

Remember the Whole Way

A Journey of God's Guidance, Trials, and Miracles

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Chapter 1

1

Only Remember All Your Way

Usually, creative people who reach old age begin to write memories, going back to their past life's path. I thought this would not happen to me. I hoped that even in old age I would stay active in my calling from God, forgetting the past and reaching forward. But sometimes God changes our plans when we least expect it.

There was a time when I gave myself to writing, but later I stopped and thought I would never return to it. But God's ways are not our ways, and His plans are not our plans. After many years, the Holy Spirit began to push me strongly to do what I did not want to do: to share the lessons God taught me in my life.

God's lessons are important. They show us our weakness in different life or spiritual situations. But they also help us understand and fix things according to God's will.

Chapter 2

2

Many things God spoke to people long ago, especially to His chosen nation Israel, are still important today for us, the Church. In Hebrews it says:

“God, who at many times and in many ways spoke to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He made heir of all things, through whom He made the world.”

Now I want to give you an important Bible text from Deuteronomy:

“And remember all the way which the Lord your God led you these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you, to test you, and to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. He humbled you, let you hunger, and fed you with manna, which you did not know nor did your fathers know, so that you would understand that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word from the mouth of the Lord. Your clothes did not wear out, your feet did not swell these forty years. Know in your heart that the Lord your God corrects you as a man corrects his son. So keep the commandments of the Lord your God, walk in His ways, and fear Him.”

This text shows us what we often go through in our own lives.

Chapter 3

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This also describes my own life. The Lord has led me for almost forty-six years now. I am ready to talk about it clearly.

Before I explain the path God led me and my family through, I want to tell about some important events that shaped it.

One day, while reading the Bible, the Holy Spirit stopped me on this text:

“If the root is holy, so are the branches.” (Romans 11:16)

The Spirit gave me the meaning: “The root is you, the last link in your family line. You carry responsibility before God for your whole family line.”

Before I came to God, I was under heavy alcohol addiction and could not free myself.

Chapter 4

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I worked as a loader at a food factory. Every day more than twenty tons of goods went through my hands. My pay was good. On top of that, we sold stolen meat products. Life seemed successful. Our fridge was full of stolen food, and my wife and I lived in plenty.

I worked seven hours a day with one day off. From lunchtime, we began drinking, and we didn't stop until late at night. After work, we carried stolen food to our contacts, and with the money we got, we drank until morning. Our wild nights ended in restaurants, and then we went home by taxi late at night, completely drunk.

After a year and a half at the factory, I was completely broken. It seemed my life was heading to a tragic end. But at that time, my mother's prayers came before God, and He started to set things in order.

Chapter 5

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One of my older sisters, who was a strong believer, lived in Poland. She married a Polish man and stayed there. She invited my mom and me to visit her. Even though Soviet authorities made it hard, we managed to go. We planned to stay two weeks, but by God's plan we stayed a month.

Among believers, I had no access to alcohol. I had free time, so I read a lot of Christian books in Russian that my sister's husband had. Most were small booklets about the lives and faith of believers who gave themselves to God. These inspired me deeply and made me think about God.

At the same time, the Holy Spirit was working on my wife, Lyuba, but in a very different way.

Our neighbor, knowing I had gone to Poland, asked Lyuba to keep her moonshine machine at our house for a while. She was afraid her husband would throw it away. But as soon as that thing came into our home, and since the devil saw that God was working with us, he attacked us.

Lyuba began to feel demonic fear. Every night, exactly at midnight, she saw with open eyes a carriage filled with demonic figures enter our apartment.

She stayed awake all night with the light on, sitting on the couch next to our baby's crib, terrified. At six in the morning, the carriage left, only to return the next night. This happened every night for a whole month, until I came back from Poland.

Chapter 6

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When I came back home, I returned to my job. For another month, I was still under alcohol addiction. But after the trip to Poland, I began to think it was time to live differently.

One Saturday, my mom invited Lyuba and me to church on Sunday. That day my work ended earlier, so I had one day to rest before the new work week. I told Lyuba, "Let's go to church, so my friends won't come and drag me into drinking again."

Chapter 7

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At the prayer house, they announced our decision to visit church, and believers prayed that we would not change our minds. During the service, all the preachers called sinners to repent. We knew they were talking only about us, because everyone else in the church was already a believer.

We felt nothing and just waited for the service to end. But when the pastor again called people to repent, something happened to me. I stood up and walked toward the pulpit, as if drawn. I felt like a rabbit hypnotized by a snake.

Standing in front of the pastor, I realized it was too late to turn back. Hundreds of eyes were watching me. Then, repeating after the pastor, I prayed the sinner's prayer. God's fear broke me, and I understood there was no way back.

That moment I was born again. I was completely freed from all addictions.

The Bible says: "Whoever is in Christ is a new creation. The old has passed away. Behold, all things have become new."

When someone is born again, they don't need human rehabilitation methods. Jesus said: "If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."

But Jesus also warned: when an evil spirit leaves a person, it may return with seven worse spirits if the person does not fill their life with God. So after freedom, if believers don't dedicate themselves to serving God, they are in danger.

The Bible says: "Be alert and watchful, because your enemy the devil walks around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in faith..."

Chapter 8

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Very soon after being born again, I realized that though the Lord had freed me from alcohol, theft, and bad habits, I was not fully dedicated to Him. I was still under the pull of this world.

