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What Canst Thou Say?

Friends • Mystical Experience • Contemplative Practice

You will say, Christ saith this, and the apostles say this: but what canst thou say?

*Art thou a child of Light and hast thou walked in the Light, and what thou speakest,
is it inwardly from God?*

—George Fox

Telepathy

The Lesson Plan

A family emergency arose, so my client Mary called the school to arrange for a substitute teacher for her classroom the following day. Then she realized her lesson plan was tucked under a pile of papers on her bookcase. She could leave detailed instructions so the sub could find it. But, before she had quite finished her dinner, she found her feet taking her to her car to drive to school to put the lesson plan on her desk. There was a biting wind with flurries of snow as she drove to school. “This is nuts,” she said to herself. “I could be snug at home and do this by phone.” But her car continued to head for the school.

As she went around to the side door near her classroom, she was surprised to see a girl, wearing only a sweatshirt for warmth, huddled in the corner by the side door of the school, crying and talking on her cell phone. “Oh, shit!” thought Mary. “Now I have to deal with this, as if I don’t have enough on my mind.” On her way back out of the school, the girl was still there, and Mary overheard the words, “It’s my choice!” An alarm went off in her mind: she knew what those words implied.

In her most teacherly voice, Mary identified herself and said, “It’s too cold for you to be here. You have to come and sit in my car while you finish your conversation.” The girl followed

her docilely, and quickly finished her phone call in the car. Mary asked her, “Are you thinking of harming yourself? Or have you done something already?”

“I took a hundred Tylenols.”

“When?”

“What happened made no sense to me; it doesn’t fit my view of the world. But it happened!”

“Two hours ago.”

Mary thought fast. “You are going to the Emergency Room. Since I’m not allowed to drive a student anywhere, you have two choices. I can call an ambulance, or you can call a friend who lives nearby who can drive you to the ER.”

Anne C. Highland

The girl chose to phone a friend, and told Mary that he would be right over. Within five minutes, a boy and his mother drove up, and the girl got into their car. Mary followed them to the hospital. She bullied her way past the clerks to the triage nurse. She told me, “Thirty seconds later they had her in a treatment room.” Mary stayed until the girl’s father had been called before she went home.

“I’m not a spiritual person like you,” Mary told me. “What happened made no sense to me; it doesn’t fit my view of the world. But it happened!” She knew her view of Life would never be quite the same again.

Anne C. Highland was a clinical psychologist in Philadelphia. She attended Gwynned Meeting when she sent WCTS this piece a few years ago. We are publishing it posthumously.

From the Editors:

Clairvoyance, mind-reading, and second-sight are other names given for telepathy. The dictionary holds this gift at arm’s length by saying, “Supposedly the ability to communicate thoughts, feelings, ideas, sensations and mental images from mind to mind.” Telepathy is honored as a human faculty among Aborigines in Australia. In our more rational culture people often call it coincidence. We have heard that this is just another name for God. Judge for yourself as you read these tales of another way of knowing.

Maurine Pyle and Mariellen Gilpin
Editors for this Issue

Part of the All-ness

Excerpt from Original Wisdom: Stories of an Ancient Way of Knowing. Robert Wolff, Inner Traditions, Rochester, Vermont: 2001. Wolff, a psychologist, worked among the Sng'oi people of Malaysia for two years, and learned telepathic knowing from Ahmeed.

I could not imagine that they were telepathic, but they certainly seemed to know each other's thoughts. Of course, they lived together; they were around each other all the time. They must have known each other intimately. I thought that maybe this explained it.

Ahmeed did not volunteer any information. He did not teach. When I asked him something, he barely answered, just grunted something. We walked all day. In the evening, back at [the village], I asked him what I should learn from these walks. He laughed....

The next day, after walking an hour, I realized I was thinking so much that I did not pay attention to where we were, what was going on in the envi-

ronment. I was trying to figure things out in my head, making lists, weighing probabilities as if Ahmeed's talents were a problem in statistics. I decided instead to open my ears, my eyes, my nose, my skin to whatever I could pick up in the jungle around us.

I stopped abruptly.

