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# The Audible Voice of God...

*February 13, 2000*

[Suddenly, tonight, I felt compelled to write, but did not know what to write. I got a pen and paper, sat down at the table, and started writing. This is what I wrote. This is the first draft, and I had no particular topic in my mind when I put the tip of the pen to the paper.]

I am writing this letter to you as an act of faith. I do not know what to expect to happen, what result to expect. I just now wanted to speculate, but was immediately quashed. I am, and have been for a long time, at a crisis in faith. All that I know to do is to share this, my story.

All my life I have believed my destiny and fate was to be "An Author." Those were the exact words I formulated in my mind as a child: not "to be a writer," or "to write;" but "To Be An Author" in capital letters. This letter will be disjointed and out of chronological order, because I will deal with each subject as it occurs to me. I am going to resist the instinct to control its creative flow of narration. It is, after all, just a story.

The oddity of mentally forecasting myself to be "An Author"—as opposed to using any other way of naming the vocation—was once illustrated to me, shortly after my wife and I separated. I was at the Sambo's restaurant in Colorado Springs with Ruby Brookshire. Ruby was a Christian woman who, to this day, I esteem as having been a believer of heroic and biblical dimensions. We were up until the early morning hours, drinking coffee and talking about The Lord (which we often did). At that time, I had been struggling with the question of what The Lord wanted me to do with my life. I had been inwardly pondering this subject while Ruby and I had been discussing other subjects. I do not now remember what subjects we had been discussing.

After a while (a few hours) and several cups of coffee, I needed to use the men's room. While in the men's room, I asked the Lord to show Ruby what I should be, what He wanted me to do. I prayed this inwardly—not vocally—sincerely desiring an answer.

I returned to our table, not saying anything to Ruby. This was not difficult, when we spoke she usually did most of the talking while I did most of the listening. It was an appropriate method, I realized that this was a learning experience in which The Lord had placed me; I would no more interrupt her when the Spirit of The Lord was on her to teach, than anyone would have spoken if they had been sitting with Paul or Peter or John. I paid attention, not out of respect for the person, but out of respect for The Lord.

Ruby looked up at me in a direct and personal way, saying that she just had the strangest thing occur. While I had been in the men's room, the word "Author" appeared to her, right before her eyes. She said that she didn't have any idea what The Lord intended by showing her the word "Author," nor did He explain it to her. I then related to her my prayer of a few minutes earlier. She then understood, and said that she would never have used the word "author" herself, but would have used the word "writer" or something similar. The fact that the word I had used since childhood "Author," had been used was a confirmation that this word truly came from The Lord:

thus my answer.

When I was in the fifth grade at Shadeland Elementary School, our teacher gave us a homework assignment. Mrs. Quincy was the wife of a graduate student at Purdue University, and this was (I believe) her first teaching job since receiving her credentials. We had just started studying poetry, simple verse appropriate for ten and eleven year olds. Our assignment was to write a poem that evening.

The following day she read my poem aloud to the class (a practice of hers that chagrined and embarrassed me to no end). She later said that it was not the product of a gradeschooler. It dealt on both an emotional and intellectual level with the concepts of light and darkness, shallowness and depth, life and death, hope and despair. I had compared these parallel pairs of opposites in parable form (with perfect rhyme scheme and meter), by creating an analogy of a fish descending to the depths of the ocean. She later called my parents in to meet with herself and our school principal, Orville S. Pearl. She wanted my parents to allow her to pursue publication of my poetry. This is a theme that recurrent throughout my life, and one of many opportunities which were never consummated.

The previous year my family had moved from the Clarks Hill school district to the Shadeland district. As was common throughout the county, all fourth graders were given comprehensive achievement tests at the beginning of the school year.

