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## Daily Devotional - Friday, July 27, 2018 - When a Child Dies

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JULY 27TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Friday, July 27, 2018 - When a Child Dies

### 2 Samuel 12:16-23

Understandably, people who lose a child want assurance that their little one is safe in the arms of God. The Bible is not explicit about what happens to those who are too young to make a proclamation of faith. However, the Lord's mercy upon them becomes clear as we study His Word.

Over the years, many people have created unbiblical explanations for what happens to children who die. There are those who argue that salvation is available to some but not to others, which is scripturally untrue (John 3:16; 2 Peter 3:9). Also unsupportable is the more complicated theory that God uses His foreknowledge to determine whether a child who dies will enter heaven or hell. The idea is that He rescues those who He knows would have grown up and been saved, but He rejects the rest. What terrible uncertainty that would mean for family members left behind.

God doesn't keep people guessing. What His Word teaches is that during the early years of life, a child does not know how to choose good from evil (Deut. 1:39; Isa. 7:16) and therefore isn't held responsible for his moral conduct. Accordingly, when a little one departs from life, the Lord is waiting with open arms. This theology makes biblical sense, given the Father's

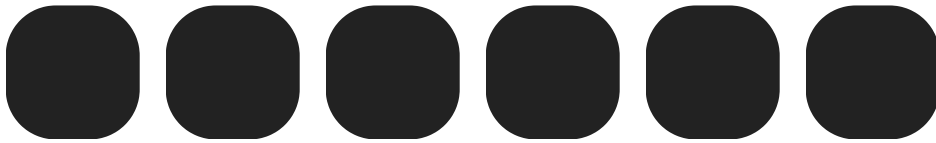
character, desires, and plan.

Until a child is mature enough to decide about whether to serve the Lord, he or she is safe from divine judgment. Our just and loving God does not punish children for being too young to grasp their need of a Savior. Believers join their departed little ones in heaven (2 Samuel 12:23).

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## Daily Devotional - Thursday, Friday, July 26, 2018 - An Anchor Full of Promises

JULY 26TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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## Psalm 57:1-3

Yesterday we looked at the anchor as a symbol of God's unchanging Word. We know that sailors use this device to keep a vessel from drifting and also to protect it during storms. So how does the Bible help us in stormy times?

The Word of God ...

**Comforts us.** It tells us that our Father will give us peace and rest when we go through trouble and carry heavy burdens. Many of the psalms were written out of David's own experiences of receiving comfort and strength from God during storms in his life, and they are a great place to start.

**Reminds us that God is omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent.** Not only does the Lord know exactly where we are in our storm and what we're going through, but He's also with us in the middle of it. In fact, He has the ability to calm the storm, though He most often uses His power to bring us safely through it.

**Guides us.** Psalm 119:105 says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." The psalmist assures us that the Bible shines a light as we walk, enabling us to safely move forward, step-by-step, in the right direction.

We must remember it's not enough for a boat to simply *have* an anchor; in order to do any good, the anchor must be *utilized*. Similarly, it's not enough to own a Bible and know, in theory, that it is full of promises. God's Word can be effective in our life only if we read, meditate, believe, apply, and obey it. Then the anchor works every single time. We may be shaken—even a little beaten up at times—but we will ride out the storm and sail on!

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## Daily Devotional - Wednesday, July 25, 2018 - Our Anchor in Stormy Times

JULY 25TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Wednesday, July 25, 2018 - Our Anchor in Stormy Times

### Hebrews 6:17-20

One thing common to everyone is the experience of going through storms. Whether these are literal weather events, personal trauma, or the turmoil caused by war and social unrest, we all face circumstances over which we have little control. Some storms are over quickly, whereas others seem unending. Some tempests cause little damage, but others leave great devastation in their wake.

- *Where do these storms come from?* At times we bring them into our own life through choices we make, but other times they're caused by someone else's actions. It may even be that the devil has stirred up some adversity to distract or hinder us. And there are occasions when God's work in our life requires a storm to fulfill a special purpose.

