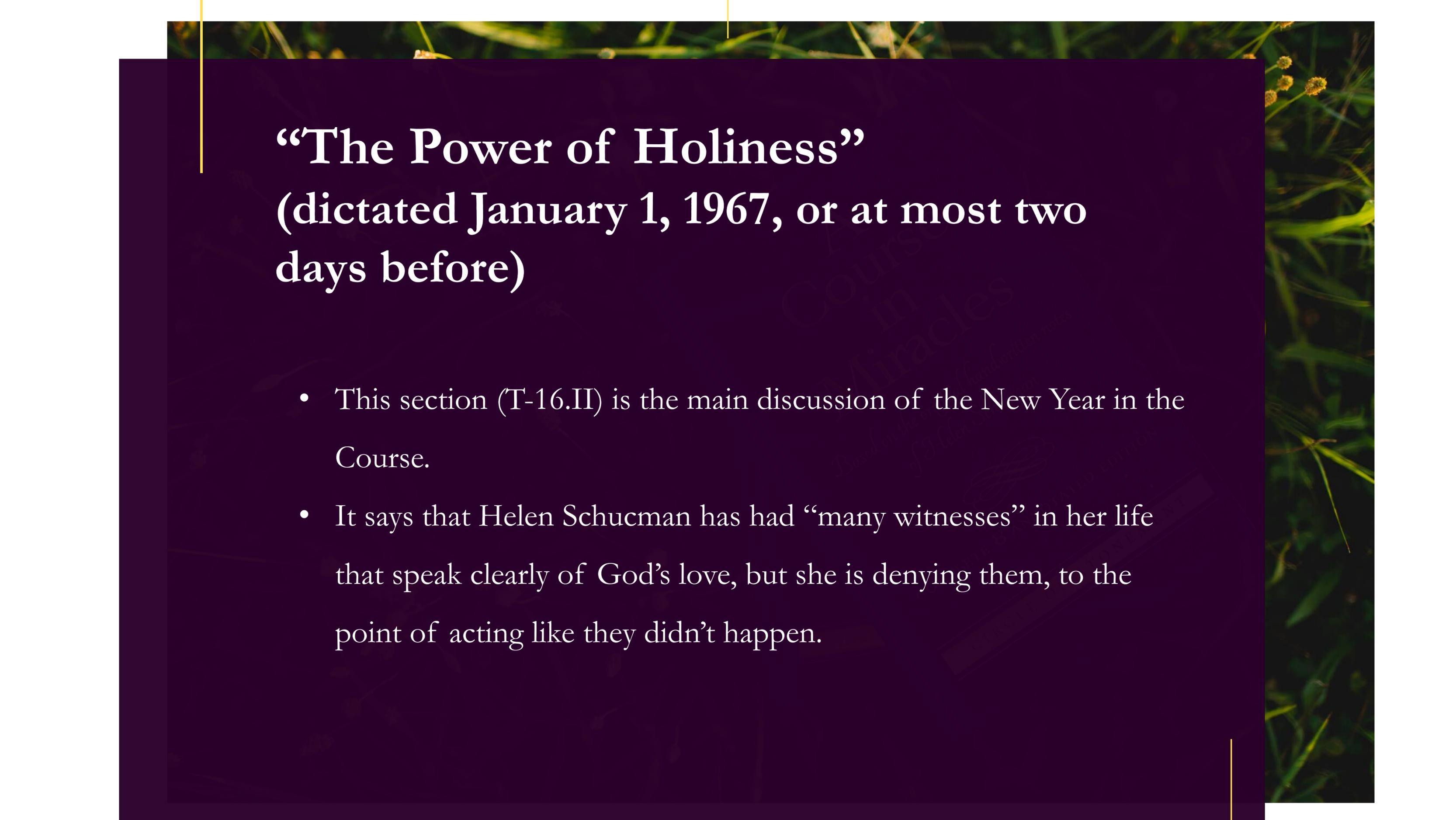


# Fresh Start with *A Course in Miracles* in the New Year.

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# The Course talks about having a different year by dedicating it to God.

- The Workbook is about a “year that we have given God.”
- The Text discusses the New Year, particularly in “The Power of Holiness” (T-16.II).
- There is even a special message (from December 31, 1975), which says, “This year *will* be different.”
- All of these are about having a different *kind* of year than we have ever had before.



# “The Power of Holiness”

(dictated January 1, 1967, or at most two days before)

- This section (T-16.II) is the main discussion of the New Year in the Course.
- It says that Helen Schucman has had “many witnesses” in her life that speak clearly of God’s love, but she is denying them, to the point of acting like they didn’t happen.

