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# **The Miracle in Room 21**

**179-A**

**Series: Miscellaneous Messages**

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# The Miracle in Room 21

We are about to view in the theater of faith, a four-act play entitled, “The Miracle in Room 21”. We hope it will be a blessing to you. Let me introduce the cast of characters:

Father: Abraham (Abe)

Mother: Sarah

Miracle: Isaac

Miracle Worker: Jehovah God

Plan B: Hagar

Angel of the Lord: Jesus Christ

Nurses, Doctors: (FOMI - Figment of my imagination)

Our outline looks like this:

Act I- A Surprise at Genesis General Hospital

Act II- Memories of a saint (Genesis 15:1-21:8)

The key to the womb (Genesis 15:1-6)

God’s Rolex (Genesis 16:1)

A Message to runaways (Genesis 16:2-16)

Act III- A Promise Secure (Genesis 17,18,21)

Act IV- God’s Greatest Answer of All

For a capsule review of the drama, we turn to Hebrews, chapter eleven, where we read:

Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was passed age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the seashore innumerable.

(Hebrews 11:11,12)

## ACT I- A SURPRISE AT GENESIS GENERAL HOSPITAL

Two dead folks brought forth life. That’s the story line in a nutshell. The scene begins in the emergency room of the

maternity wing in Genesis General Hospital. It is late at night, and a handful of nurses and doctors are scurrying about tending to the needs of their patients. The atmosphere is relaxed, but professional.

Suddenly, the double doors swing open and two wheel chairs roll in, pushed by two apparently faithful servants. The couple is old, *very old*. But there seems to be a twinkle in their eyes and a glow on their faces uncommon for their ages and certainly uncommon to an emergency room at midnight.

The admitting nurse, one Sylvia Guggenheim, looks up from her paper work and is startled, to say the least, to see the two of them. She addresses them somewhat harshly. “And where can I direct you folks? This is the maternity wing.”

“What He hath promised, He is able also to perform.”<sup>1</sup> the old man replied somewhat boldly. “Call Dr. Rubenstein in geriatrics,” Nurse Guggenheim shouted into the intercom. “No, no, you don’t understand,” the kindly old man countered, “my wife is going to have a baby!”

“Sure she is!” Nurse Guggenheim laughed, “never mind, get Dr. Kline in Psychiatry!”

“Oh, my dear child,” the man replied. “My wife is going to bear me a son in her old age.” (That word “son” should have aroused some curiosity, as well, since sonnograms hadn’t been invented.) “And our seed will be as numerous as the sand on the seashore. What he hath promised, He is able also to perform.”

“Humor him,” the nurse whispered, “Get them to fill out an admittance form.”

Name please? “Sarah” she replied. “It used to be Sarai, but God changed it.” “Age?” “Ninety.” Chuckles could be heard in the background. Symptoms? “I’m going to have a baby!” she replied. “What God hath promised, He is able also to perform.” (More giggling in the background.)

“Oh, I laughed, too, when the angel told us,” Sarah quietly responded. The nurse ignored that. “Husband’s name?” “Abraham,” the old gent proudly announced. “It used to be Abram...” The nurse interrupted... “I know, I know, before God changed it.”

“Age?” “100,” the old man beamed. “All right,” the nurse

<sup>1</sup> Romans 4:21

## The Miracle in Room 21

replied, “just follow me and we’ll have the doctor take a look at the lady and see about that baby.” With that she winked at the other nurses and began to roll Mrs. Sarah into the observation area. “You wait right here, Sir,” she cautioned Abe, “we’ll call you later.”

Abe was still beaming. “You’ll see,” he began...but by now the nurses all chimed in unison, “What God hath promised, He is able also to perform.” Only a few minutes passed before the phone rang. Nurse Guggenheim picked it up. Her eyes widened until they almost popped out of her head. She dropped her cup of coffee and it ran like a river over the keyboard of her new IBM (Israeli Business Machines) computer. She jumped up and racing from her desk, shouted to the others, “You’ll never believe what’s happening in Room 21. There’s a miracle in room 21.”

