said a few words and I

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headed home in the heavy rush hour traffic on a cold, dark, rainy evening.

I was unprepared for my reaction once I was alone. I burst into tears as I set off in the darkness and it continued all way home. It was as if someone had turned a spigot on full blast. Constantly having to wipe away the stream pouring out of my eyes so I could see ahead of me and not crash into the oncoming cars was a road hazard, but I wasn't thinking about that. Choking sobs put me off balance, so I had to keep reacquainting myself with what was around me. That was pretty much what was happening in my head, as well. A collage of merging and diverging thoughts and emotions that kept colliding and building and exploding. To this day, I'm amazed I wasn't in a crash of some sort on that unfortunate trip.

Imploding into this insufferable scenario was God. This time it seemed that He was up in front of the car, moving along with me, just above and ahead of me. He was speaking to me about the surgery and what I was to expect from it. God told me that I must not be

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concerned about the surgery. That I should be happy with whatever He would do in the surgery, whether I lived or died. He was very insistent about it and would not let me go until I had come into agreement with Him. For the next months I didn't know whether I would live or die in the OR and gained a peace over it long before I entered the hospital.

I suppose He wanted me to keep an open mind about it so that He could do what He had to do. If I needed to have a particular outcome, His hands might be tied and He needed me to be happy with whatever He might do. It was similar to how He was with the first still small healing, so I was familiar with what He was proposing. I assured God right there, in the middle of that malay of hazard and double jeopardy. I said right out loud that I would be okay with whether I lived or died. I trusted Him and that would not change. Done. I made my way home without further incident.

One thing you can't accuse God of is wordiness. He says what He has to say with the fewest and shortest words and always gets His meaning across, whether we

## God Speaks

know it or not. The film industry must be in awe of Him. They probably gleaned their short blurb mania from His prose. It's inspiring the way He melds words and whole concepts into concise packages that carry the most punch with the most perfect clarity. I understood, but found I did have something to say about it myself.

In the two month interval of time between that fateful evening and the day I entered the hospital for the operation that would set me free from this pain and suffering, I prayed and talked to God often about what He wanted and why. There were so many questions, pondering and wondering and instants of needing clarity. Brevity is not my strong suit. I never really got a definitive answer, but was under a consistent blanket of assurance and strength from God that kept me in a good state of mind. For that I was eternally grateful.

## God Speaks

## Chapter Nine

### THE MIRACLES

#### *The Green Pain Reliever*

The date for the operation was set. God and I had bandied about His precept ad infinitum and all there was left to do, again, was wait. There was a contentment and finality about this phase, in spite of the dictum set forth on the final outcome. I was getting what I'd wanted from the beginning. A profound satisfaction emanated from that resolution. So many

## God Speaks

questions had been answered and the ones remaining hardly seemed worth the effort to enunciate, let alone work over for results.

About the only unsettling part at the moment was the timing of the surgery. Ahh, the questions pop up like pop corn in hot oil. Do I have another month left? That is, could I risk waiting another whole month? Will I do some foolish thing that bursts this perfect bubble I inhabit and end up paralyzed before the magic hour? Can I stand to wait another minute, another second, before I lose what sanity I have left? Is this sanity? Is the sky really blue? Or am I imagining it? Am I imagining everything? Stop! I'm OK. I'm in God's Hands.

One day, I was going about business as usual. My life as I'd known it before the accident was a distant memory and never would come again. I knew that. Nothing would ever be the same. Nothing. I wasn't even beginning to pick up the pieces for a life after the surgery yet. I must have realized somewhere inside there would be a lot more to come. No sense in

## God Speaks

weighing what I had left or what I'd do with it at this point. Besides, the possibility that I was to move on to wider horizons was a major consideration. It does make sense, though, even if you're not contemplating death in the near future. Making your peace with what happens after that last breath is comforting. Perhaps that was God's objective. Perhaps that's why I was given an ultimatum: know that you could die on the table and be in Heaven. What's so terrible about that? Absolutely nothing. Therefore, calm takes over and you can really experience peace. I don't think we ever really interpret everything God has in Mind. It's enough that we get what we get.

This is fascinating that I should be writing this twelve years later and finally grasp what God was doing in those crazy days. I have wondered a myriad of times why God did The Agreement with me and especially at such an improbable time. Wasn't He risking my life having a conversation of such magnitude in the middle of heavy traffic when I was so upset? But, then I suppose I could have also been in an

## God Speaks

accident if He had *not* settled me down right then and there. This is the stuff of life, after all.

Anyway, back to that day. I was having a good morning. It was a bright and beautiful. There was nowhere to go and nothing pressing to do. Sound familiar? I was tranquilly getting a few things done in my present usual manner: tortoise pace, measured, purposeful, focused, deliberate. I really don't know what precipitated the onset of the pain. As the doctor had put it months before, any movement might bring on that coup d'état that could recoil those muscles into horrific spasm— or worse. Whatever it took, I did it.

Springing into action, the pain killers were never far away and they mercifully did the trick. Usually. Not this time. The pain was beyond what I could cope with. As my brain became more and more confused and thinking was less and less possible, I called my sister for help. Then I called my surgeon to get a stronger pain killer. It seemed an endless striving for the relief I grievously needed, but I wasn't one to give up, easily, if ever.

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My sister arrived with our mother and her two young children in tow. As we waited to hear from the doctor, I tried to manage the pain. The only thing that stays with me is how I aimlessly, constantly moved around on the couch searching fruitlessly for a comfortable position. It wasn't until the two kids came close and started to laugh and quip with each other as they watched my twitching eyes and squirming body that it hit me how ridiculous I must have been. They got me. I even had to join in on their mirth as I imagined how funny I looked, even playing with them as I added theatrics. Judging by their amusement, I didn't need to add a great deal to maintain my audience.

We talked as much as I could handle conversation, which was very little. Between them and the doctor, I managed to get a prescription for a heavy duty pain medication and secured Evie to get it at the pharmacy. She was out the door and I was writhing.

Retreating into myself, I went deep inside and, I guess, sought help from a different place. I rose from the couch, walked up the stairs, down the hall and into

## God Speaks

the dining room. There I sat on a stuffed chair and waited. It wasn't long before I heard Him. It was Jesus. Yes, Jesus. It wasn't God, The Father, The Holy Spirit, my Guardian Angel or anyone else. It was Jesus. Of that I'm certain.

I'm not sure where He was, but it felt like He was hovering above me like God was during the agreement episode. Jesus was different, though. He was exceedingly gentle, caring, soft-spoken, instructional in a sublime way. I listened intently to everything He said. This is how it went.

“Do you see the pain?” Jesus asked.

“What do you mean?” I queried.

“In your body, can you see where the pain is?” He directed me.

Looking at myself in my head, I still wasn't sure what He meant, but I tried to do what He said. I tried to see the pain that was searing me. When I felt that I had located it and could actually see it, I told Jesus “Yes, I see the pain.”

“Now, make the pain green. Wherever the pain is, see

## God Speaks

the pain as green.”

Completely enraptured with the process and drawn in by not only the necessity for relief, but the hope of achieving it, I looked at the pain and pictured it as a pea green color. It was as though the pain became suspended right there, wherever it was; it had a different quality about it.

