

*Helping
Bereaved
Parents*

by George G. Galdiano

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Ezri Galdiano's Memorial Website: ezri-galdiano.memory-of.com

Sources

We live to honor the memories of our loved ones. They deserve no less from us. To make our lives count is our penance for living. —Andrea Warren¹



After the tragic, accidental death of Ezri, our 10.5-month-old daughter, on 16 November 2005, I attended grief counseling, and talked to ministers, therapists, and families who suffered tragic losses. I attended grief coping and counseling seminars. I've read dozens of books and articles on grief, participated in internet grief forums, attended a 20-hour Lifeline Chaplaincy seminar about communicating and dealing with people in crisis, attended a GriefShare support group, completed Stephen Ministry (helping people in crisis) training at a local church, and attended grief seminars by Dr. Allen Wolfelt. Many of the suggestions in this document are from these sources as well as my own experiences.

While I have done my best to provide useful information, each person grieves differently, and these suggestions are not a substitute for professional training, counseling, or advice.

Five Stages of Grief

"Stages" gives the wrong impression. Bereaved people do not methodically experience a list of emotions. They can experience any one or all of them on any day and experience emotions not on the list. It is more of a grief web than a grief chain.

1. Denial
2. Anger
3. Bargaining
4. Depression
5. Acceptance

They say the bereaved experience stages...But grief is not clear cut for me. It swoops and swirls and cuts me off and knocks me down, running helter-skelter from stage to stage and back again.... I understand so little of this process of grief, yet this I know for sure: The theory about stages is wrong... —Andrea Warren

Acceptance. I finally reach it.

But something is wrong.

Grief is a circular staircase.

I have lost you. —Linda Pastan

How Long Does Grief Last?

A lifetime! Even though people grieve immediately after the death of a loved one, they are usually in shock. The hardest part of the grieving process usually occurs 6–24 months after the death. Meals, cards, and strong support have usually stopped by this time. While bereaved parents never stop grieving, most have usually developed the skills necessary to cope with their grief after two to four years.

Family gatherings, holidays, anniversaries, birthdays, and special days are especially difficult as are “firsts,” like the first Christmas with out the deceased. For me, the second round of holidays between November and January were especially difficult because I was still in shock during the holidays immediately following Ezri’s death in mid-November. Her birthday being in late December added to the intensity and complexity of my grief.

We don’t recover from grief. If we are lucky and if we are strong, we simply learn to live with it.
—Andrea Warren

Physical Symptoms of Grief

1. Anxiety
2. Breathlessness
3. Chest pain, tachycardia (racing heart), or heart palpitations
4. Chills and sweating
5. Compulsions, obsessions, or phobias
6. Crying unexpectedly or mood swings
7. Cotton mouth or constant swallowing
8. Dizziness
9. Difficulty breathing
10. Disorientation
11. Exhaustion, fatigue, muscle aches
12. Fear
13. Feelings of suffocation
14. Feelings of carrying a weight on the back
15. Forgetfulness, inattentiveness, or lack of concentration
16. Hair loss
17. Headaches
18. Imagining fleeting glimpses or sounds of the deceased
19. Loss of appetite or over-eating
20. Listlessness
21. Loss of libido (especially after the loss of a child)
22. Nightmares
23. Pain or tightness in upper body, especially the stomach, chest, shoulders, arms, and neck
24. Personality extremes (an orderly person might clean more, for example)
25. Sensitivity to light or noise
26. Shaking or tremors
27. Sleeplessness or oversleeping
28. Stomach problems, including nausea or an upset stomach
29. Symbiotic pain (imagined pain in areas where their loved one was injured)
30. Tension

Warning Signs of Depression

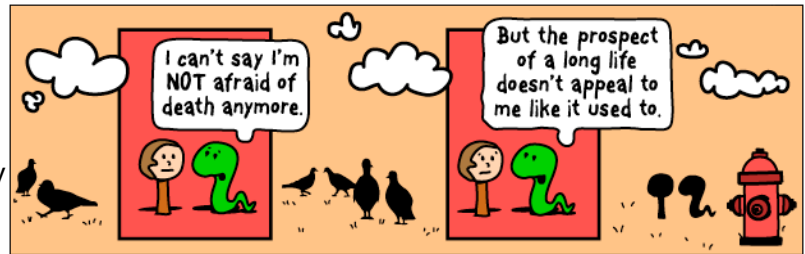
While grief is normal and healthy, experts recommend a person seek counseling if these symptoms persist after the initial grieving period:

1. Alcohol or drug abuse
2. Disturbed sleep patterns
3. Drastic weight gain or loss
4. No interest in previously enjoyable activities
5. Pain or constriction in the chest
6. Persistent suicidal thoughts
7. Poor personal hygiene

Warning Signs of Suicide

...I yearn for own death because maybe, maybe, oh please maybe, I would be reunited with my little boy.... —Andrea Warren

1. Feelings of anger or rage
2. Feeling hopeless or worthless
3. Feeling anxious or agitated
4. Insomnia or sleeping excessively
5. Dramatic mood changes
6. Seeing no reason for living
7. No sense of purpose in life
8. Giving verbal hints like, "You'd be better off without me."
9. Talking or writing about death, dying, or suicide
10. Talking about being worthless
11. Threatening to hurt or kill oneself
12. Withdrawing from family and friends
13. Significant changes to eating, sleeping, or appearance
14. Significant changes in appearance
15. Taking life-threatening risks
16. Increased alcohol or drug use
17. Looking for ways to kill oneself
18. Putting affairs in order by updating a will, giving away possessions, etc.
19. Visiting or calling people to say goodbye
20. Suddenly becomes cheerful after a period of depression²



Like Andrea Warren, many parents who have experienced the death of a child may wish to die, but in my **non-professional opinion** that doesn't necessarily mean they are suicidal. However, if someone starts planning to end their life, displays suicide warning signs, or if you have any doubts whatsoever, seek professional help immediately.

"Stop a Suicide Today!" (www.stopasuicide.org) has an excellent risk assessment questionnaire on their website at www.stopasuicide.org/signs.aspx. They also have a brochure in PDF format at www.stopasuicide.org/downloads/Sites/Docs/StopASuicide_SuicideRiskQuestionnaire.pdf.

The **United States National Suicide or Crises Hotline** at **1-800-SUICIDE** or **1-800-TALK** is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Funeral Arrangements

Making funeral arrangements is a physically and emotionally draining event for the bereaved. The funeral director asks dozens of questions they are unprepared to answer, and they have to make major decisions—including financial—during a time their thinking is addled by grief.

Since few families are prepared for the \$10,000–\$20,000 expenditure, many pay for it by using a high interest credit card. According to the National Funeral Director's Association, as of 2007 the average funeral costs \$6,500, which seems low from my experience. Cremation costs range around \$1,000–\$3,000.

If the bereaved do not have objective, clear-headed family members to help them, offer to go with them when they make funeral arrangements.

Here are just some of the questions the bereaved may be asked:

1. How will the deceased's body get to the funeral home (the hospital may take it or the funeral home may offer to do it.)
2. Do you want the deceased embalmed? (While there is no law requiring embalming, it is mandatory at many funeral homes.)
3. What clothes will the deceased wear?
4. Do you want a wake (viewing)?
5. When should the wake take place?
6. When and where will the memorial service take place?
7. Who will be conducting the service or give the eulogy?
8. What do you want the obituaries to say?
9. Which relatives preceded the deceased in death?
10. Which living relatives will be listed in the obituary?
11. In which newspapers and on what days do you want the obituary to appear? (In 2005, newspapers in major cities charged upwards of \$500 per obituary per day. The funeral home usually faxes the obituary to the newspapers.)
12. What do you want on the funeral program?
13. Do you want Bible verses on the program? If so, which verses?
14. Do you want music piped in?
15. What kind of music do you want played?

16. Will your church provide a chorus? If so, do you have special songs you want them to sing?
17. Will the deceased be cremated or buried?
18. Which casket do you want? (***Caskets can be a major expense. Funeral homes are required by law to allow consumers to purchase a casket from a 3rd party without charging a fee.***)
19. What kind of grave marker do you want?
20. What should the grave marker say?
21. Do you want your child buried in the children's area or in a separate plot?
22. Do you want to purchase a family plot?
23. What flower arrangement do you want at the wake and the funeral?
24. Where should flowers be delivered?
25. Do you want to suggest people make memorials to a charity or fund instead of purchasing flowers?
26. Do you want to pay the minister and song leader? If so, how much do you want to pay them? (In 2005, a \$100 honorarium for each was customary.)
27. Will there be a reception afterwards? Do you want that information in the funeral program?

Support Suggestions

Emotional

1. LISTEN, LISTEN, LISTEN (I highly recommend LifeLine Chaplaincy's workshop, which teaches people how to listen to people in crisis, www.lifelinechaplaincy.org.)
2. Respect and learn from the bereaved.
3. Tell stories about the deceased and mention his name often.
4. Attend the wake and funeral if possible.
5. It's okay if you cry too.
6. Hug and touch (let the bereaved initiate contact.)
7. Let the bereaved express grief in their own way, even if it is unusual to you.
8. Accept that how a person feels is natural and encourage him to express his emotions without judging.
9. Reassure the family you will never forget their loved one.
10. Find and offer to pay for grief counseling for the parents, spouse, and children (Grief-Works for Children is a good free resource for bereaved children in the Dallas area.)
11. Suggest grief support groups like The Compassionate Friends (www.CompassionateFriends.org) or GriefShare (www.GriefShare.org.) Find out things like dates, times, places, and cost for them.
12. The Compassionate Friends and GriefShare both have e-mails that may help guide the bereaved through their grief. GriefShare's "A Season of Grief" has a religious them and is sent once a day for a year. They are short enough for a bereaved parent to read without be overwhelmed and very thoughtful. These e-mails are good for both the bereaved and those who wish to understand what we go through.
13. Find and offer to pay for marriage counseling if the couple suffered a loss of a child.
14. Send e-mails, letters, or cards, especially on holidays or special days (like anniversaries.) Many bereaved people say how meaningful it is to get a call or letter every year on the anniversary of their loved one's death.
15. Sit with the family during worship if they attend church.
16. Pray with the family regularly during prayer time.
17. Encourage the bereaved to share their feeling and keep a journal.

18. Let the bereaved know they can call you anytime day or night, but only if you mean it. I made many 2 am calls to friends who said, "call anytime." Some of my night owl friends offered to be my "after midnight" contacts.
19. Pray and fast for the family if that is part of your religion.
20. Leave something meaningful at the gravesite (especially during holidays or special days.)
21. Visit the grave of the deceased with the family and sing hymns.
22. Invite them to share a meal with you during the holidays.
23. Don't suggest something could have been done to save the deceased.
24. Provide a good book on coping with grief.
25. Don't suggest alcohol or illegal drugs. Medication should only be taken under the supervision of a physician, and in my opinion, only as a last resort.
26. Avoid clichés and platitudes such as "Call if you need anything," "She's in a better place," "God has a plan," etc. . .
27. Read a good book to help you prepare to help the bereaved (*I Wasn't Ready to Say Goodbye* by Brooke Noel & Pamel D. Blaid, PH.D., Champion Press, is excellent and reaffirms many of the suggestions in this document.)
28. Invite the bereaved to do things, but don't be upset if they turn you down. They may not be up for it emotionally or the event may be too painful of a reminder of their loss.
29. Do something special with the parents and light a candle in honor of the deceased child on 15 Oct, **Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day**. See www.october15th.com for more information.
30. Suggest some time away at a place like Faith's Lodge, which provides a temporary respite for families who have suffered the loss of a child or have a seriously ill child. See the Internet Resources section for more information or visit www.faithslodge.com.
31. Sibling of a deceased child may be interested in Camp Erin, a network of bereavement camps for children aged 6-17. See the Internet Resources section for more information or visit http://www.moyerfoundation.org/programs/CampErin_About.aspx. Dallas area residents can visit <http://christian-works.org/camperin>.
32. If the deceased parent was an outdoor enthusiast, the surviving children may be interested in participating in an outdoor expedition by the Wally Dallenbach Jr. Foundation. This foundation's mission is to "bring children who have lost a parent, as well as the surviving parent, on an outdoors adventure that they would remember for a lifetime." See the Internet Resources section for more information, visit www.wallydallenbachjrfoundation.com, e-mail Dan Passe at dan@passeconsulting.com, or call 704-634-9022.

33. Use internet search engines to search for local groups in the bereaved's community that may offer camps, seminars, grief counseling, etc... Local churches, hospitals, and funeral homes are also good places to start.

Practical

34. "Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep," is a charitable organization that provides a free professional photographer that will photograph and create a photo slide show of the child and family set to meaningful music. They will also provide the family a free photo CD of the photographs so the family can have their own 5"x7" made. Visit their website at www.nilmdts.com to find a participating photographer in your area.
35. Offer to be with them when they go to the funeral home to make funeral arrangements, but don't offer an opinion unless asked. Funeral arrangements are emotionally exhausting and the bereaved are making major decisions during a time they are not thinking clearly. (See the Financial section on how you may be able to guide them.)
36. Offer to create a photo collage of the deceased for display at the funeral using family photos (also makes a wonderful gift.)
37. Offer to notify others about funeral arrangements.
38. Ask if the family wants you to record, video tape, or take photographs of the funeral; some funeral homes may provide audio or video recordings.
39. Offer to plan a reception with snacks after the funeral in a neutral place, like a church building (so the bereaved don't have to worry about hosting such an event in their home or cleaning-up.)
40. Offer to stay at the bereaved's home to take phone calls and messages.
41. If the family has young children, offer to stay their house and take care of the children. (The children should stay in their own home since they need a familiar and stable environment.)
42. Offer childcare so the parents can have time for themselves.
43. Offer to pickup out of town friends and relatives at the airport and offer them transportation and a place to stay.
44. Since some burglars scan obituaries for victims, have someone stay at the bereaved's home during the wake and funeral. (I imagine there's a special place in hell for thieves who rob families burying their child.)
45. Record who brings meals, etc... so the family has a list for thank you notes later.
46. Offer to help with thank you notes.
47. Give the bereaved family paper plates, cups, and plasticware so they don't have to wash dishes.

48. Take meals or give them restaurant gift cards.
49. Give food in disposable containers so they don't have to worry about returning dishes.
50. Clearly label meals with contents, your name and heating instructions, if necessary.
51. Pack and organize left over food.
52. Keep their house clean and the dishes washed.
53. Do their laundry.
54. Offer to clean the house on a regular basis for a while. (Check before moving the deceased personal items.)
55. Feed, water, and exercise pets.
56. Run errands for them (grocery store, cleaners, post office.)
57. Offer yard care.
58. Offer to help contact insurance companies, etc.
59. Offer your company (movies, dinner, a walk, ANYTHING as long as you are with them.)

Financial

60. Suggest the family ask the funeral director for a list of itemized expenses.
61. Offer to help with funeral expenses (the average US funeral costs \$10,000–\$25,000.)
62. If the family has financial concerns, provide or suggest a financial planner.
63. Inform the family they can purchase a casket from a 3rd party. By law, the funeral home must accept the casket without charging a fee.
64. Purchase phone cards for long distance calls.
65. Purchase restaurant gift cards.
66. If the deceased was a victim of a crime in Texas, the family may be able to recoup funeral and related expenses through the **Texas Crime Victim's Compensation Fund**
URL: www.oag.state.tx.us/victims/cvc.shtml
E-Mail: crimevictims@oag.state.tx.us
Phone: (800) 983-9933 or (512) 936-1200 (in Austin)

Other states may have a similar program.
67. Suggest the family contact the HR department at the deceased's work to check on life insurance benefits.