Several hours have passed now, and a bewildered Dr. Goldstein emerges and enters the waiting room. The nurses huddle around him. “I can’t explain it,” he began, “but it’s a boy. It’s a boy! And this woman is well past age. Who happens to be the father of this miracle child?” he went on, somehow expecting a much younger man to emerge. The nurses pointed to the 100 year old Abraham, dozing in his wheelchair. Dr. Goldstein began to feel faint for the first time since graduating med school four years before.

He awakened the old man carefully. “It’s a boy, Sir,” he began, “and it’s a medical miracle.” A smile crossed the face of father Abraham. “Yes, Doctor, it is a miracle. But I believe God, that whatsoever He hath promised, He is able also to perform. The boy’s name, Doctor, shall be called Isaac. Would you like to hear the story?”

As the doctors, nurses, orderlies and patients awaiting treatment all gathered around, the elderly statesman drew up in his wheelchair, smiled broadly, and told this story:

“It all began some 25 years ago. I was a much younger man, of course, full of vision, hopes, and dreams. And God spoke to me and said.” (Screen fades and we see emerge a much younger Abraham, the Shekinah glory of God surrounding him, and across the bottom of the screen, we read, Genesis 12:1-4.)

Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go forth from your country,  
And from your relatives And from your father’s house, To  
the land which I will show you;

And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And

## The Miracle in Room 21

make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing;

And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

So Abram went forth as the LORD had spoken to him; and Lot went with him. Now Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. (Genesis 12:1-4 NASB77)

“Well,” Abe continued, “a lot happened after that, and Lot had a lot to do with what happened next.” He waited for the others to chuckle, but somehow they were too much in shock to laugh. He went on. “One day, God spoke to me again, this time to impart a vision more fully describing what He planned to do. I was amazed, excited, and ready!” (Scene fades.)

### ACT II- MEMORIES OF A SAINT (Genesis 15:1-21:8)

#### The Key to the Womb (Genesis 15:1-6)

After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, “Do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you; Your reward shall be very great.”

And Abram said, “O Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, since I am childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?”

And Abram said, “Since Thou hast given no offspring to me, one born in my house is my heir.”

Then behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, “This man will not be your heir; but one who shall come forth from your own body, he shall be your heir.”

And He took him outside and said, “Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.”

Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness. (NASB77)

The scene fades back to the waiting room. Abe continues. “But though I believed God, and God counted my belief as righteousness, as time went by, we began to get discouraged.” And hanging his head in shame, Abe began to recall what happened next.

#### God’s Rolex (Genesis 16:1-4)

A picture from Genesis 16 tells the story,

## The Miracle in Room 21

Now Sarai, Abram's wife had borne him no children, and she had an Egyptian maid whose name was Hagar.

So Sarai said to Abram, "Now behold, the LORD has prevented me from bearing children. Please go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children through her." And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai.

And after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Abram's wife Sarai took Hagar the Egyptian, her maid, and gave her to her husband Abram as his wife.

And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived; and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her sight. (NASB77)

"We forgot something!" Abe began to weep quietly. "We forgot that the key to womb rests in the hand of a sovereign God. How could I forget? My Father's word explains it over and over. With that, he began to quote passages from his heart that confirmed God's control over the birth of children. The first was from his own life; the others stretched the span of time into the time when Messiah would come. Here are a few the old man shared:

And Abraham prayed to God; and God healed Abimelech and his wife and his maids, so that they bore children.

For the LORD had closed fast all the wombs of the household of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham's wife.

(Genesis. 20:17,18 NASB77)

And they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both advanced in years. (Luke 1:7 NASB77)

But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John.

"And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. (Luke 1:13,14 NASB77)

but to Hannah he would give a double portion, for he loved Hannah, but the LORD had closed her womb.