“Do you see the green pain?” He inquired ever so softly.

“Yes.” I answered.

“Now, very slowly and cautiously,” He instructed me firmly but kindly, “move the pain out of your body.”

Honestly, I had no more questions and I didn't want answers anymore. Engaged in the procedure of easing the green stuff clear of my prone torso, Jesus seemed to help me move it until there was none left in me at all. I saw it in my body. I saw it moving from my body. And then, I saw it outside of my body. It was elementary. Casual. Done.

Then He was gone. So was the pain. There was not one bit of pain in any part of me. Getting up from the

## God Speaks

chair, I kept checking and rechecking. NO PAIN! How astounding is that, I ask you!?! Well, I was flabbergasted. But, quintessentially delighted. Elated. Pain free by the Hand of Jesus.

As I look back at the experience today, I am becoming totally aware of all that this means. I've always wondered what it would be like to be at the knees of this great teacher, preacher, lover of mankind, Son of God, God. And I got more. Way more. I was healed by His Hand. Powerful! Really powerful!

My sister waltzed into the house with her purchase. I went down to meet her. Then the questions came. Should I take the pain killer? Still? I tell you, the accident must have left a few bruises inside the brain, because I still didn't completely comprehend the magnitude of what God had done. Did I? Nope. What a dope. I took a hydrocodone. Of course, it made me very sick and I deserved to be sick the rest of the day because I didn't recognize the fullness of what Jesus had done for me and relied on a human remedy, anyway. It's wonderful to know that God will serve us

## God Speaks

without our being perfect. There's nothing better than knowing He's always there and will never fail us.

## God Speaks

## Chapter Ten

# THE MIRACLES

### *The Calm*

The long awaited day had arrived. February 6, 1998. Nearly a year after the accident of April 4, 1997. I'd had my round with the MRI and been informed that I should have the operation. God had set me on the right path to help me in every way and even helped me help myself when I proved deficient. What more could you want from God?

## God Speaks

Just to live. I knew that I wanted to live and that I had things I wanted to do with my life. I had given it over to God in The Agreement, fully and decisively. But, I did want more, I guess; and I knew it. I also knew that I was ready to go to Heaven, if that was what He required of me today. I would be obedient unto death.

Arriving at the hospital with my husband, Rod, we met my mother, Lilo, my sister, Evie, and my brother, Chuck. We chatted amiably in the waiting room in hushed tones. It often surprises me how we can make small talk in the most dire of circumstances. Even joked and laughed a little. We were all a little nervous. I'd had four surgeries, but this seemed different, somehow. There was a palpable feel in the air of attentiveness, a reverence. The others were routine. This was not. The singer could lose her voice. The dancer could be paralyzed from the neck down. The actor could lose the stage forever. So the jollies were a bit stiff and constrained. Nonetheless, they were quite welcome. Then, a woman came into the room and asked for me.

On this day of the surgery, I said goodbye to my

## God Speaks

mother, my sister, my brother and my husband, not knowing if I would come out at all or if I'd come out able to sing again. I left it all up to God.

She led me through the lobby, the double doors and down a hallway. It was a convoluted path (sound like life?) and we came to a large area similar to an ER with small cubicles, circular curtains and beds.

When I was asked to get up on the bed, several assistants began to prepare me for the challenging operation ahead. One person was sanitizing certain spots on my legs and poking prods into the yellow patches. Another was putting a thick, sticky glue onto my scalp explaining that it would take weeks to get out of my hair. Yet, another took my blood pressure and others were coming and going while they worked with hardly a comment.

My head was bowed low to my chest. I couldn't tolerate watching it. Suddenly, an overwhelming terror developed. A real terror. I don't know what was worse, the terror itself or feeling overcome by it. *Am I going to lose it, right here and now? How would that look? How*

## God Speaks

*would that feel? What would it do if I really lost control? What do I do now?!?* I couldn't keep up with the eerie, creepy crud crawling about in my head.

I remember knowing that all I could do was to call upon God and, as I raised my head upward to do just that, something wonderful overcame me instead of the dread. As I was drawing my head upward, a resolve came from somewhere deep, deep inside. By the time my head was held high and I was asking God full out to help me – it happened.

I had a complete change of heart! As if I had a drink in my hand and could hear the music playing, I began a light-hearted chit-chat with anyone who would join in. And they all kept up with me. I asked questions and listened to their lively answers. As I asked the questions, they explained every detail of what each one of them was doing and I understood everything. The electrodes in my head let the surgeon know my responses to everything he did. Those long, fat electrodes she stuck at intervals up and down my legs did the same thing. They had to come right up to the

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spinal cord with a rotary blade that would swipe away the offensive disc. “Wow! That’s interesting!” I exclaimed. I made one joke after another and kept them laughing. We all laughed. Genuine and hear-felt fun and enjoyment. Incredible!

My aerobic conversation went uninterrupted, even as they wheeled me along, down the lengthy hall and into the OR. Even as the surgeon gave instructions to each of the others present right up to the point where someone put something over my nose and asked me to count down from 100. The smile never left my face.

“One hundred. Ninety-nine. Nin-e-t-t-y—eeeeiiigghh. . . Niiiiinnnyyy . . . .”

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## Chapter Eleven

### THE MIRACLES

#### *The Surgical Fast*

I remember waking up, opening my eyes and feeling nothing. Physically and emotionally I felt nothing. My mother was on one side of my bed and my sister on the other, each one holding my hand. As I write, I'm tearing up. You see, they love me. And that feels very good. The rest was like being in a straight jacket. Wooden. Immobile. My head was stuffed with cotton balls, but I

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did get the message. Life goes on. And so will I. With a little help from my family and friends.

A huge neck brace filled the space from my shoulders to my chin and held my head unwaveringly in place. I was advised by family and hospital personnel alike that the note on the front of this offensive piece of equipment (I had tried to wear several of these unsuccessfully in the months after the accident. I hated them.) was not to be removed for the entire three months that this brace was to be securely on my neck. I still have that tape on my four drawer file and, even though the words have long since worn off, they still resound with the all the brute force of a General giving orders to a private.

My son, Aaron, picked me up from the hospital the next day. That was a treat. I knew he'd come from Penn State especially to drive me home and I enjoyed it, brace and all. It was a short visit. We talked some, he dropped me off and helped me get set up. I had a hospital bed for the next few months so that I could follow medical rules for a speedy recovery. Bed rest, no

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activities, take your prescribed meds, don't talk a lot. They were lonely months. I had visitors, but I know that peoples' lives go on around you without a hitch. They have to. People do what they can and go on. Rod brought breakfast to me in the mornings. I could get up to get a simple lunch. Ditto dinner. Rod would get home at ten o'clock and we'd do it all over again, ad nauseam.

It was a positive break having the winter Olympics to watch during that time. So, I found myself turning off the TV feeling quite satisfied and fulfilled with the rush, the excitement of the games reverberating in the quiet of my bedroom, my sanctuary. It was two weeks after surgery. There was no one in or near the bedroom. I had been taking my last prescription medication for one week, three times a day with meals. I normally don't eat breakfast and may skip one or both of the other meals, depending on my activities and my appetite. Since the surgery, I had been eating three small meals a day in order to take this one particular medication. Several unusual symptoms had come to my

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attention – blood in the tissue when blowing my nose, periods of extreme nausea and severe headaches. Not yet a mental giant, that’s as far as it went, a notation.

