

Ella Samples Hanshaw

Where: Ella's home

Date: November 20, 2018

Location: Seville, OH

Interviewer: Emily Hilliard

Transcription: Emily Hilliard

Length: 2:17:52

Ella Hanshaw (b. Ella Samples, October 7, 1934 Procious, WV- d. July 29, 2020, Seville, OH) was a songwriter and musician who grew up in Maysel, West Virginia. She was most recently living with her husband Tracy in Seville, OH. In the 1980s, Ella, Tracy, and Maxine and Chester Spencer formed the Hallelujah Hill Quartet, performing Ella's original gospel songs and traditional gospel in churches across West Virginia. Hanshaw was raised in a Baptist church, but became Pentecostal in 1991. She experienced holy visions and believed her songs were a gift from God. In 2018, Ella's granddaughter Kelly Kerney, and Kerney's partner Ethan Bullard, produced a CD-R of the Hallelujah Hill Quartet recordings.

In this interview, Hanshaw discusses her life in music in West Virginia and Ohio, her songwriting process, her holy visions, and her faith.

Ella's obituary reads:

"Ella E. Hanshaw, 85, of Seville, died Wednesday, July 29, 2020 at her residence after a courageous battle with cancer.

Ella was born October 7, 1934 in Procious, West Virginia to Raymond and Pearl Samples.

She was a member of the Crossroads Assembly of God. She enjoyed sewing, gardening, playing Hand and Foot, writing and playing music, singing, and praising her God.

Ella was a devoted wife to her husband Tracy Hanshaw; beloved mother to her children Pam (Danny) Kerney of Ashtabula, Terry Hanshaw of Seville, Sandy (Walter) Warner of Spencer, Theresa (Dan) Plevny of Parma and Larry "Brooks" (Sheila) Hanshaw of East Lake; beloved MawMa to her grandchildren Scott, Tracy Lynn, Kelly, Troy, Christina, Jason, Andy, Joshua, Ben, James, Zac, Nick and Ashley; great-grandchildren Maureen, Chase, Ezra, Silas, Hope, Nathan, Dacey, Rachel Ella, Lincoln, and Brooke; brother George "Bucky" Samples; sisters Ethel "Sis" Mullins and Ophelia "Puggy" DeBoard.

Ella was preceded in death by her stillborn son Roger Dean, grandson Brian, nephew James Burton, brothers Stanley and Guy, sisters Virginia "Ginny", Opal and Eileen."

EH: Emily Hilliard

EL: Ella Hanshaw

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EH: Okay why don't you... why don't you introduce yourself and tell me your name, and when and where you were born.

EL: My name is Ella Hanshaw and I was born Ella Samples in Procious, West Virginia.

EH: Why don't you tell me a little bit about your family background.

EL: Well, my mom and dad--they were just farmers, just ordinary country people, you know, raising gardens and everything and raising their chickens and hogs and you know, the things that you usually raise and have, so it was like a farm life, pretty rough at times. And my dad was a good singer and mom was too. It was always you know, like singing and I just love singing! And they were raised, born and raised over in that area too in Procious, West Virginia, around in there.

EH: So...

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EH: Okay...it's working. So why don't you tell me a little bit-- I know you started singing when you were really young, but what about playing guitar?

EL: Well I was about maybe 12 years old and a neighbor that lived closed to us-- Florence Butler... and she had a guitar-- she played a lot. And she liked me and so I'd go home from school in the evenings and she let me play her guitar, you know I couldn't play it, you know, and she let me and oh I would just play on it and do whatever I could and she did that like for a long time. She let me like do that and that's when I like realized that I really wanted to play and sing.

EH: And did your parents play instruments?

EL: My dad did. My dad played a banjo and he could play it real good and sing, you know. And he loved to hunt and everything, and my mom--she sewed about all of our clothes and everything. Raised gardens, canned stuff, you know, and all that. And she was--mom was very talented about things. She could sing and do so many things.

EH: Mmhm. Sounds like it! And what songs do (mic shorts out...[you remember your dad playing on banjo])

EL: Mmm.. "Going up Cripple Creek!" (laughs)

EH: (laughs) Yep! That's a good one!

EL: And oh my goodness... oh if I can just thing of some of them... "Gonna Twist That Rabbit Out of the Hole" or something...

EH: "Groundhog?"

EL: "Groundhog" yeah! He'd sing about a groundhog and about going up Cripple Creek--did I say that?

EH: Uh-huh, yeah.

EL: Oh, there were just so many of them real old things that he'd sit and play and we'd get such a kick out of that but yeah, dad knew all of them. And I wish I could think of more of 'em. And... it's just not coming right now.

EH: That's okay.

EL: But he did, he just would sit down and play that banjo and sing so many of them songs.

EH: And (mic shorts out)

EL: No... when I really got to playing good on the guitar that I could play and sing and that, but me and dad used to sing... like do it together. He loved... his favorite song was "Holy God's Unchanging Hand" and he was always wanting me to sing that with him, so we'd sing songs together and him and mom always would sing together--they'd get up in church and sing and so that rubs off on ya, you know. I loved it. I just God just put it in me to want to sing! (laughs)

EH: And so did you sing harmony or do you remember learning how to sing harmony or did it just-- because you heard it at church you remembered how to do it?

EL: Oh I learned-- I just heard it and I learned how to sing harmony more or less. My sister was a good singer and she kinda helped me learn how to harmonize with a group or anything and keep your part. It took a little learning there but I caught on to it very easy.

EH: And so as you got better on the guitar--that was about when you were 12, you started to play?

EL: I started playing around with that at about 12, and then my brother, he could play-- he traded up a guitar and he was good and he showed me a few chords and things on there, so boy I, you know, I would play and sing, you know, on that guitar and then later on we--this was in Prociuous, we lived there in that time, and then we moved to Maysel and there was a friend that lived down the road just a little ways and he was a good friend and mom and all of 'em and he loved hearing me play and he traded up a pretty good guitar and brought it up and give it to us and boy, from there, you know, and I would just pick up what chords I could. But I could hear a song and I could hear it maybe twice and I know it. I mean I could play it. I just had the music built in me I guess 'cause I picked it up by ear and Orville Siders (sp? Satters?) really helped us too. He was from Clendenin, West Virginia and he showed us a lot of things you know what I mean? That we didn't know. We just knowed a few of the little basic things but he showed us a lot of things on the guitar and Tracy [her husband] started playing the guitar. He got a mandolin at first off my brother and learned to play that so me and him could play that real good and so we'd play the fast songs, you know. And then Floyd had bought that guitar-- Floyd Smith-- and we played on that and then I started dating Tracy. And got to playing and then we got married and moved to Ohio. And then like I say, the songs just kept coming. I just (mic shorts out)... I wrote a lot of 'em before I was ever married and they weren't like Christian songs. I wrote a lot of them. And then when we moved to Ohio, why I started singing oh... let's see... in the Emmanuel Baptist Church I think it was, down in Brunswick, Ohio and so I'd sing in there and play my guitar, you know, for them. And then we had friends that loved music and we'd get together almost every weekend and then especially on holidays or birthdays or something and we (mic shorts) 1 or 2 in the morning, 'cause we're young and we loved it and we played music you know,

like that. And then oh... we just for a long time thing like that and I, like I say, played in church, sang in church and things and even before I had come up here, though, when I was in school, our teacher Billy Schoonover (sp?)--he was so nice-- he let us 4 girls get up and sing every morning in church, I mean school. And that was you know, encouragement. We'd do that.

EH: Oh wow.

EL: Yeah.

EH: Was it your classmates or sisters?

EL: No, it was classmates. Yeah. And we had a real good time doing that.

EH: What were the songs that you would sing?

EL: Oh my goodness. I wish I'd thought of them before and write 'em down, but...

EH: Oh, that's okay!

7:55

EL: Me and Phyllis and Betty and Nat... if I had some time to think I could write 'em down.

EH: That's fine. If something comes to mind later you can call me or we can... or you can write me. But it doesn't matter.

EL: Okay. Yeah. And then when we... we come up here. And then, like I say, I had 5 children (laughs) and still singing, you know. But every time that I would get sick, because you know, raising 5 children is kinda...takes a lot of your time and then my husband was the biggest baby I raised! (laughs)

EH: (laughs)

EL: And I would... and then if I'd get sick or something, God always gave me a pretty song. Every time I got sick I would come out of it by concentrating and writing a song. And my husband told me that one time. He said that I hate to think about you getting sick, but he said every time you get sick you come out of it with a beautiful song, you know, so... (laughs)

EH: (laughs) Oh wow.

EL: Yeah, and we was up here in Brunswick for 25 years. Well, no it was 31--we was in Cleveland awhile. And then moved out there and bought us a home. And Tracy got hurt at work. He got hurt real bad. And we went back to West Virginia. And that's when we met the church that we started going to. We met Maxine and Chester Spencer and that was the ones that was you know, played with us on our quartet. So we met them and... Maxine went to the church that we started going to and she had been singing with other people. Oh, she had the most beautiful alto voice I ever heard. And her husband didn't come to church but he was an excellent bass singer and he played golf with my husband but he didn't come to church. So we had just built a church and it was...everybody was having such a wonderful time and they'd get these goosebumps and they called them "hallelujah bumps."

EH: (laughs)

EL: (laughs) Okay? So they named that little hill there where the church was Hallelujah Hill.

EH: Okay.

EL: Well I wrote a song "Hallelujah Hill." And Tracy when he went golfing with Chester, he asked him, "Hey, hey... the women would like us to get together and try to sing and harmonize." So Chester agreed to it! So we, for 3 months, we practiced in secret. Nobody knew-- we was in my dining room, our dining room--and we practiced in secret. And then when the day come, the Sunday came for us to (laughs) sing this song, I'm telling you, we got up to sing-- me and Tracy had been singing kinda by ourself, see. Well we said, this morning we got a surprise for you, we got somebody else that's gonna join us. So we called Maxine and Chester up and oh my, the pastor and Chester's mother was you know, just amazed. And I really thought, whenever we started singing, that Chester's mother and our pastor was gonna go through the roof.

EH: (laughs)

EL: They, they were so excited and so that's how the Hallelujah Hill Quartet got started. From then on, we just kept practicing, I think every Tuesday night was our practice and then even more and we started going to churches all around and the different counties and places and singing. We sang for 8 years but we didn't charge nobody. We went and we just sang for free and we said, you know, if they wanted to give us a love offering, that was okay, but in those 8 years we got... we took 3 offerings because the people where we sang, honey, they couldn't afford to really pay somebody. And so we just sang and then we put money in their thing and went on. I mean, just go where they needed us.

