

## A PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS – 18

JANUARY – MARCH, 2010

**Tuesday, January 5, 2010.** On New Year's Day I joined in the conversation that two of my 4th floor friends, Ruth and Lorraine, were having in our elevator lobby. "Did you watch the ball drop last night?" Lorraine asked me. I shook my head in response. "Neither did I," she said, and Ruth said she didn't either. We smiled.

"I woke up at 12:30," said Lorraine. "I woke up at 2," said Ruth. "And I at 1:05," I typed. We smiled some more as we understood that all of us had our TV sets on intending to watch, but had fallen asleep instead. "Maybe next year," said Lorraine, which made all of us laugh heartily, a good way to start the new year!

I'm sure each of us had our own thoughts running through our minds as we laughed, similar thoughts that didn't have to be verbalized. Who knows what 2010 has in store for the 3 of us? There's an answer to that question: GOD knows! What a comfort to know that friendships begun here are "to be continued" There!

**Sunday, January 10, 2010.** Three days ago we had our service here at Sky View, which I had entitled "Thoughts for the New Year." I made 4 main points:

1. The new year is a good time to review basic truths about God:
  - a. God is far different from us.
  - b. God takes care of his children like a good Parent: he reassures the frightened.
  - c. God never changes.
2. The new year is a good time to begin a personal relationship with God.
3. The new year is a good time to strengthen our resolve to serve God.
4. The new year is a good time to reflect on things to come and to remember that this world is not our Home; we're just passing through.

Seven people took part in presenting this program, which seemed to me almost like a wonderful pageant celebrating God and the new year. Besides being substantive, it was fun!

In the middle of the night (about 2 AM today) I awoke with fresh thoughts about the February service on my mind. You may recall from Penny 17 that a similar thing happened in early December, when Christmas and New Year's ideas mingled in my head, many of which were used in the Christmas Eve and January services. I would like to drop everything right now and work on next month's program, but there are some things I must handle first. With that, I'll close this entry and get busy!

**Friday, January 15, 2010.** An interesting incident took place in my room when this day was brand new. Around midnight I noticed that an area on my back was being irritated by a lump in my bed pad. I tried to reposition myself, to no avail, as I can barely move in bed. My night aides generally come to me about 2:00. Could I wait that long to get relief, I wondered? As the minutes ticked on, my discomfort increased. Finally at 12:20 I pressed my call bell to summon help.

A short time later, Margaret came in, accompanied by Ayisha. I motioned for my Lightwriter, which Margaret, who knows me well, promptly gave me. "My back hurts. Lump in pad," I typed. "Why didn't you call me?" Margaret asked. "You know I want you to call any time you are uncomfortable!" Completely puzzled, I picked up the call bell and pressed it, while nodding my head. "You did ring it?" she correctly guessed, and I nodded again. "Then you think we're here because we knew you were ringing," Margaret offered, and I affirmed what seemed obvious to me. Relief flooded her face when I shook my head in answer to her question: "Did you ring a long time ago?"

Then I found out the truth: My bell hadn't worked! The lights that should have come on in my room and over my door in the hallway had remained dark! The only reason they had come in, Margaret said, was because they were in the east end of the hallway and thought they would check to see if I was ready for them. I have a different explanation, of course. I think God, my Primary Caregiver, noticed the whole situation and gave Margaret, his under-caregiver at the time, the idea to check on me early that night. This I know: As I settled down comfortably for the rest of the night, I was grateful to both of my aides AND to the Lord my God!

**Sunday, January 17, 2010.** A SECOND VERSE AT LAST! In the mid-1980s, I wrote the following devotional song:

Verna Mae Kwiatkowski      Faithful and True      Verna Mae Kwiatkowski

O my Lord, \*faith-ful and true, al-ways faith-ful and true, I love - you. FINE

I love - you, Lord, I love - you. D.C. al FINE.

\* NOTE: Perhaps you could sing more verses by replacing "faithful and true" with other Scriptural words.

Notice I suggested that other words could be substituted for faithful and true, thus forming new verses. In all the years since then, I have never been able write a verse 2 according to the standards I had set for myself: The first word had to have two syllables and the second word, one; and the second word had to rhyme with "you." Then yesterday, while I was still in bed, I began musing on the service we had in January, particularly on the meditation about God never changing. The phrases "You remain the same" and "Year after year, you're as good as new" combined with my familiar tune until I found myself singing:

Oh, my Lord, changeless and new, always changeless and new, I love you!

