



A delightfull readable yet profound survey of the way stories inform our faith and values, and are essential to our Christian witness. Ralph Milton at his best.

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**“This time, God, you blew it!”**  
**an unorthodox and somewhat heretical perspective**  
**by Ralph Milton**

*You certainly won't find this story in the Bible. But it's kind of biblical. What do you think?*

*I wrote this fantasy for the periodical Aha!!! some years ago, and have read it to a number of different groups. The feedback has been about 50-50, those who love it and those who hate it.*

*So please read the story carefully, and decide whether you want to read it to others or expunge it quickly from your computer.*

Look God you blew it!

God had called a meeting of the heavenly hosts to consider the proposal.

"I've told 'em and told 'em and I've told 'em," said God, when they were all sitting around the board room table. "All that business with Abraham and Isaac and Joseph. And then there was Isaiah scaring the pants off 'em and Jeremiah with his audiovisuals. Even Ezekiel on his psychedelic trip. Nobody listens to me anymore. I get no respect.

"How about another prophet?" said Gabriel. "Only this time, one with a bit of class. White suit. Healing everybody. Strong speaker. Charismatic personality. Tongues...yeah, speaking in tongues. We haven't done that little number...."

"Look, Gabe," said God. "I know I put you in charge of PR but another prophet won't do. Even with a white suit and tongues. It's gotta be something more. It's got to be the Messiah."

"You're kidding," said Gabriel. This was most ungodlike.

"No. I mean it. Time to stop fooling around. If you want something done right, you've got to do it yourself. So I shall become flesh and dwell among them. Get me the Messiah suit."

Gabriel was dumbfounded. He didn't expect God to go through with it. Never did he expect God to become a human being, even though there had been promises to that effect for centuries.

And Gabriel had certainly never seen a Messiah suit. But there he stood at the locker with the key in his hand.

It was a greyish, moth-eaten piece of badly woven wool.

"Ah...God..." said Gabriel on the intercom to the throne room. "I think you must have sent me to the wrong locker. It was number 666, wasn't it?"

"Of course!" said God. "I don't make mistakes."

"Well, ah, it doesn't look much like a Messiah suit to me. It isn't really the kind of thing you'd wear on a triumphal ride into Jerusalem. It's nothing but an old wool rag..."

"That's it!" said the voice on the intercom.

"But God..."

"That's it!"

Back in the throne room Gabriel was busy trying to work out the logistics of it all. "We've got to get you born, first of all. Now you had one of your prophets tell people the Messiah would be born of a virgin..."

"Got just the girl," said God.

"Let me guess," said Gabriel. "Salome, the daughter of King Herod."

"She's NOT a virgin!" said God.

"Oh."

"Besides, I've got a girl from Nazareth called Mary...."

"She's not a virgin either," said Gabriel.

"She was raped," said God angrily. "By a Roman soldier. As far as I'm concerned, she's a virgin."

"Gimme a break, God. I'm not stupid, y'know."

"You're not stupid, but you haven't really paid attention to the prophets, Gabriel. The Messiah will be "despised and rejected, a child of sorrow and acquainted with grief." Who could be more despised and rejected in Jewish society than the bastard child of a Roman soldier."

"You are right of course, God," Gabriel groveled. "But she is still not a virgin."

"Oh?" said God. "A child, just barely a woman, brutally raped on her way home one night, has committed no sin. She is a victim of sin. But she is

ready to bear and love that child, and as far as I'm concerned, she is a virgin, and henceforth, all nations shall call her blessed."

"But you always seem to go to the dregs of society for your leaders, God. Why?"

"Why? Why Gabriel? Because my name is Love. And when someone is hurt, I can't help but love them just a little more. That's why I chose the Hebrews – such a poor, pathetic little tribe. That's why I chose Sarah, such a sad old woman who laughed when I announced her pregnancy. That's why I chose Jacob who was dishonest and all thumbs, and why I gave him Rachel so she could make something out of herself. That's why I chose Ruth, a starving widow and David, a shepherd from the boondocks."

"Yeah," said Gabriel. "Youngest sons and women. The ones voted least likely to succeed. It's no wonder most of the world has never heard of you. You know how to pick the winners, that's for sure."

God sighed. "Go tell her Gabe. Tell that poor frightened girl, she's going to have a baby. Me."

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It was years later. Gabriel was busy minding the shop while God was off being a human. Gabriel's biggest problem was trying to explain things to all the cherubim and seraphim that kept pestering him with questions.

And Gabe wasn't doing very well.

"I guess God's really taking it seriously, this business of being human. Seems to me the Messiah could have reserved a few divine privileges. That stable was a mess. You couldn't believe the smell. And the cockroaches.

"But then I guess God created the cockroaches too, though I'll never know why."

Then Gabriel tried to force a little optimism. After all, when you're in PR the name of the game is optimism.

"But I think God's going to do it right this time. There's a plan for a big ride into Jerusalem – people waving and shouting, all that sort of thing. I've got Judas all geared up to really challenge God to do it up brown. 'Be the Messiah and take charge', Judas is going to tell God. 'Show them who's boss'. Judas can pull it off.

"Gabriel, sir." It was one of the cherubim. "I was just down there flying around a little. And I was wondering....for the parade into Jerusalem...why did they choose a donkey?"

"A donkey! For Pete's sake. God..." and Gabriel stopped just short of blasphemy. "So what's wrong with a horse? That would have been impressive. Conquerors and kings ride on horses."

"Maybe God doesn't want to be a conqueror," said the cherubim.

"Of course God is the conqueror!" Gabriel was shouting now. "How else do you take charge of the world? Being sweet and nice is fine for openers, but if you want to be God of Gods and Lord of Lords...if you want to be the Messiah... you've got to show some muscle. A donkey..."

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It was just a week later. Gabriel was sitting in his office nursing a very large, very dry martini. There was a tiny knock at the door.

"What?" shouted Gabriel.

"Pardon me, sir," said the cherubim. "But I thought I should come and tell you."

"What's to tell. They made God the laughing stock. Crucified him like a crook out on the garbage dump. All we got was a few pious niceties from the cross. 'It is finished'. How's THAT for an exit line? 'It is finished. I'm finished.'"

"But God isn't."

"Isn't what?"

"Finished. The women went to the tomb. The body wasn't there. And then God appeared to the women and the other disciples. God is alive!"

There was a long, stunned silence as the whole thing, the miracle, soaked in past Gabriel's stubborn anger and too many martinis.

"Great! Marvelous! I love it!" he yelled. "Hey, I knew the boss had some tricks up that old sleeve. How about that? Now God is going to ride right back through town and show those Romans which end is up. How about that?"

"Are you sure?"

"What do you mean? Of course I'm sure. I'm the Archangel Gabriel, ain't I?"

"Well," said the cherubim. "God doesn't seem to be doing that. God doesn't seem to be meeting with anyone except the disciples."

"The disciples? That bunch of wimps? What for? A bunch of nerds who can't walk and chew gum. Damn! Why is it, that an all-powerful God never uses that power. When you're holding four aces, why not play them?"

"You'd think, from the way God is acting, that it's better to be weak. That losers win.

"I never thought I'd say it, but God, the Lord Yahweh, Creator of Heaven and Earth, couldn't make it as a human.

"God! This time you blew it!"

**Ralph Milton has written a number of books,  
all of them available through Wood Lake Publishing.  
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