The jungle was suddenly dense with sounds, smells, little puffs of air here and there. I became aware of things I had largely ignored before. It was as if all this time I had been walking with dirty eyeglasses—and

Suddenly, a new thought burst in on me: maybe I could sense water.

then someone washed them for me, or as if I were watching a blurry home movie—and then someone turned the focusing knob. But it was more than that—much more. I could smell things I had no name for. I heard little sounds that could be anything at all. I saw a leaf shivering. I saw a line of insects crawling up a tree.

Ahmeed noticed I had been walking slower and slower while paying intense attention to the world around me. He too stood still. "Sit?" he asked.

"Well, no...not really...perhaps... I don't know," I stammered.

"Drink?" he asked.

Afterward I realized that he had spoken very softly, so as not to intrude on what was going on inside me, and he had used simple, single words: Sit? Drink? Yes, I was very thirsty. I looked at him, thinking he would find a water vine. He was the person who knew the jungle, after all. He looked back at me with a perfectly blank expression. He was not talking.

Suddenly, a new thought burst in on me: maybe I could sense water.

In my mind I made a sort of list: seeing water, hearing water, smelling water. I might smell water, or even hear it if it were dripping on a leaf perhaps. I looked around.

"Do not talk," Ahmeed said. I knew he meant, "Do not think." "Water inside heart," he said next, with a gesture of his hand on his heart. I knew he meant I should sense from the *inside*—not with my mind, but from the inside.

It is sad to have to use so many words to say something so simple.

As soon as I stopped thinking, planning, deciding, analyzing—using my mind, in short—I felt as if I were pushed in a certain direction. I walked a few steps and immediately saw a big leaf with perhaps half a cup of water in it.

I must have stood there for a full minute, in awe. Not in awe of anything in particular, simply in awe.

When I leaned over to drink from the leaf, I saw water with feathery ripples, I saw a few mosquito larvae wriggling on the surface, I saw the veins of the leaf through the water, some bubbles, a little piece of dirt. Reaching out, I put a finger in the water, then saw that one of the wriggling

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mosquito larvae had been trapped in a tiny bubble on my finger. How beautiful, how perfect. I did not put the finger with the water droplet in my mouth, but looked back at the leaf.

My perception opened further. I no longer saw water—what I felt with my whole being was a leaf-with-water-in-it, attached to a plant that grew in soil surrounded by uncounted other plants, all part of the same blanket of living things covering the soil, which was also part of a larger living skin around the earth. And nothing was separate; all was one, the same thing: water—leaf—plant—trees—soil—animals—earth—air—sunlight and little wisps of wind. The all-ness was everywhere, and I was part of it.

I cannot explain what went on inside me, but I knew that I had learned some-

thing unbelievably wonderful. I felt more alive than I ever had before.

All of me was filled with being...

Standing over a leaf with a little water in it, somewhere in the jungles of Malaysia, I did not think in words. I did not think. I bathed in that overwhelming sense of oneness. I felt as if a light was lit deep inside me. I knew I was radiating something—love, perhaps—for this incredible world, this rich, varied, and totally interconnected world of creations that, at the same time, gave love to me. And with the love, I also felt a very deep sense of belonging.

After awhile, I slowly woke up. I came to, so to speak, and was in my body again. I looked around. Ahmeed was not where I thought he was. In fact, he was not anywhere in sight. He must have walked on, I thought.

And as soon as I *thought*, I panicked. I realized that I was alone, that Ahmeed had left me in a strange place.

I had no idea where I was, or how to get back to [the village] or to find Ahmeed. My first reaction was to shout, to yell, to call to him. But the sense of being part of this wonderful whole was so strong that I could not raise my voice. I opened my mouth to make a sound, but no sound would pass my throat. I could not possibly disturb this oneness by yelling, by feeling panicked. *I could not be afraid*—after all, I was part of this all-ness.

My life changed in that moment.

And then I knew I need not shout for help. I need not run after Ahmeed. I knew with a great certainty that all I had to do was put my mind aside and *know* where he was. Almost immediately I *knew*:

... all was one, the same thing: water—leaf—plant—trees—soil—animals—earth—air—sunlight and little wisps of wind. The all-ness was everywhere, and I was part of it.

He was not too far away. I had an impression of him walking leisurely in *that* direction....

It was quite dark when I finally returned to the settlement. When it was time to leave the place where I had discovered the leaf with water (I never drank any, by the way; I was not thirsty anymore), I extended my knowing to sense where the settlement was.