Now the song has a second verse that is very meaningful to me. Hopefully, you will enjoy it, too!

**Tuesday, February 2, 2010.** Yesterday I accomplished the task of completing the February service. Complications arose when Cliff, our principal moderator, became ill, and Earl, our principal pianist, went on a well-deserved vacation. How I praise God for the lengthy list of capable, willing Friends from which I can draw when preparing services! My son George was a big help to me, making phone calls, sending emails, and becoming moderator for this service. Two of the entries in Penny 18 are on the program: the first story (about the friendship kind of love) and the entry before this one (about our love for God). George and Loretta, our pianist, will teach Faithful and True to our "congregation"

on Thursday. Seldom, if ever, have we used my tunes in a Sky View service. I'll let you know how it goes.

That reminds me: We will be having another "first" on Thursday, Lord willing. The friendship story will be read by Ruth, the SV resident who takes part in the story! Ruth was a teacher and she reads aloud very well. She attends our services and is so excited to be taking part in one of them, the first resident to do so.

**Friday, February 5, 2010.** The service yesterday was wonderful: warm and loving! Because of a private party taking place in our living room, we were given a different spot in our vast living room / dining room complex to set up and hold the service. It all worked out well.

George and Loretta did a fine job of introducing the tune to Faithful and True to all of us. It felt so good to hear my song being sung by a group! I plan to include it in next month's service, too, and then occasionally after that.

Ruth read her story with much expression and enthusiasm, and when she was finished, the "congregation" responded with applause! There was one disappointment I didn't know about until later: Lorraine had planned to be there, sitting by Ruth's side in the front row. What a great idea they had! Actually, Lorraine did come, but she arrived after Ruth had spoken, and sat in the back. Now this, the 40th edition of Scripture and Prayer with Verna and Friends joins the other 39 as happy memories, all given for the glory of God.

**Saturday, February 6, 2010.** My mulching time this morning was both extended and rich. My aide did not come to get me up until almost noon, 14 hours after I had been put to bed. For 10 and a half of those hours I was eating through my feeding tube, and for at least 8 hours, in between my being attended to, I slept. The rest of the time my mind was busy trying to sort things out for my book *Setting My Sights On Things Above*, a project I haven't worked on for months; planning services for both March and April; writing meditations; and working on my obituary. The first three do not need further description at this time, but perhaps the fourth one does!

More than 10 years ago, my daughter Marty and I began drawing up plans for events to take place after I leave earth for Heaven, including my obituary. The content of the article is up to my children; the part where I want my voice heard comes at the end and begins with the words "In lieu of flowers." From the start I had two organizations in mind: Christians for Biblical Equality and Women's Opportunity Fund. The former was instrumental in freeing me from religious bondage, so that I could serve the Lord with all the giftedness he gave me. The latter is a group that makes small loans to poor women worldwide, so they can develop their businesses and lead their families out of poverty. I still support and recommend both organizations.

This morning I thought of another group to whom I am deeply indebted: the ALS Association. This organization is the one that is loaning me the Lightwriter, the small lap computer that helps me communicate. I have used this device more than 5 years and have not been charged anything. Isn't that wonderful? Several times my son has gotten an inventory call from them. As long as I am using the machine, I may have it; when I no longer need it, the machine is theirs to give to some other voiceless person. I like that thought, and have already instructed Marty via email to add the ALS Association to my "In lieu of flowers" list.

Speaking of the Lightwriter: recently I have begun to socialize more with the residents who gather in our elevator lobby. What a good time I am having as we talk together and get acquainted! My Lightwriter plays a huge part in this process. Without it I would be just an observer, rather than an active participant in the conversation. How well I remember the evening when Alice revealed to us

that she had been a prisoner in one of the German concentration camps during World War II. She was 17 at the time, which makes her just 5 or 6 years older than I. Calmly, she recounted an incident in which the women and girls were forced to form two lines. Sensing that getting into the lines would lead to death, Alice grabbed a nearby bucket of water and a mop and pretended to be a maid on duty. The ruse worked! I was filled with admiration for the clever and courageous girl who was still alive and well within the woman sitting across from me in the lobby. "I applaud you," I typed, and she said, "Thank you."

