
BREAKTHROUGH TO YOUR MIRACLE

Believing God for the Impossible

JASON
NOBLE
with VINCE ANTONUCCI



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Jason Noble with Vince Antonucci, *Breakthrough to Your Miracle*
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This book is dedicated to my wife, Paula Noble, and the Noble 4 (Avi, Ryan, Audree and Julia). Thank you for always believing in me, cheering me on, standing with me and always being ready for the adventure we call ministry. Thanks for always sticking in there even when the journey hasn't been easy! I love you more than words and am so thankful for you!

In addition to my immediate family, I would also like to dedicate this book to my parents. Mom and Dad, thank you for always cheering me on, teaching me about the things of God, raising me in an atmosphere where I saw you believe for the impossible, and the incredible purpose you spoke over my life.

This book is also dedicated to all the people who have believed for the impossible throughout the years in the places we have ministered. Thank you for allowing me to stand with you, be a part of your story and see God do the impossible in your life! You are also my heroes. I have watched many of you walk through incredibly difficult times and not flinch. Your faith has grown my faith. I pray that many more people will be encouraged to believe and trust God for the impossible in their lives.

Finally, this book is dedicated to the God who still does *the impossible*.

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Foreword

You are probably reading this book because you or someone you know needs a breakthrough miracle. What is a breakthrough? It is the removal of an obstacle that has been restricting progress. So a breakthrough miracle is a miraculous event when something that has been standing in your way is removed.

Please remember that, no matter what impossibility you are facing, God takes impossible situations and turns them around. He still produces breakthroughs today! My prayer is that as you read this book, your hope will be restored, your faith will be elevated and you will begin to believe God to do impossible things in your life and in the lives of people around you.

As a producer, I love telling true stories—especially miracle stories that encourage people to have hope. God has provided incredible opportunities for me to share stories of miracles with the world through major Hollywood movies. I have worked on true stories like *The Pursuit of Happyness* and *Heaven Is for Real*. I produced the inspirational hit film *Miracles from Heaven* and now the movie *Breakthrough*.

Breakthrough and the book you hold in your hands were birthed out of the incredible real-life resurrection story of John

Smith. John was brought back to life after almost an hour with no pulse or oxygen when his mom, Joyce, walked into the hospital room and prayed, “Holy Spirit, I need You right now to come and breathe life back into my son!” His pulse immediately came back. But the doctors said John was brain dead. There was a one percent chance he would live overnight. And if he did live, he would most likely be severely neurologically impaired for the rest of his life.

What do you do at that point? Do you give up? Do you just accept what the doctors have told you? Or do you fight and refuse to let go of the promises God has given you? Joyce and Brian Smith and Pastor Jason Noble stood firm and held on to the scriptural principles outlined in this book. They saw one incredible miracle after another, all leading up to John’s walking out of the hospital sixteen days later.

I believe God wants to do more miracles today. He wants to bring dead things back to life. What is our role when an impossibility comes along? My good friend Jason Noble will help you discover these answers and more. I want to encourage you to use this book as a guide when you are facing impossible situations.

In the process of making the movie *Breakthrough*, I have gotten to know Pastor Jason and his heart to help people experience breakthrough in the impossible situations of their lives. Through his experiences as a pastor, God has given him wisdom and insight on how to walk people through difficult times when they need a breakthrough. He has seen many miracles in his ministry, and I believe this book will help many more people experience the breakthrough power of God in their lives.

I am excited to see all that God does through this book as you position yourself for a miracle and believe Him for breakthrough.

DeVon Franklin, CEO, Franklin Entertainment

Acknowledgments

First of all, I would like to acknowledge Joyce, John and Brian Smith. We have walked through an incredible journey together. I'm amazed to see all that God has done since we received the call on January 19, 2015, that John had fallen under the ice. I'm excited to see all that God is still going to do because of this great miracle. You have truly become family to us. Thank you for allowing me to walk beside you. My life is so enriched because of you. John, I'm very proud of you and all that God is going to do in your life. We will be connected for life, and I love all of you very much.

