

# Murder, Miracles

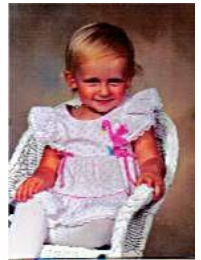
“Cling to The Lord,  
for He is your life.” Deuteronomy 30:20

## What A Trip

This story is just typed without worrying about how it sounds. It's not about punctuation or even about people. It's about the goodness and greatness of God.

Each part is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Altogether, *miracles*.

My daughter, Chloe, was two years four months old and we lived in a house in Merced. A large, lovely home with three porches: front, back, and side. An historic landmark on Merced's 'points of interest' map. Add isinglass, chandeliers and two huge fireplaces ~ the two of us cuddled closely together because the house outnumbered us.



On the classic 'it was a dark and stormy night' we were huddled in the living room. All the shutters were shut, three layers of drapes drawn, and we were quietly reading just before going to bed. It was nearly seven o'clock.

Loud knocking at the side porch entry door was both alarming and annoying. *Who on earth?*

It was Sis. *What on earth?*

We'd met Sis only twice before. In her late 70's, she was a church friend of our out-of-state landlady. And Sis was colorful! She laughed hysterically more than anyone else I know and everything shook, she *and* her surroundings. She had three cascading tummies, one on top the other. She was wild-eyed most of the time, effusive, genuine, warm, and as it turned out, abused all her life.

Pretending I'd been expecting her, I welcomed her to come in, sit down and turned on the lights. And some heat. Just a bit.

Being her typical happy, carnival self, Sis volleyed the first few lines of the script: how are you how have you been I'm so glad!

Just as abruptly as her knocking, it came out:

"My son's going on trial for murder in Los Angeles next week, will you please go with me?"

I didn't even know she had a son. I knew nothing at all about Sis beyond Baptist.

"Oh, Sis!"

I don't remember her 10-second summary of the situation, but I knew she had to be there. Her mothers' heart would break if she weren't there and she couldn't get there.

I don't remember what consoling noises I made as I thought "I'd never do that in a million years".

I *do* remember saying sweetly "Well, let me pray about it, and see what the Lord's will is." The canned Christian answer to get out of what God wants from us.

I'll never forget what *He* said:

"YOU LITTLE FRAUD! YOU *KNOW* MY WILL. YOUR *SISTER*, WHO COMES IN *MY* NAME, ASKS YOU TO HELP WITH AN UNBEARABLE BURDEN, AND YOU'RE SITTING THERE SAYING 'well, let me –'

*NO, LET ME!"*



<http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/data2/californiastatecases/b093741.pdf>

"Yes. Sis. We'll go with you! *We sure will.* How soon do we leave? You want to be there on Monday?"

"No. We drive Monday, we're in court on Tuesday. We'll stay at my son's house. It's been empty since...it happened. I don't want to spend money on a motel, we can stay there. There's no furniture, everything's been sold to pay for the attorney. And the lights and the water have been turned off, so we'll have to remember that. But we'll have it all to ourselves and we can sleep on the floor.

Greaaaaaaaat. I told you Sis was colorful.

I made arrangements to be out of town for "awhile" and got out our camping gear. Who knew how many months a murder trial would last?

The next day I cooked all the food that we had and then put the food in gallon baggies and froze them flat to use as ice for the ice box: breakfast #1, lunch #1, dinner #1, breakfast #2, lunch #2 . . . as the top one thawed out, we ate it. Counting the meals, we had enough for three persons for two weeks. Pancakes, scrambled eggs, home fries, sandwich makings, stews, baked chicken, lentils with vegetables, homemade buttermilk biscuits, steamed vegetables, smashed potatoes with gravy, cupcakes . . .

I found a 5-gallon bucket in the garage to take along in lieu of a loo. And some very thick-mil plastic garbage bags for liners. Sleeping bags, Coleman lanterns and single-burner stove. My Bible, my journal and some candles. Matches.

Needing some extra mantels, I asked Sis to drive us to the hardware store. Having seen Sis park her car alongside our sidewalk, I had the impression that her driving was like discovery learning: each time the first time. But driving those 12 blocks to the store was breath-taking.

Inside, I just stared at the hardware clerk mouthing words, hoping he'd figure out that I was begging for a ride back home with other than Sis. Sis, of course, was cackling hysterically about her near misses and our upcoming trip 'over the grapevine!'. Oh, goodie.