When the results came back, my teacher, Mrs Voyles of Elston, and Principal Pearl called my parents in "to conference." I had scored—for all practical purposes—off the scale. I was ranked as performing at two to three times my age (high school to college levels, in the 100th percentile) in almost every category. The principal and teacher wanted me to "skip" fourth grade and possibly fifth grade, and to be put on an accelerated path. My father would not allow it, because I would then be ahead of my older sister's class. Also, I am convinced, he believed that my diminutive size would cause me to become a target of derision.

A few weeks later (still in fourth grade at age nine) I got an idea for a "super weapon." I called it a "Death Ray." I had observed how light waves reflected back and forth between parallel mirrors, seemingly forever. I also knew that lethal gamma particles behaved as light waves. I reasoned that one could use mirrors to "concentrate" the gamma particles, and then release an amplified stream of the gamma waves through the use of a triggering mechanism. Thus would be achieved what I named my "Gamma Death Ray Gun." I drew up a simple schematic of how my "Death Ray" would work, with an accompanying explanatory letter, and mailed it to RCA Corporation. I got the address off of a household appliance.

A couple of weeks later I received a handwritten perfunctory note (one or two sentences on a folded announcement card, the size of a small index card) from RCA's public relations department. In the brief note the writer acknowledged my letter in polite but condescending tone. I was being entertained, patronized. Thinking back, it was exactly what one would expect from a low level new employee fresh out of college with a marketing degree, with no scientific background: be nice, some day the kid will be a customer.

Several weeks later I received a typewritten letter under RCA company letterhead from their research and development department. In the letter they again acknowledged my concept, but with this time a more formal and respectful tone. The letter said that they were considering a "similar type" of project, and for me to "please keep us posted" on any other ideas I might have in the future; and to "keep up the good work," so to speak.

A few weeks later I received an acknowledgment letter and some brochures from NASA. I had never written to NASA.

Approximately twelve to fifteen years later I read a column (written by Jack Anderson, if I am correct) in the newspaper. It told of how RCA Corporation—in partnership with NASA—had been secretly developing a “particle beam” as a potential anti-ballistic missile defense system. The R&D program had started in the early sixties, born of the idea of using mirrors to amplify gamma waves (involving advanced laser technology) into a weapon that would later be termed “Strategic Defense Initiative.” The softheaded national press labeled it “Star Wars.”

To this day, I believe that I know where they got this idea in 1963. Why did I get a letter from NASA, anyway? I never wrote to them. Obviously, my idea had been passed up the chain of intellect, until someone that understood its practicality got ahold of it. I was nine years old at the time.

I am sorry for digressing, the previous story now appears to me to be self-congratulatory and self-serving. Hopefully it will be tied in later in this letter. I am not editing it at all, but am writing it as flow-of-consciousness narrative. This is the original draft.

Somewhere around that age, eleven to thirteen years of age, I became an “Atheist.” Actually I was an agnostic materialist, believing that the universe consisted solely of energy, matter, and the laws of physics which govern them. Over the following years my philosophy became progressively more scientific and materialist, less spiritual or religion-based. By the age of seventeen I believed trenchantly that only physical matter and energy existed, that the laws of physics were inescapable and absolute, consequently all events were completely and absolutely predetermined. In order to maintain *Intellectual Integrity*, I had to admit that there existed, in this purely material universe, no room for concepts such as “free will,” “love,” “joy,” “good or evil” or any other such transcendent properties. I believed that all such non-physical concepts were fantastic delusions and superstitions born of Man’s imagination and instinctive, genetically encoded desire to be loved. I believed that our minds could only be described as electro-chemical biological computers. As such, every thought we formulated was merely a code of negatively charged or uncharged memory cells: created by our biological computers as a predetermined result of our genetic programming and sensory input.

This personal philosophy became an intellectual prison for me, one from which I could not escape without abandoning the intellectual integrity which logically demanded this conclusion. I was extremely depressed: philosophically considering suicide, since it was all predetermined anyway. I was oppressed by the knowledge that nothing mattered and everything was completely predetermined since the beginning of time, that I had no “self will” and would never attain “love’ or find absolute “truth.”

