

Divine Coincidence - A chapter in my upcoming book, *Why Me Lord*

Ali Mahjoub
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When God calls you to preach... you preach. You hear?

There are moments in life when heaven bends close—so close that the veil between worlds thins, and the ordinary becomes charged with a mysterious power. My journey has been woven with such moments. Coincidence, some might call them. But I have lived long enough, and seen enough, to know better. These moments are not random. They are divine fingerprints—God’s subtle handwriting on the pages of our lives.

I learned this truth fiercely one morning in 1984, during my missionary work in Minneapolis. Back then, I was part of the Inter-Denominational Conference for Clergy, visiting churches, meeting pastors, and inviting them to our gatherings. I was young in my new faith, hungry to serve, and open—perhaps more open than I realized—to whatever God had in store.

It was early on a quiet Sunday when I set out to visit my friend, the warm-hearted Rev. Delpino. I merged onto Interstate 94, the sky still pale with morning light, and drove no more than a mile before something happened—something I had never felt with such force. Without warning, a presence filled my car. Not beside me, not around me, but *inside* me, overwhelming and unmistakable. God’s voice—alive, urgent, unmistakably real—surged through my being. Words poured from my mouth as though I were no longer simply speaking... but being spoken through. Tears streamed down my face, blurring the traffic, the road, everything except the fire in my chest.

And then—a whisper. Soft, gentle, but carrying the weight of command:

Write these words down.

My hands trembled. I reached blindly for the notebook I always kept with me and found a pen. Cars honked and swerved as my little vehicle drifted from lane to lane, but I couldn’t stop. I wrote as the message poured out of me—fierce, clear, unstoppable. By the time I reached my exit, most of the message had filled the page.

Shaken, still wiping my tears, I arrived at Rev. Delpino’s house. He greeted me with warmth, and we spoke about God, faith, ministry—the things that nourish the soul. When our visit ended and I rose to leave, he suddenly gripped my shoulder, his eyes blazing with a certainty that startled me.

“Look here, young man,” he said slowly, shaking me as if to anchor the words into my bones. “When God calls you to preach... you preach. You hear?”

I nodded, a little bewildered. “Of course... yes.”

I didn’t realize God had arranged the next movement in this divine symphony.

I returned home just in time for Sunday service, feeling peaceful, unaware of what awaited me. As soon as I stepped out of my car, two sisters from the church ran toward me, their faces pale with urgency.

“Ali! The minister left for an emergency meeting in New York! He said *you* must give the sermon today.”

For a moment, the world froze. My heart thudded in my chest. Me? Preach? That day? With no preparation?

Then suddenly, like a bell ringing in the distance, the words of Rev. Delpino echoed back:

When God calls you to preach... you preach.

And deeper still, the whisper that had filled my car that morning:

Write these words down.

I understood. All at once, I understood.

I hurried to my room, heart trembling, and knelt down. “God, help me,” I whispered. “These words weren’t mine—so let Your voice speak again.” I opened the notebook. The message flowed together like pieces of a puzzle that had waited for this exact hour.

When I walked into the chapel, it was packed. Every seat filled. Every face lifted. I felt the weight of all those eyes—but more than that, I felt a presence behind me, around me, within me, steadying my breath.

The moment I began speaking, something ignited. The room shifted, the atmosphere lifted, and the message - God’s message - unfolded with a power that surprised even me. People leaned forward, their spirits awakened. Some cried. Others nodded, as though they had been waiting for those very words.

When the sermon ended, a line formed. People rushed to shake my hand, to thank me, to tell me the message had touched something deep inside them.

And I stood there quietly, knowing the truth: *It wasn’t me.*

That day, I learned that coincidences are not accidents. They are divine signals—subtle, mysterious, sometimes terrifying in their accuracy. Some come to warn us. Some to save us. Some to steer us toward our destiny. But all of them whisper the same truth:

Someone is watching. Someone knows. Someone cares.

And when God calls you to speak... you speak.