Then I began to cry. My tears were partly brought on by a heart-wrenching – yet excellent! – film I had just watched with my friend Barbara: "The Boy in the Striped Pajamas." This is a fictional story centered around a concentration camp and a German family, while Alice's story is true! Spurred on by my tears, another resident recounted how she, who lived in the United States, hated Germans and all things German during WW II. Before I could write "Not all Germans were bad," Alice said those very words, and then added: "It was a German soldier who helped me escape!" I'm sure we have just scratched the surface of her story. I look forward to hearing more in the weeks ahead.

**\*\*FLASHBACK\*\*** In 1947, when I was 14 years old, my family moved to Sebring, Florida for an 8 month period of time. In a cottage near ours lived 103-year-old Mrs. Ikenberry, a widow, still able to walk and clear of mind. Back then it was rare to know someone who had reached 100. I knew just what to do with my good fortune: I had Mrs. Ikenberry sign my autograph book! She wrote her name and age on one of my book's colored pages – and that was the extent of our conversation! As the years passed, I realized that I had lost the opportunity to hear about Abraham Lincoln, the Civil War, and much more from someone who had lived through those years. Don't repeat my error. Swapping stories with others is a great way to pass the time!

**Thursday, February 11, 2010.** The action and the view outside my window were fascinating yesterday. I sat in my chair and gazed at the scene for more than an hour in the afternoon. If you have guessed that we were having a snowstorm, you are correct. The snow started early in the morning and continued throughout the day, although the accumulation on my ledge never reached more than about 6 inches. The action came from the snowplow, two people walking down our steep driveway (no, they didn't fall), cars moving slowly on the highway, birds, a dog, and the swirling, falling snow. What a show!

Within Sky View the night staff was being mandated to stay for another shift as others called from home with news that they couldn't make it to work. I had a surprise when the 3:00 shift came in. My night aide Margaret, of whom I wrote on January 15, came into my room to say hello. She told me she was working the evening shift in place of someone who couldn't get in, and then would stay on to do her night work, though on a different floor. Then she added this: "I am your aide this evening. I've never put you to bed before!" Indeed, I had never seen Margaret from a sitting position before! Unlike other times when I realized someone different was putting me to bed, Margaret's news brought me no inner anxiety at all. At once I realized why: Margaret and I KNEW each other. She understood my way of communicating and I knew her to be a kind, patient person who would listen to me. And so it was; there were no problems getting me to bed.

But this is not the end of the story. During the evening shift I heard from my room a different sound coming from our lobby: that of singing and laughter! I wished I could go investigate, but on Sunday, just about the time of the Super Bowl game, I came down with the upper respiratory illness that has been going around Sky View recently. "It was your turn," said Kathy, our nurse manager. I did enjoy the football game, despite coughing spells. I started medication right away, but as of now, I have kept myself confined to my room, lest I be contagious. I did inquire about the festive sounds, however, and found – just as I had suspected – that Margaret was at the center of all that joy. What a difference one person can make in the lives of many!

**Wednesday, February 26, 2010.** I just had my laugh for the day. To appreciate this story, you need to know that when I use my Lightwriter, I sometimes skip or abbreviate obvious words. I like when people guess what I am about to say, as it often saves me keystrokes. If they are wrong, I simply keep on typing.

This morning Nadine, an aide on our floor, came into my room to assist my aide in giving me care. While she was there, Nadine also made my bed. From my position in the bathroom, I saw her walk by carrying the afghan I sometimes use on my bed. I wondered where she was taking it. My concern was that if she put it in the laundry, it had no identification to mark it as mine.

When I was in my chair, I found Nadine in the hallway and began to type. As usual, she stopped to see what I had to say. WHERE IS AFGHAN? she read on my screen. Instantly she replied, "In the Middle East." Seeing the puzzled look on my face, she quickly added, "Oh, you mean your BLANKET! I thought you meant Afghanistan!" Between chuckles, she explained that in straightening up my room, she had put the afghan in my closet.

Then came the unrestrained laughs! Nadine has a very hearty laugh; due to PLS, mine is as loud as a barking dog! To everyone who came to see what was going on, Nadine told the story, thus multiplying the laughter. May our overflowing happiness spread to you, my readers, as well. Let laughter ring!

**Friday, March 5, 2010.** What a busy and interesting day I had yesterday! It began when my aide got me up early so I could keep an appointment on the 2nd floor with my neurologist. This was my annual checkup, so I prepared a list of questions I had regarding primary lateral sclerosis and my life. The doctor was helpful, though readily admitting that he hadn't seen many people with PLS. It really is a rare disease! He did ask me to say "No," which I did to the best of my ability. This gave me the idea that perhaps in other neurological diseases that rob people of their speech, "No" is the word that remains. Interesting! The doctor was pleased with what he saw in me (the disease progresses slowly) and asked me to come back in 6 months.

