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STRIKING COINCIDENCES

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INTRODUCTION

This document will present a number of curious, interesting, and striking coincidences, and it is my desire to emphasize the latter most: striking coincidences, but first, let us consider a theory about coincidences that is afloat today.

"Synchronicity" is a term invented by scientist Carl Jung to describe "meaningful coincidences" -- concurrent happenings that seem to be synchronized by some unseen power and orchestrated by some force in the universe. Those who have taken up this term apparently believe that things "don't just happen," but that they are controlled by some directing force that is harmoniously bringing things to pass.

Current advocates of "Synchronicity" are hitting close to the truth when they believe and teach that things "don't just happen" in our universe, and that there is a "Synchronizer" controlling and orchestrating things in the Universe, in the World, and in Our Personal Lives. However, I doubt that most who are buying into the "Synchronicity-Belief" properly identify the great Synchronizer, Who is none other than Jesus Christ, who is even now "upholding all things by the word of his power," (Hebrews 1:3). He is the Great Orchestrator who this very moment "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." (Ephesians 1:11)

He it was who told Peter to cast in a hook and in its mouth would be found a coin with which their taxes could be paid; He it was that caused the fish to see and swallow the coin (unless the coin was miraculously created); He it was who caused the fish to be in that exact spot where Peter cast in his hook; and He it was who caused the fish to bite the hook -- all was controlled and orchestrated by Jesus, the Great Synchronizer of all things.

It is not some unknown and unknowable force controlling everything that occurs in minute detail. It is Him Who said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18). While it is probably true that many strange coincidences originate with the devil, we can be sure that even he and his fiendish workings are being ruled and over-ruled by Christ, the Omnipotent, Omniscient Synchronizer of all things.

As related to men, every coincidence might be broadly classified in one of the following categories:

- (1) A Curious Coincidence of little or no significance
- (2) An Interesting Coincidence that may have significance
- (3) A Striking Coincidence that clearly has significance

Let us first look at some that we could place in the first two categories.

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I. CURIOUS COINCIDENCES OF LITTLE OR NO SIGNIFICANCE

A. WESLEY IN THE 18TH CENTURY AND A MAN IN 1999: -- I will write in my own words, with a brief quotation of John Wesley, an incident that is related in hdm0688, "Makers of Methodism" by W. H. Withrow: As Wesley was walking one day, he came to a narrow passage-way that allowed only one person to pass through. At the same time, a man who was belligerent toward him reached the opposite side of the passage-way so that he and Wesley would have met in the middle. One of them had to give way to the other.

Refusing to back up and make way for Wesley, the belligerent called out to him, "Sir, I never make way for a fool!"

Whereupon Wesley replied, "I always do," and politely stepped aside!

In the December, 1999 issue of Reader's Digest I read last night an incidence of striking similarity -- a coincidence that occurred close to 200 years later: A single-lane of passage ran under a bridge construction with a traffic-light at each end. Two friends waited till the light turned green and proceeded to pass under the bridge when they met a vehicle traveling from the opposite direction. Perhaps the lights were not properly synchronized. Anyway, the driver of the other vehicle lowered his window and shouted: "I don't back up for idiots!" The friend driving the other car replied: "No problem, I do!"

This is a curious coincidence but probably of little or no significance.

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B. A CURIOUS COINCIDENCE INVOLVING CAMERA FILM: -- Rabbi Shlomo Price related the story of a German woman who took a picture of her infant son in 1914 and dropped off the film-plate (not roll of film in those days) at a store in Strasbourg. Then, before she picked up her picture, World War I began, and she figured that the picture was lost. Two years later in Frankfurt, over 100 miles away, she bought a film-plate to take a picture of her new-born daughter. When the plate was developed it was a double-exposure, the picture of her daughter being superimposed on the picture of her son! For some unknown reason, her original film-plate had never been developed and had been sold to her as a new film-plate -- a curious coincidence, but again, probably of no real significance.