12:58

And this one pastor at one place, he had been at our church and had a revival and he asked us please go down to the next church he was gonna go to and sing. So we went down and sung with him. And they had just finished building a church. They insisted on us taking 50 dollars, which you know at that time was pretty good pay.

EH: Right.

EL: They insisted. Well, they give us the 50 dollar check and we knew because we had a motor home (laughs) and we knew it took about 50 dollars to fill the gas tank up.

EH: Right.

EL: So we gave it to the preacher that was preaching and told him--fill his gas tank up you know, with it. And he went on. And oh my... and we were just blessed everywhere we went. Just seeing the people saved and praising the Lord.

EH: And so some questions about that--about what year did that start?

EL: The singing? Hallelujah Hill? 19 and 83 I think.

EH: That's the year I was born.

EL: Was it! Well... okay. Yeah, 1983 they was building you know, the church and they finished it and we had some wonderful times there building that church and for a long time, you know, everything went great. And let's see... I...

EH: When you did that, were you singing your songs and popular gospel songs?

EL: Right.

EH: So it was your gospel songs...

EL: Right, we were singing mostly like my songs and the other songs that we knew that was really nice to sing you know. And also, then Maxine...I taught Bible class--the 10-12 year olds. I taught that for over 2 years and we had a junior choir. Junior choir-- me and Maxine. I played the guitar and they sang and we took 'em to a few churches and let 'em sing. And I made, whenever they started singing, I... Tracy made me a stand you know-- just like a stand and I took rolls of wallpaper and a magic marker and I wrote the songs on the backside of it and I would put 'em up on there (laughs) and Maxine would turn, you know, the page as I would play and we'd both sing and she'd be turning the words so the kids could see 'em.

EH: Ooooh. (laughs)

15:55

EL: They loved that! They got such a good kick out of that. And I wrote skits for the kids--they put on puppet shows. I wrote skits for them to do that and it was so funny, you know, and I made some of the puppets and just you know, and Christmas plays, I was... what do you do when you're the one who puts it on?

EH: The director?

EL: Director, yeah, but the whole thing on--the Christmas play because at my church, when you mentioned it, you better be ready to do it! (laughs)

EH: (laughs) Right.

EL: You know what I mean? I got some people to help me you know and things, but yeah, I put on--those kids would put on their puppet skits about once a week or whatever and I was writing out skits for 'em and helping 'em get the puppet things and then oh... Christmas play, we had a Christmas play and that was one hilarious play.

EH: (laughs) Was it a pageant? A nativity pageant?

EL: No, it was Heaven's somethin' and Hell's Fire? That one that come out that was so popular, you know?

EH: I don't know this one.

EL: Okay, it was like about heaven and about hell. What happens you know, if you didn't... Well, I was gonna conduct it or put it on whatever you wanna say, and I was getting some people, certain people to try to do certain plays. Well what I'd done was-- Lord just blessed me with this idea as-- I didn't want any action in it if you know what I mean. I wanted songs. I picked out all beautiful songs that pertained, you know, to biblical things, and then they walked down the aisle acting it out. Without a word. I mean, the song was saying what it's supposed to say. Like the blind man tapping along, you know, Hallelujah Square and stuff? And I picked up... oh, I don't know, it was 2 hours long, the play, and I searched and picked out and some of our songs... and picked out and put on the cassette and then the cassette would

play and even the pastor would say, "Can't you shorten it a little bit?" And I says no--God's lead me to do it this way and I'm gonna do it!

18:47

You know, and I asked one lady to do a part and she says no, I don't want to but she said just drop my part off. They wanted to stop short, you know what I mean, I guess, and I says no. So I went and asked another lady to do it and she was so thrilled and so when it went off, there wasn't a dry eye in the house. I mean, all the songs and like everyone, like I say was just acting 'em out. They were coming down the thing and Tracy's mom was--had the song "Taken Off the Old Road and Put on the New"-- she walked down that aisle and you should have seen her. She was such a spiritual lady--she walked down that aisle and boy, she threw that robe and went up into heaven, you know. We had heaven up there--all... gee whiz... this one lady, she was really good, great at fixing, and they fixed that up, up there like it was above the clouds on the railings and everything and it looked like heaven you know. And when they came up, there was 2 angels-- an angel on each side of the walkway. And they would look--was their name there? And if it was, "okay, come in," if it wasn't, they had 2 black angels that would grab him and gonna take him back where the big fire was flashing and they was screaming. We had some that would really scream and boo. They really did the acting! And so that went on. So I don't know just how many songs-- I still got the paper. I did have people ask me for it you know, time and time again of the songs that they could act out, you know, just act it out, and that's what made it so special to me was because when you're, well, this song is playing and you're not saying anything but you're just acting out what's being said.

EH: Right.

EL: So and when one guy got up there, oh he got, and he got in heaven and I'm telling you, he was a comedian anyway and boy he jumped up in there and he was (laughing)... he was cutting a shine!

EH: (laughs)

EL: And they had this one man--this one couple, our pastor's daughter and her husband-- they had a little, little baby--she wasn't very big and I had this song, I forget which one it was, but they was come up and he had got in heaven, okay, and then when another song come along and I can't remember-- if I could go back, I could get 'em, and when he got up there, he took the baby out of her arms and she was refused. Oooh was that...

EH: Oh wow.

EL: I mean, there was some touching things that went on. So that was some great things that we put on there. And I've taught you know, even the ladies there-- I taught the ladies class for a while and that and kept singing and you know, for the church there, we sang there all the time. And then, like I say, we come back up here and I sang over here in oh... Crossroads Assembly. I sang, you know, and played my guitar and I did learn to play the piano. Before I went to West Virginia to last time, I learned to play the piano. My daughter was taking lessons and then she decided she wanted to work in the office at church and I said please Theresa, don't honey, I said you know, finish playing. And she said, mom, I want that job. And she was doing good, so I asked Grace if she would show me a few things, so she did. She showed me all the shortcuts and everything she could on the piano. And that was just before I went back to West Virginia. And then I got all the fundamentals so to speak and then I just picked the rest of it up on my own because I just know music, so...I'm not great on it but I can play the piano pretty good! (laughs)

EH: And so you learned completely by ear?

23:28

EL: Yeah, my thing was ear. When Grace was trying to show me on the piano, you know, things, as long as she was showing me something or having me to do something that I couldn't relate to, just the minute something would come up, and you know them songs is just stuff you know-- a little "Row, Row, Row Your Boat," and stuff-- just the minute she would bring one up like that, I'd lose it. My ear would just... you know, and so she had to be careful and not have me play anything that I knew. (laughs)

But oh, it's been such a wonderful thing. I... just so many songs and that box right there... is songs I could show you song after song that's not been put to music.

EH: And when you read through those songs, do you remember some of the melodies that you had for them?

EL: Oh yeah. Yeah. And then there's a few that I was noticing that I would have to really search my mind, but most of 'em, yeah-- I know the melody. It's there whenever I read it. I think oh! But I didn't have anybody else... short (?) when I said I was putting my ones... all them songs that's on the CD... but he had liver ailment and he passed away. And then I didn't have anybody else to write me...the music for me. So that's why I didn't write any more music-- I mean, didn't get it put on paper [musical staff], but I kept writing. I wrote one here not long ago "Visions of Victory." That's a powerful song and I'm gonna try to get that if I can put to music you know, to that.

EH: Do you still play guitar and piano?

EL: Honey, not since I had the cancer. I mean it's been a year. I was diagnosed last October and then... November, early November they started all that chemo and that. And my cancer was really bad. Really bad. And if it hadn't have been for the good Lord I wouldn't have made it. And the kids thought that, you know, a time or two that the moment was gone. But God had different plans. So this doctor the other day and last-- about a week or two I went over and he said, yeah, he said it's been a year this month, you know, that I was diagnosed with the cancer and it was really rough. I lost 50 pounds. I went from a size 16 down to a size 8! I can wear an 8 now (laughs).

EH: (laughs) That's half the size!

EL: Oh my. I know! Half the size! And you know what I mean, and I get it on [holds waistband] and they're way big! (laughs)

EH: (laughs) I guess that's one benefit!

EL: Yeah! Well, you know... it does... it feels so much better to have all that weight off. But I said I can't remember what it was like to be heavier! (laughs) But it was a battle. It was a battle.

EH: But it's in remission now?

EL: No, it's healed!

EH: Oh wow.

EL: Last time, they take a PET scan and they had give me the chemo and the tumors-- I had 2 bad tumors-- one of 'em had cut the blood flow off from my colon. Oh man, you talk about suffering--that was terrible. So that tumor was there and there was one on my lung back there. And the time... 'cause I can

take a lot of pain... but by the time I went in and gave into it... and I'm a prayer warrior and I you know, believe in prayer, and by the time I went in it was pretty bad. And he (laughs) that one back there had a hole eat in my rib! (laughs)

EH: Wow!

EL: Yeah, but the...I don't remember just how long, but they started giving me the chemo and they had to give me the strongest they had. They said it was so bad that they had to give me, and man it really was hard on me and the 2 tumors shrank. They just shrank from the prayers-- everybody you know, I knew and family and everybody was praying and the tumors shrank! And then when I went for my... the PET scan, I was totally cancer free. They said from head to toe. So I was so thankful. And then I came home, I got to come home for a few days and then I was having, well they said like panic attacks, you know, just thinking about things and getting like real nervous, so they started...we had to really pray about that, and God showed me-- he shows me things, honey, and he showed me that I was healed from that... the panic attacks and anxiety and then I went back in for... well that was the breathing thing--that was bothering me, and you know--nerves-- it was nerves, anxiety and they was going to release me because I couldn't breathe--that last time I went in there. I went in a couple times and I couldn't breathe and I went in and they had oxygen on me and was checking me out and then I was there I think 3 days and then they said they were gonna let me come home, but they would let me come home with oxygen because I couldn't breathe without it. So I kept praying and I saw... you know, I saw in a vision this evil ugly demonic spirit of the Leviathan. I don't know if you know what that is--if you're Christian or what--you know, but...

EH: I think I know the Leviathan.

