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Daily Devotional - God's Provisions in Adversity

SEPTEMBER 22ND 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - God's Provisions in Adversity

1 [Thessalonians 5:18](#)

As we determined yesterday, if you are not going through a difficult time, you likely will encounter one soon. Jesus assured us that we'd have many hardships in this life ([John 16:33](#)).

As unpleasant as trials are, there are still many reasons for giving thanks. Yesterday, we looked at three provisions believers can count on during adversity: God's presence, a pathway through the trouble, and potential to grow. Today, let's explore two more.

1) Protection. God doesn't necessarily keep believers from suffering or disappointment. Stopping the storms may be our goal, but from His point of view, the adversity may be necessary to mature us spiritually. However, the Father offers protection by staying with us in the struggle. Once we receive Jesus as our Savior, we are promised that God's Spirit indwells us and will never leave. What's more, we have assurance that nothing can separate us from His love ([Rom. 8:38-39](#)). So our ever-present God walks with us through the hardships, providing guidance and speaking truth into the situation.

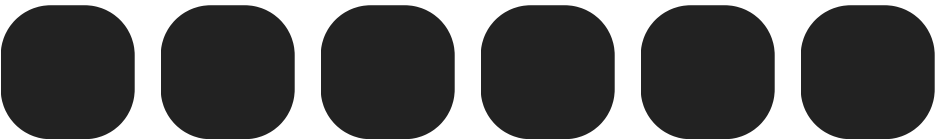
2) Peace. While difficulties cause many people anxiety, God's peace is available to His children. This inner serenity does not depend on whether circumstances improve. Rather, it's a result of our relationship with Him. Our main focus shouldn't be on fixing the problem; rather, we should concentrate on our dependence upon God.

As we recognize the Lord’s provision during trials, we can genuinely express gratitude. We often don’t know what the purpose is for each ensuing difficulty, but we do know that our God is good and trustworthy.

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Daily Devotional - Through the Trials

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Daily Devotional - Through the Trials

Matthew 14:22-34

No one gets through life without trials. Realistically, you are currently in a storm, just getting out of one, or about to enter a turbulent time. That is the bad news. Thankfully, we serve a good God who provides—even through dark times.

Today's passage tells of a stormy night on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus provides for us today just as He did for His disciples in that unsettling situation. Today, we will focus on ways that He does this.

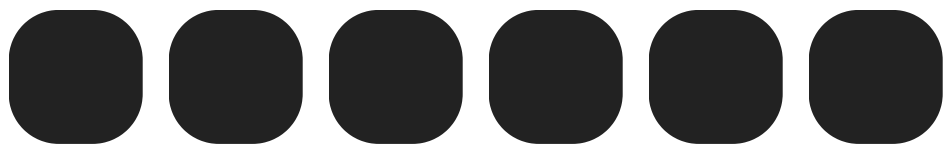
- *The Father offers Christians His presence and the promise that He will never leave ([Heb. 13:5-6](#)). To the extent we are mindful of these wonderful provisions, we are able to live with a sense of comfort and courage, regardless of our circumstances. What an amazing gift!*
- *The Lord blesses His children with a pathway through trouble. He is in total control of our storm and will use the trial for His purpose. We may not understand, but we can trust His hand to guide us and accomplish good. Sometimes the reason or benefit of a difficulty becomes obvious, while in other cases, it may never be clear.*
- *The Father offers believers the potential to grow. Hardships serve as exercises in trust, and they allow us to learn more fully how great God's power and love are.*

No one enjoys trials. But remember to express gratitude for God's hand in your life. Hardships offer the chance to trust your Creator and know Him better. Even though they are painful, don't waste the opportunity trials offer to become all the Lord has planned for you.

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Daily Devotional - The God to Whom We Pray

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Daily Devotional - The God to Whom We Pray

Nehemiah 1:1-11

Nehemiah demonstrates power in prayer. As a servant to King Artaxerxes of Persia, he had no right to request leave to rebuild Jerusalem's walls, much less to requisition materials and protection. Yet knowing the nature of the God he served, Nehemiah did not hesitate to act boldly and ask the king for what was needed.