68. Suggest the family contact the Social Security Administration office to check on survivor benefits (www.ssa.gov.)
69. It is my understanding that if a child qualifies for a birth certificate, the family may count that child as a dependent for that tax year if she lived with the family for more than 6 months out of the year OR lived with the family the entire time she was alive (even if it was just one second.) Social Security Administration form SS-5, which is used to apply for a Social Security number, may be obtained by calling the Social Security Administration at 800-772-1213 or by going to www.ssa.gov/online/ss-5.pdf. According to the SSA, it usually takes two weeks to process the application.
70. If an accident occurred in a home or vehicle, suggest the family check with the appropriate insurance company about benefits (if another person was involved, also check with their insurance companies.)
71. Have a fundraiser based on an interest of the deceased.

Gift Ideas

72. For parents experiencing infant loss before or soon after birth, a wonderful non-profit organization, "Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep," (www.nilmdts.com) will send a professional photographer to the hospital to take photographs. The photographer will create a special DVD slide show set to music and provide the parents a photo CD so they can reprint photos up to 5"x7" format. **All services are free of charge.**
73. The Comfort Company specializes in providing unique sympathy gifts. Visit their website at www.thecomfortcompany.net for gift ideas. See "Gift Idea Websites" in the Internet Resources section for more websites.
74. Le Belle Dame also provides bereavement gifts ideas: www.labelledame.com/miscarriage-infant-loss.html.
75. Bereavement jewelry can be purchased from places like www.myforeverchild.com.
76. Living with Loss Magazine (formerly Bereavement Magazine) also has gifts available on their website at www.bereavementmag.com. A 1-year, 4-issue subscription to their magazine costs \$32 for US residents and makes a thoughtful and useful gift.
77. Create laminate bookmarks from the obituary (some newspapers sell these.)
78. Create a memorial quilt using photos that have been transferred to cloth. Here is one place to buy them if you are not a quilter: www.conniescorner.org
79. Purchase a photo blanket (look around malls, do a web search for photo blanket, or look at www.yourwovenphotos.com.)
80. Gifts like an angel baby blanket with the baby's information engraved on it are available from Le Belle Dame at www.cafepress.com/miscarriage.

81. Give gifts like pillows, calendars, mouse pads, tote bags, coffee mugs, etc that have photos of the deceased on them.
82. Have a crystal engraving made (example at: www.inspeck.com/products/crystal/crystal.asp.)
83. Have an acrylic statuette made from a photo (example at www.mpix.com/productsinfo.aspx?prod=13)
84. Create a scrapbook of the deceased. A memory book can be created and ordered over the internet at www.memories-are-forever.org.
85. Put a photo of the deceased on a stamp (example at: photo.stamps.com.)
86. Create a memorial DVD of the deceased. Slide show software like ProShow Gold (www.Photodex.com) costs around \$70 can help you share memories on DVD, PC or the internet.
87. Have a memorial birthday party or anniversary the first year.
88. Jewelry with the deceased's name or birthstone may be meaningful.
89. Buy or create an obituary book from the comments made at the funeral home or newspaper websites. Many of them will allow you to purchase these books also.
90. Offer to help build a memorial website at www.findagrave.com, last-memories.com, memory-of.com, virtual-memorials.com, or similar websites. Costs range about \$50–\$100 and have different features. (Example at ezri-galdiano.memory-of.com.) Weebly.com and Yola.com offer FREE web hosting.
91. Create a CD with meaningful or special songs. See the **Suggested Music** section for ideas. (Please comply with copyright laws.)
92. Have an artist paint or draw a portrait of the deceased. (A charcoal drawing of our family that includes our deceased daughter is one of our most treasured possessions.) (Example at: www.portraitsbydana.com/memorials.html and www.portraitsbydana.com/wingscollection.html)
93. Purchase a print of a child with Jesus. Jean Keaton has many wonderful pencil drawings for sale on her website in different sizes ranging in price from about \$20–\$100. Most are under \$20 for even the largest size. We purchased *Laughing Baby* because the baby's laugh reminded us so much of Ezri. www.keatonprints.com. Unfortunately, Ms. Keaton no longer does commission work.
94. Have a photograph of the family or deceased turned into a virtual painting (a photo that is altered to look like a painting and printed on canvas.)
95. If you can get copies of some of their favorite photos, upload them to a photo site and create a photo-book. (Example at: www.blurb.com.)

96. For children, create a coloring book of their loved one using photo editing software. Instructions can be found here:
www.galdiano.net/documents/ColoringBookInstructions.pdf.
97. In honor of the deceased, sponsor a child through organizations like Compassion International (www.compassion.com) or make a donation to a meaningful charity.
98. Custom soda bottles can be purchased over the internet from Jones Soda, www.jonessoda.com. For about \$30 (as of Nov 2007) you can have a photo and quote placed on a 12 pack of 12 ounce glass soda bottles. A variety of flavor and colors are available.
99. Figurines or statues: Design Toscano at www.DesignToscano.com has an angelic baby sculpture entitled "In Nature's Hands" that would be appropriate for a gravesite. Precious Moments, www.preciousmoments.com, has figurines of angel babies. Look for figurines like "Safe in the Arms of Jesus" (Item #521922.) "Mommy's Love Goes With You," (Item #690007) is a much sought after figurine that is no longer in production.
100. A custom Teddy Bear can be made from the clothes of the deceased by www.tammybears.com. Cost ranges from \$85-\$200.

What Not to Say to Someone Who is Grieving

While grief is fresh, every attempt to diver only irritates. You must wait till it be digested.... — Samuel Johnson

General Guidelines

1. Bereaved people usually are not logical. They hurt, are in pain, and need empathy instead of logic.
2. Avoid theological platitudes like “God has a plan” or “God won’t give you more than you can handle.” A person in crises has his belief system and theology in turmoil. Even a strong believer may doubt God or be angry at Him. Also, many well-meaning people are quoting their own theology, not God’s.
3. Do not proselytize. Your actions—not your words or religious beliefs—will be meaningful.
4. Avoid clichés such as “It was his time to go,” or “Time heals all wounds.” Neither time nor words can heal a person. Listening and being there will mean more to them, even if you don’t know what to say.
5. Do not minimize someone’s feelings by saying things like, “It could be worse.”
6. Do not pressure someone to stop grieving by saying things like, “Don’t cry” or “Shouldn’t you be over this by now?”
7. Even if you have undergone a similar crisis, you do not know how someone else feels.
8. Do not tell someone how he should feel or what he should do.
9. While building rapport with someone by pointing out similarities (same school, same interests, same background, etc) is acceptable, avoid talking about yourself.
10. Do not advise someone to discard personal artifacts of the deceased.
11. Use the deceased name and invite the bereaved to tell you about his loved one.
12. Tell stories about the deceased.
13. If you gently encourage someone to talk about the deceased, he will guide you on when to drop a topic.
14. Don’t say or imply something could have been done to save the deceased.
15. Ask specific questions such as, “Are you sleeping better?” instead of general questions such as, “How are you doing?”
16. Consider a course, like Lifeline Chaplaincy’s workshop, to learn how to better communicate with those in crisis (www.lifelinechaplaincy.org.)

Specific Statements to Avoid

STATEMENT

INTERPRETATION AND COMMENTS

Avoid Sharing Your Theology

Don't be angry with God.
Don't say that about God.

God already knows how we feel even if we don't express it. The creator of the universe gave us emotions and understands our pain and anger.

Don't question God.

People who question God may eventually develop a stronger faith.

God is merciful.
(Usually said after the bereaved receives a little good news about something.)

If God is so merciful, why is my child dead?

God needed her in heaven.

An omnipresent and omniscient God killed my child because He needed her? I need her more.

God took her for a reason.

What reason would make you okay with the death of your child?

God will use this to make you a better person.

If I was a better person, my child would be alive? It took my child's death to make me a better person?

God won't give you more than you can handle.

You mean if I was weaker, my child would be alive?

It was God's will.
God has a plan.

This is God's fault?

It's for the best.
It's a blessing.

My child death is a blessing?

She's in a better place.

Do you hope your child will die so she can be in a better place too?

The Bible says, "grieve not."

Now I'm a bad Christian too?
No it doesn't. It says to grieve, but not like those who have no hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13.) Even Jesus wept (John 11:35.)

You have an angel in heaven.

I'd rather have a child on earth.

Avoid Statements that Invalidate Emotions

At least she didn't suffer.

Why did she have to die or suffer at all?

At least she isn't suffering anymore.

At least you didn't have time to bond with her.

At least you had her for x time.
You should be thankful you had her for as long as you did.

At least you have other children.

Be brave.
Don't cry.

Call me if you need anything.
If there is anything I can do, let me know.

Don't cry. \ You shouldn't feel that way.

Don't talk about it.
Forget about it. \ Try to forget about her.

Every thing will work out.

I felt the same way when my pet died because it was like a child to me.

I know how you feel.

I remember feeling the same way when (some-other-relation) passed away

I understand what you're going through.
I know how you feel.

Isn't it great everything worked out for you?
(Usually said after some good news is received after the death.)

I bonded with my daughter the moment she was conceived.

I wanted a lifetime with my child like everyone else gets.

No child could ever replace another.

Failure to express grief appropriately now will cause unresolved issues later on

The bereaved are on auto pilot right now and can barely remember their own name. They don't want to feel guilty about bothering someone in addition to everything else.

Crying is cathartic and yes, he should.

Cut your legs off with a blunt pocket knife and let me know when you forget they're gone.

Sometimes, things don't work out on this earth. And even if it someone doesn't suffer financially, his child or spouse will never be with him again in this life.

I pray you never find out how wrong you are.
Sadly, this comment is heard by bereaved parents more than I ever imagined.

Really? When did your child die?

The death of a child is the singularly worse event anyone can experience. No other death even comes close.
Even if you experience the same type of loss as the bereaved, each person grieves, feels, and reacts differently.

Unless you've lost a child, you cannot even begin to imagine 1% of the pain I feel.
Even if you have suffered a similar loss each individual is unique.

No, everything did not work out. My child is still dead.

Isn't it time you moved on?

No. Grief lasts a lifetime.

It could be worse.

*Yes, I could be in jail for strangling you (but no jury would convict me.)
Knowing something could be worse, doesn't change how I feel now.*

It happened, why dwell on it?

*Because she was **MY CHILD**. How can I forget her?*

It was her time to go.

Maybe, but that doesn't assuage my grief.

It's better that she passed away when she did.

What would be better is if she didn't pass away at all. What day would you pick for your child to pass away?

It's probably for the best.

The death of my child is what's best for me?

Life goes on.
You have to get on with life.

The bereaved will cope with their grief in their own time and in their own way.

She may have suffered more if she survived.

Yes, but she would be alive and there would be hope that she could live a full normal life.

She wouldn't want you to feel this way.
(This is not the same as "She wants the best for you," or "She wants you to lead a full life.")

*Now I feel guilty AND depressed.
Sadness and grief are a healthy and natural part of the grieving process.*

Things like that happen.

And how would you feel if it happened to you?

Things will be better once you get back into your normal routine.

No, they won't.

This happened for a reason.

Which reason would make you okay with the death of your child?

Time heals all wounds.

You must mean my child will come back from the dead in time because that is the only way I will ever heal.

You can handle this.

Right now, living another second seems unbearable.

You can have other children.
You can remarry.
You'll find someone else.

No one can ever replace my child [or spouse.]

You can't bring her back.

Really? I thought I alone had the secret to resurrecting someone, and I've just been waiting for the right time to use it.

You need to focus on what you have, and take care of what you got.

While I cherish what I have, I can never forget my child or stop thinking of her.

You need to stay busy.

I can barely get out of bed in the morning.

You need to stop using her death as a crutch.

First, you're not qualified to tell me how to deal with my child's death. Second, if I had a crutch, I'd beat you with it.

You'll be okay. \ You'll get over it.

Maybe I will someday, but I'm not OK now.

You're so strong.
I admire your courage.

The person may become hesitant to share their grief with you.

Questions Better Left Unasked

Are you going to have another child?
Are you going to remarry?

My child [or spouse] is not replaceable

Are you going to move?

*I don't even know what I will eat for lunch.
(Experts recommend the bereaved refrain from making any major decisions for 12 months after a tragedy.)*

Did she look good (or peaceful) at the funeral?
(This is not the same as saying "she was beautiful.")

I thought she looked dead.

How are you doing?
(If asked casually.)

I wish I was dead, but I can't say that every time someone asks, so I smile and say I'm fine when I'm dying on the inside.

How are you going to survive financially?

I have no idea. Thank you for adding to my worries.

Only Uttered by Utter Buffoons

At least you'll have the income tax deduction this year.³

Its nature's way of weeding out defective children.⁴

Isn't it funny that some people have too many children and you can't have any?⁵

Too bad you have to spend money on a funeral.

Why did you bother naming your baby when she was born dead?⁶

You must have done something to deserve this.

Helping Children Cope with Grief

Mothers Against Drunk Drivers has an excellent brochure on this topic:
www.madd.org/common/HelpingChildrenCopeDeath-total%20.pdf

A bereaved adult's pain is increased when they have a child affected by the death. Nothing is more difficult than dealing with both a deceased child and a grieving one as well.

However, it is the parents' job to help children learn to cope with grief in a healthy way. It is my personal opinion, and the opinion of many experts, that "protecting" a child from the reality of death does more harm than good.

Dallas Based ChristianWorks for Children (www.christian-works.org) has a grief therapy group for children and parents called GriefWorks. I highly recommend their program.

Many parents are concerned their child will hurt a grieving child or parent by asking about the death of their loved one. In my opinion, not only is this normal and healthy, but also gives children a chance to explore and share their emotions.

Here are some suggestions on how to help a child cope with death:

1. Although they may not be able to express it verbally, infant and toddlers also grieve. As Dr. Alan Wofelt has expressed, "Any child old enough to love is old enough to grieve."
2. Don't shelter the child from the reality of death.
3. A parent or someone the child loves and trusts should inform him of the death as soon as possible after it occurs.
4. Allow the child to see the body and attend the funeral. (Amilia talked to and touched her deceased sister for about an hour at the hospital.)
5. While a family can share their religious beliefs, tread lightly and carefully when discussing abstract ideas like heaven to make sure you don't confuse the child or so he doesn't blame God. Saying things like, "Jesus loved Bobby so much, He took Bobby home," could cause the child to blame Jesus for his sibling's death, think Bobby is living somewhere else, or start misbehaving just to make sure Jesus doesn't grow too fond of him too.
6. Don't misuse religion to keep the child (or yourself) from grieving.
7. It's okay to cry and talk about the deceased in front of the child; If a child asks why you're crying, answer truthfully in an age appropriate manner ("I'm sad because I miss Ezri," is an example of a truthful and appropriate response.)
8. Reassure the child he did not cause your sadness.

9. Encourage the child to attend the funeral, but don't force them if they don't want to go. An audio or video recording can be made in case the child regrets the decision later in life.
10. Encourage the child to draw a picture or leave something that's meaningful to him in the casket.
11. Take the child to the gravesite and let them leave mementos like flowers they picked, a small toy, or drawing; this may be especially important during holidays and birthdays.
12. Answer questions truthfully and in an age appropriate manner as many times as they are asked.
13. Provide a consistent and stable environment.
14. Inform the child's school about the death so it can provide appropriate support.
15. Spend time with child: take him to a movie or a park, play ball with him. Significant conversations may start just because you are together.
16. Allow the child grieve and to talk about his feelings.
17. It's okay if you don't know the answer to something.
18. Look for clues that indicate child is grieving and ask the child about those clues. If she says her dolly is sad, ask why the doll is sad.
19. The child may play "funeral." Again, use the opportunity to ask the child about his feelings by asking questions like, "Are you making a grave because you miss your sister?"
20. A child may sing or make up songs about the deceased.
21. A child may experience nightmares; ask about the nightmare and use it as an opportunity to explore the child's feelings and fears.
22. Depending on the child's age, they may want to act like a baby, wet the bed, or forget potty training.
23. A bereaved child may appear to be upset at one thing or misbehave in an unexpected manner, but in reality he is grieving.
24. Don't tell a child how they should feel.
25. A child may want a memento to keep near them to remind them of the bereaved or may want to get rid of things like photographs that remind them of the deceased. Accommodate the child within reason, but don't do anything permanent in case he changes his mind later. (Amilia fluctuated between removing pictures in her room and wanting to move to a new house.)