I would also like to acknowledge the team of people who have helped me on this book, including my agent, Don Gates, my publisher, Chosen Books, and the team of people at Chosen: Kim Bangs, Ann Weinheimer, my editor, and everyone else on the Chosen/Baker team. You have made this process a joy! Especially, with the quick turnaround! You all are the best.

I would like to acknowledge my partner on this book, Pastor Vince Antonucci. Vince stepped in at the last minute and partnered with me to write this book. We had a very tight timeline, and he knocked it out of the park. I could not have done this book without Vince. I appreciate him more than words can

Acknowledgments

say. I so appreciate his fresh insight and pastoral perspective. It enriches this book so much.

I would also like to acknowledge DeVon Franklin (producer of *Heaven Is for Real*, *Miracles from Heaven* and *Breakthrough*) and Pastor Sam Rodriguez. I'm thankful that God has brought these two men into my life. They have opened incredible doors for us, and are truly Holy Spirit-empowered and -anointed men. On a personal level they are genuine men of God. They are the same in private as they are in public. It's been an incredible journey. Thank you both for believing in me and allowing me to be a part of this incredible journey. Thank you for your spiritual leadership and the incredible impact your lives are making on the world. Thank you for standing beside us through this process and battling to share God's story with the world.

I also need to acknowledge all of the people who have stood with us through this journey of more than twenty years in ministry—all of the intercessors and prayer warriors who have stood by our side and were willing to stand in the gap. This army believed and prayed for miracles. I want to acknowledge all of the people also who have walked through very difficult crises and responded in incredible ways. They truly positioned themselves for miracles! You are my heroes. In the darkest moments your faith has shined.

Last and most important, I want to acknowledge God. As I write this I'm so thankful that we serve a God who loves and cares for us so much. I'm thankful that He has chosen to partner with us to see incredible things happen in our lives. I'm thankful that He cares for people who are suffering and walks beside us in the darkest moments of our lives. I'm thankful that His great love for us changes everything. I'm thankful that we can know God's heart today through His word and the fact that He wants to have a relationship with you and me! I'm thankful that He is active in our lives and doesn't remain a secret.

ONE

God Still Breaks Through

Your problem is not your problem.

I know you think it is. Whether it is a sickness that won't go away or a son who won't come back, not enough money for your family or too much fighting with your family, the wife you never seem to find or the husband you wish you could get rid of, the person lying to you or the person lying in front of you in a hospital room, clinging to life, your problem is not your problem.

Your problem is also not God.

I know that in your more honest moments you have wondered if it is. You have prayed, but He has not answered your prayers. Sometimes it doesn't seem as if He is paying attention to you at all. He is supposed to have compassion and power, so He could help, but He isn't.

But, no, God is *not* your problem.

What you need is a miracle, and what God is good at are miracles.

So, what is your problem?

You don't know how to position yourself to receive a miracle.
That is the problem.

Picture a guy who needs a mode of transportation and is given all the parts to put together a motorcycle. What's the problem? This dude has no idea how to put the pieces together to make a motorcycle! (Personally, I would have no idea where to begin, other than to call a mechanic!)

Picture a woman who needs a fancy dessert for her dinner guests. She is given all the ingredients to make an amazing chocolate soufflé. What's the problem? She doesn't know how to mix the ingredients in a way that creates a soufflé.

Your problem is not your problem, and it is not God. God is still God and still does miracles. You just need to know how to position yourself to receive one.

Needing a Miracle

I was in my office when my wife, Paula, called and asked me to get to the hospital "right away." *Right away* is never good, so I grabbed my car keys and headed out.

It is a 45-minute drive to Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital. I drove the whole way praying and confused. I knew something had happened with one of our church members, fourteen-year-old John Smith, but none of the details. And, until hearing Paula's tone of voice, I had no idea how serious it was.