There, my knowing told me immediately...I started walking, still drinking deeply of that wonderful sense of belonging. I was part of this jungle, and the jungle was part of me. The smells, the rich colors now darkening, the sounds of animals were almost overwhelming. The only way I could deal with so much was to feel it as a whole, one—not analyzing, interpreting, naming, sorting, judging....

I did not hurry. I knew all the time where Ahmeed was—to the side and slightly ahead of me...Ahmeed joined me just outside the settlement. Neither of us said anything. We only looked at each other and smiled.

Get Going!

Anonymous

An email from his neighbor was forwarded to WCTS by Merlin Taber on September 2, 2007. His neighbor wishes to remain anonymous.

Sarah, a friend of mine at church, has myriad health problems, massive financial burdens, and a spirit like no one I've ever met. Joyful Sarah's mouth is constantly filled with praise to our Lord and thanksgiving for the blessings He has bestowed on her; dear Sarah is always more concerned about praying for the needs of others than for her own diabetes, liver cancer, rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, and congestive heart failure.

It was a stunning morning here in Champaign, Illinois, this first day of September. I had wandered over to see our dear friends, Merlin and Lidia, and they showed me new vines they were cultivating along their back fence. I excused myself, hurried back to our yard, and brought back a large trellis that Sarah's husband had made for us about three years ago. It's really quite a piece of work, but was too large to fit anywhere on our house and had been resting against the side of our back porch all this time. So I presented it to Merlin and Lidia. Merlin insisted on giving me \$14 for it, and I finally told him I'd take it but would pass it on to Sarah.

A few hours later I was finishing a day's work in the yard. I had mowed, edged, swept, trimmed some bushes, and laid out eight bags of mulch in the flowerbeds and under the trees. I was soaked in sweat, filthy from head to toe, reeking of pine bark mulch and freshly cut grass. I stood up to admire my handiwork and out of nowhere came a voice, as pure and sweet as the breeze I'd been enjoying all day.

Sarah needs some money. I stood up and looked around. No one. Nothing but the wind and the brilliant, clear

sunlight. And I knew instantly Who it was.

“How much, Lord?” I asked.

I'll tell you. Get going.

I pushed my wheelbarrow in the garage, closed everything up, and went inside to wash up. I was considering taking a quick shower; I was covered in dirt and grime from head to toe, and attired in yard clothes that any homeless man would turn down. Hmm, how about tomorrow? Would Tuesday be okay? As I dried my hands and pondered the beckoning shower, a great weight came upon me, and the Voice came again. *I said get going. \$254.*

\$254? What's \$254? Hardly a number I would pick out of the blue. I grabbed the \$14 Merlin had given me that morning. In less than 30 seconds I was out the door, running, mind you—it wasn't as if I had received a mild suggestion. I dashed to the bank, got \$240 out of the ATM, then reached Sarah's house, to find no one home. What to do, what to do... I left a note on the door for her to call me.

A short while later she did.

“Hey Sarah,” I blurted. “God said you need \$254, and I've got it here.”

Sarah hollered something I couldn't make out, then she said she was already in her van and would be right over. She stepped into our house, Bible in hand, laughing and crying, and took a torn note from inside her Bible.

She said, “I've been praying and praying over this list, and my God never fails me! He *always* comes through!” I turned over the note, and saw a list of financial needs with today's date highlighted at the top. The amount she had to have today: \$254. The amount she'd been praying for over and over. Not a penny more. Not a penny less. \$254.

A Far More Costly Outgoing of Spirit

Excerpt from “Let Your Lives Speak,” Elfrida Vipont Foulds, Pendle Hill Pamphlet #71

Those who climb the fells above Morecambe Bay, whether it be on the north shore or the south, and look out across the glittering waste where the invisible track winds between the treacherous quicksands and across swift-flowing channels to the other side, may realize what friendship meant to the early Friends.

Margaret Fell recorded that if she or her daughters were in anxiety or distress, Robert Widders of Kellet never failed to sense it and so would set out from the far shore of the Bay, in all seasons, winter or summer, storm or calm, by day or by night, and make the dangerous crossing in order to bring to Swarthmore the help and comfort of a friend. Such friendship did not count the cost. Moreover, such a sensitiveness was not, and is not, easily won.

