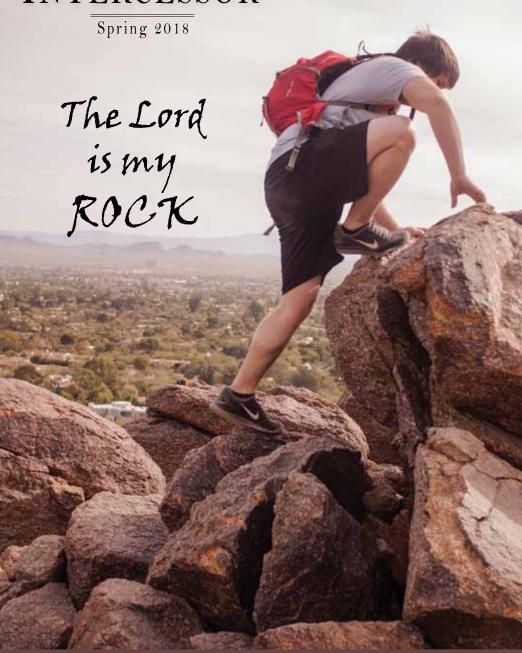
INTERCESSOR



The Magazine About Prayer

Read how God used a prayerful heart and an online dating website for His glory and ministry | p. 14

Read about how prayer led to complete healing for a woman who lost her child in a tragic way | p. 17

MY PLAN

By Kelvin Brown

Who said there would never be trouble? Who said there would never be pain? But you can rise up to look down on it all If you live on a higher plain. Don't think, don't act, or live as the world For I've chosen but a few. I've blessed you to deliver my word, Will I not see it through? I have Plans for you. Never will I tempt, that you may fail, Though I may devise a test. Will you walk through fire to be made pure Or exist as all the rest? I'm searching your inward parts; But you can and shall prevail, For I am God and I'm with you, My Plan, it will not fail. So stand as a soldier of my Word By the calling in which you've been called, A path has been laid for your success, If you follow, you will not fall. Lay down your troubles and look for grace, My hand will guide you through To receive the blessings and riches of heaven:

This is My Plan for you!

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened. and do not be dirmayed. for the lord your God is with you wherever you go. Joshua I:9

ABOUT BREAKTHROUGH

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Our Mission: Bringing together anonymously those needing prayer and Christians willing to pray for them; calling, equipping and encouraging people for this work.

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Our Mission

Breakthrough Intercessory Prayer Ministry is here for anyone who wants prayer. Prayer requests may be sent to us by mail, phone, email, fax, or through our website. Your prayer request is sent anonymously to six of our nearly 4,000 intercessors around the world who agree to pray for 21 days for each request they receive.

You will have your own prayer team of dedicated intercessors holding your needs up before the Lord. People often report an increased sense of peace during the prayer period. As you read this magazine, you will learn about many prayers that have been answered.

Catherine Marshall was given the inspiration for Breakthrough nearly 40 years ago. She was a best-selling Christian author who became concerned about the many prayer requests sent to her by her readers. At the same time, other readers were writing to tell her that they longed to be used by God but had no idea what they could do. God gave Catherine the vision of matching these two groups of people: those with prayer needs and those Christians who wanted to be part of a ministry. Thus Catherine and her husband, Leonard LeSourd, began the Breakthrough ministry.

Prayer requests are identified by first name only and are never sent to intercessors in the same geographic location as the prayer requester. The 21-day prayer period was arrived at based on the story in Daniel chapter 10. Daniel was praying for three weeks before the angel of the Lord was able to come and help him. The angel had been detained by spiritual forces from the first day of Daniel's prayer.

Our intercessors may receive scriptural insights from God for the prayer requester. Those messages, in the form of Scripture verses, are sent to the office and then forwarded to the person requesting prayer. In turn, prayer requesters send their answers to prayer to the

staff which are then forwarded to the intercessors as encouragement for their faithfulness in praying.

We want to hear from you. Pray about becoming one of our intercessors. It is a small expenditure of time compared to how it will impact your life and change the lives of others. As you read this magazine, think of your own stories of answered prayer that you would like to share. Our editorial committee will consider them for publication in The Breakthrough Intercessor. Remember also to send us your prayer requests. It is our privilege to pray for you.



From the Chairman

Before a seed can sprout and bring forth new life, its outer shell must first decay and die. Spiritually, the same happens with us. In order for

the Lord to bring us into new life, (including a more abundant relationship with Him, a greater anointing or mantle), something within us must first die. Jesus is our example. When Jesus willingly sacrificed Himself on the cross for us. He sowed His life as a seed into the Earth. In John 12:24 (KJV), Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."



Would you like to be able to bring forth new life, to have new beginnings? Well, something within you

must die before new life can spring forth. Something of self, ego, or pride. Although present in the life of every person, these must decrease before the Lord can bring increase to our lives. As John 3:30 (KJV) says, "He must increase, but I must decrease."

Sometimes this takes the form of giving up something for God, or dedicating more time to Him. At other times it could take the form of losing some "thing" that was valuable to you, or losing "someone" that was near and dear to your heart.



their lives to bring forth much fruit.