- *Why does the Lord allow storms in our life?* Difficulties tend to turn our focus toward God. We either start questioning Him or go to Him for help and strength. He may want our attention because there's a sin we need to deal with. Or perhaps He wants us to let go of something we

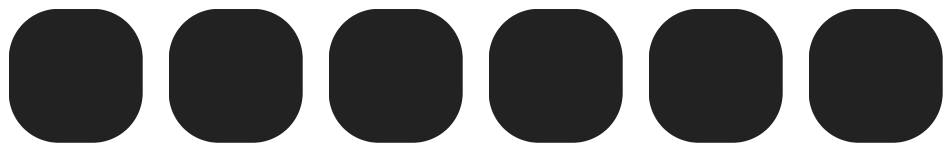
need to surrender to Him. It could be that He wants to conform us to His image (Rom. 8:29) or equip us to serve Him.

- *How do we respond to storms?* When we struggle against God because we don't like the hardship we're going through, that's an indication we don't trust Him. Instead of trusting that He is working good in our life, we may wrongly believe He's trying to hurt us. At such times knowing Scripture is crucial for the believer. His Word is the immovable anchor in our storm. We can trust the Bible because, like God, it never changes!

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## Daily Devotional - Tuesday, July 24, 2018 - He's Got the Whole World in His Hands

JULY 24TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Daniel 2:20-22

How many of us have listened to the global or national news and wondered, *What in the world is going on?* Without a firm foundation of biblical truth, we can easily be overcome with fear and despair. Despite the upheaval in political and financial realms, Christians can find peace in the knowledge that our God is sovereign over every nation and ruler on earth.

Though the future of a nation appears to be in the hands of its rulers and lawmakers, an omnipotent hand is orchestrating a good and glorious plan: The Lord is the one who “removes kings and establishes kings” (Dan. 2:21). Ultimately, every governmental leader is put into office, not by voters, political campaigns, or personal abilities, but by the hand of God.

Nothing that the Lord does is carried out in isolation. He’s working all things according to His divine plan. We tend to think that a ruler has to be righteous for God to use Him, but Proverbs 21:1 tells us the Lord can direct the heart of any national leader wherever He wishes. In fact, He describes two pagan kings—Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus—as “My servant” (Jer. 25:9) and “My shepherd” (Isa. 44:28). Unbeknownst to them, God guided their paths to fulfill His purposes for Israel.

When the news threatens to dislodge your peace or cause despair, remember who holds the nations and rulers in His hand. The Lord’s plans for this world are moving along according to His divine purposes, and no unrighteous ruler can thwart Him. Just keep singing, “He’s got the whole world in His hands.”

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## Daily Devotional - Monday, July 23, 2018 - Wisdom for Life

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JULY 23RD 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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### Proverbs 4:10-27

Sometimes life seems like a confusing maze of options, and we don't know which path to choose. What we need is God's wisdom to guide us. Our first source for insight is His Word, but that is not the end. With scriptural principles as our foundation, God provides other opportunities that can help us grow in wisdom.

**Discernment.** Instead of blindly accepting cultural ideas, we should compare what we hear and see around us with what God has said in His Word. Then we'll recognize evil and deception and have the wisdom to avoid that path.

**Observation.** By noticing actions of godly and ungodly people, we gain wisdom. As we observe their mistakes and successes, as well as our own past, we learn the blessings of obedience and the consequences of wrongdoing.

**Godly counsel.** The Lord will sometimes use other people to give direction for our life (Prov. 12:15). Whether they speak encouragement or correction, we can trust their advice when it lines up with Scripture and is confirmed by the leading of the Holy Spirit.

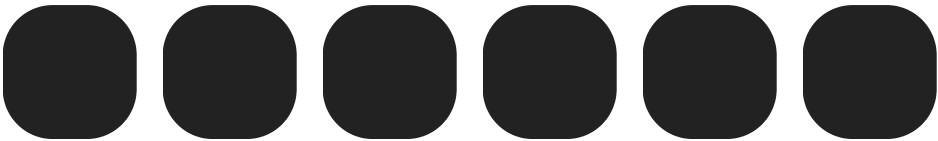
**Wise Associates.** There’s great benefit in spending time with those who know the Lord and routinely respond in a godly manner (Prov. 13:20). Before developing close relationships, we should learn what people value. As we recognize which individuals reflect wisdom in thought and deed, we can cultivate a relationship with them and emulate their discerning ways.

God wants us to pay attention to what we see and hear—and to be deliberate in our choice of companions. Wisdom isn’t just having the right information; it’s an ability to perceive between right and wrong, good and best.

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