Turns out, John and two friends had walked out onto frozen Lake Sainte Louise and the ice had given way. The other two boys were able to self-rescue. They were spotted, taken to the hospital and released. John could not crawl out. For fifteen minutes he was completely submerged. He swallowed enough lake water to fill his lungs completely. When the first responders finally reached him, he was dead. They transported him to St. Joseph Hospital West, trying desperately but unable to get a pulse.

John had been dead for over an hour when his mother, Joyce, hurried into the emergency room. The doctors had given up. Before calling the time of death they asked Joyce if she wanted to see him one last time to say goodbye.

Talk about needing a miracle.

What Is a Miracle?

You hear people use the word *miracle* quite a lot.

“It was a miracle I got to work on time.”

“It was a miracle I didn’t burn my mouth on that coffee.”

“It was a miracle the Cubs won the World Series.”

No. Those are not miracles. (Well, maybe the Cubs.) A miracle is not something unexpected or that goes against the odds. Those may be pleasant surprises, and God loves to bless us with special things, but they are not miracles.

A miracle is when God does something only God can do. It does not just defy probability; it defies explanation. Well, any explanation other than . . . God.

God created our natural world and the natural laws that govern it. A miracle happens when God chooses to reach down and intervene in the world He created. It is when God chooses for the supernatural to break through into the expected norms and routines of the natural. In the Bible, miracles are sometimes called *signs and wonders*. A miracle is a sign that points people to God and causes them to wonder about Him and His power; it stirs them to believe in and glorify Him.

Miracles in the Bible

The Old Testament starts with a miracle: God created the world out of nothing.

God was just getting started.

In the Old Testament we see God choosing repeatedly for the supernatural to break through the natural. God sent plagues, parted the Red Sea, stopped the sun, imposed leprosy, healed leprosy, gave a donkey the ability to talk, saved lives and resurrected the dead.

The New Testament starts with a miracle: God put skin on and entered the world He created as Jesus, His Son.

Jesus was just getting started.

In the New Testament we see Jesus choosing repeatedly for the supernatural to break through the natural. Jesus turned water into wine, calmed an angry sea, walked on water, fed thousands of people with just a small bit of food, healed people with physical diseases and mental illnesses, and resurrected the dead.

One of the times Jesus raised the dead is in Luke 7. Jesus was approaching a town called Nain when He saw a dead boy being carried out of the town gate. The boy was the only son of his mother, who was a widow. A large crowd was walking with her, mourning with her. When Jesus saw her, “his heart went out to her and he said, ‘Don’t cry.’” Jesus walked over to the coffin, touched it and said, “Young man, I say to you, get up!” The boy started breathing, then talking, then “Jesus gave him back to his mother” (verses 13–15).

Back then people were typically buried quickly after death. They did not have embalming fluids as we do, so it was a necessity. This mother had just lost her son, probably in the previous 24 hours. The shock was wearing off, and the pain was setting in.

Jesus walked up and “his heart went out to her.” That is the first thing to note in this story: *Miracles happen because we have a God of compassion.*

Jesus saw this mom and He hurt for her. What is interesting is that this would have been a very common scene. It was a funeral procession. If you and I were driving on a Saturday

morning and came across a hearse followed by a procession of cars, we would barely notice. What was happening in Nain that day was very ordinary, but Jesus had an extraordinary reaction. He felt the woman's pain.

When we struggle, when we suffer, God feels *our* pain. You might believe that your life is too insignificant, your problems too ordinary, that God would never notice you. You would be wrong. Jesus shows us we have a God who has compassion for you.

The second thing to note in this story: *Miracles happen because we have a God of power.* Have you ever had an emotional reaction to someone's pain, but you couldn't do anything to help? You felt bad. You would have helped if you could have, but there was nothing you could do.

Jesus felt something *and* He did something. He cared *and* He was able.