And then, in just a couple hours, it was time to go downstairs for Scripture and Prayer with Verna and Friends! When I got there, about 20 minutes early, Ruth and Lorraine (see February 5 entry), were already there, wanting to get good seats! We had a large attendance, including many from the 4th floor. The biggest surprise for all of us happened at the piano. Knowing how much Loretta enjoyed being with us last month, I sent her an email inviting her to attend the service any time she wanted to, even if Earl is here. What joy I felt when, halfway through the prelude, Loretta arrived, smiling broadly! "I got your email," she said to me, and then sat down behind Earl.

After the prelude and the first hymn were over, some movement at the piano caught my attention. Was I ever surprised to see that Earl and Loretta had changed places! She played the next two hymns and then they changed back again. It worked well and was such fun! When I was telling this to Marty today, she said maybe we should change our name to Scripture, Prayer *and Fun* with Verna and Friends! There is nothing frivolous about our services, by any means, but they are joyful. And why not? After all, joy IS one of the fruits of the Spirit!

When the equipment was put away, the furniture was back in place, and all the goodbyes were said, Leo returned with me to my room and we had a visit. For the past couple months Leo has been bringing me Jumbles and Cryptoquotes to work on. After not doing them for years, I'm glad to know that my skills have not waned! Leo writes on the newspaper clippings what I type on my Lightwriter, for I certainly can't handle a pencil or pen. One thing that has improved is my memory, and that is by design. When I moved to Sky View, I realized that my days of writing things down were over, and began devising memory tests for myself. One test was to learn the 12 sons of Jacob by tying them to

the alphabet. I just tested my recall ability and found it intact! Both Leo and I are enjoying the puzzle project.

The last event of yesterday's big day was the weekly visit from Andrea, my reflexologist and friend. My job was to relax to the point of falling asleep, if possible. In Andrea's skilled hands, I readily obliged. She says that is the highest compliment I can give her!

**Sunday, March 7, 2010.** I am scheduled to get a new feeding tube Friday morning, March 12. I have had my current tube for over 20 months, though I should have had it changed at least two months ago. In late February, when I was finally ready to have Sky View make an appointment for me, I never dreamed we would have to wait 3 weeks to have it done, but so it was! Four times a day my nurses give me medication and a 250 cc flush of water through my tube, and each time there is a chance that the tube will have a blockage that must be worked out. At least once a day chance becomes reality. The nurses and I have developed several techniques that eventually work, though much patience is required to implement them. Some of the nurses know that I am also praying, and they join me in giving thanks to God when the tube is flowing again. We began a countdown at 10 days; now we're down to 5. No use worrying now. This project is almost over!

**Monday, March 8, 2010.** An incident that took place a few weeks ago keeps coming back to me and warming my heart. It took place in our elevator lobby on another evening when Ruth, Lorraine, and I were the only ones there. Someone brought up the topic of games we used to play in our childhood. What a wonderful time we had with that subject! Most of the games that one of us mentioned had also been played by the other two. These were wholesome, active, social games, some accompanied by rhythmic chants or songs. They included jumping rope, hopscotch, jacks, London Bridge, and dominoes. Ruth, the most able-bodied of the three of us, acted out a game of hopscotch, to the delight of Lorraine and me. Lorraine can walk, but she uses oxygen all the time and certainly can't hop or dance, while I can't even stand up without a special lift. Yet all of us took great pleasure in Ruth's activity! I find that interesting.

This was the evening Ruth brought up the subject of autograph books, and I remembered that they had multicolored pastel pages. As each of us pictured our own books, for we all had them, we recalled some of the rhymes that were written on our pages, with enough success to make us smile. "I remember what my aunt wrote in my book," said Ruth: "TO THINE OWN SELF BE TRUE." This line from Shakespeare, coming as advice from her aunt, brought two memories to my mind, both of which I told to my friends. The first was that I had that same message in my book, only it was written by Miss Bird, my 9th grade English teacher in Sebring, Florida. The second was that I, too, had an aunt who wrote me a message that I have never forgotten, and have tried to live by and pass on: TRUST IN THE LORD WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND LEAN NOT ON YOUR OWN UNDERSTANDING; IN ALL YOUR WAYS ACKNOWLEDGE HIM, AND HE WILL MAKE YOUR PATHS STRAIGHT (Proverbs 3:5,6, changed from old to modern language).