[At some future date I may outline in geometric reasoning exactly why such a philosophy is the only possible logical conclusion that could result from any belief system that excludes a Creator. It is all very persuasive: it is the only intellectually honest conclusion for any atheist.]

It was at this point in my life that I believe The Lord took mercy on me. It was necessary because I had gone beyond the reach of other people’s influence. He showed me things which were not explicable in a materialistic universe, phenomena which disobeyed the laws of physics and logic. Be assured, it is not upon such phenomena or reasoning that I base my salvation or faith. My salvation is a result of Jesus’ Grace, He personally brought me to belief and confession. I only relate my philosophical dilemma in order to illustrate the bondage of darkness in which *the liar* had me secured. The Lord had to break my intellectual bondage before I could cry out to Him, to believe His resurrection and receive Him, and to be saved.

In the late summer or early fall of 1975, Elaine and I were living in Colorado Springs. The apartment occupied the entire top floor, and we had two bedrooms although we only used one. Elaine worked at Cheyenne Mountain Zoo at the Thunderbird House. I worked at Western Sizzlin' Steakhouse. When I had first become a Christian I had read where Jesus said "I will not leave you comfortless. I will send you a Comforter, even the Holy Ghost, and He will lead you into all truth."

One night Elaine and I were visiting Ruby Brookshire, along with Brad Marchel and Jim Moffet, two friends. The Holy Spirit was leading us, and Ruby was teaching us about the voice of God. She explained that God spoke to us in a small still voice, and spoke in our spirits. However, she explained, when Jesus said "My flock shall know my voice," He was not talking about the small still voice in our spirits, but rather about His audible voice. His audible voice was not heard with our spirits, but rather with our physical ears!

When we told her that none of us had ever heard His voice audibly, she said that there was no excuse. She explained that, just as real sheep would audibly recognize their shepherd's voice and come at its beckoning, so must we learn The Lord's voice. She showed us how this comes only with prayer and complete devotion. She also instructed us in this manner, that we must approach The Lord standing upon His promise: that the sheep in His flock would know His voice.

Also, that we must ask Him to reveal to us His audible voice with faith; this meaning that we should not repetitiously badger Him. Rather, we must ask Him believing that He keeps His promises and will honor His own word; and then wait quietly for His response. We must not approach Him with a pre-conception of what He will say: we must not put words into His mouth. If we did approach Him while carrying any expectation of what He would say, then we would either be disappointed and unanswered or worse, deceived. Also, when we go before The Lord to hear His voice, we must be totally committed, "sold out to God," as Ruby would say.

By being "sold out," she admonished, we must not place any of our temporal exigencies on Almighty God our Maker, who speaks to us from the throne of Heaven. We must subjugate our flesh completely, if our ears of flesh are to hear the audible voice of God. This means that we must not take thought of food or drink, or of what we must do on the morrow, for God knows that we are flesh. Neither may we sleep, for the weakness that is our flesh will betray us.

We must go into our prayer closet with full and complete commitment, ask The Lord to reveal to us His voice, thenceforth to speak only praises to Him without other requests or repetition, to put from our minds all thoughts or expectations, and to become silent: as befits a man of flesh and bone kneeling before the throne of the Almighty God. We wait upon Him.

Brad and Jim promised to immediately go home and seek the audible voice of God. They would not delay, but would do so at once, and would wait as long as it takes until they hear His voice. They could do this because neither at that time had a job, and would have quit their jobs anyway, because they were totally devoted to this pursuit.

I was dismayed. I was married, and thus had earthly responsibilities to provide for my wife through my own labor. Neither could I refuse to show up for work, lest it appear irresponsible and ruin my witness to my coworkers. Nevertheless, I resolved to do all that I could in good conscience.

