

Is This Incredible Event in D.C.'s Skies a Supernatural Prayer Confirmation?

When Daniel poured out his heart in prayer for Jerusalem, he received initial confirmation that God had heard his prayer. The angel Gabriel came to him and told him, "As soon as you began to pray, an answer was given" (Dan. 9:23).

I received the following email from a lady who had prayer-walked downtown Washington, D.C., during "777: An Urgent Call to Prayer," a nationwide prayer-and-fasting initiative for America that took place from July 1 to 7. This woman sent a picture she had taken on July 8 of a full, double rainbow over the nation's capital, which we all took as a "sign" that God had indeed heard our prayers. In early September, after participating in another prayer initiative—this time for Israel—she wrote the following:

"It hasn't rained here in D.C. for several weeks. But this afternoon a storm swept through our nation's capital. I saw several reports of a double rainbow over D.C.—again! Lots of folks posted photos of the rainbow on Twitter. Though I sadly missed seeing it with my own eyes, I smiled real big when I read the news. I've lived in this town nearly seven years and can attest to the fact rainbows do not happen here that often. My friend, the Lord has sent us yet another gracious sign that He has heard our prayers."

Could it possibly be that once again God has placed His initial confirmation of our prayers in the sky over our nation's capital to let us know that our prayers have moved heaven?

I know God has heard our prayers. Because He promised that when we come to Him in Jesus' name, He will. And He always

keeps His promises. The rainbow is just the exclamation point.

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How You Can Make God Smile

My husband, Mark, had just returned from a 2011 Global Awakening conference in Pennsylvania. As he unpacked his suitcase, he told me of an amazing couple he had met. Mark traveled with Randy Clark in the early '90s and met all kinds of awesome people from around the world. I was happy for him then but felt his connections at that time had little to do with me. That was until he showed me the website of this couple.

The Holy Spirit had powerfully touched Mike and Deena Van't Hul when Randy prayed for them at a conference in 2000. In 2005 Mike and Deena moved their family to China and began to take in disabled orphans. They renovated an abandoned elementary school in Fuzhou China and opened Hidden Treasures Home. As I looked at the pictures of their beautiful children on the Loaves and Fishes International website, tears flowed freely down my face. I said out loud, "I want to go there."

It was now 2013, and we found ourselves holding orphaned babies halfway around the world in the place we had dreamt of. We pinched ourselves to be sure it was true. God had made a way for us to go. We held babies, wrestled with toddlers, played games, sang in Donald Duck voices, worshipped and prayed. Some of the children were unable to speak, some unable to walk, some autistic and some blind. I spent 20 years teaching children with severe physical and mental disabilities in the public school system, so the joy that comes from being

with children such as these was very familiar to us. The difference was that Jesus was at the center of everything this orphanage did.

The Purest of Prayers

One day after morning circle time, a young boy in the classroom asked the teacher's assistant a question in Chinese. The assistant was able to speak English and she approached Mark. "An Fu wants to know if he can pray for your arm."

To understand his request, it's important to know that Mark was born with a partially formed left shoulder and arm, and only a small bud for a hand. Though he's lived a completely normal life and his disability has never kept him from living his life to the fullest, still we have spent more than 20 years waiting for his physical healing from God. We've received multiple prophetic words about this healing, many of which came through complete strangers. Mark has had the amazing privilege of praying for and seeing many healings take place all over the world. He has witnessed blind eyes regaining sight, deaf ears opening and weak limbs strengthening. Though we've stood on the Lord's promises, we've also had to walk through seasons of deep disappointment and grief.

So when this precious young boy asked to pray for Mark, we were pleasantly surprised. Of course we were happy to have him pray! Without hesitation or reservation, An Fu made his way toward Mark on bent legs that made it difficult for him to walk. He held Mark's small arm in both of his hands and prayed these words in very clear English: "Jesus, Jesus—arm, hand, grow; arm, hand, grow. Jesus, heal. Jesus, heal. Thank You, Jesus. Thank You, Jesus."

The presence of the Lord permeated the room. We knew we were standing on holy ground. We came home from China with a renewed sense of awe at how God moves in people's hearts.

Every day there are prayers for missing body parts at Hidden Treasures Home. It was an atmosphere filled with faith. It was an honor and a joy to be in such a place.

One of our favorite verses in the Bible is Hebrews 11:6: "And without *faith* it is impossible to *please* God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him" (emphasis added).

This verse doesn't say that without *success* it is impossible to please God or without *results* it is impossible to please God. We please our heavenly Father by having faith.

When sweet An Fu prayed in faith that Mark's arm would grow out, God was smiling; God was pleased. When by faith Mark let down his guard and allowed this prayer, God was smiling; God was pleased. Faith that steps out in love and takes the risk of praying for others makes God smile. How remarkable that we all carry within us the ability to please God. Scripture says: "Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see" (Heb. 11:1).

We easily believe in what we see, but faith is being confident and assured about what we do not see. We have not seen an arm grow out, but we have faith that it will. How wonderful that this faith does not make our Father shake His head in concern that we have gone off the deep end.

This faith makes Him smile because we are assured of what we do not see, as God's Word declares. "Then Jesus told him, 'Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed'" (John 20:29).

Ephesians 5:10 instructs us to "find out what pleases the Lord." When we understand that pleasing God requires faith (Heb. 11:6), this makes it easier to recognize the exact type of faith that brings the Father such joy.

God Is Pleased When We Receive

We were excited and a little nervous. "You push the doorbell."

"No, you push the doorbell." How did we end up in northern Idaho, standing on the front porch of John Loren Sandford, a man we dearly admired but had no idea we would ever meet?

I had written John, thanking him for allowing us to reference a quote in our book and to express how he and his recently departed wife, Paula, had inspired Mark and me to team-teach and minister together. I mentioned that it would be wonderful to meet him and that perhaps we could take a detour on our trip out West. We really had no expectation of that becoming a reality. John's quick response and invitation to stay at his home surprised us.