EL: Well yeah, it's the dragon of the sea. And what it does--it's a demonic spirit but it tries to attack your mind and affects your thinking and twists it around and everything and God has showed me that that was destroyed. Just sometimes that fire from heaven will come down, you know, and do things. And so I knew in my heart that everything would be okay. Well, my oxygen had bottomed out and they was gonna let me come home and they was figuring out what kind of oxygen or how much, you know, so the nurse said, I'm gonna talk you down this aisle here-- down the hallway and see what your oxygen will do so we'll know. Okay. We walked I don't know maybe 8 or 10 feet down there and she put that thing on my finger that you know tells your oxygen. Honey, when she put that on my finger (cries) my finger lit up like a lightbulb!

EH: Wow.

EL: Her eyes got big, she grabbed it off and she put it on the other finger. That finger lit up like a lightbulb. She did it to that one and that one lit up! And here come this guy running up and he said, "What is going on?" She said, "I don't know, look at this!" And he was the one that give the oxygen to take home. And they were just totally amazed and then my oxygen went up to 99, honey, and they had to take it out of my nose and it's still up there.

EH: Wow, that's incredible.

EL: And when I went to the doctor, they told me I had COPD. I had developed COPD and that was healed, when I went to the doctor, after I come out of there, and for I don't know, when I went for my check-up, I says no doctor-- I do not believe I have COPD because when I was in there God showed me and give me that blessing when I was praying about it that the COPD was gone.

32:31

Well, okay, he checked me and he checked my lungs and things thoroughly. He said, You do not have COPD, because if you did there'd be a raspy-ness or something back there. and he said, "You do not have COPD." So I praise God-- he healed it you know. And then I had got up a urinary tract infection when I was up there--he also healed that! So I'm telling you, he healed the cancer, he healed the urinary tract infection, he healed the COPD, and he healed my oxygen! And I got out of there and my PET scan, when I took that PET scan, I was totally cancer free. Oh, honey, you don't know! (laughs) Nobody could ever know the pain of cancer unless they've had it.

EH: I'm sure.

EL: I've had a lot of pain. I've had deterioration in my spine, I have had blood clots, I have had arthritis, I have had several things, used to take the flu, you know every year, but that cancer is the worst pain that I think anybody could ever have in their body and live.

EH: Wow, yeah-- I imagine so.

EL: Yeah, it was.

EH: Have you always experienced visions?

EL: Oh yes, honey, I have ever since 19 and 91. June the 3rd. I went to a Baptist church, honey, and they didn't believe in the gifts today. Bless their heart, they were good wonderful people, and loved the Lord and that, but they didn't believe in the gifts today and the speaking in tongues. Well, I had been sick, I had deterioration in my spine back there for... it was over 6 years. And I had been hurt, I couldn't even pick up a cup, I couldn't wear anything, you know a coat or anything on there-- it was so painful it was them 2 at the bottom of my spine. They ruptured, them 2 discs ruptured and they was going together and I would just cry in pain. I couldn't even lift up a cup and my niece came and done clothes for me-- I mean worked for me, everything that I needed and I went to chiropractor after chiropractor and even ever bone doctor and physical therapist that I could go to and they couldn't help me. You know, they would try but they couldn't get the relief and I got prayed for and after I got filled with the Holy Spirit and I got prayed for, and God totally give me a miracle and healed my spine.

35:39

He healed that arthritis. I had one preacher diagnosed, or he give me a word or prophesy that I had a blood disease that I hadn't even realized and it was, it was healed and just the things that I've been through, I just couldn't imagine. I mean, I... you wouldn't believe. I could write books and books on 'em you know! (laughs) But whenever God baptized me in the Holy Spirit-- I had criticized it, 'cause I was a Baptist and I didn't believe that it was real and I went and told some people, you know, and I said honey, that talking in tongues is evil, it's of the devil. She smiled at me and said, "Ella, honey, you just don't understand." Well, I didn't. But I had children-- my oldest daughters was Pentecostal and they kept telling me, mom, God wants to heal you. God wants to heal you. And I got a radio program of Brother Kenneth E. Hagin up on the hill down there. I could get it-- nobody else could. And he was-- he taught on faith and healing and I kept listening to him and it sounded too good to be true because I had gotten so weak from having that deterioration in my spine and other things that was going on and I just said, Lord, if I really believe, and it don't happen, I won't be able to stand it. I just wouldn't be able to take it. And I... but I kept praying and I kept listening to Brother Hagin and he built my faith up and my daughters did until I just knew that I could get my healing. And I went to that-- and my daughter-- she's a pastor now, she has a pastor's license and at that time she was anointed to pray for people to be healed. and I went to--she lived up in Ashtabula, Ohio, and I was in West Virginia at the time. I said Tracy, take me to Ohio. I said take me to Ohio I want Pam to pray for me. And I had to pile pillows up and just lay my arms on 'em they hurt

so bad. But I went up there and she went... she prayed for me, we went down by the lake, that Geneva Lake I believe is what it is. And there was 2 beautiful red ribbons there-- little ribbons you put on Christmas packages? Just laying there... new! So she got one and I got one. We kept them. You know what I'm saying? But she went down there and she prayed oh, such precious prayer with me and my spine was healed! I went back up there and I says, honey I don't feel any different right now. "Mom, you're healed." (laughs) "Mom, you're healed." And I couldn't go shopping, I couldn't even drive a car, honey. 5 years I couldn't drive a car or anything. And so we got up there to the store-- she was gonna stop and get some things and I hadn't been able to pick up nothing, put it in the car, hadn't shopped for way over 5 years or 6. So we went in the store and she was getting some things. After a while, I just started reaching and getting things and putting 'em in the cart! Oh my! And I got up to the register, we was getting ready to pay for the stuff, she was, and I reached up to get me some-- I don't know if it was gum or something up there, I reached up there to get and she said, "Mom! What are you getting!" I said, "Honey I got this." She says, "I thought you was reaching for pain pills and I was gonna smack 'em out of your hand." (laughs) But you know what I mean, she was just that sure that I was healed and I was too and when she stopped and got me a Chinese dinner, and we bought that and went on to her house, the next day, honey, I just was getting better and better and you know, as I went along. Next day we went down to Brunswick where I lived and they was picking the pears off of the pear tree, and they was throwing 'em down you know, and honestly I was out there catching those pears and jumping around, you know. Oh! Just unbelievable because I had suffered so long and known it was gone, you know, and ever since that I was baptized in that, God has been showing me visions, honey, I could pull out, just almost like them things there. I could pull out visions and show you and almost... every time I pray for somebody or something, I can see a vision of an evil, demonic spirit. And you know what they look like?

EH: [shakes head]

EL: These comics and things these kids watch on TV. Them ugly things, you know, that is demons. And but God shows me sometimes the person and what is happening to 'em and then the demon and he will destroy it. And I've got it written... maybe I'll find one here in a few minutes and just let you read one.

EH: Yeah.

EL: Because God uses me in a mighty way. I'm a prayer warrior and an intercessor and I take down the enemies.

EH: Wow. And so when you said that when you were sick you would receive songs, was that sort of the same process when you were given songs? Was it like a vision or did you feel like you received songs from God?

EL: I just received 'em, yeah. I would just start thinking, you know, of a pretty song and but no, when I see a vision, honey, it's just like I'm right there looking at it. You know what I mean? I could be sitting right here in the thing and God will show me a vision, he'll show me what's going on and he'll show me what kind of an animal it is. It started out usually with just snakes and then it would be a wolf you know, or a lion or a bear or a dragon or just things like that. Like I said, when you watch these comics these poor little kids are watching today, that is demons and it's getting, Satan is getting kids used to them to when they come around to pester 'em, they'll think it's just the little comics.

42:58

So and you asked me a question there, now what was it?

EH: Oh, I was just asking what that experience was like when you would receive songs and if it was similar to the visions.

EL: Yeah, sometimes the songs mostly come just like I'll be sitting and just thinking and just all of a sudden they'll float through my mind. And I can write one in 15 minutes. Whenever God gives it to me, I grab out my pencil. Usually there's 1 or 2 lines that I have to really work on. I have to go to the Bible you know, and find it or something. But he gives me them songs and within about 15 minutes or less, I can write a song. And it's just been that way, and I don't know how many I've missed honey, lying in bed at night, and oh, a pretty song will come and I'll think, oh now in the morning I'll write that down as soon as I get up, but in the morning it's gone. If you don't, yeah, if you don't grab it when it's there... but I have... I have written so many songs that it's just... I just can't imagine, and if I had 'em, if I had somebody to help me put some of 'em to music [transcribe the melody] I would sure do, because I think I've got some that's really touching to people.

EH: Could you-- if you had a recorder, could you sing the melody so that someone else could put it to music later?

EL: Oh yeah. Yeah, I do that. That's the way I used to always do. I kept a little computer around-- not a computer, a...

EH: Recorder, tape recorder.

EL: Recorder, yeah. And every time a song would come up and I'd grab it while the tune was still in my head. Now if I didn't get it while the tune was in my head, sometimes I'd lose my tune. And yeah (laughs)...

EH: So you get the songs--the words and the tune at the same time?

EL: Mmhm. Mmhm.

EH: That's amazing.

EL: Yep, it just goes and then I get my music and put to it. Cause when he gives me the tune and that, then I had to find the chord and stuff on the guitar and then just go with it.

EH: Right, right. And then what about-- at what point did you start writing songs in general?

EL: My goodness honey-- in 70... I was looking at some a while ago. There, back in the, back in the 70s, 60s or 70s, something like that. (Goes through box of song lyrics and transcriptions) That's '86 but I saw one a while ago-- "The Great USA," boy that was a good one. (shuffles papers) "I Want To Tell Them About Jesus," the chorus... "Lazarus the Beggar," "Got Me On White (?)"-- that was a good one. Michelle Bednar (sp?) did that for me. That was the first ones that I had recorded. She recorded (transcribed) two for me I think.

EH: So she put-- she transcribed all these on musical...

EL: Yeah, she put it to music. I just had the words and the tune! And she picked out the tune and put it on that-- she just wrote kind of singly if you see what I mean...

EH: Yeah.

EL: ... and it took her 4 pages to do that one, but then she done another one... what was it? "I'll Cry Tomorrow." She did that one. Now that wasn't a Christian song but that was one...

EH: ...that sounds good, I like that title.

EL: There, see?

EH: Oh yeah. So...

EL: 1,2,3,4--that was another 4.

EH: So in 1978 you were, well you were born in what year?

EL: '34.

EH: So... 44.

EL: Oh I started writing songs, honey, oooooh back in (exhales) '52 we got married, we come up here in '52 and I'd already been writing songs and singing 'em for (sighs) so it had to be in the 40s... I could be able to find...I couldn't find 'em... I just didn't you know, I just--there's just been so many things happening here and I didn't have time to dig out some that I wanted to.