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C. A COINCIDENCE INVOLVING A NATIVE OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND: -- I read the story of a man named Coghlan from Prince Edward Island who died while visiting Galveston, Texas in 1899. His body was buried on Galveston Island in a lead-lined coffin inside of a granite vault. In September of 1900, a hurricane struck Galveston Island, the cemetery was flooded, and the same thing occurred as what recently happened after the hurricane struck South Carolina: -- the man's coffin was buoyed to the surface by the floodwaters, and thereafter floated out into the Gulf of Mexico. It was next propelled by the ocean current around the tip of Florida and out into the Atlantic. Pushed by the Gulf Stream, the coffin sailed north, and after an 8-year voyage, in October of 1908, some Prince Edward Island fishermen spotted the coffin, still bobbing in the water. They brought the coffin to shore just a short ways from Coghlan's native village, and, after finding a metal plate with his name inscribed upon it, he was reinterred near the church where he had been christened! Now that's one way to beat shipping charges for transporting a corpse back home for burial! -- but, while it constitutes a curious coincidence, the whole thing is probably of little significance or importance.

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D. SEVERAL MORE CURIOUS COINCIDENCES: -- Just after the writer finished writing an incident involving a girl who found a hedgehog in her garden, a domestic worker reported to the woman that a hedgehog had been found in her garden. Another writer increasingly brought the character of a spy into a story he was writing. After he had finished his book, the U. S. Immigration Service arrested a Russian spy who was living in an apartment one floor above the writer.

Under Eisenhower, when Allied Forces were planning the Normandy invasion of June 6, 1944, the code words "Utah" and "Omaha" were given to beaches where the troops would land, and the code word "Mulberry" was given to an artificial harbor to be placed after the landing. "Neptune" was the code name for overall Naval operations, and the code name "Overlord" was given to the entire invasion plan.

May 3, 1944, the name "Utah" appeared in the crossword puzzle of a London newspaper; May 23 "Omaha" appeared the same way; May 31 "Mulberry" appeared; and on June 2, just four days before the invasion, both "Neptune" and "Overlord" appeared in the crossword puzzle. This uncanny appearance of all of those code-names in the crossword puzzle of the newspaper was

extensively investigated, but the man who created the puzzles was found to be completely innocent of any espionage. He had no knowledge of invasion plans, and had chosen the words at random!

Taking the facts to be so in regard to the last story, it was a series of uncanny coincidences, but probably of little significance, even though some believers in "Synchronicity" might try to give it some meaningful explanation. Yes, God is controlling all such occurrences, but even that does not mean that all coincidences are significant. Many such coincidences, insofar as they relate to God's creatures, have no real bearing on their lives.

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II. INTERESTING COINCIDENCES THAT MAY HAVE SIGNIFICANCE

A. COINCIDENCES IN THE LIFE AND DEATH OF DANIEL ASBURY: -- In hdm1526, "Pioneers of Methodism in North Carolina and Virginia," Matthew H. Moore's sketch of Daniel Asbury contains several interesting coincidences that may well have some significance:

"The close of his life was as serene and beautiful as the twilight that succeeds a peaceful summer-day. His meekness, his patience, and the simplicity of his manners drew to him the hearts of his brethren, and lighted up the evening of his career with a quiet beauty that lingered on the mind of the beholder. On Sunday, April 15, 1825, as he was returning from a walk in his yard, he stopped suddenly, looked up toward heaven, and with a pleasant smile on his face, uttered indistinctly a few words, then fell to the ground -- dead. It is said of him that he had frequently expressed the belief that he should die on the Sabbath, and it is rather a singular coincidence that he was born on the Sabbath, captured by the Indians on the Sabbath, returned home on the Sabbath, was converted on the Sabbath, and on this holy day ascended to his eternal rest and entered his Father's house."

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B. A COINCIDENCE INVOLVING LUELLA MARSH FORD'S FATHER: -- Luella Ford filled some position at BMI when I attended there between 1959 and 1962. This is taken from her book, "God's Ford on the Go," hdm0502. She subtitled it: "Sea and Land," and under the subtitle was Ecclesiastes 11:1: "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days."