As I leaned back in bed, preparing to go off to sleep, I heard someone speak.

“I want you to fast tomorrow.”

I thought a moment and it hit me. It was the voice of God. The *audible* voice of God. I have to admit, I was awed. I heard Him speak out loud, as clearly as if someone were standing right next to me. He said it to *me*. “I want you to fast tomorrow.”

I know I heard it and I know it was God Who had spoken to me. I didn’t fall on my face at the thought of God speaking to me. I thought about what He said. My first response was “I’m taking this medication. Can I stop taking it? Is that OK?”

This time, His answer was a strong impression in my heart, almost as ‘audible’ as when He had spoken out loud. “It’s all right.”

I thought a minute. My second response was, “I just had major surgery. Is it okay not to eat anything after

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the surgery?”

“It’s all right.”

Again, this I felt from inside, in my heart. I thought about it. A long time. The only thing that was holding me back was me. *Am I ready to do a fast ~ tomorrow!?* In the past I had always chosen to do a fast, on my own, without any stipulations. Even though I had been doing it for more than twenty years, I had to think about whether or not I was ready to do it when it was not my choice and with so little time to consider it. *Clearly, this might be the hardest obstacle to overcome*, I acquiesced, humbled.

God intervened in the midst of my quandary. This time I did detect a hint of exasperation as He exhorted me “Gloria, I wouldn’t ask you to do anything that would harm you.”

He said my name. He said my name! God calls us by name!!My body wasn’t, but my heart was jumping up and down and dancing all around the room. Immediately, straightaway, my heart was primed. I was fully determined to do the fast and, more than that, my

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faith was increased exponentially. My last response was a jubilant “My Lord, I believe You, I trust You, I obey You!” Sleep was sweet.

The next morning I woke up ready to fast all day, a complete fast, for the Lord. The next thing I knew, my husband was at the door asking me if I wanted the usual, toast and juice. I said a firm and definite “No.”

He brought me toast and juice.

Now I was confused. It sat there next to me while I went back to the Lord. *Is this a test, Lord? Did You only want to see if I'd be ready to do the fast? Is the test over? Do You still want me to fast or should I go ahead and eat anyway?* We humans are certainly fickle. When you're told not to eat, all you want to do is eat. Does God know that about us?

For ten minutes I sat. God was silent. I wondered. I thought. I began to feel nausea. Then, I called Rod and told him to take the food away. I would fast.

As I lay back down to sleep, God spoke. “You can drink water and around 3:30 to 4:30 you can have a meal.”

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My head hurt; my stomach felt icky; I blew my nose and filled a tissue with blood. After I drank a glass of water and placed a full glass next to my bed, I slept for hours.

When I awoke, I thought I ought to tell my doctors. The surgeon said I could be off the med for a couple of days. No more meds! I began to feel like I was in the hands of the Great Physician. I still had a headache, slight nausea and blood in my tissue, so I went back to sleep after drinking a full glass of water.

I woke up feeling a little weak, but good. Warily walking around, I noticed there was no headache and no nausea. There was no blood when I blew my nose. Hunger growled inside. No, I don't remember what it was, but I had a fine meal. It was purely delightful. Enjoyed every single bite.

I had been treated and released. What a great feeling! Healed at the Hands of God, Who is intricately and intimately involved in the lives of *every* human being just as He is in mine. What a God!!! What an awesome God!

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## Chapter 12

### More Accidental Concurrent Events

For a long time after the accident, probably a couple of years, I observed a common occurrence. Everyone's familiar with the phenomenon that takes place when you buy a new car or a new dress or bag, and, suddenly, you see it everywhere. Simply unexplainable. Bizarre. It was the same with this. Out of nooks and crannies, people popped up who had the same personal response to traumas in their lives that had happened

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to me.

One of the most encouraging and endearing blessings a person can have is to compare with others who have had the similar experiences. That ‘knowing’ and mutual understanding creates a bond that spans time and distance. I was amazed over and over the first six months after the accident to ‘run into’ people wherever I was who were able to ‘get hold of’ how I felt and commiserate in ways that truly buoyed me at an extremely difficult time. Not only that, they often shared the most intimate and intriguing aspects of the spiritual ramifications that were exactly as I had felt them. Mine was not a unique nor unusual event. Hearing God speak and knowing what He wants and being exhilarated with peace and joy at a time of great turmoil and pain from a trauma—was the norm! Interesting.

At first, of course, I was awed. How exciting to meet someone who has had life altering, deeply intimate and unbelievable consequences that are so like my own. Even as I’m writing this at this

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moment, I'm hearing a very loud ringing in my right ear. Is this a coincidence? After all these experiences, I think not. I knew each of these people who shared with me had undergone the exact same spiritual awakening, although through unique circumstances. The utter sincerity in their hearts was virtually an earmark of the happening. This is something you can't fake. It goes deeper than the surface. A question I came away with that was gradually more persistent after hearing each person's account soon became unrelenting. What was this unknown factor I was seeking after and how deep must I go to find it? Good questions. And we're hot on the trail.

When the euphoria of meeting these people wore off, I realized how important it was for me to hear from these people. I felt vindicated. Validated. Authenticated. Why? In a world alone, a place where no one knows you, where no one knows your name, it's hard to compare apples to nothing. If there are

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only apples in your world and you suddenly come up with a grape, you can't explain a grape to someone who only knows apples. When all these stories I heard bore out to be more grapes, it was quite invigorating to be recognized: someone else had grapes to compare to my grapes. There is a recognition in their eyes, as if that experience alone is a moniker. I'm sure each of the others I encountered felt the same about this part of the experience, as well. These conversations weren't the usual blow by blow, a to z description. The joy and passion and delight shone through it all and was infectious. I imagine it's like meeting a soul mate.

Then it occurred to me: I needed to compare these stories, not only for my own elaboration, but to show these colleagues they were not alone. Also, it could help prepare others for something that may or may not happen to them at some point in their future. It's scary finding yourself in a new world with no grid to

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follow. Lastly, it pays to be prepared.

Years have passed since these times changed my life. In preparing myself for the follow-up, I wanted to extend a gracious hand of hope and understanding to each of the people I found on my path. Their insights of revelation, and the aftermath that catapulted us into this new realm it seems only a few inhabit, could create new hope for all of us. A letter of introduction and commiseration along with an unimposing questionnaire, designed to gently lead them to remember the best and the worst and to bring out the most intimate and revealing feelings without undue probing or causing more trauma, had to be the arduous necessity. Mission accomplished.

After living with this revelation for some time, I have come to the conclusion that anyone could answer these questions and learn something about themselves. Anyone who reads these questions may receive the invitation to a better place, a better

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vantage point from which to grasp this conception. So this could be for you!

Following are the elements, the letter and the questionnaire, that could help you to express what's already happened to you, prepare you for just such an event or aid you in seeing that you have had one of these events and what you can do to reap the full benefits of this occurrence in your life.