To hold our friends in our thoughts means more than occasionally thinking of them with affection. It means a far more costly outgoing of the spirit, which can in very truth reach beyond human and physical limitations until we are indeed “with” them. Such an exercise of friendship is an echo of the deeper exercise of the spirit which is prayer, which in its turn can reach beyond human and physical limitations.

We talked awhile, and cried a bit together, and I told her I had to keep that note. It is now in my Bible. She gladly gave it to me; she'd been praying so hard over the list that she had it memorized, she said. I gave her the \$254, and off she went, once again singing the praises of a Lord who constantly, daily, without fail, supplies her needs.

I'm not sharing this to receive praise and accolades. I need no hail-fellows or well-dones—I've had my blessing this day, and it has come from the highest Authority. I'm sharing this story with you to the glory of God, not the glory of me. I am joyful and humble to have been used of Him. Sarah prayed, and God chose me. And if you don't believe it, well, that's completely irrelevant; it doesn't negate the fact that it happened.

A Chance to Think

Mariellen Gilpin

As part of my recovery from mental illness, for four years I was the leader of a mutual-help group for mental sufferers called GROW. I spent hours and hours on the phone, listening to my friends and encouraging them to get their lives under better management. At the end of my first five months as leader, statistics were grim: six group members had been in the hospital, two died, one woman seduced someone in the group, and one angry fellow had thrown a table during a meeting, terrorizing the entire group. The phone calls went on, with one soul calling me up after each meeting to abuse me because I had not met her standards of performance for a group leader. I was deeply convinced that I was in over my head, and only God could change my friends' lives. I wasn't sure how, but my job was to make an opportunity for God to work.

The phone never rang in those days that I didn't say, "Oh help!" as I walked toward it. I often sensed before I picked up the receiver, "This is So and So, and she's shot herself in the foot yet again. She is an abused child. How do I help her take responsibility for her life without making her feel worse about herself?" Then I'd pick up the phone, and there she'd be, primed to give me an emotional bath because she felt terrible and lost and powerless. But somehow the worst was past before I picked up the receiver; I knew who it was, what the basic problem was, and I had a chance to think before I heard my friend's voice. I still did a lot of listening, but I had been enabled to respond instead of simply react.

The phone never rang in those days that I didn't say, "Oh help!"

Why did those flashes of precognition come to me? A lot of real-world data floated around my mind from my friends' lives, but how did I know in the instant this was Bob's crisis, not Carol's, Mike's, or Mark's? I think the flashes came because I was so aware I couldn't do anything to help unless I could somehow be God's instrument. I wanted to serve God and serve my friends; compassion ran very deep. I did a lot of praying for my friends, too, and somehow prayers always devolved from "How can I help?" to "This one is entirely in Your hands. Let me get out of Your way." When I got out of the way, insights came, words came, and slowly a few lives changed—most of all, my life changed. I have met a God who is a present Help, waiting for my invitation and my desire to simply listen for Guidance.

Mariellen Gilpin is an editor of WCTS. She celebrates the many ways God has helped her deal with mental illness.

A Bit of Mind Reading

Maurine Pyle

Years ago I was employed by an international self-help organization, which provides mutual assistance to people suffering from the stigma and effects of mental illness. One day at work I received an email message from a man named Anil in Pune, India. He asked me how he could come to America to learn the cognitive behavioral method used in our support groups. He had read the website and was convinced that our method could help people in India.

I wondered what to do, since there are no schools to teach this form of self-help. The groups are led by mentally ill people who have learned how to demonstrate the method. How could I help Anil learn the method? I began calling around the self-help network to ask if anyone would host Anil for a couple of weeks and take him to group meetings.

I went down the list and called people who might say yes (non-resister types) and also lived in large cities with lots of Recovery group meetings. That was a logical decision tree. At first I was refused. Intuition played into my decision to call Bob in Columbus, Ohio, because he is both sensitive and not a nay-sayer. Bob was intrigued by my request and offered to carry it

forward to his wife Dot. I did not know that Dot would be willing or that she was even a world traveler. I discovered that later.

The next day over breakfast Bob told Dot, "Maurine called yesterday to ask if we would provide hospitality for a man from India who wants to attend group meetings. What do you think?"