What did He do? He walked up and touched the coffin. In doing so, Jesus was crossing some boundaries. Back then there were rules about what you could and could not touch. Touching a dead body, or the piece of wood the body was on, was a strict no-no. But Jesus had compassion on this hurting mom, so He walked up to the coffin and ignored the religious policies. He reached out His fingers, made contact, and the young man breathed. Jesus' touch brought back the boy's life.

It also brought back the mother's hope. Hope has been called "oxygen for the soul." A moment earlier the boy had no oxygen, and the mom had no hope; Jesus gave new life to both of them.

When we struggle, when we suffer, God has the power to do something about it. You might feel that your situation is so dead God could never help you. You would be wrong. Jesus shows us we have a God who has power for us and can bring dead things in our lives back to life.

That day a miracle happened.

God did something only God can do. Jesus reached out, and His touch allowed the supernatural to break through into the natural. Dead people stay dead; but not if God chooses to do a miracle.

A miracle is also a sign that points people to God so they will believe in and glorify Him. That is exactly what happened in this story. Look at the result of the boy being raised that day: “They were all filled with awe and praised God. ‘A great prophet has appeared among us,’ they said. ‘God has come to help his people.’ This news about Jesus spread throughout Judea and the surrounding country” (Luke 7:16–17).

Does God Still Do Miracles?

Throughout the Old and New Testaments God does miracles. What about today? Does God still do miracles?

Many people say no. I’m not just talking about atheists and agnostics. A lot of people who go to church every Sunday struggle to believe God still does miracles.

Why? I think there are several reasons.

The Way We Think about God

People who believe in miracles believe in God.

People who don’t believe in miracles may believe in God, but they believe in a God *who lacks compassion*. They have become convinced that God is not concerned with what is going on in their lives. They have bought into a lie that God does not care about them. The truth is that God loves us so much He allowed Jesus to die for us when we were His enemies. Now, as His adopted children and friends, He would do anything for us (see Romans 5:6–10). God is aware of every little thing going on in our lives (see Luke 12:7). God invites us to bring all of our cares to Him (see 1 Peter 5:7). God has the compassion to care about

what we are going through and wants to act on our behalf, but people who don't believe in miracles doubt that.

People who don't believe in miracles may believe in God, but they believe in a God *who lacks power*. They may or may not believe the stories in the Bible that demonstrate God's power, but they have become convinced that God does not have, or refuses to use, that kind of power today.

There are a lot of people in our world who know about God, but they do not truly know Him. Second Timothy 3:5 tells us that some people have the appearance of godliness but deny its power. You can know about God, but if you have never experienced His life-changing power you don't really know Him.

The truth is that God is the same yesterday, today and forever (see Hebrews 13:8). God did not stop being God when the Bible stopped being written. God has not changed and has not lost His power.

The Way We Think about Life

Why do people, even those who go to church and say they believe in God, not believe in miracles? I think for some it's the way they want to approach life.

There was a time when people were comfortable with mystery and unpredictability. It was kind of necessary because there was so much we did not understand. Today, at least in America, people feel as though they have it all figured out. Rather than being small cogs in a big universe, many feel like masters of the universe—anti-supernatural, fiercely independent, self-reliant and wanting to be in control. That doesn't leave much room for God to do something unpredictable.

In the beginning, God made humans the way He wanted them to be. I wonder if we have returned the favor? Many people are not interested in a God who can intervene in their lives. They feel threatened if He works in ways they cannot control.

The Way We Want Others to Think about Us

Pastor Craig Groeschel talks about Christians who believe in God but live as if He doesn't exist, calling them "Christian atheists."¹

A couple of decades earlier, Stanley Hauerwas, professor of theological ethics at Duke University Divinity School, and William H. Willimon, professor of Christian ministry at Duke, wrote an article in *Christian Century* in which they gave the same assessment of Christians: "The central problem for our church, its theology, and its ethics is that it is simply atheistic."² The title of their article is interesting: "Embarrassed by God's Presence."