The letters are found in the introductions to the chapters highlighting each of the people I met within the year after my accident. Immediately following is the questionnaire I sent with the letters. Leisurely peruse these questions. Spend time with them. Pour over every detail and all that bubbles up as you think through them. Explore all the ins and outs. You may discover a passion that grows as you re-live their moments and consider your own answers that may have lived inside longer than you thought possible. Most of all, enjoy.

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The premise that coincidence is only evidence that God speaks is one aspect of this book. How He speaks to us is another. Yet another is how He moves in our lives to help us hear Him. No coincidences; only God moving in inexplicable, unexpected ways to show Himself to us in order to give us all we require for long, healthy, happy, joyous lives on this earth. You can only read about others. You cannot live their experiences. You must discover your own coincidences yourself.

*Happy trails!*

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## Chapter Thirteen

### Does God Really Talk to Us?

It's all about the proverbial tree. When a tree falls in the deepest wilderness, does it make a sound? When God speaks, does He make a sound? Is it a sound we can hear? Good questions, but, we're after answers.

No one hears everything or sees everything. I mean, we do exactly that, sense everything. But, we would rapidly be overwhelmed if we had to process every last bit of information we take in with our senses. We are

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built to only manage all this information. Part of that management is to completely ignore all the superfluous data we don't need to insure immediate survival. Beyond that, focusing our attention on one particulate further strains out any information that doesn't pertain to the chosen theme. I once read that our mouths are capable of speaking only one thought at a time. Yes, some of us try to get away with more than that, but, yeah, garble is the word that comes to mind. I guess we can't take in more than one thought at a time, either. The idea, though, is that we leave out a lot in the interest of catching something that makes sense. It's like the pile of puzzle pieces we leave next to the Big Picture while we wile away our time calculating where the piece fits that's in our hand.

We are also programmed by our genes, environment and those closest to us as to how to filter the input. As we age and can "think for ourselves," we begin to involve ourselves in that continuing process and find that we can do some fine tuning. Connection. Good, bad or indifferent, that is how we come to live our lives.

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So, obviously, there are processes that break the connection to the entirety of the world around us. The universe, the spiritual, is not separate, but an integral part of us, each of us, all of us. I believe now that when we're born, we are totally connected with all that exists. As we grow older, we're still connected, but gradually closed off to the totality of it as we are programmed to believe other things as 'truth,' even though they bear little or no resemblance to the real truth about life, the universe and ourselves.

God Is our constant awareness of the big picture. He speaks to all of us all the time regarding our nature and how we relate to that wholeness we've forgotten and how it relates to us. I've been saying that for years, at least since my accident. Just last night I spoke with a friend who said exactly that. There are certain truths that remain truth, whether or not we believe them. Science has given us many of them. The rest we must discover ourselves. Our lives are a path of discovery leading us back to where we came from and a full sentience of it.

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So, as we journey through this life, we do all that's expected of us and expect, in return, what we're told to expect. The American Dream. Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. As we wend our way and waft through the years, we can put our feet up and enjoy the fruits of our labor. Ah, the good life. Most of us do what's necessary to bring that about and experience the goodness. But, don't we all have a feeling of uneasiness from time to time that we're missing something? Don't know what, but—something.

I don't think I comprehended it for many years. It was almost as if I took it for granted. God whispering, inaudibly. A little direction here. A little encouragement there. Coincidences popping up and marveling at them. Wondering. Awed. What if? Could it be? Perhaps that's the way we respond when we've lost contact and begin to recover.

After some time, I couldn't brush aside the patterns and the obvious glare of the full-faced wonder of coincidences that defied explanation, yet begged for it. The impossibility of so many occurrences and the

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pointedly undeniable way they came about was overpowering and hauntingly called for answers that I had no way of embarking upon exploring. The biggest question for me was how to go about finding answers in matters that seemed to lay just beyond the reach of science or math, something even remotely concrete. Words might describe them, but certainly couldn't formulate a viable accounting for them. As the song goes "What'll I do? What'll I do?"

Often I've said that God musingly sets us up for His answers to our questions. Today I fondly say "God set you up!" Now, of course, it's fun to watch it happening to other people – friends and family and complete strangers. It's a common ground that produces the strangest bedfellows.

Since I've been actively researching these odd events, these more than mere coincidences, I've named them REV's. They are revelations, revealing, reinvigorating, revving, They are minute bits of wonder that defy categorization, that tantalize and tease you into wanting

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more and more and never reaching the desired satisfaction.

On my path of breakthrough exploration, there's a pattern of conduct I've found which aids the hunt. Stop. Listen. Focus. Of course, I'd like to claim it as my own, but I do believe that God set me up, yet again. The dalliance, the dance, all designed to lead you on to that find, like a carrot on a stick. Naturally, we really do desire the end result, just as God knows we do.

Stop! As soon as it happens, get rid of all superfluous distractions. Stop all activity. Every thought. Every outside movement and noise. It's only you and the moment.

Listen! Hone in on the sense of hearing. Cock your ear, inside and out, and wait to hear it again. It'll come. Wait.

Focus! This will fine-tune your every sense even more, so that the hearing will be heightened beyond the everyday use to something special.

Once you start to alert yourself to capture these moments, every fiber of your being will conspire with

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you to make it happen, not the moment, but marking the moment. Once you make up your mind to do it, it's just a matter of time. Eventually, you'll see the Cardinal!  
Enjoy!

## Chapter Fourteen

### HOW DOES GOD TALK TO US?

Now you have your end of the conversation in place, reception. But, you ask, what do you listen for? Well, think of Who you're listening for and what He has available to Him with which to get our attention. Consider the universe. That's the limit. No limit.

So, God has no limits, but we do. Here, I'll share with you a few of His methods from the list I sent to the

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people who had my experience. Also, I'll explain a few of the ways God has talked with me directly. These I know of first hand. Then, there are stories from others who have also heard from God in the same ways I've heard from Him. There's virtually nothing new under the sun and we do have our limits.

**Serendipity** is a word that's been bandied about so long people hardly know what it means anymore. Yet, I do believe it is the heart of how God speaks to us. Even though it's been overused, people still equate it with God, however diluted that connection may be. The recognition is there, nothing else. So, whenever something pops up and seems to have no real ties to the world of the five senses, in spite of its obvious validity, people call it serendipity. Most people use it in a tongue-in-cheek way, which saps any real efficacy. It's given a hasty nod and dismissed. Indeed, it may very well have been a 'note from God,' but, still, no one is listening. It loses all of its import and glory. Instead of being put on a pedestal and hailed with renown, it's shoved into oblivion. Denial is the indifference that

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makes believe God Is either dead or has no influence on this world.

**Tough times** could crack any nut. We've probably all experienced something difficult enough to stop us in our tracks and make us sit up and take notice. The daily grind stops grinding and we look around and are forced to make sense of things again. I believe there's a general concurrence among folks that, if you're going to hear from God, it'll happen during an occasion that taxes your ability to cope and strains your desire to hold on. Yes, when you feel like giving up. That's when He shows up, at the end of your rope.