26. Don't chide a child for expressing grief appropriately (though you need to redirect their punching to a pillow instead of a person) and don't chide a child for regressive behavior (wetting the bed, etc...)
27. If the child expresses the desire to see the loved one again by saying they want to get sick or ride their bike to heaven, ask questions that help them explore those feelings and use the opportunity to explain physical death.
28. A child may grieve by talking about the events they will miss (like a picnic or sporting event) rather than the person.
29. Use words like "dead" or "death" around children instead of euphemisms. Younger children are very literal. If you say, "Your sister's asleep," he may become afraid to fall asleep. If you say, "Your parents lost Frankie," he may think his brother is wandering around aimlessly. If you say, "God took your sister," he may become angry with God. If you say, "Your father is looking down on you from heaven," he may become paranoid; if you say, "Your brother went home," he may think his brother moved. At a grief seminar, a woman explained that well into adulthood, she continually looked for infants while driving down the road because when she was a child, her family told her that her mother had "lost" her baby brother.
30. If appropriate, reassure the child that the tragedy is not his fault. Children between four and six years old have "magical thinking" and he may think he caused the death, especially if he argued with the deceased, was mad at him, or did something wrong around the date of the death.
31. Arrange for grief counseling and for the child to be around other children who are grieving.
32. Give the child a special gift like a doll or jewelry.
33. Give the child an age appropriate book about grief.
34. A child will grieve and readjust to the death at each level of development.
35. Don't tell the child that he/she must be the man/woman of the house. Dr. Wolfelt tells a story about how a 9-year-old boy, who was told he was the "man of the house" after his father's death, drove the family car to a gas station to fill it with gas because that was what his father used to do.
36. Don't expose a child to adult issues or problems.

Writing a Condolence Letter

There are many internet articles like dying.about.com/od/lossgrief/a/console_letter.htm that suggest how to write a condolence letter. Here is my adaptation:

1. Acknowledge the loss and use the deceased's name.
2. Mention how you learned about the death.
3. Express sympathy.
4. Mention something special about the deceased
5. Include a memory of the deceased.
6. Honor the deceased.
7. Mention something positive about the bereaved.
8. Offer specific help.
9. End with a word of sympathy, a comforting Bible verse, or quote

Example Letter

Dear George, Kimberly, & Amilia,

- 1. Acknowledge the loss and the name of the deceased**
- 2. Mention how you learned about the death**

Our family was deeply saddened when we received a phone call from Jill in the church office this afternoon informing us of Ezri's death.

- 3. Express sympathy**

Even though we have been crying over this tragedy all afternoon, we cannot imagine the pain you are experiencing. Our hearts are broken and filled with sympathy.

- 4. Mention something special about the deceased**

We will never forget Ezri's beautiful hazel eyes or infectious smile. We could tell how proud you were of her and how much joy she brought you.

- 5. Recall a memory of the deceased**

We remember saying hello to Ezri last Sunday, She gave us a great big smile, and we saw her first tooth. Kim mentioned that the tooth came in the previous week during your family vacation to Las Vegas.

- 6. Honor the deceased**

We know how real and traumatic grief is to children as well as adults. In honor of Ezri, we've made a donation to GriefWorks for Children.

Ezri's death also reminded us of how very precious children are. We will hug Bud and Bonnie extra hard and be extra patient with them for a very long time.

7. Mention something positive about the bereaved

The poems George wrote for Ezri and put on your family website are very touching and give us a glimpse into how much you love and miss your baby girl. We remember how Kim she stayed up all night carrying Ezri when she had an ear infection.

We know Amilia was a great big sister and adored Ezri. She was always hugging her baby sister and talking about her.

Ezri was part of wonderful, loving family and had such devoted parents. God could not have placed her in a better home.

8. Offer specific help

We are eating Thanksgiving dinner D'maggios off Central & North West Highway next Thursday at 1:00 PM. We remember you mentioning that was one of your favorite restaurants. If you're available, we love for you to join us as our guest.

We are also enclosing a gift card for Chick-Fil-A. We know how much Amilia enjoys going there.

We know the grief children experience is as real and devastating as the grief adults feel. ChristianWorks for Childen offers free grief counseling for children every Tuesday evening at 7:00 pm. If this is something you are interested in, you can contact them at 972-960-9981 for more information.

Compassionate Friends also has a support group for parents who have lost children. They meet on Thursdays evening at 6:30 pm at the 1st Methodist Chruch in Plano on 105th street & and Griefville Ave. Tricia Smith is the group leader. She can be reached at 972-539-3829.

Their website, www.compassionatefriends.org, says you can also call the TCF National Office toll-free at 877-969-0010 or write nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org for more information about local chapters.

9. End with a word of sympathy, a comforting Bible verse, or quote

We are lifting you up in prayer to God, and He is counting your tears and keeping them in a bottle (Psalms 56:8.)

Bob and Jane Doe

1234 Comforting Way
Dallas, TX 78023
214-555-6789

Internet Resources

Many of the suggested websites and their descriptions have been shamelessly borrowed from Cheryl Haggard's postings in the www.nilmdts.com forums, the Heavenly Angles In Need forums at www.heavenlyangelsinneed.org, and from the organizations' websites.

Please feel free to visit the Haggard family blogspot. www.haggardfamily.blogspot.com. My heartfelt thanks to her and to everyone whose love, hard work, and dedication keep these resources going.

A Place to Remember

www.aplacetoremember.com

Uplifting support materials and resources for those who have been touched by a crisis in pregnancy or the death of a baby.

American SIDS Institute

www.SIDS.org

Founded in 1983, the American SIDS Institute, a national nonprofit health care organization, is dedicated to the prevention of sudden infant death and the promotion of infant health through an aggressive, comprehensive nationwide program of:

Research about both the cause of sudden infant death and methods of prevention.

Clinical Services assisting pediatricians in the medical management of high risk infants.

Education about prevention methods aimed at the public and medical community.

Family Support providing crises phone counseling, grief literature and referrals.

Anencephaly

www.anencephalie-info.org

Anencephaly is a congenital birth defect that occurs in approximately one in one thousand pregnancies. Anencephaly is a neural tube defect, just as is spina bifida. Life expectancy for a baby with anencephaly is just a few hours, sometimes a few days at most.

Angel Names Association

www.angelnames.org

The Angel Names Association is a nonprofit, 501(C)(3), charitable organization dedicated to assisting families of stillborn children through programs designed to provide financial assistance for end-of-life expenses and counseling services, and funding for stillbirth research.

Angel Teddy Bear Foundation

www.angelteddybears.org

Our purpose is to deliver teddy bears to hospitals that are in turn given to parents of stillborn children, miscarriages and neonatal loss. Along with these teddy bears is a card containing a sympathy message and the website address.

We know that these teddy bears are not to replace the precious ^^ we have lost but it is something to hold.

We can offer support to you and your family. The volunteers and people that post here know and truly understand what you are feeling. So you are not alone nor do you have to go thru this all alone. Please feel free to contact someone personally (volunteer or myself) we are already friends with a great bond.

We sincerely hope that with this website and the teddy bears that we can fulfill our motto of: "Bringing comfort to grieving parents and families."

Baby Loss

www.babyloss.com

The Babyloss website provides information and support online for anyone affected by the death of a baby during pregnancy, at birth, or shortly afterwards.

Bereaved Parents of the USA

www.bereavedparentsusa.org

Bereaved Parents of the USA (BP/USA) is a national non-profit self-help group that offers support, understanding, compassion and hope especially to the newly bereaved be they bereaved parents grandparents nor siblings struggling to rebuild their lives after the death of their children, grandchildren or siblings.

Beyond Indigo

www.death-dying.com

A good website that has resources for all types of deaths. Includes message boards.

Camp Erin

http://www.moyerfoundation.org/programs/CampErin_About.aspx

Camp Erin, created and funded by the Moyer Foundation, is a network of 28 bereavement camps in 18 states (as of Feb 2010). At this weeklong camp, "[grieving] children and teens ages 6-17 that have experienced the death of someone close to them ... have an opportunity to address their feelings and memorialize their loved ones. They are provided with tools and resources for use during and after camp, including memories and friendships that last long after camp is complete."

Dallas area residents can get more information about Camp Erin from <http://christian-works.org/camperin>.

CaringBridge

www.caringbridge.org

Loved ones of a seriously ill person can enter updates on this free website to keep family and friends informed of the person's status. Visitors can leave messages for the patient or family. This website is a great idea and I wish someone had thought of it sooner.

A CaringBridge website helps keep loved ones informed during difficult times. In return, family and friends give patient and caregiver support through guestbook messages.

Every free, personalized CaringBridge website includes:

- *Patient care journal to update family and friends*
- *Guestbook for messages of love*
- *Photo gallery*
- *Free online support for using the service*

Centering Corporation

www.centeringcorp.com

The Centering Corporation is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing education and resources for the bereaved. Centering was founded in 1977 by Joy and Dr. Marvin Johnson. We started with nine little coloring books for hospitalized children and two workshop offerings for nurses and families. In response to the need for support by families and caregivers while facing their grief experience we developed many new resources. Today we have over 100 books and for children and adults, My Friends Emotion Dolls, a Memory Bag for children, five videos and caring cards, plus over 200 books and resources from other publishers. We continue to provide educational offerings and workshops for caregivers and families. The second generation, Janet and Ben Sieff, brings new life and ideas to meet our changing needs in today's bereavement experiences.

Center for Loss

www.centerforloss.com

Founded by Dr. Alan Wolfelt, The Center for Loss is dedicated to "companioning" grieving people as they mourn transitions and losses that transform their lives. We help both mourners, by walking with them in their unique life journeys, and both professional caregivers and lay people, by serving as an educational resource and professional forum.

Children are a Gift Foundation

www.childrenareagift.com

The missions of the Children Are A Gift Foundation is to enable families who have lost a child, have a special needs child or are unable to have a child to find peace and support through the healing process.

Claire's Friends

www.claresfriends.org

In all likelihood, you are here because you, or someone you care about, have been touched by infant loss. I am so very sorry that you are walking this painful path. Having lost a little one myself, I can sympathize with your broken heart. I hope this website will provide a small measure of comfort to you in your grief, or assist you as you seek to help others.

My husband, Heinz and I began "Claire's Friends" on Mother's Day 2005, shortly after the loss of our baby, Claire Elizabeth, on January 22, 2005 to early infant miscarriage. We hope that you find blessing and comfort from both our words, and the offer of these small tokens to honour your dear Little One. ~ Cynthia

Comfort In Heaven

www.comfortinheaven.com

A Christian website that offers grief forums for women and a memorial birth certificate for infants that do not qualify for a legal birth certificate. You must accept their statement of faith before joining the grief forums.

Compassionate Friends

www.compassionatefriends.org

The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.

The Compassionate Friends is a national nonprofit, self-help support organization that offers friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. There is no religious affiliation and there are no membership dues or fees.

The secret of TCF's success is simple: As seasoned grievers reach out to the newly bereaved, energy that has been directed inward begins to flow outward and both are helped to heal. The vision of The Compassionate Friends is that everyone who needs us will find us and everyone who finds us will be helped.

Elizabeth Ministry International

www.elizabethministry.com

*Christian Support For The Joys, Challenges
And Sorrows Of The Childbearing Years*

*Fertility - Pregnancy - Birth - Adoption
Infertility - Crisis or Special Needs
Miscarriage, Stillbirth, Infant or Child Death*

Emmazing Grace Foundation

emmazinggracefoundation.org

Our mission is twofold:

1 – *We wish to assist in easing the financial burden of burial costs by helping with funeral costs, cemetery monuments, etc.*

2 – *We wish to provide infant bereavement clothing to hospitals and funeral homes.*

If you have recently lost an infant less than 1 year of age and are in need of assistance, please click here.

Eternal Perspectives Ministry

www.epm.org

The official website of Christian author Randy Alcorn. Besides books, the website offers a quarterly newsletter.

EriChad

www.erichad.com

Home of loving support for bereaved parents.

Grieving the loss of a child is one of life's most difficult experiences. You may think you'll never survive such pain. EriChad can't take away your pain, but we hope to validate it, hold your hand, and help you find life's rainbow.

Faith's Lodge

www.faithslodge.org

Opened 21 July 2007. Faith Ann Lacey's parents built a lodge in memory and honor of their daughter. Faith's Lodge is located "on 80 picturesque acres near Webster, Wisconsin. . . ."

Specifically, Faith's Lodge will welcome families who currently have a child with a serious illness or have suffered the recent loss of a child. . . . Faith's Lodge will provide temporary respite for families in these stressful situations by offering them an escape to the Lodge's peaceful northwoods [sic] setting to create new memories, and renew and refresh their minds and spirit. Faith's Lodge will also welcome bereaved parents and families who have recently lost a child.

Find A Grave

www.findagrave.com

A free website where you can enter information about where the deceased is buried, write an obituary, upload photos, and leave virtual flowers. Example: www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fq.cgi?page=gr&GSIn=galdiano&GSbyrel=all&GSdyrel=all&GSob=n&GRid=13322580 or go to www.findagrave.com and search for **Ezri Galdiano**.

First Candle

www.sidsalliance.org

See SIDS Alliance.

Footprints Ministry, Inc.

www.angelfire.com/ny5/footprintsministry/index.html

“This website belongs to a Christian organization that publishes a free newsletter for families who have lost children of any age for any reason.” —HAIN

Gentile Birth

www.gentlebirth.org

The Midwife Archives at this site is a collection of information about all aspects of pregnancy, birth and well-woman care from a midwifery perspective.

Gift Idea Websites

Acknowledgements: www.acknowledgements.net (Bereavement gifts.)

Blurb (Photobooks): www.blurb.com (Photo book.)

Connie's Corner: www.conniescorner.org (Photo blankets and other gifts.)

Design Toscano: www.designtoscano.com (has an angelic baby garden statue titled “In Nature’s Hands.” Cost is \$25 as of 2007.)

Hoping Skills Company: www.hopingskills.com (Symphy gifts.)

Inspeck: www.inspeck.com/products/crystal/crystal.asp (Crystal engravings.)

Jones Soda: www.jonessoda.com (Custom soda bottles.)

Keaton Prints: www.keatonprints.com (Drawing of children with Jesus.)

Le Belle Dame: www.labelledame.com/miscarriage-infant-loss.html (miscarriage and infant loss)

Living with Loss Magazine: www.bereavementmag.com (Bereavement magazine, calendar, booklets, hope gifts.)

Memories are Forever: www.memories-are-forever.org (Memory books.)

My Forever Child: www.myforeverchild.com (Memorial jewelry).

MPix: www.mpix.com (Photo gifts and statuette.)

Photos Stamps: photo.stamps.com

Portraits by Dana: www.portraitsbydana.com, 843-200-6151 (Custom drawings ranging in price from \$100-\$425, based on size and number of subjects.)

Precious Moments: www.preciousmoments.com (Angel baby figurines.)

Remembering Our Babies Memorial Keepsake Boutique: www.october15th.wahmweb.biz (Memorial gifts.)

TammyBears: www.tammybears.com (Custom teddy bears made from the clothing or blanket of the deceased. About \$150.)

The Comfort Company: www.thecomfortcompany.net (Sympathy gifts, including bereavement ornaments.)

Your Woven Photos: www.yourwovenphotos.com (Photo throw covers.)

Good Grief Resources

www.goodgriefresources.com

Good Grief Resources was conceived and founded by Andrea Gambill whose 17-year-old daughter died in 1976. In 1977, she founded one of the earliest chapters of The Compassionate Friends, an international bereaved-parent support group. In 1987, she founded and edited Bereavement magazine, and in 2000, she joined Centering Corporation as Editor of their new magazine, Grief Digest. Twenty eight years of experience in grief support has provided valuable insights into the unique needs of the bereaved and their caregivers and wide access to many excellent resources. The primary goal of Good Grief Resources is to connect the bereaved and their caregivers with as many bereavement support resources as possible in one, efficient and easy-to-use website directory.