Upon arriving home, I explained to Elaine that I, too, must seek The Lord's voice. However, I would not leave her or forsake her by any means. I told her that I had resolved to commit all that was mine to promise. I was not scheduled to work the next two days, but on the third day I must go to work, and return to her. I told that I would go into our spare bedroom and wait upon the voice of The Lord. I made her promise not to interrupt me for any reason, save it be for a life-or-death emergency. Also, I asked that, on the morning of the third day at seven o'clock, she come

in to get me, to send me to my job.

Thus I retired to the spare bedroom to seek the voice of God. I approached The Lord in prayer, heartbroken that I could not speak any bold convictions and commitments, such as my friends had promised. I said to Him that He knew my heart, and I would not attempt to lie to Him. It is in no way possible to lie to Him [I say that it is not possible, in that it is not possible to deceive God: *we only deceive ourselves, and that to our own undoing*].

I told Him how that I always believed that the Holy Spirit would lead us into all truth, as was written. Also, how He had said that His sheep would know His voice. Also, that for us to know His voice, we must hear His voice. Also, that I understood that He required total commitment. I then apologized for the small pittance which I brought: on the third morning I must go to work and return to my wife. I was abashed at the poorness of my offering by way of commitment, as compared to my friends. I acknowledged that He is not a respecter of persons, now does He require of any man more than we can bare.

Nevertheless, I committed all that was mine, the morning of the third day was not mine to promise. I asked that, according to His faithfulness to His own word, that He speak to me audibly. I resolved to accept His voice—His words—and to keep them. I resolved to not eat or drink or sleep, but only to wait upon Him. I asked Him to help me to be silent, in order that I not dishonor His will or provoke His anger. Lastly, if He should have mercy upon my meager attempt, I acknowledged in advance: that it will be because He is great; and that, if I hear not His voice, I will know that the failure would be mine alone, because of my little faith.

Thus I remained silent, to wait upon The Lord. Only occasionally did I open my mouth, and then only to speak or sing His praises, as the Spirit led me. The night had passed and the early morning (this I remember because Elaine had already left for work). I was still awake, but just barely. My mind was clear, and free of thought.

The Lord said, “Mark, it is not hard to know I love you.”

### February 24, 2000

This moment was, perhaps, the beginning of the end. [*“O’, ye pens of little ink.” I am now on my third (3<sup>rd</sup>) ink pen since starting to write this sentence, a total of nine words. It is now Thursday, February 24, eleven days since I wrote the previous paragraph. I have been almost comatose since Sunday of last week, barely venturing out of the house. Discouraged, depressed, disconnected, full of self-loathing and guilt: just now I snapped out of it and picked up a pen. Amazingly, both the first and second pens that I picked up ran out of ink, after writing only a few words: I believe a hindering spirit is at work here.*] To return to the subject at hand, it was the beginning of the end of Elaine’s and my marriage, and the beginning of my long descent to this pitiful state. It was probably the point in time when I started to lose Elaine. I believe now that the loss of Elaine precipitated my loss of faith. Probably, even now, I am angry at God: He should have done something!

The loss of the only person whom I had ever believed truly loved me was catastrophic to me. Even to this day, she was the only person that I believed loved me. I have hoped for—or philosophically convinced myself of—the love of others; she was the one person of whom I was truly convinced of love. It was not necessary for me to try to believe it. The trauma of losing her opened in me a wound, one which would not close or heal. Into this open wound in my soul (*I speak metaphorically, comparing a physical wound to the true and spiritual wound*) entered dirt and sin, which have festered and infected my whole being.

## This is the story of how the end began

That morning (after first I heard the audible voice of God) I had nothing planned for the day. I did not have to go to work, but I did not wish to disturb Brad and Jim, so I sat in the apartment for a while. I had no idea what the word from God was supposed to mean, I just accepted it as best I could. After a while I spoke with Brad. I don't remember if he called me or if I went over there. He asked me if I would help him with some errand. I asked him what had happened the previous night. He responded that he and Jim had gone back to their apartment with the full intention to seek the voice of The Lord, but somehow or another they had ended up falling asleep. After helping Brad with the errand, I returned home that evening. It was about seven o'clock, and Elaine had been off work for some time, but she did not answer when I entered the apartment and called to her. I knew she was home, because the van was parked outside, and finally I found her huddled in our bedroom closet. She was cringing, sitting with her knees pulled up into her lap, hiding, crying, terrified. I asked her what was wrong, but she would not tell me. She has never told me. My Love, my Hope, was cringing and withdrawn, and I could not get through to her. To this day, I do not know what had frightened her so. I now believe [*just now, as I am writing this account*] that she was afraid of my relationship with God in some way.

