



ENCOURAGEMENT IN ADVERSITY

7-DAY DEVOTIONAL

God is with us through all of life's hardships. Be encouraged, find peace, hope, and comfort as you seek His presence.

7-Day Devotional

Day 1: Let's Roll!

Day 2: Healing

Day 3: Peace

Day 4: Suffering

Day 5: Overcoming Your Mate's Fear

Day 6: Good Out of Bad

Day 7: Faith Into Action

Day 1

And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

Revelation 12:11, NKJV

“Let’s Roll!”

On the morning of September 11, 2001, United Flight 93 from Newark to San Francisco was hijacked by terrorists who claimed to have a bomb. With telephone confirmation that other planes had hit the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center, the passengers understood the hijackers’ intent.

Todd Beamer, a 32-year-old businessman picked up a seat-back phone and reached Lisa Jefferson, a GTE supervisor. He told her that he and others were going to “jump on” a hijacker who was guarding the passengers in the rear. Beamer asked her to pray the Lord’s Prayer with him. He also made her promise to call his wife, Lisa, and tell her that he loved her and their two little boys.

Dropping the phone after talking with Jefferson, Beamer said, “Jesus help me.” Then after reciting Psalm 23, he

said, “Are you guys ready? Okay, let’s roll.” Those were the unforgettable last words Beamer said before he and others rushed the hijackers of United Airlines Flight 93. There were screams, then silence.

Brave American civilians, complete strangers, rose against impossible odds and tried to save the 757-200 aircraft. In doing so, they made the ultimate patriotic sacrifice. United Flight 93 crashed into a large field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania, killing all 44 aboard. Of the four hijacked planes that morning, United 93 was the only one that failed to hit a targeted site.

Taken from *The American Patriot’s Bible*

Day 2

So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the Wilderness of Shur. And they went three days in the wilderness and found no water. Now when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. Therefore the name of it was called Marah. And the people complained against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?" So he cried out to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet.

There He made a statute and an ordinance for them, and there He tested them, and said, "If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the Lord who heals you."

Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees; so they camped there by the waters.

Exodus 15:22-27, NKJV

Healing

Fixing broken things is God's specialty. That wasn't His original area of expertise; creation was. But Satan, His created being, turned against Him, came into His garden, and brought deception, blame, shame, and brokenness. That was what Satan intended, but he underestimated God. Jesus would be His answer. He came to earth in human form to take away the sin and pain of His people. He would fix the broken places, heal and forgive. If you are sick in spirit, Jesus wants to heal you. If your relationships are sick, He wants to bring wholeness. If your soul is damaged with discouragement, He wants

to repair you. If your body is hurting, He wants to relieve your pain. His whole heart toward His creation is to heal us where we are hurt, because He says, "I am the Lord who heals you."

—JAN SILVIOUS

Taken from *Women of Faith Devotional Bible*

Day 3

Then the LORD said to him, “Peace be with you; do not fear, you shall not die.” So Gideon built an altar there to the LORD, and called it The-LORD-Is-Peace. To this day it is still in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

Judges 6:23-24, NKJV

Peace

Our own quest for peace often begins in a period of our lives when we are experiencing anything but peace. So, too, the Book of Judges tells the story of Israel at one of its lowest points. See if you can picture this: The sons of Israel are so intimidated by their enemies that they live in dens and caves in the mountains. Livestock and vegetation are next to none—the Midianites regularly swoop down like locusts and consume whatever they find. Israel is desperate, and they do what desperate people need to do: They cry out to God.

God appears to an unlikely man in the midst of his daily chores. “The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valor!” the Angel of the Lord says (Judges 6:12). As the youngest member of the least family of Israel, Gideon would hardly be a natural choice to deliver Israel. The Lord reassures him of the only truth that is ultimately important. “Surely I will be with you,” He says (Jude. 6:16). Gideon seeks confirmation by a sign from God.

When the Angel of the Lord puts out the end of his staff and consumes meat and bread in a blaze of fire, Gideon’s eyes are opened. It is the Lord! “Peace be with you; do not fear, you shall not die,” the Lord replies. Gideon names this place, “The-LORD-Is-Peace” (Judges 6:23, 24). Instead of fear and doubt, God has given Gideon peace. This impossible task set in impossible circumstances is not resting on Gideon’s shoulders. God has promised to deliver. Gideon must only step out in faith.