This was the first moment I realized that this trip was no lark and that we were in serious danger even before leaving town.

Packing up her car, which shouldn't have been driven even those 24 blocks, was a geometric triumph of compression. How could I tell Sis that I had to be the designated driver?

Out she came with another bulky load of things she couldn't leave without.

"Honey, you know, I don't mind driving right here in Merced, but you'll be doing the driving to Los Angeles and back. I know you won't mind."



Behind the jolliness of her pain, Sis is extremely bright. Most folks miss that in her because it's hidden beneath the wreckage of abuse.

We took off over the grapevine: an enormous, elderly Baptist acquaintance, a baby still waiting for most of her blonde hair to come in, and me. And we drove and we drove and we drove. The car, not roadworthy before we left Merced, rhumba'd continuously under its load. No rear visibility whatsoever. My precious child packed between boxes and Pampers in the back seat and I prayed like never before. O, God.

Sometime after 11PM we were somewhere in the greater Los Angeles area, the land of intersecting freeways. Whew! Almost there. "Sis, it's time to get out the map and address, we're in Los Angeles."



"Oh, I didn't bring the address with me. I don't have a map."

"???????????"

"Well, I know where it is. It's right here, just a bit further, the next exit. You're right there. Just a minute . . . there, take this next exit. I recognize it from before."

Off we went, then turned right. Then left, then right, then who knows? Following her "I just know it's this one" and "Well, it looks exactly *like* that one, so maybe" we drove until after midnight.

Seeing a huge shopping center, I drove into it to have a safe place to stop and cry. The poor old car flummoxed through the deserted lots until I realized I had driven into a darkened loading zone - a downsloping dead end.

Another solitary car slowly headed directly at us. O, God.

We were alone.

We were in 'the wrong part of town' just after the Rodney King violence.

We were trapped.

I knew there was absolutely nothingabsolutelynothingabsolutelynothing I could do to save us: we were trapped. We couldn't outrun them, I couldn't defend my incapacitated older friend and protect my baby at the same time. I knew I was a dead woman.

The headlights advanced very slowly, straight on. They were obviously deciding what would be the best fun: robbery, another beating, rape, kidnapping, and then what when they found my baby?

I got out of the car with my hands over my head praising God loudly and walked swiftly away towards the oncoming car to put distance between the two cars.

"Hallelujah, hallelujah!" I shouted as I walked forward to my fate.

If this were the last memory my baby had of her Mama, let it be that God is worthy of praise. I surrendered to Him, praying that they'd overlook my darling precious baby and my newly beloved friend. Maybe Sis would think to hide my baby.

The approaching car was so slow and those lights so bright in my eyes as it took for-e-ver. Finally, we met and I stood still, arms still up to Him. Father, I trust You. Just You.

**"Hallelujah"** Did I just scream or was it in my heart?

"Glory! Glory to God in the highest!" a female voice. A sweet female voice. *Whaaaaaaaat?*

She dimmed her headlights and pointed the search light down as she inspected me and my entourage with her flashlight nightstick as slowly my eyes adjusted: a cop.

A lady, blonde, pretty cop. *This is not happening.*

"So, what are you doing back here?" she inquired, but didn't interrogate.

"We're lost. *We're just lost!* We're trying to find her son's house, we don't have the address, we don't know where we're going and we drove back into this dead end."

It all rolled out quickly as stoicism was overcome and panic surfaced, then we continued back to my 'vehicle'. Used to be a car but nowadays it's a vehicle.

"My son's house is right behind the Culver City police station on a cul-de-sac," Sis blurted, her eyes even wilder than 'normal'.

"Well, that's outside my jurisdiction, you're in another city, but I'll lead you there. That's not procedure, but I know where it is."

Hello?

In the millions of places in all the cities called 'the greater Los Angeles area', how did this lady cop know who Sis's son was and where he had lived? Please 'splain me this. This didn't occur to me 'til years later. At the time, I was thinking "Yippy, skippy, we - are - outta here!

But how did she know?

We drove there. Actually, she drove straight there and we followed her.

At the right end of the cul-de-sac in a new, expensive development was a large house sitting dark. The policewoman parked and got out as did I after pulling in where she motioned. Sis was quietly hysterical and the baby was oblivious.

Then I got out of my car, the lady cop got out of her vehicle, and she spoke:

"Look, I don't know why, but the Lord wants me to tell you this" and time stopped. Her voice changed.