I had to fight with the desires of my flesh, which came through other ways.

Before turning to God, I subscribed to several newspapers. After work, I always read them carefully. I filled myself with worldly information and lived by it. The Word of God had no place in me.

The next year, I stopped my subscriptions. For a while, this closed the door to worldly influence. But soon another source opened. At my workplace, there was a stand where fresh newspapers were posted every day. I was strongly drawn to it, and again I filled myself with worldly news.

Realizing I could not handle it alone, I asked God for help. Soon, the stand was removed.

Chapter 9

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But another problem remained: my dependence on television.

I loved soccer and other sports. I thought watching games was not a sin. But in our church, this was not encouraged. Lyuba did not enjoy it, but I always wanted to watch. We had a strict ban on movies, which we considered demonic influence.

But when watching sports, if Lyuba left the room, I quickly turned the channel to a movie, lowering the sound, then switched back when she returned.

I realized I was still under the spirit of the world. Again, I prayed for complete freedom. Soon, our TV broke down, and we threw it away.

After that, we were fully free from worldly information. Lyuba and I gave ourselves fully to serving God.

Chapter 10

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For believers today, living in the time of technology, my story may sound strange. But back then, believers lived in the fear of God and stayed free from worldly influence.

The Bible says: “I urge you, brothers, by the mercy of God, offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God. Do not conform to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may know God’s will—His good, pleasing, and perfect will.”

After being freed from worldly influence, Lyuba and I experienced full freedom in Christ Jesus. Apart from caring for our family and serving God, nothing else interested us.

This was our time of “first love.” It lasted fifteen years. It was full of the greatest and most blessed events in our life and ministry.

Jesus told His disciples before He went to heaven: “It is not for you to know the times and dates the Father has set by His own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. And you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Chapter 11

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These words of Jesus were given to His disciples before He went up to heaven. But this great command was not only for them. It is for every generation of believers in the Church of Jesus Christ.

The words of Jesus came true on the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came down on His disciples. In another place, the Bible explains this command more deeply:

“These signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will drive out demons, they will speak in new tongues, they will pick up snakes, and if they drink anything deadly, it will not harm them. They will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”

This great command shows the power of God working both in our lives and in our ministry. I want to share some examples God gave me in my walk of faith.

Chapter 12

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To provide for my family, I went back to my old job as a loader. The work was very hard but paid well.

One day, while loading food from a freezer, I caught a terrible chill. The next morning I couldn't sit or bend. My spine felt like a metal rod, and my collarbone stuck out.

My local doctor sent me to different specialists. None could give a diagnosis. Finally, I saw an elderly female cancer doctor. She could not explain my illness either, but she gave a sad conclusion: my tests and x-rays looked like lung cancer. She sent me to the oncology institute for treatment.

This happened on a Friday. On Sunday, my wife and I went to church. Our church was not registered, so we held services in the forest to avoid government persecution. That day, visiting brothers who prayed for healing came.

During prayer for the sick, one of them, not knowing my problem, laid his hand on the place where my liver was. By faith, I accepted my healing. I still felt sick, but I testified during the service that God had healed me of lung cancer.

Chapter 13

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On Monday, I went to the oncology institute. But my most important x-ray had been lost, so they made me new x-rays and repeated my tests. All results showed my lungs were clean. I was healed.

But God had more plans. Though I was healed from cancer, my body was still partly paralyzed, so I couldn't go back to my heavy work.

Believing friends offered me a job as a night watchman at a car base. The salary was four times lower, but it gave me time to pray and read the Bible.

I worked one day and then had three days off. At night, I had my own room with a small bed. No one disturbed me. On Sundays, if my shift was scheduled, I would ask the mechanic for a break, go to church, and return.

Months passed, but God still provided for my family. One day I told God I was happy to stay in this job. At that moment, His power touched me, and my body was fully healed and renewed.

Chapter 14

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My old job left me with no time for my family. All my free time went to recovering from the hard labor. But a wife needs a husband, and children need a father who spends time with them. God gave us families, and He will ask how we cared for them.

The Bible says: "If anyone does not provide for his own family, especially his own household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."

That is why God held back my full healing for a while. He wanted me to learn to care for my family and also give time for serving Him.

Both family and ministry need balance. If not, problems will come in both.

It is very important to see God's plan even in uncomfortable situations. God always works with many purposes at once.

Chapter 15

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Now I want to share about the power of God in ministry. This is not about theology, but about practical ministry that solves spiritual and life problems of believers.

During the time of our “first love” and full dedication, we often traveled with young people to small local churches in villages. Most people there were elderly. They welcomed us with joy, and we encouraged them with our service.

One time, we arrived late, when the service was almost over. The pastor, not wanting to upset us, asked me, as the leader of the youth group, to pray for needs.

An elderly woman came forward. On her way to the evening service, she slipped on ice and badly injured herself. Her whole right side was damaged. She could barely drag her right leg, couldn't lift her right arm, and the right side of her head was numb.

During prayer, I laid hands on her and declared healing in Jesus' name. But nothing happened at first. Then the Holy Spirit gave me a word of knowledge.

I told her to start lifting her injured leg upward, each time saying, “I do this in the name of Jesus Christ.” She obeyed, and each time her leg rose higher. Soon, she was fully healed.