Being born at Economy, Nova Scotia, on the Bay of Fundy, my Dad loved the water. At twelve years he went to sea. "Anyone who went to sea in the old sailing vessels had to be a real sailor," were words I often heard from his lips. During his sailing days he visited every country that had a port, but Australia. In his twenties he decided to become a land lubber; went west to that land where the blizzards prevailed in winter -- the land of the Dakotas. He was in the surveying crew that marked the boundary lines between North and South Dakota; and North Dakota and Montana. In his late thirties he married Margaret McArthur, my mother, who was just a teen-ager.

Because Dad was an interesting conversationalist, wherever he went a crowd was usually gathered. As a child I enjoyed hearing his stories of land and sea. I shall relate one of the outstanding incidents.

A boat was bobbing at the dock on the Bay of Fundy near Economy, Nova Scotia. A young lad out for a hike along the beach became entranced that sunny afternoon and climbed into the boat. Stretched out full length, he basked in the sunshine and soon went to sleep. As the tide became stronger the boat loosed from its mooring and was headed out to sea.

Across the inlet stood a man looking out over the great expanse. "What's that I see? Looks like a boat." Hurriedly he hunted up his binoculars, focused them on the bobbing boat. "Someone's in the bottom of that boat," he concluded. Knowing the danger of the sea waters, he hastened into his boat and rowed up close to the straying vessel. With anxiety he wakened the boy, helped him climb into his boat and took him to shore.

About twenty-four years later Dad was cozily sheltered for the night in a sod hut on the open prairies of North Dakota. One of those blasting blizzards was raging without. A knock came at the door -- an elderly man covered with snow and ice asked if he might have protection from the storm. Settled by the fireside the two men soon began to exchange stories. Listening to the whistling storm, the visitor, grateful for Dad's hospitality that really spared his life, recalled how one time 24 years before he had saved a boy's life off the coast of the Bay of Fundy. Dad listened intently as his guest went into the details of the rescue of the sleeping lad.

With a cry of joy my Dad said, "I was that boy!"

Together they rejoiced in this coincidence as they went to rest that stormy night.

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C. A COINCIDENCE INVOLVING JOHN W. HOUGHAWOUT AND GEORGE GUYER:
-- In hdm0805, "History of the Old Baltimore Conference," J. E. Armstrong wrote:

"John W. Houghawout -- born in Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, May 13, 1811; died in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, March 24, 1891; converted at the age of sixteen. His active ministry extending through a period of forty-two years, from 1838, was spent in connection with the Baltimore, East Baltimore and Central Pennsylvania Conferences, but within the Pennsylvania territory. He was possessed of a meek and gentle spirit, always genial and unselfish. Under his effective ministry hundreds were converted and saved. It is an interesting coincidence that he and Rev. George Guyer entered the Conference the same year, and went together to their heavenly reward on the same day and at the same hour.

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D. A COINCIDENCE IN THE LIFE OF BEVERLY CARRADINE: -- This story is taken from "A Bundle of Arrows," hdm0029, by Beverly Carradine:

The writer when a lad for months observed the practice of nightly prayer, mainly through the request of a lady friend. One night he was entertained at the country home of a physician. The house being crowded with company, three or four of the male guests were put in one of the

bedrooms. As he, in the presence of the others, knelt to pray, he was greeted by an obstreperous fit of laughter on the part of this doctor. The boy arose from his knees flushed and indignant, and gave the physician a scathing rebuke, which the man keenly felt, but the sad part was that the lad quit praying from that hour. The attack of ridicule was too much for him.

It is very remarkable, and makes one of the strange coincidences in life, the occurrence to which we now call attention. Fully seven or eight years rolled away; the physician moved away from this house, and the writer rented it; and right by the side of the bed, in the identical spot where he had uttered his last prayer, here, after the flight of eight years, he knelt to pray again. The fourth time he went down before God he heard from heaven!