Dot asked him where in India, and when she heard it was Pune, she said, "I will be going to Pune next week on a tour with the Girl Scouts." In fact, she needed to visit an Indian host family and had not been able to find one.

Dot went to Pune and had a lovely visit with Anil and his family. Later on that year, Anil came to America to stay with her and Bob and learned the self-help method. Successful group meetings for schizophrenics and their families were planted in India, thanks to a bit of mind reading.

Maurine Pyle calls herself the Quaker Hobo. "Hobos, themselves, seem to differentiate themselves as travelers who are willing to do work, whereas a tramp will travel but will not work and a bum will do neither." (Wikipedia)



WCTS Editor Mariellen Gilpin was interviewed on "Keepin' the Faith" November 25, 2007. You can listen to it at: <will.uiuc.edu/am/ktf>

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Table Lamp Décor and the Mind of God

Chris Johns

Chairs were lined up against the wall, leaving the hallway open to make it easy for other people and equipment to get through to the examining offices, operating rooms and the elevator. Lesley and I were sitting in two of the chairs next to a table lamp, which was strategically placed to create the illusion of a homey, less-anxious-feeling environment, but this institutional effort at generating calmness had little if any effect on the intensity of the pain she was experiencing.

As I held her hand and did my best to comfort her, she couldn't help from crying with each of the unrelenting contractions. The doctors were getting closer to taking her in, and I reassured her with the last jolt of pain, that it was almost over. Soon, Lesley. Soon.

But how could she be delivering now? She didn't even look pregnant yet! How could she be in labor? It didn't make any sense, yet the contractions and pain were totally real.

Then I woke up.

Dreams don't always make sense, but this one had a bold reality that I couldn't ignore. I discussed it with my boyfriend over breakfast, but it was still looming large. I called my mom

Dreams don't always make sense, but this one had a bold reality I couldn't ignore.

to tell her about it...she had the two of us in the house on a recurring basis when I was growing up. Lesley and I were best friends from the same block. We stayed close, even though we didn't see each other often after she moved west. I visited her when I headed west

to backpack during the summer, and she got in touch with me when she was in town to visit her family. Lesley and her husband had moved even farther north, and so I hadn't seen or talked to her in years.

It was later in the afternoon, and because I couldn't get the image of her face in the painful throes of labor out of my head, I decided I had to call her. "Lesley? Lesley! I had a dream about you last night. I'm calling to find out how you are."

"I'm not surprised. It was a tough night, but I'm doing better."

"In the dream, you were in huge pain...contractions. It was as if you were in full-blown labor. I was holding your hand, and timing the contractions in some fashion, telling you it would soon be over. But here's the deal: you didn't *look* pregnant at all! It just didn't make any sense."

"Yes, it does, actually. Last night I was in pain, and was in the hospital. A ruptured ectopic pregnancy threw me into surgery in the middle of the night. It was a long night."

I knew dreams could be powerful insights into our own minds, but this was clearly, without any doubt, insight into the mind and heart of someone thousands of miles away. God holds us in a mystery. I don't expect to know how this works, but I do accept that there are powerful ways of knowing with hidden underpinnings. I accept that we mortals aren't privy to all of the workings of the universe. Since this dream, I have had numerous others that occasionally remind me the mind of god is alive and well, and has a way of communicating with me that most would discount. But I know better!

Chris Johns was brought to meeting as a teenager by her best friend, and she now attends Thursday Nights at the Meetinghouse in Urbana-Champaign, Illinois.

Practical Message

Chris Johns

The dream was so vivid, it woke me up. I was getting ready to head off to work in my usual hurry. Heading out the front door, I looked out across the country landscape, missing the obvious. There on my doorstep was a huge fox snake curled up, and I stepped right on her. This was alarming for me, and not such a good thing for the snake.

I told my husband about the dream, because it was so vivid. We had some hilarious discussion about what the symbolism could possibly mean. Whatever would Freud think?

After coffee, I grabbed my jacket and bag, then headed out the door to my car, a bit more carefully than my typical self. The real snake was still there, every bit as huge and gorgeous as she was in my dream. Sometimes when God communicates to us, it's not earth-shatteringly deep—just practical!