GriefNet

www.griefnet.org

We have almost 50 e-mail support groups and two web sites. Our integrated approach to on-line grief support provides help to people working through loss and grief issues of many kinds.

Our companion site, KIDSAID.com, provides a safe environment for kids and their parents to find information and ask questions.

GriefNet is directed by Cendra (ken'dra) Lynn, Ph.D., a traumatologist who works in Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA. Supported by a dedicated team of volunteers, and by the generous donations of its users, GriefNet is operated as a non-profit corporation under the name Rivedell Resources, Inc.

GriefShare

www.griefshare.org

In addition to "A Season of Grief" daily e-mails, GriefShare has grief support groups meeting throughout the US, Canada, UK, New Zealand, Australia and South Africa.

GriefShare is a friendly, caring group of people who will walk alongside you through one of life's most difficult experiences. You don't have to go through the grieving process alone.

GriefShare seminars and support groups are led by people who understand what you are going through and want to help. You'll gain access to valuable GriefShare resources to help you recover from your loss and look forward to rebuilding your life.

GriefWatch

www.griefwatch.com

The Grief Watch site was created to provide you with bereavement resources, memorial products and links that can help you through your personal loss. It also serves as an excellent educational tool for all who travel down the road of grief.

GriefWorks for Children

www.christian-works.org/griefworks/grief_services.shtml

ChristianWorks (formerly Christian Services) is a Dallas based charity. Within the ChristianWorks umbrella is Griefworks, which helps children experiencing the death of a loved one cope with grief. They are located at 6320 LBJ Freeway, Suite 121, Dallas, TX 75240

Growing Through Affliction

www.growingthroughaffliction.com

Web site of Lynette Kraft, mother to 9 children—3 of whom have died—and author of *In Faithfulness, He Afflicted Me*. The website describes itself with “Supporting you as you go through affliction...Encouraging you as you grow through affliction.”

Hannah's Prayer

www.hannah.org

Hannah's Prayer Ministries provides Christian based support and encouragement to couples around the world who are struggling with the pain of fertility challenges including primary and secondary infertility, pregnancy loss, early infant death and adoption loss. Our outreach extends to those who become parents of living children through pregnancy, adoption and/or foster care.

HeartPrints Photo Retouching

personal.nbnet.nb.ca/crempel/Heartprint

Heartprints is a digital photo retouching service for families who have lost a baby through stillbirth or prematurity. Many parents are anxious to see the photos of their stillborn babies, only to have that anticipation turn to dismay when the photos simply do not depict the child they remember. Other parents find it difficult to share their pictures with friends and family, afraid of the reaction they may get. I can correct many esthetic issues that take away from the natural beauty of your child.

How can I get my photos retouched?

Simply email your photos in jpg format to hrtprint@nb.sympatico.ca and I will respond as soon as I can. Large, high resolution files are easiest to work with. Results will vary depend-

ing on the quality of the image, lighting, etc. Images that are blurry or poorly exposed may not be able to be retouched.

Heaven's Gain

<http://www.heavensgain.com>

Heaven's Gain specializes in providing small baby caskets and burial products for families suffering the loss of a child through miscarriage or early stillbirth.

Helping After Neonatal Death

www.handonline.org

Helping After Neonatal Death, is a California non-profit 501(c)3 corporation, founded in 1981 to help parents, their families and their healthcare providers cope with the loss of a baby before, during, or after birth.

HAND is a resource network of parents, professionals, and supportive volunteers that offers a variety of services throughout Northern California and the Central Valley. There are no fees for our services. HAND relies entirely on donations to support its programs.

1-888-908-HAND (4263)

Helping After Neonatal Death: Hand of the Peninsula

www.handsupport.org

I do not know if they are related to handonline.org, but Hand of the Peninsula has an excellent directory of newsletters for bereaved families at www.handsupport.org/newsletter.html. They also have material available over the internet at www.HANDsupport.org/library.html.

HAND [of the Peninsula] is a volunteer group of parents who have experienced the loss of a baby before, during or after birth. Their experience has established a desire to offer support to parents, their relatives and friends during the normal mourning following miscarriage, genetic abortion, stillbirth or newborn death of their babies. HAND volunteers are not professional psychotherapists, however they may make referrals to professional counselors.

HAND originated in Marin County, California, in 1979. HAND chapters in San Mateo, Santa Cruz, Santa Clara and Alameda Counties have successfully been offering support to bereaved families and loved ones since 1981. HAND is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. There are no fees for our services. HAND relies entirely on grants and donations to support its programs.

24 Hour Crisis Line: (650) 579-0350, (888) 220-7575

Heavenly Angels in Need

www.heavenlyangelsinneed.com

Heavenly Angels in Need charity "Serve[s] all babies, children, and. . . families in need. [They] knit, crochet, sew, craft and more to try and fill every need possible. [They] serve Children's hospitals, hospitals with Neonatal Intensive care units, Pregnancy Crisis Centers,

Shelters, Foster care, emergent situations and more. [They] are helping grieving families by supplying them with much needed burial and memorial items. [They] give clothing, blankets, hats, booties, care bags, and more to all babies and children in need. [They] are reaching out to the World sharing the Love of God through giving. Heavenly Angels in Need mission is to help every baby and child who need."

HAIN also provides a forum where grieving parents can talk to one another.

Hospice Foundation of America

www.hospicefoundation.org/griefandloss

While we often think of the grief associated with death, there are many other losses in our lives that cause us to grieve. Hospice Foundation of America has information that should help you understand some of the challenges you must face when coping with grief. Whether you are going through this yourself or trying to help a family member or friend, HFA offers support and advice to assist you.

Houston's Aid in Neonatal Death

www.hand.net

H.A.N.D. is a greater Houston area based pregnancy and infant loss support group for parents whose babies have died any time from conception through late infancy. Our mission is to help parents cope with feelings of grief and isolation which accompany the loss of a baby.

The goal of this site is to share H.A.N.D.'s mission to support grieving parents in the greater Houston area. We welcome any and all comments regarding neonatal death and this web site. If you have neonatal death questions regarding grief, information to share, a link to add or a problem with this web site, please contact us. We welcome all comments that will help us to have a more effective web site.

Hygeia Foundation

www.hygeia.org

Hygeia® is a leading global internet community for pregnancy loss and neonatal death and an important resource for maternal and child health. Information regarding pre-pregnancy health, pre-natal health and maternal and child health is essential in improving the quality of health in all populations.

Infants Remembered in Silence, Inc.

www.irisremembers.org

IRIS is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization that is dedicated to offering support, education and resources to parents, families, friends and professionals on the death of a child in early pregnancy (miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy, molar pregnancy, etc) or from stillbirth, premature birth, neo-natal death, birth defects, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), illness, accidents, and all other types of infant & early childhood death.

Kid's Aid

www.kidsaid.com

Kid's Aid is a safe place for kids to help each other deal with grief and loss. It's a place to deal with feelings in our e-mail support group, to share and view artwork and stories, and for parents and kids to ask questions and find answers.

Additional information and resources on grief and bereavement can be found on our mother site GriefNet.org

Last Memories

www.last-memories.com

Another memorial website. As of 2007, the price was around \$40 for an "everlasting" website. The everlasting price includes a free memorial video from the photos you upload, free family tree software, and free memorial book, which is an attractive printed copy of the website. I could not find details on how much disk space they allocated. They also have grief forums.

Lifeline Chaplaincy

www.lifelinechaplaincy.org

Provides compassionate support for the seriously ill as well training for those working with them.

Living with Loss Magazine

www.bereavementmag.com

Living with Loss Magazine (formerly Bereavement Magazine), offers calendars, booklets, cards, books, dvds, cds, and gifts for bereaved parents. A subscription to the magazine is a thoughtful gift for a bereaved parents. A one-year (4 issues) subscription is \$32 for US residents.

LIVING WITH LOSS: Hope and Healing for the Body, Mind, and Spirit (formerly known as Bereavement Magazine) is a support group in print offering articles, stories, poems, and resources for the bereaved by grief educators and presenters, facilitators and caregivers, authors and writers, and most important the bereaved themselves.

Mary Madeline Project

www.marymadelineproject.org

A non-profit organization, "founded in memory of Marie Erickson who dies at seven weeks of age," that donates infant burial gowns and blankets to hospitals for bereaved parents.

Memory Of

www.memory-of.com. Example: ezri-galdiano.memory-of.com.

A memorial website where you place an internet tribute for your deceased loved one. A detailed list of the features www.memory-of.com offers can be found here: www.memory-of.com/Public/Features.aspx

Miss Foundation

www.missfoundation.org

MISS is a nonprofit, volunteer based organization committed to providing emergency support to families in crisis after the death of their baby or young child from any cause. We are here to help families cope with the resultant feelings of overwhelming grief and loss. We are committed to public awareness to decrease infant mortality; we support medical research committed to the same cause. Our vision is to perpetuate education and awareness on ethics and death issues; decreasing enigmas surrounding grief and increasing bereavement sensitivity and crisis intervention protocol establishment through a psychosocial, multidisciplinary training program.

Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death

www.mend.org

M.E.N.D. is a Christian not-for-profit corporation whose purpose is to reach out to those who have lost a child due to miscarriage, stillbirth or early infant death and offer a way to share experiences and information through support groups, the quarterly newsletter, and our Internet web site.

Mothers Against Drunk Drivers

www.madd.org

Many good resources and has a great deal of information on their website.

Much Loved

www.muchloved.com

Another good memorial website.

National Stillbirth Society

www.stillnomore.org

The mission of the parent-led National Stillbirth Society is to "educate, agitate and legislate" for greater stillbirth awareness, research and reform. Ours is an "activist" organization, fighting to overcome the inertia of traditional practices and challenge medical care providers who routinely accept stillbirth as an unfortunate but unavoidable outcome of pregnancy in a small percentage of cases.

Next of Kin Registry

www.nokr.org

The Next Of Kin Registry (NOKR) was established as a FREE tool for daily emergencies and national disasters. NOKR is an emergency contact system to help if you or your family member is missing, injured or deceased. NOKR provides the public a free proactive service to store emergency contacts, next of kin and vital medical information that would be critical to emergency response agencies. Stored information is only accessible via a secure area that is only accessible by emergency public trust agencies that have registered with NOKR....

NOKR is a non-partisan; non-profit 501(c)(3) dedicated to bridging rapid emergency contact information. NOKR was established in January 2004, for daily emergency situations.

Now I Lay Me Down To Sleep

www.nilmdts.com

This charitable organization provides professional photographers to family suffering a child loss. Completely free of charge, a family can request a photographer from their website who will photograph the baby and family, provide a photo slideshow set to meaningful music, and provide a photo CD the family can use to print their own photos. Their discussion forums are also a place for grieving family to meet and talk to other families who have experienced infant loss. I can't praise this organization enough.

Rainbows Happen

www.rainbowshappen.com

Strategies To Get You Through Illness and Loss. This website is divided into two main parts: One is for people coping with serious illnesses or injuries. The other is for people who have experienced the death of a loved one.

Rachel's Vineyard

www.rachelsvineyard.org

Rachel's Vineyard is a safe place to renew, rebuild and redeem hearts broken by abortion. Weekend retreats offer you a supportive, confidential and non-judgmental environment where women and men can express, release and reconcile painful post-abortive emotions to begin the process of restoration, renewal and healing.

Rachel's Vineyard can help you find your inner voice. It can help you experience God's love and compassion on a profound level. It creates a place where men and women can share, often for the first time, their deepest feelings about abortion. You are allowed to dismantle troubling secrets in an environment of emotional and spiritual safety.

Rachel's Vineyard is therapy for the soul. Participants, who have been trapped in anger toward themselves or others, experience forgiveness. Peace is found. Lives are restored. A sense of hope and meaning for the future is finally re-discovered.

Remembering Our Babies

www.october15th.com

Did you know October 15 is **Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day**?

...Remembering Our Babies was created to provide support, education and awareness for those who are suffering or may know someone who has suffered a miscarriage, an ectopic pregnancy, a still birth, or the loss of an infant. We hope that we can help you by giving you and all of the other parents, grandparents, siblings, relatives, and friends a special day of remembrance. This special day of Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance is October 15th of every year.

Sarah's Laughter

www.saraha-laughter.com

"Christian Support for Infertility and Child Loss."

Share

www.nationalshareoffice.com

The mission of Share Pregnancy and Infant Loss Support, Inc. is to serve those whose lives are touched by the tragic death of a baby through early pregnancy loss, stillbirth, or in the first few months of life.

All information packets, correspondence, and support are free of charge for bereaved parents...

Share Grief

www.sharegrief.com

There are many good articles about dealing with grief on this website.

Since the launch of ShareGrief.com in July 2001, our team of volunteer grief specialists has reached out to hundreds of people across the world who have experienced the death of a child, spouse, parent, sibling, friend or other family member. Whether the loss is as a result of an accident, illness, suicide, trauma or sudden death, our team quickly responds with support and compassion. We offer information on support groups, local resources and reading materials that may be helpful to the bereaved....

We look forward to assisting those who seek comfort after the death of a loved one and we will continue to provide a much needed service to the bereaved community.

*Sandy Lipkus
Grief Specialist and Founder of ShareGrief.com*

Share Pregnancy and Infant Loss Support, Inc

www.nationalshareoffice.com

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SIDS Alliance (AKA First Candle)

www.sidsalliance.org

*Whether you are seeking the most current information on infant health and safety or you have experienced the death of a precious baby, First Candle is here to help.
1-800-221-7437*

Silent Grief (Web Site)

www.silentgrief.com

Support for all who have suffered miscarriage and later child loss. I would like to extend my personal welcome to every one who visits SilentGrief.com. It is my prayer that you will find SilentGrief.com to be a safe place of healing, support, and hope during your time of grief, loneliness, and depression. Child loss, whether miscarriage, stillbirth, or older loss, is a pain like none other. It is my heartfelt desire that this will become your place to receive daily nourishment, friendship, and support for child loss so that you will never have to feel alone or silent in your grief again.

Silent Grief (MSN Community)

Groups.MSN.com/SilentGrief

This MSN community was created to provide a place to chat live with other people grieving the loss of a child. When applying for membership, please be sure to include why you would like to join.

Still No More

www.stillnomore.org

Welcome to the official web site of The National Stillbirth Society, an activist organization comprised of parents and other family members and friends who, having lost one or more babies to this vilest of all "birth defects", are fighting back.

Last year over 28,000 babies in the United States were delivered dead. For the most part they were of viable gestational age. About two-thirds evidenced no observable physical cause to explain why they died. And yet, babies, like adults, die for a reason. Medical science just has to search harder to find that reason so many otherwise healthy babies are dying before birth.

Stop A Suicide Today!

www.stopasuicide.org

Each year in America almost 30,000 people commit suicide, and 70% of those people tell someone or give warning signs before taking their own life. Stop A Suicide Today! can teach you how to recognize the warning signs of suicide in family, friends, co-workers, and patients, and how to respond as you would do with any medical emergency. Learn more about Stop A Suicide Today!

Sufficient Grace Ministries

<http://www.sufficientgrace.net>

Sufficient Grace Ministries for Women, a 501 (c) 3 non-profit, non-denominational Christian organization, was founded in 2004 by Kelly Gerken with the purpose of reaching out to women and families to offer comfort, encouragement and hope. The Dreams of You division of this ministry was created specifically to provide comfort to women and families who have lost a baby through miscarriage, stillbirth, or infant death. Kelly has experienced the loss of twin daughters (Faith and Grace) at 26 weeks and the loss of an infant son, Thomas...who died shortly after birth from Potter's Syndrome.