Her rival, however, would provoke her bitterly to irritate her, because the LORD had closed her womb.

(I Samuel 1:5,6 NASB77)

And it came about in due time, after Hannah had conceived, that she gave birth to a son; and she named him Samuel, saying, "Because I have asked him of the LORD."

(I Samuel 1:20 NASB77)

## The Miracle in Room 21

Then Jacob's anger burned against Rachel, and he said,  
"Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the  
fruit of the womb?" (Genesis 30:2 NASB77)

Then God remembered Rachel, and God gave heed to her  
and opened her womb. (Genesis 30:22 NASB77)

"Oh, beloved doctors and nurses," the kindly old man whispered, "God holds the key to the wombs of His saints. He owns their physical life. He controls the day they are born and the day they die. Oh, that we could relax and trust Him. God wanted to place a sign over our house that said, 'NO HELP WANTED: MIRACLES HAPPEN HERE.' But I was impatient. God seemed so slow my solution was to help Him out in the flesh. The result was a disaster. It always is."

The screen fades momentarily and the voice of God speaks to us. "Oh, Beloved, maybe it's *your* problem too. You get a promise from God, maybe about a loved one who is lost or in trouble, maybe about your health, maybe about your job, and you believe God for that promise. But time s-t-r-e-t-c-h-e-s out and nothing appears to be happening. Instead of your faith growing as the heavens are silent, you begin to think, "God's forgotten," or "maybe I misunderstood," or the ultimate lie, "God helps those who help themselves."

"That's what happened to me," Abe agreed, "I wanted to keep from embarrassing God. He had made me a promise that it seemed He somehow wasn't going to keep. It had been reported in the Jerusalem Gazette, mentioned on the ten o'clock news on WORD, and you could hear it whispered all over. "Abe's going to have seed like the sand on the seashore. But shucks," Abe went on, "I didn't have enough sand to rub between my toes." Sarah seemed to assume the guilt and encouraged me to do whatever I could to give God a hand. She said, "There's Hagar." "Enter Plan B," the old man said, tears running down his leathery face."

"We had God's promise. But we didn't understand God's timing and we confused the delay with ineptitude or inactivity on God's part. Oh, Beloved," Abe looked intently at the now mushrooming crowd gathered around him, "time belongs to God. He invented it. He is unhindered by it. He controls it. He can even make the sun stand still. Time will end one day and we will enter that cycle of eternity whenever He deems it proper. God owns the clock. Time is His ally; time is His tool. Satan can control circumstances as

## The Miracle in Room 21

God allows, but the hands on the clock belong to God. And what He needs most in our lives is time.”

Needless to say, it got very quiet. Abe continued, “Several things happen when we give God time.

1- We have no choice but to trust Him.

2- We give Him a chance to develop our character

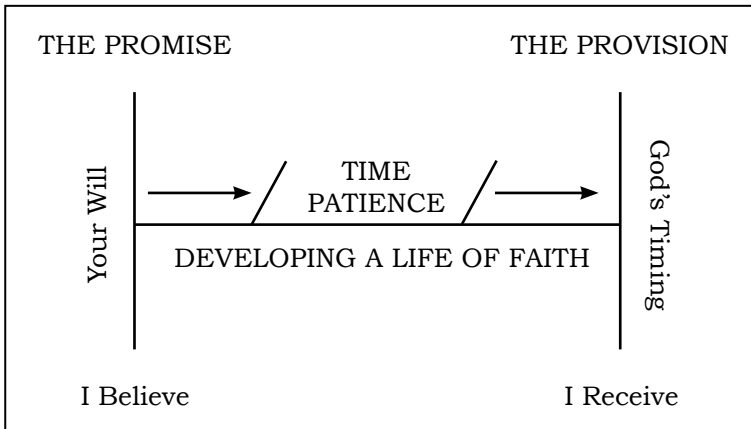
3- Finally, we use up all our resources until we can't share His glory anymore.