Still on the subject of the audible voice of God, I recall that the next time I heard His voice was not long after Elaine moved out several years later. I was traumatized. I did not know that she was considering leaving me, she had never even discussed it with me. It came as a complete surprise, shocking me into a numb stupor. I believed, and still do, that marriage is an irrevocable union performed in heaven by The Lord: divorce is not spiritually possible except in cases of adultery (as Jesus told us). I had committed no adultery. Therefore, Elaine could not sue God for divorce, she lacked the requisite basis for divorce. It is still a wonderment to me. It has caused conflict and turmoil in my mind and soul.

Several days after she moved out—about two or three weeks afterward—I approached the throne of the God of our fathers. I had once asked Him to give to me Elaine for a wife, and had not tried to cause it to happen through my own actions or will. He had caused her to find me, to pursue me, and we were married. We were lawfully married, and we were spiritually wed. As Jesus reminded us, Adam first said of Eve, “For this reason shall a man leave his mother and his father and cling unto his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” Such a union—two people being merged into one flesh—was only possible because the Heavenly Father performed the union. Neither modern science nor civil authorities have been able to perform such unions.

One night, I reminded God of this union which He had performed, a union which no man could sunder. I reminded God that, according to His word, we two were one flesh. I demanded (“demanded” is the correct word: I just now thought about it for several minutes, wanting to use the exactly correct wording for what I did), demanded of Him that He reveal to me where Elaine—the other half of my flesh—resided. As a child of God I had the right and the responsibility to know where my wife was. Knowing that, if God is to answer our prayers then our prayers must be specific, I wanted to know exactly where she was sleeping that night. Also, and I was firmly convinced in my heart and mind as well as in my speech to Him, I wanted Him to reveal the whereabouts of my wife by five o'clock the next morning.

This was my specific prayer, which I believed He would fulfill. It was a righteous prayer (one which I had the right to request), it was a specific prayer (even to the time of day), and it was based upon divine faith (which is the conviction that God is faithful to His own words; our “faith” in our own ability to believe hard enough that we can make something happen is not divine faith, and it will not save anyone).

I also knew that, when we pray for anything upon this earth, we must believe that God will

answer us from heaven. Therefore, I thanked Him for answering my prayer, and praised His faithfulness and justice, for He is a merciful God who hears the cries of His flock, and saves them.

I also knew by His written word that, when we believe He has answered our prayers, we must prove our faith by acting accordingly. Colorado Springs is a large city, spread out and far-flung as is common in the American West. I had spent many long hours searching for Elaine on my own, thinking that I would “run into” her, or that I could find her by sheer perseverance. Finally I realized that I might never “run into” her, whether by happenstance or by my own design. I had spent every waking moment (whenever I was not at work) canvassing the city for her car: business parking lots by day and apartment complex lots by night (most often until dawn). It was only after much searching on my own—through my own efforts—that I prayed to The Lord that He show me where she lived. I knew that I would never find her on my own.

As an act of faith I got into my car and started driving. I started as soon as I got off work, about midnight, and drove the car randomly. I did not formulate a plan or “search pattern,” as I had been doing for a couple of weeks. I left it up to God to guide me. I drove for many hours believing God to answer my specific prayer, and that answer be soon.

Just before dawn I was driving in a residential single-unit housing development in Northeast Colorado Springs (in spite of the fact that she lived in an apartment complex, she had told me that much over the telephone). I was watching the clock, for it was approaching five o’clock and I still was driving randomly as an act of faith. At about eleven minutes before five o’clock, He said, “Stop.”