I think that is another issue that keeps people from believing in miracles. It is not just the way we think about God and life; it is also the way we want others to think about us. It seems to me that Christians want to be known, more than anything else, for being *normal*. In Bible times we see Christians known for their great love, for living sacrificial lives and for the miracles God did among them.³ There was nothing normal about them. That is why people were so amazed by them.

Today, many Christians worry about seeming "weird." They don't want to be different; they want to be respectable. If you want to be normal, miracles do not really fit into your theology or way of life.

God Is Still in the Miracle Business

People may struggle to believe, but God is still in the miracle business. He has not lost His compassion or power. What He was capable of then, He is capable of now. What used to happen still happens.

You can believe that in faith, or you can believe that because of the evidence. In fact, most people who train a skeptical eye on

the theology and the real-life claims regarding miracles usually come to believe that they are true.

C. S. Lewis, a former atheist, studied what the Bible says about miracles and whether or not miracles still happen. He focused on theology and philosophical arguments. His conclusion? God is still in the miracle business. Lewis wrote a book proving miracles still happen that he titled *Miracles*.⁴

Craig Keener, another former non-believer, traveled the world investigating claims of modern miracles. His conclusion? God is still in the miracle business. He wrote a (more than 1,200-page!) two-volume book proving miracles still happen that he titled *Miracles*.⁵

Eric Metaxas, another former skeptic, analyzed the topic of miracles, questioning whether or not miracles and science can coexist. Metaxas writes, “The idea that science is somehow at odds with faith and miracles is false. It’s actually not only false but also demonstrably illogical.”⁶ Metaxas’s conclusion? God is still in the miracle business. He wrote a book proving miracles still happen that he titled *Miracles*.

Lee Strobel, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, and another former atheist, used his investigative skills to determine whether or not miracles are still happening. Part of his investigation involved interviews with atheists who made the best possible arguments against God and the supernatural. Strobel’s conclusion? God is still in the miracle business. He wrote a book proving miracles still happen that he titled *The Case for Miracles*.⁷ (At least he added a few words to the *Miracles* title!)

God still does miracles. Even skeptics have been convinced.

But the big question is this: Are you? Do you believe?

It is a big question because whether or not you believe God can do a miracle may well be the difference between whether or not you receive one.

That brings us back to the emergency room in St. Louis.

Resurrection

John had been dead for over an hour. No pulse, no oxygen.

Joyce walked into the room, saw her son's lifeless body, and cried out with a voice that could be heard throughout the emergency room, "I believe in a God who can do miracles! Holy Spirit, I need You right now to come and breathe life back into my son!"

Immediately, the EKG monitors started to beep. John had a pulse. He was breathing.

The doctors were shocked. John was alive. But he was still facing desperate circumstances, so they decided to airlift him to Cardinal Glennon.

I arrived at Cardinal Glennon and was stunned to see the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) waiting room overflowing with friends, family, church members, classmates; all of them there for John.

People updated me in hushed tones. Forty-five minutes of resuscitation efforts could not raise a pulse. *Nothing* could get a pulse. He was not breathing. His heart was not beating. John was dead. Joyce walked in, prayed and he came back to life.

As I was talking with people in the waiting room, John's parents, Joyce and Brian, walked out of their meeting with the doctor. Brian had arrived shortly after Joyce. Joyce told us what the doctors had told them. John was brain dead. All of his organs were in catastrophic failure. They gave John a one percent chance of making it through the night. If he did make it, he would be a "vegetable."

We decided that we were not giving up. We believed in a miracle-working God and trusted that He was going to break through.

I took a group of pastors into John's room, and we started to pray. Over the next weeks we continued to pray.

As we prayed, God did miracle after miracle. John made it through the first night. He woke up on the third day. He had

the ventilator taken out on the seventh day. John walked out of the hospital on the sixteenth day. On the fortieth day he was completely cleared by his doctors. At this writing nearly four years later, he is a fully healthy young man.

Even doctors who did not believe in miracles called it a miracle.⁸

What Miracle Are You Seeking?

