





# THE SEVENTH FLOOR

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## **DEDICATION**

To my loving husband, Dick, and my precious son, Jeremy.  
Next to Jesus Christ there are no greater gifts than the two  
of you. May my son always know that his destiny rides on the  
wings of God's Word.



## FOREWORD

Debra (Debbie) Deardorff proves to be a faithful mouthpiece for hope in “The Seventh Floor”. Her personal story of oppressive shame and lost dreams releases grace and compassion over all who have felt forgotten by God. Debbie invites us into the inner sanctum of her journey with God, as she shares step by step the truths and actions that birthed the miraculous healing in her spirit and body. She reminds us that the God of the Bible is alive and well, and still willing to do the impossible! Her journey is C.P.R. to the Spirit!

This fast paced adventure will breathe life into your spirit. Each page is saturated with life-giving mentoring for all who long to see shame defeated, dreams fulfilled, and the promises of God manifested.

Debbie Deardorff not only lived this journey, but she continues to live her life with this stunning vulnerability,

humor, and utter abandonment to Jesus. Debbie and her husband, Dick, have many stories like this one that give testimony that Jesus is still the Triumphant One, doing exceedingly, abundantly, above and beyond all they could ask or imagine! They are among the truest examples of real life in Jesus I have ever known. If I could bless you with a friendship with them, I would! The next best thing is to encourage you to breathe in their “real life Jesus” in these pages. You will never be the same.

Debbie and Dick, thank you for being such trustworthy carriers of His integrity, wisdom, and love. You have always sown seeds for Jesus here in the U.S. and around the world. May this book bring forth the greatest harvest for Jesus you have ever known!

Endless love and honor,

Dr. Susan Watson



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## INTRODUCTION

How long would you hold onto a dream if you knew one day it would become a reality? Would you allow anything or anyone tear it away from you? What if year after year you were told it would never, ever be possible?

In the face of this type of impossibility, I had a dream. I wanted a child. A son. No matter what they said, I knew one day I would see his face. This is the story of my incredible, personal journey. At first glance, most would think this book is about my struggle to have a baby. While I was in the journey I thought so too. It's not. It's about how I learned to hear and trust God.

It was only because of the personal relationship I developed with Him along the way that He brought me through each adversity, and gave me strength to last. Each time someone tried to show me a way out or walked away because I refused

to give up, He took a step closer and let me know He was there. He became my whole world and in the process went from just being a Savior to the loving Father I never knew.

I hope that in these pages you too find the real and lasting love of my Father and come to find that, with Him, nothing is impossible.

Debbie



**CHAPTER 1: SECRETS**



It was the summer of 1983. I was attending an annual church camp meeting. Record-breaking crowds were anticipated, so the meeting was held in the Civic Center. The days were filled with life-changing teachings and the evenings electrified like the “old-time camp meetings.”

I had talked my mother, sister, husband, niece, and a close friend into joining me at the conference. Our family went to church but I had never been to anything like this. Our expectations were high, and we were not disappointed. Seats were scarce, so we journeyed to the “nose-bleed section.” The atmosphere was charged like that of a race at the moment horses bolt from the gate. On cue, over 9,000 people erupted in a symphony of singing that was so different it was beyond anything of this world. The presence of God filled the room hovering over us like a thick cloud. I had never been so

overwhelmed. I began to cry. I could feel His love in such a tangible way, it seemed He was pouring it down on us like rain. He pulled me from the depths to respond with tears flowing freely down my cheek.

The moments of our worship seemed to last a lifetime and then the speaker for the evening stepped up to the podium. The message he spoke was powerful. Intellectually, I knew what he was saying was for everyone; but inside I knew the truth. Each word was like a sole arrow piercing the bull's eye of my heart with unfathomable love. At the end of his message, the minister gave an invitation and asked for anyone who wanted to receive what he called the “endowment from above” (which is a call for baptism in the Holy Spirit), to come forward. So many people responded the aisles were flooded with what seemed to be a sea of people. The atmosphere was so alive with anticipation that no one appeared to notice the endless lines and no one seemed to care. Before I knew it, I was in line with them.

By the time I reached the front of the line for my moment to be ministered to, the speaker suddenly stopped and asked “Is there any woman here who has had an abortion?” Everything and everyone froze. A silence descended that seemed to linger in the room. Abortion was a subject no one spoke about--never in public--let alone in front of thousands of people on live TV. Abortion was illegal and carried a stigma that would forever ruin a woman’s reputation and that of her family.

Not moved by the crowd’s reaction, he went on to say, “The anointing of God is present to minister and heal you.” My face flushed hot and my mind began to race wildly. I wondered how he knew. Who told him? Was this a coincidence or did God stop an entire service just to talk to me about the darkest secret of my heart? A secret hidden so deep it was never, ever to be spoken of. My parents knew. Our pastor knew. But the tragic events that had robbed me of my innocence and exposed my life to darkness--- we had kept hidden beneath a wall of silence, shame and fear. All those years of carrying

this heavy weight, a weight that grew heavier and heavier day by day, the thing we had labeled the “dark family secret,” had taken a terrible toll on my life. My mind still racing, I knew I couldn’t go any further. The fear of being exposed paled in comparison to the burden of carrying the secret. This was my chance! Maybe Jesus could fix this and maybe, just maybe, it would be okay. Slowly, I moved into the new line.

In the 1960s, when I was a teen, it was common for high-school students to have part-time jobs. I was no different. We were a middle-class family and while we had the necessities, if I wanted other things like clothes or spending money, I would have to pay for them myself. When I was sixteen, I was given the opportunity to work at a national department store chain, in the children’s department. I would be working there each day after school from 5:00 PM to 9:00 PM and all day on Saturday.

Next to the children’s department was the men’s clothing department, where a handsome young man worked. We began to talk during lunchtime or on our coffee breaks. For



months, we chatted about work and enjoyed the simplicity of each other's company. Not long after, we went out on a date. It went well and ended with a nice, short goodnight kiss at my front door. I liked him. He was pleasant and from a church-going family like me. We dated for a couple of months when I mustered up enough courage to ask him if he would take me to my high school Valentine's dance. Even though he was four years my senior, he said yes.

We had a great time at the dance. Driving home he said he'd like us have a couple of drinks. I thought to myself, "What harm could it do?" While my parents never drank socially, they would have an occasional glass of Mogen David wine. As for me, I had never taken a drink of any kind before, but I was curious and decided to join him.

He pulled the car over somewhere along the route home and brought out a single glass and a container filled with some sort of alcohol as though he had planned it all out. Soon I was intoxicated. With only a couple of sips, my senses became numb. It was as if I were someone else and somewhere

else, in a surreal world that was foreign to me. We began to kiss. That was nothing new; we had kissed before. Suddenly, it felt different, and before I knew what was happening, I found myself overpowered and underneath him. We were having sex.

When he was finished, he started up the car to drive me home. In the awkward silence of the drive, I kept saying to myself, “Just keep quiet. When I get home, I’ll be safe; it’ll all be okay.” I was not experienced with boys or men. I had had only one other boyfriend in my life before this young man. My first boyfriend and I had an honorable agreement that we would kiss and nothing more, so that we would never place ourselves in a position that would tempt us to compromise my virginity or our relationship. We dated for well over a year and never broke our promise to one another.

I thought this is what all men were like. It never occurred to me that other men would not be as honorable in protecting my reputation or their integrity. How could I have been so stupid? I knew I had done nothing wrong but I still felt dirty,

dark and despicable. How could I have been so naive?’ In an instant, a hatred of myself began to take hold that would last many years beyond this event.

As we arrived at my house, I ran from the car intoxicated, frightened, bewildered, and ashamed. Safe inside the sanctuary of my bedroom, I pulled the covers over my head and said to myself, ‘I’m home, I’m protected, I’m safe. What should I do? I know--I will never talk to him, see him, or go out with him again. I’ll pretend nothing happened. I’ll vow to never drink again and just go back to my normal every-day life.’

You see, in our home, the standard coping strategy was denial. If you believe it didn’t happen, it didn’t. We rewrote history, made up our own reality and believed it. We lived this strategy; it was woven into my family’s DNA. Therefore, using the coping skills of my childhood, I convinced myself it didn’t happen and I was still a virgin.

But despite my vow to myself to put it all behind me, this man had a hold on me; a mental and emotional pull that kept me tied to him even though I stopped seeing him, wouldn’t

return his calls and never went out with him again. It was choking. He was nowhere in sight and I still couldn't get away from him. He was always lurking in the shadows of my soul. The only way to get away from him was to bury him, along with the incident, as deep as I could in the farthest recesses of my heart. I did just that; I buried him as though he were dead and with him, myself.