The Vibrating Web of Connectedness

Mary Waddington

It was April, it was a Wednesday, and it was noon. The ritual of my sandwich making was encroached upon by an inward, persistent instruction that I eat my lunch out in the narrow back yard, which abuts the marsh. Totally uninviting. With only the hint of a lawn, that damp and insect-ridden space is always trying to become what it once was, tidal habitat. Furthermore, it held nothing to sit on. But I knew I should never argue with intuition.

Having found an empty crate, I flipped it upside down and sat among tufts of onion grass. My thoughts meandered until they were snared by a claw that scratched within the few evergreens bordering my house. I then heard a groan, a tragic rasp of a sigh that sounded both pinched and parched. Then another. I followed the sounds in a half-crouch, every muscle poised for flight. I parted juniper boughs and spotted my sunken window well. Peering into it, I saw why my intuition had called me to the back yard—a hapless turtle had been caught halfway into his fall and was wedged in a prison without bars. Empathy quickened and softened me. What is the taste of his fear? How intense is his longing for home? What does a slowly dehydrating body feel like? How many times has he clawed at the wall, hoping each time for a purchase and the promise of escape?

I had learned to identify only one species of turtle—the muddy and menacing snapper. Noting this turtle was not one, I reached for him. He quickly withdrew to his only protection and hid inside himself from the dread of not knowing. He stayed there while I pried him loose, and during this period of imposed intimacy we became friends.

I trudged toward the pond carrying the heaviness of Turtle sandwiched between my hands, one under and one over him. I did this to offer the only nourishment I had for him—the healing energy that flowed between my palms. My legs swished through last year's tall tawny field grass. I felt connected to the briars, the gnats, the damp, and especially to Turtle. My step suddenly became very light. There was great joy in our journey to the pond. It became the zenith of our bonding. We both had a history of having fallen into captivity, and we shared the experience of its accompanying fear and deprivation. My measured, light-footed stride became part of the celebration of our freedom, knowing well that freedom is a state one cannot truly comprehend or appreciate without having first gone through the agony of imprisonment.

When do we realize that our lonely, silent struggle isolates and limits us?

At pond's edge I gave Turtle back, laying him ceremoniously at my feet. Before I had time to step out of his space, and with a speed that challenged his reputation, he thrust himself out of hiding and plunged into the life-giving waters. And in that instant I was quenched.

I quickly lost sight of Turtle and our link became a trail of sky-colored bubbles. Even after the last bubble burst the connection between us remained, and this tethered me to the rim of the pond. I stood there saturated by the fullness of an overwhelming gratitude. I felt the soft breeze as the unified breath of all souls who have struggled in bondage through all time. I felt it as a collective sigh from every being who persevered through their crying and kept the faith until freedom came.

And then this soul breath within me blew upon embers of newfound compassion. It created a flame of prayer that leaped forth to all who are still in captivity. And within this fire was the heat of knowing that so long as even one of us remains in bondage, none of us is truly free.

Then it was Friday and it was yoga class. I sat next to my daughter Debbie, a sculptor who at that time lived and worked in a section of my house. The set of postures was over and we were sharing highlights of our week. Briefly, and for the very first time, I told my turtle story, aware as I spoke that astonishment was spreading over Debbie's face. When I finished, with trembling voice she shared her story:

For many days she had been unable to finish a commissioned sculpture that carried a pressing deadline. She had completed the upper half of this sculpture, which was a seated angel child. Yet for some reason she had not been able to sculpt an appropriate base for it, one that would meet the specified elevation and at the same time be worthy of the figure it supported. And then just two days ago, on Wednesday at lunchtime, the image of a turtle had flooded her mind. The energy from this image flowed down her arms, out through her fingers and into the pile of overworked clay beneath the angel, effortlessly transforming it into a free-spirited turtle. The circle sat in stunned silence, speechless. Two seemingly separate events had just been woven into one.

I rushed home to Debbie's studio yearning to witness something tangible from Wednesday's happening. I stood in reverence before her completed sculpture, feeling like I should be on my knees. There was my beloved Turtle, proudly carrying an angel on his back, obviously on a special mission. Debbie had not only captured his likeness but somehow his essence, which also felt like *my* essence. I found my-

self anchored to the spot by the same invisible cord that had tethered me to the rim of the pond.