His prayer began, "I beseech You, O lord God of heaven" ([Neh. 1:5](#)). *Lord*, when it appears in all capital letters, denotes the word *Jehovah* (a form of *Yahweh*, the Hebrew name for God). It means "God who is eternal in His being"—conveying that everything everywhere is in His presence. So, when God makes a promise, He knows how He will keep it. That is why Nehemiah called Him "the awesome God who preserves the covenant." He knew God was committed to bringing repentant Israelites back to their homeland to dwell in His presence ([Neh. 1:9](#)).

Another Hebrew name used to refer to God, *Elohim*, is translated "He who is absolutely sovereign." If He spoke the world into being, then He is certainly more than able to provide Nehemiah with supplies, some time off from work, and favor from the Persian king.

There are many other names for God, such as *Adonai* ("master"), *Jehovah-Jireh* ("provider"), and *Jehovah-Rapha* ("healer"). Since the Hebrew language is precise, it can help us to better know who He is—when we need solace, we call upon the God of comfort; in our confusion, we have the God who teaches. Just as knowing one's audience affects which words we choose to sp

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Daily Devotional - The Blessing of Loyalty

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Daily Devotional - The Blessing of Loyalty

[Ruth 4:13-22](#)

I believe Ruth's remarkable loyalty is what earned her a place in both the Bible and the lineage of Jesus Christ. Our culture idealizes "looking out for number one," but Scripture teaches us to protect loved ones and those in need ([1 Cor. 13:7](#); [Ps. 82:3-4](#)). Ruth is a shining example of faithfulness—she willingly adjusted her own schedule and expectations to meet Naomi's needs.

With no family left to care for her and no neighbors who shared her faith in God, Naomi found herself in a foreign land, far from the comfort of a familiar and like-minded community. During those dark hours, Ruth—her son's pagan widow—sacrificed everything to stay at Naomi's side. Then, to care for her aging mother-in-law, Ruth set aside hope of remarriage as well as the prospect of a child. She packed her bags for a foreign country and swore to follow a strange religion: the worship of Naomi's God.

Ruth undoubtedly was aware of the risks involved in casting her lot with another woman in a male-dominated society, but she did so without hesitation. And the young woman's commitment did not end when they arrived in Israel. It was Ruth, following Naomi's

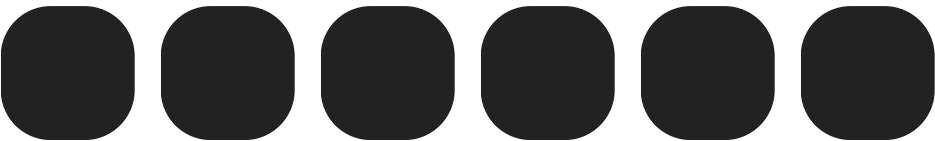
directions, who kept the two women fed. And it was Ruth, again under Naomi’s tutelage, who made a strategic alliance with Boaz that secured their future.

Ruth sacrificed mightily for her mother-in-law, and as a result, God gave her the very things she thought she’d forfeited—a God who loved her, a home, a husband, and a son. Moreover, Ruth is counted among the ancestors of the Messiah, Jesus. What a testimony of the reward for loyalty.

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Daily Devotional - The Price of Loyalty

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Daily Devotional - The Price of Loyalty

Ruth 1

The Christian life isn't free of obligations. The many "one anothers" in the Bible are God's instructions about how to treat people in our circles and give of ourselves to enrich those relationships. Yet many people today prefer not to invest in deep friendships, opting instead for casual acquaintances that demand little. The devoted loyalty of Ruth—a pagan from Moab—stands in sharp contrast to such superficiality.

Casual friends can talk about politics, movies, and sports but avoid discussing deep concerns. Then they won't have to bear anyone else's burdens or heartbreak. But neither will they learn the deep joy of expressing loyalty to a person in need. The human heart was created to crave intimate fellowship—the kind of connectedness that can share feelings without fear of judgment. Because of loyalty based on mutual trust and love, close companions can point out blind spots and challenge each other to greater faith.

Ruth is an example of this kind of selfless dedication. When her mother-in-law Naomi went through a bitter period of hopelessness and loss, the young widow Ruth chose to follow the older woman. Though this meant sacrificing the comforts of home and any prospect of marriage to a countryman, she demonstrated absolute allegiance.

Loyalty demands a high price that too few are willing to pay. Some hold acquaintances at arm's length to avoid obligation. But believers are saved to stand together in love and encourage one another ([John 13:34](#); [1 Thess. 5:11](#)). Doing so brings blessing, even when there's a cost.

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