

PEACE
IN EVERY
STORM



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BILL & BENI
JOHNSON

*Declarations & Meditations
for Difficult Times*

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PEACE IN EVERY STORM

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When a storm is raging around you, it can be easy to feel overwhelmed. As you read these pages, our prayer is that you would find an anchor of God's goodness, His faithfulness, and His protection no matter what your circumstances. God is with you. He is for you. He is not intimidated by the size of the waves that surround you or the howling winds that threaten to shake you.

Psalms says that His "wrap-around presence is our defense" (84:9 TPT). And Jesus promised that His Spirit would bring us comfort and truth. We have been given His peace—a peace that surpasses our ability to understand—to safeguard our hearts and minds (see Philippians 4:7).

As you read these entries and meditate on the Scriptures, let His voice become the loudest thing in the room. Hide yourself in His strength. You can be confident that you've been given the grace for victory in everything you are facing. God is fighting your battles. You are His beloved child, and He is eternally worthy of your trust.

Bill & Beni Johnson



THE FINAL SAY

"Everything I've taught you is so that the peace which is in me will be in you and will give you great confidence as you rest in me. For in this unbelieving world you will experience trouble and sorrows, but you must be courageous, for I have conquered the world!"

JOHN 16:33 TPT

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*The last chapter has been written,
and we win!*

There is no permanent victory for the devil. Ever. Imagine Satan's response, thinking that he'd won a final victory when the Messiah was crucified only to realize the trouble he was in three days later. There are a couple of things that are guaranteed to you. First, every situation where you have ever experienced the devourer—the one who kills, steals, and destroys—will be worked for your benefit (see Romans 8:28). Did God design your suffering? No. It wasn't His idea, but He's so big that He can win with any hand. He will take any

situation that comes into our lives with affliction and turn it around for our blessing.

Here's the second thing: our God is the God of vengeance (see Psalm 94:1). There's no such thing as the devil having the final say in anything. That beast will be silenced and there will be absolute vindication for every moment of infirmity, affliction, torment, pain, and temptation you've ever experienced.

God draws near in judgment (see Malachi 3:5) not to condemn us, but to judge the powers of hell. There will be vindication. Even if you don't see it all in this world, there's just a thin veil that separates this world from eternity. You will have the pleasure of seeing the vindication of God for every single bit of loss you've ever experienced.

Finally, Romans 8:18 (NASB) says, "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us." It is not worthy of comparison. Whatever difficulty you have experienced or are currently experiencing, it cannot be compared to the glory that will be revealed in you, on you, and through you. Like Bob Mumford said, "I read the last chapter, and we win."

When the perishable has been clothed with
the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality,
then the saying that is written will come true:
"Death has been swallowed up in victory."

1 CORINTHIANS 15:54 NIV

Have you seen God redeem situations in your life in the past? List them out, remembering His faithfulness.

If you were to write a final chapter of your life—filled with God's vindication—what would it look like?

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REDUCED TO STRENGTH

Then the LORD said to Gideon, "There are too many people with you for Me to hand over Midian to them, otherwise Israel will boast [about themselves] against Me, saying, 'My own power has rescued me.'"

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God will reduce me to my place of strength.

Gideon had an assignment from the Lord. He was to leave his hiding place and lead Israel's army into battle with the Midianites. God brought an army of men to him, but almost immediately He began to send people back home. The strength of Gideon would not come from the number of his troops. God often prunes us back to a place of strength and health found in our dependence on Him. It's not pleasant, but our comfort is not His main concern.

Israel had 32,000 soldiers. With those numbers, they could have taken credit for the victory God had for them.

God was going to reduce the army to a mere 300 men. First, He sent home the 22,000 men who were fearful. Fear makes people unstable and more likely to take glory for themselves. God is jealous for His glory, and fear turns the attention away from the greatness of God and back onto our own ability.

With 10,000 people left, God had one more test; He was only going to select the men who drank water in a specific way. It would be so nice if every time God gave us a test we knew what the goal was. If the king who only hit the ground with the arrows three times had known God's goal in testing him, he probably would've hit the ground a million times (see 2 Kings 13:18).

But God doesn't do that. He puts us in the middle of a test, and He tests for something that we can't fake—character. When the 10,000 went to the water, 9,700 drank directly from the river and 300 scooped the water into their mouths, staying alert. God chose the latter.

The Lord could've won that battle on His own without any army, so He wasn't demonstrating that He could be victorious with only a few men. He was showing that He would bring victory, no matter how many in number, with those who weren't fearful and who were alert. Now Gideon's army was ready. God had reduced them to their place of strength.