For days I pondered this chain of events that began in my kitchen. A small but persistent nudge pushed me outdoors so I could hear a weak and raspy cry. Up to that point, Debbie's mind and the turtle's body had both been hopelessly stuck, perhaps for the same duration of time. While she clawed at her mound of unyielding clay he clawed at his wall, and neither could move forward. When I heard his cry for help was he hearing Debbie's? When I rescued him, was that the moment she was rescued?

I ponder still. In my search for answers I am given more questions: When do we realize that our lonely, silent struggle isolates and limits us? Where do we find the courage to ask for help? Why are we so often afraid to reach into that deep pocket of trust that holds the space for the humble call and the blessed response? Who makes the first move that vibrates the web of universal connectedness and awakens us to the presence of the other? I ease my questions into that place that is the Source of all questions and also the Repository for all answers.

Mary Waddington is a member of Salem Meeting, New Jersey. Her story about her spiritual connection with animals appears in Discovering God as Companion: Real Life Stories from What Canst Thou Say?



Revived for Joy and Gladness

Excerpt from the Journal of William Edmundson (1627-1712)

William Edmundson is from England where he has a shop, but feels called to go to Ireland and so also lives there. In his journal he recounts that while he is in Ireland, unbeknownst to him there are two women Friends (Anne Gould and Julian Wastwood) from London who are visiting Ireland and traveling "all on foot in winter time, wading rivers and dirty miry ways." Anne Gould was "much spent..., the enemy persuading her, that God had forsaken her, and that she was there to be destroyed, so that she fell into despair; but I knew nothing of them." While William Edmundson and his brother were at a fair:

"I was under a great exercise of spirit, and the word of the Lord came unto me, that my shop was in danger to be robbed that night." So they decided to travel home that night...."but my spirit was still under a great exercise, the word of the Lord moving me to turn

back towards Clough. I was brought under a great exercise between these two motions, to travel back and my service unknown; and my shop on the other hand in danger to be robbed, which brought me into a great strait, for fear of a wrong spirit. I cried to the Lord in much tenderness of spirit, and his word answered me, that which drew me back should preserve my shop; so we went back..."

On the next day "towards evening I came to Clough, and took up my lodging at an inn...When I came into the house I found Anne Gould in despair, and Julian Wastwood with her, but when they knew who I was and heard my name, for they had heard of me before, the poor disconsolate woman

...but when they knew who I was and heard my name, for they had heard of me before, ... the poor disconsolate woman revived for joy and gladness...

revived for joy and gladness, and got up, for she was in bed overwhelmed under trouble of mind. I saw then that my service of coming there was for her sake...I told them how I was brought there by the good hand of God, led as an horse by the bridle, to the place where they were..." *He helped them back to his house (in Ireland) and then went back to England.*

Tell Us Your Stories!

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“When I came home, I inquired about my shop, whether it had been in danger of robbing? They told me, the night I was under that exercise about it, the shop window was broken down and fell with such violence on the counter, that it awakened our people, and the thieves were affrighted and ran away. So I was confirmed it was the word of the Lord that said, that which drew me back should preserve my shop, and I was greatly strengthened in the word of life, to obey the Lord in what he required of me; for I was much afraid lest at any time my understanding should be betrayed by a wrong spirit.”

Contributed by Stuart Mays. It is in the Journal of William Edmundson as printed in Friends Library vol. 2.

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November 2008

Angels

Guest Editor: **Michael**

Resman with Judy Lumb

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them. (Luke 2:9) When have you encountered an angel? Was it a comforting experience, a disturbing one, a summons to labor in the Lord's vineyard? Angels might be described as agents of God's mercy. Have you been helped by an angel? Have you been an angel helping someone else? How have angels changed your life? Share your stories of angels.

Deadline: August 15, 2008

February 2009

Gratefulness

Editor: **Patricia McBee**

If your only prayer is "thank you" it is enough. (Meister Eckhart). Do you have a story of the spiritual breakthrough of a spontaneous upwelling of gratitude? Or perhaps you have a story of the grace that comes from a daily discipline of gratefulness, come what may. What have you discovered about gratitude in the face of suffering? How have you found God's grace to be the source or the result of gratefulness?

Deadline: November 15, 2008

May 2009

Editor: **Patricia McBee**

Deadline: February 15, 2009

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