"HE WHO DWELLS IN THE PRESENCE OF THE MOST HIGH  
SHALL ABIDE IN THE SHADOW OF THE ALMIGHTY.  
I WILL SAY OF THE LORD 'HE IS MY REFUGE AND MY FORTRESS,  
MY GOD IN WHOM I TRUST.'  
SURELY HE WILL SAVE YOU FROM THE FOWLER'S SNARE  
AND FROM THE DEADLY PESTILENCE.  
HE WILL COVER YOU WITH HIS FEATHERS  
AND UNDER HIS WINGS YOU WILL FIND REFUGE.  
HIS FAITHFULNESS WILL BE YOUR SHIELD AND YOUR FORTRESS.  
A THOUSAND MAY FALL AT YOUR SIDE,  
TEN THOUSAND AT YOUR RIGHT HAND,  
BUT IT WILL NOT COME NEAR YOU.  
NO HARM WILL BEFALL YOU, NO DISASTER WILL COME NEAR YOUR  
TENT.  
FOR HE WILL GIVE HIS ANGELS CHARGE OVER YOU  
TO KEEP YOU IN ALL YOUR WAYS."

Then her normal voice returned as she added "He sent me to tell you. Well, good night." She got in her patrol vehicle and drove off. And she was gone.

I felt alone in front of a huge dark empty home saddled with my baby and my friend.

I just couldn't get over it! What would have happened if she hadn't shown up? Would we have ever found this place? **FOR HE WILL GIVE HIS ANGELS**

The logistics of getting us inside this strange place and to bed brushed away lots of thoughts.

Sis unlocked the door and opened it just enough to see it was pretty bare inside, very dark. Only a couch and a glass coffee table in the front room and a round wooden table made out of an old cable spool in the elevated adjacent dining area up a few stairs. I brought our things in quickly, doing only necessary duties before getting some sleep. Set up our 'port-a-potti', unrolled sleeping bags in the living room.

Confession: it felt cold and very creepy inside. It wasn't until the next morning in the daylight that I saw all the blood at the bottom of the stairway in front of the entry door. We never mentioned it.

I'll skip most of the very strange experiences of camping in a deserted murder scene without electricity and water and the first few days in court. Except this one . . .

En route to court the very first day and it's a lovely drive along the water and we're lost and it's almost time for court to convene. Sis doesn't know which court, which courthouse. Sis doesn't have the attorney's telephone number. But she suddenly decides that we've been going in the wrong direction for way too long. We turn around. Now we're headed back towards Santa Monica and we're out of gas. I coast off the road to the side. I am not about to miss the event after all this.

"Get out of the car, Sis!"

"What are you doing?'"

"Come on, Sis, let's go." With the baby on my hip on the side of the road and my thumb out, what did she think I was doing?

"What are you doing?"

"I'm waiting for the person that God's sent to drive us to the courthouse on time!" I yelled as a nice new Jeep pulled over driven by an expensively dressed, middle-aged woman. She was absolutely not a dangerous person and there was nothing weird about her.

About us, absolutely.



"Where are you going?" she asked politely.

"Her son, Dale Hurd, is going on trial for murder this morning and we don't know where the courthouse is and we've run out of gas." I expected to taste grit and dust as she drove off in a hurry.

"Get in, that's at the Santa Monica Courthouse, I'm going right by there, I'm an attorney." And off we went.

If I tried to make this stuff up, I couldn't. Please tell me how she knew? God sent an attorney? **CHARGE OVER THEE** Angels, yes. Attorneys? Yes.

Then at the courthouse, in the courtroom, holding my baby, holding Sis, seeing the back of Dale's head as he sits on trial.

Hearing opening remarks about the dead woman, Beatrice, her beauty, her kindness, her children. Seeing her large portrait, then seeing her actual grey sweatshirt, the actual bullet hole and the actual blood that matched our carpet.

Rubbing noses with my baby and smiling big, and saying 'ugguh mugguh' quietly to distract both of us from the proceedings. Sis's heart was breaking because she hadn't known what to believe even before she came. She loved her son, she loved her daughter-in-law, she loved her grandchildren, Diana and Charles, whom she was no longer allowed to see.

Three long days in court, then three longer days off including Martin Luther King Memorial Day on Monday the 17th, time to sleep in.

*Until 4:31AM.*

Asleep on the floor with my baby snuggled in my arms and suddenly we were flying up in the air. **A THOUSAND MAY FALL AT YOUR SIDE**

Awake but not aware, we hit the floor then **TEN THOUSAND AT YOUR RIGHT HAND** I couldn't find her.

