

The David Series: Week 9 Devotions

In week 9 of the David Series we explored the theme of tragedy in David's life. For this week the daily devotions will help us deal with tragedy in our lives.

Day One

Read:

"I lift up my eyes to the mountains- where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. He will not let your foot slip- He who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord watches over you- the Lord is your shade at your right hand; the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord will keep you from all harm- he will watch over your life; the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore." (Psalm 121)

Apply:

This verse is one I have been clinging to and reading over the last week. I have just recently been round a bend in my life and been confronted by something that has hit me hard and knocked my breath out of me for a bit. In this time of feeling unsure, unsafe, hurt, and angry the one thing I have clung to is Jesus. I don't know where my life will take me, I don't know what I will have to face or go through and so there is nothing I can do to prepare myself or make sure I'll be alright. The only one that knows the beginning from the end and can hold me safe through it all is the Lord, and is the only one that can satisfy and provide for the need in my heart.

Promise:

The Bible says that God has good plans for our lives (Jeremiah 29:11) and that He will work all things together for our good (Romans 8:28). That is a promise we can cling to! So when we read in Psalm 121 that our help comes from the Lord and He is the one to look out for us and help us, we can be sure that we can trust Him as He has our best interests in mind, for a life of purpose and promise. He is an ever present help in our time of trouble!

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, as I lift my eyes to You, may I know your help and hope and know You as the God and Father that comes through for me and works all things together for my good. Show me Yourself and help me to trust You, in Jesus Name, Amen.

Day Two

Read:

"Lord, how many are my foes! How many rise up against me! Many are saying of me, "God will not deliver him. But you, Lord, are a shield around me, my glory, the One who lifts my head high. I call out to the Lord, and he answers me from his holy mountain." (Psalm 3:1-4)

Apply:

I don't know about you, but I have definitely had times in my life where I have felt surrounded by people who dislike me or are against me. Especially as young people, we can often feel like the world is against us, like they just don't get what we need or where we're coming from. We feel alone, misunderstood, and victims of how other people treat us. The good news is, that we are not left to face this world alone but have been given the Lord as our shield to protect us when we are innocent, and as we call out to Him, He will answer us. Did you know that the definition of a shield is something that is used as a protection against blows or missiles, it is something which protects from a danger, risk, or unpleasant experience. If the Lord is a shield around us, then He is the one to protect us from that which would hurt or damage us and get us safely through the storm. We are not in this alone!

Truth:

As we call out to God, He will hear us! Psalm 34:18 says, "The Lord is near to the broken hearted and saves the crushed in spirit" in our time of trial and storm, we will not be left alone, and it promises here that God will be near to us in that place and He will save us. He knows exactly what we need and always has a plan. The storm can never crush you if you allow Him to be your shield and protect you.

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, help me to allow you to be my shield and the one who makes me safe. May I know you as my comfort and my hiding place when the storm is dark and the wind is strong. Be my shield in the storms I'm in and let me feel you near. Amen

Day Three

Read:

"Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes." (Psalm 37:7)

Apply:

Maybe it's just me, but when I go through a tough time I usually like to find some way I can fix it. I like to find a solution or some way I can help to make the problem better, because then at least I feel like I have some control over what's going on, I'm not just spinning out of control in the storm but have an end in sight, a goal of something that will calm the storm I'm in. Sometimes, though, there is nothing you can do. I am going through something at the moment that I have no control over and no answers for. There is nothing I can do to make it better or change it or even understand it better and so in the beginning I felt like I was falling. I didn't understand and there was nothing I could do, so I simply had to sit where I was. In that moment of numb pain and confusion, I decided to ask Jesus to come into my storm. I told Him I didn't understand and couldn't sort it out, and so had to hand it over to Him. As I looked into His eyes of love and surrendered my storm and the problem I couldn't fix into His very capable and gentle hands, I felt a certain amount of peace that I hadn't had before. I realised that the calming of this storm was not up to me, the carrying of this burden was not for my shoulders, and the fixing of this problem was not for me to figure out. I could hand it to my Daddy, and know that it would be okay.

Promise:

To surrender means to stop resisting a supremacy and submit to their authority, and as we submit to the authority of God in the midst of our storms, instead of the pain, stress, confusion, and darkness, we can take on the promises He gives us. The Bible says that His burden is light, He has good and perfect plans for us (Jeremiah 29:11), He works all things for our good (Romans 8:28), takes care of all our needs (Matthew 6:25-34), and calms the storms (Mark 4:35-41). These are the promises that are ours within the storm if we simply choose to let go and let God. The storm is not yours to calm!...

Prayer:

Jesus, please come and calm my storms and take the burdens from my back. Help me to surrender to You and know that You will take care of me. May Your promises be more real than the storm as I look to You and surrender. In Jesus Name, Amen

Day Four

Read:

"Not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near." (Hebrews 10:25)

Apply:

Often when times get tough being with people is the last thing we want to do. We want to sit by ourselves and tell ourselves it is as bad as it seems. There is such strength in each other though and the wisdom and insight others can give us. In the midst of the storm the mist is often all we can see and can't see beyond what we're facing in the moment. Life looks grey and we feel that way too, ready to just sit down and feel miserable. When we surround ourselves with people that know us and understand the goals we're pushing for, the promises God has for us though, they can remind us of what's really important and show us the light at the end of the tunnel. They will be there to carry us when we are weak and help us to walk to the edge of the storm and the breakthrough that is just beyond. We can be each other's strength when times are tough and remind one another of the truth that's beyond the dark.