He said this audibly, I heard it with my own ears. If you had been seated in the car next to me, you would have heard it with your ears, as well. I pulled over to the curb and waited for His voice. He said “First, turn right.”

Somehow, I then became confused. In my eagerness to find Elaine, I reverted to trying to find her on my own. Perhaps it is the flesh that weakens us, but I know there is an enemy as well. I started looking to my left and right, hoping to spy Elaine’s car, as I proceeded down the street that The Lord had indicated. I then thought I heard some voice say, “Now turn left,” and then again, “Turn right.”

After just a few minutes I realized that the enemy had stolen my answer by lying to me, and that it was my fault. I continued to drive around until about fifteen minutes after five o’clock, and gave up the search. By that time I was trying to find her on my own. I was discouraged, physically and emotionally exhausted. I went home to sleep.

The next day I needed to do my laundry before going to work at five o’clock in the afternoon. I drove to a laundromat near where Elaine and I had last resided together. I was familiar with the laundromat, so I went there even though it was now on the other side of town from where I lived since our separation. Completing the laundry took longer than I had anticipated, I could not get my washing to dry thoroughly, but I had to be at work at five o’clock.

I delayed as long as I could until I absolutely had to leave for work, knowing that I would not be able to return home before proceeding to my job. Therefore I drove directly from the laundromat at Rustic Hills North, going north on Academy Boulevard. I intended to travel a little used (by me) shortcut to work, Templeton Gap Road.

As I hurried to work driving north on Academy Boulevard, at approximately ten minutes before five o’clock, Elaine’s car passed before me. She had been driving south, and turned left directly

in front of me, pulling onto Halfturn Road. When I got off work that night I drove by the corner of Halfturn Road and Academy Boulevard, where I had seen her that afternoon. Her car was parked at the complex on the corner.

I found her name on one of the mailboxes. I realized that, if I had continued in the general direction that I had driving that morning after The Lord said, "First, turn right," I would have arrived at this corner at a couple of minutes before five o'clock a.m. As I had prayed. As I had believed, before the liar stole my answer. And in so answering my prayer again, exactly twelve hours after I lost the first answer, The Lord had delivered another message to me. He gave me an answer to the question that we never like to ask: "When, Lord?" The answer that should come from us to Him: "In Your time, not in mine."

*~Mark A. Rector at Lazy R Ranch*

**ADDENDUM: 15 APRIL, 2001**

Just now, as I was correcting a few typos I noticed in this text, it occurred to me what she may have been thinking, that had so frightened her: she had come home expecting me to still be in the second room, and the enemy had used the opportunity to attack her faith. Perhaps on returning home from work that evening, she had attempted to contact me, contrary to what I had required that she promise the evening before: to NOT disturb me except for a life-or-death emergency. In any case, she had come home and discovered me gone, and was afraid that The Lord had taken me in some manner. I do not know for a fact if this was the cause of her extreme discomfort and unalienation, but it suddenly seemed to make sense. I do reserve the right to delete this at some time in the future, if either The Lord or my own abilities cause me in the near future to realize this all is just a ration of self-justification on my part. If that is the case, I apologize in advance.

*~Mark A. Rector at Lazy R Ranch*

p.s. I capitalize "The" when I write "The Lord," unlike the commonly accepted practise of leaving the article "the" uncapitalized--because His name is "The Lord" and we capitalize proper names.

If you would like me to post more such topics, or if you would like to submit a suggestion, or if you just want to express yourself,

**send me an email:**

**lrranch@nlci.com**

If you would like for me to start a "Bulletin board," "Chat Room," or to post your comments on this website, please let me know in your email to me.

I will not change the content of your messages [except, perhaps, to correct any spelling or grammatical oversights--none of us are perfect, even though we are ordered to be perfect; even then, I will attempt to contact you--via return email--before posting any such minor content-neutral alterations].