She then did the same with her arm. At first, she could not bring it down because of fear. I commanded her loudly in Jesus' name to move it. She obeyed, and was completely healed.

Chapter 16

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The lesson God taught me that day I later used in many other prayers for healing. Three things are always important:

Faith in God's promises.

A close relationship with God to hear His voice.

Using the authority God gave us in Christ.

When we follow these, healing ministry is successful. If we ignore them, we may fail.

The Bible says: "If we are unfaithful, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself."

Let me share another example, this time with people who did not know God.

During the time of Perestroika, the government allowed more freedom. We were permitted to visit patients in hospitals. In one ward, people had back problems and nerve diseases. We went after dinner in the evenings, sang hymns, preached, and called people to repent. Many liked it and some turned to God. Afterward, we prayed for healing.

Chapter 17

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One time, as we prayed, the power of the Holy Spirit came. Healings began to happen.

An old woman who could hardly walk was told to walk around the room, lifting her legs higher each time, saying, "I do this in the name of Jesus Christ." Soon she was walking confidently, fully healed.

Then a man with severe back pain came forward. He could not sit or bend. The Holy Spirit led me to use authority. I commanded him loudly in Jesus' name to bend and straighten, to sit and rise. He obeyed and was instantly healed.

Chapter 18

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Another lesson God taught me came during a visit to a sister in the countryside.

She was old and lived alone. Long ago, when she believed in God, her husband left her. Her only son, whom she loved, lived in the city.

One weekend, her son visited. But the next day, police came and arrested him for theft. She fell into deep depression. A spirit of weakness bent her body at a ninety-degree angle. She also had asthma, so she slept sitting up, because lying down she could not breathe.

Chapter 19

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While talking with her, God gave me a word of knowledge: she loved her son more than God, breaking the first commandment. This opened the door for the spirits of weakness and asthma.

When I told her this, she admitted she hadn't realized it. At that moment, the power of the Holy Spirit came.

The chair I sat on felt like fire. The Spirit lifted me up, placed my hands on her head, and I loudly commanded her body to straighten. Her spine cracked, and she stood upright. At the same time, the spirit of asthma left with a loud sound.

Before, she always cried loudly, even in church. But after freedom, she shone with heavenly joy. At first, people thought she went insane from stress, but soon they saw God had healed her.

Chapter 20

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After her healing, Lyuba and I visited an old man who was bedridden, near death. We knelt at his bed, laid hands on him, and declared healing in Jesus' name. Suddenly, the power of God came. He jumped out of bed and began running around his house.

But this was only preparation. God had something greater to do in that village.

These events brought the fear of God on all who saw. People realized God had come for an urgent purpose. The reason became clear only later, after God finished His work.

Not long after, a group of young believing sisters came from Russia to work in the harvest. With them was a young single brother. The sisters all hoped he would marry one of them, but instead, he returned to Russia, married there, and came back with his wife. He later became pastor of the local church.

The sisters, however, never married. Hidden jealousy and offense grew among them for decades. God was about to break these chains.

Chapter 21

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The breakthrough came suddenly, when no one expected it.

After a Sunday service, we stayed for fellowship. During the talk, the Holy Spirit began to uncover the hidden things in the hearts of those sisters. At first, they resisted and didn't want to admit their sin. But then one sister broke down and opened her heart. The others followed her example.

There was deep repentance and freedom. They forgave each other and cried, asking for forgiveness.

Only the power of God can untie knots tied by the devil. I have seen this many times in my walk of faith, even today.

Chapter 22

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Serving God is our calling. But we also live in the flesh, in a physical world.

It is one thing when believers live in a free country. But in the Soviet Union, the government tried to keep Christians in fear, to persecute, to mock, and to make life hard.

This happened not only from the authorities, but from all levels of society poisoned by atheist propaganda.

It was a narrow and thorny path. Yet God always kept His Church, and the gates of hell did not overcome it.

Believers of past generations did not avoid suffering for Christ. They did not look for the world's approval. They called themselves strangers and travelers on this earth.

Now I want to share how God led me and my family through this hard time. It did not destroy us but strengthened us to trust Him with our lives.

Chapter 23

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In the Soviet Union, atheism was taught in all schools. Believing students were mocked and pressured to give up their faith. If they refused, they could be expelled or blocked from higher education.

This propaganda was also in regular schools. Teachers told kids from Christian families not to follow their parents, warning them not to become outcasts.

Children were constantly told: "There is no God. Live like all Soviet children." If a child refused, they were mocked in front of the class. Other kids were taught to laugh at them.

Some of my children faced this, since they were already in school then.

Chapter 24

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In primary school, every child had to join the “Octobrists.” They wore a badge with young Lenin’s face, the founder of the atheist state.

In middle school, children had to join the Pioneers, wearing red ties as a sign of loyalty to communism.

In high school, they were pushed into the Komsomol, the youth organization created to keep communist ideology alive.

My children refused to join any of these. Because of that, they were treated as outsiders at school.

Local authorities often called Lyuba and me, along with our children, for meetings. In front of our kids, they scolded us for “forcing religion” on them and pressured the kids to reject us.

Even at my workplace, atheist propagandists would come. They held meetings where they told everyone, including believers, that God does not exist. The goal was to turn workers against Christians.

Chapter 25

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But these were not the only attacks. For decades, the government used many methods to try to destroy the Church.