My new pretend world was going along just fine until the doctor spoke the words, "you are pregnant." The room began to spin. My world shook violently. It was as though a 9.0 earthquake had devastated every part of me, and knocked out the power. Darkness flooded my heart and mind. "Traumatized" simply isn't a big enough word for my pain. Parts of this nightmare are still so vivid I can recall them with sure accuracy, while there are months or even years of time that have been erased from my memory as if they vanished into thin air.

My family went to church every Sunday, but we never really "knew" God. I have no recollection of whether my

parents prayed and asked God what to do, or even if we had a discussion of any kind about whether to keep the baby or put it up for adoption. My only conscious memory was traveling in the middle of the night to an out-of-state abortion clinic recommended by our pastor.

As soon as I walked in the door, my senses were in overload. It happened so fast, yet I knew I would never forget the overwhelming smell of disinfectant, the blinding bright lights over the table, and the words “it’s a boy.” My mind was clouded. I was paralyzed; I was numb.

On the way home, my parents treated me to lunch at our favorite chicken restaurant. Each bite was like a mile of distance we put between ourselves and the glaring horror of the events from the clinic. By dessert, we had so distanced ourselves from the “dark family secret” that finally it was locked deep within the recesses of our minds, never to be acknowledged again. Without a word being spoken, this, we had silently decided between us, would be our new reality. Once home, we contentedly continued our old lifestyle of “if

you pretend it is not so, it is not so.” As with the other things my family decided didn’t happen, the incident was never talked about again.

I did not know that secrets birth darkness, and darkness births torment. Torment becomes a private jail cell where our emotions and a part of one’s true self are locked away: no visitors allowed. The dark family secret was buried forever inside a seventeen-year-old girl, a junior in high school--with no one to talk to, no one who would understand, and no one who cared.

Thirteen years later, a married woman with a deeply buried secret stood in front of 9,000 people, live TV cameras rolling and her family staring from the stands in betrayal and disbelief. With the speaker’s words still ringing in my ears, I realized what I’d done. But I didn’t care. Yes, everyone there and everyone on the other side of the television cameras would know what we’d sworn would never be spoken of again. But I could not ignore that God stopped an entire service for me so He could heal my broken heart and set me

free. I wrestled to grasp: “Could God actually love me that much?” No one had ever loved me that much. I couldn’t refuse to respond. I decided in that moment this would be my day of reckoning, forgiveness, and deliverance. The minister moved slowly, patiently down the line to pray for each one of us who came forward. I knew in my heart there must have been many more like me who’d also had an abortion but were too scared or embarrassed to come forward. I have no idea if I would have come forward had I been sitting up in the stands when the invitation was given. I would have likely been trapped between my mother and freedom.

Was I the brave one? No. I was rescued. I was so grateful and relieved that God would offer me His rich forgiveness and healing. As the minister began, a breath-taking, sweet presence descended in the arena. The love of God was tangible, hot, and overwhelming. His peace swept over me like the billowing waves of the ocean. As the minister placed his hands on my face, the radiant heat of God’s healing power flowed into my body, and suddenly my feet went out from

under me. God penetrated the wall that had encased me in darkness, flooded my heart with light, and healed me with His marvelous mercy.

While on the floor, I heard the minister say to the woman who had been standing to my right that the abortion she received caused her to lose her reproductive organs, but God was going to do a creative miracle and give her back her missing body parts. Still lying on the floor, I thought as the minister spoke, “A creative miracle? Is that possible? I didn’t know God could do that!” I was consumed and simply saturated with His goodness. What deliverance! What compassion! What forgiveness!

As I made my way back to my seat, my mother and sister spoke not a word. My husband, Dick, hugged me and thanked God for my healing. What happened to me was not a secret to him. Before we married, I had shared the entire incident with him.

Several months after that night in the stadium, as I was praying one day, God asked me a question: “*Debbie, why are*



*you still carrying a record of this event in your heart? You have forgiven everyone but yourself. In Heaven, there is no record of what you've done. I forgave you, so you must now forgive yourself."*

You see, although I knew God had forgiven me for my naïve indiscretion and the abortion that followed, and I had forgiven the young man who took advantage of a simple girl's innocence, I didn't realize I had not yet forgiven myself. As I experienced the presence of the Holy Spirit there with me, I spoke to that seventeen-year-old girl within me and said, "Debbie, I forgive you." Just saying those words aloud with conviction released me. Peace and joy filled me again. What had been a horrible nightmare could truly now become a distant memory. The painful darkness, the secrets, the agony, and the pretending were really over. Never again would I have to hide the truth or from the truth. I was free! Glory be to God forever!

It was in revealing my innermost secret before God that I was able to be free. He knew my secret all along! I was the one who was hiding from the only one I could ask for help-- God!

I learned Satan is an equal-opportunity destroyer. Darkness is the place where he resides and wins. Protecting a secret just causes it to take root and grow until darkness envelopes the one who carries it. God was always there with His loving arms open wide to forgive me. My darkness didn't frighten Him. It wasn't bigger than He is or greater than He is! He was the only one who understood my brokenness and had the power to destroy it. As 1 John 1:9 states: "If we tell Him our sins, He is faithful and we can depend on him to forgive us our sins. He will make our lives clean from all sin." (NLV)<sup>1</sup>

The problem wasn't what was going on outside of me; it was the war that I was waging with myself inside of me. My family may have given me the tools and materials to build the wall, but I was the one who decided to use them to wall myself within my new fabricated reality. Whether to stay in darkness or come into the light was always my choice. When I was faced with the decision of doing what I was taught by my family, hiding in the darkness, or run to God, I ran to Him!



## CHAPTER 2: HOPE AGAINST HOPE



With my secret exposed, my past forgiven, and a renewed sense of hope in my spirit, Dick and I started to build our life together. At the beginning of our marriage, our careers were our focus. Everything else, including children, could wait. But in the back of my mind always lingered the thought: Would God give me another child? Would it be a boy? Could God trust me to be a mother again?

Dick is five years my senior. By the time I entered my early thirties, we decided to get serious about having children. After ten years of marriage, I had not yet conceived. Being practical and logical, our next decision was to consult fertility doctors to diagnose our problem and recommend a course of action. To our dismay, we faced alarming news. I was barren, and tests indicated Dick had a less than 1% chance of fathering a child. The doctor told us that “his sperm count

was too low, and they were not swimmers.” Disheartened and disappointed, we left the doctor’s office not knowing exactly what we would do next.

Despite the bad news, the doctor spoke one word I couldn’t shake. “BARREN” . . . The very sound of the word brought feelings of dryness, emptiness, and hopelessness. As the weight of the word sank in, I began to think more broadly about its meaning. It didn’t just apply to an inability to conceive a child, it could apply to any situation in which we experience darkness, emptiness or despair. . . robbed of the good things God has planned for us, convinced that barrenness is our unchangeable destiny. I thought about people who were living in poverty, those who were jobless, in debt and facing bankruptcy, those in loveless marriages, those fighting life-long addictions or diagnosed with terminal illnesses, those in prison or mental institutions, or those living under tyranny and corruption, with their lives in constant danger. In my mind, the list of those who could be called barren was endless.

I still considered myself a fairly new Christian at that time, but I knew that I did not want the label “barren” to be my destiny, and I did not want to give Satan the satisfaction of isolating me from God’s promises or what He had planned for me. I set out to explore every avenue to change this “destiny,” immersing myself in God’s Word.

At the advice of several specialists, Dick and I went through various medical procedures and processes, such as fertility medication and ovulation charts, but nothing happened, and eventually we had exhausted all our medical options.

At this time, Dick’s career took off. With each promotion came a move. Each time, I had to seek a new position, too. Finally, I chose not to seek a job yet again, but to focus on my dream. With time on my hands, I quickly became involved with a women’s Bible study that met every Thursday morning. I shared my story with the group, and they suggested I believe God for a miracle. They shared with me the story from the

Old Testament of Abraham and Sarah. They said, “Debbie, they became pregnant with Isaac in their old age.”

I took the women’s challenge and set out to find out more about Abraham and Sarah for myself. I had to know what they knew about God that I didn’t. I had to know their story.

