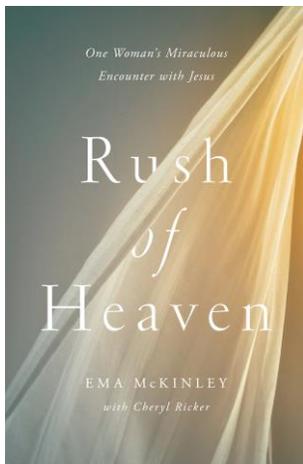




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A Women's Miraculous Encounter with Jesus New Book Chronicles How Jesus Healed Her Crooked Body

Grand Rapids, Mich. — From "Heaven is For Real" to "Proof of Heaven," popular books and movies have captured audiences' fascination and desire for documented encounters with God and the afterlife. "**Rush of Heaven: One Woman's Miraculous Encounter with Jesus**" (Zondervan; **October 21, 2014, hardcover \$19.99**) chronicles the night Ema



McKinley witnessed Jesus in her room while He astoundingly straightened her crooked foot, hand, neck and spine.

On an ordinary workday during Easter weekend of 1993, Ema McKinley was high above the ground searching stacked boxes in a storage room, when she came face-to-face with a drum heater on the ceiling. When the heater roared, McKinley was staring straight into its blazing flame. Heat blasted her body and her world suddenly went dark. When McKinley awoke the next day in a hospital bed, she learned she had fallen off the stacked boxes and had hung upside down, by her left foot alone, for two and a half hours after the fall.

Rather than improving, McKinley's body became progressively bent and disfigured. Doctors diagnosed her with reflex sympathetic dystrophy (RSD), a rare nerve disorder that cripples limbs and causes extreme sensitivity to touch. RSD pain is said to hurt more than almost anything known to man, surpassing non-terminal cancer, amputation of a digit and child birth, according to the McGill Pain Index. In addition, it has the highest suicide rate. The disease led to McKinley's hand and foot deformities, painful sores, insomnia, gastrological distress, curvature of the neck and spine, heart and lung failure, and permanent confinement to a wheelchair.

While living with RSD for 18 years, McKinley's faith was consistently tested: divorced shortly after her accident, when she needed support the most; constant battles with her insurance company to pay for medical pills; a near-death experience from having a heart attack; a forced admission into a psychiatric ward for several weeks; and the list goes on. But through all the trials, McKinley held onto her faith and drew from God's strength every day, making the consistent decision to give thanks to God.

McKinley says: "When we choose to rejoice in trials, we find more peace. We see trials as a means to grow in patience, which develops character, which translates into deeper faith and hope for what God will do in the future. I think God allows suffering to help us focus on our eternal home. Our circumstances are temporary compared to the glory that will soon be revealed in us."

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On Christmas Eve of 2011 McKinley, who was home alone after a long day of holiday preparations, made a wrong move in her wheelchair and landed abruptly onto the floor. "Pain exploded when the curve of my neck slammed the floor, crushing it against the bend," said McKinley. "Fire shot through my spine. My crooked foot got pinned somewhere behind my right leg, and my left arm lay trapped beneath me. All I could see of it was my big club fist, looking lifeless and useless in front of my face."

McKinley lay on the floor for eight and a half hours, crying out to Jesus, the only one who could hear her. Wondering if it was her time to go to her heavenly home, McKinley's world turned when she felt the miraculous presence of Jesus, who healed her crooked body and restored her mobility.

"As He stood over me, I had only one response: complete trust. Abandon. I'd do whatever He said. I'd trust Him with everything in me," says McKinley. "Like the rest of my body, my hand shook as I raised it. I was now lifting my newly reconstructed hand. Time stopped as we touched. Waves of warmth. Strength I'd never known. My heart was completely taken over. Lost in Him."

In McKinley's entire medical history at Mayo Clinic, there are not any doctors who can explain how she healed so quickly. Dr. C. Robert Stanhope, a Mayo Clinic surgeon of 30 years said, "What happened to Ema is simply not explainable to my knowledge from a medical perspective. I believe the only explanation has to be that God intervened in her life with a miracle."

"Rush of Heaven" will ignite readers' passion for Jesus and help them walk hand-in-hand with Him through life's darkness.

Ema McKinley has appeared on the *700 Club*, local television and radio broadcasts, and is a requested speaker across the country. She has also been invited to speak in Thailand. Ema enjoys writing poetry, praying with the needy, and loving people of all ages and backgrounds. Her compassion, sense of humor, and deep relationship with Jesus inspire many to trust deeper and live each day to the fullest. Today, Ema stands tall, walks without assistance, and praises the God who brought healing to her body. She recently moved from Rochester, Minnesota to Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, and has two sons, Jason and Jeff, and two dynamic grandsons.

Cheryl Ricker has an Honors degree in Creative Writing from York University in Toronto, Ontario. She studied Theology at Christ For the Nations Institute in Dallas, Texas, and Writing/Spiritual Formation at Regent College in Vancouver, BC. Cheryl has written news stories for various Campus Crusade for Christ publications: *The Canadian Challenge* magazine, *Hot News*, and *Leadership Profiles*, and she has been published in *Focus on the Family's Thriving Family* magazine, as well as in newspapers and devotionals. She currently resides in Rochester, MN with her husband and sons.

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Possible Interview Questions for Ema McKinley, Author of "Rush of Heaven: One Woman's Miraculous Encounter with Jesus"

- Ema, after a horrific work accident you spent more than 18 years in constant pain and suffered with a crooked spine that confined you to a wheelchair for 16 of those years. How did this happen?
- What was going through your mind when you woke up in the hospital bed, the day after the accident, and learned what had happened?
- Several of your co-workers were still at work after you had passed out. In fact, one was supposed to give you a ride home that night. You even confirmed this with her that day. How were you able to forgive these individuals that perhaps could have found you earlier?
- Your husband decided he wanted a divorce directly following the accident. What got you through this time of needing support more than ever?
- Before the accident, you were an athletic powerhouse with multiple jobs and volunteer positions. How did you adjust to confinement in a wheelchair?
- Throughout all the doctor appointments, specialist visits and prescribed prescriptions – there was consistent pushback from the insurance company about paying the bills. How did you handle this? What advice do you have for others going through a similar situation?
- Small sounds, bright lights or slight movements could set off your condition, causing excruciating pain. There was one day when you had to go to a doctor's appointment for insurance purposes. After hitting a bump in the road, you had a near death experience. Tell us about this.
- At one point your legs had severely infected soars covering them. Your doctor advised amputating your right leg and said it was a matter of life or death. You decided to keep both of your legs. What made you come to this conclusion?
- In 2011, you received a Christmas miracle: Jesus came into your room, healed your body, spoke to you and held your hand. How did this experience change you – spiritually, emotionally and physically?
- There are many popular books on documented Biblical encounters. Why are Christians – and non-Christians – extremely interested in this topic?
- Why do you think Jesus decided to cure you? What's your advice to others who are desperately seeking to be healed?

To schedule an interview with Ema McKinley, please contact Jennifer VerHage at jennifer.verhage@harpercollins.com or 616-698-3331.