The Compassionate Friends

www.compassionatefriends.org

See entry for Compassionate Friends.

The Tiana Foundation

www.tianafund.org

Founded in memory of Tiana Rose Velez, this San Jose, California based foundation provides a \$150–\$300 voucher to California Monumental to help offset the cost of a memorial marker for families who have suffered neonatal or infant.

Trisomy 18 Foundation

www.trisomy18support.org

The Trisomy 18 Foundation is a 501 (c) 3 tax-exempt nonprofit corporation in the Commonwealth of Virginia (EIN 77-0600393) with offices in the Washington, D.C. metro area of Northern Virginia whose mission is to provide support as well as the development of programs and services to meet the needs of families whose children are diagnosed with Trisomy 18.

US Funerals On-Line

www.us-funerals.com

This website has useful information about funeral planning and dealing with funeral homes.

US Funerals Online was launched in June 2003 as a funeral guide and funeral home directory. The site aims to provide consumers with an easy to use directory and to show how money can be saved during a very stressful period.

US Funerals Online's directory lists all funeral homes in the US and is listed in Zip code order. The site also includes a Casket Buyers Guide which gives some useful points to consider when buying a funeral casket.

Virtual Memorials

Virtual-memorials.com

Another memorial website. Cost is around \$50. Web pages are more flexible than Memory-of.com, but it offers less storage.

Wally Dallenbach Jr. Foundation

www.wallydallenbachjrfoundation.com

Wally Dallenbach Jr. Foundation's Mission: Formed in October 2009, the Wally Dallenbach Jr. Foundation's mission is to give children who have lost a parent the opportunity to learn about the outdoors, their heritage and their parent's passion through hunting and fishing expeditions.

Led by outdoors experts, including Wally Dallenbach Jr. himself, in some of the world's most beautiful locations, the children who experience a Foundation program will come away with: A respect and love for the outdoors and all it represents. Useful new skills. Additional understanding of their lost parent and a new respect for the lost parent's outdoors passion.

For more information about the Wally Dallenbach Jr. Foundation, please visit their website, email Dan Passe at dan@passeconsulting.com or call him at 704-634-9022.

WebHealing

www.webhealing.com

*A webpage by Tom Golden, Webhealing offers grief discussion boards, recommends grief books, articles. Mr. Golden is an internationally known psychotherapist and speaker who has authored several books, including: *Swallowed by a Snake: The Gift of the Masculine Side of Healing* and *A Man You Know is Grieving: 12 Ideas for Helping Him Heal From Loss*.*

Essays & Writings

The Brave Little Soul

John Alessi

Not too long ago in Heaven there was a little soul who took wonder in observing the world. He especially enjoyed the love he saw there and often expressed this joy with God. One day however the little soul was sad, for on this day he saw suffering in the world. He approached God and sadly asked, "Why do bad things happen; why is there suffering in the world?"

God paused for a moment and replied, "Little soul, do not be sad, for the suffering you see, unlocks the love in people's hearts." The little soul was confused. "What do you mean," he asked." God replied, "Have you not noticed the goodness and love that is the offspring of that suffering? Look at how people come together, drop their differences and show their love and compassion for those who suffer. All their other motivations disappear and they become motivated by love alone."

The little soul began to understand and listened attentively as God continued, "The suffering soul unlocks the love in people's hearts much like the sun and the rain unlock the flower within the seed. I created everyone with endless love in their heart, but unfortunately most people keep it locked up and hardly share it with anyone. They are afraid to let their love shine freely, because they are afraid of being hurt. But a suffering soul unlocks that love. I tell you this—it is the greatest miracle of all. Many souls have bravely chosen to go into the world and suffer—to unlock this love—to create this miracle—for the good of all humanity."

Just then the little soul got a wonderful idea and could hardly contain himself. With his wings fluttering, bouncing up and down, the little soul excitedly replied, "I am brave; let me go! I would like to go into the world and suffer so that I can unlock the goodness and love in people's hearts! I want to create that miracle!"

God smiled and said, "You are a brave soul I know, and thus I will grant your request. But even though you are very brave you will not be able to do this alone. I have known since the beginning of time that you would ask for this and so I have carefully selected many souls to care for you on your journey. Those souls will help you create your miracle; however they will also share in your suffering. Two of these souls are most special and will care for you, help you and suffer along with you, far beyond the others. They have already chosen a name for you."

God and the brave little soul shared a smile, and then embraced. In parting, God said, "Do not forget little soul that I will be with you always. Although you have agreed to bear the pain, you will do so through my strength. And if the time should come when you feel that you have suffered enough, just say the word, think the thought, and I will bring you home."

Thus at that moment the brave little soul was born into the world, and through his suffering and God's strength, he unlocked the goodness and love in people's hearts. For so many people dropped their differences and came together to show their love. Priorities became properly aligned. People gave from their hearts. Those that were always too busy found time. Many began new spiritual journeys —some regained lost faith— many came back to God. Parents hugged their children tighter. Friends and family grew closer. Old friends got together and new friendships were made. Distant family reunited, and every family spent more time together. Everyone prayed. Peace and love reigned. Lives changed forever. It was good. The world was a better place. The miracle had happened. God was pleased.

The Grief Pit

Author Unknown

The day my children died, I fell into the pit of grief. My friends watched me struggle through daily life, waiting for the person I once was to arise from the pit, not realizing "she" is gone forever.

The pit is full of darkness, heartache, and despair. It paralyzes your thoughts, movements and ability to reason. The pit leaves you forever changed, unable to surface the person you once were.

Some of my pre-grief friends gather around the top of the pit, waiting for the old me to appear before their eyes, not understanding what's taking me so long to emerge. After all, in their eyes I've been in the pit for quite sometime. Yet, in my eyes, it seems as if I fell in only yesterday.

Not all my pre-grief friends are gathered at the top of the pit. Some are helping me with the climb out of the darkness. They climb side by side with me from time to time, but mostly they climb ahead of me, waiting patiently at each plateau. Even with these friends I sometimes wonder if they are also, waiting for the pre-grief me to magically appear before their eyes.

Then, there are the casual acquaintances, you know the ones who say, "Hi, how are you?" when they really don't care or really don't want to know. These people are the people, who sigh in relief that it was my child who died and not theirs. You know, the "better them, than me" attitude—not that I blame them; I too wish it happened to someone else.

My post-grief friends are the ones who climb with me, side by side, inch by inch, out of the pit of grief. They have no way of comparing the pit climber, to the pre-grief person, I once was. You see, they started at the bottom of the pit with me. They are able to reassure me when I need reassurance, rest when I need resting, and encourage me to move forward when I don't have the strength. They have no expectations, no memories and no recollection of how I "should" be. They want me to get better, to smile more often and find joy in life, but they've also accepted the person I've become: The "person" who is emerging from the pit.

Getting Through Grief

Deborah R. Gemmill, from *Getting Through Grief*, 1996, Beachcomber Press

My baby has died.

Please don't tell me you know how I feel. You don't. You can't. I hope you never do.

Don't tell me he's with God and I should be happy. How can I be happy when every time I go into his nursery all I see is an empty crib and toys that will never be played with? How can I be happy when my arms ache to hold him?

Please don't tell me God needed another angel. It's hard for me to understand why God would take away this little one who was so loved. Maybe I'll understand later. But for right now, let God find another angel.

Please, please, please don't tell me I'll have other children. Maybe I will, but my son was not a puppy that ran away. He cannot be replaced.

Maybe you could just listen when I remember out loud all the things that we did together: the walks, the early morning feedings, the first time he rolled over. Maybe you could just sit with me while I cry over all the things we'll never do together.

Please don't tell me it could be worse. How? I really don't want to hear about your grandfather's death. It's not the same. Don't think my pain will be eased by comparison. Of course I'm glad that he didn't suffer, but I'd be a lot happier if he hadn't died at all.

I know it must be hard for you, but would you mind looking at his picture just one more time? We don't have many of him, and I'm just a little bit afraid that I may forget what he looked like. He wasn't here that long, you know.

Could you please just listen? Don't tell me I'll get over it. There is no "over it," only through it. Maybe you could just be with me while I take my first steps through it.

Please don't tell me I should be glad he was just a baby, or that at least I didn't get to know him. I knew him. I knew him before I ever saw him. He is a part of me. And now he is gone. I haven't just lost a seven-month-old baby. I have lost a part of myself.

I know you mean well, but please don't expect me to tell you how to help me. I'd tell you if I knew. But right now I can hardly put one foot in front of the other.

Maybe if you looked around, you could find some things to do, like taking my daughter for a walk, or doing the dishes, or making some coffee.

Please don't try to remove my pain or distract me from it. I have to feel this way now. Maybe you could just listen.

Spreading His Message

John Oehser - Colts.com, Saturday, 4 February 2006

http://cache.colts.com/sub.cfm?page=article7&news_id=5112730f-a6be-4130-a27d-0d464cd7808d

Dungy Makes Super Bowl Stop to Speak at Athletes in Action Breakfast

DETROIT, Mich. – They were there for breakfast, and they were there to cheer New York Jets running back Curtis Martin.

And it was Martin who received the Athletes in Action Bart Starr Award Saturday morning, but the hundreds who gathered in fourth-floor ballroom at the Marriott Renaissance in Detroit, Mich., on the morning before Super Bowl XL were clearly touched by the featured speaker.

That speaker was Colts Head Coach Tony Dungy.

Two hours into the breakfast, emcee Brent Jones introduced Dungy, who was welcomed with a lengthy standing ovation. Dungy thanked the crowd, shared an anecdote about Martin, then told the crowd he was going to speak for about 15 minutes.

“It’s great to be here,” Dungy told the crowd, then adding with a laugh, “I just wish I wasn’t here in this capacity so many times of being just that close to being in the game and just being an invited speaker....”

He told them he was going to talk about lessons he had learned from his three sons. The crowd fell silent. Then Dungy spoke.

And although this was a breakfast – and although at many such events speakers speak over the clinking of glasses and murmurs from semi-interested listeners – for most of the 15 minutes the room was silent except for Dungy’s voice.

He spoke of his middle son, Eric, who he said shares his competitiveness and who is focused on sports “to where it’s almost a problem.” He spoke of his youngest son, Jordan, who has a rare congenital condition which causes him not to feel pain.

“He feels things, but he doesn’t get the sensation of pain,” Dungy said.

The lessons learned from Jordan, Tony Dungy said, are many.

“That sounds like it’s good at the beginning, but I promise you it’s not,” Dungy said. “We’ve learned a lot about pain in the last five years we’ve had Jordan. We’ve learned some hurts are really necessary for kids. Pain is necessary for kids to find out the difference between what’s good and what’s harmful....”

The lesson learned, Dungy said, is simple.

“You get the question all the time, ‘Why does the Lord allow pain in your life? Why do bad things happen to good people? If God is a God of love, why does he allow these hurtful things to hap-

pen?” Dungy said. “We’ve learned that a lot of times because of that pain, that little temporary pain, you learn what’s harmful. You learn to fear the right things.

“Pain sometimes lets us know we have a condition that needs to be healed. Pain inside sometimes lets us know that spiritually we’re not quite right and we need to be healed and that God will send that healing agent right to the spot.

“Sometimes, pain is the only way that will turn us as kids back to the Father.”

Finally, he spoke of James.

James Dungy, Tony Dungy’s oldest son, died three days before Christmas. As he did while delivering James’ eulogy in December, Dungy on Saturday spoke of him eloquently and steadily, speaking of lessons learned and of the positives taken from experience.

“It was tough, and it was very, very painful, but as painful as it was, there were some good things that came out of it,” Dungy said....

Dungy also said he received a letter from a girl from the family’s church in Tampa. She had known James for many years, Dungy said. She went to the funeral because she knew James.

“When I saw what happened at funeral, and your family and the celebration and how it was handled, that was the first time I realized there had to be a God,” Dungy said the girl wrote. “I accepted Christ into my life and my life’s been different since that day.”

Added Dungy, “That was an awesome blessing, so all of those things kind of made me realize what God’s love is all about.”

Dungy also said he was asked often how he was able to return to the Colts so quickly after James’ death. James died on December 22, and Dungy returned to the team one week later. Dungy said the answer was simple.

“People asked me, ‘How did you recover so quickly?’” Dungy said. “I’m not totally recovered. I don’t know that I ever will be. It’s still very, very painful, but I was able to come back because of something one of my good Christian friends said to me after the funeral.

“He said, ‘You know James accepted Christ into his heart, so you know he’s in heaven, right?’ I said, ‘Right, I know that.’ He said, ‘So, with all you know about heaven, if you had the power to bring him back now, would you?’ When I thought about it, I said, ‘No, I wouldn’t. I would not want him back with what I know about heaven.’

“That’s what helped me through the grieving process. Because of Christ’s spirit in me, I had that confidence that James is there, at peace with the Lord, and I have the peace of mind in the midst of something that’s very, very painful.

“That’s my prayer today, that everyone in this room would know the same thing.”

For complete article, see the link above or use this shortcut: <http://tinyurl.com/5pi8wu>

The Little Lamb

Erwin W. Lutzer, from *One Minute After You Die*, p. 75, 1997, Moody Publishers

The death of an infant, however, causes all of us to struggle with the will and purpose of God. It seems strange that God would grant the gift of life and then cause it to be snuffed out before it could blossom into a stage of usefulness. But we can be sure that there is a purpose in such a life, even if it is not immediately discernable.

James Vernon McGee again says that when a shepherd seeks to lead his sheep to better grass up the winding, thorny mountain paths, he often finds that the sheep will not follow him. They fear the unknown ridges and the sharp rocks. The shepherd will then reach into the flock and take a little lamb on one arm and another on his other arm. Then he starts up the precipitous pathway. Soon, the two mother sheep begin to follow, and afterward the entire flock. Thus they ascend the tortuous path to greener pastures.

So it is with the Good Shepherd. Sometimes He reaches into the flock and takes a lamb to Himself. He uses the experience to lead His people, to lift them to new heights of commitment as they follow the little lamb all the way home.

Little Touches to Make a Big Difference for Moms in Need

by Margaret Renkl, [PARENTING.COM](http://parenting.com)

<http://www.cnn.com/2008/HEALTH/family/02/26/par.friend.in.need/index.html>

When her father was dying of cancer, Kathy Hill Kremer leaned hard on her friends: "They brought me food when I forgot to eat, and wine when I just couldn't take it anymore. They drove my mom back and forth to the hospital. Best of all, they invited my daughter Aubrey for play-dates so she could escape all the sadness. That meant I could focus on helping my parents, and my husband could concentrate on being there for me," says the Tennessee mom....

And to make things more difficult, kids tend to get even needier during crunch time: The reduced attention, the change in routine, and an atmosphere of anguish can make them clingiest just when Mom needs some space. So how can you lend a hand? Here's what moms say has been most appreciated....

For complete article, see the link above or use this shortcut: <http://tinyurl.com/2h8nnu>.

A Grieving Parent

Judy Skapik

A grieving parent is someone who will never forget their child no matter how painful the memories are.

A grieving parent is someone who yearns to be with their dead child but cannot conceive leaving their living ones.

A grieving parent is someone who has only part of a heart as the rest of it is buried with their child.

A grieving parent is someone who begs for relief from the memories which plague them and then feels guilty when they get it.

A grieving parent is someone who pretends to be happy and enjoying life when they really are dying inside.

A grieving parent is someone who holds the lives of their remaining children as the most precious gift they have.

A grieving parent is someone who can cry or laugh at the drop of a hat whenever they remember their beloved child.

A grieving parent is someone who feels as if they just lost their child yesterday no matter how much time has passed.

A grieving parent is someone who fears for their remaining family because they cannot bear to have any more loss.

A grieving parent is someone who sits by their child's gravestone and feels a knife stabbing their heart.

A grieving parent is someone who wants to help others who have lost loved ones because somehow their loss is theirs all over again.