Believers across the Soviet Union prayed for freedom of religion. Finally, in God's timing, prayers were answered. Authorities allowed the building of prayer houses, where Christians could worship without persecution.

This was only a small step, far from full freedom, but it gave some relief.

A year after one such prayer house was built in our city, Lyuba and I came to God.

But only three years later, authorities began pressuring our pastor. They wanted to control the church and its services. If he refused, they fined him.

One day, our pastor told them he would no longer follow their orders if they went against God's commands. They banned him from leading the church or preaching. They warned him that if he resisted, he would be arrested.

So the pastor and half of the church left the prayer house and began meeting secretly in homes. We were among them. The other half stayed, not wanting persecution.

Chapter 26

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When we left the prayer house, we split into small groups and started meeting in homes. Lyuba and I were in one of those groups, and the pastor made me responsible for it.

Meeting in homes was risky. In big apartment buildings, janitors often acted as informers. If they saw groups of people going into a believer's apartment, they reported it. Soon the police would arrive, bring witnesses, and write down everyone's names. Then heavy fines came, which were especially hard for large families — and most of our church was made up of large families.

But all this drew us closer to God. We learned to fully rely on the Holy Spirit's guidance.

Before going to any home for worship, we always prayed for God to put His protection over that house. Sometimes God would warn us not to go to a certain place, and we obeyed. When He gave us peace about a home, we went, and He protected us. Even when we were caught, it was still part of God's plan.

Chapter 27

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One time, after we were caught in a home meeting, the authorities called everyone for questioning. Representatives from different government offices came to “re-educate” us. They brought us in one at a time, asking questions and trying to scare us into obedience.

But the Holy Spirit gave us boldness. When my turn came, He filled my mouth with words. The officials became confused and began arguing loudly with each other. Finally, they just pushed me out of the room.

The same happened with others. Instead of being afraid, people ran in happy, eager to testify about God’s love.

Afterward, while we waited for the final decision, a local policeman mocked us, trying to humiliate God’s servants. But suddenly he lost control, turned pale, and said, “Of course, you are strong.” He had no choice but to admit the truth: the One in us is greater than the one in the world.

Chapter 28

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During persecution, we could not openly share the gospel. But God gave us another opportunity — funerals.

At funerals, the coffin was carried outside, and many people gathered: family, neighbors, even passersby. Relatives spoke about the dead person, but believers were also allowed to share a short word and sing hymns. Authorities never stopped this.

I want to share one story about a funeral service where God worked.

My nephew's friend lost his grandmother. He asked my nephew to invite believers from our church to sing and pray at the funeral. We gladly agreed.

Chapter 29

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We sang several hymns in the courtyard and again at the cemetery. But when we returned to the house, we were asked to stay for the meal.

We agreed, but with one condition: before eating, everyone must stand, and we would pray for the food, but not for the alcohol on the table. They agreed.

As people ate and drank, they began asking us about our faith. They had never heard such things before and listened with interest. It turned into a true evangelistic meeting.

But then one man, filled with resistance, shouted, "Enough talk about God! We are here to remember the dead." Strangely, no one supported him. Others argued back at him.

To avoid making things worse, we politely left.

Chapter 30

30

During the years when we still met in homes, many unusual events happened. I want to tell you about two of them.

One evening, our pastor came to a midweek service straight from work. He was upset because earlier he argued with a coworker who was Orthodox. During his sermon, he vented his frustration. Trying to excuse himself, he said, “We must also love Orthodox people — but with God’s love.” No one understood what he meant.

After the service, an 8-year-old girl shared a vision she had during prayer. With closed eyes she clearly saw these verses:

“As I urged you... stay in Ephesus so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer or to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. Such things promote controversial speculations rather than advancing God’s work — which is by faith. The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. Some have departed from these and turned to meaningless talk.” (1 Timothy 1:3–7)

Through this child, the Holy Spirit corrected the pastor in front of us all. He had to accept it with repentance.

Chapter 31

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When we faced pressure, we began to seek a closer walk with God. We wanted to be led by the Holy Spirit, and God often visited us through spiritual gifts.

During this underground period, even our children experienced revival. Many of them, at ages seven or eight, were baptized with the Holy Spirit and used in spiritual gifts.

I know some people may struggle to believe this because of their own opinions. But I don't tell this to argue or prove something. I only share what God led us through on our journey of faith.

Chapter 32

32

The second case I want to tell you about shows how God guided our gatherings.

Before each meeting, we asked God to show us a safe place. One time, we felt God's peace about meeting in the apartment of a sister who lived on the top floor of a nine-story building.

A respected brother, who had suffered much for his faith, came late. He said he saw a group of police downstairs near the elevator. He urged us to leave quickly so we would not be caught.

But I told him, "We came here by God's direction. We are under His protection. We will hold the service. If you don't have faith for this, you may go home."

The brother left. No one judged him, because he had already suffered greatly — even years in prison and in a psychiatric hospital. He was old and didn't want to risk prison again.

Chapter 33

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So we stayed.

At the same time as we enjoyed blessings in ministry, our faith was tested by life struggles.

We had many children, and only I worked. Lyuba cared for the kids. Money was never enough. But we gave our needs into God's hands, and He always provided.

At just the right time, help came from different sources. The Bible says: "His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness."

Let me share some examples of how God cared for us.

Chapter 34

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Our kids' clothes wore out quickly. Even clothes that still fit became useless because the kids grew. We didn't have money to buy new clothes. But God always cared for us.