Everything contorted. **NO HARM WILL BEFALL YOU**

I found Chloe and held onto her as the earth convulsed and screamed.

It was the 1994 Northridge Earthquake, then the largest disaster in US history. Freeways fell down, buildings fell down, and we fell down as we waited for the outcome. Oh, the *sounds*.

Then, nothing.

Not a light anywhere, total darkness as Los Angeles saw parts of hell. Fearing it would begin again, I remembered the five-inch thick, round, wooden, cable spool table.





"Sis, quick, get under the table! *Now*.

I hauled Sis over. I admit to pushing her enormous being under the table without any ceremony and with great effort. I pushed on her until most of her was under the table. And so were we. With the three of us gathered together beneath the table, I began to sing.

"Praise the name of Jesus

"Praise the name of Jesus

"He's my Rock! He's my Fortress! He's my Deliverer-

And the baby sang, she knew the words. Sis argued wildly about something and I sort of punched her.

"... in Him do I truuuu-st!

"Praise the name of Je-e-e-sus."

"Come on. Sis, *sing!*"

Sis had a beautiful, beautiful voice.

"Sis, sing *now!* Look, we can praise God or we can die. We can praise God *and* die. Either way, we're going to praise God. Take it from the top."

An ominous, percussive sound of felt air 'whoooooop whoooooop whoooooop whoooooop whoop', right on top of us. Intensely bright, scary lights coming directly at us, coming with the sound, down through the darkest night in Los Angeles. The City of Angels . . .

No, it wasn't Angels but an emergency helicopter landing on top of the Culver City Police Department. Seriously, this place really *is* next to the cop house? It was an immense sight framed by utter silence and darkness. From under the table, we sang the same song until nearly dawn.

All the lights in Los Angeles were out making it the very blackest night. There was no electricity, no TV, no idea of what was going on or what to expect. When the intensity of the black sky began to shift to darkest grey, out I went to look around.

Sis and the baby stayed under the table waiting for my report. One never knew when the next shaking would come and it was going to kill.

I heard a few emergency sirens far off but nothing else.

Other shadows came into focus as the dark grey slowly lightened. I met my neighbors for the first time. Because I was an outsider, it was OK to be scared witless in front of me. Their homes were wrecked, ours had no apparent damage. NO DISASTER WILL COME NEAR YOUR TENT.





Being considered a stranger who was visiting the murder site in some way connected me to the murder; this was an odd way of being introduced. Before the earthquake all their homes had been sealed up tighter than clams to protect them from us.

For several days much of Los Angeles went without electricity, without water. Now we became *popular*: we had food, we had water, we had a camp stove, lamps, and emergency rations were our daily fare. I knew how to make an emergency porta-potti. For all their wealth, they had absolutely no survival skills and suddenly, I was cool.

And the earth kept shaking.

Little ones, bigger ones. No one ever really slept, at least I didn't. Saying our bedtime prayers before sacking out the floor, Chloe would pray "Father, please don't let the earth go shakey shakey tonight!" Sleeping on the floor magnifies every little burp. There were over 4,000 aftershocks that first week. Each one got my attention. To this day I wake up around 4:30 AM and listen to God and we get real close. **Real close: this is Grace.** Before the sun rose, long before, I would tiptoe upstairs with my bible, some candles to read by and my notebook with God.

Separate from any other notebooks, I always have one for God and me alone. I scribble down what He says, I write down what He does. During this awful time in terror, I listened like never before. Our lives truly depended upon His grace and **my hearing what He said.**

Jolly old Sis had, of all things, brought along a shortwave radio which gave us access to the outside world. Even if I had wanted to pack and run, we couldn't. Hourly the news came that all freeways exiting Los Angeles were closed due to earthquake damage, there was no way to run. Then on the fourth day, or maybe the fifth, news came that the freeway route north was open again and it was time to flee whilst we could.

That morning I took the news to God as though He should be apprised of our situation. "Father, *Father!* We can make it out now. Should we go or should we stay?" What a stupid question to even ask when God had opened a way for us to go and go *quickly!* Imbecile, *go!* But then He came, the Word: "Day after day, my Lord, I stand on the watchtower; every night I stay at my post." **STAY AT YOUR POST. . . '**

Now if you are responsible for your baby's life and that of an elder friend, *your baby's life!*, then that's a tough order. Then again, I wasn't responsible, God was. And God knew. He knew all about every shakey shakey coming, He Alone knew which routes were safe and where disaster would strike next. So, I stayed. *We stayed.* And God tuned my hearing in as never before.