We added 800 miles to our road trip just to spend time with this wonderful man and brother in Christ. Our three days and nights with John were relaxing in some respects and challenging in others. Between tours of the town, home-cooked meals, Western movies and baseball games on TV, we spent hours before the Lord asking Him to show us anything we needed to know.

Early into our visit we shared with John God's promise of a creative miracle and the 20-year journey of trust. He responded, "When I first saw you two come through the door, the Lord told me He was going to do that, but I wasn't going to mention it until you said something." That was not what we expected to hear, but it was exciting.

The Lord taught us much through John. The first revelation came when Mark shared the story of when his older twin sisters first saw him and how they cried inconsolably. Mark spoke of the inner vow he made to never allow anyone to be disappointed because of him again. He also went on to assure John that he had renounced and broken that vow, and much good had resulted.

Now John spoke. He gently expressed that even though Mark had correctly perceived the lie that his spirit had taken in as an infant, Mark the adult now needed to acknowledge that his understanding of why his sisters cried was incorrect. The inner vow he made put him on constant alert to try to control other people's emotions. He didn't want anyone to ever feel pain. This prevented him from seeing what his sisters' tears really meant. John said, "Mark, your sisters didn't cry because they were disappointed. They cried because they loved you and were sad for you."

That thought had never occurred to Mark, and a single tear began to roll down his cheek. The idea of someone reacting with sadness out of love for him was completely new and tender territory. John explained it was time to open his heart and receive the love he didn't take in as an infant. It was time to renounce control and to realize that people were going to feel emotions regarding his disability. It was a crippling illusion and inappropriate to think that he should try to prevent this. Mark had to allow people to feel emotions for him. He had to permit them to express sorrow for him, have joy for him, and feel *for and with* him. He had to allow people to feel the way they needed and wished to without controlling.

The next question from John pushed another button in Mark. He asked, "What if God wants to give you an arm and hand just because He loves you, just a good gift from a Father to His son? What if it is not being given to you for the sake of others? What if it is not being given so you'll pray more effectively for others to receive their miracles?"

Mark's response was intense and immediate, "I don't want that; I couldn't handle the guilt. I think the guilt would crush me."

With John's 50-plus years of leading people through inner healing and writing books used around the world on the topic, the word *guilt* waved a big red flag. "Why would you feel

guilty, Mark?" he asked.

"Aren't you worthy of receiving a gift from your heavenly Father?" Layer by layer the Holy Spirit uncovered other beliefs that Mark didn't even know he held on to. These thoughts were:

- If we receive our promise, and others who see or hear us have not yet received theirs, it will trigger sorrow and grief in them, and they will feel overlooked by God. We would be unhappy and guilt-ridden to have received such a great miracle unless others also receive theirs.
- God will not receive glory because our miracle will cause others to focus on what they do not yet have.
- After we receive our miracle, we must be used by God to pray for others, and they must receive their creative miracles. From our earliest training in praying for the sick, we were taught that God will do through us what He has done to us. When Mark first traveled with Randy Clark, he would pray for people through the night. We pictured ourselves doing the same.

We came to realize that God may be thinking differently. Receiving ministry from John left us with much to process. We decided to go out to breakfast the next morning to try to sort things through. So over warm plates of eggs, bacon and pancakes Mark and I talked and explored these new thoughts with each other and with the Lord. We thought it might help to bring up scenarios we had only allowed ourselves to discuss out loud on rare occasions.

We imagined ourselves standing on a stage with Mark's arm and hand fully formed. We could envision people being filled with joy for us over how God had moved. We then asked ourselves, What if people, rather than feeling grieved and overlooked by God because their own circumstances had not yet changed, felt a sense of awe and reverence toward God because of what He did for us? What if no one asked us to pray for them because they

were overcome with joy over what had already happened?

What if it will be a moment like the one described in Psalm 126: "When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dreamed. Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. *Then it was said among the nations, 'The Lord has done great things for them.'* The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy. Restore our fortunes, Lord. ... Those who sow with tears will reap with songs of joy. Those who go out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him" (vv. 1-6, emphasis added).

Little by little we came to realize that though we attempted to be selfless in our thinking about future ministry, we had really made this whole thing much too much about us. We had taken control away from God and decided for ourselves what life should look like after the miracle happened based on our past experiences. The Holy Spirit revealed that it was difficult for us to receive God's unconditional love from Him and others.

The condition we had placed on God's gift was that we should be able to give it away or we would crumble in guilt. With much prayer we came to the place of laying down our preconceived notions of what life should be like after the miracle. We laid it at the foot of His wonderful, freeing cross and chose to take our hands off. We did this by asking God to forgive us for taking control away from Him.

How Much Faith Do We Need?

When I was a young girl, my mom wore a necklace that intrigued me. It was a clear round capsule, and it contained a single mustard seed. The seed was extremely tiny. My mom told me that she wore the necklace to remind her of the following Bible verse: "Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to

there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you" (Matt. 17:20).

If we give our little seed of faith to the maker of heaven and earth, things change, things move, things bow down, things are created! Nothing is impossible for us because nothing is impossible for Him, and He lives in us.

So why is it that even when we apply all the faith we can muster and our faith is placed in Jesus, our mountains seem to stay firmly planted and immovable? We believe the answer to that question is rooted in our expectation and our definition of *movement*.

Matthew 17:20 does not say the mountain will move instantly. We like "instant" answers, but God does not always work that way. We may look at other people and determine that the answers to their prayers have come instantly because we happened to be there the moment the healing took place or the moment the house sale came through. We don't know the emotional preparation that took place before the healing or the amount of renovation that occurred before the sale.

In God's economy, movement is a process—even movement that appears instantaneous.

Matthew 17:20 also does not say the mountain will move as one large mass. Have you ever played the game Jenga? To set up the game, you make a tower by placing rectangular blocks in a crisscross pattern. The object of the game is to remove a block without causing the tower to tumble. There is a trick to finding the block that is movable. You tap on the ends to discover which ones will slide out of the stack without disrupting the entire structure. Often one block is immovable until the blocks around it are removed.