# The “many witnesses” to God’s love for Helen

- Miracles done through her—expressions of love that have been healing for those on the receiving end.
- The divine voice she has heard. “The Host of God has called to you, and you have heard” (7:6).
- Her learning that holiness (love) has power and attack is weak.
- Problems that she has given to the Holy Spirit that have been solved for her.
- Ideas from the Course that have proven their power to her.

## Don't we have a similar list?

- Think about miracles you have done—expressions of love that have been healing for those on the receiving end.
- Think about guidance you have received that you knew was not from you.
- Think about lessons you have learned that would have been unthinkable before.
- Think about problems you have given to the Holy Spirit that got solved for you.
- Think about ideas from the Course that have proven their power to you.
- Think about any other witnesses to God's love for you in your life.

## Helen, however, is denying all this.

For instance, because she can't understand how miracles work, she maintains that the miracles she has done *haven't happened*.

Yet can you really believe that all that has happened, even though you do not understand it, *has not happened*? Yet this is your position. (5:2-3)

# She is instead placing her faith in the disaster she has made.

His Voice has spoken clearly, and yet you have so little faith in what you heard, because you have preferred to place still greater faith in the disaster you have made. (9:4)

What is “the disaster you have made”?

It is all that is wrong in her life.

It’s the mess of her life, which is really a mess she has made.

It’s the consequences of all her past mistakes and negative patterns.

It is the giant rut she has dug for herself.

# This pattern of hers persisted.

Ken Wapnick, who was close with Helen years later, said,

When Helen would complain that nothing ever happened to her and that Jesus really let her down, I would remind her, first, of the Course itself, and then that if people had had one one-thousandth of her experiences of Jesus and the Love of God, their lives would have been changed forever. She of course could not agree with me.

*(Absence from Felicity, p. 372)*

# But are we really that different?

Don't we often discount the witnesses to God's love in our lives?

- We are skeptical—to an unhealthy degree.
- We think that apparent answered prayer was just a fluke.
- We conveniently forget the amazing thing that happened.
- We let a holy instant fade and be replaced by its opposite.
- We tell ourselves we never...receive guidance, have spiritual experiences, manage to forgive, etc.

# Two roads are running along concurrently in her life

1. All the witnesses to God's love for her.
2. The disaster she has made.

Each offers her a different reality to live in.

#1 tells her that "Reality is safe and sure and wholly kind to everyone and everything" (9:6).

#2 tells her that reality is disaster. What's real is the mess she's in.

*She has chosen to live almost entirely in the second reality.*

# Haven't we done essentially the same thing?

- As you look at your life and as you go through each day, which of these two roads do you mainly picture yourself as being on?
- Don't you tend to give more faith to the road of “the disaster you have made”—all that's wrong in your life?
- Don't you tend to discount the first road—in which you walk surrounded by the witnesses to God's love for you?

# Jesus wants Helen to make a New Year's resolution to give her faith to the first road.

“Today, let us resolve together to accept the joyful tidings that disaster is not real, and that reality is not disaster.” (9:5)

- “Let us resolve”—he’s asking her to make a resolution on New Year’s Day.
- “Together”: he’s asking her to make it *with him*.
- “Disaster is not real”: Accept that the mess she is in is not real.
- “Reality is not disaster”: Accept that what’s real is what the “many witnesses” speak of—a reality that “safe and sure and wholly kind.”

# What kind of year will this resolution give her?

- It is “a year of joy in which your listening will increase” (7:8).
- ...in which she gives her problems to the Holy Spirit to solve (10:1-3).
- ...in which she applies the Course’s ideas: “This is the year for the *application* of the ideas that have been given you” (10:4).
- ...in which she acknowledges the witnesses to God’s love: “Think what you have really seen and heard, and *recognize* it” (10:8).
- In short, it will be a year in which *she walks along that first road*.

# What kind of year do you want next year?

- What is your “ideal spiritual year”?
- Write down the kind of year that would constitute your ideal spiritual year.
- Flesh it out with the feelings, events, and experiences that would be part of it.
- Based on your deepest spiritual longings, how would you like your year to be?
- You might want to ask within as part of this.

# What structure might you adopt to achieve that year?

- Maybe it's time to really read the Text.
- Maybe it's time to do the Workbook.
- Maybe it's time to do the Workbook *better*.
- Maybe it's time to do post-Workbook practice.
- Maybe it's time to establish a morning routine.
- Emily and I are doing “Rules for Decision.”
- Mary Anne is just finishing a “Holy Spirit practice.”

*Take a moment and ask within about the structure to adopt.*

# Whatever it is, you will need to flesh it out with some specifics.

You will need to know specifically what you are doing.

