

# 911 Attack

*continued from page 8*

were thousands of people just looking up at the building in amazement. Never having a liking for crowds, I kept walking north to try and get away while scanning the crowds for coworkers at the same time. One woman I worked with, Iris Rodham, found me and pulled me along as I kept looking back at the building I worked in. It had a tremendous gaping hole in it and thick black smoke was pouring out. Building Two was also on fire and we learned that another plane had crashed into this second building. People on the streets gathered around cars with radios blasting the news. Reports were coming in that it was a terrorist attack. The whole scene was very surreal and unbelievable. My eyes were irritated from the smoke and I looked back at the building wondering to myself if I could go back to work there tomorrow. What was I thinking? Iris and I thought we might be able to get the subway uptown so we continued to walk up the west side. We made it to about 14th street, which was about a half hour after I got out of the building and I looked back and gasped, "Iris, I think Building Two is collapsing!" People on the streets screamed in horror and cried. Could this be happening, is it real, I thought to myself? All of downtown was enveloped in a huge cloud of smoke and dust. I could only think of the people who were still down by the pier and the Trade Center, staring up in wonderment. Now they were probably running for their lives. Iris and I trudged forward, sirens screaming past us as fire truck after fire truck made its way downtown. Soon after that, Tower One, my building, collapsed. Now knowing that our lives would never be the same and that insanity was breaking loose on the city, my main mission was to get to midtown to Steve's building on 47th and Park. We made it to Chelsea Piers and they had already set up tables to distribute water to those of us walking by. We stopped for water, to use the restrooms and much-needed pay phones since all

cellular service seemed to come to a halt. I spoke with my sister and Steve and told them I was on my way to midtown. Iris and I made it to his building by 11:30, only two hours after I got out of the World Trade Center. Steve and I embraced each other knowing all too well that the situation could have played out differently. We were the lucky ones. We even made it home that day by 4 PM. My parents rushed to see me and we clutched each other emotionally. We were glued to the television that night as were many Americans and people around the world were. Watching the whole scene repeated over and over again I then began to realize the enormity of the event that I had just survived. I made it out physically fine, some smoke in my eyes and blisters on my feet, but the next few days were like riding an emotional roller coaster. I'd be fine one moment, crying the next. Sleeping is hard and loud noises startle me. Every time I hear a siren it brings me back to that day. Within the first few days I received dozens of calls from friends, family, coworkers and old acquaintances. Many of us who were there have asked since then "Why?". Two years ago when I visited China I met a very special person, Julie Gillam. I was recovering from a hard time in my life and Julie gave me a quote from Jeremiah 29:11 that reads "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord; plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." I have held on to those words and read them in times like these. I later found out that the man in the wheelchair did not make it out, along with his best friend who insisted on staying with him. Their names were Ed Beyea and Abraham Zamonwitz. Seven other employees from Empire were lost that day along with thousands of other innocent people. And who at this time was braver than the heroes of the New York City Fire Department and Police Department? ❀