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E. A COINCIDENCE INVOLVING MARK TWAIN AND TWAIN'S BROTHER: -- During the 1850s Mark Twain and his brother Henry worked together on Mississippi river boats. One night Twain had a disturbing dream in which he saw Henry's corpse lying in a metal coffin in the sitting room. A single, red flower lay on Henry's chest. Twain awoke, dressed, and went for a walk, and the dream was so real to him that he had walked half a block before he realized that he had been dreaming. A few weeks later Twain and his brother happened to take different boats from New Orleans to St. Louis. The boilers exploded on the boat Henry took and he died a few days later. Most of the others who died as a result of that explosion were buried in wooden coffins, but a metal coffin was made for Henry. When Twain viewed the body, he found it just as he had seen it in his dream. As Twain looked on a bouquet of white roses was placed on Henry's chest with a red rose in the center.

I am not sure that any of the coincidences in this section were significant, but they all might have been.

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III. STRIKING COINCIDENCES THAT ARE CLEARLY SIGNIFICANT

Now we come to the part I wish to emphasize most: striking coincidences that quite clearly show the working of God. A coincidence of this sort is sometimes described as "more than a coincidence," as opposed to an insignificant occurrence that we describe as "merely a coincidence":

A. A STRIKING COINCIDENCE INVOLVING TWO SOLDIERS: -- This story comes from "Sin the Tell-Tale," hdm0707, by W. E. Shepard, and is titled: "Discovered Through Dice":

"During the reign of Frederick William, Miss Rose, the beautiful and accomplished daughter of Mr. Walther, the smith of the Armory at Berlin, was shot dead at a public well. Two soldiers, Ralph and Alfred, both rivals of the affections of the young lady, were suspected and brought to trial. Witnesses had seen both of these young men at the well on the evening the crime was committed, and both declared innocence. Alfred, the more respected of the two, was regarded as an exemplary young man. He admitted that he had met Miss Rose at the well that evening, but

affirmed positively that he left her there peaceably and unmolested. Ralph, the more suspected, was pressed hard for a confession, but continued his positive denials of guilt.

"Finally, since it was clear that one of these two young men must have committed the crime, it was determined to seek to decide the question of guilt or innocence by the novel method of throwing dice, and this was to be done in the presence of the bereaved Mr. Walther, and of the officers of the court. Two dice were placed upon the drum. Ralph, smiling in self-reliance, grabbed the dice and threw first and turned up two sixes, the highest possible number. This was a shock to those looking on. Alfred, apparently doomed to a lost cause, dropped upon his knees, turned his face heavenward, and offered a short, earnest prayer to God. As he arose to throw the dice, he said, 'Help me, God Almighty, for Thou knowest that I am innocent.' Then with joyful reliance on the God of destiny, he threw his dice on the drum; and behold, by a remarkable coincidence his dice split and showed up 1 plus 6 plus 6, in all, thirteen. Thus Alfred was one ahead of Ralph and it was done by turning up the two highest numbers, six and six and the one on the split. All spectators were surprised and Ralph was so overwhelmed with guilty consciousness and plain manifestation of guilt that the sweaters now had little difficulty in obtaining his frank and full confession to the crime. The split dice, put together, was named the 'death-dice' and is preserved in the Hohenzollern-Museum as a relic."

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B. A STRIKING COINCIDENCE INVOLVING ROBERT MATHESON: -- This story comes from "Twice-born Men," hdm0617, by Hy Pickering:

Robert Matheson, late Registrar-General for Ireland, thus relates the story of his passing "from death to life" (John 5:24).

In 1873, our family, visiting Scotland, went to Lanark for the purpose of seeing the Falls of Clyde. Not having time to go the distance from the town, we decided to visit Lanark Old Abbey. Soon we reached the Abbey, which stood in the center of a large burial ground. There was a main walk leading to the ruins and a circular walk on each side. My dear wife and my father took their places on the circular walk, and proceeded, one to paint and the other to sketch the Abbey, while my brother and I set out to search for the graves of the martyrs. I soon got tired of the search, and determined to rejoin my wife. The shortest way to reach her was to cut across the grass, but I had not taken into account the difficulties of picking my way through the rank grass, full of small grave stones. I nearly tripped over one of these, and finally was thrown to the ground by another of them which was partly concealed by the grass. Instantly I felt a strong desire to see what it was which caused my fall. Most of the tombstones were very small slabs with the name cut on the rim of the stone. Only one or two letters of the Christian name on this slab were visible, the remainder of the inscription being covered by the grass. I lifted up the grass, and what was my astonishment and horror to find my own name (Matheson) and Christian name (Robert) cut on the rim -- Robert Matheson.