**Coincidence.** Talk to anyone who's heard from God in any way, shape or form and the answer will be that there is no such thing as coincidence. No doubt. It's as sure as the sky is blue and grass is green. Once you've heard Him, you know it when He speaks again.

**A knowing** is an affect that is like a noiseless, tremor-less buzzing. Sort of like the snow falling – you see it, but you can't hear it or feel it (unless you're in it, of course). You feel it, but you can't hear it or think it.

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It's not a thought; it's a feeling. More than just knowing in your head that a fact is correct, it impacts every part of your body. One thing for sure, though, is the knowing of it. You know that you know that you know. That's the best way I've heard of describing it.

**Deja vu** is another term that's been kick around a lot. Everyone feels it and no one knows what it is. You **HAVE** been here before!! That's my take on it. In some way, at some time, you have been this way before. Why else would you recognize it?

Hearing a **voice inside** is similar to the knowing, but with sound. As sound goes, we hear it. Again—you don't hear the knowing, you only feel it. I suppose it goes along with the knowing in some aspects, but the differences are that there is some kind of sound conveyed, there is a definitive voice that actually speaks words. The voice is inside. It comes from inside your body. Don't ask how it's done. That's up to God.

There are times when you'll hear a **voice outside** your body. It's the same as a voice inside, except, in your mind, you can tell that it comes from outside your

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body. When Jesus spoke to me about the pain and how to remove it by picturing it as green, I could see His upper body in my mind and it was located above me, to the right and in front of me.

**Are these voices identifiable?** Sometimes you know exactly who is speaking to you. Other times, you're not sure or don't have any idea. It really doesn't matter. As long as what they're saying is positive and has only good repercussions, you can feel safe hearing from them and following through on what they are saying.

**An audible voice** will seem as though someone actually spoke to you and you'll look around to see if someone is there. The time when God Himself said my name and asked me to fast after the surgery, it was a voice I heard outside my body and it was 'out loud.' I've heard three audible voices so far: Jesus helping me with pain relief; God, the Father, asking me to fast; my Guardian Angel when I was walking. I didn't understand what my Guardian Angel said, let alone take any actions on it. His voice was musical.

**A feeling** is different from a knowing. A feeling,

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even though it involves feeling, as knowing does, isn't as strong as a knowing. A feeling is more of a slight tremor rather than a six on the Richter Scale. It's a phantom feeling. Think of the idea of whole milk having the cream removed. The same, but not quite.

**Other people**--friends, family, strangers--will many times provide the voice that carries the message intended to reach you. You still have to recognize it and that it's from God. That usually comes when it's spoken.

**Books, newspapers, magazines, etc.**, provide a way of speaking that is more palpable, therefore, more acceptable. My experience has been that God will put something on my heart about what He's teaching me. Then, I'll read it somewhere along my everyday travels. It's always astounding to those of us who are really communicating how God orchestrates these events so that we get the His intended content. Simply marvelous! It happens pretty much the same way with the rest of these modes: **TV, films, radio, music, even His Word, The Bible.**

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**Memories** are a bit trickier. The fact that our bodies record every minute detail of what we live through and keeps it, much as we record on DVD and are able to play back, is what happens with our memories. When a memory comes back to us, with it comes the complete package, all the smells, sounds, sights, and all the feelings we had when it occurred. And, as we peruse a memory, we can pick through all the details, in effect, re-live, that memory as though we were back in that same place doing the same things and with the same people. The best part is that we can get what we missed the first time. Pretty nifty. Try it some time. It's fascinating.

**Nature** has been used by God with me constantly for many years. I really didn't have anything to do with it. He fairly much established it over time and it stuck with me. I now find it to be a fun and interesting pastime as I go about my daily routine. He mostly uses cardinals, blue jays and swans. Cardinals and swans have to do with my mother. I'd only see a cardinal when He had something to say. When I saw it, I'd either be thinking

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His message, speaking it or hearing it. With the cardinal sighting came the conviction of the message and that He was giving me a gift. Animals, sunsets, the moon, bird songs. I suppose you could say God uses anything At Hand to make His point. Every time it's as exciting as Christmas!

**Dreams** are real. They're as real as memories. People are captivated by dreams and what they represent in our lives, both sleeping and awake. There's been a great deal of speculation, but no real breakthroughs. I believe the mind is the last frontier, not space. Whatever is in space is probably also in our minds. Dreams are in our minds. I also believe that, when asleep, we are closer to the spiritual, that is, we have a better connection to the spiritual. God can speak to us when we're asleep better than when we're awake because our waking minds are out of the loop. They're not gooking up the function with all our fraudulent beliefs we've made up and throw around as if they were real. We disconnect when awake and plug in when asleep.

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**Symbolic dreams** are unlike real life dreams. Interpretations of dreams are as personal as the individual. An interesting facet about my dreams is dreaming of future events. I've dreamed about places I hadn't been to and people I had yet to meet. Yes, places I visited and people I actually met *after* dreaming about them. That's why I feel **deja vu** could have something to do with dreaming. Do we dream of people and places and then visit them and get that feeling of being there before? I think so. Symbolic dreams, though, are only representations for the message, like words represent the understanding we mean to transmit. A picture is worth a thousand words. One of God's most endearing qualities is brevity.

**Visions** are waking dreams. Those who remember their dreams are more likely to have waking dreams, or visions. They are far more open to the communication process than those who won't remember their dreams at all, as I've heard some people are.

**Angels** are real, too. There was a time that we experienced an upsurge of the interest in angels.

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Naturally, everyone has their opinions and theories of what they are, what they represent to us, and what they are supposed to be doing here, or there, depending on your theory. As with so many other facets of our lives, conjecture oftentimes rules due to the lack of factual information. Personal experience and those of people close to us tend to win out over what is too far removed from the intimately sensual. That is as it should be. I wasn't sure what to believe about angels until I met my Guardian Angel. I don't know his name, but some do. I've seen him once and heard him speak to me once. Again, direct personal experience trumps any theories any day.

**Loved ones** can be used as a conduit through which God can bestow a word. They may think they're saying one thing, yet, you are getting another understanding from God, besides what they are saying.

**Loved ones who have passed on** are also able to give us little tidbits now and then. I've heard from both my father and my mother in various ways. I've felt their presence and gotten messages through that alone. My

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father came to my living room the night he died and didn't give up until he let me know that he was ecstatically happy. I couldn't cry at all anymore. It was as though he seeped that glee right into me. My mother couldn't walk with me before she passed, but she was bounding around me and my sister when we went for our first walk together after she passed. We both felt her and were joyous!

God is limitless. He can use anything or create anything to get in touch with His creation. Be open to Him and He'll bring you the world and beyond. Scientists have established that nothing disappears or goes away in the way we think of it. A two year old child thinks a ball no longer exists when it disappears under a table. The ball is merely out of sight, just as those we love and all the things we delight in during our lives.

This morning, Hilda and I were talking over breakfast. Involved in the conversation, to make my point, I conveyed a story about a lovely evening in my dorm room with my friends. Singing for hours to Lyn's

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guitar, we were frivolous and joyful, boisterous and gleeful. Gradually, the merriment played out and, then, someone noticed that it had begun to snow. The mood was already euphoric, but, hushed by the peaceful quiet, one by one, we fell asleep. It has remained a moment of pure joy for me through the years.