EH: Oh, that's okay.

EL: Now this is '86 "A Great Work of Art," that was a beautiful song. (shuffles papers) "I Wonder How Your Heart Would Respond," that was another beautiful... "Heavenly One Please Let Me Come Back Home." Now that one was some of my first Christian ones, but I didn't date it. Me and my husband sang that one together a lot when we learned...

EH: Wow

48:43

EL: I got Christmas songs that I've written. (laughs)

EH: Oh! Nice! "Don't Let Your Guard Down."

EL: Yeah, that one I sang by myself and they backed me up on the chorus I believe. Oh, I loved that song, it was-- it was so true! (laughs) And that one...this one I would like to get put to music.

EH: Do you remember how this melody goes?

EL: Oh yeah. Mhm. Yeah, this is one of my last ones here. I want to get done. Starts singing at 49:33:

"Visions of victory
Powers beyond
Moving God's children
Keeping them strong
Lights in the darkness
Peace in the storm
Anchored in Jesus
Guided by love.

Anchored in Jesus
Victories are won
Powers are broken
Blessings will come
Standing on his promise
Believing his word
Visions of victory
Anchored above.

Make me a blessing
Touch Lord through me
Tear down the mountain
Set captives free
Oh Holy Spirit
Move in our midst
Visions of victory
Havens of bliss"

Then it goes to the chorus again.

EH: Wow, Beautiful.

EL: (laughs) Well, and I'm singing it more or less down in my natural voice than when I'm on the piano or something and lifted up higher, but that's the tune, that's the way it goes.

EH: Your voice hasn't changed at all since those recordings. Still sounds great.

EL: You know, I'm thankful for that. I thank God constantly that I can get out there, you know. Piano, or I haven't picked up the guitar in a while on account of my back, you know, the cancer left my back up there around the shoulder blades. So I'm constantly strengthening it, trying to get it, strengthening it back up so I can play my guitar again. But yeah, there's just so many that I have.

EH: Has Kelly or anyone scanned these to make sure they're copied too?

EL: No. No, there's-- she has the ones that I sent her the cassettes, but all these ones that mostly I'm showing you here now has not been put on there for her. Some of 'em have but not all of them.

EH: That would be good to do to make sure there's copies of them too.

EL: Yeah, it's just, you know...

EH: It's a lot of work.

EL: It is, but you know... and my problem is... I'm a scribbler.

EH: (laughs) No, your handwriting's very nice.

EL: Well, that ain't what I mean! (laughs) I mean whenever I've got a vision or something like that and it comes and then whatever is close to me before I lose the song or lose the vision, I'll get it and write it

down and then I got a bad habit of not getting it and putting it back in the you know, a book where I can keep it.

EH: Scribbling on a napkin or something.

EL: This is one of them pretty ones-- "A Great Work of Art Must Be In Heaven." That was in '86. "That Special Star." Now I wish somebody, some group would really put that together. We went across that so good but I don't know if that was ever put on the tape.

EH: Do you remember the melody?

EL: Oh yeah, yeah. (hums) If I could get it...

(starts singing at 53:21)

"Oh beautiful star, so far away
Lit the path of wise men to where Jesus lay
Oh beautiful star, guiding through the night
To our savior's birthplace, the precious holy Christ"

and it goes...

"In the night, quiet and still
Wise men searching for Bethlehem
Shepherds coming from the field
To see their savior, our Lord has sent

Then such peace on earth did fill the air
And all his people knew their savior was here
Guided by a star, shining through the night
Reveal the precious story, our savior came at last

In the night, quiet and still
Wise men searching for Bethlehem
Shepherds coming from the field
To see their savior, our Lord has sent

In a lonely stable, on a bed of hay
The wondrous wonder or wonders, created pure love that day
Our precious holy Christ child, to show the world new life
A babe born in a manger, our savior Jesus Christ."

EH: Oh, I love that.

55:57

EL: Yeah, it's pretty. With the group harmonizing on it that was pretty and then certain places where it went down there? Made it so pretty. Yeah.

EH: So in the group, you played guitar. What did everyone else play?

EL: Honey, just me and my husband. He played electric guitar and I played flattop--the rhythm.

EH: Okay. And then the other 2 was just harmonies.

EL: Just harmony. Maxine was the alto and Chester was the bass. And he was the high and I would lead. And we could always find a song that we could do. Even if we had to change it around. Sometimes, there was a few times Maxine did lead and sometimes Tracy'd lead but always, when we picked a pretty song, when we heard something that we liked, we could always find a way to sing it and do it.

EH: And in the-- you would travel to different churches and was it around Clay County and Kanawha County and...

EL: Yeah, Clay County, Kanawha County, up in I don't know where Sutton-- I don't know what county that is up in there.

EH: Braxton.

EL: Braxton, maybe that was, yeah, Braxton and we was out where Spencer--whatever county that is in [Roane] so we'd go from Spencer and Clendenin and Braxton and up I can't think of the place we went a lot...Summersville? Yeah.

EH: So Fayette County.

EL: Yeah, Fayette County.

EH: Wow, you really traveled!

EL: We did, we went around you know and we did that for like 8 years and for a while when we first started I was still hurting really bad with the deterioration in my neck. It had been healed but it hurt so bad. We'd go play the guitar and the next day I'd be in bed all day, I'd be so sore and hurt you know, and then I told my brother-in-law, he's a preacher, and I said it's just so hard, I don't know if I can do it or not and then he said, well one thing, God will test you and he said if you just do it whenever you want to, or make excuses then it won't work, you know, and that touched me very deeply and I said that was true. And every time I'd play, I mean it would hurt me so bad because of my back and next day I'd be in bed a day or 2, but I'd get right back up and go out the next time. (laughs)

58:56

It was, oh we had some times. We did, yeah. Yeah.

EH: And did you mostly work inside the house? You mostly worked at home throughout your life?

EL: I worked at home taking care of my 5 kids, raising a garden, canning, freezing, sewing for my kids (laughs). I don't know where... I don't know where I found the time, I honestly don't, but I did. I was so-- but you're happy, you know, when you're doing things like that. And especially and singing and everything, I was so happy and I loved gardening. Oh, I still do. I love getting out there and gardening and if Lord willing next spring I will get me a little garden going. But I'd can as high as 400 quarts during the summer. I mean berries, tomatoes, beans, soup, sauce--everything I could get. And then I'd put the freezer full. And Tracy he loved to fish so we usually had fish in the freezer all the time or deer or something--he liked hunting and fishing. But yeah, it's really been a you know, some life, I guess. And some of it exciting and some of it was pretty miserable with the hurts and the sicknesses and the pains. Cause he went through, oh my goodness, the things he has been through too. And...

EH: Where did he work?

EL: He worked up here for Jones and Laughlin Steel at that time. Now it's LTV.

EH: Okay.

EL: But he worked, you know, like for them. But music was just something we just--absolutely was part of our life. We loved it you know, from the time I was little and I don't know. Like I say, I can dig out song after song after song and visions. God started showing me them visions in 19 and 1, June the 3rd, 19 and 1 (1991). He baptized me in that Holy Spirit and I started speaking in the tongues. Honey, I had to go against my husband, I had to go against my pastor, I had to go against my friends, but I stood on God's word. I said I would not let God down. And I went through some pretty rough times too and it cost me a pacemaker! (laughs)

1:01:46

EH: (laughs)

EL: Well you know what I mean? Your nerves and things?

EH: Right.

EL: I was trying too hard to get them to see and understand the wonderful things that God was showing me and telling me and they just couldn't accept it. You know, they didn't understand it and later on I understood it but at that time I couldn't. Why, you know, (sighs) and at one time the Lord said "Be still and know that I am God." Well, I be stilled a little bit, but I didn't be still long enough.

EH: (laughs)

EL: (laughs) I mean I know that had to have been what had happened (laughs) you know. But yeah. Yeah, we really had some good times going places and singing and I mean teaching the kids and having the junior choir and when I stop sometimes, when I really stop to think, what all I have been involved in, it just amazes me.

EH: Yeah, very incredible.

EL: Yeah, I mean just you know, even helping with Christmas plays and helping the kids with those Bible skits and just they would come to me for something and they'd... a poem or something like that... if they ever wanted to figure something out, they'd come to me and ask me and so yeah. And it's just (tears up) mmmhm.

EH: How many songs do you suppose you've written in your life?

EL: Oh my goodness, honey. I honestly don't know. But there must be 2 or 300 of 'em.

EH: Wow.

EL: Because I've got... I've got an attaché case in there and I got stuff in here (shuffles through papers). This is just a little tiny thing...

EH: Oh wow.

EL: ... of that stuff and I got this is just song after song and some of 'em hasn't been completed.

EH: That's incredible!

EL: And I kept 'em so I could go back and work on 'em! And very soon that and this and... (shuffles through papers) There's another book that's got... song and then some of 'em. This might be where I taught. And... I know they're there, see... just... song after song.

EH: Wow.

EL: First and 5th of '09. Yeah. So I've got place--things like that out there, in there, and here's one that's got stuff in it. Attaché cases... (shuffles through boxes). But I can go in my boxes--there is some boxes here that I still have from when I moved here 10 years ago and I was having--that was just right after I had the pacemaker surgery and stuff and we was in bad shape and he was too. He'd had surgeries and colon surgeries and oh... heart problems. And strokes and we had... and I... there's still some things that I haven't got out of boxes in there. (laughs)

EH: Wow.

EL: So if I could, if I could get a hold of somebody.

EH: Yeah.

EL: That can kinda help me. Because I know there's a lot of songs--just songs. They're... but most of these songs-- almost every one of them good Christian songs I wrote was just anointed by God.

EH: Wow.

EL: There's my husband (points to photo) caught a fish down in Florida.

EH: Aww.

EL: Let's see--there are medical statements and songs.

EH: (laughs) All mixed together. Would you say that-- is music one of the things that brought you two together initially?

EL: Uhh... yeah in a sense it was because... Yeah. We started dating and that but then whenever he seen our music and my brother's and that, yeah, he really liked that. And that got him to playin'. He had a very hard time uh... how would you say... grasping a song. He didn't relate to songs like I did.

EH: Ah. Right, right.

1:07:01

EL: He had to have so many beats, so many this and that.

EH: He had to have more technical knowledge and you could just intuitively understand it?

EL: Yeah! And I could just hear it and hear the song beat, but he related to it a totally different way, so it was, it was hard for him to...

