

Devotional: God Strengthens Us to Endure Hardship

Scripture: “Women received their dead raised to life again...” – Hebrews 11:35a

By Major Paula Wild

Have you ever faced a situation so painful, so uncertain, that you couldn't see a way through? A time when you prayed for a miracle, but instead, life took you through a valley you never wanted to walk?

As I read Hebrews 11:35 — “Women received their dead raised to life again...” — I think of two powerful moments in Scripture: the widow of Zarephath and the Shunammite woman. Each experienced deep loss. Each cried out in grief. And each saw God move in a miraculous way — restoring life to their sons through the prophets Elijah and Elisha.

But not every story ends that way.

Several months ago, my mother became very ill. She was admitted to the ICU, and we spent weeks filled with uncertainty. There were good days and bad days, moments where we had hope and others when we feared the worst. We prayed, we hoped, we asked God for healing — for one of those miracle moments like in the Bible.

But ultimately, she succumbed to her illness and passed away.

It was very hard. My heart felt unbearably heavy. I was overwhelmed by grief. And I'll be honest...I felt like God had abandoned me. I couldn't understand why He didn't intervene. I didn't feel His presence at all. I began to question my faith and my understanding of God's presence; Did I not pray hard enough? Did I not believe enough? Why didn't God hear my prayers? Have I not been faithful to Him? Was my walk with the Lord not good enough? The questions and sadness of the situation were overwhelming.

And yet, over time — quietly, patiently — God began to remind me that even in the valley, He was still there. That His strength doesn't only show up in the miracle, but also in the endurance. In the waiting. In the weeping. In the learning to breathe again.

Elijah and Elisha were prophets used by God to perform incredible miracles. But they also faced hardship, doubt, and fear. Elijah even cried out to die under a tree in his lowest moment. Yet God met him there — not with fire, but with a whisper. That whisper of presence — of strength — is sometimes the greatest miracle of all.

Hebrews 11 is full of people who endured hardship. Some saw miracles. Others saw suffering. But all of them were commended for their faith — the kind of faith that trusts God not only for resurrection, but for the strength to endure when resurrection doesn't come.

If you're in a place today where you're waiting, hurting, grieving — please know you are not alone. God has not abandoned you. He is with you in the ICU, at the graveside, in the silent nights when your heart aches. He will strengthen you — even if it takes time to feel it, even if your prayer isn't answered the way you hoped.

He is faithful. And He is near.

Reflection:

- What hardship have you endured that felt overwhelming?
- Can you see moments when God carried you, even when you didn't feel Him?
- How might your faith be strengthened in the waiting?

Prayer:

Lord, thank You that You are close to the brokenhearted. Even when we don't see the miracle, You are still our strength. Help us endure. Help us believe that You have not left us. And remind us, even in our sorrow, that You are the God who restores and revives. Amen.