Both the Apostle Paul and John the Disciple had their freedoms taken near the end of their lives. Paul lived under house arrest for several years in Rome, and God used that time to guide Paul to write letters to churches. Many of these became part of the New Testament. John was exiled to the Isle of Patmos, and there he received the book of Revelation. God used these very difficult times in

When Catherine Marshall's husband, Peter Marshall, passed away, she grieved. But what the devil intended for evil, God used for good, to bring her into a closer communion with Him and giving birth to Breakthrough Ministries. God is very close to us during times of trial and suffering: "The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit (PS 34:18, KJV)." You can trust in Him. As you do, look forward to the new life and new beginnings that will sprout!

Suin K. Wells



Some time ago, it came into my mind to say to the Lord, like young Samuel, "Speak, Lord, for Your servant is listening." These times come when I get up very early and quiet my mind. I prayed I could listen more. I so wanted to hear from Him. He has been faithful to answer.

Last Friday, even though I was up later than usual, I sensed the Lord had something to say to me, so I got my journal and sat down and listened. He gives me these bits of wisdom much like He gives me a poem. I just listen and write as fast as I can. He encourages me, chastens me, and exhorts me - just as His Word says. Here is the entry from September 17, 2010:

"There is no race...you are a woman of God...live as such. Will it count for eternity? How much [do you do] to please self? How much time do you spend on maintenance? Discipline your mind. Take every thought in captive obedience to Christ. Discipline your mind to slow down what you do.

"Again -- you have My 'marching orders' -- [don't plan] too much for



the day; then you think of additions. You are like an overloaded passenger getting on a train -- you don't need all that baggage. Travel light. My disciples travelled light. Focus on the important, not all the 'I want to's.' All of your being -- heart, soul and mind -- travel in one direction -- no sidetracking, no rabbit trailing. Have time with Me -- I miss you. Come, sit at My feet. Let Me teach you, and we will do this together. Haven't I always been with you? You are thirsting for the Living Water, fresh from the spring. Your heart is yearning for this.

"Am I not the Author of Hope? Choose to leave this heaviness behind. Don't doubt. Remember yesterday: I

distinctly woke you up. You were alert instantly. I am still the same. I am waking you up. It is time to arise from this and go forward. You can discipline yourself. Stay on My path. Walk with Me. I don't run. I don't rabbit trail. Do I have your attention?"

"You are put on this earth for My purposes. Don't thwart them. Don't delay. The time is short. Yes, I wanted to speak with you this morning. Your spirit sensed it. Listen to Me, always. I have wisdom to share with you: not morsels. You are here for Me, not for yourself. Haven't I always given you all you needed? You have your needs met. You have a foundation -- go out from this foundation, one step at a

time. Obey, and I will reveal the next step. I am placing people in your life. Pay attention to each person. You are praying for open doors, open hearts, and that I would open your mouth with My words. Have I not answered multiple times, dear one?"

"I know. I know you have a

sensitive heart. I love that

sensitive heart. I know you

are 'different.' I made you

distinctly to be 'different' - to

be sensitive, to be kind, to

have a real heart."

"Take heart. I am not angry with you but am encouraging you. Don't be so burdened with duties that you miss or resent an opportunity that is from Me. You are not a CEO, you are my humble, loving daughter. You are not humble in

your natural flesh -- I have made you humble and you must remain in Me constantly to remain that way. You are not the solution to these problems you encounter. You may be a vessel, but that is for Me to decide. You are eager, but temper your eagerness with My wisdom: 'Should I take this on? Is this from the LORD?"

At that point, I told Him "Lord, I want to hear what You have to say, even if it 'ouches' me."

"I know. I know you have a sensitive heart. I love that sensitive heart. I know you are 'different.' I made you distinctly to be 'different' -- to be sensitive, to be kind, to have a real heart. I see your tears. Don't fear, little one. I made you different to make a difference. People all around you are hurting, and need Me. Because you can sense their need, and because you reach out, I can use you. Keep your heart and mind open to Me. What am I teaching you/telling you at this moment? Listen with your heart, too. I have given you both heart and mind to be used for healing, and for other purposes for Me and My glory.

"Don't fear anything. Whatever

assignment I give you, I will equip you for. You will have everything you need, and will rely on Me for the words to say. Be alert. DON'T be exhausted physically. Be fitted and fresh to do My work. My yoke is light, dear one."

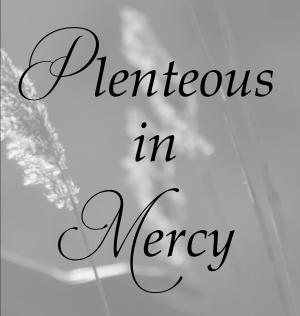
Renewed, I told Him: "Ah, Lord, I am drinking of the Living Water."

He replied, "Yes, dear one, and you are refreshed. Now, go and refresh others, and bring them to Me."

In March 2008, the Lord saved Miriam's life through a kidney and liver transplant. (see Summer 2009 issue of Breakthrough Intercessor). The key verse He gave to her was Psalm



118:17: "You shall not die, you shall surely live, and declare My wondrous works." She is married to the love of her life, Bob and enjoys reading, writing, and praying. She is thankful for the privilege of prayer.