As I said, I have been thinking about that evening for a long time now, especially wondering about the source of all our joy. It's true that we were 3 elderly ladies, all living at Sky View because we need help, gathered together in a certain place on a certain date at a certain time. We were talking about common experiences from the past, and that made us happy. But MUCH more was going on: I think we experienced a glimpse of ETERNITY that night! Unlike the time and space that we live by on earth, in eternity there is neither time nor space, not even past or future. Eternity is always NOW. As we talked that evening, a vivid image flashed into my mind: Lorraine, Ruth, and I, all about 11 or 12 years old, were happily playing games on my front porch in Annville, Pennsylvania, as if it were now! From that image, I wonder if all of us always had the capacity to really enjoy ourselves, and that's why we can do so even now? I know that's true of me. I am going to show this story to Lorraine and Ruth. This should lead to another good discussion!

**Saturday, March 13, 2010.** FEEDING TUBE PROJECT COMPLETED! This story will not only tell you what happened, but will also give you a sense of the challenges that arise from not being able to talk. My mind is as alert as ever, yet I must write my questions and then have someone deliver them and bring me the answers. I have no way of knowing if my questions were read as written or paraphrased. Here is a copy of a note I gave to our nurse manager earlier this week

To Kathy  
From Verna 413  
RE: Tube change Friday, March 12

It's getting close!

Please find out if I am to refrain from eating & drinking after midnight on Thursday. I would think I should, since anesthesia is involved.

Also, should I take antibiotics in preparation for the procedure, since I have an artificial hip?  
Or will the doctors take care of that at the hospital?

Am I going to the hospital on a gurney? I asked this before, but got no answer.

Kathy spoke with the doctor and told me I was indeed to refrain from food and drink after midnight and that I did not need antibiotics. She also said I was going to the hospital on a gurney, not in my chair. With this knowledge in mind, I was able to prepare for the actual trip. First on my list was to be sure I had 3 copies of this important note, which I had written over 2 weeks ago:

A note to Dr. Martin & to the person who will be getting me ready for anesthesia.  
From Verna Kwiatkowski, Sky View  
RE: New feeding tube

Please use my left hand to prepare for anesthesia, as the lymph nodes under my right arm have been removed.

Please use a small needle, as my veins are small.

Dr Martin:

Please let me have a pillow under my head and knees at all times, if possible.

Please use a small child's template in my mouth, as I cannot open wide.

Remember that I go into spasms & my emotions are heightened by my PLS.

Thanks.

**\*\*Note:** What I especially liked about the tube I now have is that the mechanism on the end could be replaced. About 2 months after I got this tube, the cap to one of the openings broke off. Easily, my nurse removed the defective part and inserted this one, which is kept on hand at Sky View.

Would it be possible for me to have a new tube with an end that can be replaced?

Yesterday morning at 10:30 two men from Shalom ambulette came into my room with a stretcher, ready to take me to the hospital. Zonia, the aide assigned by Sky View to go with me, had everything ready, and soon the four of us were on our way into the grey, misty day.

Our arrival at the hospital, the registration, and my transfer onto a hospital gurney all went well. (One of the registrars was fascinated by my Lightwriter. It IS a marvelous instrument for people with conditions like mine!) The ambulette drivers left, expecting a call before 2:00, and Zonia and I were put into a small room to await the doctor. The person I was really expecting – the one who would get me ready for anesthesia – never came, leaving me puzzled.

When the doctor arrived I got my answer: he had in mind doing a simple bedside exchange, one that would not require anesthesia. After he read my paper, he said, “Obviously, you were expecting something different.” At that point we had the direct communication we would have had weeks ago – if I could talk. In the end, I agreed to let him draw out my old tube manually and then insert a style of tube that might last 6 months. When it needed replacing, the doctor would give me the procedure I had been expecting when I wrote my note, so he could check on the condition of the 2 small ulcers he had noticed before.

Without incident, the old tube was removed, but when he tried to insert the new one, it would not go in! He tried a second time, but when he still met resistance and saw it was causing me pain, he said he would have to give me an endoscopy after all, and scheduled a room for 4:00! It was then about noon, so Zonia and I had some time to get acquainted. Early on, a nurse, who followed my instructions exactly, looked hard for a good vein to use and found one in my left wrist. When the needle went in just as she had hoped it would, I heard her whisper, “Thank you, Father.” “Amen!” I said inwardly.