EH: Well, it sounds like you were very talented, so it might be hard for others to catch up! (laughs)

EL: (laughs) Yeah! It was really hard! I used to sit in the basement for hours and help him get over songs he liked.

EH: (laughs)

EL: Oh my. '85. Jeez! Oh my, I wrote these with a pencil! '81, '85.

EH: Wow.

EL: '79... "So Can I." (looking through songs). "Someone's Knockin'" "Close to Home"... my, my. Yeah... there's just so many.

EH: And before you performed with the quartet had you ever performed before?

EL: Oh just, no not really perform except in church and things. Just singing with my guitar and doing that.

EH: And did you listen...

EL: And we did... me and Maxine used to go whenever the men couldn't go and we'd go and sing as a duet to people. We did it for some homecomings and things that they were having and we'd go and sing if the men couldn't go. Yeah. And we used to go to the--it was not actually a nursing home but one of these places where you know they have the women that needs help and we used to go there and sing.

EH: Like a women's shelter or something?

EL: Yeah... it was, I forget what they called it, but there was a bunch of women you know, and men there and we used to go there about every Wednesday and play and sing for 'em. And they really liked that. Yeah, we done an awful lot of...singing and playing and learning as we went! (laughs)

EH: Right!

EL: But God just absolutely you know, he just blessed me with a talent to know how to play and sing. Like one of the guys at church, he was so amazed when I was playing the piano and singing and he says, "My goodness!" He says the talent to play is talent but he says to be able to sing and play and keep on all them keys!

EH: Yeah, that's very difficult.

EL: Yeah, well, see and to me it was just like a piece of cake! (laughs)

EH: Right, right! You just had it naturally! Did you listen to records and radio growing up?

1:10:19

EL: Oh yeah. Yeah. We had, even when I was a kid, they just had the radio with a battery and just certain people had 'em. And what we used to do, I'd go with my brother and listen to the wrestling or the boxing and stuff like that, you know. And we didn't have a radio 'til I guess ah... hmm... we had a record player--the old time crank up record player--we had that and "Comin' Around the Mountain When She Comes!" (laughs) all them things. And then we didn't have TV until we got married and moved to Ohio because down there in the mountains it was snowy. Very few had...

EH: reception.

EL: Yeah, had reception. Uh-huh.

EH: Are there artists or are there musicians that you listened to a lot or remember admiring?

EL: Oh yeah! I mean through the years we loved George Jones and Merle Haggard--there were tops, and Kitty Wells-- oh, I loved Kitty Wells. And a lot of those ones... Kitty Wells, Jeanne Pruett was really good and Wanda Jackson-- I used to like her songs. And Dolly and all of us started coming out, you know. And oh! Forgetting my favorite one! Loretta Lynn!

EH: Oh yeah.

EL: Oh yeah. I used to sing her songs like crazy! And Kitty Wells-- I sang Kitty's.

EH: "It Wasn't God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels"?

EL: Right, right, yeah. And what was the other one... "Make Him Believe."

EH: I don't think I know that one.

EL: Oh, that was a pretty one.

1:12:25

EH: I'll have to listen to it.

EL: (Starts singing "Make Him Believe" at 1:12:28)
"Make him believe I never lost you," you know, and then that and stuff. It was really pretty. But it's hard. When you got the music in you, you can get your voice right with it, you know? It's just different.

EH: Right, right. And so when you were younger did you imagine yourself as one of those sort of more of a country singer?

EL: Mmhm, mmhm. Oh yeah! Even when I was little, like I said, you know, when I was just young and before I ever wrote a song or anything like that, I used to, just you know, get out there and sing and just picture yourself singing before big crowds and everything. And yeah. You picture that.

EH: Did you perform for your family? Did you have picking parties or anything like that?

EL: Oh, well we always had you know, things around... and I would have joined a music group a few times. But I had a husband that was so jealous, honey. I knew that it wouldn't pay.

EH: Yeah.

EL: You know what I mean? And then I, and then I had my 5 kids and I says no, I'd rather stay home with my kids because I was the kind of person that could not and would not work under pressure, you know what I mean?

EH: Mmhm.

EL: And when they get a hold of you, you go where they say and you're under pressure and Loretta Lynn even had a nervous breakdown over something like that. And I could see that coming. We, I think it was something about the Pet Milk contest and I--I signed up and was gonna go, you know doing that. And I could sing anything, any kind of song that would come out. And then there was the... was it the Midwestern Hayride? There was 2 or 3... there was 2 or 3 things on TV that I...

EH: The Wheeling Jamboree?

EL: Yeah. ... would call in and started you know to go and sign up with 'em and a friend of mine across the street, well he was a cousin, he had got me a job, or wanted to, to sing with a polka variety gang, 'cause he liked my singing so much. And then I found out about the time to do it that I was pregnant, so I didn't do that one (laughs). But I would have... I started to go and do one of them Jamborees and get started in music, but my kids just meant too much to me and Tracy was just absolutely too jealous and I knew that it wouldn't last and I didn't try it.

And I went-- we was gonna play-- I'd seen the ad in the paper in Brunswick one day 'cause oh I loved to play, and she was advertising for guitar players and a piano player and I think a bass or something. She played lead guitar. And so I answered the ad and we got together--it was a bunch of us-- got together. And three of 'em, the one that played the piano and stuff--she didn't play by ear. The lady that played the lead guitar. She played by ear and this other woman on the piano she said, "Well I have to have the music, you know I have to play by music!" And then there was a bass girl there that was gonna play and so I had... I was praying about it and I had pulled in there one night to practice and I was the last car that pulled in the driveway. Everybody else was already in there. We went in and we had a practice and she was asking me what I thought of the bass one and the other one, the girl on piano, and I says, "Well I don't know," I said, "In fact I don't know what you think of me!" She said, "Oh my goodness! You're the only one I can (laughs) hang on to." Because I could keep up with her. And so I said, well are we gonna be playing in churches and she says, "Well, we might, we wouldn't want to leave churches out." She said, "I was thinking about clubs and stuff like that." Well, that settled it for me. I just thought, no. It will only lead to downfall because you know, your Christianity that will pull you away. And so I thought no, I'm not going to join her band. I'm just not. And you know I went outside and I got in my car and there wasn't anything behind me, I mean when I pulled in there. I got in my car and started it up and I was just gonna back straight back and I started backing up and I'm telling you honestly something got a hold of my hands and just wrung my steering wheel, and I thought what is going on! I looked over and it took my car out around--there was one parked right behind me and it was her husband. And God had... the holy angel, whatever, you know, had took my hands on that wheel and just wrung it and I just barely missed that car. And I mean I just started thanking God and I knew why he'd done it. Because I had decided I was not gonna join that band and God protected me and took care of me. So I called her and told her the next day that to find somebody else, that you know, I wouldn't do it if they wasn't gonna play in churches and stuff. So no, that's the reason I could have went and I probably could have made it big, because I had a good

voice. But my kids meant too much to me and then like I say, my husband and I wasn't gonna tear up my family for nothing.

EH: Right. Mmhm. And you still got to have-- you still had a life playing music too.

EL: Right! I still played music, right, in the church and then me and my husband was playing all the time and we always had friends that dropped in and played with us you know. And if it got--if they wanted to play differently or something like that, they'd just have to go their way.

EH: Yeah, you know I have some friends who became professional musicians and then realized that they stopped liking music because they had to play... travel from town to town and play the same songs every night and it took the fun out of it for them.

EL: It would, it would. And I just, I couldn't go for that, you know? I loved to play for the glory of it and the beauty in it, and how you feel when you get with good friends and you play. But when you are doing it under pressure, pretty soon they end up taking dope or something and then the career ends and what's it all for?

EH: Right.

EL: You know. But I'm so thankful, honey. I'm so thankful that you came up and...

EH: Well I'm so thankful to be here! (laughs)

EL: Yeah!

EH: It's so exciting-- I just have loved hearing all of your songs. And Ethan sent me some of the early ones last night. So I had heard all the gospel CDs but I hadn't heard the-- I think he sent 4 of the non-Christian songs which are all so beautiful too.

EL: Did he? Oh, well now see she hasn't sent me them-- I would like to hear them! (laughs)

EH: They said they weren't cleaned up yet so I think he's working on them.

EL: Yeah, yeah. That's probably like that one there awhile ago--"I'll Cry Tomorrow" and then "I Had a One Way Ticket There." That was a pretty good one.

EH: Yeah, that's-- so is that-- I think I saw that one on here.

EL: Yeah, that was.

EH: Is that a Christian song?

EL: It's not exactly, but it could be used as one if I just change a few words.

1:21:23

1:21:23

EH: It's in one of these folders...

EL: Yeah it was. Where's it at here?

EH: Oh here it is! "I've Got My One Way Ticket."

EL: Yeah, she wrote it down I think. Yeah. And that's a peppy one and it was good. Starts singing at 1:21:40

"Got me a one-way ticket and I'm leaving
I'm not looking back and I'm not grieving."

Then I got my (?)

"I've been waiting for so long for a chance to be long gone
So a got me a one-way ticket and I'm leaving.
That big jet plane pulls out at 6:09
Just in time for me to make that line
My ticket's in my hand and I'm a-makin' lots of plans
Got me a one-way ticket and I'm leaving."

Oh my voice cleared up a little bit here yeah!

"Big jet plane carry me away. Like a little bird that learned to fly today.
There's lots of things I ain't been seeing
So I got me a one-way ticket and I'm leaving."

(laughs)

Now usually I'm always singing up in that higher voice! (laughs) But that's the tune to it anyway.

EH: Nice. Oh, and what brought you back to West Virginia--was it just because there was family there?

EL: No honey. Tracy got hurt at work. He hurt his back real bad and he had to have some surgeries and stuff on it. And we lived in a smaller house and it was just, you know, driving us both up a wall because he couldn't do nothing and he had the TV going constantly and that drove me up a wall because I didn't turn the TV on during the day-- just at night time, you know in the evenings I'd watch something. I never could, I mean I'm always--I was always working, always doing something. I didn't have time to watch TV (laughs). So he hurt his self real bad and we had to go back to West Virginia and then he got better. His back got better and everything and then he helped 'em you know, build the church and everything like that, but we--that was our home grounds and then he... we bought his father's farm and built us a beautiful place down there. I got the-- I thought I had a picture there to show you of it, but it... we had a beautiful place. And then he had heart trouble. He had 3 bypasses, or triple bypass and he had 2 stints or 3 put in and then he had colon problem and he had to have it out his bowels for a while. And then they punctured his colon and oh my. And then they had to go in there--emergency surgery, you know. And last time they laced him up because they had to go in there 2 or 3 times for emergency. He was laced up like a football and they said he would never be able to have any more surgeries. Then he developed him that cellulitis in his legs because of lack of circulation where they took you know, the veins out of his legs. So he's had quite a bit, you know, and rough times. At one time he was in the hospital for a month and I was in there for a month but it was just a little bit different time (laughs).