Promise:

Sometimes when I'm feeling down, God can feel so far away. I often just need a hug or a hand on my shoulder, and so feel alone. I remember saying to God once, "Lord, I need to feel you physically here and I can't, 'cause You aren't physical, so I feel alone..." in that moment though I felt Him gently reply that although He isn't physical, He uses the hands and feet of His children to show us the love we need and provide us with the strength we don't have. Empowered and inspired by Him, the people around us can love us with the love of the Father, God loving and giving us strength through His children and hands on earth.

Prayer:

Lord, show me Your love through the people around me. Help me to allow other people in to help me and support me and show me Your love. Thank you that You always provide for my needs and are more than enough. Thank you that you provide exactly what my heart needs in every situation.

Day Five

Read:

"Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honourable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." (Romans 12:17-19)

Apply:

Ooh, when someone else causes us pain the first thing we want to do is get justice and revenge! It's not right, it's not fair, and we deserve better! I have had a certain person in my life for a very long time, and for most of that time they have been causing me pain and hurt often. In the beginning I would fight back and voice that that was not what I deserved and not the treatment I should get. After many years of going round and round the same argument and ending up more exasperated than before I decided to take a step back and evaluate what I was doing wrong. Clearly me trying to get justice was not working. I had read this verse before, but honestly, I was too scared to hand over my vindication. What if He didn't come through and fight for justice for me?...

Promise:

Often the people that are closest to us, like family and the friends we trust, are the ones that hurt us the most. They know our weaknesses and are with us all the time and often what they say or do hits exactly the nerve that hurts the most. This breaks trust and relationship and because they have been let into the deepest places of our heart what they do stings the most. God promises in the verse above that vengeance is His and when God promises something He will come through. The Bible says in Proverbs 15:1 that a quiet answer turns away wrath and so as we take a leap of faith, let God avenge us, and don't repay evil for evil, God has the opportunity to come through for us and fight for us. He is on your side and will work all things together for your good. God is in your storm!...

Prayer:

Daddy, please will you avenge me and help me to trust you to fight for me. Give me strength to give up my pride, answer quietly and let you be God. Thank you that vengeance is Yours and You know exactly what You are doing. Amen

Day Six

Read:

"I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

Apply:

This world can be very overwhelming at times. The trials and storms we go through are often more than we can bare, more than we can cope with, and more than we can fix. I don't know about you, but sometimes when I'm too weak to go on I just need someone to fight for me, to make it alright and hold me tight. If you listened to the song I sent earlier you will have heard that it says that God is on our side. I remember listening to this for the first time when I was feeling really bashed and broken. The first verse goes, "In the frontlines, You fight for me, Your kindness is my shield. When the armies rise, and I am scared, my heart you will defend." Hearing those words in the midst of my broken time seemed to release the pain and ocean within my heart. In the battle I was facing, God was there, His kindness was my

shield, not my own strength, and in the face of my ever rising pain and afflictors He was my defender. God is on your side, He goes before you, He stands behind, He tells your fears to run, always and forever, you are loved, He is on your side.

Promise:

The Bible says that God goes before us to prepare the way. That means that He already knows exactly what is going to happen and has already planned to provide for you. He also promised us in the verse above that we would have trouble in this world, which means that He already knew about it. He didn't leave it there though and promised that in the face of trouble He has overcome. If you have a chance, read the rest of John 16. It is full of promises of God's presence and help through our time of trial.

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, please hold me in this time, save me and know my heart and what it needs. Thank you that I am never alone but you are with me in the storm and have overcome the world! In Jesus Name, Amen

Day Seven

Read:

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep." (John 10:10-11)

Apply:

In the space of trial and tragedy our focus is shifted off what it would usually be on. We see the problems and storms around us and are not as focused on the other important things in life. As Christians we have great destiny in Christ and each one of us is made with a purpose, impact on the world that is prepared for us to walk in (Ephesians 2:10). The Devil would like nothing more than to snatch our impact away from us and hinder the Kingdom by disabling God's children. As it says above, he comes to steal, to kill, and to destroy and one of the ways he can do this is by getting us to stay in our broken place. As people consumed with our brokenness and unable to see past the fog, we are not able to see as clearly the things God has for us and the things He's prepared for us to do.

Promise:

We read yesterday that God has promised that He has overcome the world, that means that we will be okay. We need to decide though, to fight for our destiny and legacy, and so when trials come we cannot sit down and wallow in it, but rather must arm ourselves and fight to move on past the storm having learned more about who we are in Christ and the God that is on our side (See yesterday's devotion). If the devil is after your legacy, using your trials to get you down and make you feel low, then arm yourself (Read Ephesians 6:10-20), and let Jesus in to fight for you and remind you of what's true!

Prayer:

Dear Lord, please help me to fight for my legacy and the impact You have prepared for me to have on this world. Thank You that You fight for me and are on my side. Thank You that You have more for me than my place of trial and with You I can move on into the promises You have for me. In Jesus Name, Amen