Upon finishing my story, she recalled a night in her youth that was equally moving for her. Alone in her bedroom, she woke up and saw it was snowing. It drew her to the window where she sank to her knees and prayed. I could tell from the look on her face that she had the same awesome feeling that fascinates me when I see snow falling. It was her comments that mystified me. “All around it was quiet. No one was there.” Only the white puffs floating against the backdrop of darkness. As I’m writing this right now, the memory is coming back of a window where someone was doing the same, praying in the middle of the night as the snow fell on a solitary scene. As it came into my mind, I recognized my mother crying at the frosty window pane praying that God would help her flee the Russian Front

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that had surrounded them in Poland in 1945. The snow is falling and God Is calling. He seems to be the matching element.

Then, Hilda spoke of how her father taught her to splash cold water in her face in the morning. She does it to this day. It reminded me of how my father was once called Superman because fitness was one of his fond endeavors and I realized that I must have acquired it from his example. We equated the snow falling to our memories of our fathers. Gladness filled her eyes as she said “It’s a wonderful feeling. You think of the person involved. You know you’re not alone.”

Robert Frost wrote about it (about God?) in his titillating poem, “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening.” He reined in his horse to watch the fluffs of white drifting into a field. The tug of responsibility spurred him to go on, but he was reluctant to leave a place that gave him great pleasure. What was that pleasure? Was it God? Was it the promise of communion with God?

The snow is falling and God Is calling. He appears to

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be the one common unifying element. The One tie that brings it all together. We don't frequently see it happening, but He shows us where we fit in and how He hangs it all in concert with the universe, the stars and whatever lies beyond.

## Chapter Fifteen

### LISTEN!

It's all about the proverbial tree. When a tree falls in the deep wilderness, does it make a sound? When no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound? When God speaks, does He make a sound? Is it a sound we can hear? Good questions, but we need

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answers.

Of course it makes a sound! Just because no one hears it, doesn't mean there is no sound. A tree is falling, folks! It makes ear splitting noise from the moment it sways and starts creaking as it teeters, splintering in its descent, faster and faster, whooshing through the air, picking up momentum until it crashes on the ground with a thunderous roar, the earth moaning and groaning with the tremendous weight and the yanking of those gargantuan roots, maybe splitting rocks on its way, right up to the point where it careens back and forth, settles in and, yes, stops moving.

Someone once told me that he had to learn to stay much farther away from a falling tree than you'd think because the movement of the air around it will suck you in and under the tree, it's that powerful when it falls. All that makes a sound, a lot of sounds. To even consider that it might not make a sound isn't

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sound. People have also reported that they hear God speak. And those who haven't consider this. Why don't we all hear Him? We just don't hear everything.

No one hears everything or sees everything. We would be entirely overwhelmed if we had to process every last bit of information we take in with our senses. We are built to manage all this information. Part of that management is to completely ignore all the superfluous data we don't immediately need to survive.

We are also shaped by our genes, environment and those in our lives as to how to filter the input. When we are older and can "think for ourselves," we begin to involve ourselves in that continuing process and find that we can do the fine tuning. Connection. Good, bad or indifferent, that is how we come to live our lives.

So, obviously, there are things that break the

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connection to the entire world around us. The universe and the spiritual, is not separate, but an integral part of us, each of us, all of us. I believe now that when we're born, we are totally connected with all that exists. As we grow older, we are still connected, but gradually closed off to the entirety of it as we are programmed to believe certain ideas as 'truth,' even though they bear little or no resemblance to the real truth about life.

God speaks to all of us all the time. I've been saying that for years, at least since my accident. Just last night I spoke with a friend who said exactly that. There are certain truths that remain the truth, whether or not we believe them. Science has verified many of them. The rest we must discover ourselves. Our lives are a path of discovery leading us back to where we came from.

So, as we journey through this life, we do all that's expected of us and expect, in return, what we're told

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to expect. We're programmed. Preconditioned. Some call it The American Dream. Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. As we wend our way and waft through the years, we can put our feet up and enjoy the fruits of our labor if we have done all that. Ah, the good life. Most of us do what's necessary to bring that about and experience the goodness. But, don't we have a feeling of uneasiness from time to time that we're missing something? Don't know what, but—something.

I don't think I saw it for many years, either. It was almost as if I took it for granted. God whispering, inaudibly. A little direction here. A little encouragement there. Coincidences popping up and me marveling at them. Wondering. Awed. What if? Could it be?

After some time, I couldn't ignore the patterns and the obvious glare of the full-faced wonder of coincidences that defied explanation, yet begged for

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it. The impossibility of so many occurrences and the pointedly undeniable way they happened concurrently was overwhelming and hauntingly called for answers that I had no way of beginning to explore. The biggest question for me was how to go about finding answers in matters that seemed to lay just beyond the reach of science or math. Words might describe them, but certainly couldn't formulate a viable accounting for them. As the song goes, "What'll I do? What'll I do?"

Here's the thing, though. In my twenties, I was in a predicament and was boggled by my circumstances. Much like many people, I threw my fist in the air and demanded answers. That was it. "I want answers and I want them NOW!" Over the years, I did take note from time to time that some questions I targeted God with were answered. It didn't seem to matter the amount of time that intervened after I asked the question. I always remembered the question when I

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got the answer. Since the accident, it's more like a way of life, hearing from God and talking to Him as though He were a person right next to me. I kind of like it. It's a real pleasure to be 'in' with the One Who actually has all the answers and really can move Heaven and Earth!

One of my muses is that God sets us up for His answers to our questions. Today I fondly say "God set me up!" Now, of course, it's fun to watch it happening to people around me, friends and family and even strangers. It's a common ground that brings the strangest bedfellows together. Well, God set me up with two strangers who said things that made me sit up and take notes. Henrietta and Hilda coming into my life has been no accident and it's a pure delight to watch how God infuses our relationships with treasures that can only be relished in our hearts.

Rita and I were talking quietly when Henrietta suddenly interjected "What was that noise?"

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The two of us stopped chatting, considered what she had said, turned our heads and . . . listened. It immediately occurred to me that this was a prime example for my book. We have to be set up to listen for what's coming. Henrietta set us up. No sooner is the query launched when everyone in earshot would stop whatever they are doing or thinking and would move their heads into a position to receive the sound from the noise and then concentrate exclusively on hearing the noise in order to identify it.

“What was that?”

That sets us up to hear from God. We must do this exact same preparation to hear from God.

The lights suddenly go out in your home. You can't see anything in that utter darkness. One of the things you'd do before you set on a path to do something about it would be to listen for any noises that would help you either decipher where you are or where you want to go.

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You are camping in the middle of the woods. You are startled awake by a sound near your tent. You stop moving and listen intently to make out what you are up against—either an unwanted animal or a trickster campmate.

You are home all alone working on a project that consumes all your attention. There's a loud crash behind you in another room. Do you immediately run to see what it is. Or do you wait and listen first to figure out what the best action would be?

It describes perfectly what happens to someone when they experience this unprecedented event in their lives. You strike a pose in order to gain all the information possible to make a wise choice about your next move. You listen with more than your ears. You listen with every part of you, physically, mentally and beyond.