All went well with the new tube insertion and the endoscopy. When I awoke from anesthesia, the doctor told me the new tube is just like the old one and that my ulcers had healed. By 6:30 the four of us were headed out into the dark, drizzly night, with Zonia shielding my head with a large umbrella. By 7:00 I had been tucked into my bed at Sky View! “Thank you, Father! Amen.”

**Saturday, March 27, 2010.** Two weeks ago, an aide who is “great with child” requested that I write a prayer for her unborn baby. At the time I was about to begin writing the April service, but this request was so unique that I decided to take it as an assignment from God and see what happened. Like some other aides on our floor, this mother-to-be works only on the weekends. My goal, then, was to have a finished product printed on special paper, ready to give her on the following Saturday. Was I surprised when, in bed that night, it was not a prayer that came to mind, but a poem! Here it is:

Dear little baby, tucked in Mother’s womb,  
Soon you will come out, so you can bloom.  
Your loving family awaits your birth  
With hugs, kisses, smiles, and mirth.  
God has known you since conception;  
He will give you a good reception.  
As you grow, here is your part:  
Trust in the Lord with all your heart!

Several days later, I had a page titled A Poem and a Prayer for an Unborn Baby. Besides those two main elements, the page contained 3 Bible verses and a dedication. After my son George took care of the centering and spacing of everything, we printed it on pretty paper that featured butterflies. The aide liked it and said she would frame and hang it next to the baby’s crib. What an enjoyable project that turned out to be! And I still finished the service, though just in time. Hallelujah!

**Sunday, March 28, 2010.** Today is Palm Sunday, and, as usual, my mind goes back to the 1990’s when I was pastor of the Community Church of Yorktown. I used to love preparing the 3 services our church offered. I thought of them like this:



Palm Sunday – Deciding to face what has to be faced  
Good Friday – Enduring what has to be endured  
Easter – Resurrection! Pure joy! Forever!

During the night I began to think in a way new to me of the POWER OF GOD that was shown at the death and resurrection of Jesus. It makes the power that people exerted over Jesus at his trial and crucifixion seem like NOTHING in comparison! Make no mistake about this: Jesus CHOSE to face what he had to face and to endure what he had to endure. How was he able to do this? By focusing on the joy of the resurrection that would come after his work on earth was over. Certainly there was power behind the decisions Jesus made, but my mind explored two other thoughts about God's power.

One of them came from Isaiah 53:6 – “We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.” I began to wonder whether sin could be assigned a weight. How heavy would you say was Adam and Eve's sin of eating fruit from a forbidden tree? Was it more or less than Cain's sin of killing his brother and then lying about it? Adam and Eve's sin was heavy enough to break them off from their relationship with God; it was no lightweight matter! What would your sins weigh? What about mine? Can you imagine the total weight of all the sins of all the people who have ever lived or who ever will live? That's the load that God laid on Jesus, ounce by ounce, pound by pound. Jesus felt the crushing load so much that he cried out in agony, “My God! My God! Why have you forsaken me?”

After picturing Jesus under that heavy, heavy pile of sin, and feeling the pain of a broken relationship with God, it is not hard to imagine that Jesus died. What is astounding is that he didn't remain dead! In my mind, I see Jesus reviving, pushing aside and disposing of the load, and exiting the sealed tomb EASILY! What POWER the resurrection displayed! Let's bask in that power! He paid the penalty for our sin; NOTHING is impossible with God!

My other train of thought had to do with stories told in Matthew 27 and 28. Here is the first passage: “When Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people.” What a display of POWER! And it all happened the moment Jesus died, more proof that he was no ordinary man. God tore the curtain in the temple apart from the top, showing that the new covenant had now replaced the old. The Bible tells us in many places that creation speaks of the glory of God. In this case, the earth shook, rocks split, and dead people came back to life; it was awesome!

Now the second passage. On the day of resurrection, one of God's invisible created beings took on form and became involved, with startling, POWERFUL results. Listen: “After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.” Jesus was already gone, of course. He certainly didn't need an angel to help him exit the tomb! Rather, the angel came to let the women look inside. Suddenly I find so funny the thought that the angel rolled back the stone AND SAT ON IT! So much for the best efforts of humans to keep God contained! The resurrection proves that it can't be done. Our God is ALMIGHTY! Praise his name.

**Wednesday, March 31, 2010.** Time to close. I am happy in the Lord and hope you are, too.