By Carolyn Anna Boston

It was going to be a long time until payday. I decided to search the house for loose change -- even \$2 would help. I ransacked my coat pockets, dresser drawers, and pocketbooks, but not a penny showed up. Then I remembered I had over 300 pennies in the Mason jar in the kitchen. I decided to take the coins to the coin collector at the bank. But the Lord spoke to me and instructed me to go to a specific bank downtown. Though it seemed unusual at the time, I went to the bank He had requested.

While I waited in line at the coin collector, I told the Lord that no matter how bleak the situation looked, I knew He would take care of me. I reminded Him of the long stretch between paychecks and how I needed help to make it to the next one. When my turn came to use the machine, I poured in the coins and waited for my receipt. When it came out, I headed to the teller to collect the money. It wasn't until then that I looked at my slip and saw the amount. The receipt said \$120.00! Instantly, I checked with the woman who had used the machine before me and asked if she had mistakenly left some of her coins in the machine. She assured me that she hadn't. I immediately left the line and waited to see a customer representative. It was clear to me that the bank's coin collector machine had made an error.

I explained what had happened to the bank representative. I told her the amount of coins I had put into the machine and what the receipt said. Her only words to me were, "Our machines don't make mistakes." I insisted there had to be an error and she insisted there wasn't any. She repeated the same phrase to me again. "Our machines don't make mistakes." I left my name and number with her just in case there was a deficit in the coin collector's tally at the end of the day. The bank never contacted me.

That afternoon, the Lord supernaturally met my financial need at the bank He specifically instructed me to visit. God had gone ahead of me and prepared a miracle. I shook my head in complete amazement. Psalm 103:4,8 AMP entered my thoughts... "Who redeems your life from the pit and corruption, Who beautifies, dignifies, and crowns you with loving-kindness and tender mercy... The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy and loving-kindness." I left home with a little over three dollars in pennies and returned home with \$120 - more than enough to buy groceries, food for my pet and enough provision to get me to the next pay period. The Lord not only provided for me, He also gave me His peace in the midst of a time of great need.

"For though the mountains should depart and the hills be shaken or removed, yet my love and kindness shall not depart from you, nor shall my covenant of peace and completeness be removed, says the Lord, who has compassion on you." Isaiah 54:10 AMP

Carolyn Boston has devoted herself to praying as an intercessor for Breakthrough for 25 years. She worked in the telecommunications industry for 31 years. She is retired and resides in Pennsylvania.



The Dreaming Prayer By Catherine Marshall 111111

ressed in working clothes and knee-high clodhoppers, Ray used to come talk with my mother. He was always clean, but he didn't even own a suit of clothes. On a summer's day he would settle himself on the top step of our vine-shaded front porch talking... talking... while Mother sat in a wooden rocker shelling peas or stringing beans or darning socks. Mother soon saw his boundless energy and fine mind.

On one particular afternoon there emerged for Ray the same inner longing which I had had – college. Once his dream was out in the open, standing there shimmering, poised in the air, Mother was delighted to see the wistfulness in Ray's brown eyes, replaced by kindling hope.

"But how can I manage it?" the boy asked. "I've no money saved. Nor any prospects."

Mother sensed that with Ray, however, the Dreaming Prayer should involve, more than just college, a completely new approach to life. "Raymond, whatever you need, God has the supply ready for you, provided you're ready to receive it. And ours is still a land of opportunity, Raymond. The sky is the limit! The money will be there for every dream that's right for you, every dream for which you're willing to work."

For a preacher's wife who had little enough herself, this was a doughty philosophy. But Mother believed it and had often proved it so. And these truths took root in Ray.

There came the day when Ray accepted Mother's philosophy so completely that she could lead him in the prayer that releases dreams to make them come true. After having heard her pray it for me, I can easily imagine how it was for Ray...

"Father, You've given Raymond a fine mind. We believe you want that mind to be developed, that You want Raymond's potential to be used to help You lift and lighten some portion of Your world. Since all the wealth of the world is Yours, please help Raymond find everything he needs for an education.

"And, Father, we also believe you have even bigger plans for Raymond. Plant in his mind and heart the vivid pictures, the specific dreams that reflect Your plans for him after college. And oh, give him joy in dreaming – great joy."

With a flat pocketbook but faith in his dream, Raymond Thomas got on a bus and went off to college. How he made it is much too long to chronicle here. It involved Mother's finding a woman to start him off with a loan – writing him encouraging letters – praying. And Ray himself accepting responsibility, developing initiative. In four years he had twelve jobs, budgeting time as well as money: so many hours for classes, study, church, work, recreation. It was a proud day for Mother when Ray received his Bachelor of Science degree, cum laude.

During World War II and afterwards I lost touch with Ray, though I knew he had settled in Vienna. Then in the summer of 1958, I wrote Ray that I was coming to Europe. In Rome I found a letter from him waiting for me...

"I have a surprise for you. You will hear from the office of the Reveranda Fabrica di San Pietro whom I've contacted on your behalf. The point is that only with their permission can you see the most wonderful sight in Rome, the excavated street of Tombs sixteen centuries old beneath the nave of the High Altar in St. Peter's. I explored every bit of it two years ago..."

Then when I checked into the hotel in Florence, the mail clerk handed me another letter from Ray...

"When you see the high dome of the Duomo, remember that it took Brunelleschi fourteen years to build it. Last winter, I climbed to the highest balcony right at the top of the dome and crawled all around it..."