Hilda's corn story went one step farther. "Listen!" she implored as we stood one afternoon in her front

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yard.

I stopped, looked straight at her vintage Hallmark expression of expectancy . . . and waited.

“You can hear the corn grow.” she stated matter-of-factly. I was astounded. And I imagine the way I felt at that moment was the way people feel when we *think* we *might* have just heard from God for the first time. She not only had my full attention, but had placed an axiom securely in my brain. I knew I would never forget it.

This lovely lady was eagerly explaining her experience having awoken in the middle of a serene country night in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century—no cars, few planes, pristine, agrarian flora rustled by sweet, flowing breezes. She made the most of an opportunity others would only forsake by thrashing pillows or yearning for bright city lights.

That very morning I was on my way to her home and had finally decided that this chapter would not

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be entitled “Gloria Listens.” It would be “Listen!” And here she was giving me a confirmation of my decision. God speaks!

It’s much like that—hearing from God. He’s a person of few words, He is. He wastes nothing. So—when you do hear from Him, it’s something you’ll remember—always. Just stop, focus, listen and you’ll see the Cardinal, too.

Perhaps, that’s what God is doing with these events in our lives. He’s merely getting our attention, so that we can have that phenomenal relationship. So, we are inundated with the belief systems we are born into and the spiritual takes a back seat to the here and now. First, He has to get our attention. What does He have to do to get our attention? God does have His ways and He’ll do what He has to do to accomplish that. You’ve seen people slap someone’s face to clear their head? We’ve seen this happen many times in movies and on TV. That’s what this accident did for

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me. It forced me to focus on things I had not been paying attention to, enough or, possibly, at all.

Focus seems to be an essential part of listening. Focusing gathers all your energy and concentrates it on one endeavor. God speaks to everyone. Some people listen. Some people never stop hearing God. Some have selective hearing. Some don't. Some people are trained that God doesn't speak and that those who think He does are insane. Some people are disillusioned with God and don't want to hear from Him. Some don't want to be "told what to do." They turn God off and spend their lives in a place called denial. Some are angry at God.

That's why some people hear God speak and others don't. When you hear God speak to you, you know it. There is no question about it. Just like you know the sun is yellow and the grass is green. Just like you recognize the voice of someone you know very well. Same thing. You know God's voice. Period.

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God speaks to everyone. Many of us aren't listening. Some are deaf. Some are dumb. Some are blind. All you have to do is cock your ear in readiness. Focus on hearing. Be prepared to hear and wait. Just as you would with a friend or co-worker or someone on the street. It's as simple as that. That's all it takes. Just do it.

God will give you the heads up sign. The opportunity to stop, focus and wait. If you're listening, you will get the message, whatever the message is and whatever the method He chooses to deliver it. Stop! Focus! Listen!

You'll see the Cardinal!

"Listen!"

## Chapter Sixteen

### TALK BACK!

“Don’t talk back to me, you little . . .” Don’t tell me you never heard this, no matter what language you speak. We’ve all heard this through the years. And how could we forget the old ‘axiom’ “children should be seen and not heard?” Rubbish!

God actually *wants* us to talk back to Him. He welcomes it! What’s a conversation without talking back? Nothing. I suppose it’s like that tree falling to the

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ground and no one hearing it. It's called 'dead air' in radio. You do not want no sound going over the airwaves. It's the one thing that would make the people running a radio station go nuts—let them hear nothing. Dead air. It's a death nell. God has reasons galore for talking to us, but He has good reasons for wanting to hear back from us, too.

Here's a thought. Spend your life talking to people and never having them talk back to you. It would drive you crazy, right? Your wife, daughter, mother, sister, boss, neighbor, waiter, ticket booth attendant, and on and on. First of all, how could you do that? You wouldn't be very productive. Neither would anyone else in your life. Now picture only one person in your life never talking back to you. You'd have some degree of success, but you'd lose whatever returns you might receive in the proportion that you aren't successful with that one person. It's like dead air. No returns. God wants better odds than that. And so do you.

As a matter of actual, truly unmitigated fact, it's ungodly NOT to talk back. It's rude to be at a party or

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at the dinner table with others and not talk to them, especially if they are talking directly to you. When someone asks you a question, an answer is expected. We live in a world that would come to a crashing halt if there were no feedback. Yet, we often attempt to live our lives that way, don't we? Think of all the ways we might benefit from God if we could hear from Him.

God gets the Big Picture. We don't. One of my memorable moments in high school was in driving class with Mr. Getchonis. He was young, right out of college and in his very first teaching job. I was only there to get in a car and learn to drive and because it was required. It was a long class, like all of them, and he said so much that I'll never remember, but there was one concept that he really drove home for me. The Big Picture. The idea is that when you are in the driver's seat, it is your responsibility to see not only each and every thing that you are focusing on at the moment, but the entirety of all that you are taking in at once. Is that possible?

Can we focus on one detail and see the entire picture

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before us at the same time? We have another falling tree maxim. My take is that we can try to do everything all at once, but there are times when we automatically fade out the Big Picture in order to pick out the specific feedback we need to take the next action. So ,when driving, we fade in and out of the Big Picture. It's what we do to get the job done.

It's pretty certain, though, that not one of us living here on this earth gets the Big Picture as we travel the highways and byways of our lives on the way to wherever we're going. God gets the Big Picture. He created it. Here's a thought. What if . . . we befriend The One Who made all this and rely on Him to give us the direction we need to make our lives the most fulfilling and joyous that it could be? Are some people doing this? Certainly. Are you doing this? Could you be doing this? Maybe you should try getting the Big Picture. Listen. Talk back.

Biblical figures conversed with God. They even got Him to change a few things to accommodate them. That's awesome! If you've ever read anything in the

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Bible, you have some idea of what I'm saying here. These people heard God speak to them and talked back. It runs the gamut from curious to amazing to miraculous to laugh out loud funny. It's worth a read for the entertainment, but the treasure is buried between the lines. That's where you find God.

It can happen to you. It has with me.

Talk back!

## Chapter Seventeen

### Speak Up!

Speak up or forever hold your peace? Never!

God wants us to know that He Is in the room with us. Acknowledge His Presence just as we would any person. He wants us to know that He's on the train with us; in the office; in the car; sitting next to us at church and at the bar; listening to our prayers while rooting for our favorite team; answering the prayers of the team and the coach as they pray, play by play; holding the hands of the sick and the dying; holding the hearts of

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the moms and dads fighting for their children's hearts, minds and souls; shoring up the faith of people ready to give up; helping to handle impossible situations, wherever we are and whatever we're doing.

He wants us to know that He's looking over your shoulder as you stare at porn online; by your side walking into the motel room with someone else's wife; alerting you as you stalk your favorite celebrity; showing you better ways instead of bilking millions from people who trust you; inspiring people to pray for you when you pick up that gun to relieve your broken soul with revenge.

Look around. Speak up. He's here, right now, with you, waiting for you to connect by telling Him all that you need to say to get relief and get help and be whole. He can help you without your consent, but He can help a lot more when you work with Him.

Open up. Speak up. Talk back. God wants to hear from **you**.