When all that has been done and we are adequately out of the way, then in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, He accomplishes His purpose *just at the appointed time*. I call it the Hebrews 10:36 principle,” he added. “It won't be written for a few thousand years, but this is what it will say,”

For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. (Hebrews 10:36,37 KJV)

This diagram explains it:



“I think it means that the difference between God's will and God's timing is everything. We think we know His will, then chafe and fume until God comes to our rescue, and if He doesn't do it right away, we try to help Him out. What He wants to do is stretch us while we wait for His will to unfold, learning ever so slowly, yet ever so clearly to trust Him. Anyway, I listened to Sarah, and she had been listening to the voice of the stranger, just like Eve. The



results were trouble, indeed.”

“This wasn’t the first time I had abdicated my role as spiritual leader, either,” Abe muttered. I couldn’t say no to Lot. I couldn’t admit Sarah was my wife—I tried to pretend she was my sister to protect myself—and now I listened to a plan borne of emotion and guilt.”

“You women,” Abe looked at the nurses standing by, “you women don’t make it so easy on us guys. Force us to go back to God’s promises and stand on them. And guys,” Abe went on, “we ought to know better.”

#### A message to runaways

Abe seemed to feel better after his little sermonette. But he didn’t stop there. “So many lessons we can learn after the fact. The first one was, ‘when you violate a Biblical principle, the home begins to fall apart’. And ours sure did. The second principle was, ‘jealousy and condescension lead to rebellion’. Hagar couldn’t handle the fact that she was with child and Sarah wasn’t. So she began to chide my sweet wife, and you can imagine what happened. It went like this”,

And after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Abram’s wife Sarai took Hagar the Egyptian, her maid, and gave her to her husband Abram as his wife.

And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived; and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her sight.

And Sarai said to Abram, “May the wrong done me be upon you. I gave my maid into your arms; but when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her sight. May the LORD judge between you and me.”

But Abram said to Sarai, “Behold, your maid is in your power; do to her what is good in your sight.” So Sarai treated her harshly, and she fled from her presence.

(Genesis 16:3-6 NASB77)

“I guess you can guess what happened next,” the kindly old man went on. “Hagar split. She took off. She became a runaway. Can’t necessarily blame her. But boy, did God give us some lessons for runaway children from her story. Look what happened,”

Now the angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur.

## The Miracle in Room 21

And he said, “Hagar, Sarai’s maid, where have you come from and where are you going?” And she said, “I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai.”

Then the angel of the LORD said to her, “Return to your mistress, and submit yourself to her authority.”

Moreover, the angel of the LORD said to her, “I will greatly multiply your descendants so that they shall be too many to count.”

The angel of the LORD said to her further, “Behold, you are with child, And you shall bear a son; And you shall call his name Ishmael, Because the LORD has given heed to your affliction.

“And he will be a wild donkey of a man, His hand will be against everyone, And everyone’s hand will be against him; And he will live to the east of all his brothers.”

Then she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, “Thou art a God who sees”; for she said, “Have I even remained alive here after seeing Him?”

Therefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered.

So Hagar bore Abram a son; and Abram called the name of his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael.

And Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to him. (Genesis 16:7-16 NASB77)

God’s message to runaways is:

- 1- No matter how hot is gets, don’t run.
- 2- You cannot run from God.
- 3- You’ll always end up in the wilderness when you do.
- 4- Once you get tired, God will be there waiting, but you’ll have wasted so much time, compounding your problem.
- 5- God will send you back to the place of your rebellion.
- 6- God will bless you when you return and submit.

### ACT III- A PROMISE SECURE (Genesis 17,18,21)

“Oh, did I learn a lot about obedience during that episode,” Abe continued, “and I couldn’t help but wonder if with all the help I tried to give God and the mess I had made, if His promise would still come true. Then I remembered that God had attached no strings. It’s almost as if He knew how little faith I would have.”