When we are out of resources, harassed by overwhelming circumstances, aware of our own inadequacy—we are finally qualified to rest in the power of God to deliver, the One who brings peace.

—PAULA RINEHART

Taken from Women of Faith Devotional Bible

Day 4

so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure, which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer;

2 Thessalonians 1:4-5, NKJV

Suffering

In 2 Thessalonians 1:4, Paul speaks of the “patience and faith” of the Thessalonians. Nowhere was their growth in faith and love more evident than in the way they patiently and faithfully endured hostilities and suffering from the enemies of Christ. Although there was no need to speak, since the Thessalonians’ lives spoke clearly enough (1 Thessalonians 1:8), Paul’s joy before the Lord over their perseverance bubbled up. Having a right attitude toward suffering (verse 5) is essential, and that required attitude is concern for the kingdom of God. They were not self-centered but concentrated on God’s kingdom. Their focus was not on personal comfort, fulfillment, and happiness, but on the glory of God and the fulfillment of His purposes. They were not moaning about the injustice of their persecutions. Rather, they were patiently enduring the sufferings they did not deserve (verse 4). This very attitude was “manifest evidence” or positive proof that

God’s wise process of purging, purifying, and perfecting through suffering was working to make His beloved people worthy of the Kingdom (2:12) by being perfected (James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 5:10).

For believers, afflictions are to be expected (1 Thessalonians 3:3) as they live and develop Christian character in a satanic world. Suffering is not to be thought of as evidence that God has forsaken them, but as evidence that He is with them, perfecting them (Matthew 5:10; Romans 8:18; 2 Corinthians 12:10). So the Thessalonians demonstrated that their salvation, determined by faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ, was genuine because they, like Christ, were willing to suffer on account of God and His kingdom. They suffered unjustly as objects of man’s wrath against Christ and His kingdom (Acts 5:41; Philippians 3:10; Colossians 1:24).

Taken from *The MacArthur Daily Bible*

Day 5

So he answered, “Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.”

2 Kings 6:16, NKJV

Overcoming Your Mate’s Fear

There are 365 “fear nots” in the Scripture. It’s clear that we fear a host of things, yet for many of us, the greatest fear is the fear of rejection. Perhaps you or your mate fears failure or appearing stupid, forgetful, or insensitive. All of these can become grounds for rejection.

The more fears your mate has, the less open he or she will be in relationships. If the words withdrawn and unexpressive describe your mate, then recognize it as a possible clue to actual or perceived rejections of the past. And remember Elisha’s word to his fearful servant: “Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them” (6:16). Fear dissipates when someone who is fearful knows that significant people in his life (people like you!) are with him.

Be careful of communicating rejection to your mate in any way. Instead, seek to understand your mate. Ask yourself, Why is my mate fearful? You may need to ask forgiveness for adding to the problem.

A fearful person needs to be received gently in love. He or she needs to be heard. Those fears are real, no matter how inconsequential they may seem to you. To be ignored can make your spouse feel uncared for and unimportant. First John 4:18 promises us, “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.” Choose to love, and see how God will use your love to help your spouse overcome her fears!

Taken from the *FamilyLife Marriage Bible*

Day 6

Now when he was in affliction, he implored the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed to Him; and He received his entreaty, heard his supplication, and brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD was God.

2 Chronicles 33:13, NKJV

Good Out of Bad

God will sometimes allow suffering and sickness to get our attention. And at times God will allow painful events and circumstances to bring us to where we need to be spiritually. Could God use even the death of a child to bring someone to faith in Christ? One woman wrote me, “A person expects to lose a parent. Maybe even a brother, sister, aunt, or uncle, but never a child. My son would have been sixteen years old today. It has been fifteen years since his death, but he was the person that brought me to the lord. Because of his death, I received

my salvation. The comfort I found when I fell into God’s hands! God knows my pain. He lost a son, too.” She concludes, “I found salvation through God’s son because of the loss of mine.” What can you say? God brought good out of bad.