I poured myself into God’s Word. To say that I devoured the Word would be an understatement. Many days, I would get so involved in studying the scriptures – sometimes for as long as nine hours at a time--I often lost track of time. Before I knew where the day had gone, Dick would come home from work only to find no dinner on the table and graciously take me out to eat. It was during this time that I discovered the deep love God had for me, and in return fell deeply in love with Him. I began to see Abraham and Sarah through their own eyes, experiencing the twists and turns of their journey as if it were my own. The people within the pages of the Bible became more than the characters taught in a children’s Sunday School story or a bland recount of some historical record. No! They were human just like me. They

had questions about their life just like me, and they were also hurting and seeking for answers. I discovered the Bible is a record of God's involvement with mankind. These were real people who had real encounters with God. For me, the Bible became a living, breathing thing, a record of the trials and victories of people who faced the challenges of everyday life--just like me. As a young woman who only knew God from what others had said about Him, I saw for myself what I'd had never seen before – the living God. He wasn't the distant, cold or untouchable person I thought Him to be. No! He was just the opposite!

The story I'm referring to starts in Genesis when God told Abram, which was his name at that time, to leave his country and receive a land that God would give him. God told him: "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing." (Genesis 12:2) Abram was seventy-five-years-old when he heard those words from God. Believing God, he was obedient and left his family, his father's home, and his

country. As Abram continued to follow and obey God, God blessed him so much that everything he had, including the people in his household, multiplied.

God spoke again to Abram: “Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield, your very great reward.” (Genesis 15:1) While Abram was grateful for his great wealth and possessions, the thing he wanted the most still eluded him --a son; someone to share all that God had blessed him with, someone who would carry on his name. For Abram, it was more than the desire to have a son, it was an expectation of his culture. A man wasn't a man until he had a son. God reminded Abram he would father a child. One night, God told Abram to go outside and count the stars in the sky. On a clear night in the East, they could number in the thousands as far as the eye could see. God promised, “So shall your offspring be.” (Genesis 15:4)

Every night as Abram watched the stars fill the sky, he must have wondered how God would make a man who couldn't seem to have one child into a great nation. As the years



passed, he and his wife, Sarai, had still not conceived a child. Sarai began to lose faith in God's promise. In desperation, she convinced Abram to sleep with Hagar, her maid, in hopes that Hagar would conceive a child and give Abram an heir.

Unless man's ideas are from God, they seldom end well, and Sarai's idea was no exception. Hagar became pregnant as planned, but all was not well. Hagar mercilessly taunted Sarai and looked down on her because Sarai herself could not conceive. When Sarai could no longer bear the ridicule, she began to severely mistreat Hagar, so much so that Hagar ran away. Now far away from the camp and Abram, an angel of the Lord appeared to Hagar and told her to return to her mistress, Sarai, and endure the treatment because the child she was carrying was a son whose name would be called Ishmael, and from him would come a great multitude. Thirteen years after Ishmael was born, the Lord God appeared to Abram to make a covenant with him. God said: "No longer will you be called Abram; your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of many nations." (Genesis 17:5) He went on to

say, “As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah.” (Genesis 17:15) Abraham laughed and said to himself, “Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?” God confirmed that, yes, that was exactly the case, and He told Abraham his son would be named Isaac. As Sarah overheard the news, she too laughed, because she knew she was well beyond child-bearing age.

How similar was our situation to that of Abraham and Sarah! Dick and I were each barren in our own way and unable to produce a child, just like the two of them. I was amazed to see that their story was our story! I pondered deep in my heart, “How did these two people receive healing and conceive Isaac?” I found my answer in Romans 4: The scripture said, “Abraham considered not his own body that was now dead . . . neither the deadness of Sarah’s womb.” Abraham hoped against hope that he would be the father of many nations. He had to believe God’s word to him even though all the natural facts loudly told him otherwise.

Romans 5:2 went on to say, “. . . he staggered not at the promise through unbelief---.” (NKJV)<sup>2</sup> Abraham refused to let his reasoning or his emotions override his belief in God’s promise that he would be a father.

And yet, I thought, Abraham was only human. He must have been bewildered when he considered their ages and their barrenness. Even so, he concluded that God’s promise was the final authority. He locked into this word from God without doubting, and in turn God’s word changed Abraham and Sarah’s barrenness!

As I continued my own spiritual journey, I faced the same temptations Sarah faced to change God’s plan. Like Abraham, waiting was challenging and at times agonizing. I realized it is not wrong to let your mind process the facts. We were created to ponder and reason; however, if our conclusion contradicts the Word of God, we must choose to side with God’s Word. It must be the final authority. As He did with Abraham, God continuously brought me confirmations of His promises, and His promises gave me strength to stand firm.

Abraham was strong in faith and gave glory to God. He had to praise and thank God for the baby before conception, keeping his eyes focused on the Word of God. He had to believe that God would do what He said He would do. Romans 4:17 says of Abraham: “who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did.” (NKJV)<sup>3</sup> He talked about his faith, called himself a father of nations and, while keeping his eyes on God’s promise, God healed his body. The promised son, Isaac, was born.

Glory to God! Finally, after all my searching, I knew what to believe, confess, and meditate as far as Dick was concerned, but what about me? I found the answer in Hebrews 11:11, “Through faith also Sarah received strength to conceive seed and was delivered of a child when she was past age because she judged him (God) faithful who had promised.” (NKJV)<sup>4</sup>

Suddenly, I saw it! I saw Abraham and Sarah sitting in their lawn chairs on the front porch, drinking sweet tea. The sun is setting against the sky. A refreshing breeze blows gently, cooling the heat from the day as night nears. Taking it all in,

Sarah looks over their land, servants, and cattle. Everywhere she looks, she sees the miracles God had performed. She remembers that God said He would not only bless Abraham but make him a blessing. And that He had. The vastness of it all takes her breath away; out of joy and gratitude I see her turn to Abraham and say, “My love! Look at what the Lord has done for us! He surely is faithful! He has fulfilled every promise He spoke to us.” In that moment, she counted God faithful! It was then I realized what scripture says of Him; “God is not a man that he should lie; neither the son of man that he should repent; hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall not make it good?” (Numbers 23:19 NKJV)<sup>5</sup> Joy filled my heart to think He would be the same God for me that He was back then. As a matter of fact, the scripture describes that He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He is ever faithful to keep His word! (Hebrews 3:8)

In the midst of so much joy, a sudden question flooded my mind: What gives me the right to believe I will have a

child? I knew that faith comes from the written word of God. “For faith comes from hearing the message. And the message heard is the word of Christ.” (Romans 10:17) But did I also have the right to believe for a baby? My next step was to find out what God’s word said about children.

In searching God’s word, I found the answer in Genesis 1:28 (NKJV)<sup>6</sup>: “And God blessed them [Adam and Eve] and God said unto them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the Earth. . . .’” Psalm 127:3 reveals: “Lo children are a heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is His reward . . . happy is the man who has a quiver of them.” (NKJV)<sup>7</sup> It was then I knew in my spirit that it was God’s will for Dick and me to have a child.

But how should I ask God for a son? My answer came from Hannah’s personal story. (I Samuel 1-2) Hannah too was barren, and yet she desired with all her heart to have a child. Scriptures tells us God had closed Hannah’s womb. Hannah was one of the two wives of Elkanah. His other wife was named Peninnah. (During the time and culture of the

Old Testament, it was not uncommon for a man to have more than one wife.) While Hannah was barren, Peninnah was just the opposite. She had given her husband many children. Year after year Peninnah mercilessly taunted Hannah, much like Hagar had taunted Sarah.

Even though Elkanah loved Hannah greatly, he did not understand her pain. In those days, to be a woman without child was devastating and dangerous. Because her barrenness was considered a curse, it could mean an eventual bill of divorce or abandonment in one's older age. Because of Elkanah's deep love for Hannah, the scriptures tell us he gave Hannah double what he provided to Peninnah to attempt to reassure her of his devotion. Although sure of her husband's love, still she wanted a child more than anything! One day, she went to the temple and poured out her heart to God in prayer. She cried to the Lord and asked Him to bless her with a son. She promised the Lord that if He honored her request, that she would dedicate her son to the work of Lord. The priest in the temple overheard her praying. He told her that

God had also heard her prayer. And He had! The scripture states “the Lord remembered Hannah and she gave birth to a son and she named him Samuel.” (1 Samuel 1:20)

I pondered all these things. I spent time meditating on God’s written word concerning Abraham, Sarah, and Hannah. Acts 10:34 states: “God is no respecter of persons.” (KJV)<sup>8</sup> What a joy to see that He does not show favoritism. I thought, “if that was true, I can believe also.” The scripture excited my faith so much I prayed, “God, if you will open my womb and give me a son, I will dedicate him back to you for your service!” It was then that I decided to name him Richard Matthew.