We have seen God move mountains in a similar way, one block at a time. We speak to the mountain and tell it to move by forgiving someone. Once that block goes, we speak to the

mountain and tell it to move by renouncing an ungodly inner vow. Once that block goes, we speak to the mountain again and tell it to move by asking God to heal our current broken relationships. Eventually our mountain moves from here to there, and we have not crumbled in the process.

As We Are Going

After Jesus rose from the dead and before He ascended to heaven, He gave His disciples very specific instructions. Many in the church call this the Great Commission: “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matt. 28:19-20).

The words “therefore go” are literally translated “as you are going.” In other words, as we live and go about our everyday lives we are to live out of who we are, with our destinies and promises going with us. We are not to be consumed looking for *the person(s), the place(s), the thing(s)* that fit with our promises before we serve. God fulfills our destinies and promises as we go. Each day lived in obedience to Christ is a day full of faith that pleases Him and holds the probability of our miracles being fulfilled *as we are going!*

This is the faith that makes God smile, the faith that moves mountains. It is faith that steps out in love, that releases control to God and that is lived out in daily acts of obedience to Christ.

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Mark and Tammy Endres talk about their incredible faith journey in writing a new book, *When Heaven Seems Silent*, at endres.charismamag.com

The Surprising Simplicity of Sharing The Gospel

We know we should, but we don't.

In a nutshell, that's the state of evangelism among Christians in America today. In fact, a recent Barna Group study found that although 73 percent of born-again Christians in this country believe they have a personal responsibility to share their faith, only half (52 percent) actually did in the past year.

What is to blame for this huge gap between theory and reality? Why do we know we should share the Good News of Jesus Christ with others—and even want to do so—yet rarely follow through with this?

As an evangelist, I always try to inspire people to become soul winners—to go after the lost, preaching the gospel to friends, family and co-workers. In my experience, the myriad excuses for not sharing Jesus can usually be boiled down to one word: *fear!*

Fear comes in many forms: fear of the unknown, fear of man, fear of failure, fear of rejection and fear of confrontation, to name a few. Fears like these imprison and silence too many Christians. It seems we have subconsciously allowed fear to

masquerade as a legitimate reason for silence.

But Jesus rejects this excuse. His parable of the talents explains how one servant actually buried his talent because of fear (Matt. 25:14-30). When the master returned, he rebuked the servant severely, calling him “wicked” and “lazy!” (For more on this, go to cfan.org/nofear).

We must overcome our fears to share the gospel. The question that follows, then, is this: *How?*

To answer that, here are four principles for overcoming fear, followed by five tips for communicating the gospel. Putting these points to practice will make us fearless and effective soul winners.

Principle #1: Fear is a phantom.

Zig Ziglar used the power of an acronym when he famously defined the word *fear* as “false evidence appearing real.” When it comes to sharing your faith, often you will discover that those you are worried about offending have actually been waiting (or even praying) for someone to talk to them about matters of the soul. Everyone has questions about life, death and God, yet often the most intimidating people are those most open to the gospel. Begin to share your faith and soon you will discover that your fear was but a phantom. As you confront it, like a mirage it will fade away until it completely disappears. I have heard countless stories illustrating this.

My mentor, Reinhard Bonnke, told me the amazing story of his brother’s salvation. Many years ago Reinhard had a dream. He saw his unsaved brother, Jürgen, walking on a treacherous footbridge stretched above a deep, rocky chasm. Suddenly a cloud of fog came over the bridge, and he heard his brother crying for help as he fell to his death.

Reinhard awoke with his heart pounding and his bed soaked in

sweat. Then the Holy Spirit spoke clearly and specifically: "Jürgen is on the bridge to eternity. If you don't warn the godless man, I will hold you accountable for his death. ... Write him a letter and tell him what you have seen in this dream."

Reinhard struggled, knowing this could make Jürgen and his other brothers turn against him. Besides, Jürgen grew up in a pastor's home and was very familiar with the gospel; what could Evangelist Bonnke tell him that he didn't already know?

But the next day, when the Holy Spirit prompted Reinhard again, he decided to obey no matter the cost. He wrote the letter and mailed it right away.

Weeks passed. Finally the long-awaited reply came from Jürgen. Emotion overcame my mentor as he read it. Jürgen said that his wife had just left him and his best friend had just died. Drowning in depression, he had decided to take his own life when he had a dream—*the exact same dream* as Reinhard's! When he awoke, he fell at his bedside and prayed, "Almighty God, you know that I don't even believe in You, but I have a brother who serves You. If You have spoken to me through this dream, speak to me through Reinhard."

A few days later, Reinhard's letter arrived like a word from heaven at just the right moment. "Your dream was my dream," Jürgen said. "I have given my life to Jesus. He has forgiven my sins."

Imagine if Reinhard Bonnke had allowed fear to stop him from writing the letter that saved Jürgen's life (physically and spiritually). He would have lived with the regret that Jürgen's blood was on his hands!

Principle #2: Trust that the Holy Spirit is working with you.

As much as you want to see people saved, Jesus wants it more.

The Holy Spirit is highly invested in evangelism. He lingers at the foot of the cross. He cooperates with soul winners because they do what is closest to God's heart. Cultivate a deep conviction that when you share the gospel, the Holy Spirit—God Himself—works with you! That will make you fearless. After all, if God is for you, who can be against you (Rom. 8:31)?

To walk with this assurance requires something called faith. Just as we are saved by faith, as followers of Jesus we live by faith. Is it any surprise that we must also evangelize “by faith?”

- By faith we trust that the Holy Spirit has gone before us and prepared the hearts of those we encounter.
- By faith we choose to view the encounters we have in our everyday lives as “divine appointments.”
- By faith we trust that the Holy Spirit will give us the right words at the right moment as we share the gospel.
- By faith we trust that the Holy Spirit will take those words and continue to use them in that person's heart long after we've parted ways.

Keep in mind, however, that every action of faith includes an element of risk. That will never change.

So why would we risk our well-being and comfort for someone else? We find the answer in our next principle.

Principle #3: Love trumps fear.