I was not at all inclined to be superstitious, but thinking over the strange coincidence which had brought me there, I could not fail to see that it was a direct message from God to me. I felt the letters of the inscription with my hand, so as to make sure that it was real. Had I heard a voice or

seen a vision I would have readily ascribed it to a disordered state of the brain, resulting from overwork, but here was a tangible reality, about which there could be no question.

It presented itself to me thus: "Here lie the remains of a man who once bore my name. He has gone into Eternity; you will be there soon, and then what about your soul." I felt I was unprepared to meet God. Reliance on my religious observances and my own righteousness vanished, and I saw myself as a lost sinner in the presence of a Holy God, before whom I would have shortly to stand and give an account. I thought there was no hope for me, and that I was in the same category as the man in the parable to whom God said, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee" (Luke 12:20).

A few nights after my return to Ireland, I was sitting alone in our dining-room by the fire, thinking over the wonderful thing which had happened to me, and in deep anxiety about my soul. The Bible was lying on the chimney-piece. I opened it listlessly at I John 5:1, when the words of verse 1 seemed to light up in a way I never experienced before. It was the Holy Spirit illuminating the page. I read the verse again and again, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." I said to myself: This verse says that if I really believe on the Lord Jesus as the Christ, I am born of God. I will believe on Him now, and trust Him with my whole heart as my Saviour. Then the Devil made a last effort to keep me in his grasp, and whispered to me: "It is all very fine for you here in your own parlor to say you will trust Christ, but what about to-morrow, when your friends and companions will declare you have gone mad and turn you into ridicule." I recognized the force of this, but, reading on, I came to verse 4, which says, "Whosoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." I saw at once that this supplied the answer to the suggestion of the Evil One. I resolved to trust Christ then and there, for time and eternity, and boldly to take my stand for Him in this world.

Many years have elapsed since that memorable night, which altered the whole course of my life. I have passed through many trials and many difficulties in my earthly journey; but God has been faithful to His promise, and has given me the victory, and soon I shall be in the Savior's presence to see the King in His beauty, and to praise and adore Him for all His wonderful love to me.

He passed to his reward on January 27, 1926.

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C. A STRIKING INCIDENT INVOLVING H. C. MORRISON'S BROTHER: -- You will see profound similarity in one aspect of this story with the story above. It is from hdm0240, "The Healing Shadow," by Raymond Browning:

A cousin of Dr. Morrison's lived in the blue-grass section of Kentucky. He was a handsome, attractive man but pleasure-loving and ungodly. He owned a fine farm, had a good home, and kept a string of race horses. One day he was riding on a spirited saddle horse when he came to one of those fine old country churches you often see in central Kentucky. They are usually painted white and have a tall steeple. Nearly always there is a large graveyard adjoining, and the place is enclosed with a white limestone fence. Suddenly he reined up his horse and dismounted

and walked into that churchyard. He had thought of a friend who had recently passed away and whose funeral he had been unable to attend. It occurred to him that he would like to see the grave. Soon he located it and there before him was the fresh-turned dirt, the withered flowers, and the new tombstone. He read the inscription. It was in the early fall. Flowers were still in bloom and the mockingbirds were singing, and as he stood there in the quietude of that lovely churchyard he began to talk aloud.

He said, "Bill, old boy, I'm sorry for you. I'm afraid you've missed it. The trouble with you, Bill, is that you drank whiskey and played the races and went all the gaits -- just like I'm doing. Then you died -- just like I'm going to die; and you've gone to hell -- where I'm going. I'm sorry, Bill, but you've missed it."