God is a God of compassion and power. God loves us, is for us and wants to come through for us. A God-sized problem requires a God-sized solution and creates a moment for God to break through. God is willing and able to intervene and do miracles because He loves us and wants to reveal Himself to us. He did miracles throughout the Old and New Testaments, and He is still doing them today. I saw John Smith raised from the dead, and I have seen many others. I will be sharing a bunch with you.

But *you* are the one I am wondering about.

I wonder why you are reading this book. Perhaps you are facing an impossible situation and you are looking for a miracle. Where do you need God to intervene? Maybe . . .

You have received a scary diagnosis from a doctor.

You are not sure if your marriage is going to make it.

Since you were a kid, the only way you've communicated with your mother was through yelling, and you want finally to move past that.

You are battling an addiction, and you never experience victory.

Your finances are a disaster, and you have no idea what to do.

A loved one is going through chemo, and the situation is not looking promising.

You have never been able to forgive the person who abused you.

You cannot stop overeating or overspending.

People you care about have no interest in Jesus; you can't get through to them.

You worry incessantly and know it shows a lack of faith.

You hate your job but are afraid to launch out on a new career path.

You have been struggling with the same debilitating condition for years.

The son or daughter you love has walked away from God, and there is no sign of a return.

You have low self-esteem, and it is killing you.

So, do you believe God can do what you need Him to do?

But Will He Do It for You?

God does miracles. Still.

So, why don't we see more of them today?

Why are *you* not experiencing a miracle when you are so desperate for one?

Those are good questions, important questions. Throughout my years of studying the Bible and interacting with thousands of people through my role as a pastor, I have discovered something: It is no coincidence that certain people do not receive the miracles they hope for and certain people do.

You might guess that I have found this difference between them: Some people *lack* faith for miracles; other people *have* faith for miracles; some people believe God *can*; other people believe God *will*.

That is part of it but not all of it.

It turns out that people who receive miracles don't just receive miracles; they *position* themselves to receive miracles.

When Joyce Smith walked into that room, her son was dead; but that was not her problem. Her problem was positioning herself for a miracle. Because Joyce trusts in the God who can raise the dead, she knew how to position herself to receive the miracle she needed.

Your problem is not your problem, and God is not your problem. God is still God and still does miracles. You just need to know how to position yourself to receive one.

I wrote this book to help you know how to position yourself so you can breakthrough to your miracle. God longs to intervene in your life and do for you what cannot otherwise be done. He has the compassion and the power. He is ready and eager to move on your behalf. He is inviting you to position yourself to partner with Him and make the impossible possible. Let's position ourselves so God can show up, show off and draw people to Himself.

CONNECT WITH GOD

God, thank You for loving me. Thank You that You care about me and what is going on in my life. You know me, and You know I have moments of doubt. But God, I believe You are who You say You are and can do what You say You can do. I am facing some situations that seem impossible, but I know that nothing is impossible for You, and that the impossible is nothing to You. I am so grateful that You want to be a part of my life. God, please grow my belief. Teach me how to position myself for a miracle. I thank You in advance for the miracles I believe You will do in my life, and I pray they all bring You glory. In Jesus' name, Amen.

POSITION YOURSELF

1. Read the healing miracles in the New Testament that Jesus performed. Write down the practical things you see people did before and after Jesus healed them.
2. What impossible situations do you need God to break through for you? Write them down, and keep track of everything God does. Watch for the little things that might not seem like miracles.
3. Commit to praying every day for the miracles you are seeking, believing that your breakthrough is coming.

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What do you truly believe about God and His ability to do miracles in your life?
2. What past events and circumstances have shaped your perspective on miracles?
3. Where do you need God's breakthrough in your life?
4. Do you really believe that God loves you enough to step in and do miracles in your life? Why or why not?
5. What is keeping you from believing that God can do a miracle in your situation?
6. What is the next step you need to take after reading this chapter?