## Chapter Eighteen

### **“Come Let Us Reason Together for Awhile”**

Once you've taken the plunge, which means you're talking back and speaking up, you get the invitation. God words it this way, “Come, let us reason together for awhile.” What a wonderful solicitation! Do you get that from anyone else around you, let alone the Creator of the universe?!? Could it be? The One Who made the earth and put the stars in the heavens and Who sent mankind the most amazing piece of literature to amuse and teach us, wants us to not only hear Him speak, not

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only talk back to Him, but to *reason* with Him?  
*Together?!*

**OF COURSE!** That's precisely why He made us. Let's face it, no one knows the whole story here. At least, as far as I know, no one knows everything. But, this powerful, loving, kind and amazing God wants us to know what we need to know when we need to know it. And doesn't He know best, anyway? I rest my case here, although I do get one thing very clearly now: God wants us to understand that He Is a vibrant and intimate and vital part of our world and to give us the knowledge and information to help us live the best lives we can. Believe me, Heaven can wait! I want it now!

I've been a singer, actor, dancer (yeah, the Triple Threat) all my life. Through the years, I've seen the love stories on TV where the kiss is bliss, heard and sung the best love songs, watched the heart rending relationships of our favorite famous people on their roller coaster rides before us and I've come to the conclusion that our best relationships are flawed, because people are flawed. The One relationship each

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and every one of us is yearning for is the relationship we left behind when we were born, that affiliation with our Creator, The One Who made us. That is the relationship the love songs are sung about, the love stories are written about, the young men and women are hot on the trail of—that satisfying, healthy, fulfilling association without which nothing else is complete. People looking for that special someone today call it the ‘total package.’ ‘X’ is the unknown factor in a mathematical equation; ‘X’ marks the spot; ‘that’s the spot’ we’re itching to reach. God Is all that. He is the unknown factor that spells it out, brings it together and ties it up in a neat little package. We are the ones who complicate things.

Listen to the lyrics of a love song and think about it. I have for many years and each and every song could be written directly about God. In fact, I believe they are. That elusive bond that gives us goose bumps and leaves us weak in the knees and giddy in the stomach is not about a man or a woman, but about being with God. That’s why when you put Him in the right place, you

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find you're in the right place.

I have a fond memory of waking up on Saturday mornings and hearing my parents chatting warmly in the bedroom next to mine. I remember the low tones and the way they leisurely went back and forth. They knew each other well, had no more to discover about each other. There was a comfort and ease, a level of subdued intimacy that went very, very deep. From that, I gleaned a great consolation and joy, without even realizing it back then. I still feel a soothing solace thinking about it. For me, it must be something like that, a real working relationship with God. This easygoing, effortlessly flowing, give and take.

“Come, let us reason together for a while.” This is sheer ecstasy! Make it a habit and life will be brilliant, as only God can make it happen through you. You can wing it on your own or you can take advantage of the best opportunity any person on the face of the earth could have.

God wants YOU. He's on the line right NOW. Take the call. You'll be glad you did.

## Epilogue

### Livin' it Up!

God and I are getting along pretty well, these days. If anyone had told me when I was a teenager, wondering what all those words and stories meant in the Bible, I would have laughed out loud and called the way I'm talking with God today pure sacrilege. Life is hard, but God Is Good!

My friend, Hilda, is an earnest Christian woman. More important than that, though, is her authentic relationship with God. She told me that this is a tough

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world, but it's also a noxious place. She's glad she's going to Heaven soon. She'll leave behind a good life and a loving family. No matter how good life is, there are the sorrowful and challenging passages we have to undergo. They are inescapable.

We have a friend who had run several businesses. His wife chose to create a company with him to care for the elderly where he's acquired sensitive skills and learned more about God than in any of the other businesses he's had. It's the tough times, the hard decisions, the experiences that make us struggle, these hone the mettle we're made of. With God; without God. It's a choice.

Trauma makes us draw on a deeper experience with God because we need Him more. He comes. No, He responds. He's never far away. Never. So, He responds. Just as we bleed when we're cut, God instantly responds when we need Him. Or should I say that He be-comes more evident to us when we get "real" and just accept Who He Is and throw over all the erroneous beliefs we establish as we grow up and be-come more involved in the immediate world around us. Hard times

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cut through the flack faster than all the idle babble in the world. Straight talk is the sharp edge we need to reach out to God so He can respond in kind to us.

I was typing poems into the computer for a book of poems on death I edited called The Memory Lives On. As I was typing this poem, I sensed that it epitomizes the premise of this book. So, here it is in capsule form. They say a picture is worth a thousand words. So, is a poem. It's not words, really, but the stuff we feel.

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BANKRUPT

One midnight deep in starlight still,

I dreamed that I received this bill:

( - - - - in account with Life):

Five thousand breathless dawns all new;

Five thousand flowers fresh with dew;

Five thousand sunsets wrapped in gold;

One million snow - flakes served ice cold;

Five quiet friends; one baby's love;

One white - mad sea with clouds above;

One hundred music - haunted dreams

Of moon - drenched roads and hurrying streams,

Of prophesying winds, and trees;

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Of silent stars and browsing bees;

One June night in a fragrant wood;

One heart that loved and understood.

I wondered when I waked at day,

How - - how in God's name - - I could pay!

CORTLANDT W. SAYRES

Thank God there's nothing owed. Life is a gift.

God loves it when we appreciatively thank Him (I

first typed Hom - what's that?! Him and Mom?)

and truly enjoy what we're given.

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Following is a questionnaire designed to get you thinking about the spiritual in your own life. I've left some room for you to put answers with the questions and a few pages for notes at the end.

### Questionnaire

1. Do you believe you have had an experience that has heightened your sense of God and the spiritual?
2. Please tell briefly what that life altering experience was.
3. What are the ways that your life was changed in the natural?
4. What supernatural changes resulted from this experience?

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5. Do you feel that you can actually hear God speak to you?
6. Are there more than one or two ways that He speaks to you?
7. Please list and briefly elaborate on each way you hear from God.
8. Are any of these ways you hear God?
  1. Serendipity
  2. Harm; tough times
  3. Coincidence
  4. A knowing
  5. Deja vu
  6. A voice inside
  7. A voice outside

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8. What voices do you hear? Are they identifiable?
9. An audible voice
10. A feeling
11. Other people (friends, family, strangers)
12. Books, newspapers, magazines, etc.
13. TV
14. Films
15. Radio
16. Music
17. His word
18. Memories
19. Nature
20. Dreams

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21. Visions
22. Through angels
23. Through loved ones who have died
24. Through loved ones who are living,  
but at a distance and not through  
means we are familiar with such as  
phones, letters, etc.
25. Any other method you have

experienced not already listed here. Please be explicit and explain as fully as possible. Thank you.

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## God Speaks

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### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gloria Slater has spent her life pursuing acting, writing, singing, dancing, theater and film, songwriting, health and fitness, ancestry and all the same questions everyone else has asked throughout history. She has lived in seven states and visited 45 of the lower 48 as well as 4 Canadian provinces. Her mother grew up in Berlin, Germany and her three times great grandmother on her father's side was a Native American from the Mohawk tribe in the Iriquois Nation.

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