By now I was consumed with curiosity about Ray. This man seemed to bear no resemblance to the boy from Radical Hill. Obviously, he knew Europe as few Americans do. And the drive and indefatigable zest apparent in his letters intrigued me.

The letters kept coming... Venice: "I've written to my friend at the Salviati Glass Works and asked him to send a gondola for you. You must see the master glassblowers at work..."

At Bad Gastein:

"You'll find it rugged. I've skied near there..."

Ray met me at the Vienna airport, a bouquet of flowers in hand. "Flowers and music are a part of Vienna," he explained. "Here we always take flowers to our hostess even for a dinner party." Later, over Sacher torte and coffee, he began answering my questions.

"The fact that I could sit on your front steps and - with no money at all - dream of going to college and achieve it, proved something to me. Very simply, what your mother had said, was true - any right dream can be realized. Material resources are at the beck and call of the dreamer. And prayer helps you know if it is right and gives you the power to stay with it."

He described his war experience - one of the few survivors of a torpedoed destroyer - and how during convalescence he dreamed of the plan for the rest of his life.

"I wanted to be the kind of world citizen who could serve my country in peacetime, to travel and master several languages, to get a Ph.D. degree."

"It interests me that your dreams were that specific," I interposed.

Ray sipped his coffee, seeming lost in thought as he stared out of the window. "This dreaming process won't work unless we are specific. That's because a big part of the power to make the dream come true arises from a mental picture. And you sure do have to have specifics to form a mental picture."

Then Ray went on to sum up how much of his dream had been realized: travel in sixty countries, his Ph.D. in physics from the University of Vienna, which meant mastering German. He also speaks Spanish, passable French, some Italian, Dutch and Swedish - and a little Russian. He serves his country through a job with the U.S. Atomic Energy Program in Europe.

A story like Ray's reveals the connection between constructive dreaming and prayer. For, in a sense all such dreaming is praying. It is certainly the Creator's will that the desires and talents that He himself has planted in us to be realized. God is supremely concerned about the fulfillment of the great person He envisions each of us to be. He wants us to catch from Him some of His vision for us. After all, this is what prayer is, men cooperating with God in bringing from Heaven to earth His wondrously good plans for us.

Catherine Marshall (1914-1983) was a bestselling author and founder of Breakthrough, Inc. Article used with permission.



There's no telling what might pop up in your face these days when you're surfing the internet. This day, it was a "dating list," a list of folks describing their attributes in an attempt to find their soul mate.

Dating sites had vied for my attention many times before, but I had never looked. Not even glanced. While I am a single man and dating lists are quite popular, I don't think God needs them to direct your path to your life mate. Besides, I'm not looking anyway – I don't believe that another human being is the answer to any of my problems, no matter how good she might sound in her profile.

I can't explain what was different this particular day. Not really curiosity. Maybe I was on hold in the middle of a telephone conversation and restless, so I began checking through new email without my usual caution. Or maybe the Holy Spirit had dialed my number.

I took only a second or two and scanned the list. A name jumped out... an awesome-sounding Italian name. Italy – a nation of hot tasty foods and cool names! Lazzeri, Lasagna, Lombardi, Linguine. Liz. Liz - with a distinctly Italian last name. Hmmm...

Her address was a prison...three time zones away. One of the most important aspects of my life, particularly in those days, was sending weekly mailings to inmates across the country: inspirational stories, devotionals, and jokes. I sent as many as 120 mailings a



week to three countries and more than a dozen states.

The ad read -

I am currently in prison and am very lonely...I have fallen deep into despair and am completely alone...I am looking for a man...a free spirit with an expressive soul...I want someone to cherish me and adore me... Please write to me...

Loving? Free Spirit? Expressive soul? I knew such a Man! I sent Liz my next mailing:

We love Him because He first loved us... He will gather the lambs in His arms and carry them next to His heart...

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven...

To my surprise, she wrote right back! She must have replied the same day she got my mailing. But, whoa she did not sound too pleased, with big, slashing, angry looking script as she began her letter -

Who are you??? Why are you sending me stuff??? Who gave you my name????

Thanks though for trying to put a smile on my face in this lonely dark place.

Liz

PS – You made me laugh and you made me cry; if you think of it, can you please send me some more stuff? I don't get much mail here. Thanks

Daily, for years, I have prayed that our loving and all-knowing heavenly Father would put folks in my path who I am equipped to minister to. Here, He had given me a "date" with a very lonely and love-starved soul whose name was on a desperate list. We wrote back and forth maybe a dozen times. She had no church background and asked many questions. I encouraged her questions and prayerfully answered the best I could.

Over the months, praying daily for wisdom for Liz by name, I taught her that no human could meet her need for love; other humans would only disappoint (as she probably already knew!).

I explained how the God of the Bible loves us more than we can imagine. He became a human, Jesus, living as a carpenter, and for a short three years a travelling preacher. Then He paid the price for our sins in a very horrid, brutal, painful, humiliating public execution on a wooden cross. He returned from death to walk again among humans!

God demonstrates His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us...

I showed her that if she would reach out and cling to Jesus, she would begin to manifest fruit in her life, as fruit is connected to the branch of a tree. Love. Joy. Peace...