One day, my sister in Poland called. Believers from Austria had asked her for addresses of large believing families in the Soviet Union. She gave them ours.

Soon, every three months, we began receiving parcels filled with new, high-quality clothes. To our surprise, every size was perfect for us and our kids.

Each parcel also had a bedcover, something rare and valuable in our country. We sold the covers to neighbors, used the money to pay rent, and bought food.

Neighbors were shocked. Even wealthy families could not get such quality clothes. From our abundance, we also shared with other large families.

Chapter 35

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But one day, the “manna” stopped.

I dreamed I saw yellow leaves falling from trees in the rain. Among them, slowly falling to the ground, was a paper declaring our right to receive parcels. Soon after, the parcels stopped.

But God still cared for us. Help came in smaller ways, from other sources.

Later, Lyuba also had a dream. She saw someone knock on our door, and through the peephole she saw a man with a large sack of used clothes. Soon, that's exactly what happened. Different people began bringing secondhand clothes for our kids. They were not as fancy, but still in good shape.

During Perestroika, when Gorbachev was president, Christian families abroad began inviting children of believers to visit. Our kids traveled to Germany, Italy, Spain, and Scandinavian countries.

After returning home, those families sent large boxes of clothes and food. We had so much that we even gave it away to neighbors and strangers.

Chapter 36

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I want to tell you another story, connected to my twins, Sergey and Vladimir. One of them, Vladimir, is the son who later urged me to share these memories with you.

One day, our children found a photo in the yard and brought it home. The photo showed twin boys, about one year old, sitting on a couch in matching outfits. We liked the photo and kept it.

Later, Lyuba gave birth to twin boys. When they turned one, we took their picture — and were shocked. The photo was identical to the one we found: same twins, same couch, same outfits. We searched for the old photo but never found it again.

Not long before their birth, Lyuba had another dream. She saw that I had bought a huge baby stroller, so big it couldn't fit through our doorway. She was surprised I had chosen such a large, light-colored stroller. With difficulty, we pushed it into the apartment.

The Bible says in Job: “God speaks once, even twice, though man does not notice. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls on people.”

And it also says if a dream comes twice, God will surely bring it to pass.

Chapter 37

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Lyuba's pregnancy with the twins was very difficult. She was taken to the hospital early. Doctors immediately performed a C-section. The babies had detached with the placenta and were drowning in blood. They had no heartbeat. Doctors worked hard to save them, and finally placed them under a glass dome connected to machines.

At the same time, Lyuba's life was also in danger.

The doctor told me, "If they survive three days, they will live." But by his eyes, I could see he didn't believe it.

That night, as I prayed, my pillow burned with heavenly fire. God answered me: the children would live.

While still in the hospital, Lyuba dreamed she was walking hand in hand with two little boys. It was the second time God confirmed His promise.

Now, I want to tell about a new period that came after the fall of the Soviet Union — a time of revival, especially in Ukraine.

Chapter 38

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Before I speak about the revival, I want to share two more stories: one from before Perestroika and one during it.

My pastor often sent me to minister in sister churches, usually in rural Russia.

In one church, I faced a very hard case. A young man was in the third stage of lung cancer. He was skin and bones, unable to eat, drinking only small sips of water.

Before praying for him, I asked God to take control. Relatives and church members gathered, hoping God would heal him through my prayer.

I was troubled, because usually such cases ended in death. But then God gave me a word of knowledge.

I told everyone: "If you will pray for this brother with persistence, as if he were your dearest one, God is able to heal him." In this way, I placed the responsibility on them, not on myself.

Chapter 39

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During prayer, people cried loudly to God. Then I knew: God would do a miracle today.

As I prayed, the Holy Spirit moved me forward on my knees. My hands touched the young man's body and slowly rose upward. His bent body straightened. In a moment, the cancer was gone.

That evening, he ate a whole fried chicken. Soon he gained strength and returned to work.

When I came back home, I told my pastor and church, and we rejoiced.

But this story had a sad ending, a lesson for us all.

Some time later, I had a dream. I sat in an empty room, telling believers about the healing. Suddenly, a thunderous voice from heaven said just two words: "He died." I woke up in cold sweat.

I knew God was warning me.

Chapter 40

40

Three months later, I returned to that church. The young man looked as sick as before.

He had been a driver for his boss. When he returned to work, his boss organized a celebration. Instead of going to church that Sunday, he joined his coworkers in drinking.

Soon, this became his lifestyle. He was often seen drunk. He stopped coming to church.

The cancer returned. When I visited, he was in the last stage. He repented and came back to God. Soon after, God took him home.

God knew that if he lived longer, he would fall back into sin and be lost.

Chapter 41

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I want to share another important lesson God taught me.

This happened during Perestroika, when the government already allowed a little more freedom.

One time, my pastor sent me to another sister church, also in rural Russia. While waiting for my train, I sat inside a small station filled with students returning to Moscow after summer break.

Seeing the chance, I raised my voice and preached God's Word. The students listened with great attention. When I called for repentance, many responded and accepted Jesus as Savior. At that moment, my train arrived. I barely managed to jump in.

In my train car, three men were with me. Two were well-educated, most likely communists and atheists. The third looked simple and uneducated.

Filled with the Spirit after preaching to the students, I began to witness to them too. The two educated men argued at first, but their arguments were weak, so they soon went quiet.