EH: Oh wow.

EL: Yeah, that's when I had the pacemaker 'cause they told me, you know, my heard went in to atrial fib because of you know, like his... just taking so much care of him and things and I was worried so bad and my heart went into fib and it was 153 I think beats and it wouldn't quit. It kept going, so they told me I had to have a pacemaker or I wasn't gonna make it. And I said if I can have a pacemaker and be back normal, I said I will go for it, but I said if I'm gonna come back and be like a vegetable or something, I says no, I don't want it. And they says, oh no it'll help you. It'll do that. So I agreed to let them do that because at one point they had to force air into my lungs all night while I was in there. You know, I couldn't breathe and they was gonna put me on that ventilator--is that what it is? And I says no. And that last choice that I don't want on it. So they got that air thing--they put a thing on me and it (blows air twice to demonstrate, laughs) just kept pumpin' air. But in the morning, why they done it about all night and the next morning I could breathe. So God's took me through so much, honey, and oh my goodness! And look at me now--I'm 84 years old!

EH: Yeah! You look great!

EL: Thank you! That's what you know my friends all tell me and I said I am for what I been through! And jee whiz and now most of the people my age is either on a cane or crutch or a walker or you know, or a wheelchair and I'm just thankful and I owe it all to God. I can't praise him enough.

EH: Well you've done a lot of it in your songs.

EL: Well you know, I did. And that's what I said when Kelly told me that you were interested in talking to me and that, you know, when she made those for me, and I thanked God. I said those songs were anointed by God and I know he's watching over 'em and that's why--that they're being circulated. That's why you seen 'em and liked 'em, you know? And we've never charged for one. I had all them made and I've given 'em to friends, I've given 'em to church family and I've never charged anybody for one because I just want them to be blessed.

EH: Wow, well they're gifts. Well, I don't want to wear you out for too long. (laughs) But I'm sure we could talk a lot more. It would be nice sometime to do another follow-up interview and go through more of these songs.

EL: Well I'm enjoying, you know, talking to you and I was gonna just let you read this thing that I wrote here.

EH: Yeah, sure. Or do you want to read it out loud?

1:28:26

EL: Well it's mostly what we went across--I can you know. Part of it, yeah. I think we went across a lot of it unless you just want to glance across it and see if there's some things here...

EH: Well why don't you read it?

EL: Okay.

EH: Well if there's any parts that we've missed you could just read the whole thing and then it will be on the recording.

EL: Okay, okay. It said uh... (read)

"I guess I've been a singer ever since I was big enough to know what a song was. I love singing. My mom and dad sang a lot and at age 12 our neighbor had the guitar, like I was telling you, and she let me play with it. And it was there that I knew I wanted to play and sing. My brother Stanley traded up a guitar and showed me some chords and oh how I would beat on that guitar and sing at home! (laughs) I was always singing in church and at school. Billy Schoonover (sp?) let us girls sing every morning in school and I always played and sang by ear. I could hear a song just a couple of times and play it and sing it. Then I begin to write my own songs. I started dating my husband Tracy and then started-- he started learning to play so he got a mandolin from my brother at first and then a guitar. We were, we were married and then came to Ohio. The songs kept coming and so did the kids! (laughs) I had 5 children, played my guitar and sang in Emmanuel Baptist Church in Brunswick, Ohio, and with our friends most every weekend. Michelle Bednar put my first songs to music arrangements for me. We played and sang with Country Classic Richard Barrett and Orville Siders (sp?) and they really helped us a lot. And uh... okay... especially Orville--he really helped us and showed us a lot on the guitar. Me and Tracy started singing together and we kept singing and writing songs and oh how I missed my family and my hometown (laughs). I wrote a song "Little Home Among the Hills" and I loved that song. And I... I learned to play the piano after that.

When Tracy got hurt at work, we moved back to West Virginia in 1981. I was there 25 years. Come back up here 10 years ago. And there we met Chester and Maxine in the church we went too and Mack had been singing with other groups and she was one of the best alto singers I had ever heard. And I found out she was a distant cousin of mine and Chester hadn't been coming to church but he played golf with my husband and we found out he was an excellent bass singer and loved to sing so Tracy talked him into practice with us and the place where we had just built a new church, we called it Hallelujah Hill. We were all so blessed as it was being built, with the "hallelujah bumps," they called it Hallelujah Hill and I wrote a song called "Hallelujah Hill." We practiced secretly 3 months where... and when the Sunday arrived for us to sing, I thought Chester's mom and our pastor were just gonna lose it and go through the roof! (laughs) That started the Hallelujah Hill Quartet. For 8 years we traveled around singing in different churches and for no pay. We accepted 3 love offerings and then we gave them back to them.

Let's see... God kept on blessing and I kept on writing. Mack and I had a junior choir and I taught the junior kids 2 years. And the ladies for about a year or 2. I wrote songs for them on the back of wallpaper (laughs). Tracy made me a stand and then Brother Glenn Matthews had told me about Ella Short from Charleston who could arrange my songs to music and he was so nice and did a lot of songs for me. He knew they were anointed of God. But he was very sick-- his liver-- and he passed away and I didn't get any more songs put to music. But I just kept on writing them and still do.

1:33:22

I have written so many and I thank God for the gift and the talent he has given me. We lost Chester in January of '93 and we lost Maxine in November of '02. And I used to write skits for the kids for the puppet show and did Christmas plays (laughs) and whatever else they needed!

EH: (laughs) Yeah. Did you write other songs that--when you were living up here-- about West Virginia and about your home?

EL: Uh... I don't know. I know I wrote that one-- "A little home among the hills/just built for you and me/it doesn't hurt to daydream/some day that's where we'll be." I was, you know, lonely and... "roses climbing on the fence/birds up in the trees/singing as our work is done/in the summer breeze." And I can't remember the other thing. It was... yeah... "dogwood buds a-bloomin' as our love grows and grows/watch each other... chasing each other down the road." I forget just how that was now!

EH: (laughs)

EL: But yeah, I did write songs and then I wrote one one time where I was getting so tired of Ohio and I said, "take me where some roses will bloom." That was a pretty song, but I, you know...

EH: Sounds like it.

EL: And that was... it's in there somewhere. I'll find it one of these days. But I did, I wanted to go back to where some roses would bloom. (laughs)

EH: Did you meet other people in Ohio who were from West Virginia?

EL: Yeah! A bunch. The group there... the Country Classics... we played and sang with them off and on. Bundy Price (?) and Orville Siders and Richard Barrett--they were from West Virginia and I think their group was called the Country Classics. And they played around up here. Yeah, and Billy Pack (sp?) he was in with them. And we learned a whole lot from them. Tracy played with them a lot. I played sometimes but Orville--he used to show us all kinds of things on the guitar. Yeah, he showed us most of the things. We just knowed the strict chords and then he'd show us the little off chords and minors and stuff like that--a few of them.

EH: Oh yeah.

EL: So, but I did-- I loved my guitar. I really did get it mastered pretty good! (laughs) But that's the music you hear on those things, it's just me and my husband playing and singing.

EH: Nice yeah, I love that. I really like the "Open Season on the Devil." (laughs)

EL: (laughs) I wrote that for the kids, you know! All them little short ones there. That was--that's what I say--she didn't know--Kelly didn't know. She kind of mixed, you know, those in there, but all them little short ones are the ones you hear-- I wrote them for the kids to sing. And that's why I do it, "it's open season on the devil, shoot him down." And oh they get the biggest kick out of it!

EH: Oh I bet!

EL: Yeah, I wrote several of 'em and...

EH: Yeah, I think I brought the CD and I'll see if I wanted to comment on any of 'em, but....

EL: Ooh... maybe she'll send me one of 'em. I wondered about that after I give her all of them and I thought--I did have a box of 'em. Some that I'd written before I started writing the Christian songs.

EH: Oh yeah. So this is just the gospel.

EL: I just wondered if she...

EH: So that one.

EL: Yeah, she just had this one made off the other one.

EH: Yeah, yep. So that yeah, those are the-- I was mostly listening to the originals but I don't know if you want to tell any stories about any of the songs there or anything.

EL: Well, honey... that "One More Hill" on there, I put it, yeah, "One More Hill"... closer home... I was so sick at that time that I just didn't know if I was gonna make it or not. I can't remember exactly what it was but I was so sick and that song is what brought me out of it. I just said, "one more hill, one more chore, going up closer home." But that's what my husband said. Every time I'd get sick or something, or the kids some kind of sickness, he would give me a beautiful song and I would pen that song down. That would take my mind off of my sickness (laughs).

EH: Yeah, I bet.

EL: 'Cause I worked hard when I had a song and it was on my mind, you know, and how does it sound this way? And I always put 'em on the tape. And then listened to 'em because sometime-- you can say the word-- a little bit high, a little bit low, or just a little bit wrong and you can learn to work it out good if you put it on tape and listen to it.

EH: Right, right.

EL: So yeah, I done that, and then that "Beauty Beyond the Rainbow." Everybody said that was one of our good ones. And "The Devil Gets Me Down"! My brother-in-law tell me that, boy I like that one! (laughs) Yeah. But most of these he just gave 'em too me at times that something was usually going on. And I could just--one well, they said a while ago... "If I could look in the mirror and just don't like what I see, I'll... fear or sadness in the face looks at me"... "Don't Let Your Guard Down." That one was really, I guess I was just having some thoughts there that I'd been gettin' beat up by the enemy, you know what I mean and I had to say, "Don't Let Your Guard Down," you know?

EH: Right.

1:39:51

EL: So... so yeah, it's just... and yeah and "I am a Child of the Precious King"-- I wrote that one for the kids. Yeah. And that one, "Will My Lord Be Proud." I was just asking him that in earnest (laughs). Oh, it's been wonderful. I had so much, so much good times writing the songs and working 'em out. Because you know, you can't just write 'em down. It takes so long to work 'em out. But usually, God would give me the tune and the words just as he give it to me and then I could pen it down and grab my cassette and capture that tune and then I didn't have any trouble getting that song laid. So...

EH: If you still have a cassette player, you should sing through some of these so the melody is captured too.