- With the Text it helps to have a reading calendar.
- With the Workbook, it helps to have clarity on the practice instructions.

It can even help to have checklists in which you check off your practice periods.

- With all of it, it is crucial to have a morning routine.

*Take another moment and ask within about specifics, the when and how.*

# Let's make that resolution with Jesus.

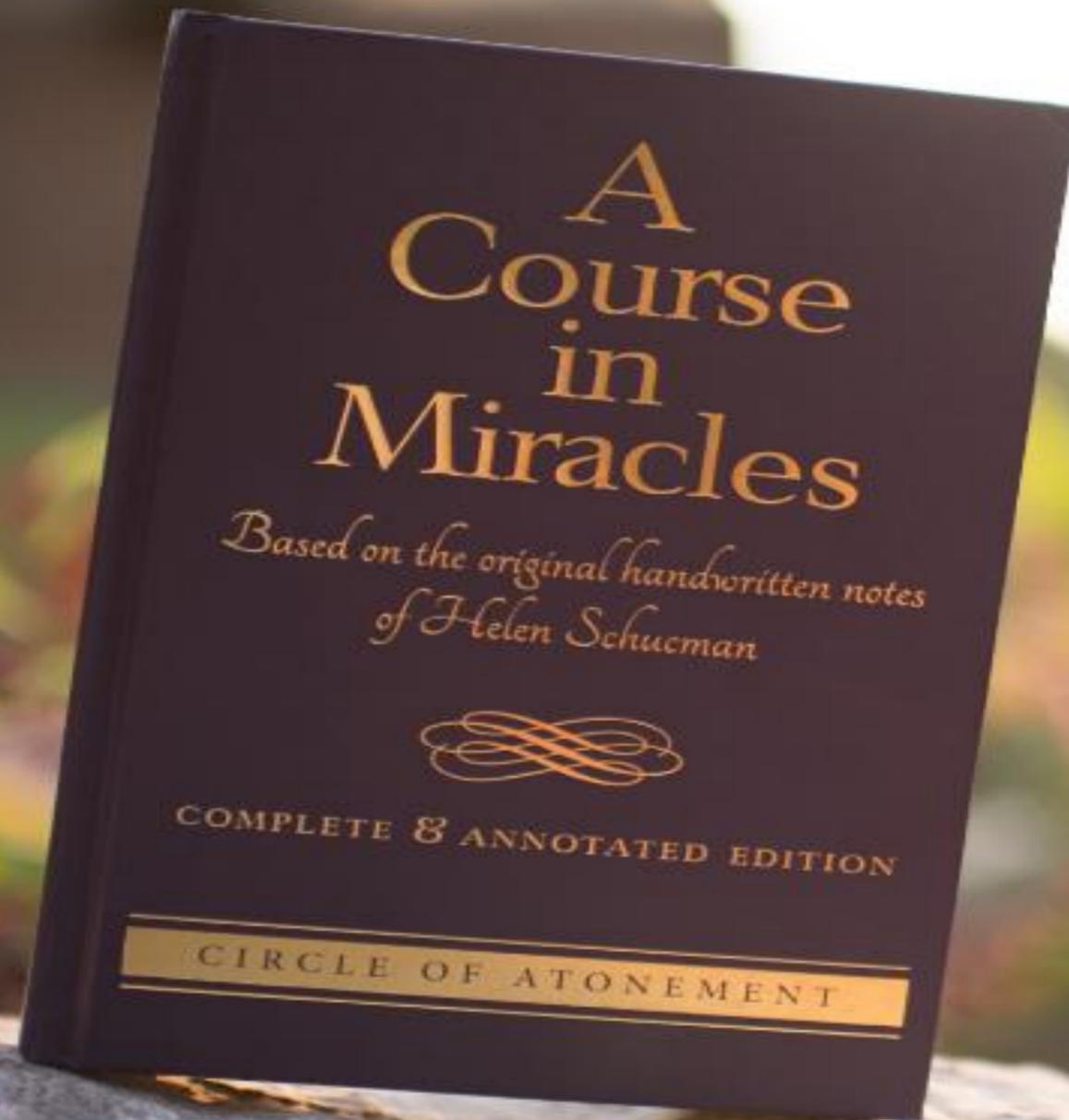
*Jesus, I resolve with you that disaster is not real and reality is not disaster.*

*What is real in my life is not the mess I've made, but all the witnesses to  
God's love for me.*

*I resolve to walk along **their** road.*

*I resolve to have a different **kind** of year,  
in which I leave the past behind and walk into a new future.*

*I have nothing to lose and everything to gain.*



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