Fear is an emotion everyone feels, but love is infinitely more powerful than fear. Love compels us to take risks. Love acts like an anesthetic, numbing us to fear so it won't govern our actions. As 1 John 4:18 says, “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear.”

At one of our Schools of Evangelism, a young man asked me an honest but painful question during a question-and-answer

session: "I have been preaching on the streets for more than 20 years but have never led anyone to Christ. What must I add to my message to get results?"

The answer was immediately obvious to me. I simply responded, "Love." And that answer applies to more than a frustrated street preacher; it applies to all of us.

According to 1 Corinthians 13:1, a message without love turns us into "clanging cymbals." How utterly annoying and unappealing!

I've encountered many people who view the lost as "targets," or a convert as a "notch in the belt." (I've even been guilty of this myself). Winning the lost is all about "winning" for them. Because of this, they think they must be a better debater or more clever and witty than their target.

But that's not how it works.

"Winning" the lost often means being willing to look like a "loser." It requires vulnerability. It means being willing to be embarrassed and even accepting persecution. What compels us to subject ourselves to such exposure? Love—seeing the lost the way Jesus sees them.

Love is not selfish (1 Cor. 13:5). That means to love others is to put them before ourselves. If fear of rejection keeps us from sharing the gospel, it means we love ourselves more than we love the lost. Love risks the loss of comfort, convenience and security for the gospel's sake (Mark 8:35).

I believe love is the most crucial part of evangelism. If we want to become more effective as sharing the Good News, we must ask God for a baptism of love. Evangelism will become as easy as breathing!

Principle #4: Be prepared.

From grade school to Bible college, I always feared test day. But I discovered a secret. After graduating from seminary, I went to university and got a job as an all-night security guard. The job's long, boring hours gave me the opportunity to study more than ever—sometimes four to five hours a night. Soon I came to realize I did not dread tests anymore. I actually looked forward to them—because I was ready for them!

Preparation puts confidence where there used to be fear and insecurity. That's why 1 Peter 3:15 says that we should *be ready* to give everyone an answer for the hope that we have. Don't wait until the middle of a conversation with an unbeliever to start thinking about what to say.

In the ancient world, warriors had to be ready for surprise attacks. An unprepared soldier was a dead soldier. If a soldier lounged around in bare feet, it meant he did not expect an attack. But wearing his military shoes signified readiness. Paul had this in mind when he said, "Stand ... having shod your feet with the *preparation of the gospel of peace*" (Eph. 6:14-15, emphasis mine).

Smith Wigglesworth used to say, "I don't get ready; I stay ready." Whether we are at a gospel crusade or grocery store, we must live with our "gospel boots" on!

I'm amazed by how few Christians can quote a few basic evangelistic Scriptures on command. Perhaps this is a major reason so few share their faith—they're not ready! Part of wearing "gospel boots" means being able to represent the gospel message faithfully when needed. (To help with this, see "The ABCs of the Gospel" for a few Scriptures every Christian should know by heart.)

If we are prepared to share the gospel, the Holy Spirit will use us. Imagine losing power in your house and it becomes dark. You go down to the basement and find two lanterns—one has kerosene and the other doesn't. Which would you use? The

lantern that's ready, of course! We don't have to beg God to use us. If we are ready, God will use us automatically!

5 Tips for Sharing Your Faith

Even if you've overcome your fears and are ready to be used by the Holy Spirit, still there are ways we can all grow when it comes to being messengers of the gospel. So here are five tips to prepare you more to share your faith.

1) Be aware of those around you. I love it when the Holy Spirit gives me a word of knowledge about someone's need. It is a powerful tool and great "ice breaker." (If you've never experienced this, ask the Holy Spirit.) However, the truth is that we don't always need a word of knowledge to discern someone's need. Most of the time we are just too busy or self-absorbed to notice the obvious needs all around us.

If we will make a conscious decision to be mindful of the people around us, we will find many opportunities to share "a word in due season" to pray with people and to lead them to Christ. The more we practice, the more sensitive we will become, and we may even discover that the Holy Spirit has been leading us more than we ever realized.

2) Be willing to initiate. Most churches use a model of soul winning I call "spider web evangelism." They build beautiful buildings and offer lots of programs, then wait for unbelievers to come to them.

But that isn't what Jesus taught. Jesus said, "Go ... and preach the gospel" (Mark 16:15) and, "I will make you fishers of men" (Matt. 4:19). This is proactive language. To be effective soul winners we must be willing to take the initiative and engage those around us.

It's actually easier than you may think. Smile. Say hello. Ask questions and then listen. I've been persecuted many times for sharing my faith, but never once for being friendly and

initiating a conversation.

3) Use your testimony. We often don't feel equipped to handle objections to the gospel—and for many of us, that's what prevents us from sharing. But the truth is, there will always be someone who knows more than us about science, history, philosophy or even religion. There's no need to worry. Someone once said, "The person with an experience is never at the mercy of a person with an argument."

There is one thing no one can take away from you: your testimony. And, amazingly, everyone has one!

If you are a child of God, then He has changed your life. You have something to say! Your testimony is unique to you. Even if you think your story isn't that interesting, it glorifies God and contains His power. And if the gospel has touched you, then know that it will touch others through you.

4) Don't argue. Are you afraid of getting into a debate with someone about religion? I have just the solution for you: Just don't argue at all!

Remember the story of the woman at the well? She tried to stir up a debate with Jesus. "Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain" she said, "but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem" (John 4:20, NIV). She was baiting Jesus, yet He refused to be sidetracked into a debate about religion. He had come to give her eternal life.

A friend of mine recently began to share the gospel with a group of young college students, and one girl became antagonistic. She was studying biology and instantly started pushing evolution to win a debate about the existence of God. My friend was completely undaunted by her aggression and said, "Wow, you're smart. I wish God had given me a mind like yours. Can I ask you a question? Do you have any pain in your body?"

“Yes,” she said. He prayed for her and she was healed on the spot. He went on to lead that young woman to Jesus. At the end he asked, “Now can you explain to me what just happened?”

“No,” she said.