While in prayer one morning several months later, God spoke to me in a still small voice in my spirit. He said “*His name is Jeremy Matthew*” I started to cry. I realized God had Jeremy in His heart long before I did. Jeremy means “exalted by God,” and Matthew means “a gift from God”. From that moment I was pregnant . . . if only in my heart. This encounter with God was in 1983.



During the next year, God gave me two dreams and sent me a message confirming the words He had been speaking to me. In the first dream, I was standing in an open area. Before me was a toddler, a little boy about two years old. He was wearing a sailor suit and standing with his back to me. His hair was the color of mine and naturally curly. In the next scene of the dream, I went to get on an elevator. The door opened, and I pushed the button for the seventh floor. However, the elevator went out of control, and I erratically ascended to the fourteenth floor and dropped back down to the sixth floor. The elevator flew upward and downward repeatedly. It finally landed on the seventh floor. The door opened, and there stood a slimy, dirty, vile creature. I knew it was a demon. He was the one pushing the elevator buttons. I chased after him. There was no place for him to hide. The dream seemed to have no end. I just kept chasing him. At the time, I did not understand the significance of the dream. It would be ten years before I would find out its meaning.

In the second dream, I am sitting in a doctor's office. I see a chart with my name on it. The word "POSITIVE" is written on the outside of the chart. I knew that meant I would go to my obstetrician, and he would tell me that I was pregnant!

The last message God sent to me was a word of confirmation through a lady from our Bible Study. She had gone to an out-of-state Women's Aglow meeting. At the conference, she glanced at a picture on the wall. It was a picture of a stork carrying a baby in a blanket. God drew her attention to look at it more closely. The caption on the picture read "Jeremy." God told her to go back and tell me that I was going to have a son named Jeremy. Glory to God! When she shared it with me, I could hardly contain my excitement. Jeremy was on his way!

Many times, God will graciously send His children messages through dreams, visions or people. Often it is because there are rough waters ahead, and He doesn't want us to lose heart or give up. Often it is to let us know what

to do when the crisis comes. It is in those challenging times that we learn to reflect on what He has spoken to us, and this personal revelation is what enables us to stay strong. Our enemy, Satan, looks for ways to distract or deceive us so he can steal what we've been promised. Mark 4 tells us that Satan comes to steal God's word from out of our hearts. I did not know at this time that this walk would have so many twists and turns, nor did I know that it would take ten more years before I would hold Jeremy in my arms.

Dick and I hoped against hope that God would give us our son. Our place now was to keep believing, hold onto our faith, and wage a good war. And what a war it was. By the time we moved to the south in 1985, some friends decided to "come to our rescue." Through their contacts, they found two babies who were available for private adoption. We thanked them, but turned both adoptions down. For some families, adoption is the right avenue. However, for me to adopt either baby would have destroyed my faith. God spoke to me and

He confirmed that I would “carry” Jeremy. For me to do anything else would have been my “Ishmael.” (Genesis 16)

Our first glimpse of hope came from a routine doctor’s appointment scheduled for Dick. After running several tests, the doctor came bouncing into the examination room proclaiming loudly, “Dick, you could get anyone pregnant!” Dick shouted back, “Doc, I don’t want to get just any woman pregnant. I want to get Debbie pregnant!” With that news, we rejoiced. Little did we know that, within weeks, Dick would be on an overseas assignment in London--for a year--leaving me at home on fertility drugs.

Our next hurdle came when our doctor who suggested artificial insemination. We tried twice to conceive and failed both times. After years of trying and two failed procedures, Dick was almost at the end of his rope. Because he was no longer the problem, his focus turned to me-- the child bearer! One Saturday afternoon, out of the blue, he came into the kitchen where I was and in an angry and frustrated tone said, “If you are not pregnant within this year, we will adopt.”

I turned my face to the wall and bit my lower lip to keep from saying anything to him in return. He turned around and proceeded to go outside and mow the lawn. With tears streaming down my face, I whispered to God “I still believe your word.” A few minutes later, I was overwhelmed with peace, and Dick never brought up the subject of adoption again.





## CHAPTER 3: BUILD AN ARK



I was so convinced that God would give me a child that I prepared a nursery in anticipation of Jeremy's birth. God spoke to my heart and said, "Debbie, what you are doing is building an ark to the saving of your household." In order to understand this statement, one must understand the story of a man called Noah.

The earth was filled with evil beyond anything we can imagine! God saw what had become of mankind, and He regretted that He had made mankind. The Bible says in Genesis 6:13-14 that God spoke to Noah and said, "I'm going to put an end to all people for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth. So make yourself an ark . . ." In the midst of evil, God found one faithful man, Noah, who He considered a righteous man in his generation. It was said of Noah that he

walked with God. So great was His love for Noah that God did not want him or his household to perish.

God gave Noah specific instructions about the size, shape, and materials to use to build an ark. In Genesis 6:17, God continues, “I’m going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on the earth will perish.”

If I were Noah, I might have asked: “Lord, what is an ark?” and “what do floods of waters mean?” In Noah’s time, the earth was watered by a mist that came up from the ground at night. He didn’t know anything about rain, let alone a flood! Noah spent one hundred years building the ark and warning the people about what was coming. (Genesis 2)

If you lived in Noah’s time, you would have thought he was a crazy, delusional, and even self-righteous madman. Who among them had heard God’s voice? “Poor Noah, don’t you know that God doesn’t talk to us? And if He did, why would He pick you?” Yet Noah was convinced he heard the voice of God clearly. Noah believed what God said, and he



carried out God's instructions. At the end of one hundred years, Noah fulfilled his mission, and the ark was finished. The floods came, and just as God had promised, Noah's family was saved. (Genesis 6-10) How could Dick and I not relate to Noah? Year after year, move after move, looks, comments, laughter, ridicule and questions came our way while we built our own ark. Many people thought that Dick and I were crazy, and that I was definitely delusional. But I had studied the scriptures and seen over and over how God had blessed those who believed Him, and I was convinced that God would bless us with our own miracle.

I learned early in my journey with God that not everyone would understand. God gave Dick and me a strong desire to spend our time and resources on various benefits for children. It was not uncommon for me to give baby showers, to sit at the hospital waiting room with expectant parents, and give money to orphanages, schools, and local outreaches. Why? God knew we were building an ark and keeping our faith active.

Dick received many job promotions, and with each promotion, came a geographical transfer. I prepared three nurseries and packed three nurseries. Each time we moved to a new home, we prepared a room for Jeremy. Since receiving the open vision of Jeremy wearing a sailor's suit, I made Noah's Ark the nursery theme. I will never forget our first purchase: Jeff the Giraffe. He was six feet tall and stood in the center of the nursery. Jeff went with us each time we moved and was always a source of entertainment for the movers. Today, twenty-eight years later, Jeff still lives happily in our house, standing erect and enjoying a view of various 2x4's and carpet in the basement.

As we continued to build our ark, the VanderBear family came next. We built a boat that attached to the nursery wall where the bear family resided, sailor suits and all. On the television in the den, I placed two stuffed lions, a father and cub. I saw them at the store, and God told me to buy them. When I was putting them on the television, I discovered the tag on the father lion read "Richard". Years later, God

reminded me of Jacob and his ring streaked, speckled, and spotted cattle. (Genesis 30) As with my Richard, the lion, and his cub-- so it was with Jacob and his spotted fertile cattle. The story still makes me chuckle. To this day, one of the greatest memories Dick has is the day I brought home Richard and the cub, keeping Dick's faith alive.

Each Christmas we purchased presents for Jeremy. On Christmas morning, we opened the gifts and placed them in his nursery. It was not uncommon for us to purchase a book and inscribe the date. We would tell him how much we loved him and tell him how we couldn't wait to hold him in our arms. It seemed whenever I talked about our miracle baby, people who were barren would ask me to pray for them. I prayed, and God always answered by turning their barrenness into fruitfulness.

Yet in the midst of all this hope and faith, our troubles with fertilization continued. In 1990, after moving to Florida, our former next door neighbor called to ask us to contact the buyers of our previous home. The new homeowners had

had their own struggles with conception and until that time had not been able to get pregnant. My neighbor had shared with them how Dick and I were believing for a child too. After years of waiting, they were pregnant. When I called her she was frantic and crying and began to tell me this story. “Debbie, we moved into your old house. We just fell in love with it. We had always wanted children, and to this point had not conceived. Shortly after our move, I found out that I was pregnant and that we were having a boy. I proceeded to the room that I had chosen to be his nursery. To my shock, when I removed the light switch cover and saw the room’s previous paint color, I realized I had picked the same blue paint that you had chosen for your son’s room.”