## The Miracle in Room 21

With that Abe winked at the crowd as if to acknowledge that if ever there was someone worthy of the kind of blessing he had just received it sure wasn't old Abe.

"Ah, beloved ones," he started up again, "then it happened. Another 14 years had passed. Why, it was just last year. God spoke to me again. It went something like this,"

Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless.

"And I will establish My covenant between Me and you, And I will multiply you exceedingly."

And Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying,

"As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, And you shall be the father of a multitude of nations.

"No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I will make you the father of a multitude of nations.

"And I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come forth from you.

"And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you.

"And I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

God said further to Abraham, "Now as for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations." (Genesis 17:1-9 NASB77)

"Not long after that," Abe went on, "Sarah and I were out on the plains of Mamre and it was terribly hot." (Scene fades again.)

Now the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day.

And when he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the earth,

and said, "My lord, if now I have found favor in your sight, please do not pass your servant by.

## The Miracle in Room 21

“Please let a little water be brought and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree;

and I will bring a piece of bread, that you may refresh yourselves; after that you may go on, since you have visited your servant.” And they said, “So do, as you have said.”

So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah, and said, “Quickly, prepare three measures of fine flour, knead it, and make bread cakes.”

Abraham also ran to the herd, and took a tender and choice calf, and gave it to the servant; and he hurried to prepare it.

And he took curds and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and placed it before them; and he was standing by them under the tree as they ate.

Then they said to him, “Where is Sarah your wife?” And he said, “Behold, in the tent.”

And he said, “I will surely return to you at this time next year; and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son.” And Sarah was listening at the tent door, which was behind him.

Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; Sarah was past childbearing.

And Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I have become old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?”

And the LORD said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh, saying, ‘Shall I indeed bear a child, when I am so old?’

“Is anything too difficult for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, at this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son.”  
(Genesis 18:1-14 NASB77)

And the LORD said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do,

since Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed?

“For I have chosen him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice; in order that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him.”  
(Genesis 18:17-19 NASB77)

Tears began to run down the cheeks of the old man now. “Oh, my wonderful God never stopped loving me. He never changed His plan to bless me; He never wavered in His promise. Oh, how faithless I was, yet, He referred to me as one having “faith”. How

## The Miracle in Room 21

could it be? I guess the truth will be explained when Messiah comes. He will say this,”

...for verily, I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. (Matthew 17:20 KJV)

“Faith? Oh, how little I had,” Abe went on. “But it was enough to please God. One thing I did believe, though, I believed He is the I AM. And He counted it unto me for righteousness. Even after that, I made a fool of myself again with Abimelech. I seem to never learn. But nevertheless, His word was faithful. And it all led up to this *miracle in room 21*. Time at last for the promise to be fulfilled. God will write about it like this,”

Then the LORD took note of Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did for Sarah as He had promised.

So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the appointed time of which God had spoken to him.

And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore to him, Isaac.

(Genesis 21:1-3 NASB77)

Abe’s voice was soft, now. “God kept His word. When there was no way man could claim credit for it, God kept His word. He always will. Don’t you see, folks, *this is not our child, it is God’s child. He did it.*” And before he could say a word, the whole hospital chimed in, “Whatsoever He hath promised, He is able also to perform.”

### ACT IV- GOD’S GREATEST ANSWER OF ALL

The scene changes now. It is several thousand years later. The apostle Paul is addressing the church at Rome. The Messiah has come. The Promised One has fulfilled all the promises of His coming. And Paul is looking for an illustration of faith. Does he choose Moses? Elijah? David? Solomon? No, he reaches into his book of life and calls to remembrance old Abe and the miracle in room 21. Old Abe, sometimes faithless, sometimes weak, sometimes disobedient, but at the moment in time when God confronted him with the promise, *he believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.*

The miracle in room 21. May we never forget it. Three things stand out above all the rest.