If my friend had tried to debate creationism versus evolution, the young college student probably would have made a fool out of him. That may even have discouraged him from sharing the gospel again, for fear of being shut down in the same way. But God’s love and power conquers every argument and empowers us to win the lost rather than win debates.

5) Ask the question! I have seen situations in personal evangelism where an unbeliever received an amazing prophetic word and perhaps even a physical healing but was never encouraged to make a decision to follow Jesus. What a tragic wasted opportunity!

D.L. Moody famously told the story of preaching the gospel at a church meeting, after which he told the people to go home and think about what they heard. That week the great Chicago fire of 1871 ravaged the town. Many of those very people lost their lives before they ever made the decision to follow Christ.

From that point on, Moody began giving altar calls whenever he preached, urging the people to make a decision for Christ right then and there and emphasizing the urgency of the matter.

An altar call may be effective in a congregational setting, but how do you bring a person to a point of decision in one-on-one evangelism? It’s easy. Just ask a pointed question like, “Do you need to get right with God?” or “What is keeping you from surrendering your life to Jesus?” or “Can I pray with you right now?”

This will bring your conversation to a point of decision, and

this is the point where salvation takes place. As witnesses, this is what we are after.

Don't be afraid to ask a person to make a decision and to pray with you right away. Remember, they may never have another chance. Now is the day of salvation!

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Daniel Kolenda explains why the cross of Jesus Christ must be the centerpiece of sharing your faith at sharing.charismamag.com

The Truth Behind Jonathan Cahn's Best-Selling 'Shemitah'

Best-selling author Jonathan Cahn has been called America's prophet, deemed as such for the prophetic messages revealed in his blockbuster books [The Harbinger](#) and [The Mystery of the Shemitah](#). He has been invited to speak at the Presidential Inaugural Prayer Breakfast in 2013 and at numerous events across the country, as well as appearing on a variety of television programs to further sound the alarm.

Now, with his latest book *The Mystery of the Shemitah*, already claiming five weeks on the *New York Times* best-seller list, he shares some of the behind-the-scenes elements of his blockbuster books in an exclusive interview with *Charisma* magazine.

CHARISMA: Your previous book, *The Harbinger*, has sold 1.6 million copies so far and remained on the *New York Times* best-seller list for over 110 weeks. How do you explain the interest in that book?

Jonathan Cahn: Part of the reason is *The Harbinger's* nature, which is unique and hard to put in a box. On top of that, everyone is interested in what the future holds. *The Harbinger* doesn't give a general or theoretical idea of the future but a very precise and specific revelation of what lies ahead.

Beyond all that—and probably most important—is the same reason I can take no credit for anything about *The Harbinger*. From the day the mystery began, to the book basically writing itself, to this day, *The Harbinger* has defied natural explanation. So I believe the ultimate explanation for everything that's happened is that God wanted the message to go forth and made sure to send it. Before He judges, He sends warning.

CHARISMA: What prompted you to write *The Mystery of the Shemitah*?

Cahn: As with *The Harbinger*, I didn't plan to write it. In many ways, it was a surprise. The Shemitah is not only an ancient mystery but an event that is now upon us. Because of that, there's been an explosion of speculation and concern for what it will bring. So *Charisma* felt that there should be at least a booklet to help people prepare in light of it.

I wasn't intending to write another book until I heard from the Lord that it was time—as with *The Harbinger*. I offered to

help. But as I started, I was flooded with new and unexpected revelations concerning the mystery, how incredibly big it is, how it's been affecting all of our lives—and what it reveals about the future. There was no way a booklet could contain it. The same way the writing of *The Harbinger* just flowed onto the pages, so too did *The Mystery of the Shemitah*. In less than two months it was finished, and less than two months after that, it appeared on the shelves of bookstores. So it couldn't be any newer than it is!

CHARISMA: *The Harbinger* is written as a narrative. Why did you choose a non-fiction format for this book?

Cahn: It's actually the opposite. *The Harbinger* was originally written in non-fiction form. But right after I finished it, I was led to rewrite it in the form of a narrative. People have continuously asked me about a sequel to *The Harbinger*, but it's not the kind of book one can just decide to write. Events have to take place, and God has to reveal. But I know there will be a sequel to *The Harbinger*, and I believe its timing will be linked with events yet to happen. When I write the sequel, it will be, as is *The Harbinger*, in the form of a narrative.

The Mystery of the Shemitah is linked to *The Harbinger*, and in some ways is even more specific about the future, but it's not the sequel. Rather, it's the opening up of a mystery that begins with *The Harbinger* and yet is so big that it opens up an entirely other dimension and world. It's distinct. Writing it in a non-fiction form allowed me to do things I couldn't otherwise do. For example, *The Mystery of the Shemitah* includes many visuals, illustrations, charts, graphs, etc., where the reader can actually see the phenomenon in *flesh and blood*—things that would not be possible if it were in narrative form.

CHARISMA: Given all the success of *The Harbinger*, how do you think people will receive *The Mystery of the Shemitah*?

Cahn: I recently spoke on Capitol Hill at an event hosted by Mike Huckabee. He departed from his text to tell the audience to read *The Harbinger* and used the word “stunning” to describe it. That’s probably the most common word I’ve heard people use in describing it. So what I would say is this: What is contained in *The Mystery of the Shemitah* is no less stunning than that which is contained in *The Harbinger*. It was a total surprise. The mystery is bigger than anyone had imagined—starting with myself!

*Did you like this article? You’ll enjoy Rabbi Cahn’s books, *The Harbinger* and *The Mystery of the Shemitah*, as well as *The Harbinger* DVD. Purchase them [here](#).*

What Would Jesus Do About the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict?

For decades, evangelical support for Israel seemed rock solid. Today, however, many younger Christians in Western churches are hesitant to give Israel the same unconditional support their parents did. Stories of Palestinian suffering, rather than the struggles and triumphs of Israel, have attracted the sympathy of young evangelicals.