She was crying and apologetic. Guilt had consumed her. Somehow, the enemy had convinced her she was carrying a child that was intended for us. Immediately, I told her: “Congratulations! God has heard your prayer and blessed you with your son. You have your son; God will bless us with ours.” She stopped crying and asked, “Are you sure?” I told

her I knew positively that the baby she had believed for was the baby God had given her. With that, she calmed down, and the call ended.

Satan had played one card too many . . . I burst out laughing at him and said to myself, “we built an ark!”





**CHAPTER 4: THE CRY OF FAITH**



Two years more passed, and it was now 1992 and we were still in Florida. We had been married for almost twenty years. I was forty, and Dick was forty-five. I started to re-think the Abraham/Sarah story. Oh my goodness. Somehow it had never resonated with me that Abraham was one hundred and Sarah was ninety years old when Isaac arrived!

I started back-pedaling. “God, help me. I don’t want to be ninety when I conceive Jeremy.” I was concerned. Surely God knew Sarah and I weren’t the same. Looking back on the situation, I’m sure that God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, (and the angels too) had a really good laugh about this one!

It was a late August day. The rainy season had passed, and it was hot! It was not unusual for me to take a walk in the afternoon and then fall into the swimming pool to cool off. I put on the praise tape in my Walkman and proceeded to

walk around my neighborhood. It was a small community; to walk the entire area took about forty-five minutes. On this day, the Holy Spirit moved me to claim every household in my neighborhood for the Kingdom of God. As I walked by each of the houses, I called each family by name and thanked God for revealing Himself to them and receiving them into His Kingdom.

After the walk, I was tired, hot, and sweaty. I didn't even bother to put my swimsuit on; I just fell into the pool, shorts and all. After cooling off, I changed clothes and decided to take a nap. I dozed off immediately into a deep, sound sleep. The next thing I knew, I was sitting up screaming, loudly declaring, "God, I will not go to heaven in the rapture without Jeremy Matthew!" Every cell in my body was trembling.

After hearing myself scream, I was immediately bombarded with condemning thoughts. "How dare you demand God to do anything? You are so ungrateful. How could you talk to the God of the Universe in that tone of voice, let alone demand anything of Him?" I scrambled to try to catch these



words with my hands. “God, please forgive me! Please don’t be offended, I’m so sorry!” I started to cry. In His sweet, gentle way, He comforted me and spoke to me in that still quiet voice, *“Debbie, that was a cry of faith. It came from your spirit.”*

Somehow within the realm of prayer, the intercession I had just finished for my neighborhood had carried over into my sleep. My spirit entered a place that bridged the gap between hell, earth, and heaven. This form of intercession has only happened to me one other time. All I know is that two weeks later I conceived Jeremy!





## CHAPTER 5: THE POSITIVE TEST



In late October 1992, I began feeling very tired and I wanted to sleep all of the time. I was confiding in a friend about my tiredness when she suggested I take a pregnancy test. To tell you I immediately jumped into my car and acted on her words would be a lie.

Several days went by before she called me again, early in the morning. This time she was very angry and insistent: “Do it now!” For the first time in all those years, I was afraid. I felt paralyzed. What if it said I was not pregnant? After a long struggle with myself, at 3:00 in the afternoon, I went to the drug store and purchased a pregnancy test. I followed the instructions and anxiously waited. IT WAS POSITIVE! I called my doctor’s office and he told me to come immediately, and they would work me into their schedule. I jumped into my car (holding the pregnancy test out the window), and

sped to his office. The nurse took blood and ran the normal pregnancy procedures. While I sat in the doctor's waiting room, women with appointments came and went, and the clock continued ticking. I waited, and waited, and I waited. Each second felt like a minute, each minute an hour, and each hour, an eternity.

At 5:00 PM, the nurse came to the waiting room and softly said, "Debbie, you are pregnant. The doctor wants to examine you." I stood up and asked the nurse, "Would you say that pregnant part again?" She responded, "Debbie, you are pregnant." I began to jump. "Would you say it one more time?" I asked. She replied in a loud, frustrated voice, "Debbie, you are pregnant!" I shouted, I cried, and I told everyone in the waiting room. "I'm pregnant; Jeremy is finally here!" No one but God knew why there was so much elation and joy that day. Looking back, the doctor, nurses, and patients must have thought I had gone completely insane.

The baby I had been carrying in my heart for nine years was now about to be apparent to everyone else. I frantically

tried to phone Dick, who was now living in Illinois. It was a common tradition for Dick to move ahead to the new location while I stayed behind to sell the house and eventually join him.

When I phoned his office, he was in a meeting and could not be interrupted. I told his secretary that it was an emergency. She proceeded to interrupt the “behind closed doors” session. When Dick heard that I was on the phone and it was an emergency, his first thought was to assume that I had either driven the car into our pool, had an accident, or set the house on fire. When he came onto the phone, the first words out of his mouth were, “Are you all right? What is wrong?”

I asked him, “Are you sitting down?” By this time, I was cool, calm, and collected. He took a minute, grabbed a chair, and waited for the bad news. “Dick, I am informing you today, confirmed by doctors’ tests, you are going to be a father. I’m pregnant.” There was silence. He asked, “Debbie, are you telling me that we are going to have a baby?” I

exclaimed “Yes!” He shouted and I cried. Somehow, at the end of our call, he collected himself and went calmly back into his meeting.

Later I found out that he was so excited that he told his boss: “Debbie is pregnant, and it only took me twenty years!” His boss laughed and said, “Well, it took you long enough. I’m glad you finally got it right! Congratulations!”

God does have a sense of humor. Jeremy was on his way. The test was POSITIVE.



## CHAPTER 6: THE GREAT DARKNESS



This move was uneventful. I was four and one-half months pregnant when I left the eighty-degree weather of Florida for the sleet and snow of Illinois. The movers unpacked the van in record snow. I sat in a chair in the entryway, wrapped in a blanket directing traffic.

Doctor's orders were no lifting, no unpacking, and no strenuous activity. The blood tests in Florida indicated that my body was not producing the hormone progesterone which is necessary to carry a full-term baby. Without this hormone, I could naturally abort. Needless to say, I was taking the recommended doses of progesterone, and all of us were on high alert.

Each night, Dick would come home from a long day's work at the office to unpack boxes and hang pictures. The nurse who worked for Dick knew we were in transition and

did not have a doctor. She quickly consulted the best fertility obstetrician. We had an appointment scheduled within the next week. (Thank you, Mary.) Our appointment was at a medical facility which was a forty-five minute drive from our home.

Because I was forty years old in our first pregnancy and was not naturally producing progesterone, our new doctor decided it was in our best interests to run all of the recommended tests. During our routine pre-natal visit, as he sat down to discuss all of the lab reports and findings, he was very alarmed.

The doctor proceeded to tell us that Jeremy's growth pattern was not within the normal guidelines. When he compared the measurements of Jeremy's skull to his femur bone, the measurements indicated his legs were not forming at the same rate as the rest of his body. He called it "lag time." He said rather emphatically, "If this condition does not improve quickly, you will deliver a child with dwarfism or other deformities."



We left his office with a pamphlet in hand and a recommendation for psychiatric counseling. From four months to delivery, we counted each of Jeremy's movements after every meal. The doctor said if he did not kick ten times within the first hour after each meal I ate, we were to call him immediately. The suspense after each meal was unbearable. We would watch the clock and count, holding our breaths between each one. The time in between seemed to be an eternity with no relief until Jeremy had moved the ten times. This went on meal after meal, day after day.

If that was not enough pressure, at this visit the doctor told us that we could "terminate the fetus at any time because of the medical findings." We did not react. We did not say a word to him or each other, and like a storm approaching on the horizon the great darkness moved in. SILENCE!

The streets were full of five o'clock commuters traveling on the icy roads. The sky was dark with low covering snow clouds. Because of the frigid temperature, the wind chilled you to the bones. Even so, the outside air seemed like a heat

wave compared to the cold, dark despair inside our hearts. The air was so thick between Dick and I we could barely breathe. Neither of us spoke. Shocked and devastated, we started our long forty-five minute drive back home.