The New Normal

Author Unknown

Normal for me is trying to decide what to take to the cemetery for Christmas, birthday, Valentine's day, and Easter.

Normal is that extra chocolate Easter bunny sitting on the counter because I always get my children a chocolate bunny and this year I still bought one for the one who is not here.

Normal is sitting at the computer crying, sharing how I feel with chat buddies who have also lost a child.

Normal is being more comfortable with a funeral than a wedding or a birthday party. Yet, feeling a stab of pain in my heart when I smell the flowers, see that casket, and see all the people crying.

Normal is feeling like I can't sit another minute without getting up and screaming because I just don't like to sit through church anymore. And yet feeling like I have more faith and belief in God than you ever have had before.

Normal is going to bed feeling like my kids who are alive were cheated out of happy cheerful parents and instead they are stuck with sober, cautious people.

Normal is having tears waiting behind every smile when I realize someone important is missing from all the important events in my family's life.

Normal is staring at every little girl or boy who looks about my child's age. And then thinking of the age my child would be now and not being able to imagine it. Then wondering why it is even important to imagine it because it will never happen.

Normal is not sleeping very well because a thousand "what if's" and "why didn't I's" go through my head constantly.

Normal is turning the TV on the minute I wake up and it being the last thing I turn off before going to sleep at night because the silence is deafening.

Normal is every happy event in my life always being backed up with sadness lurking close behind because of the hole in my heart.

Normal is telling the story of my baby's death as if it were an everyday common place activity and then gasping in horror at how awful it sounds.

Normal is each year coming up with the difficult task of how to honor my child's memory and their birthday and survive those days. And trying to find the balloon or flag that fits the occasion.

Happy Birthday? Not really.

Normal is disliking jokes about death, funerals and bodies being referred to as cadavers when I know they were once someone's loved one.

Normal is being impatient with everything except someone stricken with grief over the loss of their child.

Normal is feeling a common bond with friends in England, Australia, Netherlands, Canada, and all over the USA, but yet never having met any of them face to face.

Normal is a new friendship with another grieving mother and meeting for coffee and talking and crying together over our children and our new lives. And worrying together over our living children.

Normal is being too tired to care if I paid the bills, cleaned house, did laundry or if there is any food in the house.

Normal is deciding if this time I am going to say if have 2 or 3 children because I will never see this person again and it is not worth explaining that one of them is in heaven. And yet when I say, "only 2" to avoid that problem, feeling as if I have betrayed that child.

My new normal is hiding all the things that have become normal for me so that everyone around me will think that I am "normal."

Letter to Ms. Fanny McCullough from Abraham Lincoln

Abraham Lincoln

Executive Mansion
Washington, December 23, 1862.

Dear Fanny

It is with deep grief that I learn of the death of your kind and brave Father; and, especially, that it is affecting your young heart beyond what is common in such cases. In this sad world of ours, sorrow comes to all; and, to the young, it comes with bitterest agony, because it takes them unawares. The older have learned to ever expect it. I am anxious to afford some alleviation of your present distress. Perfect relief is not possible, except with time. You can not now realize that you will ever feel better. Is not this so? And yet it is a mistake. You are sure to be happy again. To know this, which is certainly true, will make you some less miserable now. I have had experience enough to know what I say; and you need only to believe it, to feel better at once. The memory of your dear Father, instead of an agony, will yet be a sad sweet feeling in your heart, of a purer and holier sort than you have known before.

Please present my kind regards to your afflicted mother.

Your sincere friend

A. Lincoln

A letter from Abraham Lincoln to Fanny McCullough. Ms. McCullough's father, William McCullough, who was killed in battle near Coffeville, Mississippi on 5 Dec. 1862

Suggested Reading

While I have read many of these books, some suggestions are from other bereaved parents. Books that I have not personally read are underlined. Books I recommend are in **bold**.

Some suggestions may seem unusual: *Night* by Elie Wiesel, for example, somehow managed to be meaningful to me though it is about a teenage boy's experience in a German Concentration Camp. *Love's Executioner* by Dr Irvin Yalom, Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry at Stand University, is brilliant and insightful, but was extremely challenging to my theology. S. Gregory Peck is also a brilliant psychologist, but religious. His books, *The Road Less Traveled* and *People of the Lie*, helped reaffirm my faith.

C.S. Lewis' books are good, but some are difficult to read.

Children & Teens

Baby Angels, Jane Cowen Fletcher, Candlewick Press 1996

Gentle Willow, Joyce C. Mills, Magination Press

Help Me Say Goodbye, Janis Silverman, Fairview Press

I Miss You, Pat Thomas, Barron's

It Must Hurt A Lot, Doris Sanford, Mutinomah Press

I Will Remember You, Laura Dower & Elena Lister, Scholastic Inc.

Life & Loss: A Guide to Help Grieving Children, Linda Goldman, Accelerated Development Inc.

Tear Soup, Pat Schweibert, Grief Watch (good for adults also)

The Dragon Fly Door, John Adams, Feather Rock Books Inc.

The Fall of Freddy the Leaf, Leo Buscaglia Ph.D., Slack

The Next Place, Warren Hanson, Waldman House Press

We Were Going to Have a Baby, But We Had an Angel Instead, Pat Schwiebert, Grief Watch

When Children Grieve, John James and Russell Friedman, Harper Paperbacks

Healing & Insight

A Broken Heart Still Beats, Anne McCracken, Hazelden

A Grace Disguised: How the Soul Grows Through Loss, Gerald Sittser, Zondervan

A Grief Unveiled: One Father's Journey Through the Loss of a Child, Gregory Floyd, Paraclete Press

Awakening from Grief: Finding the Road Back to Joy, John E. Welshon, Open Heart Publications

Beyond Tears: Living After Losing a Child, Ellen Mitchell, Saint Martin's Griffin

Big George: An Autobiography of an Angel, James Jennings, Hay House

Dear Parents: Letters to Bereaved Parents, Joy Johnson (editor), Centering Corporation

Dying: A Book of Comfort, Pat McNees (ed.), Warner Books

Empty Cradle, Broken Heart: Surviving the Death of Your Baby, Deborah L. Davis, Fulcrum Publishing

Free to Grieve, Maureen Rank, Bethany House

Gone but Not Lost: Grieving the Death of a Child, David W. Wiersbe, Baker Books

Good Grief, Granger E. Westberg, Augsburg Fortress

Grieving the Child I Never Knew, Kathe Wunnenberg, Zondervan (Religious)

The Grace in Dying: How We are Transformed Spiritually As We Die, K.D., HarperSanFrancisco.

In a Heartbeat, Dawn Siegrist Waltman

I Wasn't Ready to Say Goodbye, Brook Noel & Pamela D. Blair, Champion Press

Lament for a Son, Nicholas Wolterstorff, Cambridge University Press

Life after Loss, Bob Deits, Fisher Books

Living with Grief, Brook Noel & Pamela Blair Ph.D., Champion Press

Mommy, Please Don't Cry, Linda Deymaz, Multnomah Gifts

Moondance to Eternity: A Doctor's Journey into the Hearts and Souls of Children Facing Death, John E. Monaco, DeVorss & Company

Tender Fingerprints, Brad Stetson, Zondervan

The Bereaved Parent, Harriet Sarnoff Schiff, Crown

The Mourning Handbook, Helen Fitzgerald, Simon & Schuster

Waiting for Gabriel, Amy Kuebelbeck, Layola Press

When Goodbye is Forever, John Bramlett, Ballantine Books

When the Bough Breaks: Forever After the Death of a Son or Daughter

by Judith R. Bernstein, Andrews McMeel Publishing

When there are No Words, Charlie Walton, Path Finder Publishing

Psychology

Listening and Caring Skills in Ministry, John S. Savage, Abingdon Press

Love's Executioner, Irvin D. Yalom, Harper Perennial Classics (Atheistic)

Man's Search for Meaning, Viktor E. Frankl, Beacon Press

Momma and the Meaning of Life, Irvin D. Yalom, Harper Perennial (Atheistic)

Night, Ellie Wiesel, Hill and Wang

People of the Lie, M. Scott Peck, Simon & Schuster

The Road Less Traveled, M. Scott Peck, Touchstone

Religion & Theology

90 Minutes in Heaven, Don Piper & Cecil Murphey, Revell

A Grief Observed, C.S. Lewis, Easton Press

Batten Down the Hatches, Pat Scott, 21st Century Christian

Beyond the Storm, Dr. Jerry Jones, Howard Books

Confessions of Grieving Christian, Zig Zigler, B&H Publishing Group

C.S. Lewis's Case for Christ, Art Lindsey, IVP Books

Disappointment with God, Philip Yancey, Zondervan

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made, Philip Yancey & Paul Brand, Zondervan

Getting Through the Tough Stuff, Charles R. Swindoll, Thomas Nelson

Hiding from Love: Learning to Feel and Serve Again, Dr. John Townsend

Holding on to Hope, Nancy Guthrie, Taylor House Publishers, Inc.

If Faithfulness, He Afflicted Me, Lynette Kraft, Tate Publishing

In His Image, Philip Yancey & Paul Brand, Zondervan

Miracles, C.S. Lewis, Fount

Mere Christianity, C.S. Lewis, HaperCollins

One Minute After You Die, Erwin W. Lutzer, Moody Publishers

Reaching for the Invisible God, Philip Yancer, Zondervan

Revenge Redeemed, Bob Stewart, Fleming H Revell Company

Safe in the Arms of God, John MacArthur, Thomas Nelson Publishing

Shattered Dreams: God's Unexpected Pathway to Joy, Larry Crabb, WaterBrook Press

Soul Survivor, Philip Yancey, Hodder & Stoughton Religious

So You Want to Be Like Christ, Charles R. Swindoll, Thomas Nelson

Surviving the Raging Fire, Pat Scott, 21st Century Christian

The Great Divorce, C.S. Lewis, HarperSanFrancisco

The Hiding Place, Corrie Ten Boom, Barbour Publishing

The Mystery of God's Will, Charles R. Swindoll, Thomas Nelson

The Problem of Pain, C.S. Lewis, Touchstone Books

The Problem of Suffering, Kippy Myers, Freed-Hardeman University

The Lord is My Shepherd: Healing Wisdom of the Twenty Third Psalm, Rabbi Harold Kushner, Knopf

The Weight of Glory, C.S. Lewis, HarperSanFrancisco

The Will of God, Leslie D. Weatherhead, The Epworth Press

What's So Amazing About Grace, Philip Yancey, Zondervan

When Bad Things Happen to Good People, Rabbi Harold Kushner, Anchor

When Life Doesn't Make Sense, James Dobson, Tyndale House Publishers

When Life is Forever Changed, Rick Taylor, Harvest House Publishers

Yet Will I Trust Him: Understanding God in a Suffering World, John Mark Hicks, College Press Publishing Company

Suggested Music

These songs are recommended by me or other bereaved parents. However some songs may be more meaningful to someone than others. Many songs are available from internet music stores such as Amazon, iTunes, etc...

1. *A Mother's Prayer* —Celine Dion
2. *A New Day Has Come* —Celine Dion
3. *Always On Your Side* —Sheryl Crow & Sting
4. *Angel* —Beverly Mitchell
5. *Angel* —Sarah McLachlan
6. *Angels Among Us* —Alabama
7. *Angels in Waiting* —Tammy Cochran
8. *Annie's Song* —John Denver
9. *Are You Alright?* —Lucinda Williams
10. *Awake* — Josh Groban
11. *As I Lay Me Down* —Sophie Hawkins
12. *Baby Mine* —Bette Midler
13. *Baby Mine* —Alison Krauss
14. *Believe* —Trans-Siberian Orchestra
15. *Blessed* —Elton John
16. *Borrowed Angels* —Kristin Chenoweth
17. *Broken* —Lifehouse
18. *Broken Hearted Me* —Anne Murray
19. *Butterfly* —Mariah Carey
20. *By Heart* —Jim Brickman
21. *Can't Cry Hard Enough* — Williams Brothers (or Bellefire)
22. *Cinderella* —Steven Curtis Chapman
23. *Circus* —Eric Clapton
24. *Do What you Have to Do* — Sarah McLachlan
25. *Do You Dream of Me?* — Michael W. Smith
26. *Down The Road of Bittersweet* —Karl Kohlhase
27. *Dreaming with a Broken Heart* — John Mayer
28. *Even Darkness is Light to Him* — Michael Card
29. *Everything I Own* —Bread
30. *Fly* —Celine Dion
31. *For Always* —Josh Groban
32. *From Where You Are* — Lifehouse
33. *Glory Baby* —Watermark
34. *God Bless the Broken Road* — Rascal Flats
35. *God and Time* —Newsong

36. *God Only Cries for the Living* —Diamond Rio
37. *Gone too Soon* —Michael Jackson
38. *He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother* —Al Green (Various Artists)
39. *Healing Rain* —Michael W. Smith
40. *Heaven's Gift* —Lora Knight
41. *Held* —Natalie Grant
42. *Hello-Goodbye* —Michael W. Smith
43. *Here Without You* —3 Doors Down
44. *He's My Son* —Mark Schultz (or Mel Kennedy)
45. *Hold Him in Heaven* —Barbara Fairchild
46. *Homesick* —Mercy Me
47. *How Do I Live Without You* —Leann Rimes
48. *I Believe* —Diamond Rio
49. *I Can Only Imagine* —MercyMe
50. *I Grieve* —Peter Gabriel
51. *I Will Be Here* —Steven Curtis Chapman
52. *I Will Carry You* —Selah
53. *I Will Love You* —Fisher
54. *I Will Not Forget You* —Sarah McLachlan
55. *I Will Remember You* —Sarah McLachlan
56. *If* —Bread
57. *If We Hold On Together* —Diana Ross
58. *I'm Your Angel* —Laren Ireland-Cantous & Noel Amante
59. *It Will Be Me* —Melissa Etheridge
60. *Jesus Has A Rocking Chair* —The Greenes
61. *Last Day* —Marilyn Scott
62. *Lay Me Down to Sleep* —Robin Patrick
63. *Life Ain't Always Beautiful* —Gary Allen
64. *Live Forever* —Michael W. Smith
65. *Love, Me* —Collin Raye
66. *Lullabye* —Billy Joel
67. *Me and God* —Josh Turner
68. *Miracle* —Celine Dion
69. *More Than a Memory* —Garth Brooks
70. *My Heart Will Go On* —Celine Dion
71. *My Name* —George Canyon
72. *New Star in the Sky* —Air
73. *Not a Day Goes By* —Lonestar
74. *Nothing Without You* —Bebo Norman
75. *Oh My Papa* —Eddie Fisher

76. *Oh Very Young* —Cat Stevens
(Various Artists)
77. *Now I Lay Me Down* —Nikki
Venable
78. *One More Day* —Diamond Rio
79. *One Sweet Day* —Mariah Carey
& Boyz II Men
80. *Praise You in This Storm* —
Casting Crowns
81. *Precious Child* —Emily Richards
(or Karen Taylor-Good)
82. *Probably Wouldn't Be This Way*
—Leann Rimes
83. *Remember Me This Way* —
Jordan Hill
84. *Seasons in the Sun* —Terry Jack
85. *Shadows of the Day* —Linkin
Park
86. *Shine On* —Jet
87. *Sissy's Song* —Allen Jackson
88. *Smallest and Wingless* —Craig
Cardiff
89. *Somewhere Over the Rainbow*
—Karen Carpenter
90. *Streets of Heaven* —Sherrie
Austin
91. *Tears In Heaven* —Eric Clapton
92. *The Dance* —Garth Brooks
93. *The First Time Ever I Saw Your
Face* —Peter, Paul & Mary
94. *The Prayer* —Josh Groban &
Charlotee Church
95. *The Rose* —Bette Midler
96. *There is Peace* —Emily Richards
97. *There You'll Be* —Faith Hill
98. *Time Passes On* —Orleans
99. *Too Beautiful* —Chelsea Brun-
sell
100. *To Where You Are* —Josh
Groban
101. *Visitor From Heaven* —Twila
Paris
102. *Waiting For My Real Life To
Begin* —Colin Hay
103. *Watch Over My Baby* —
Quartus
104. *What Sarah Said* —Death Cab
for Cutie
105. *What We Believe In* —Jim
Brickman
106. *When God Ran* —Benny Hes-
ter
107. *When I Get to Where I'm Going*
—Brad Paisley
108. *Whisper to Me* —Emily Ri-
chards
109. *Who You'd Be Today* —Kenny
Chesney
110. *Wish You Were Here* —Mark
Harris
111. *With Hope* —Steven Curtis
Chapman
112. *Would You Go with Me* —Josh
Turner

113. *You Are Not Alone* —Michael Jackson

114. *You'll Be in My Heart* —Phil Collins

115. *You're Gone* —Diamond Rio

116. *Your Heart Will Lead You Home* —Kenny Loggins

Poetry

Ezri's Psalm

George G. Galdiano, 19 November 2005

Ezri! Oh! Ezri!
I cry to God for you!
Tears have been my drink
Sorrow my only food

The grave has swallowed
My heart is ripped in two
The earth is your crib
Cruel Death has taken you

My eyes have had no rest
The stars have heard my cries
Words cannot comfort
No man can answer "Why?"