They appear to be motivated more by the cause of social justice for the “oppressed” Palestinians than by prophecy-driven backing of the restored Jewish state. Many Christian youngsters have sided with the Palestinians as the perceived underdog. And in any case, Jesus in the Gospels seems to have very little to say about the current situation.

For a generation known to read far less in the Old Testament than previous generations, this supposed New Testament

“silence” makes a big difference in how they view the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Today, they ask: What would Jesus do? That is, would Jesus affirm the national calling of Israel according to the promises made to the Hebrew patriarchs and prophets? Would He affirm Israel’s right to live in the land? Or would He rather side with the Palestinians as a weak and suppressed minority?

A strong guide for answering these questions is to look at how Jesus dealt with the most prominent indigenous minority living in Israel during his time. As we shall see, there are many striking parallels between the Samaritan people in the days of Jesus and the Palestinians of today. So who were the Samaritans, and how did Jesus treat them?

A Replaced People

The Bible’s first mention of the Samaritans is in 2 Kings 17:22-41, which gives their historic background. The passage recounts how the northern kingdom of Israel was “carried away from their own land” (v. 23) and taken into exile in 722 B.C. by Assyria, whose King Sargon II followed a common practice of conquering empires in those days. He replaced the dislodged Israelites with people from other regions of his empire. Thus, he took people “from Babylon, Cuthah, Ava, Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel; and they took possession of Samaria and dwelt in its cities” (v. 24, NKJV).

These new implants, thereafter called the Samaritans, began intermingling with some of the Israelite remnant left in the land and quickly adopted some of their religious practices. Besides their own gods and traditions, they also worshipped and “feared” the God of Israel.

Then in 586-582 B.C., a second uprooting occurred when the southern kingdom of Judah also was forced into exile by the Babylonian Empire. This gave even more room for the Samaritan

people to expand and solidify their presence in the land of Israel.

Resisting the Restoration

Some 70 years later, the Jewish people started to return to the southern kingdom and rebuild the temple and the city of Jerusalem. Yet the Samaritan communities were among the strongest opponents of this Jewish restoration. They resisted it religiously and politically (Ezra 4; Neh. 4:1-3). Nevertheless, Jerusalem and the temple were restored, and the Jews re-established their presence again in their promised homeland because the Lord was with them (Hag. 1:13).

Still, the Samaritans continued to oppose the Jewish return and to develop their own rival culture and national identity. Over time, they even cultivated their own form of pseudo-Judaism. The prophets and other writings of the *Tanakh* were rejected, and only the five books of Moses were considered binding. For this reason, the Samaritans rejected the idea of a promised Messiah from the lineage of David who would restore the kingdom for Israel. Rather, they expected a messiah figure who would be “a prophet like Moses,” as the book of Deuteronomy foretold, ushering in a moral and spiritual revival but not a national restoration.

Tense Relationship

By the time Jesus came along, the Samaritans had lived in the land for over 700 years. They developed their own narrative of the region’s history and saw themselves as the true Israel and rightful heirs of the land, claiming descent from Ephraim and Manasseh. The temple in Jerusalem was considered an apostate shrine and its worship blasphemous to God. During the time of Alexander the Great, Samaritans built an alternative temple on their holy mountain of Mount Gerizim—the biblical “Mountain of Blessing” overlooking Shechem.

Meanwhile the Jews did not recognize the Samaritans as part of

their people and would not allow them to enter the temple in Jerusalem. Yet when Jesus was a child, around 6-9 A.D., Samaritans reportedly forced their way into the temple during Passover and desecrated it by throwing bones into the sanctuary. Indeed, for centuries it was a relationship characterised by tension and disdain. Jewish writings from 200 B.C. called Samaritans "the foolish people."

Thus, during the time of Jesus, both Jews and Samaritans refused to mingle (John 4:9). Jewish pilgrims who were on their way to worship in Jerusalem were harassed (Luke 9:51-55). The Jewish historian Josephus reports that in 52 A.D., Samaritans even massacred a group of Jews making pilgrimage to Jerusalem. For Jews, the name "Samaritan" became a curse word (John 8:48). Even the disciples of Jesus were not fond of the Samaritans and were eager to call down fire on their heads (Luke 9:54).

Jesus Crosses the Border

Amid this hostile, complex relationship, Jesus sets a refreshingly different tone toward the Samaritans. The Gospels record that Jesus healed them (Luke 17:15-16) and reached out to them individually and as a community (John 4). In fact, Jesus rarely shared such deep thoughts on worship, His own Messianic identity and the Spirit of God as He did with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well. The encounter led to revival in the village, where Jesus spoke about the fields being white for harvest (John 4:35). Then there is the legendary parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37). Surely it was offensive to Jewish listeners when Jesus described the Samaritan and not the Jewish priests as being the true neighbor to the man in need.

Thus, Jesus wouldn't allow Himself to be drawn into the negative stereotypes of His time. When His disciples wanted to call down fire on a Samaritan village for not allowing their master to pass, Jesus rebuked them harshly, saying, "You do

not know what manner of spirit you are of. For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them" (Luke 9:55-56).

Jesus did not consider the Samaritans as enemies but reached out to them with compassion and love. He healed them, ministered to them, used them as examples to His Jewish brethren, and even envisioned them as part of the harvest.

Jesus and the Samaritan Narrative

Still, while Jesus may have displayed an unusually kind attitude toward the Samaritans, He did not buy into their version of history. When Jesus healed the 10 lepers, the only one who returned to thank him was a Samaritan, to which Jesus replied, "Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" (Luke 17:18).

Jesus reached out to the man with compassion yet still considered him a "foreigner." The Greek word used here is *allogenes* and it's used in the Septuagint translation to mean the "stranger" who dwelt within the land. This person would have many rights and privileges but would still be excluded from the covenant promises and privileges of Israel. It was the same Greek word used in the inscription around the temple courts, allowing access only to Jews but not to *allogenes*—foreigners.

So Jesus reached out to the Samaritan people but also maintained a clear distinction between them and the Jews. He once instructed His disciples not to "enter a city of the Samaritans" (Matt. 10:5), but to focus rather on "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (v. 6).