With no music or news on the radio and just the sound of the windshield wiper blades scraping the snow-covered glass, thoughts came into my mind like a machine gun, one after the other. I was too numb to cry. My mind raced. “All this for what? We waited all of this time to conceive a deformed baby? The doctors must have given us someone else’s test by mistake. This isn’t possible, it’s just a bad dream.” Our hopes and dreams were dashed in one devastating blow. I said to myself, “I’ll call the doctor tomorrow. He has definitely made a mistake.” SILENCE.

I watched cars slowly pass as if time had stopped. I wondered if they were also facing alarming news, or if they were just traveling home with dinner waiting on the table. Looking down at my legs, I realized they were shaking. I glanced at Dick. He looked as if he had drifted a thousand

miles away, deep in thought as his white knuckles gripped the steering wheel.

About halfway home, I once again heard God's still small voice asking me a question: "*Debbie, what is more difficult for me-- to heal Dick's body, open your womb, or lengthen your baby's legs?*" As quick as a lightning bolt falls in the midst of a storm, God's word penetrated the darkness of my emotions. I gasped! Out loud I said: "This is nothing for you, God! Look at what you've already done!" I turned to Dick and said "It's going to be all right, Dick. God will finish this. Jeremy will be normal. We are going to see a miracle." Dick quietly agreed. With this little bit of light, we arrived home and went to bed.

I had experienced this great darkness before: emotions trapped in hopelessness, walled up behind silence and despair. The doctor's words were floating in the air, trying to suffocate and challenge everything we believed. "He's an educated man and someone who's in authority." Those were the facts but were they the truth? I just kept breathing... surviving. I knew I was in the fight of my life.

I had felt so lonely and isolated since we moved. The inclement weather and restrictions associated with my pregnancy had limited my ability to get out of the house and make new friends. We had no family members close by. We had virtually no support system. And here we were, once again, facing bad news and having no one to walk with us.

I knew I needed clarity. Early the next morning, I grabbed a cup of hot tea and moved quickly to my study. As I sat down, I quieted myself to ponder the words God had just spoken to me. I yielded to the Holy Spirit in prayer. (Thank God for my prayer language.) Praying calmed my frantic mind and my rampant emotions. I knew I was articulating the perfect will of God for me in this situation by praying in the spirit. God reminded me again that His written word had healed Dick's body and opened my womb. I realized I would just pray in the spirit until God guided me to my next step. After praying a while longer, I heard these words: "seed" and "grow."

I did not know where these two words were in the Bible, so I grabbed my *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*.<sup>9</sup> The words were found in Mark 4: 26-29 (KJV)<sup>10</sup>: “So is the Kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow up, he knows not how. For the Earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because harvest is come.”

This was my scripture! I started pulling out every Bible translation I could find so I could read Mark 4 in as many versions as possible. When I began to read Mark 4 in the Wuest New Testament Translation, it said: “In this matter, is the Kingdom of God, as if a man should throw seed upon the earth, and should be sleeping and rising night and day, and the seed should be spreading and **lengthening**; he knows not how.” With a loud voice I shouted “Woohoo!

That's it!" I needed Jeremy's legs to lengthen! Glory to God!  
Once again I had my answer!

That whole day I meditated and reread over and over every translation of the passage until my heart had peace. Then I prayed the prayer of petition, 1 John 5:14-15. It was a simple prayer: "God, I ask you to lengthen Jeremy's legs. I'm asking you to make him normal and whole. I also ask to carry him to full term. I thank you because I've prayed according to your will, I know you heard me, and you have granted me my request. Amen."

Because I believed God had answered my prayer, I did not ask for anyone to pray for me. And we never followed through with the psychiatric counseling that the doctor had recommended. We weren't crazy or confused. No counseling was needed for us to believe God for a miracle. No one knew our test results except for a couple of friends. We did not share my situation or the doctor's reports with our families. If I had told my mother, she would have tried to talk me out

of our decisions. I wanted agreement with those of like faith. I was now in my fifth month, and the pressure was on.

Sonograms were conducted at every prenatal visit. We watched Jeremy grow worse and worse with each new sonogram. As devastating as the news was, God continued to sustain us. The doctor kept advising us to abort our fetus. He thought we were crazy to continue the pregnancy and we needed counseling. We refused to consider any words other than the Word of God. Our doctor was Jewish and knew we were Christians. We kept telling him the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was our God too. We told him that Jeremy would be normal, and he would see a miracle with his own eyes.

By the end of the last trimester, our doctor wanted to see me every week. Each visit, the sonograms still reflected that Jeremy was getting worse, but Dick and I NEVER acknowledged the facts or anything other than the TRUTH that Jeremy was normal. We didn't even discuss the doctor's reports between ourselves at home. We never acknowledged or accepted what the doctor said as truth. Dick was truly

a Godsend at this point in time. His positive attitude and predisposition of hope empowered my faith. After work, he would hold me. He was focused, and his calmness gave me peace and comfort. He was persuaded that we would realize what God had promised us.

As I look back, I believe God must have dropped into our hearts the “gift of faith.” In our desire to stay positive and focused, neither of us watched any disturbing TV programs or movies. Both of us knew that we had to protect our faith at all costs. The enemy attacked our faith in every way possible. He wanted us to doubt and get discouraged, but we had heard from God. Everything we saw or heard from the doctors threatened our belief. The doctor constantly questioned not only our judgment but our sanity. I’m sure he wondered why we could not see that our only option was an abortion. At eight months, the doctor would say each week that he could “still make a phone call, and the nightmare would be over.” The thing he considered a nightmare was our long-awaited miracle.



When God dropped Mark 4 into my heart, he authoritatively spoke these words to me: *“Jeremy will grow, but you will not know how; and, at his birth, he will be whole. The time for Jeremy’s miracle will be at delivery.”* Then I said, “Ok, God, if you perform this miracle as he comes out of my womb, it is ok with me.” Then God emphatically spoke the next profound truths to me. He told me never to give Jeremy’s testimony without sharing these words. I promised God I would never talk about our journey without telling the whole story.

He continued *“Debbie, tell my children to quit harvesting at the blade. Men determine their own harvest, and if it is not their desired results, they blame me. Tell them I am always a FULL CORN IN THE EAR--GOD.”* He explained to me that it is easy to be deceived by Satan. We have a tendency to measure the effectiveness of our faith by what we see with our eyes. He said Satan will deceive us every time. Satan is the god of this world. It is possible to look at our circumstances and assume that, if they are not changing, our faith is not working and

we should give up. Lastly, he told me to tell everyone that  
*“I’m coming back soon!”*

If I had believed what my eyes saw on my sonograms and listened to my doctor’s words, I would have believed what the enemy wanted me to believe – that our faith didn’t work. Glory to God! He gave me a warning! It was then countdown time. Jeremy was soon to arrive.



## CHAPTER 7: MANIFESTED VICTORY



Jeremy's delivery date was set for June 7, 1993, at 7:00 AM. My doctor wanted to induce labor at eight and one-half months because of our medical situation and our long commute to the hospital. He did not want me to go into labor and not be able to get to the hospital in time.

We had been attending a small satellite church. The ladies of the church wanted to give me a baby shower and scheduled it for the Saturday before that Monday's inducement. This sweet gesture simply overwhelmed me. No one at the church personally knew me, but they wanted to be a blessing to me anyway. After they asked if they could do this for me, I put my head on the steering wheel of my car and cried. I knew it was God's way of encouraging me and showing me His love. During the shower, the ladies asked if they could pray for me. No one, not even Dick, knew that the devil had

been tormenting me over Jeremy's arrival date. Satan kept telling me that I would not see "full corn in the ear" as I had believed because God did not plan his birth time, man did. I immediately asked the women to pray and agree that I would go into labor on my own. After they prayed, I went home to rest. Twelve hours later, my labor pains started and continued throughout the day on Sunday.

At 3:00 AM Monday morning, Dick and I got dressed and headed to the hospital. It was show time. I listened to the song, "I Will Trust Thee" over and over all the way to the hospital. Upon arrival, I put on my gown, and Dick and I waited for our doctor to come talk to us. He informed us that the birth of Jeremy could take up to three days. I said to him, "No, I will have him in eight hours, preferably six." With that, he smiled, shook his head, and left the room. By now he was used to us not being or reacting as "normal" expectant parents. Thinking we had plenty of time before Jeremy's arrival, Dick decided to go down to the cafeteria for coffee and a donut.