1- God is not finished with you yet. Age is not the issue. Faith is the issue. God may not give you another child at 100, but He may well give you more spiritual children. It isn't over until it's over. And the weaker we get, the stronger He is. If you are in the "twilight years" don't let them become the "no light" years. Take the investment God has made in your life and make it count. Pour your life into younger men and women. Share the signposts of your journey with others coming along behind you. Don't become selfish or self-centered. Even if you haven't enough strength to move, *you can pray*. And you can pray with understanding young folks have never known.

2- Don't confuse the will of God with the timing of God. God may have given you a promise for a loved one or for your ministry or for your marriage. And you may have become "weary in well-doing." You may have confused God's apparent slowness as a change in plans. Not so, beloved. The slower He works, the greater the blessing. God does not manufacture on the assembly line. He heats each vessel to its maximum so that it will cure *just right*. You can't rush that. Don't try. Abraham did. The mess he made is still with us.

3- Finally, remember. God's greatest whisper of love comes as He refuses to give you what you want when you want it so you will instead become what He wants you to be. Patience is what He's after. And time is what it takes. The sweetest words God can whisper to you are these: "I love you my child, just wait." This poem expresses that thought,

WAIT

Desperately, helplessly, longingly, I cried.  
Quietly, patiently, lovingly, he replied.  
I pled, and I wept for a clue to my fate,  
And the Master so gently said, "Child, you must wait."

"Wait? You say wait?" my indignant reply.  
"Lord, I need answers, I need to know why!  
Is your hand shortened? Or have you not heard?  
By faith I have asked, and I'm claiming your Word.

"My future, and all to which I can relate  
Hangs in the balance, and you tell me wait?  
I'm needing a "yes" a go-ahead sign,  
Or even a "no," to which I can resign.

The Miracle in Room 21

“And, Lord, you have promised that if we believe,  
We need but to ask, and we shall receive.  
And, Lord, I’ve been asking, and this is my cry:  
I’m weary of asking —I need a reply!”

Then, quietly, softly, I learned of my fate  
As my Master replied once again, “You must wait.”  
So I slumped in my chair, defeated and taut  
And grumbled to God, “So I’m waiting, for what?”

He seemed then to kneel and His eyes met with mine  
And He tenderly said “I could give you a sign,”  
I could shake the heavens, darken the sun,  
Raise the dead, cause the mountains to run.

“All you seek I could give, and pleased you would be,  
You would have what you want, but you wouldn’t know Me.  
You’d not know the depth of My love for each saint;  
You’d not know the power that I give to the faint.

You’d not learn to see through clouds of despair;  
You’d not learn to trust, just by knowing I’m there.  
You’d not know the joy of resting in Me,  
When darkness and silence was all you could see.

“You would never experience that fullness of love,  
As the peace of My Spirit descends like a dove.  
You would know that I give, and save, for a start,  
But you’d not know the depth of the beat of My heart.

“The glow of my comfort late in the night,  
The faith that I give when you walk without sight,  
The depth that’s beyond getting just what you ask  
From an infinite God that makes what you have last.

“And you never would know, should your pain quickly flee,  
What it means that, “My grace is sufficient for thee.”  
Yes, your dreams for that loved one o’er night could come true,  
But the loss—if you lost what I’m doing in you.

“So be silent, my child, and in time you will see  
That the greatest of gifts is to get to know Me.  
And though oft may my answers seem terribly late,  
My most precious answer of all is still...*wait!*”

The Miracle in Room 21

Abraham believed God—that “whatsoever He had promised, He was able also to perform”. So he waited and he waited and he waited. It seemed to take forever. But at the time appointed, and *not one second sooner*, God kept His promise and Abraham waited no more.

Oh, Beloved, God will come through  
He will provide all He’s promised to you,  
You are safe and secure in His promise sublime,  
God may seem slow, *but He’s always on time.*

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