The Santa Monica Courthouse was closed due to earthquake damage and the trial reconvened a week later in the West Los Angeles Courthouse. Finding our way there was like driving through post-war ruins and very dangerous. Oh, so scared. Had to drive up and over a one-lane overpass, a thin, reedy little thing surrounded by mounds of bricks which used to be buildings and the fires of broken gas lines, not knowing whether we'd make it over before the next shakey shakey.

A new courtroom. A precious baby to entertain and distract, a precious sister to entertain and distract.

Being on the 'wrong team' was hard.

See, the deceased was young and beautiful and a beloved employee of the City of Santa Monica where she had worked at City Hall, well known, well loved. Her husband was a cold duck with a Ph.D. in economics but perhaps no conscience whatsoever and deemed to have murdered.

It wasn't a crowded courtroom. The attorneys, the detectives, the defendant, 'the wrong team' (us), and a well-healed woman sitting by herself. In this new courtroom, the well-healed lady approached me and introduced herself as a reporter. She was kindness incarnate.

She expressed her concern for my child being present and said that she knew of an excellent, excellent first-class daycare in Santa Monica. She offered to inquire about the baby attending there, was I open to that? The daycare was very expensive and there was a two-year admittance waiting list, and Chloe wasn't yet old enough to attend there (she'd done her fact checking).

But she thought it was worth asking.

The daycare was located in a church where she was a member. A huge, brick building with stained glass windows. Very churchy. Very brick. In a city of mostly piles of brick rubble.

She reported back the next day that although Chloe was too young to attend, they would be happy to have her there, no charge. I had never put my child in daycare and I was terrified to let her out of my arms. But I did it. It made me even crazier than the earthquakes but for Chloe's sake, I agreed. I believe it was a Wednesday. Which made life and travel through the bricks and the fires to daycare and then the courthouse even more interesting.

Day by day we would go to court. During long recesses the detectives, the 'good guys' disrespectfully checked me out. They decided I was some kinda nutcase because I was there to support the perp's Mom. Like, God doesn't love perps? There was a lot of sniggering and derision, it really hurt, really quite hard to take. They sat as far away from me in the courtroom as they could. *Perfectly fine with me.*

Then the earth started shaking again.

The courtroom ceiling tiles started to come down.

My heart screamed 'My Baby, My Baby, My Baby.' And at the same time, I knew she was over 4.6 miles away through diversions and the bricks and the fires and it was over, it was too late.



"I KNEW EXACTLY WHERE SHE'D BE BEFORE THE EARTH SHOOK."

My hands went up to Him as I sat there in the courtroom with the ceiling tiles falling down on me. I hoped that sacrificing my pride would save my child.

“SHE’S MY CHILD, I’M ALREADY THERE.”

I worshipped Him with upraised arms as the windows buckled too far and crashed down in millions of pieces and deadly dust. Oh, how fast I moved when the earth stopped! I left Sis alone with her child in the courthouse and raced out to find mine.

This was the greatest 'aftershock' to the greatest natural disaster in American history. The landscape had changed again, the route had moved as I fought through maze of rubble and fires and cars and mistakes. I hammered through and very impolitely nosed out the well-mannered Silver Cloud waiting properly in line outside the daycare. There were bricks on the pavement, bricks in the foyer, dust in the air – but most of the church intact. Even with all these years to recover myself, I shake in the recollection.

A precious Filipino nanny rushed up to my car, asking me “Are you the mother of Chloe?”

My mind whirled in terror, imagining that just one brick was all it had taken –

“Yes.”

"Oh, thank you. *Thank you, Ma'am!*

“Thank you your daughter come here. We so scared for the earthquake and your daughter - she know how to do. We so scared so scared and she yell 'Everybody! Quick! Get under table and praise the Lord!' We so scared and she sang! Thank you for your daughter.”

*HIS daughter.*

Thereafter, everyone in court sat as close to me, a woman of God, as possible.

“I will surround you with songs of  
deliverance.” Psalm 32:7

*JONESING*

What an amazement that I could even get back in the car and drive back to court as tremors came and went. Fixing my baby into the car seat in the tattered old car and threading our way, scared to bits, back to the courtroom littered with broken glass in West Los Angeles and to Sis and the son she loved.