EL: Yeah. I do. I have one in there, the batteries went dead in it and I gotta get it back out and start doing that because that's the way I always captured my song. I kept a cassette around or else if my cassette wasn't where I could get it, I would keep singing the song 'til I got to it."

EH: Well I do have a lot of double A batteries if you need any! (laughs)

EL: Okay!

EH: Do any of your children play music or sing?

EL: Oh yeah. Yeah. My oldest daughter and then my middle daughter--she can-- no, and the 3rd daughter. I got 3 daughters and 2 sons. So the girls can play some and one of my boys, my youngest boys, but my oldest boy--he said no, about all he could play is radio. (laughs)

EH: And they play piano or guitar?

EL: No usually guitar. And Pam I think plays on the--she was learning on the piano--my oldest one--she was doing some on the piano, 'cause she sang a whole lot different style songs than I do. (laughs)

EH: Uh-huh.

EL: You know. So yeah, she's down in Florida now. They go down there in the winter. We used to go down there all the time in the winter, but after Tracy got, had that last heart attack and stroke, we couldn't go down there no more and we let them have our place. So, but... yeah, Sandy my middle daughter, she likes to--she can play a little bit on the guitar I think. And my son-in-law, they play. My youngest son, he played guitar, and he could play the bass. Oh me and him used to get them bass and the guitar out, when Tracy'd be gone, he was gone half the time. My husband was just always--liked to be on the go somewhere, or working. He wasn't home very often. And me and Brooksy-- that's my son, Larry Brooks, and he learned to play the bass. And oh! We would get the guitar and the bass out and play and he learnt to oh, what'd you do--run the bass, or you know, walk the bass or whatever it was, and Ray Price's songs-- you could do that! Oh! And me and Brooksy would sing them songs and walk that bass and it was so pretty. But yeah, he did. Me and him had a lot of fun doing that. My youngest son.

EH: Yeah, I love the upright bass.

EL: "My Shoes Keep Walkin' Back To You," you know, that was one of Ray... and then there was another one that was really good we liked to sing. Yeah... boy. Music is just--was built in me, I guess, and it really tore me up. Well, it didn't tear me up, but it just... I just felt like I lost everything when I couldn't play the guitar and stuff no more--and sing. Because of you know, the pacemaker and his sickness and taking care of him constantly. And I just had to kind of give up my guitar playing for a while because I wasn't able. Anyway my arms after that surgery. But I'm getting back. Now I can play the piano pretty good.

EH: And do you have one here?

EL: Yeah! Yeah, I got a piano out there. (laughs)

EH: Nice. I miss having a piano around.

EL: Yeah. I started to try to play that one there-- "Visions of Victory" on the piano because I got to play on it and when I get to a certain part of that, honey, my hands just (demonstrates shaking, laughs) and it's the same way with "Amazing Grace." I play that song and when I get down to that 2nd verse-- "the hour I first believed," my hands won't stay on that thing and I played that and I thought oh my. And then I started playing "Visions of Victory," and boy oh boy my hands just didn't want to stay on those keys I was getting so blessed and I thought, well I've got to bring that song out alive because I know that's what God was telling me. That one needs to be revived.

EH: Sure. Well, is there anything else you'd like to add?

EL: I don't know. I can't think of anything.

EH: Thank you so much.

EL: You know I'm thankful and I'm still a very strong prayer warrior and you know, intercessor and God shows me visions, honey, constantly and I am so thankful. I've seen... people in our church--I've seen 'em healed. Because... well it was two of our best friends and she called me one morning about 2 o'clock in the morning. She says, "Oh, Ella, she said, I had to flight Phil to the hospital. She said he's got something wrong. His head you know. And they took him in there and he had a brain tumor and they had to do surgery and they didn't know if he was gonna make it or not. Well, boy, I mean I went to prayer. I went to prayer big time, you know what I mean, and in the spirit. Not just... spiritual prayers. And I seen this old lion with its big old brushy tail and its fur come sneaking around and I knew when I seen that, when I see a lion, I know there's death near. Death trying to take a hold of somebody. And I started praying, praying and I'm telling you and then I seen a fire from heaven come down, pointing at that thing and praying in tongues, and a fire from heaven come down and started hitting it like lightning bolts. It started jumping and jumping and trying to get away and it couldn't. That lightning from heaven just burnt it to a crisp on the ground. And it just blew away, you know. I see a fiery pit like a volcano in the distance and God asked me to throw the enemy in there. Whenever I have took him down and destroyed him, just throw him in that pit. And that lion just went down to, you know, was totally destroyed and I picked up that thing and I flung it in that pit. Okay? And Chester had his surgery and everything and he pulled through the surgery and everything and I was telling my daughter about it, and she says mom, sometimes they travel in pairs. I says oh my. She says maybe you oughta go back to prayer and make sure and see. You know, I went back to prayer, I started praying and crying out to the Lord, sure enough, here come an old female lion sniffing around right where he was, you know, where that other one was disintegrated. She comes sniffing around and boy I yelled at that thing, you know, and was pointing at it and praying and you know how they do, and wanted to lunge at me. But God done the same thing to that one. He melted her right down to the-- nothing but a greasy spot on the floor. And Chester, I mean, Phillip did have another attack. And it was another brain tumor, another one and they had to do a 2nd surgery but he pulled through it just fine. So that was one life God saved because of prayers.

1:49:25

And I see things like that all the time. When I see things and I see God do that, then I know it's been taken care of. And it's just... cause in West Virginia when we lived there and right down below us in a little white house, his mother and them used to own it and then we owned it... and I didn't even know who lived there at the time, but there was a little well house. That thing was sitting up on the bank from it. I looked down there one day just looked out the window and I saw a lion sitting on there, just as plain as could be, you know out of vision. I saw a lion out there and I thought what in the world is that lion doing on that well house. Well I started praying because God taught me when I see something, anything like that, to start praying. And I just started praying and praying and praying and after a while I saw that thing burnt down, you know. And you know 3 or 4 days from that time we found out that guy was about dead with pneumonia and he got over it. Yeah. Just one thing after another like that. And it's been-- I've got just about as many visions and dream things wrote down that's actually happened or you know, as I have songs! (laughs)

EH: Wow! (laughs)

EL: I do! I'm not kidding you.

EH: Hundreds.

EL: Oh my yes, so many. I like--let me see where is my little (shuffles through papers) I don't know if I wrote it in here or not. Well, that is a private thing on my husband that he might not want me to say. (turns pages) Oh, I'll read this one. (starts reading at 1:52:09)

"In prayer this morning--this is October the 15th in '18 about 2am in the morning. In prayer this morning for many things: abortion, our government, the wicked to be exposed, their wickedness fall upon their own heads, for our president Trump. Wait a minute. And for our president Trump and all who support him. To drain that swamp. The money and the wicked have stolen, lied, killed, and whatever it took to rob the working man and the poor of, to be released to the righteous. The Bible says it belongs to them and I prayed for pastors and churches and underprivileged children and people on and on in the spirit and I prayed for God's guidance on my life and in this spirit I saw a giant rattlesnake curled up, shaking his rattlers ready to strike. I jumped on it with my feet and stomped it with-- I had cleats on my feet even! And stomped its head and then with both feet stomped and stomped it but it seemed to be still needing more so I pointed my fingers toward it and fire from heaven came through my hands and burned it into the ground. Then the hose was in my hand and I burn it deeper and deeper and deeper into the ground. Then Linda and Ralph came to mind and the place that they lived used to belong to a witch. I told-- I was told. And praying for them and knowing God showed me years ago he put a wall of fire around that church property and bars across the driveway. That property now belongs to God. I saw Linda's couch years ago with bones in it. Ms. Cunningham suffered in there and died. Had cancer. I prayed for it to be cleansed and purified in the name of Jesus. Then I saw a bed full of snakes all mangled together. All types. So I kept praying in the spirit. I reached down and got the top of the bed clothes and I pulled them down and rolled all of the snakes up in the bed clothes and tossed them into that fiery pit that I always see in the distance. It looks like a volcano. Then I realized it was my bed. All of the evil spirits that had come against me while I was sick with the cancer had been taken authority over and cast out. Praise God. Praise God, praise God. And my back has been prayed for and a prophetic word to me--my back is healed several times. The mountain has been cast into the sea. Thank God, thank you father. These prayers went on for well over 2 hours and here I am on Monday morning writing and have been writing for over an hour."

(laughs) I write down the thing--it's unbelievable what I can see. And there's always a long time ago he showed it to me-- it just looks like a volcano and it's way out there in the distance. And when I take down an enemy, you know, and he's dead, I beat him or... I've seen dragons and grabbed their mouth and then stabbed their eyes out with my sword until they're dead. And toss 'em in that thing. A little old thing like me gets to toss a dragon, a dinosaur (laughs). When the spirit of God is up on ya, honey, there's no limit to what can be done. And that's not us doing it, that's him doing it.

EH: And do you see-- is it a totally different scene? Like you saw the lion on the well house-- is it sometimes blended with the tangible world?

EL: Now what do you mean by that now?

EH: Well so you said sometimes it's like a scene that's completely--like it wouldn't be this chair in front of you, but then you said there was the vision with the well house and the lion where it was sort of-- where it is physically in front of you and also a vision. So is it combined sometimes?

EL: No, I just look down there and just as if it was a real lion. It was just sitting on the well house and so I prayed until I seen it destroyed.

EH: Yeah. But then with the volcano, it's completely...

EL: Oh yeah, that's a different thing. It's out there and whenever I see something destroyed, God will show me-- fling it in that thing or somethings it'll blow it in there. (blows) Just you know with a whirlwind and just blow it in there.

EH: And have you written songs about some of these visions? Is there any overlap between songs and...

EL: I don't know as I have written... because too many people don't understand. Now, like "Visions of Victory" and that and then that song that "A Great Work of Art." Now that pictures one because I believe I was seeing what John saw coming down. And I've got that vision in there somewhere. I've got it, you know, and I had that song in there-- I wanted to show you that. Just can I go in there a minute?

EH: Yeah! For sure.

EL: I think I laid it out right where I could get it.

1:58:20

(walks into other room)

EH: Oh wow.

EL: Now this... I'll go get the vision that God give me and show you what this picture is... (shows EH picture she drew). This is trees-- I was floating through the air and I could see it way in the distance and it looked like a castle you know, like a stone castle? And it had that clear glass dome that just shine--which is perfect glass is clear, they say. And then this was inside it. It was like a square. It's square but inside it's like a stadium. And there was a platform in there and this was seats, rows and rows of seats all around there and I just couldn't tell you how-- you know, what I mean? And it was full of millions of people. And I was in a platform here on the center.