When the nurse came in to start the I.V. at 6:00 AM, the labor pains increased. Dick happily sauntered into the room with his coffee and newspaper. I decided then and there he was dead meat! “How could he just leave me? Doesn’t he know I’m in the middle of a crisis here? What is he thinking? And where is the anesthesiologist?” Little did I know that the anesthesiologist was in the Emergency Room and would be detained for an hour. With Dick holding my hand, I told God that I had stretched my faith as far as I could. I cried out for Him to help me! Not long after my prayer, the anesthesiologist came and gave me my epidural. Then I was able to relax and drift off to sleep.

Around 10:00 AM, my water broke, and the nurse called my doctor. He checked my progress, smiled, and left the room. Soon after, around 11:45 AM, everyone panicked. Jeremy was crowning!

And then “Granny” – an elderly flower delivery woman who couldn’t have been more than eighty pounds soaking wet – burst into the room carrying two dozen roses. Dick

had arranged with the flower shop to deliver the roses to my room before I delivered Jeremy, and Granny took that promise to heart. Two orderlies immediately turned around, picked her up, and carried her out of the room! Her little determined feet were still moving in mid-air! About a minute later, she burst through the door again, shouting “I promised these roses would be here in time!”, and again, the orderlies carried her out! She broke through the third time, at which point Dick rescued her and brought the flowers into my room.

I looked up and saw my husband’s face; it was white as a sheet. Despite all our faith and confidence in the words God had spoken to us along this long and winding journey, a journey lasting more than ten years, the time of truth was upon us. Jeremy’s delivery was only moments away. The doctor asked, “Dick, are you okay?” Without waiting for a response, he said, “Move behind Debbie’s head, it will be all right.” By then I was too sedated to really know what was going on. Looking back perhaps that was best. Unlike Dick,

I was calm because the anesthesia disengaged my mind, and I focused all my energy on the miracle we'd waited so long to see. The clock read 11:59 AM when Jeremy Matthew came into the world. I delivered him just as I had said, in less than six hours! As a matter of fact, it was exactly five hours and fifty-nine minutes. I will never forget the moment I held him in my arms. He was perfect, long legs and all, from head to toe. Glory be to God forever!

The doctor lifted him from my arms to put him in his crib so they could clean him up and check his vitals. Our Jewish doctor kept running back and forth between Jeremy and me. He looked at me, and then he looked at Jeremy's legs. "He's normal! He's normal!" he exclaimed, his eyes wide with amazement. We saw him pause and scratch his head as if what he had seen wasn't truly real. Just as we said he would, he had witnessed a miracle with his own eyes.

The doctor still in a state of disbelief, Jeremy's pediatrician came into the room. Picking up his chart he began to question his colleague. "Why do we have all these notations on this

chart about ‘dwarfism’? ‘This child is normal!’” And with that, the final confirmation of the truth was official. Jeremy was, in fact, a miracle.

We were filled with elation and wonder, but for me the moment also felt surreal and almost anticlimactic. Having been married for twenty years and having Jeremy in my heart for ten of those years, why wasn’t I reacting like everyone else? I asked God: “What is wrong with me? I should be bouncing off the walls.” He replied, “Debbie, Jeremy was always real to you. You carried a perfectly formed, healthy baby boy in your heart. It is the others who can now see what you’ve seen all along.” I sighed in relief and let the struggle of the long, erratic journey go like a leaf to the wind. I began to cry and the peace of God filled our room. Holding Jeremy in my arms, crying is all I could do; tears of joy streamed down my face. I was holding the promise of the written Word of God in my arms, I knew I would never be the same. God’s truth and love had changed my life forever. All I could say was, “Thank you, thank you God.” Dick and I just held Jeremy,



kissed him, and rejoiced in Lord for what He'd done for us in the quiet of our hospital room. I didn't remember it at the time of Jeremy's birth, but many years later I remembered the dream I had had of a perfectly normal toddler in a sailor suit. That toddler was Jeremy. And I remembered the disturbing dream of riding up and down an elevator that was out of control when I was trying to get to the seventh floor. Our journey had been a violent, unpredictable ride with Satan trying to control that elevator, but despite all his attempts to get us to change our minds, God protected me and brought the journey to a safe and perfect completion. The number seven is mentioned numerous times in the Bible as the sign of God's completion. God had brought me safely to the seventh floor – the moment where His Word would not only be complete but with irrefutable evidence.<sup>11</sup>

I often wonder how our experience might have been different if we had been surrounded by family and friends during my pregnancy and at the time of Jeremy's birth. It

was the absence of family and friends that made us rely completely on God. He became our whole world.

It has been many years since that moment I held His word in my arms yet I am still overwhelmed by God's love, healing, grace, wisdom, hope, faith, strength, and miracle-working power. GOD ALONE DESERVES THE GLORY! It was a Savior I accepted as a teenager who became a Father, who loved and cared for me in patience and understanding enabling me to realize my "full corn in the ear." A seventeen-year old girl with a dark secret grew up to become a woman who carried a very different secret. This one she would not be ashamed to share with the world. She would shout it from the mountain top and to the ends of the earth. This is my story.



**CHAPTER 8: FINAL CALL**



For a long time, I thought the birth of our son was the end of the story. Our long, arduous journey had ended in the miracle of a lifetime. It wasn't until many years later that I would realize it was a story inside a much bigger story.

In May 2012, with Jeremy in college, Dick and I were traveling home to our home in South Carolina. It was around 1:00 AM, and we were exhausted from our five-hour road trip. During our visit, I had written most of the book except for the last two chapters. During our trip home, Dick and I took a stroll down memory lane. We had not realized the magnitude of God's love and faithfulness until we saw our story on paper. We laughed! We cried! We rejoiced! We pulled into our driveway and hurried to catch as much sleep as possible before we had to face a full day of work the next morning. As I lay my head on my pillow, I heard God's still

small voice inside my spirit say, “*Debbie, this is not the end of the story.*”

I contemplated His words, and drifted off to sleep. Little did I know that in the next few hours I would receive another dream. This dream dramatically altered my thinking, shifted my focus, and significantly changed my life.

In the dream the hour was midnight, and I was standing in my back yard gazing up at the stars when, suddenly, there was an unexpected explosion. It was a large burst of light like fireworks, the kind you might see at Disney World--but it was about one thousand times larger. It was so expansive it filled the skies. It was amazing, seeming to come from deep in the universe far beyond our solar system. I knew that the news reporters would be shocked and baffled as they tried to identify the origin and reason for this amazing phenomenon. Suddenly I could hear their chattering voices talking one over the other like static from a radio. They talked wildly as they asked themselves questions, discussed opinions, and debated the answers all to no conclusion. Then out of my mouth I

shouted--“This is the sign and wonder promised, announcing these are the last days and the end of time according to Bible scripture!!”

As the dream moved on to its next scene I saw the last chapter of the book, as if I held the book in my hands and flipped to the page. In bold letters it exclaimed, “TELL THEM I’M COMING SOON!”

I woke up shaken by the impact of the dream. God reminded me of the visitation I had had in February 1993, when He gave me the scripture from Mark 4: 26-29. This was the scripture that He spoke to me regarding Jeremy’s birth, and the assurance that he would be normal. At the end of the visitation, He reminded me of the last thing He had said to me which was: “Tell them I’m coming soon.” At that time, my attention was so focused on the circumstances surrounding Jeremy’s birth that I had forgotten the words that I had written. Twenty years had gone by. He had hidden this from me until now and at this hour? “Why, I wondered?” God spoke to my heart that this is the next event

for mankind – His Son’s return. He shared that though we may not know the time, according to scripture, we will know the season.

According to Mark 13:32, the scripture tells us, “But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, only the Father. Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come.”

No one except God himself knows the day or hour when Christ will return, yet the season of His return will be made known to us through various signs and prophecies described in the Bible. We cannot deny the signs that indicate He is coming soon. Everything described in the scripture is unfolding in front of our eyes. We are hearing heresies in the church; dealing with a compromised Bible and the love of many believers is growing cold. We are seeing the collapse of world economies, hearing constant rumors of war, experiencing constant upheavals in weather patterns. These are not to be feared. They are the labor pains of Christ’s eminent return. Romans 8:22 records: “We know that the

whole creation has been groaning as the pains of child birth right up to the present time.” Just as the labor pains I had in the natural signaled an impending event, on God’s calendar, these labor pains mark the season of the falling away of the church and the return of Jesus Christ to Earth.

I could see clearly now how the process He took me through was a story within the story. The importance of my story, combined with current events and my dreams, correlated my labor pains with the labor pains of the world today. Was the walk I had with God in order to receive Jeremy just the beginning of a greater purpose? Was He asking me to receive His love again, believe His prophecies and build another nursery--this time within my heart? Was He creating a longing within me to begin looking for His return just as I longed for Jeremy those many years ago? The answer was YES, YES, YES!! So, the real story doesn’t end for all of us until His return! My question is, are you ready?