Finally, when Jesus ministered to the Samaritan woman at the well, she confronted Him with her people's own narrative: "Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship" (John 4:20). She wanted to know whose narrative was correct.

Jesus answered, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth" (vv. 21-23).

Jesus portends that a new era in salvation history was soon coming when the place of worship would become secondary, and each believer would become a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit. But Jesus did not conclude that Jewish tradition would become irrelevant. On the contrary, He strongly challenged the Samaritan belief system, saying, "You worship what you do not know." At the same time, He identified Himself with Jewish tradition in a manner rarely found in the Gospels, saying, "We know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews."

In a way, Jesus underscores with the Samaritan woman what He also stated to the healed leper—that they were foreigners to the covenants of God with Israel. The only way for them truly to become part of the household of God would be through the covenants and revelation given to the Jewish nation.

Note that Jesus did not say salvation is received by becoming Jewish but rather that the woman should reconsider her theological and personal attitude toward the Jews. Decades later, the apostle Paul would make the same point: "What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God" (Rom. 3:1-2; see also Rom. 9:4-5).

Jesus thus affirms to the Samaritan woman the ancient Abrahamic calling of Israel, that through them "all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Gen. 12:3). This covenant relationship with Abraham's natural descendants remains even if they reject Jesus as their Messiah (Rom. 11:28).

The Samaritans of Our Day

There is still a small Samaritan community living in Israel today. They number fewer than 1,000 members and mostly are located on Mount Gerizim, near modern-day Nablus. However, their numbers are too small for them to play a significant role in current affairs. Instead, the community that today more closely mirrors the dynamic between Jews and Samaritans at the time of Jesus is that of the Palestinians.

When the Jews were exiled by the Romans under Titus in 70 A.D. and later under Hadrian in 120 A.D., other people groups moved in. Each successive conqueror seizing control of this major crossroads brought their own ethnic mix, whether they were the Romans, Byzantines, Arab-Muslim invaders, the Crusaders or Ottoman Turks. The result is an indigenous people with a broad amalgam of ethnic backgrounds. Some Palestinian Christians today may claim to be descendants of the first Messianic Jewish community in Israel, but this would be difficult to prove after all the turbulent history in the region.

Scholars have documented that when Jews began returning to Israel in the 1800s, many Arabs from neighbouring countries also came to find work created by the Zionist movement. Most of these people today would call themselves Palestinian. The vast majority are Muslim. They not only reject the Bible's teachings but also maintain that Jews have no right or historic connection to the land. Supported by the global Muslim community, they resist by all means the restoration of Israel on the land much as the Samaritans did in the time of Nehemiah and Ezra.

On the other hand, the small Palestinian Christian community shares a common faith in Christ and the Bible with us, yet they've developed their own twist to history and theology. Many Palestinian Christians contest the restoration of a Jewish state, both politically and theologically. In their own version of replacement theology, they not only see the Jewish

people as being replaced by the church but Jesus as a Palestinian—one of the true custodians of the Holy Land. They see God's promises to Israel as having elapsed either by being fulfilled in Jesus or by now falling to Palestinians.

As in biblical times, both sides rarely mingle, and the tense relationship has drawn even more blood than in the times of Nehemiah, Ezra and Jesus.

A Call for Today

Jesus' unique approach to the Samaritans can help us face the challenges of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict today. Jesus demonstrated a heart of compassion toward the Samaritans, who weren't accepted by most of His fellow Jews. Samaritans were privileged as the only people besides the Jews who experienced His personal touch. After His resurrection, Jesus instructed His disciples to consider the Samaritans as the very first non-Jews to receive the gospel. Philip, Peter and John did just that and brought a powerful revival to them. Likewise, the church today is called to show similar compassion in reaching out to the Palestinian people, and in particular the believers among them. They often feel forgotten by evangelicals around the world who show support to Israel but ignore their Arab brothers in the land.

But despite the Samaritans having lived in Israel for hundreds of years, Jesus still considered them "foreigners," even though such a notion surely offended them. Jesus did not deny their right to live in the land, but He also affirmed the unique covenant promises enjoyed only by Israel, including the land promise.

Paul notes that Jesus "has become a servant to the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers" (Rom. 15:8). He was sent by God to "remember His holy covenant, the oath which He swore to Abraham" (Luke 1:72-73), not to forget or forfeit that

covenant.

So Christ, in His time of earthly ministry, set a remarkable example for us on how to reach out to the Palestinians—and the Christians especially—without compromising the divine calling of His own people.

This might be a challenging balancing act for today, as the harsh realities on the ground are often more complex than they appear. For Palestinian Christians to look into the eyes of young Israeli soldiers and call them “beloved for the sake of the fathers” (Rom. 11:28) is far more difficult than for Christians from abroad to do. For many Jewish believers, it is equally difficult to accept as their brothers and sisters those Palestinian Christians who question their biblical right to the land and even voice support for Israel’s worst enemies.

In the end, the church in the nations is called to pray and care for both sides. We are called to uphold God’s promises to Israel and support a nation that after 2,000 years has returned to the land of its fathers and remains surrounded by implacable foes bent on its destruction. We also are called to recognize the needs of our Arab brothers and sisters in the land, who often are caught between their longtime Muslim neighbors and the new Jewish reality.

That means we are called to be peacemakers without compromising truth. May the Lord help us in pursuing these worthy aims.

Jürgen Bühler *is the executive director for International Christian Embassy Jerusalem.*

Satan's Deadly Trio

Jennifer LeClaire (Chosen)

While the Holy Trinity seeks to deliver, redeem and guide you, an unholy trio is out to destroy you. Learn from *Charisma* news editor and columnist how to recognize and combat the spirits of Jezebel, religion and witchcraft that are part of Satan's assault.

Last 9/11 Survivor Finds Angel in the Rubble

Genelle Guzman-McMillian was the last person pulled from the rubble of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks 13 years ago. She said God has given her a miraculous second chance, which she's used to remind others that life is not promised.