Your sweet sister wails
To God she lifts you up
Her hugs are empty
Her love has not a cup

Her heart is broken
How she wants to hold you!
Nightly she begs God
She pleads to be with you

Your mother now mourns
But her faith is still strong
"The world is unfair,
But to God she belongs."

Women weep with us
Strong men have offered prayers
They cry like children
Their hearts our burden share

There's only one hope
That our sorrow will end
You are in heaven
And we'll hold you again

Ezri's Requiem

George G. Galdiano, 12 December 2005

Born before dawn after Christmas day
You were so perfect in every way
I loved you before we even met
Crazy about you in an instant

Your birth was a miracle to see
My world swirled around, my joy complete
Who knew my heart fit so perfectly
Between two so tiny hands and feet?

Your smile, your brown hair, your hazel
eyes
Your crawl, your kisses, your midnight cries
I wouldn't trade one for all the world
You're my happiness, my baby girl

Ten months is too short to say hello
Barely enough time to see you grow
No Thanksgiving, no white Christmas snow,
No birthdays, so much you'll never know

Even though I will never know why
I know sometimes we must say goodbye
But with all my heart and soul I swear
In heaven, love is forever there

The Promise

George G. Galdiano, 17 February 2006

Inconsolable grief and pain
Stalk me at every turn
In moments of silent refuge
They sigh, "She won't return..."

Once sweetly cherished holidays
Instead hold fear and dread
For merrily they remind me
That she is still quite dead

What can give me peace or solace?
Tell, what can ease my pain?
Will she ever return to me?
Will I hold her again?

Some people turn to drink or drugs
To numb the searing pain
But those cannot dull forever,
Thus nothing do they gain

Some people have burning rage,
Vengeance their balm of choice
But once it's applied, they realize
Their hearts cannot rejoice

Some people seek to help others
Hoping to be a boon,
Or they may try to save the world,
But neither salves the wound

Some people look inside themselves
But must turn out again
The answers to the questions asked
Cannot be found within

Some people seek the reasoned voice
Of men so wise and learned
Their council seems so true and sweet
'Till dust they too return

There's only One who promises
That we will meet again
And He has risen from the tomb
To prove my hope's not vain

A Moment with Ezri

George G. Galdiano

If I could hold you one more time,
If once more into my lap you could climb,
I'd feel your rhythmic breath of life
And cherish your heart beating close to mine

If time were mine, I would decide
To gaze deeply into your hazel eyes
Lost in such love, our souls would twine,
And I'd will that moment to never die

With my heart and eyes, I would trace
The smooth, round curves of your angelic face,
Drink the essence of your sweet hair,
And be content forever there embraced

If in my arms you slept once more,
I'd lose myself in you, my heart's adore,
Oh, how my joy would fill the earth
And mortal I'd behold all heaven's worth

Nothing could fade or dim our love
While we communed in our blissful hug
Content, we'd let the world rush by
And in our solace wait for God to come

(Inspired by an incomplete poem in *When Goodbye is Forever*, by John Bramlett, New York: Ballantine Books)

Dark November

George G. Galdiano, 28 November 2006

Often I awake,
A tear in my eye
And for one swift ache
I may forget why

Then I'll remember
You were in my dream,
Since Dark November
My only reprieve

Whenever I'm blue
And I'm not sure why
I'm yearning for you
That you were alive

Suddenly, I'll smile,
'Though no one's around,
Your baby girl wiles,
So charming I found,

Were hidden away,
Bursting to be free,
Too lovely to stay
Under lock and key

Forever I'll wish
You were here with me
My bitter anguish,
Not you, a mem'ry

An Angel's Prayer

George G. Galdiano, 04 June 2007

Now I lay me down to sleep
I do not cry, I do not weep
This strong body is mine to keep
I can fly at angel speed

I paint the sunrise for you
And pick the colors in sunsets too
Rainbows are kisses that I blew
Shooting stars, a wish for you

Heaven seems so very far
But it's much closer than a star
If God in heaven is where you are,
Then I too live in your heart

Now I lay me down to sleep
I pray the Lord your soul to keep
I will watch you through the nights
'Til you wake in heaven's light

Has It Really Been?

George G. Galdiano, 01 October 2007

Has it really been a day?
I held you just yesterday.

Has it really been a week?
All I can do is weep.

Has it really been a month?
Without you, there is no sun.

Has it really been a year?
I've cried a million tears.

If prayers were stars,
Mine would fill the sky.

If grief could kill,
I'd die a thousand times.

If thoughts were real,
The universe would be filled
with you.

What's the Sound?

George G. Galdiano, 16 October 2007

What's the sound of desperate prayers?
What's the sound of a mother's tears?

What's the sound of a soul adrift?
What's the sound of a final kiss?

What's the sound of an angel flying?
What's the sound of a child dying?

What's the sound of icy rage?
What's the sound of a child's grave?

What's the sound of a candle flame?
What's the sound of an unsaid name?

What's the sound of empty years?
What's the sound of a million tears?

What's the sound of unsung glory?
What's the sound of an unread story?

What's the sound of a child's charms?
What's the sound of aching arms?

What's the sound of questioned faith?
What's the sound of love and grace?

What's the sound of an empty tomb?
What's the sound of a rose's bloom?

Am I Strong?

by George G. Galdiano, 17 Oct 2007

What does it mean to be strong?
Does it mean to right a wrong?
No. My child's still in her quiet crypt,
Embraced by Death's cold, graceless grip.

Does it mean you do not cry?
No. I've wept and begged to die.
Tears like rain fall from my eyes,
And with time would flood the skies.

Does it mean you can forget?
No. I'll sooner lose my silhouette.
A thousand times I've touched her grave,
And a million more I've begged and prayed.

Does it mean you are a sage?
No. I question, hurt, and rage.
My spirit's in a restless maze.
My grief, the fool on Shakespeare's stage.

Does it mean you can go on
Living life like nothing's wrong?
No. I'll never, ever be the same.
I am, by Death's hand, forever changed.

What does it mean to be strong?
It's to tell the World you belong
Among the weak and bloodied throng
That stood once more than knocked down.

Bury Me With Daises

George G. Galdiano, 27 Oct 2007

Red golden Autumn leaves
Frolic and dance to earth.
Unseen, the winter breeze
Plays music for their mirth.

Children in coats and scarves
Play games like chase, and run.
Their undiminished cheer
Warms winter's waning sun.

Dim daisies bury seeds
Beneath the hardened dirt.
She did not live to see
Spring rains or summer's birth.

She blossomed not a year
And faded far too soon.
She neither shed a tear
Nor sighed the harvest moon.

My heart is buried there—
Within my daisy's grave.
I grieve her beauty fair
And all the joy she gave.

She knew not she gave at all
Which is why I call her blessed.
Ever since my daisy's fall
She has been so greatly missed.

When the Fall of Life comes—
To all who live it must—
The aches and withered skin
Before cold winter's dusk,

Sing to Autumn's music,
Dance with the falling leaves,
Let swift laughter warm you,
Play long beyond the eve.

When I sleep in winter—
This is my last request—
Bury me with daisies,
Lay them upon my chest.

Bury me deep and sure
Shed not a tear for me
For like my daisy pure
You planted but a seed.

When the tears of spring pass
And heaven's meadows bloom
Look for me in the field—
I'll be with her at last

Twice Damned

George G. Galdiano, 06 Jun 2008

Twice damned; Twice cursed--this is my hell
--One foot there and one in this world.
Tried, condemned to live in this cell
Afraid to die, scared to live well.

I've kissed the veil 'tween life and death,
Blessed and cursed God with wretched
breath
Soulless I trudge this sullen path
Without a future or a past

Deep and wide would I rip the sky
And into demon hordes I'd stride
Whatever fears immortals hide,
Nothing could keep me from your side

Some worship the sun's golden light
Others praise the moon's silver night
I exist in the dim twilight--
Grey shadows between death and life

I yearn "To sleep, perchance to dream,"
And yet I dread the ether's weave
For losing you once again seems
As bitter by Apollo's wings

Is a child in the other realm
Any less than one mortal still?
The guilt of joy yet overwhelms
And my ethos forever sealed

A Birthday In Heaven

Kris Smith, 2005

I heard you crying yesterday
And felt your heart-sent love
So I'm sending you this message
Now, from Heaven up above.

You're wondering if I'll celebrate
My birthday (way up here)
I know you're missing me today
I feel your essence near.

God planned a special day for me
He told me with a wink
He'd ordered me a special cake
(It's Angel food, I think)

I'm getting lots of hugs from God
He's really good at that
And every time that I walk by
He gives my head a pat

Balloons will fill the streets for me
They float up through the clouds
And we have lots of clowns up here
That make us laugh out loud

There is a birthday carousel
Jeweled horses ride the wind
With music playing oh so sweet...
The magic never ends

I've made so many friends, you see
We laugh and play and sing
We ride our bikes and play jump rope
And sleep in Angel's wings

We'll have our cake and ice cream
And open gifts, surprise!
But we don't blow out our candles here
Instead, they light the skies

After the Worst

Author Unknown

After the worst has happened with nothing
left to fear,
The sun continues shining with
undiminished cheer;
And winds continue blowing and skies
continue fair,
As hearts continue bearing pain they could
not bear.
A life so young released to heaven...left on
earth we wonder, "Why?"
But some are sent among us briefly...some
have spirits meant to fly.

Angel Cord

Author Unknown

We are connected, my child and I,
by an invisible cord, not seen by the eye.

It's unlike the cord that connects us 'til birth.
This cord can't be seen by anyone on earth.

This cord does its work right from the start.
It binds us together, attached to my heart.

I know that it's there, though no one can
see,
the invisible cord from my child to me.

The strength of this cord is hard to describe,
it can't be destroyed, it can't be denied.

It's stronger than any cord man could
create.
It withstands the test and holds every
weight.

Though you are gone and not here with me,
The cord is still there, but no one can see.

It pulls at my heart, I am bruised, I am sore.
But this cord is my lifeline as never before.

I am thankful that God connects us this way.
A mother and child, nothing can take it
away.

Butterflies

Author Unknown

I long to feel the soft weight of you
to welcome you home, with kisses
on silky round cheeks.
Instead my arms ache with the
weight of your absence,
the empty places that were meant for you
to grow into.
My love for you will last an eternity
My hopes and dreams now carried
on the fragile wings of each butterfly
passing
compelling me to pause,
to savor each moment,
each flutter in my heart, your wings.

Christmas In Heaven

Wanda Bencke, 1999

christmasinheaven.net/christmas.html

I see the countless CHRISTMAS TREES
around the world below
With tiny lights like HEAVEN'S STARS re-
flecting on the snow.

The sight is so SPECTACULAR please
wipe away that tear
For I am spending CHRISTMAS WITH
JESUS CHRIST this year...

(see christmasinheaven.net/christmas.html for the full poem.
I'm waiting for permission from Ms. Bencke to before adding
the full poem.)

Daddy's Girl

Anne Musial, HAND of Alameda County
[for] Natalee Elizabeth Musial, 26 Dec 1999

Every day I follow you,
I wish that somehow, you knew.
In every thought you have of me,
In everything you do.

I know how much you love me,
I wish you wouldn't cry.
Although I wanted to be with you,
My soul was meant to fly.

You know Dad, I am happy.
I am safe from any harm.
Just imagine eternity,
Protected in your arms.

So Daddy, please remember,
Whenever you are down.
I am always with you.
When no one else is around.

I'll always know you love me.
Until you leave this world.
Then we'll be together,
Forever, Daddy's Girl.

Don't Tell me

Author Unknown

Don't tell me that you understand,
Don't tell me that you know.
Don't tell me that I will survive,
How I will surely grow.

Don't tell me this is just a test,
That I am truly blessed.
That I am chosen for the task,
Apart from all the rest.

Don't come at me with answers
That can only come from me,
Don't tell me how my grief will pass,
That I will soon be free.

Don't stand in pious judgment
Of the bonds I must untie,
Don't tell me how to grieve,
Don't tell me when to cry.

My life is filled with selfishness,
My pain is all I see,
But I need you and your
love...Unconditionally.

Accept me in my ups and downs,
I need someone to share,
Just hold my hand and let me cry,
And say, "My friend, I care."

Feelings

Joy Curnutt

In memory of Jason 11/26/1974–04/11/1999

I feel like I've just existed
And now it's been a year
I don't know how I've lived and breathed
Without you being here.

I know you lived your lifetime
As short as that seems to me,
But the pain in my heart is still so great,
Yet I know your spirit is free.

At times I think I hear you
The thoughts come to my mind.
I struggle for the sound of your voice,
But your voice I cannot find.

Yet you come to me in many ways
So I know you did not die,
You want to tell me that you're close,
And to please stop asking Why.

Our lives on earth seem all too brief,
Or brief as it seems to me.
But where you are is forever,
GOD calls that Eternity!

Grieve Not

Mary Frye, 1932

Do not stand at my grave and weep
I am not there; I do not sleep.
I am a thousand winds that blow,
I am the diamond glints on snow,
I am the sun on ripened grain,
I am the gentle autumn rain.
When you awaken in the morning's hush
I am the swift uplifting rush
Of quiet birds in circling flight.
I am the soft stars that shine at night.
Do not stand at my grave and cry,
I am not there; I did not die

God's Lent Child

Edgar Guest

I'll lend you for a little time
A child of mine, God said.
For you to love the while she lives
And mourn for when she's dead.

It may be six or seven years
Or forty-two or three.
But, will you, 'till I call her back,
Take care of her for me?

She'll bring her charms to gladden you
And should her stay be brief,
You'll have her lovely memories
As solace for your grief.

I cannot promise she will stay
Since all from earth return,
But there are lessons taught down there,
I want this child to learn.

I've looked the wide world over
In my search for teachers true.
And from the throngs that crowd life's lane
I have selected you.

Now will you give her all your love,
Nor think the labor vain,
Nor hate me when I come to call
This lent child back again?

I fancied that I heard them say
"Dear Lord, thy will be done.
For all the joys thy child shall bring,
The risk of grief we'll run."

"We'll shelter her with tenderness,
We'll love her while we may.
And for the happiness we've known
Forever grateful stay."

"But should thy angels call for her,
Much sooner than we've planned
We'll brave the bitter grief that comes
And try to understand."

How Deep is the Ocean?

Irving Berlin

How can I tell you what is in my heart?
How can I measure each and every part?
How can I tell you how much I love you?
How can I measure just how much I do?

How much do I love you?
I'll tell you no lie
How deep is the ocean?
How high is the sky?

How many times a day do I think of you?
How many roses are sprinkled with dew?

How far would I travel
To be where you are?
How far is the journey
From here to a star?