**TELL THEM I’M COMING SOON!**







**CHAPTER 9: THE LIGHT HAS COME**



Barrenness has many forms and faces. You may be single and desire to be married. You may have lost a position or be laid off work and need a job to provide for yourself and your family. You may be living in poverty or over your head in debt with no apparent way out. You may be facing bankruptcy or the failure of a business. Maybe your barrenness is a loveless marriage where you go through the motions day after day in disappointment and frustration. It may be a life-long addiction, or a loved one who is struggling with mental torment or emotional instability. You may have a rebellious child who cannot seem to find her way. You may be in legal trouble or even sitting in prison. It may be sickness or facing the diagnosis of a terminal disease. You may have lost someone you love or have been rejected by a mother or father. You may be living with abuse, under tyranny or corruption,

with your life in constant danger. Perhaps your barrenness is none of these things. Perhaps you are the person who, to the world, seems to “have everything”, but you’re still unhappy and have no lasting peace; you know something is missing.

Regardless of the name of your barrenness, all have pain and the potential for healing in common. All barrenness is a form of darkness, despair, and emptiness. It does everything it can to keep God’s personal light from reaching you, because it is His light that will drive out the darkness. Barrenness has a despicable nature that tries to convince you that it is your lot in life- your unchangeable destiny. It plays hide and seek with hope, smothers freedom, and tries to convince you that whatever has happened is all your fault. It isolates you in frustration and despair, whispering that God’s promises are for others, but not for you. Its ugly lies try to hide your God-given identity. Barrenness desires to impose its own names on you and your future instead of the one God planned for you- names like poor, hopeless, shameful, sick, diseased, spoiled,

unforgivable, doomed, bankrupt, deformed, imprisoned, and failure. Do you hear those words?

Do not despair! Ephesians 5:14 says, “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light.” (KJV)<sup>10</sup> Despite the name of your present barrenness, there is good news! Isaiah 60:2 declares, “The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light. They dwell in the land of the shadow of death, but upon them hath the light shined.” John 1:4 says, “In him [Jesus] was light and the life was the light of men.” Through His Word and the sacrifice of His son the Lord Jesus Christ, He has shown us His tender mercy and grace.

Along with light, the very nature of God is love. He is the personification of love; it’s what makes God who He is. Every cell of His being radiates love. You cannot work for or strive to earn His love; it is received as a free gift (Ephesians 2:8). He does not love you based on your “do”; He loves you based on your “who”. Do you know who you are? You are the one He created, loved and chose before the beginning

of time. He loves you so much He sent His only son, Jesus, to rescue you!

Believing in God's love releases a knowing inside you, so with every fiber of your being you can say, "He loves me! He is crazy in love with me! I am the apple of his eye! I am safely held in the palm of His hand. I am the first thing He thinks about in the morning and all throughout the day I am constantly on His mind. My Father is passionately and eternally head over heels in love with me!"

Regardless of where you are today, inside your DNA is your true, authentic God-given destiny. You were created to walk, commune, and fellowship with God, your personal Creator, Savior, and Father. James 1:17 says: "Every good and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning." Light comes to us when the truth of His word penetrates our personal darkness tearing down the walls and destroying the barrenness. In a moment, the light of His love can change your circumstances.

This faithful God of light and love is also a giver. He is not one who withholds any good thing from you. (Psalms 84:11) He loves to lavish gifts and blessings on His children! (Hebrews 11:6) The Bible calls Him a “rewarder,” which means as you come closer to Him and walk with Him, there is an abundance of benefits or a payday awaiting you! Scripture tells us all of the good things He has planned for us and for our future. By believing that he is good, you will not only see your life in a different light, but you will also see the goodness of God in the land of the living, right here and now! (Psalms 27:13) Glory to God! That means the rewards He has for you are not somewhere out of reach or out in the distant future. He will daily lavish us with good things the scripture tells us.

When you allow Him to be your greatest focus, then you are in position to receive from Him, in unending measure, His great love and wisdom. Revelation 19:11 calls Him the “Faithful and True One.” His precious promises to us are “yes” and “amen.” You can trust Him. He is everything His

Word says He is, and He will do everything the Word says  
He will do!

God alone can turn your present barrenness into hope and life. As you place your belief and trust in Him, faith will arise in you as easily as breathing; it is the natural byproduct of believing in Him, the work of the cross and the truth of His Word. There is nothing higher than the Holy Scripture. The Bible, God's Word, is the only truth. God is passionate about giving you a new life and a new start.

The path to knowing Him is lovingly simple. It begins by believing that Jesus was real and that He was the Son of God who came to earth to die on the cross and pay the ransom for our sin- the darkness and barrenness that caused our separation, sickness, and pain. Only the grace of God through Jesus can bring new life to our empty, barren places. The Scripture calls it "being born again." He is the only one with the power to erase your past as if it never happened, as He did for me.

If you are living within the grip of barrenness, as I once was, run to Him! Don't waste another minute believing the lies of the enemy; run to Him now and be made whole! Ask Him into your heart today. If you are willing to do so, the Prayer of Salvation and the Prayer to receive the Holy Spirit are located in the back of the book.

If you decide to ask Him into your heart today, get ready for the greatest journey of your life! And, one day, I hope to read about your story of how "With God, nothing is impossible."





## **Dear Friend,**

At the time of finalizing this book, Jeremy is now twenty-one years old. I am happy to report that he is attending Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee, where he is majoring in Audio Engineering Technology. He is on his own journey with God and fulfilling his God-given destiny. As he follows his dreams, he is actively serving in ministry at CrossLife Community Church in Hendersonville, Tennessee, and works for numerous bands and studios. He also enjoys expressing himself in music through bass, organ, and piano.

Dick and I are still happily married and enjoy our life high atop a mountain in South Carolina. Through World-Wide Harvest Ministries, our heart is to reach the nations with the love of the Lord Jesus Christ.



Jeremy's High School  
Graduation 2011



## **APPENDIX A**

### Prayer of Salvation

Dear Lord Jesus,

Please come into my heart and forgive me of my sins. I want to receive you as my personal Lord and Savior. I want to be born again.

I receive you as my Lord and Savior. I receive God as my Father.

Thank you for saving me.

Welcome to the family of God! I would love to hear about your decision for Christ and would love to send you a packet to help you get started living a victorious life as a child of God.

World-wide Harvest Ministry P.O. box 314, Travelers Rest.  
South Carolina, 29690-0314



## **APPENDIX B**

### Baptism of the Holy Spirit

If you have never been baptized in the Holy Spirit, it is simple to receive this precious gift. All you have to do is just ask in faith for the Lord to fill you with the Holy Spirit and give you the gift of speaking in tongues.

When you do this, the precious Holy Spirit will come upon you and you will sense His presence. He will immediately begin to create a prayer language inside your spirit. When He does, your tongue and mouth will begin shaping words that He has created inside.

Now pray this prayer from your heart:

“Heavenly Father,

Your word says that you are faithful to give the Holy Spirit to those who ask You. (Luke 11:13).

So in the Name of Jesus, I ask you to please fill me with the Holy Spirit. I thank you for giving me a new language. I believe I receive it now. Amen

After you have prayed this prayer, don't speak in your native language any longer. Yield yourself to the Presence of the Holy Spirit, and begin to speak out those words that you don't understand with your mind.

It may sound a little like baby talk in the beginning. But as you continue to yield yourself to speaking the words the Holy Spirit gives you, you will begin to pull more of a flow out of your spirit. Soon you will be speaking fluently in your new, spiritual language.”<sup>12</sup>

## NOTES

- 1 This excerpt is from the New Life Version.
- 2 This excerpt is from the New King James Version.
- 3 This excerpt is from the New King James Version.
- 4 This excerpt is from the New King James Version.
- 5 This excerpt is from the New King James Version.
- 6 This excerpt is from the New King James Version.
- 7 This excerpt is from the New King James Version.
- 8 This excerpt is from the King James Version.
- 9 *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* is a Greek and Hebrew dictionary written by James Strong.
- 10 This excerpt is from the King James Version
- 11 *A Time to Advance* by Chuck Pierce. Page 298: "All sevens are important: completeness, fulfillment"
12. *Excerpt from Dave Roberson's book The Walk of the Spirit - The Walk of Power, used with written permission from the author."*