Thankful to find somewhere to park because like everything else here, parking spaces kept moving. I unleashed my exuberant two-year-old who was still singing.

"He's my Deliver-rr-rrr. " Chloe tore out of my grasp and ran down the sidewalk and right around *that hedge*.

"Don't ever go over there." The sign said "Amphitheater" and the attorney had said "Be careful! This is Los Angeles. There are lots of homeless people, va-grantz," (that must be Yiddish for nuttinks) "and they live there in the amphitheatre behind those hedges. It's dangerous. Stay on the sidewalk, keep your eyes open and walk quickly."

So, of course, Chloe ran to the right around the hedges to investigate who-knows-what. Sure enough, there was an unimpressive cement amphitheatre playing to an audience of no one with a cast of about thirty homeless people.

He was laying there downstage right and downtrodden, left alone. He couldn't see us, his eyes were clouded over like an old dog's eyes, opaque veils over the pupils. He tried to sit up and greet us when I said 'hello'. Without much introduction he explained that he wouldn't live a lot longer, that he wished he could sit up and be friendlier. He drifted in and out. His name was William Donnell Jones. He couldn't get himself up on one elbow much less sit up. His shopping cart house was empty. His bedroll wasn't a roll or a bed. His black legs stuck out on the cement like a prop, too skinny to be real.

Less than bones. He welcomed us into his world as though we were dignitaries from another nation and he was the ambassador. He spent what little energy he had being kind to the child. More than many of us in perfect health, perfect wealth, he was rich towards God. Why is it that the 'good guys' are so frequently bad and the "bad guys" so frequently filled with good? He couldn't see us yet he connected with us in love.

He said the angels would be coming to get him soon, they were on their way to get him. He didn't appear delusional to me. I felt so bad for him, it was too late. Whether it was aids or starvation or the hopelessness of being hurt one too many times, it was too late for him. And the Word of God *poured* out of him. Poured out in *power*. His voice was clear. Then his head would sink down. He couldn't see me, he couldn't see the care in my eyes for him. I wept inside but my outside held still. Really good at this.

## WHATEVER YOU ASK IN MY NAME

"Chloe, put your hands on him and let's pray." She was young but she didn't want to touch him.

"Baby! Put your hands on him and pray with Mama!" Her tiny little hands matched his tiny little legbones as she touched him with me and we prayed.

No, I don't remember exactly what words we prayed. Healing isn't found in the majic of carefully memorized words but in the power of the God to whom we prayed, the God who hears us. And healing isn't found in the emotions we had as we prayed, which included

revulsion and hypocrisy. An honest woman depending upon her own power would have prayed the last rites.

We then hugged and said our goodbyes and Chloe and I walked around the hedges and back into the real world. My steps were heavy leaving Mr. Jones there, walking back to rejoin Sis. Reseating ourselves in the courtroom after that last promising tremor introduced a new seating pattern, one where everyone tried to sit as close as they could to the little lady who knew her God. I get very popular for a few days after an earthquake.

That evening we used the last bit of everything cooking for Mr. William Donnell Jones, it was just a hamburger and scrambled eggs at this point. Not that it would do him enough good, not that we'd even find him again, but it's all I knew to do. In bright daylight the next morning we parked early and rushed to see if we could find our new friend. Running around behind that forbidden hedge again, down the walk, up the...

Stares.

Stares as he said "Good morning! We-eeeell, this must be Chloe!" Beautiful black arms reached down to scoop up a giggling little blonde baby girl.

"Good to see you again, Mama." His eyes were clear and deeply brown and smiling and not a thing wrong with him or his sight. His clothes were the same, those were the same skinny legs and ankles, but *they were walking*.

"Hello. My name is William Donnell Jones," he said, extracting his ID as though proud to prove himself alive and well. "William Donnell Jones. Thank you so much, M'am, for praying for me. I'm sooo much better."

## "But take heart, I have overcome the world."

John 16:33

**DID YOU SEE HIM?** When Sis asked me to go Los Angeles, before I could say 'no', Jesus said 'YES!' He knew this was going to be a gruesome and grueling trip. He knew about the earthquakes, every single one of them. And He knew what I needed and what I needed to hear from Him to get us through. I didn't have the presence of mind to call out to Him, I just knew to praise Him no matter what *because He has taught me to praise Him*.

Every need that we had Jesus had planned for, even packed for, in advance. Jesus is lovely, He is sweet, kind, gentle, worthy of all my trust and powerful. Jesus is LORD.

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