But the simple-looking man resisted me strongly. Later, I learned he was from a believing family but had turned away from God. We talked all night, and by morning, he repented and prayed the sinner's prayer.

Chapter 42

42

As our family's time in Ukraine neared its end, we also faced hard life situations that pushed us toward emigration to the USA.

After the fall of the Soviet Union, freedom of religion finally came. For decades, believers had longed for it. A wave of revival swept through the lands, especially Ukraine. New churches opened, filled with people coming from the world.

But the true Church, which had suffered persecution under communism, was cautious. It rejected government registration and did not hurry to go public.

I was still a member of such a church.

Chapter 43

43

A year after the collapse of the Soviet Union, I decided to use the freedom and start openly preaching the Word of God.

During a service in my home, I announced this and asked for blessing. But in our brotherhood, things were not so simple. They tried to forbid me. When I stayed firm, they treated me as if I were a foreign body. They turned all the believers in our group against me and announced that I had caused division.

Starting ministry without support was very hard. But after some time, a small church formed, mostly from people who had just come to God. Later, two ministers came and ordained me as pastor.

This time of independent ministry was very blessed. We preached in public squares, train stations, and bus stations. Many were thirsty for God. But the growth of our church was small compared to other new churches. I was troubled, but God had a hidden plan.

Chapter 44

44

In the beginning, a small group of like-minded believers joined me, coming from other churches not connected to my old denomination.

One evening, during fellowship at my home, another group came — these were new believers from my former church.

When I left, I had said I would not invite anyone from that church, but if someone came on their own, I would not send them away. So when they asked to stay, I agreed.

During prayer, the Holy Spirit spoke through me to them: “Make a decision about what the Spirit already told you in your secret prayer room.”

They admitted it was true. The Spirit had already spoken to them to join us. They then told us the story of how God led them to that decision.

Six months before I left, they had repented, received the Holy Spirit, and began to grow spiritually. My ministry had encouraged them. But after I left, no new leader rose up, and they began to feel dry. Then the Spirit told them clearly: “Go to Victor.” So they obeyed.

They became leaders in our church. One brother even became my assistant. But later, I learned that God sent them not to build up the church, but to bring it down. This was part of His plan.

Chapter 45

45

Soon, God began to carry out His plan.

One night, Lyuba had a dream. She saw me sitting at a table with some church members. Suddenly, a plane landed nearby. I quickly stood up, grabbed my briefcase, and went toward the plane.

A few days later, we got a call from Havana. One of my sons, who had long been in treatment there, needed a guardian. My older son and Lyuba had already gone before, so now it was my turn. I flew to Cuba.

The treatment center was on the ocean, built as part of Cuba's debt repayment to Ukraine. Children with serious illnesses lived there with guardians. Many stayed for a year, some for several years.

Knowing I might be there long, I brought a big suitcase of Bibles and Christian books for the kids.

Chapter 46

46

When I arrived in Cuba, I immediately began sharing the gospel with guardians and children, handing out Christian books. But to my disappointment, few wanted to listen. They refused to gather for fellowship.

I became upset and went to complain to God.

One afternoon, when the beach was empty, I sat in a wooden chair by the ocean and spoke to Him: "Lord, why did You bring me here where nobody cares about my ministry? My young church has no pastor now, my family has no father, and here I sit useless by the sea."

Then God answered me: "Who told you that I sent you to these people? I did not send you to them. You will preach about faith in many churches in Havana."

After that, my spirit calmed, and I trusted His Word: "For no word from God will ever fail."

Chapter 47

47

Soon after, two young men whom my older son had befriended came to visit me. They were believers. When they heard what God told me, they took me to churches in Havana.

The believers there welcomed me with great joy. Some said they had never had a pastor from the former Soviet Union visit them.

But there was one big problem — I had no translator. I could not preach in Spanish.

After many attempts, finally in one church they found a man who knew Russian. He had studied at a university in St. Petersburg. He had only been a believer for one month and hadn't even read the whole Bible yet. But he became my translator because there was no one else.

For 45 days, we preached together in 25 churches. My messages were short — about 15 minutes with translation — and all about faith.

God also sent an old coordinator to arrange meetings with pastors, and the two young brothers drove us everywhere.

Chapter 48

48

This old coordinator had his own story. He was over 70 years old, from an older generation of believers. He disliked the modern churches and had quarreled with all their pastors. But to set up my visits, he was forced to reconcile with them.

God never works in just one way. He uses every situation for His purposes.

There is a big difference between seeking ministry ourselves and being sent by God. If we go where He has not sent us, we must work hard, and often those are our own goals, not His. But if we are truly sent by God, His glory appears without our effort.

That's what happened with me in Havana. At first, I tried to serve in my own way, but God corrected me. The Bible says we walk by faith, not by sight.

When God redirected me, the "Acts of the Apostles" began. Miracles and signs happened. At the same time, God freed me from old religious prejudices.

Chapter 49

49

For example, when I saw Cuban sisters wearing jewelry and painted nails, I complained to God: "Lord, I cannot accept this. Who is really saved, me or them?"

God answered briefly: "If you do not accept them as they are, you cannot serve them."

So I had to put aside my opinions and accept them.