EH: Oh wow.

EL: And going around and around in just total amazement and my vision ended, and then I wanna go--I'll go get that vision and let you read it and this is--I've even got that picture in my Bible. I tried to write it.

EH: Oh wow.

2:00:47

EL: (walks to other room) You know you tell some people about visions like that and it just scares them to death. They think you're crazy!

EH: Right, right.

EL: Do you go to a Pentecostal church?

EH: No I don't.

EL: No?

EH: Should I read it out loud?

EL: Yeah! Just read it loud if you want to. Just go ahead and read it, yeah.

EH: Okay. (Starts reading Ella's vision account at 2:01:23)

"Okay, November 8, '91 I could see in vision today as I was praying for the souls of everyone in their county and state and for sickness and oppression. I was praying for the fire of the Holy Spirit to be in every pulpit, that the people might be fed with meat and not just milk all the time. If the minister does not have the fire of the Holy Spirit, how can people be fed or grow properly? I pray for those who do not have the fire of the Holy Spirit and are not truly led by God to be brought down, humbled, or put out and true ministers in their places. As I prayed on in the spirit I could see little fires breaking out everywhere and getting higher I could see the teachers and leaders of our church being lifted up in the air with fire under their feet. I could see fire going out from our pulpit and pulpits all around in other churches like little darts through the air and into hearts being melted by them. People were coming to the altar crying and rejoicing. It was like I was up over the total dark world looking down and the little flames were glowing all around from churches everywhere. I saw sheep hungry for the word coming to the flames and I was going around and around in total amazement when all these flames started coming together in the air. It was like I was holding all their light or churches up in my arms and a beautiful transparent glass dome started forming over and around us. then all these precious lights, his saints were being lifted together in the air--what a beautiful breathtaking sight.

Suddenly there were inside this beautiful dome, it was similar to a giant stadium with a high wall like an opera house all around up to the glass dome. Had rows and rows of seats all around from the bottom to the top of the wall and they were filled with what looked like millions of people. It was round and I could never explain how large around it was. There was a platform in the center I was standing on it. It was going around and around as though a stage. As I was looking at all the people in total amazement and my vision ended after the vision and wondered and asked if this could possibly be the inside of the holy city John saw. Could it be the rapture? Later on I was praying and thanking God for what he had showed me and he gave me a glimpse in a vision of the outside. I didn't see the door or gates--it was in the distance. It was on earth, I saw it through the distance over many treetops. It was though I was floating through the air. The outside was beautiful stone or a castle and the top was beautiful clear dome. It was square outside but the inside was round and lined with God's precious saints. I believe it was the holy city New Jerusalem that I saw as described in Revelations 21 "and the wall was garnished with all the manor of precious stones," Revelations 21:19. To me that's none other than God's precious saints. "In that holy city where we will worship him someday," Relations 21:22-27. The wall looked to be about 12 sections high."

Wow, that's really powerful.

EL: That's what my daughter told me, she said mom, that sounds like the rapture.

EH: Yeah, wow.

EL: You know? And he gave me that back several-- in 1991.

EH: That was the first one you had or close to the first one?

EL: No I had a few others before that one. I had our... pastor's mother, our pastor's wife's mother was sicked and her arm was hurting her really bad and they had to take her to the hospital and why-- I went to prayer as soon as they took her out. I didn't know what was wrong and I started really praying and praying and praying. And I saw a snake--just had his fangs in her arm. And see that's what the evil spirits is--it's things like that and he had his fangs right in her arm and I just kept praying and praying and praying and then God just took my hand and just squashed, got the back of its head and got it out of there and then she

was okay and got to come home. But see-- I couldn't tell them that because they wouldn't accept that, they didn't believe in that kind of stuff. But I got to listening to like Brother Hagin and then my daughters that was Pentecostal and knowed the things and it really changed you know, it changed me from that and then I... there was several other small things that I seen that was like snakes and stuff. And I told my sister, I said Sis, I'm seeing things, it's scaring me to death, I'm not ready for this. She said if you wasn't ready for it, God wouldn't show it to you. So you know, that made me think you know, well he is. He's wanting to use me for special things. And so I hope I haven't blowed your mind with a lot of this (laughs)

EH: No, I mean, I believe what you're telling me.

EL: And right here is when I wrote down in there--see I wrote things and I showed this to my pastors and stuff but they didn't think anything, you know what I mean? It don't mean to other people like it does to you, you know. And one time God absolutely--he'll show you things, warn you of things. We was having problems with the furnace and I was, well I was getting sick I mean I was really getting sick and couldn't figure out what was wrong and I said Trace, something's wrong with the furnace. He went out and checked it but he was always out in the workshop. You know he wasn't in there much like I was. And I said something is wrong with the furnace, I said it sometimes comes on and it's making me sick. Well, that went on for a while and I was getting sicker and I went in one night I was sitting in the living room and the duct you know, the air vent was right over side of me and I was sitting there and was sick anyway hurting, and that air duct come on and I mean I thought I was--I just started choking and I run for the door and I opened that door and I got out and got me some air and I went in there and I says, getting me up out of-- I said get us out of here. I said there's something wrong with that furnace but before I had done that God showed me--had you ever watched the oh, what was it... the angels... that big colored lady...

EH: "Touched By An Angel?"

EL: "Touched By An Angel!" Okay--you know which guy is the death angel okay on there?

EH: Mmm.

EL: Well all of a sudden the Lord showed me a snake in the basement and I thought what--where is it Lord, what is it? Something wrong is my food in the, you know, spoiled or something, do I need to get it out of there? Is my food spoiling? And I couldn't figure out what it was. And then I sit there for a while and then in a few minutes it come on again and God showed me that angel. That death angel. And I said Lord why are you showing me him? He's a death angel and then it come on again and the Lord showed me again and I thought oh my goodness, Lord's trying to show me that something... death get out of here. So I go in the bedroom, I said Tracy, get me out of here right now, there's something wrong. The next day, well they called the gas man. He checked it and he said, I don't find anything wrong. And then he said well let's heat it up and see what happens. When he heated it up, just as soon as it got hot, there was a big crack run plum across that thing and it was just opening up and letting all that poison out. And if I'd stayed in there probably that night it would have totally poisoned me and it took me over 3 weeks. I didn't go to the hospital but we went to Florida right after that and it was about 3 weeks before I could you know, get good breath and stuff.

EH: Right, right. Yeah, wow.

EL: So God put me through that and I know he'll show ya things. But he showed me that death angel and he showed me the snake which I know the snake meant trouble, you know or pain or something. Cause every time I see a snake trying to do something to somebody I know there's some kind of pain or something or some hurt coming on.

EH: Yeah, wow. Well I should probably get back on the road to my parents' house but is there anything else you want to share for now? Hopefully I can come back some other time and maybe we can record and sing through some songs.

EL: Yeah, okay. That might be, yeah. We can make some more appointments or find out... but what are you gonna do with this?

EH: So this will go in our archive if that's okay with you-- I have a release form where you can give permission to put it in our archive and that goes so anyone in the future can access it, you know, if they're a researcher and looking into music in West Virginia or whatever and I can give you a copy and I can give Kelly a copy, make copies for whoever in your copy you'd like. And then maybe at some point I would write about you or write about your music or something like that but I would make sure you were approved of what was written and that sort of thing.

EL: Yeah, yeah, so okay. So then it will go into... well...

EH: It's like a library basically. So I do a lot of interviews like this with musicians and artists and community elders and all of those interviews go into this library and then people who are researching it or down the road if your family members or you know, whenever it's there, family members can find it and learn about you.

EL: Wow! (laughs) I can't remember what all I was telling you now!

EH: Yeah I will definitely give you a copy.

EL: Yeah.

2:13:41

So I'll know.

EH: Do you have a CD player? Or what's the best way to get it to you?

EL: Yeah, I've got a CD player.

EH: Okay, I can burn it on a CD. But yeah.

EL: Yeah, there honey--there's just so many things. I could talk for weeks and I've got an attaché case in there full of things that you know, just through the years and so many things that I don't even think of, they just pop up and I forget. But I do--ever since 1991 I been writing down visions and dreams and you know songs along with it and I really treasure those visions because I get 'em out and I think oh my goodness. You know what I mean? It's shocking what has happened. And I know that you know what I mean? I haven't done any of it, but it's the faithfulness of my prayers.

EH: Yeah, that's very powerful.

EL: It is. God has given me-- I'm thinking the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, and the word of discernment you know, so I can pretty well discern what's going on. Now I had, my friend for instance Maxine, when Chester passed away, she just lost it. She just fell apart almost. And I was in Florida and couldn't get back and Maxine got upset at me you know and but I knew it, God showed me and told me. And then we was coming into church one day and I told her, I said now Maxine, you're not gonna get mad

at me, I'm sorry I said I knew before I got back he was upset. And she was coming up, just come in the door of the church--we'd been...went in there and sit down and (laughs) God just showed me a big old snake crawling up through there and I just got out of my seat and run up to the altar and started praying. And then Maxine started crying and then telling me that she was just upset and down and everything was wrong but see God shows me those kinda things. And he has showed me one lady that had liver problem and she was my brother's wife. She came over and her eyes were so green and stuff and I thought oh, that's usually your liver. When she left I just started praying about that and I prayed. I just kept praying in the tongues 'til I got an answer and I seen little old I don't know... little ugly things hanging down on her liver and it's like a hand just reach in there, I guess my own hand, and just pulled 'em off. Just pulled 'em all off and smoothed it out. And you know she didn't have any problem after that. So it's just you know, and you tell people things like that and they say oh you're crazy or you think you're really something but I'm not I'm just me.

EH: Right, right.

EL: And that's the kind of people God uses--somebody he can trust. (laughs)

EH: Right.

EL: So yeah, there's just so many things. So many things.

EH: Well thanks so much for sharing that and sharing all of this. I'm very grateful.

EL: Wow. Yeah, I've shared quite a bit!

EH: (laughs) Well I will turn this off. I'd like to take your picture if that's okay.

EL: Oh I don't care.

EH: And then...

EL: I want to show you a picture...

EH: Maybe I can take some pictures of...

EL: ...what I looked like a few years back!

EH: Aww. So sweet.

EL: That's when we was down in West Virginia and singing and that.

EH: Oh that's sweet. I love that.

EL: Yeah, and I was, like I say, I've lost...

2:17:52

END OF TAPE