



A Gift For

From

STRENGTH *for the* SOUL *from* OUR DAILY BREAD



Grief



Discovery House Publishers

Books, music, and videos that feed the soul with the Word of God

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Introduction

Since April 1956, millions of readers around the world have found daily inspiration, help, comfort, and biblical truth from the pages of *Our Daily Bread*. Now you can find comfort from one of the most beloved devotionals on the subject of grief, compiled into one convenient volume.

We hope that this book will be of help to you and those you know in times of grief, sorrow, and loss. May it and the Word of God bring strength to your soul.

Other books in the Strength for the Soul
from *Our Daily Bread* series

Comfort

Hope

Peace

Prayer

Trust

Valley of the Shadow

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.

*He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,
he restores my soul.*

*He guides me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.*

*Even though I walk
through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.*

—PSALM 23:1-4

Darkness upon darkness. Sorrow upon sorrow. Pain upon pain. Anguish upon anguish. That's death.

Death is a fearful visitor, snatching away people who are precious to us and leaving us behind to mourn, grieve, and wonder. It blocks the light that before had shined so freely and easily on our lives.

Whether we're facing the prospect of dying, or dealing with the death of a loved one, death can be devastating. It can sap our energy, change our plans, overwhelm our soul, alter our outlook, test our faith, steal our joy, and challenge our assumptions about life's purposes.

When we walk through the deep valley, we feel swallowed up by the shadow and come face-to-face with fear. The frantic emptiness of our loss threatens the comfort that previously originated from our trust in God, and so we grow afraid. Afraid of our future. Afraid to enjoy life again.

Yet in that valley, under that shadow, we can say to the Lord, "I will fear no evil; for you are with me" (Psalm 23:4). His loving arms never let us go. He is always with us.

Slowly at first, but most assuredly, He provides comfort and release from the darkness. He gives light. He leads us out. Eventually, we escape the valley of the shadow. —DAVE BRANON

Better Than Words

*“Behold, my eye has seen all this,
My ear has heard and understood it.
What you know, I also know;
I am not inferior to you.
But I would speak to the Almighty,
And I desire to reason with God.
But you forgers of lies,
You are all worthless physicians.
Oh, that you would be silent,
And it would be your wisdom!*

—JOB 13:1-5 (NKJV)

When we are with people who are grieving or suffering, we may feel a need to fill the awkwardness of the occasion with words. Not to say something, we fear, is to let them down. We may even find ourselves avoiding the bereaved because we're afraid we won't know what to say.

Author Joe Bayly, who lost three sons through death, described two examples of comfort he received during his deepest grief:

Someone came and talked to me of God's dealings, of why it happened, of hope beyond the grave. He talked constantly [and] said things I knew were true. I was unmoved, except to wish he'd go away. He finally did.

Another came and sat beside me. He didn't talk. He didn't ask leading questions. He just sat beside me for an hour and more, listened when I said something, answered briefly, prayed simply, [and] left. I was moved. I was comforted. I hated to see him go.

Job experienced similar emotions. In his grief, he too had craved silent support from his friends. He cried out, "Oh, that you would be silent, and it would be your wisdom!" (13:5). Instead, he was worn down by their many words.

The next time you're with people who are grieving, allow your presence to be their comfort. —JOANIE YODER

Handling a Great Sorrow

The king was shaken. He went up to the room over the gateway and wept. As he went, he said: “O my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you—O Absalom, my son, my son!” . . .

Then Joab went into the house to the king and said, “Today you have humiliated all your men, who have just saved your life and the lives of your sons and daughters and the lives of your wives and concubines. You love those who hate you and hate those who love you. You have made it clear today that the commanders and their men mean nothing to you. I see that you would be pleased if Absalom were alive today and all of us were dead. Now go out and encourage your men. I swear by the LORD that if you don’t go out, not a man will be left with you by nightfall. This will be worse for you than all the calamities that have come upon you from your youth till now.”

So the king got up and took his seat in the gateway. When the men were told, “The king is sitting in the gateway,” they all came before him.

—2 SAMUEL 18:33; 19:5–8
