

A Great Miracle Happened Here (“Here”, is my heart)

By David Brickner, Executive Director—Jews For Jesus

I was on an airplane feeling frustrated—maybe you can relate, given the “pleasantries” of today’s air travel. Plus, you know how life sometimes kind of grinds you down and you lose your sense of joy and purpose? It was that kind of day feeling somewhat lonely and peculiarly sad, I dug into *Miracles*, a book by Eric Metaxas. I’d been enjoying it earlier, but had put it down when some of the miracles recounted struck me as a bit flimsy, or at least very subjective.

This time though, a story grabbed my attention. A young woman named Elisa was riding her bike on Church Street in Skokie, Illinois, when she was nearly killed by a semi-truck. Her life was spared in a clearly supernatural way; she heard a voice say she would not die, felt herself being picked up by an unseen force, was maneuvered around the truck and continued on her way unscathed. I led the Jews for Jesus branch in Skokie for many years and knew just where that incident had occurred. I realized how easily I might have dismissed that story as flimsy, or at least very subjective, as I had with some of the other stories in the book. Except for one thing. Something very similar happened to me almost forty years ago.

I was a freshman at the Boston University School of Music and had recently given my heart to the Lord. I was considering further involvement in Jews for Jesus, possibly even moving in with the Boston branch leader and his wife to be disciple. Meanwhile, I lived in Newton—which required me to take a subway from downtown Boston to a bus that stopped in Newton, then walk a half-mile to uphill to the house.

One day I was particularly tired as the bus pulled up to my stop. As I moved toward the front exit I noticed the light was red. I figured if I hurried, I could get across the four-lane road before the light changed. I scurried down the steps and turned left in front of the bus to cross the busy street. What I didn’t realize was how quickly the light was changing, so that by the time I was passing in front of the bus the light had turned green. It was rush hour. As I moved past the bus I barely had time to see the car coming from the next lane as it struck me full force in the left hip, going perhaps as much as 35 miles an hour. Every-thing seemed to slow down. I remember reacting to the speeding car by putting my left hand onto the hood. I felt myself vaulting through the air, almost like a somersault, though all throughout I maintained ahold of my trumpet case with my right hand. I flew across the additional two lanes of traffic and landed on my feet, clear on the other side of that four-lane road. As my feet hit the dirt side of the road I fell to my knees and came to a stop.

Stunned but unhurt, I stood up and looked around. All traffic had stopped. People were getting out of their cars to run to my aid and the bus driver was staring in horror from his seat inside the bus. “I’m okay,” I yelled. “I’m ok.” People shook their heads in disbelief and slowly climbed back into their cars to continue on their way. I began the trudge uphill toward my attic bedroom. It took me a few minutes to realize the significance of what had just happened. I had no bruises, no scrapes. The knees of my pants showed no scuffing from the fall. This was physically impossible—a true miracle!

If God used angels to vault me across those lanes of traffic I didn’t know it; I never saw them. I only knew God had spared my life for some purpose. Elisa explained her experience saying, “*God not only miraculously spared me from terrible injury or worse, but also communicated to a confuse and discouraged nineteen-year-old, the powerful, life-giving truth that her life matters to Him.*” I resonate with that. My experience has reminded me of His love throughout some pretty dark seasons, and reminded me yet again on that sad day on the plane when I “happened” to read a similar story from someone else. Does that seem a bit subjective to you? I completely understand if it does.

God sometimes performs miracles that aren’t meant for a big audience. He loves us so very much, He doesn’t mind giving a private viewing of His great love for the benefit of just a few, or even one person. But even the big miracles are meant to impact not only the big, but also small, audiences.

The parting of the Red Sea was a big miracle intended for an entire nation, yet tradition tells the Jewish people, "Each one of us journeyed out of Egypt." We are meant to take such miracles personally as well as corporately.

An even greater miracle happened 2,000 years ago; the very Son of God was born in an animal stable! Yeshua (Jesus) came to have a perfect life among us, then die and rise again to deliver us from sin and death. This was a miracle intended for a big audience! Yet it remains a miracle that must be embraced by a crowd of one.

It's been said, "*If you were the only person on this earth, Yeshua still would have been born to die and rise again so that you could know the love and forgiveness of our heavenly Father.*" That great miracle happened, not just for large audiences, but because God loves you and me as individuals. The birth of His eternal Son is the most powerful demonstration of that great love, and He wants us to know the wonder of it firsthand. God's love can truly sustain us through the most ordinary of difficult days, as well as through the darkest nights.

Do you know people who need God's miraculous love right now? What will you say of this miracle so that others might know His love?

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Hanukkah is the Feast of Dedication that commemorates an against-all-odds victory of a small band of Israelites against a Syrian army. This took place in between the time of the Old and New Testament events.