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, self-control...

I had no idea where all this was going, or God's purpose in this, or how much she understood. But I reassured her she did not need me, I was three time zones away. She needed Jesus! And Jesus is never more than a whisper away!

He opened their understanding that they might understand Scripture...

These things I have spoken to you that your joy may be full...

After seven or eight months, there was all of a sudden a completely new tone to her letters. Calmness. Tranquility. Serenity. Peace.

Liz wrote:

Hello my friend,

How are you? Today has been a very sad day here – last night a lady died; the medical dept. is so unequipped, it's sad and scary. There's a sad feeling all across the facility. We had a service for her last night. She was young and kept telling medical she didn't feel well.

Did you get the letter I sent asking if you would send me a Bible? One that is easy to read.

Tuesdays they have a little church service here for us inmates, and last night I went. At the end of it they have an invitation, asking anyone seeking a closer walk with Jesus to come forward. I wanted you to know, I stepped up and accepted the Lord as my Savior! I'm a baby in Christ. I'm going to start a new life. I'm going to get baptized soon. I'm also starting a new class — commitment to change.

Anyway, please continue to send your mailings; I read them and then pass them around to share. My favorite recent one was about the wolves. I'm thankful for you!

Love, Liz

S.T. Mann is a sojourner writing from a farm in the Canadian Rockies. He's the author of a variety of works, including the true-life, scripture-laced anthologies God and Mann and



God and Mann II. He is an ordained minister, founder of a prison ministry, and compiler of a monthly devotional email. He's been published in Breakthrough Intercessor since 2011 and serves as an intercessor.

God Answers Prayers

By Roxie Olmstead



hen tragedy strikes a small community, no one escapes the consequences or moves on untouched.

While living in such a community, a young mother accidentally backed her car over her toddler's head, resulting in his death. The details were gruesome to say the least. The father witnessed the accident from across the yard.

Also, the mother was eight months pregnant and there was concern that

the trauma might make her go into labor early. Being a newcomer in town, I didn't know the mother personally, but my husband worked with the father. I prayed for God to console the family and for the unborn child. The mother carried the baby to full term and had a healthy baby girl.

My office coworker, Debbie, was a close friend of the child's parents. The day following the accident, she came to work distraught. Periodically she broke down, cried, and upset the entire office staff. There was little work accomplished that day.

"How can she ever get over it? You know she'll always have that picture in her mind," Debbie repeated over and over.

Inwardly, I agreed, but in an effort to console her, I assured Debbie that

could erase the image from

the mother's mind and he

God was the only one who could erase the image from the mother's mind and he would if we but asked. I told her that would be my prayer. Deb-

bie seemed to take comfort from my words. I prayed that prayer over and over, but at the same time I have to admit I still had reservations about whether it was possible even though I wanted to believe God could actually remove that horrible picture from the mother's mind. At times like this I think of expressions like, "Oh, you of little faith."

Soon afterwards, Debbie quit work. The office merged with another, and I moved to a new office to work with an entirely different staff.

Several years passed. One day the subject of the tragedy came up during a discussion at coffee break at the office. I was absolutely stunned when one of my coworkers said, "Did you know she [the mother] has absolutely no recollection of the accident? It's as though it's been blotted from her mind."

Immediately, I recalled an old story I had heard about the man who prayed for the mountain to be removed and then looked up and said, "I knew it would still be there." I felt ashamed that I hadn't had the inward faith I outwardly exhibited to Debbie. All I could think of was, "Forgive me, Lord, for my unbelief, and thank you for answering my prayer in spite of it."

I am in a Sunday school class for elderly women. Recently, we had a discussion about how it seemed as

though the general God was the only one who public no longer believed in God or the miracles He performs. I shared this article with my

class and explained would if we but asked. that I had written similar articles and whether they were published or not, occasionally I got them out and read them. It is a constant reminder about how great our God is. Everyone isn't a writer, but they should make notes of answered prayer to experience over and over. It increases our faith. I've heard of peo-

> This incident has served me well. When my faith is lacking, I remember it and how God can and does answer prayer.

ple who keep prayer journals and make

note of prayers that are answered for

Roxie Olmstead took up writing in her late 50s and had her first poem published at 60. Today, in her 90s, she's published over 200 pieces and continues to write in a variety of genres.

that reason.



How can Breakthrough maintain a network of NEARLY 4,000 INTERCESSORS WHO PRAY FAITHFULLY AND INDIVIDUALLY FOR EACH REQUEST THEY RE-CEIVE?

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Consider leaving Breakthrough a gift in your will to ensure that our ministry can continue calling, equipping, and encouraging people in the work of faithful intercession. Include the following wording: "I give, devise, and bequeath to Breakthrough, Inc., tax identification number 23-7423474, P.O. Box 121, Lincoln, Virginia 20160 (insert amount, percentage, or nature of gift, or remainder of estate) to be used for its ministry purposes."

Has God taught you about prayer? Has He answered prayer and you want to share it?
Do you write prayer poetry? The Intercessor's editors welcome submissions!

