

Small Miracles

Bethsaida Chapter #22 - Bountiful

May 13, 2008

There are moments in life when we see or hear something that just takes our breath away. It could be the face of a sleeping child, or the melody of a song that tugs at our heart. These moments - that flicker and tantalize for an instant - and then vanish in a flash - remind us that there is a Divine influencing our lives.

Every blade of grass, every unfolding leaf, every flower, every planet and sun bear the imprint of a Supreme being. Now a days with so many of us living in or near big cities, and living such hectic lives, I sometimes feel we have lost our connection to the grandeur and beauty of the very earth that sustains us. We don't take the time to stop and smell the roses. Sometimes, returning home in the evening, obscured by skyscrapers and the haze of pollution, we can barely see the stars, let alone sense a Divine presence.

We can look in our communities and see people whose lives are filled with despair, and through our membership, we have the opportunity to help one another. In a bigger way than we may realize, this is one way we can reconnect to our very selves - to the Divine within us.

Beyond nature, there are other teachers - other experiences that can help us on our journey. Organizations like Eastern Star offer us a guide, a light, instruction, encouragement, growth.

The word 'coincidence' has been defined as 'a fluke, chance, luck, something random that defies our sense of the reasonable'. Do you believe that coincidences are much more than simple accidents or quirks of fate? Some times coincidences are blessings. Sometimes they are awe inspiring.

Kelly would always call home to let Mom know we were having an 'awe inspiring' sunset. On one of those Divine evenings - Mom opened the front room curtains - and said "Holy! Holy! Holy!" The next day when we were at the library with the boys, Mom picked up a book of poetry by William Blake. In the small bio, it recounted how the poet would watch the sunrise and greet the sun by shouting: "Holy! Holy! Holy!" We laughed at the coincidence, and Mom checked out the book.

On the cruise the evening we left Raiatea, we were standing on the balcony watching the sunset - it was awe inspiring. On the deck below, I heard a man say "Holy! Holy! Holy!" - He didn't shout it like poet William Blake - and, well - actually he said "Holy Cow! Holy Cow!"

Thousands of years ago, God revealed himself by performing miracles on a grand scale. Today, we don't have the parting of the seas, the stopping of the sun, or people turning into pillars of salt or raising from the dead. Instead, we have coincidences - smaller, more personal, every day miracles. Is it mere coincidence that on 9/11 certain people chose not to go in to work - or were running late for work in the twin towers? Is it mere coincidence that someone chose to take a different flight at the last minute - is it mere coincidence that a Utah Eastern Star member was supposed to be at the Pentagon on 9/11 and had a sudden change of plans; is it mere coincidence for someone to survive a gas explosion that levels their home? Was it mere coincidence when that box of kittens was tossed over the fence into MY yard? Is it mere coincidence when a baby is born - five fingers, five toes - or are they miracles - expressions of

God's handiwork?

Mom grew up in the little - very little - town of The Pas, Manitoba. There were a few wealthy families in town, and Mom did housekeeping for one of those families. They had two daughters. The oldest daughter was in the same school as Mom. They were acquaintances, not friends. The youngest daughter had Down's Syndrome and didn't attend school. Mom always made extra time for the young girl - to read to her, play with her, take her for a walk. Fast forward to 1962. Mom has re-married, and is now Mrs. O'Connor. Mom and Frank are looking for a house to buy in Riverside, and settle on a house on Jane Street - but it's priced a little out of their range. They put in a bid, and the agent tells them that the owner lives out of country, but he'll get a quick response. Mom and Frank sign the papers and put down a deposit. When Mom signs the papers - for some unexplained reason - she signs them Dolores Stabback Wilson O'Connor - her maiden name Stabback - my dad's name Wilson. They hear nothing for two weeks, and then the agent finally makes an appointment to meet with them. Their bid has been accepted. The agent first passes Mom a sealed envelope - a letter from the owner,

It starts "Dear Dolores - It's a small world. How nice to be able to sell the house to someone from home - The Pas. I appreciate your bid; however, there are some repairs to be done, and with five kids, I'm certain you will have changes to make in the bath and bedrooms. I so appreciate the love you showed by little sister - she talked about you and missed you when you and Roy married and moved away. I hope you like the new proposal - enjoy the home." Signed - you guessed it.

Coincidence - God's handiwork???

I'd like to share this short story told to me by a military wife whose young son was having trouble adjusting to a new school.

A primary school teacher who didn't normally go out on the playground noticed his new pupil standing by himself looking dejected. Although he needed to get back in to the class room for some last minute preparation he decided to stop and speak to the boy.

"Jim, why is today the best day of your life?"

Jim looked puzzled. "I don't know, sir. It doesn't feel like it."

"Ah, but I'm right, Jim. Think about it. You have never been taller than you are today. You have never been stronger than you are today. You have never been wiser than you are today. So congratulations to you!"

Jim grinned. As he ran off to join his class mates, he suddenly felt taller and stronger and wiser, and that felt good.

Jim returned home that evening, happy for the first time in three long weeks.

Was it just a mere coincidence that the teacher walked outside? When will a fluke chance, a random event, put you in the middle of an opportunity to be part of a small miracle?

Maybe we should ask ourselves again; are coincidences much more than simple acts or quirks of fate? Sometimes they can inspire us to grow, to change, to live life more fully.

In our own lives, when we least expect it, we are often touched and blessed by coincidence - or is it God's handiwork????

I'd like to leave you tonight with this thought:

“Flower Drum Song” might not be the best known of the Rogers and Hammerstein musicals, but it does contain one of my favorite songs. In “A Hundred Million Miracles” the cast recount just a few of the amazing things that happen every day, from the changing of the weather, the hatching of an egg, to the fact that, even after all these millions of years, the sun still rises in the morning.

Now a hundred million small miracles might be a bit much to expect you to collect, even on a lovely sunny day, but five or six shouldn't be too hard to find. And you'll notice, I'm sure, that each Small Miracle you spot will make your load lighter and your mood brighter.