In some churches where I preached, there were no signs of the Holy Spirit. I was upset and blamed my team for bringing me to "dead churches." But my brothers quietly accepted my rebuke. Then the Spirit convicted me. I had to repent before them.

Chapter 50

50

But God wasn't done teaching me.

In other churches, the Holy Spirit moved in ways I had not accepted before. Early in my ministry, when I saw people falling during prayer at conferences, I thought it was fake.

But in Havana, it began happening through me. The first person I laid hands on fell to the ground under God's power. Then it happened to others.

Unlike what I had seen before, this was not staged. No one warned people they would fall. No one caught them. Yet when they fell, demons left, the sick were healed, and people were baptized with the Holy Spirit.

I remember one case especially.

Chapter 51

51

At one service, a young couple came. Not long before, their only son had died from illness. They were crushed by grief and couldn't escape depression.

During prayer, when I laid hands on them, they both gently fell to the floor and lay there until the end of the service. When they got up, they testified that the spirit of depression had left them. They were free.

Another time, something small happened that later grew into something big.

After breakfast, children and guardians were playing on the beach. A little girl lost her ball — the waves carried it far into the ocean. No one dared to go after it. I jumped in and swam almost a kilometer before reaching it.

The way back was very hard. With the ball in one hand, I swam with the other, struggling against the waves. With God's help, I finally made it back.

Chapter 52

52

Twenty years later, a young woman contacted us. She said she had been a 14-year-old girl in Cuba at that time, a friend of my son who was there for treatment. She often heard me testify about God but never took it seriously.

But when she saw me risk my life to save a little girl's ball, it touched her. She thought: "If he risked his life for something so small, then I can trust what he says."

That moment led her to seek God. She became a believer, grew in faith, and later became a church leader.

She found us years later and shared how that small act changed her life.

As my time in Havana ended, churches stopped inviting me, and the hospital staff hinted it was time to go home. Just before leaving, I felt strong concern and an urge to call home.

Chapter 53

53

When I called, all the members of our church were gathered in my home. My former pastor and a bishop of the underground brotherhood had come. Their goal was to bring my church members back to them.

Since I was in Cuba, they told my assistant and the others to return. They said: "If you come back, Victor will also return."

Some members, who had come from the world, resisted. They said, "We have our pastor, we don't know you."

At that moment, my call came. Lyuba told everyone I would return soon and asked them not to make decisions until then. But my assistant ignored this. He said in front of everyone, "Who is Victor? He is just a man. But these leaders are great servants, and we will follow them."

Right then, the church split. Some went back to the old church. The rest stayed, waiting for my return.

Chapter 54

54

This division was also prepared by God. While still in Cuba, I had told Lyuba that when I returned, we would make reforms in the church. She shared this with the members. Those who didn't like it decided to leave.

When I returned, I went into a three-day fast, asking God for direction. On the third day, God spoke through my own mouth: "Who told you to start a church? If you build, I will destroy."

From that time, God began to carry out His plan. It later became a great blessing for our family. I called it "God's harvest sowing," and I'll explain why.

As Ecclesiastes says, "There is a time to scatter stones."

God began to break down everything He had once blessed us with. Our remaining church members didn't want to leave me, but I told them God had forbidden me to rebuild the church. I advised them to find other churches to serve in. Slowly, they did.

Chapter 55

55

Step by step, God continued this breaking process for four years.

First, we lost one of our two apartments. Lyuba had received it as a gift from the factory where she worked because she was a mother of many children. It was stolen from us through fraud.

Then a financial crisis hit. We couldn't even pay for our current apartment, and we were close to being thrown out onto the street.

It looked like a curse. But it wasn't a curse — it was God's "harvest sowing." He was tearing down the old things we clung to, preparing something new and better.

At the time, we didn't understand and fell into despair. Later, God showed us His plan.

It began with a letter from an evangelist in the USA. He wrote: "This year is a year of hundredfold blessings for My people." Normally I didn't take such words seriously, but this time I knew it was from God.

So I began confessing it every day for four years. My faith was tested, because each year the financial crisis only grew worse. But every December, just before year's end, "manna" fell from heaven. God not only met all our needs but gave us extra to bless others.

This continued until the day God suddenly moved us to the USA.

Chapter 56

56

I also want to share how God used one man to be “manna from heaven” for us during this time.

A young, successful businessman owned the biggest car dealership in Ukraine. One of his workers was a young believer who knew me well and also knew about our struggles. He told his boss about us.

The businessman was deeply touched. He came and paid all our unpaid bills for housing. After that, he regularly helped our family until we emigrated.

At the same time, I became his spiritual mentor. He quickly grew in his calling from God.

Today, that man and his family are not only successful in business, but also fully dedicated to serving God with their wealth and lives.

Chapter 57

57

I often shared with him about my ministry in Cuba, and it inspired him. One day, he decided to go with me to Cuba. He paid for all our tickets and expenses.

When we arrived in Havana, he rented a car for two weeks, and God also provided us a place to stay. A young couple who had just come to God welcomed us into their home.

At that time, their relative from the countryside was visiting — a strong man about 35 years old. In his Baptist church, he was a youth leader.

One evening, the young couple desired to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. We prayed together. Their visiting relative mocked us for speaking in tongues. But as we kept praying, God's power touched him. He fell to the floor, spoke in tongues, and cried like a child.

When he stood up, he declared loudly: "I will open the eyes of my people to their mistake!" We understood that when he returned home, he would bring revival to his church.