Some Guidelines:

- Articles: 500 to 1,000 words; Poems: 12 lines minimum
- Topic must focus on prayer: an experience or teaching supported in Scripture
- Authors give Breakthrough permission to edit material for length and content

Email: editor@intercessors.org Mail: Breakthrough Editor, P.O. Box 121, Lincoln, VA 20160

the That If By Erin Kaschub

ear Lord, so many of my friends are hurting now," I prayed after receiving another heartflet text message, "and so many longstanding Christians are walking away from you."

My heart broke for my friends. Women who had been married for 20 years were contemplating leaving their husbands. Upstanding men and church deacons succumbed to worldly ideas and pleasures. Ministers engaged in backbiting and publicly criticizing each other. Adoptive mothers saw their children walk away from them. Out-of-work couples, friends whose spouses had died, and singles who were still searching for godly spouses all struggled.

My prayer list went on and on. It was astounding and grievous to see how the body of Christ was being systematically and diabolically picked apart.

Many of these fellow Christians, I noticed, were no longer spending time in prayer because they were consumed with searching for jobs, looking after rebellious children, trying to mend broken marriages, and carrying on with the daily hassles of life. When asked about their quiet time, many replied, "I don't have any time. I'm iust so tired."

Those were the words that resonated in my spirit for a few days. The phrase, "I'm exhausted," had not merely come from one source, but several Christians that I knew well. They were seasoned lovers of God and leaders in their churches. I was feeling weary along with them.

"Lord, what if all Your people who are beaten down and run ragged were to pray for strength? What would happen in the body of Christ if everyone who followed You were to rise up in prayer? What would it look like worldwide if all believers were to pray for strength to fight in this spiritual battle again?" I asked my Father.

If we were to all pray for our persecuted brothers and sisters in Christ, would the jails burst open for them, or would God use them powerfully for His ministry in the midst of their suffering? Instead of focusing on doctrinal differences, if we were to make concerted prayers for revival in our nations, would we not be a force to be reckoned with?

It is no wonder that the devil is fighting hard to keep us too busy to pray. The more fixated we are on our own problems, the less instrumental we will be in the kingdom of God.

Ezra 10:4 admonishes us to get off our laurels and rise up in prayer: "Arise, for this matter is your responsibility... Be of good courage and do it."

Likewise, Ezekiel 34:2 admonishes those who neglect God's church and focus only on themselves: "Woe to the shepherds... who feed themselves! Should not shepherds feed the flocks?"

God was speaking to me, telling me to get my mind off myself and my problems. He was instructing me to stop looking at all the things that needed to get done that day. Instead, I needed to turn aside and spend a few minutes doing something that would add more value to eternity than my

working, cleaning, and driving.

I began to pray that the body of Christ would gain strength and arise:

"Dear Lord, thank You that You have a plan for everything and that Your plan is not over yet (Isaiah 46:10). Lord, your saints are weary, overworked, and run ragged. They

no longer make time to spend in Your Word and are instead being carried away with the world. Please come to all of your Christians worldwide and fill us with Your overcoming power (1 Corinthians 4:20). Lord, we need Your victorious power so we can once again arise and pray for the lost, the needy,

and the oppressed (Isaiah 58:6-7).

"Father, You tell us in Ephesians to put on our armor and fight the good fight of faith, but many of Your children no longer want to get out of bed in the mornings, much less fight. Infuse them with supernatural strength that can come only from You so they can stand again and fight (1 Corinthians 16:3). Revive them according to Your word (Psalm 119:107).

"Lord, strengthen us all so we can be mighty men and women of valor who increase in strength (Isaiah 40:29). Thank You that You are the One who gives power (Deuteronomy 8:18). We also have righteousness and strength in You (Isaiah 45:24). Help us to forever remember that You are for us (Psalm 118:6, Psalm 56:9, Deuteronomy 7:31), that all Your promises are "yes" (2 Corinthians 1:20), and that nothing is

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too hard for You (2 Chronicles 14:11, Genesis 18:14, 1 Samuel 14:6). Help us to return to our Bibles so we may see all the ways You have worked in the past. Help us to ignore the father of lies who tries to tell us all is lost and hopeless (John 8:44, John 10:10). And revive us so we may come together as a

mighty army of believers who are ready to go in to possess Your land (Deuteronomy 11:8). Praise You Lord, Amen."

Reprinted from Volume 36, Issue 1

Erin Kaschub enjoys teaching Sunday school to fourth-grade girls at her church, as well as talking about all the wonderful things God has done.





A Prayer for Lucky, the Rescued Raccoon

By Lester Dean

n Friday, July 19, 2002, my father Bruce Dean and my younger brother Randy unexpectedly discovered a young, injured raccoon in the dense woods that rest on our property.

We theorized that it had been attacked and wounded by another raccoon or a neighbor's pet. Regardless, it was likely paralyzed because it had completely lost the use of its back legs. We found it crawling, pulling itself along with its front legs and large paws.

I suggested that my father and brother drive the racoon to a local veterinarian for an examination the next Monday. They kept it in a cardboard box over the weekend, hoping to nourish it and restore its strength. They gave it fresh water daily in ash trays and a small water dish. The young animal ate canned dog food with its two large, sharp front paws.

Early on Sunday morning, during my personal private prayer time, when I spend time in Christ's presence and read my favorite study Bible, I prayed for the raccoon.

I strongly believed that my dearest companion, friend, redeemer and Lord, Jesus Christ, would heal it! Holy Scripture instructs us that "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much (James 5:16, KJV)."