He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

2 CORINTHIANS 12:9-10 NIV

**Where have you experienced
the reduction of God? How has
that caused you to depend on
His strength even more?**

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PEACE IS A PERSON

"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you;
not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your
heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

JOHN 14:27 NKJV

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*God's peace prevails over every situation
in my life because the Person of Peace
lives within me.*

If we look around us at the circumstances—political, economic, social—the enemy has succeeded in raising up voices that best represent hopelessness. It doesn't take much. We can simply turn on the news to immediately hear all that is wrong with the world. It is hard to find a voice of hope and easy to find hopelessness. Some give it a different name, calling it discernment, realism, or intelligence. But, whatever name it's given, hopelessness is not a part of God's kingdom. His intention for this world is to fill it with His

presence. The angels declared, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" (Luke 2:14) That is the will of God.

Peace is the prevailing substance of the atmosphere of heaven, and God has given us His *shalom*—everything coming into alignment with Him—as our inheritance. Peace is not the absence of something. It's not the absence of war, fear, or noise. True peace is the presence of Someone. It's the Prince of Peace who crushes the powers of darkness under our feet when we become permeated with Him. It is Peace Himself who offers Himself as the Comforter so we might never need to be afraid. It is for peace that God gave us His Son so we might taste of eternity. How could we know that and choose to live without hope?

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Though we can look at the circumstances of the world and feel overwhelmed, we are not here to announce the enemy's victory; we are here to announce his defeat. The same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead dwells in us. Hopelessness has been defeated. His peace—that which touches us spirit, soul, and body—tames every opposition. God's peace prevails over every situation in our lives because the Person of Peace lives within us.

Now, may the Lord himself, the Lord of peace, pour into you his peace in every circumstance and in every possible way.

The Lord's tangible presence be with you all.

1 THESSALONIANS 3:16 TPT

Where do you see the world's greatest need for the Person of Peace to invade?
List some of the breakthrough that would result from heaven invading these situations.

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LOVE VS FEAR

"Do not fear, for I am with you;
Do not be afraid, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you, I will also help you,
I will also uphold you with My righteous right hand."

ISAIAH 41:10 NASB

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*What I fear will influence what I worship, and
what I worship will be proven by what I trust.*

"Do not fear" is the commandment repeated more often than any other in Scripture. By repeating the commandment so frequently, the Lord reveals the primary tactic the enemy uses to disengage us from our life source. The devil can't cut us off from God; he's not that powerful. But he can tempt us out of alignment with our Creator. Like a dislocated arm that no longer has full mobility, we can become disjointed, not functioning in our intended authority. And fear is what does that.

Fear is an agreement with the enemy. Any time we believe a lie, we empower the liar. We don't want to become

devil-focused, but as Paul writes to the Corinthians, we can't be "ignorant of his schemes" (2 Corinthians 2:11). When the Lord says, "Do not fear," He is never trying to shame or expose us. Rather, He's revealing to us that the grace to be victorious over fear is within our reach. He is inviting us into a partnership. When He gives commands, He enables us to do what we previously couldn't do. That is the empowering nature of grace.

There is grace to deal with whatever comes against us. Experiencing fear is not a sin, but partnering with it—embracing fear as though it were truth—is a violation of God's design. This doesn't mean we ignore the reality of our circumstances. It means that, in the midst of our circumstances, we recognize there is a higher reality. Jesus has taken care of every problem we could ever face. We now walk in His victory, aligning our minds with His. What we fear will influence what we worship, and what we worship will be proven by what we trust.

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything.

Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7 NLT

How has fear tried to disconnect you from God's goodness, power, and vision for your life? Take some time to remind yourself that God is bigger than any fearful smokescreen the enemy could throw up before your destiny. You have a powerful destiny and calling on your life.

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PRAYERS OF AUTHORITY

The God of peace will soon
crush Satan under your feet.

ROMANS 16:20 NIV

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through which I can sleep.

Jesus and the disciples got into a boat to cross the Sea of Galilee. As they were crossing, they ran into a storm so strong that the disciples knew they'd most likely die. They were terrified. They woke up Jesus, the Son of God, and pleaded with Him to do something to save them. They cried out just like many of us pray when we're in the middle of a crisis: "Don't you care if we drown?" (Mark 4:38) But Jesus rebuked them for their lack of faith.

What they didn't realize was that if Jesus was sleeping in their boat, they had divine purpose no matter the strength of the storm. Jesus was asleep because He lives from the

kingdom of heaven toward earth. And in His kingdom, there is no turmoil. When the disciples cried out to Him, He woke up and commanded the wind and waves to stop. He rebuked the wind and declared peace over the waves. The chaos stopped immediately.

Many people could have stood at the bow of the boat, rebuking the storm to no avail because they were ministering out of fear. But Jesus was able to release peace because He lived *in* peace. Peace is a military move that overwhelms and subdues the demonic. The *shalom* of heaven subdues all chaos.

