

Raising Jalleena

■ Butler resident cites doctor's prayer and the intervention of God in the miracle that saved her granddaughter

By Dee Ann Campbell
The Choctaw Sun

BUTLER — "He's the same God who raised Lazarus from the dead," says Lois Reid of Butler. "He still performs those miracles today."

For Lois and her family, miracles are not just something they read about in the Bible. They are not just events that took place 2000 years ago.

Miracles still happen, Lois says, because she sees one of them each time she looks at her granddaughter.

On the morning of September 14, 2002, 18-month-old Jalleena Thompson drowned in the pool behind her home in Barstow, California. The accident was an experience that would nearly shatter her family, but one that would lead to an undeniable miracle that would change not only their own lives but the lives of those who witnessed it.

It was an experience that, they say, would draw together a God-ordained series of events and circumstances to bring their baby back to life.

Former Butler resident, Mike Thompson and his uncle George had been working in another room of the home that Mike and his wife Julie had recently purchased, while Jalleena and her baby sister were playing in the family room. The children were locked in behind child-proof safety gates and a bolted lock on the patio door.

"I had just left the room after changing the baby," Mike remembers, "and I heard the baby cry. I looked in the room and didn't see Jalleena anywhere."

One of the baby gates was down and the door had been opened. Running outside, Mike called for his daughter, looking everywhere in the yard for any sign of her.

It was then that he noticed her floating in the corner of the pool.

While her father was pulling Jalleena's lifeless body from the pool, Dr. Christine Daniel was arriving for work at a nearby hospital. With severe back pain, the physician had tried unsuccessfully to get a replacement for her shift in the emergency room.

But what happened in the ER that day would so



18-months old brought back to life after drowning

Jalleena Thompson is pictured at 18-months during her stay in the hospital following her drowning experience. In the background are her parents, Mike and Julie Thompson of Barstow, California. Mike is a former resident of Butler who attended Choctaw County High School. His mother Lois Reid still lives in Butler with her husband Sid.

affect her life that the doctor would later write about the experience in her book *If There is a God Why Do Bad Things Happen to Good People*. (copyright, 2006, published by Holy Fire Publications).

"I prayed in my car for God's help," writes Dr. Daniel. "I was actually asking God in my prayer to make everybody well so I didn't have to worry about bending down with my back pain. I never knew I was praying for a Code Blue case getting ready to happen."

Mike carried his baby's body from the pool into the house where he and his uncle began CPR. Although they had called 9-1-1, what seemed to be a bad telephone connection led Mike to take matters into his own hands. Carrying Jalleena to his truck, he left his uncle with the younger baby and flew to the hospital, holding his child in one arm and driving with the other and continuing CPR as he drove.

"I remember running into the hospital screaming for help," says Mike, who worked as an Emergency Medical Technician at the hospital. "I fell to my knees and held her up for them to take her."

For a moment, Mike felt relief knowing that the medical staff was helping his daughter. But when the doctor looked at Jalleena, his relief vanished, turning instead to agonizing pleas for the life of his baby.

Jalleena was blue, with no pulse, no respiration, and no heartbeat. She had been without signs of life for close to 10 minutes.

"I wanted to pro-

nounce the child dead," writes Daniel. "But the father wouldn't let me."

Mike continued to plead loudly and agonizingly with the medical staff to not give up on his baby.

"He just wouldn't give up," Lois says. "He was like the men who lowered their friend through the rooftop to Jesus so He could heal him."

"I was screaming and begging," Mike remembers. "I just kept begging them not to stop. I was trying to pray but all I could say was, 'No, Jesus, no!' But the Bible says that when you are unable to pray, someone else will."

Someone else did. "I knew at this point that only a miracle could bring life back to this drowned victim," Daniel writes. "I also knew that as an M.D., I was not supposed to pray out loud in any Emergency Room or at work."

Faced with the choice of a dead child or the possibility of losing her position at the hospital, Daniel opted to pray.

"I raised my hands toward heaven and began to call on the name of Jesus," writes Daniel. "I said to the Lord, 'If you raised Lazarus from the grave, you can restore life to the child.'"

"They had put me in the hallway by then," Mike remembers. "I could hear her praying out loud from where I was, and I looked in through the door and saw her with her hands raised."