Taken from Start! The Bible for New Believers

Day 7

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”

Joshua 1:9 , NKJV

Faith Into Action

When hardships come our way, do we respond, “God, I trust You to bring me through this”? Or do we tend to say, “I’m doomed, and there’s nothing anybody can do?”

God once sent a storm on the Sea of Galilee to teach Jesus’ disciples a lesson on faith. Jesus had said to His men, “Let us cross over to the other side” (Mark 4:35), and they should have taken His statement as a sure sign that He expected a safe trip. But when a terrible windstorm threatened the boat, they panicked. The terrified disciples asked Jesus, “Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?”

How many times have we said the same thing?
“Don’t You care, Lord, that this is happening to me?
Don’t You love me enough, Lord, to do something about this hardship?”

Jesus rebuked the wind, and immediately a great calm settled on the lake. Then He turned to His disciples and said, “Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?” (Mark 4:40).

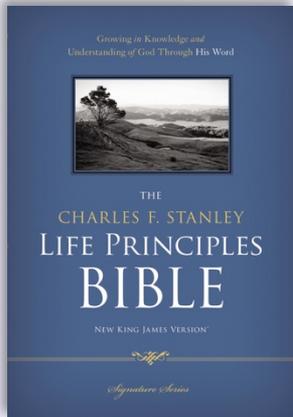
God has given to each one of us a measure of faith (see Romans 12:3), and he expects us to use it to overcome our fear. Fear always accompanies adversity; in fact, a degree of fear is what makes something an adversity instead of just another experience. Fear causes us to project the very worst that can happen – that we will never recover, that all hope is lost, that we will never again enjoy some treasured thing.

Faith tells the opposite story. Faith says that God is in control and that all things work together for our good (see Romans 8:28). Faith says that we will recover and that our final state will be better than anything we have experienced thus far.

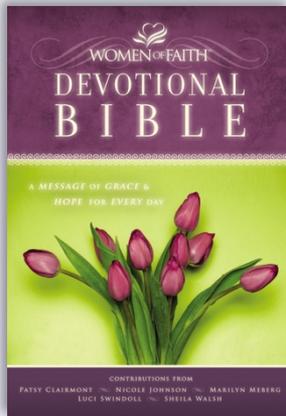
Allow adversity to call your faith to action rather than into question. Adversity reveals areas in which you need to act in faith and not fear. When hard times come, say to yourself, “Now is the time to use my faith in a new way.” The more you use your faith, the greater it grows.

Taken from *The Charles F. Stanley Life Principles Daily Bible*

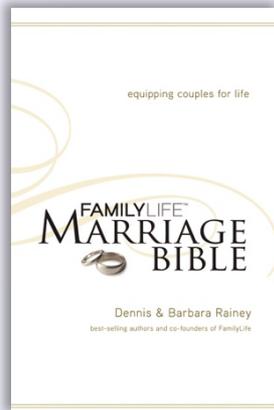
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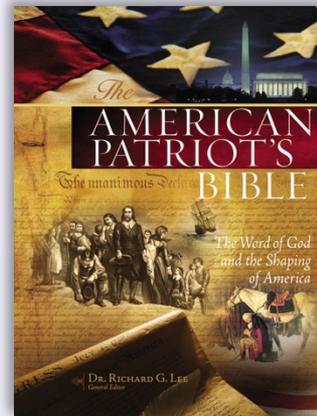
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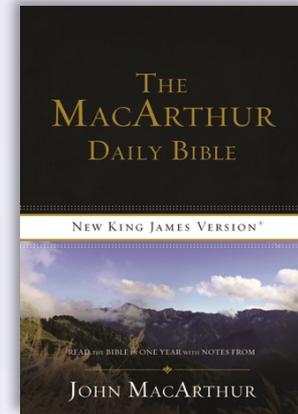
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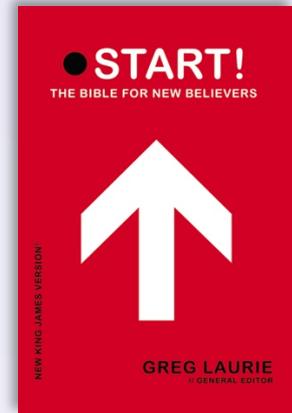
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