Jesus slept during the storm because He was a citizen of heaven in the same way that we are. Sometimes we imagine that, in prayer, we are trying to get God to intervene. In fact, God is looking for people to use the authority they've been given. Instead of reaching out to God, trying to get Him to invade our circumstances, we are to boldly pray from the promises of God. When we can see our circumstance from heaven's perspective, we have the authority and anointing to address the problem. We can only release peace over a storm through which we can sleep.

He told them, "It was because of your lack of faith. I promise you, if you have faith inside of you no bigger than the size of a small mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move away from here and go over there,' and you will see it move! There is nothing you couldn't do!"

MATTHEW 17:20 TPT

What storms in your life are trying to distract you from the divine purpose of God on your life? How can you reconnect with the peace of heaven in order to pray with authority?

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DENYING INFLUENCE

"I am Yahweh, your mighty God!
I grip your right hand and won't let you go!
I whisper to you:
'Don't be afraid; I am here to help you!'"

ISAIAH 41:13 TPT

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*Faith doesn't deny a problem exists,
it denies it a place of influence.*

Sometimes, those of us who work hard to develop a culture of faith can unintentionally begin to live in denial. We can pretend that certain problems or challenges don't exist. But that's not a healthy way to live. It doesn't develop our capacity to address the things that are going on in and around us.

If we examine a problem deeply and honestly, we can gain understanding about it and what needs to change. But we don't stop there. We then listen to what God is saying. We look over the words God has spoken to us in the recent

months to find the tools or insight He has given us in order to help us address the current problem.

God doesn't put us in situations where we are ill-equipped. We may feel like we are, but if we stop being intimidated by the size of a problem and begin to examine our history with God, we will generally see that God has been empowering us for whatever situation in which we find ourselves.

Fear causes us to forget the tools that God has put in our possession. When we can step out of fear and remember who God is, we refuse to allow the problem to influence our thinking, emotions, and value systems. If we can succeed there, we will begin to discover the tools God has already put in our lives—the revelations, the promises, and the instructions that will take us into the seasons of breakthrough we long for.

We never have to be afraid because He has seen the end from the beginning (see Isaiah 46:10). He has every solution. Whatever problem we are facing doesn't catch God off guard. He knows ahead of time the very things that are coming our way, and He prepares us to face them victoriously. He created us to be an overcoming community of believers; it's our nature in God. Trusting Him is what defines us. Faith doesn't deny a problem exists; it denies it a place of influence.

Trust in and rely confidently on the LORD
with all your heart
And do not rely on your own insight or understanding.
In all your ways know and acknowledge
and recognize Him,
And He will make your paths straight and smooth
[removing obstacles that block your way].

PROVERBS 3:5-6 AMP

**What problem are you facing that you
need God's wisdom to navigate? Think
back through your last year with Him.**

**What things has He been teaching and
equipping you with that you can use to
address this current issue?**

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FAITH IN CRISIS

The fundamental fact of existence is that this trust in God, this faith, is the firm foundation under everything that makes life worth living. It's our handle on what we can't see.

The act of faith is what distinguished our ancestors, set them above the crowd. By faith, we see the world

called into existence by God's word, what we see

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created by what we don't see.

HEBREWS 11:1-3 MSG

My faith will take me through the crisis.

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews is sometimes referred to as the faith hall of fame. Many of the great men and women of Scripture, individuals who had accomplished much for God through their faith, are named in this chapter. Abraham, Moses, and Sarah are listed. The mouths of lions and other incredible exploits are mentioned. It's not a complete list, but it highlights the fact that faith is a central theme in Scripture and foundational to our relationship with the Lord. It reveals a God who is moved by our faith.

This chapter in the Bible is a declaration that will last through the ages to honor all of those who have lived by faith. But, after listing names and various exploits for God, the writer of Hebrews shifts the tone to talk about all the problems that faith helped people to walk through. At the end of the chapter, it says, "There were others who were tortured, refusing to be released so that they might gain an even better resurrection" (Hebrews 11:35 NIV).

The faith that enables you to lay hands on someone and see cancer dissolve is the same faith that helps you to stay strong in a crisis. This is huge because often when we're in the midst of a crisis, we tend to examine our faith and find it lacking. More often than not, we think, *I must not have as much faith as so-and-so had.*

In the midst of some of the most astounding examples of faith in the entire Bible, the author shows us people who didn't have immediate answers to their problems. These were people who had to live, like us, between the promise that God had given and the problem that God had not yet answered. Living in the tension between the promise and the miracle, they were kept in a place of humility and dependence on God. And their faith will be celebrated for all of eternity in God's Word. Their faith took them through the crisis.

I have fought an excellent fight.
I have finished my full course with all my might
and I've kept my heart full of faith.

2 TIMOTHY 4:7 TPT

Sometimes when we are in the middle of the storm, it's challenging to see our faith-filled decisions the way God does. Spend some time with Him and ask Him what this season of your life looks like through His eyes.
What is He counting as faith that you may not consider great faith?

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