He turned to walk away, and his eye fell on a tombstone that was tilted over a bit. The grave had sunk down and was matted over with honeysuckle vines. Out of curiosity he stooped to read the inscription. It was the grave of an old minister named Lasley. The man said, "I remember old Brother Lasley. It seems only yesterday, but it has been twenty-five years since he held a revival in that old church. I was just fifteen years old and I remember that I went to the altar one night. That seems strange now; but I was young then, and my heart was tender, and I cried. I haven't been to church in years, and I couldn't cry if I wanted too. My heart is as hard as a rock. I don't care for God nor man. I cried that night. Old Brother Lasley saw me and came around and put his hands on my head and prayed for me, and all the burden left me and I was happy. But all that is in the past and I just don't care. Life's a strange thing. I thought when I got my race horses that I would be happy, and now I sometimes wish they were all dead. I've got a good farm and a good wife and children, and yet I'm not happy -- but I know I was happy that night. I know I'm wrong and on my way to hell; but, bad as I am, I'd give every foot of Kentucky land that I own, every race horse on my farm, and every dollar I've got in the bank if I could go back twenty-five years and could get down at that altar once more and if old Brother Lasley could once more put his hands on my head and pray for me. If I could once more feel in my heart what I felt that night, it would be worth it all, but I can't. My heart is dead. I couldn't shed a tear if I wanted to."

He put his hand to his face and then looked at it in astonishment. "O Lord," he said, "just look at this. I'm crying." He started to take a step and his foot caught in the honeysuckle vines and he sprawled across that grave. He buried his face in his arms and prayed, "Lord, if I haven't gone too far, if there is any hope for a fellow like me, please take me back and let me feel once more what I felt in my heart when old Brother Lasley prayed for me."

Soon his wife heard him coming through the house like a storm. She had started into the dining room carrying a tray of dishes, when he met her and seized her in his arms, scattering chinaware all over the floor. He jumped and shouted and, as soon as his wife could get her breath, she said, "Husband, what in the world is the matter with you? Have you gone crazy?"

"No, honey," he said, "I'm not crazy. I've got religion."

She said, "Dear, I'm so glad, but I didn't know there was any revival going on."

"Oh, yes, honey, a wonderful revival! Old Brother Lasley and I had one down yonder in the graveyard."

The people had laid Brother Lasley to rest many years ago, but somehow they couldn't bury his shadow. No tomb can ever intern a good man's influence.

Do you remember that there is something like this in the Bible? In II Kings 13:21 we read about a time when the Israelites were burying a man and suddenly they saw in the distance a marauding band of Moabites approaching. Someone said, "We can't stop to dig a grave. What are we going to do with this dead man?" Another said, "Let's put him in Elisha's sepulchre." The Scripture says, "And when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood upon his feet." I imagine he beat his pallbearers home because he didn't have to walk to the funeral as they did.

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D. A STRIKING COINCIDENCE INVOLVING A SAVIOR/JUDGE: -- This story comes from "Present Day Parables," by J. Wilbur Chapman, hdm0072.

Some years ago a man driving down the streets of one of the great cities lost control of his horses and was in danger of being dashed to death. Suddenly, there sprang out into the streets a man who, seizing the horses by the bit, stopped them in their mad career and saved the driver's life.

By a singular coincidence, years afterwards the man whose life was saved was on trial before the one who had stopped the horses, who sat in the judge's chair. The trial was ended; the lawyers had made the plea and the jury had returned with its verdict, when the judge said, "Have you anything to say why sentence should not be pronounced upon you?" Then, rising, trembling with great emotion, he said: "Judge, don't you remember me?" And the judge said once again, "Have you anything to say why sentence should not be pronounced?" And then he said, "Why, Judge, I am the man you saved; have mercy, have mercy. And with a look full of pity, his honor replied, "I do remember you and I am very sorry for you, but then I was your saviour, and today I am your judge;" and the sentence of death was passed.

Today our Saviour stands waiting to be merciful. With tears in his eyes he stands knocking again and again at the door of our hearts. But one day the picture will change, and he will be our judge to say, "Depart, for I never knew you." God save us from that day. -- J. W. C.