Guzman-McMillian was trapped under the rubble of the first tower for nearly 27 hours with her leg crushed under debris. She remembers being able to only lift her fingers to the surface of the rubble to signal for help. A man named Paul grabbed her hand, called her name and told her he was there for her.

But after rescue workers unearthed her, she noticed that there was no way a person could've gotten in or out of the area where she was trapped. She believes she had an angelic encounter, and to this day no one has been able to locate the

man named Paul.

“We looked all over and that person never came forward,” she said. “I know I was not sleeping. I know it was real. I know it was him.”

Guzman-McMillian details her miraculous testimony in her 2011 book, *Angel in the Rubble*.

“I take that experience as truly a wake-up call. I know God saved me for a reason; it has to be a plan and purpose for me here,” she says, recalling how she told God that she’d dedicate her life to Him if He’d rescue her.

Guzman-McMillan kept true to her promise. She immediately joined a church and began serving God. She attends Brooklyn Tabernacle Church in New York and travels the world telling her testimony and encouraging people not to put off their salvation as she had done: “I always said I’ll become a Christian and find Jesus at the age of 60 when I can’t dance and dress up and party no more.

“I had set that goal for my life and when I tell my story to people they really see with me that it’s not about you. It’s not about what we want but it’s about Jesus Christ and what He wants us to do in this life that we’re living.”

10 Ways to Release God’s Healing Power

Healing is one of the most controversial subjects we can raise in the church. Yet there is no doubt that the Bible is filled with accounts of Jesus’ healing miracles. It seems clear as

well from the following three Scriptures that healing is a by-product of the stripes Jesus endured before going to the cross:

“But He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed” (Is. 53:5);

“They brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: ‘He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses’” (Matt. 8:16-17);

“Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed” (1 Pet. 2:24).

Furthermore, the Christians in the early church experienced miracles of healing as well. In fact, health and prosperity were objects of prayer for the believers: “Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers,” the apostle John wrote in 3 John 1:2.

When we look at the healing ministry of Jesus, we must also recognize the vital connection we have with it: We are His body on earth today (1 Cor. 3:16). Therefore, we must exhibit the same passion for healing that we have observed in Him.

Any examination of Jesus’ healing miracles during His generation will reveal facts about how He healed and whom He healed. Note that the Bible shows us that He healed: by the Word; by the faith of the sick; to release service; to restore life; to deliver from demons; through the faith of others besides the sick; through the faith of the desperate and persistent; to reveal God (and God’s heart); His enemies. Therefore, we as His body must release His healing power to our generation as well.

Releasing the Power

Knowing all this, there are still questions and controversy that swirl around ministries of healing. Questions often asked include: 1) Does God heal everyone? 2) Why are some people not healed? 3) Whose faith is necessary for healing: the sick person's, the minister's, both?

I confess I don't know all the answers. But I have searched the Scriptures so that I can know how God healed. In doing so, I've found 10 ways the church can release God's healing power:

1. Through the presence of the gifts and the anointing to heal. There are times when God releases the gifts of healing in certain places. In these instances, the anointing is so great that even clothes are used as points of contact. People are healed in a Spirit-saturated environment where gifts of healing are released.

"Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul, so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them" (Acts 19:11-12). "To another faith [is given] by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:9). Clearly healing is a gift given for the benefit of the church and for the glory of God.

2. Through the laying on of hands. It is the privilege of every true believer to lay hands on the sick and pray for their recovery. When this is done, a spiritual transference takes place in the invisible realm. "They will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover" (Mark 16:18).

3. Through elders, prayer and anointing oil. Here the believer by his own volition calls for the pastors to pray over him. Confession of sin and heart preparation is necessary. The oil symbolizes the work of the Holy Spirit.

“Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord” (James 5:14).

4. Through speaking the Word to your sickness. Note carefully in the following verse that the believer must say clearly his need. This word must be spoken confidently. Here is a tool for you to keep using until the sickness leaves!

“For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says” (Mark 11:23).

5. Through the power of agreement and healing. The reason God gave us the church was so that we could learn the power of agreement. Psalm 133 speaks of God’s commanded blessing when two or more get into agreement about the will of God. You need for a church to come into agreement with you for your healing.

“Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them” (Matt. 18:19-20).

6. Through your own faith. Your own faith-saturated prayer can deliver healing to you. Faith will make plans and move on in spite of the sickness. “Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them” (Mark 11:24).

7. Through the name of Jesus. The name of Jesus is a powerful force against disease and devils. It is a veritable battering ram for knocking down the disease.

“And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it” (John 14:13-14).

“Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. And a certain man lame from his mother’s womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms from those who entered the temple; who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms. And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, ‘Look at us.’ So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them.

“Then Peter said, ‘Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.’ And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them—walking, leaping and praising God” (Acts 3:1-8).

Notice it was the name of Jesus that brought healing.

8. Through praying for others. God brought total restoration to Job when he forgot self-interest and began to intercede for his wayward friends. In the midst of his intercession God gave him what he needed. “And the Lord restored Job’s losses when he prayed for his friends. Indeed the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before” (Job 42:10).

9. Through the faith of others. Jesus healed a paralytic because of the faith of the man’s friends. Jesus responded to *their* faith. Likewise believers can pray for others.

“When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, ‘Son, your sins are forgiven you.’ And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, ‘Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?’

“But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, ‘Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to

say to the paralytic, “Your sins are forgiven you,” or to say, “Arise, take up your bed and walk”? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins’—He said to the paralytic, ‘I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house’” (Mark 2:5-11).

10. Through medicine. God has built the human body with defense systems that respond to attacks by sickness and disease. Because He has placed healing processes in the body, God may use medicine to heal, aiding the natural defenses of the body.

Recently I had knee-replacement surgery. I was surprised that many brothers and sisters in Christ rebuked me for having this operation because I didn’t rely solely on prayer and intercession for my healing.

I was disturbed by this until my friend Charles Carrin reminded me that it was Jesus Himself who said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick” (Matt. 9:12). God uses myriad approaches to effect healing for His children, and most people can be healed unless it is time for them to go home to be with the Lord.

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