Jesus did touch and divinely heal the raccoon, and there was no need to transport it to a vet. Our father named him "Lucky" because he said it was lucky or very blessed to be alive.

As Lucky recovered, he was comical and curious. He investigated everything he possibly could – he climbed onto a table using a wooden board, chewed on electrical wires, and broke into a bag of bird feed.

One day Lucky got stuck in a garbage can and had to be rescued. The garbage can had broken glass from a fluorescent lamp, and the main reason I believe Lucky was protected from the broken glass was because I prayed for him daily to Almighty God, who constantly watches over every living, breathing creature of His.

Lucky was docile and climbed onto the tops of our tennis shoes and bare feet. He wagged his long, hairy grey tail, like a puppy, to show his affection. We adored this small creature and quickly grew attached.

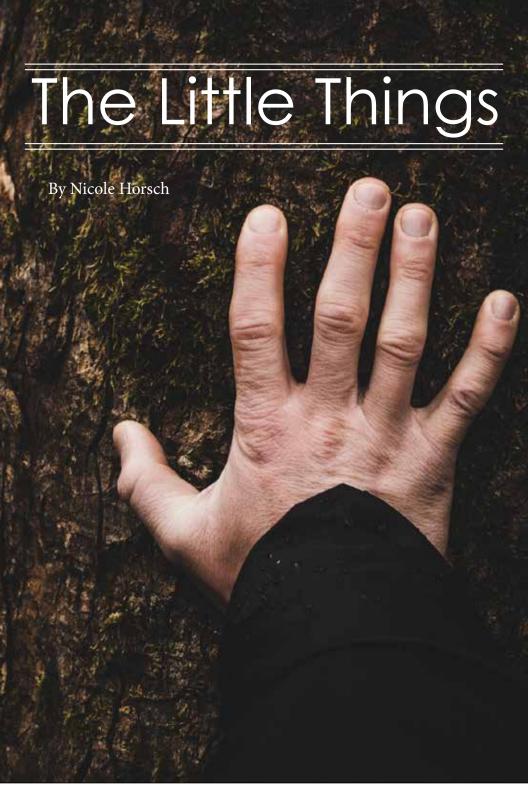
When we released Lucky after two weeks, he hung around for a few days - following and annoying our yard dog, Sable, and sleeping on top of her dog house. After a few days, Lucky vanished into the dense woods.

After he left, I was reminded of the Bible's teaching about kindness to animals: "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast: but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel (Proverbs 12:10, KJV)."

Lester Dean is a native of Florence, Ala. He attended the University of North Alabama, Shoals Community College, and Shoals Bible Institute. He is an award-winning photographer who has



exhibited his color travel photography in many northern Alabama juried exhibits. He plans to co-pastor a church in Madison, Ala., with his precious soulmate's assistance.



note of ometimes we can be so focused on the big picture of Desus that we miss the little things. The other day I was thinking about the crucifixion. It has been estimated that Jesus hung on that cross for about three hours before He finally gave up His life. They even placed something underneath His feet so that He wouldn't die so quickly and to prolong His suffering.

As I contemplated the excruciating pain, anguish, and utter despair Jesus must have experienced, I thought about how every time He must have struggled against the nails and pushed from His feet to take a breath, the splinters must have grated His back.

The cross was crude, not the nicely polished thing we have on the wall of our home. It was course and rough.

In our lives, sometimes it isn't the major events that bring us pain or cause us anxiety and fear; rather, it's the little things. The tiny splinters that pierce us as we try to adjust to the big stuff around us. Try as we might, we can't get away from the splinters.

I have friends going through cancer, others the loss of loved ones to suicide, still others the bittersweet season of empty nests and the uncertainty of job loss and strained finances. For some of these folks facing the big things, it's the little things that wear them down. It's the side effects of the cancer meds, the quarrelsome family members who argue over the estate, or the tiresome job interviews that don't seem to lead anywhere. The purpose of Christ's suffering was not only for our eternal security but to bring us hope and security during the trials on earth.

My bet is that I'm like you, thinking that God has way too much going on to worry with my little things. Threats of nuclear war, rampant hatred and racism, human trafficking, and refugee crises seem way more important and pressing toward God in prayer. I sometimes pray about my stuff and then dismiss it, thinking there's no way God would bother and that I shouldn't bother Him.

Remember this very important part of the story: As Jesus carried that cross up the hill, a man named Simon was made to carry it for Him part of the way. I imagine Simon's back was splintered, too. The weight and pain was likely too much. Ultimately, Simon of Cyrene had to give that cross back to Christ and let Him finish the work.

I would challenge you today to remember the splinters. Christ's crucifixion was a complete work, not only for salvation but so that we might have an abundant life (John 10:10). He took nails in His hands and feet to usher you to heaven, but He also strained against the burden of life and took the splinters for you, too.

Matthew 11:28-30 is one of my favorite verses. It says: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light (ESV)."

This verse reveals an image of hardworking oxen who are voked together, pulling a heavy load. This morning, I imagine that, instead of the voke being the piece of tack placed over the back and neck, the voke is the cross that Christ strained and pushed against for what felt like an eternity. He took the road of long and painful suffering to show us He can walk with us down the long roads of little things that wear us down.