While the emergency team continued to work on little Jalleena, Dr. Daniel continued to pray. For the next 8 minutes, her prayers could be heard throughout that area of the hospital, and other staff members soon joined her.

"Suddenly the nurse performing the chest compressions said she felt a mighty gush of wind strike her hand and also the chest of the child," writes Daniel, "and that quickly, the heartbeat came back."

The doctor continued to intercede in prayer on behalf of Jalleena. As they waited for the LifeFlight helicopter to take her to Loma Linda Children's Hospital, Daniel prayed for her complete recovery.

"Jalleena had brain edema," explains Lois. "Dr. Daniel prayed for her healing, that no damage would be done."

Jalleena spent the next 3 weeks in the hospital. Physicians warned the family to expect long-term and even permanent brain damage because of the length of time the



Jalleena just celebrated her 6th birthday on Sunday. She is a bright Kindergarten student with no sign of lingering problems from her ordeal.

child was without oxygen. But within days, it was obvious that there would be no lasting effects.

"I went to California to see her," Lois says. "I would sit and hold her hand and sing songs to her. Her eyes would light up and you could tell she was laughing."

During the first week in October, despite nearly a half hour with no life signs, Jalleena went home healthy and normal.

"We had three therapists come to our house to evaluate her after she got home," says Mike. "She met and exceeded their expectations. When they left, they were all crying."

Today, Jalleena is a happy, intelligent 6-year-old, with no evidence of problems associated with her experience.

"She's part of the advanced students in her Kindergarten class," her dad says, voice choking with emotion. "She is so smart that we have to give her extra work to do because she finishes everything so fast."

Just as she had expected, Dr. Daniel lost her position at the hospital because of her decision to vocalize her faith on behalf of Jalleena. But, she says in her book, the decision was one that she would make again.

And it is a decision that Mike and Lois, and all of Jalleena's family have hailed as the catalyst of faith that saved their baby.

"What would have happened if she had not done this?" Lois asks. "She risked her job. I believe that was the factor in God doing this. He saw her faith and knew that she was risking everything."

Daniel's book is now garnering national attention and may be the focus of an upcoming segment on the Oprah Winfrey Show.

Looking back, Mike and Lois cite countless circumstances that were in place that day, circumstances that they believe God orchestrated to bring about Jalleena's miracle

— from the presence of Dr. Daniel despite her own health problems, to highly-trained staff members who were on duty that day to the presence of Mike's uncle who had miraculously dropped by just to help.

"Everything that was in place that day was a miracle," says Lois. "God put those things together to save her. There's no other explanation."

Following Jalleena's accident, Mike says he began to take his faith much more seriously, and he began to see God at work in ways he had never seen before.

"I had been in the process of building a relationship with God then," admits Mike. "I was looking for answers. My mom is my biggest spiritual mentor, and she was helping me to learn."

"I used to look at people and their circumstances as statistics," he admits. "I deal with people dying every day, but when it happened to me, I was on the other side. I began to see what they felt."

Mike says that his family has also been profoundly affected by some unexplained comments made by his daughter.

"We were going to church one day, and she suddenly told us, 'I saw Jesus,'" Mike says with emotion. "She said Jesus had held her. She had never said anything like that before, and we had never mentioned anything like that to her."

Jalleena's comments have also included references to a grandfather who passed away when she was a newborn and unexplained visions that no one else can see.

"I have no doubt that she did see Jesus," Lois says. "And she says she sat with her grandfather. I believe she was in heaven, and God allowed her to come back to us."

Mike and his family visited Choctaw County in the months following Jalleena's recovery. During their visit, they visited his mother's church, the Evangel Temple in Meridian, to say a special thank-you to those who had been praying for them.

"We had so many churches and people praying for us," Mike says. "It felt like an overwhelming feeling of support from everywhere."

Through their prayers, the prayers of Dr. Daniel, and the circumstances put in place by God himself, Mike and his family say that they got their baby back — a baby who wouldn't be alive today without the sacrificial intervention of godly people and the will of the loving God who answered their prayers.

"Nothing me or Dr. Daniel or anybody else did brought her back to life," says Mike, choking back emotion. "Maybe some of the things we did helped, but it was God. We give Him all the glory."

"Only a miracle could bring life back to this drowned victim."

-- Dr. Christine Daniel

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