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E. A STRIKING ILLUSTRATION IN THE LIFE OF MAXWELL PIERSON GADDIS: -- This comes from "Foot-Prints of an Itinerant," hdm0730, by Gaddis:

For some time I had no regular place to board, which was a great inconvenience. After preaching hard on Sabbath morning, February 14th, I was seized with a violent attack of pleurisy. I was unconscious for nearly forty-eight hours, and for more than five days I was near unto death;

but "God had mercy on me" and heard the prayer of his people in my behalf I was brought back to life and resumed my labors again in four weeks from the time I was taken ill. Throughout all that sore affliction my mind was kept in perfect peace, stayed upon the Savior. The Lord was very precious to my soul. Blessed be his holy name, I shouted his praises on my bed of pain and suffering.

I must record a strange coincidence which occurred during this affliction, and one which I have often looked back to with much interest. At the worst stage of my disease, a few days before the time of my second quarterly meeting, while dozing, I fancied that I was ascending a high mountain. When in full view of its summit I found my strength was failing very fast; but I urged my way onward up its rugged side till near the top. At this point the mountain ascent was almost perpendicular, and cliff after cliff rose above me. I made another effort and succeeded in clambering up till I gained a foothold within a few yards of the much-desired place of rest.

It was a moment of intense effort and anxiety. For a time my mind was overwhelmed in despair. I felt my strength entirely exhausted. However, I resolved to make another effort. I then took hold of some slender green shrubs that projected from the rocks, and by a mighty struggle succeeded in drawing up my weary frame to the summit of the mountain. On reaching the top I instantly swooned away and fell prostrate on the ground. After I revived, on looking over the edge of the precipice I saw my presiding elder, Rev. Joseph M. Trimble, standing on a cliff below me about ten feet. He looked up and smiled, and then addressed me in the most affectionate manner: "My dear brother Mack ["Mack" no doubt being a nickname for "Maxwell" -- DVM], you have made a narrow escape, but, thank God! you are safe."

The next Saturday was the time for the commencement of the quarterly meeting. Brother Trimble arrived on Friday evening, and entering my room found me alone. I was quietly dozing a little and my fever almost entirely gone. I was soon aroused by his feeling my pulse. On looking me in the face he smiled and addressed me as follows: "My dear brother Mack, you have made a narrow escape, but, thank God! you are safe." The reader will perceive that this is the same form of expression precisely as he used when, in my "night vision," I saw him standing on the mountain cliff. With the opening of Spring I gained strength slowly, and found it difficult to fill my appointments.

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F. A STRIKING COINCIDENCE INVOLVING A GROCER'S SCALES: --

A tired-looking woman entered a grocery store and asked the owner for enough food to make a Christmas dinner for her children. When he inquired how much she could afford, she answered, "My husband was killed in an accident. Truthfully, I have nothing to offer but a little prayer." Although the man was unmoved at first, he thought of a clever response to the woman's simple request.

"Write your prayer on a piece of paper and you can have its weight in groceries," he said sarcastically. To his surprise, she plucked a folded note out of her pocket and handed it to him saying, "I already did that during the night while I was watching over my sick baby." Without even

reading it, he put it on one side of his old-fashioned scales. "We shall see how much food this is worth," he muttered.

To his dismay nothing happened when he put a loaf of bread on the other side. But he was even more upset when he added other items and it would not balance. Finally he blurted out, "Well, that's all it will hold anyway. Here's a bag. You'll have to put these things in yourself. I'm busy!" With a tearful "Thank you," the lady went happily on her way. The grocer later discovered that the scales were out of order.

As the years passed he often wondered if that was just a coincidence. Why did the woman have the prayer already written before he asked for it? Why did she come at exactly the time the mechanism broke? Whenever he looks at the slip of paper which bears that mother's petition, he is amazed, for it reads, "Please, dear Lord, give us this day our daily, bread!"

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CONCLUSION

Many more stories of Striking Coincidences could be added to this brief article. One that I thought of including is found in hdm0553: "A Snake-infested Grave," by Charles Brougher Jernigan. But here, I forbear. Anyone who examines the facts in light of the Scriptures should be convinced that even now, as in all preceding time, God is working actively, constantly, in his orchestration of the happenings in our universe, in our world, and in our lives. Probably in every day, if not in every hour of every day, that comes, somewhere on this globe, a striking coincidence or happening occurs that could be accurately described with the words of Isaiah 28:29 -- "This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working."

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THE END