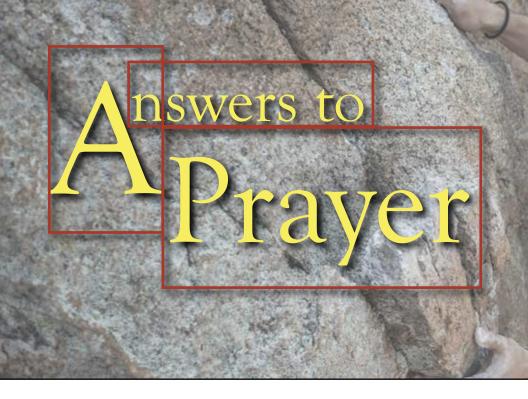
Pray about the little things today. Don't compare your sufferings or sitnation with that of the entire world. Simon of Cyrene carried that cross for just a little while and eventually handed it off to the One who could bear it all for Him and for all of us.

Nicole Goodfellow Horsch lives in Round Hill, Va.. with her husband and three beautiful daughters. She is a homeschooling mom who also manages a home-based business. At the prompting of friends,



she began writing "Another Blog About Jesus" (found at www.anotherblogaboutjesus. com) where she shares insights from the Word.

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A CONCUSSION REVERSED

Heather requested prayer for her adult son, Jeff, who suffered a bad concussion while cycling to work. He recently called from a business trip to San Francisco. His voice was strong, he is able to work, and he doesn't appear to have sustained long-term brain damage. Praise God!

SHE FELT THE **PRAYERS**

Jean says, "When I was going through a most difficult time, it was so comforting to know Breakthrough was praying for me. I mark the dates on the calendar, and I can see and feel the prayer power in my life - thank you."

TIMELY WITNESS

Gala shares that her uncle was an alcoholic for around 25 years, and her grandfather - a Breakthrough intercessor - never ceased praying for him. A pastor helped him to recover from the addiction, and he remained strong for 13 years. After this period, he became very ill and angry. He was receptive to hearing from the pastor again and invited him to visit on Thursday. By the Lord's will, the pastor arrived Wednesday. He shared the Gospel and God cleansed Gala's uncle's heart. On Thursday, her uncle passed away into the arms of Christ.

GOD'S GRADUATE

Kotso rejoices that her prayers have been answered - she officially has her



Masters degree in Higher Education Qualification. She praises God for guiding her through the exams and for giving her the endurance to finish strong.

AUTISM MIRACLE

Carolyn praises God that her 21-yearold son with high-functioning autism is holding down a job, making responsible decisions, and talking with wisdom and maturity. Carolyn has been praying over her son with Breakthrough, and she did not expect such an overwhelming change at his young age.

CHARGES SUSPENDED

Dorie shares that her grandson, Jason,

was scheduled to go to jail. However, God had other plans. Jason received salvation through the process, and when he went before the judge, all charges were suspended.

FINAL TRY

After joining Breakthrough to pray for her daughter, Paula reports that her daughter passed her pharmateutical exams on the fourth and final try. She is now employed by a hospital. Praise God!

HEALING OF MIND

Michele asked Breakthrough intercessors to pray for her stepmother's mental condition. She reports that it has significantly improved.

Praise God!

continued on next page

SUCCESSFUL TRANSPLANT

Kleynin praises God for protecting her friend after going through a double organ transplant in Columbia. Her friend is recovering successfully and is expected to return home soon.

RECEPTIVE TO THE LORD

Linda praises God for drawing her daughter Victoria closer to him. She is more receptive than ever, and she has been involved in her church and open to God's teaching.

A LIGHTER LOAD

Shelley shares that she has been struggling with depression, insomnia, and an overwhelming sense of lethargy and fatigue. These conditions have made it extremely difficult for her to find the motivation to clean and declutter her household. After intercessors lifted her up in prayer, she reports feeling a gradual lightening of the load. She recognizes the inward and outward progress of healing that is taking place within her.

CHRISTIAN COUNSELING

Briana praises God for improving her relationship with her motherin-law. She spent years trying to love her, but her mother-in-law retaliated with manipulation and lies. After being led to a Christian counselor, their relationship has been healed. Her mother-in-law has been respectful of Briana's time and space, and Briana feels free from Satan's devices.

OPENED GATES

Peter praises God for opening a financial gate after joining Breakthrough in prayer. Their house, which has been under construction for 10 years, is now completed. His wife has setttled into a new job, and God has blessed them with the ability to overcome outstanding debt.

SUPERNATURAL GRATITUDE

Twenty-five years ago, Sandra asked for prayer for her 29-year-old daughter who was diagnosed with stage four cancer, a brain tumor. She received two specific prayers with scripture, one from the Midwest and one from Africa. They sustained her and her daughter then, and they continue to sustain her even after her daughter left to be with the Lord.

Answers to Prayer are edited for publication.

GIFTS

A gift from Michael Smith, Elizabeth Smith, Becky Cooke, loving wife Delouis Pace, Patricia Manzolillo, Cynthia Drayton, James Hagan, Kimberlie Ross, and Stephanie Smith in memory of

Rogers Pace

A gift from Nevin and Gail Huber in honor of

Marty Swan and Lori Shannon



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Breakthrough ()

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