Chapter 58

58

Another story happened during our five-day stay in Havana. At that time, Fidel Castro issued a ban on missionaries preaching in churches. We were only allowed to say a short prayer or share a small testimony.

But God opened a door.

A small Presbyterian mission center trained future missionaries. The pastor of that center invited us to visit. We bought meat and food from the market, because Cubans could only get food with ration cards. We brought the food to his home. Seeing such abundance softened his heart, and he let us preach at his center.

At that time, a group of young Jamaicans had come there to study. After I preached a short message, we all prayed.

I laid hands on one Jamaican woman. She fell to the floor, filled with the Holy Spirit, and began speaking in tongues. Her eyes were wide open, and she prayed in tongues the whole time, not even fully aware of what was happening.

I knew then: through this woman, God would start revival in Presbyterian churches in Jamaica.

Chapter 59

59

Now let me tell you about one more hard situation we faced before moving to America.

We had already sold our apartment, but could not leave for a few more months because we didn't yet have plane tickets. The new owners kindly allowed us to stay for a short time.

Since we had money from selling the apartment, we decided to fix our teeth in Crimea, where there was a very skilled dentist.

We took a tram to the metro station. But when we got off, we realized we had forgotten our briefcase with all the money on the tram. The tram was already crowded and about to leave. I rushed back in, found my seat, and there was the briefcase on the floor. A man was already sitting in my place, but he had not touched it. I grabbed it and jumped out just as the doors closed.

Chapter 60

60

But more troubles came. Suddenly, three criminal cases were opened against our family. While waiting for trial, we were officially banned from leaving our city, let alone emigrating.

But despite this, we left Ukraine freely. It was all part of God's plan.

In New York, while waiting for our connecting flight, we faced another test. By mistake, we boarded the wrong plane heading in the opposite direction. Only after sitting inside did we realize. Our real plane was already on the runway waiting for us. We had to run across the airfield with our luggage to catch it.

Another problem happened: one of my sons had not received his documents from immigration. He and one older brother had to stay in New York for a week until the papers arrived. They were given free lodging and food. The rest of us continued to our destination.

At the airport, people greeted us with banners, and a local newspaper wrote a full article about us on the front page. It was big news because there had never been immigrants in that town before.

Chapter 61

61

Our sponsors in America were two churches: one Methodist and one Presbyterian. Each church appointed someone to help us with documents and to get our family settled. Many other believers also helped us however they could.

Later, we joined a program called Habitat for Humanity. They built us a small house with a little yard. We lived there until our children grew up and became independent. Then Habitat bought the house back from us for the same price as our apartment in Ukraine that had once been stolen.

I want to finish my memories with one more testimony, which was a great blessing for one of my sons.

The Bible says: "What is impossible with people is possible with God."

One of my sons became sick with arthritis at a young age.

Chapter 62

62

For two years, he was treated in Havana. Doctors removed a tumor from his lower leg. The tumor caused him great pain when walking. But after the operation, it became even worse. For some time, he had to use a wheelchair.

Although he eventually managed to walk again, the pain never left. Over the years, arthritis wasted his body so much that by age 20, he weighed less than 30 kilograms (66 pounds) and could barely walk.

When we emigrated to America, I sometimes had to carry him in my arms. If we had stayed in Ukraine, we would have lost him.

In America, he was bedridden for a long time. Even the touch of a sheet caused unbearable pain. Doctors searched for a medicine that could help him. Finally, they found one. Through IV drips, they began giving it to him, and the crisis passed.

Chapter 63

63

Now listen to how God cared for my son and gave him hope for the future, even in his suffering.

At that time, he was hopeless, in constant pain, barely able to rise from bed. One night, he had a dream. It was so real that it felt like it was happening.

In the dream, he heard his wife's voice asking him to take out the trash. God was showing him that he would have a wife and family.

Chapter 64

64

That was 22 years ago. Today, it has come true. But during those years, he struggled with doubt. The illness was never fully healed. To this day, he must take IV treatments regularly. These stop the disease from growing worse, but his body remains partly deformed. He cannot walk long distances, which makes life hard.

Because of this, he thought he would never marry. He grew older and began losing hope.

But then God reminded him again.

A believing sister had a dream. She saw my son sitting on the shore of the ocean, sad and lonely. A young woman passed by, comforted him, and stayed with him. This dream restored his hope.

Chapter 65

65

At the same time, God spoke to a single Christian woman in Ukraine, telling her: “Your husband will come to you from across the ocean.”

Soon, this came true. My son met her, and they married.

Not long ago, they celebrated their third wedding anniversary. They now have a beautiful daughter, who is two years old.

The amazing part is this: when they married, my son was already 42, and his wife was 36. They had both waited all those years, keeping themselves pure for each other, until God’s promise was fulfilled.

Chapter 66

66

After going through all the trials in Ukraine and then moving to America, we still did not fully understand God's plan.

Only later, when Russia attacked Ukraine, everything became clear.

At that time, all seven of my sons and two of my grandsons were old enough for military service. If we had stayed in Ukraine, we might have lost some of them in that war. Instead of blessing, our family would have faced tragedy.

Chapter 67

67

So now, looking back, I can see God's hand in everything.

The Bible says: "Do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. For in just a little while, He who is coming will come and will not delay. But My righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him. But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved."

Chapter 68

68

The End