And ever since I lost you
How much do I cry?
How deep is the ocean?
How high is the sky?

(words in the last verse altered)

If Snowdrops Grow in Heaven

Author Unknown

If Snowdrops grow in heaven,
Please pick a bunch for me,
place them in my babies arms
and tell him they're from me.

Tell him I love him and miss him,
and when he turns to smile,
place a kiss upon his cheek
and hold him for a while.

Because remembering him is easy,
I do it every day,
but there's an ache within my heart
That will never go away.

I Wonder, "Is that You?"

Lisa Richardson

As a butterfly flutters across the sky
I wonder, "Is that you?"

I see my shadow separate into two
I wonder, "Is that you?"

As a rainbow arches its back against the heavens
I wonder, "Is that you?"

I watch as the summer sun settles to it's slumber
I wonder, "Is that you?"

Little I Knew

Author Unknown

Little I knew that morning,
God was going to call your name,
In life we loved you dearly,
In death we do the same.

It broke our hearts to lose you,
You did not go alone
For part of me went with you,
The day God called you home.

You left us beautiful memories,
Your love is still our guide
An though we cannot see you,
You are always by our side.

Our family chain is broken,
And nothing seems the same,
But as God calls us one by one,
The chain will link again.

Just A Little Fellow

Author Unknown

I'm just a little fellow
Who didn't quite make it there
But I flew straight to heaven
And I'm waiting for you here.

Don't you fret about me, Mommy
I'm of all God's lambs most blest
I'd have loved to stay there with you,
But The Shepherd knows what's best.

Many who dwell where I live
Waited years to enter in,
Struggled through a world of sorrow,
And marred their lives with sin.

So Sweet Mommy, don't you sorrow
Wipe those tears and chase the gloom
I went straight to Jesus' bosom
From my lovely mother's womb.

Thank you for the life you gave me
It was brief, but I won't complain
I have all of heaven's glory;
Suffered none of earthly pain.

Thank you for the name you gave me
I'd love to have brought it fame
But if I'd lingered in earth's shadow,
Might instead have brought it shame.

Daddy gave me something for you,
It's our secret, Mommy Dear,
Pressed it tight against my forehead
And then he whispered in my ear.

I'll be waiting for you Mommy,
You, Daddy, and my Little Sis
When I am with you forever,
Then I'll give you Daddy's Kiss.

Just Say, "I'm Sorry"

Author Unknown

You don't know how I feel
Please don't tell me that you do.
There's just one way to know,
Have you lost a child too?

"You'll have another child!"
Must I hear this each day?
Can I get another mother, too,
If mine should pass away?

Don't say it was "God's will"
That's not the God I know,
Would God on purpose break my heart,
Then watch as my tears flow?

"Aren't you better yet?"
Is that what I heard you say?
NO! A part of my heart aches
I'll always feel some pain.

You think that silence is kind,
But it hurts me even more.
I want to talk about my child
Who has gone through death's door.

Don't say these things to me,
Although you do mean well.
They do not take away the pain away;
I must go through this hell.

I will be better—slow but sure—
And it helps to have you near.
But a simple "I'm sorry you lost your child,"
Is all I need to hear.

Please

Rita Moran

PLEASE, don't ask me if I'm over it yet.
I'll never be over it.

PLEASE, don't tell me she's in a better
place.
She isn't here with me.

PLEASE, don't say at least she isn't suffer-
ing.
I haven't come to terms with why she had to
suffer at all.

PLEASE, don't tell me you know how I feel,
Unless you have lost a child.

PLEASE, don't ask me if I feel better.
Bereavement isn't a condition that clears
up.

PLEASE, don't tell me at least you had her
for so many years.
What year would you choose for your child
to die?

PLEASE, don't tell me God never gives us
more than we can bear.

PLEASE, just say you are sorry.

PLEASE, just say you remember my child, if
you do.

PLEASE, just let me talk about my child.

PLEASE, mention my child's name.

PLEASE, just let me cry.

Rock-a-Bye Andrew

Brenda, Andrew's Mommy

Rock-a-bye Andrew, my dear little boy.
Wonder of wonders, my blessing and joy.
Slumber as I gently hold you,
Let my tender love enfold you.

Gift from God to me and the world,
Head on my heart, so peacefully curled.
Infant sublime, first true love of mine,
One with the Father, yet born to be mine.

As I rock you calmly sleeping,
Angel guards their watch are keeping.
Precious child, one day we shall see,
What love has destined for you and for me

Same Song, Different Verse

David M. Bailey

www.davidmbailey.com

*Sun came up again, just like I hoped it
would
But still, I had a question that did my soul no
good
So I poured a cup of coffee and I called out
to the Lord
He showed up and said hello, though I
thought He looked a little bored*

*I said "Lord, why do bad things happen?
He said "Oh please, we've covered this be-
fore."
I said 'yeah, but the question keeps return-
ing."
He said "so do I - if you're keeping score."*

*In fact, I promised I would never leave you
And if you look, you'll see I never have
Now tell me again; what was your question?
I looked at God and said 'don't make me
laugh.'*

*'You know exactly what my question is --
Let me tell you what I'm starting to think
Maybe even You don't know the answer
And You being God, that would really stink*

*Well, God kinda let my comment hang there
Then He looked at me, patient and amused
He said 'david, I'm especially fond of you
So of course I'm not surprised if you're confused*

*If you really want to know why bad things
happen
First you have to look at all the good
When you start to compare, you'll see imbalance there
And what is it you'd change if you could?*

*Truth is, I didn't know what to say
So I pretended that I didn't understand
I started making noise about my question
Until I saw God hold up His hand*

*He said, 'so here's the answer to your question:
Bad things happen cuz they do.
The question is will you let me help?
That answer is always up to you*

*I said Lord; you're only leaving me with questions
He said maybe so, maybe not
Sometimes the question is the answer
Why don't you go give that one some thought*

*And meanwhile, remember that I love you
And will be with you as you work it out
Won't be long before we talk some more
Of that, my son, I truly have no doubt*

*By now I was half-way through my coffee
Suddenly I began to smile
After all this talk my cup was still half-full
I'm thinking that it has been all the while*

(Used with permission. www.davidmbailey.com)

Sweet Baby Rose

Kellie Cunningham Bliss

In memory of Rose Tamikka Bliss, 1 July 2001

so, so tiny
quiet
perfect
baby girl.
beautiful
long fingers.
beautiful
long toes.

mouth opens
to say a
silent hello.
arm trembles
as her body
quietly dies.
quietly dies.
quietly dies.

eyes never
open, her
warm body
turns cold.
so, so tiny
quiet
perfect
baby girl.

Visitor from Heaven

Sung by Twila Paris

A visitor from heaven
If only for a while
A gift of love to be returned
We think of you and smile
A visitor from heaven
Accompanied by grace
Reminding of a better love
And of a better place

With aching hearts and empty arms
We send you with a name
It hurts so much to let you go
But we're so glad you came
We're so glad you came

A visitor from heaven
If only for a day
We thank Him for the time He gave
And now it's time to say
We trust you to the Father's love
And to his tender care
Held in the everlasting arms
And we're so glad you're there
We're so glad you're there

With breaking hearts and open hands
We send you with a name
It hurts so much to let you go
But we're so glad you came
We're so glad you came.

Words From An Angel

Author Unknown

I have not turned my back on you,
So there is no need to cry.
I'm watching you from Heaven,
Just beyond the morning sky.

I've seen you almost fall apart,
When you could barely stand.
I asked the Lord to comfort you,
And watched him take your hand.

He told me you are in more pain,
Than I could ever be.
He wiped his eyes and swallowed hard,
Then gave your hand to me.

Although you may not feel my touch,
Or see me by your side.
I've whispered that I love you,
While I wiped each tear you cried.

So please try not to ache for me,
We'll meet again one day.
Beyond the dark and stormy sky,
A rainbow lights the way.

When Tomorrow Starts Without Me

David M. Romano

When tomorrow starts without me,
And I'm not there to see,
If the sun should rise and find your eyes
All filled with tears for me;
I wish so much you wouldn't cry
The way you did today,
While thinking of the many things,
We didn't get to say.

I know how much you love me,
As much as I love you,
And each time that you think of me,
I know you'll miss me too;
But when tomorrow starts without me,
Please try to understand,
That an angel came and called my name,
And took me by the hand,

She said my place was ready,
In heaven far above,
And that I'd have to leave behind
All those I dearly love.
But as I turned to walk away,
A tear fell from my eye,
For all my life, I always thought,
I didn't want to die.

I had so much to live for,
So much left yet to do,
It seemed almost impossible,
That I was leaving you.
I thought of all the yesterdays,
The good ones and the bad,
I thought of all that we shared,
And all the fun we had.

If I could relive yesterday,
Just even for a while,
I'd say good-bye and kiss you
And maybe see you smile.
But then I fully realized,
That this could never be,
For emptiness and memories,
Would take the place of me.

And when I thought of worldly things,
I might miss some tomorrow,
I thought of you, and when I did,
My heart was filled with sorrow.
But when I walked through heaven's gates,
I felt so much at home.
When God looked down and smiled at me,
From His great golden throne.

He said, "This is eternity,
And all I've promised you."
Today your life on earth is past,
But here life starts anew.
I promise no tomorrow,
But today will always last,
And since each day is the same way,
There's no longing for the past.

So when tomorrow starts without me,
Don't think we're far apart,
For every time you think of me,
I'm right here, in your heart

Quotations

Suggestion for epitaphs are in **bold**. Because of space limitations on memorials, only parts of a long quotation may be in **bold**.

*A Child that loses a parent is an orphan,
A Man who loses his wife is a widower,
A Woman who loses her husband is a widow,
There is no name for a parent that loses a child,
For there is no word to describe the pain. —Unknown*

A family's love is not measured in days. —Unknown

A life may last for just a moment, but memory can make that moment last forever. —Unknown

***A life so young released to heaven
Left on earth, we wonder why?
But some are sent among us briefly
Some have spirits meant to fly.*** —Unknown

All I am, or can be, I owe to my angel mother. —Abraham Lincoln

All that spirits desire, spirits attain. —Kahlil Gibran

***A million time I've needed you,
A million times I've cried.
If love alone could have saved you,
You never would have died.
In life, I loved you dearly,
In death, I love you still.
In my heart you hold a special place,
That none will ever fill.*** —Unknown

A moment in our arms; a lifetime in our hearts. —Unknown

***An angel in the book of life wrote down my baby's birth
Then whispered as she closed the book,
"Too beautiful for earth."*** —Unknown

And ever has it been that love knows not its own depth until the hour of separation. —Kahlil Gibran

***As long as I can, I will look at this world for both of us.
As long as I can I will laugh with the birds,
I will sing with the flowers,
I will pray to the stars,
for both of us.***

***As long as I can
I will remember how many things
on this earth were your joy.
And I will live as well
as you would want me to live
As long as I can. —Sascha***

***As long as I live, you will live.
As long as I live, you will be remembered.
As long as I live, you will be loved. —Unknown***

As the fly bangs against the window attempting freedom while the door stands open, so we bang against death ignoring heaven. —Doug Horton

*Beauty is eternity gazing at itself in a mirror.
But you are eternity and you are the mirror. —Kahlil Gibran*

*Before you were conceived I wanted you.
Before you were born I loved you.
Before you were here an hour I would die for you.
This is the miracle of life. —Maureen Hawkins*

But all other arguments apart, the consciousness of existence is the only conceivable idea we have of another life, and the continuance of that consciousness is immortality. The consciousness of existence, of the knowing that we exist, is not necessarily confined to the same form, nor to the same matter, even in this life. —Thomas Paine, The Age of Reason

Dealing with a loss like the death of a child is more learning to live after a part of you has been cut off that it is like healing from a wound. —Tom Golden

***Dear Lord, I would have loved to have held my babies on my lap and tell them about you.
But since I didn't get the chance, would you please hold them on yours and tell them about me? —Unknown***

***Death, be not proud, though some have called the
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so...
One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And Death shall be no more:
Death, thou shalt die! —John Donne, Death Be Not Proud***

*Death comes when the purpose of living is fulfilled; death shows what the reason for living was.
—KemetiC saying*

Death ends a life, not a relationship. —Morrie Schwartz, *Tuesdays With Morrie* by Mitch Albom

Death is as necessary to the constitution as sleep; we shall rise refreshed in the morning. —Benjamin Franklin

Death is the last enemy: once we've got past that I think everything will be alright. —Alice Thomas Ellis

Doubt is a pain too lonely to know that faith is his twin brother. —Kahlil Gibran

Death leaves a heartache no one can heal, love leaves a memory no one can steal. —Unknown

Death, the last sleep? No the final awakening. —Walter Scott

Die when I may, I want it said by those who knew me best that I always plucked a thistle and planted a flower where I thought a flower would grow. —Abraham Lincoln

*Don't think of them as gone away, their journey has just begun.
Life holds so many facets, this Earth is only one.
Just think of them as resting, from the sorrows and the tears,
In a place of warmth and comfort, where there are no days or years.*

*Think of how they must be wishing, that we could know today,
How nothing but our sadness can really pass away.
And think of them as living in the hearts of those they touched,
For nothing loved is ever lost, and they were loved so much.* —Unknown

***Do not stand at my grave and weep,
I am not there; I do not sleep...
Do not stand at my grave and cry,
I am not there; I did not die.*** —Mary Frye, 1932

Do not believe anything because it is said by an authority, or if it is said to come from angels, or from Gods, or from an inspired source. Believe it only if you have explored it in your own heart and mind and body and found it to be true. —Guatama Buddha

Each departed friend is a magnet that attracts us to the next world. —Jean Paul Richter

Each new life, no matter how brief, forever changes the world. —Unknown

***Each moment a precious treasure,
Forever loved beyond words or measure.*** —Unknown

Earth has no sorrow that Heaven cannot heal. —Padre Pio

Empty-handed I entered the world, barefoot I leave it. —Kozan Ichikyo.

Faith is a knowledge within the heart, beyond the reach of proof. —Kahlil Gibran
Faith is an oasis in the heart which can never be reached by the caravan of thinking. —Kahlil Gibran

*Far from love the Heavenly Father
Leads the chosen child;
Oftener through realm of briar
Than the meadow mild,*

*Oftener by the claw of dragon
Than the hand of friend,
Guides the little one predestined
To the native land. —Emily Dickinson*

*Father, although I cannot see the future You have planned,
And though the path is sometimes dark and hard to understand,
Yet give me faith, through joy and pain to trace Your loving hand.*

*When I recall that in the past your promises have stood
Through each perplexing circumstance and every changing mood,
I rest content that all things work together for my good.*

*Whatever, then, the future brings of good or seeming ill,
I ask for strength to follow You and grace to trust You still;
And I would look for no reward, except to do Your will. —John Eddison*

*For death begins with life's first breath
And life begins at touch of death . —John Oxenham*

For life and death are one, even as the river and the sea are one. —Kahlil Gibran

For this I bless you most: You give much and know not that you give at all. —Kahlil Gibran

***For what is it to die, But to stand in the sun and melt into the wind? And when the Earth
has claimed our limbs, then we shall truly dance. —Kahlil Gibran***

God's finger touched him, and he slept. —Lord Alfred Tennyson

God's promises are like the stars; the darker the night the brighter they shine. —David Nicholas

God will not look you over for medals, degrees or diplomas, but for scars. —Elbert Hubbard

*Grief is like a jagged rock that you bury deep in your pocket, It's sharp edges forcing you to take
it out and examine it from time to time. Even when you do not want to. And when it is too heavy
to carry, you must ask a friend to hold it so you can rest.*

*As time passes it is a little easier to take the rock out of your pocket. It doesn't seem to weigh as
much. Now you show it to a circle of friends and, occasionally, even a stranger. One day you
pull out the rock and surprisingly, it doesn't really hurt as much. For the edges are no longer
jagged but smoothed out by time, touch, and tears. —Unknown*

***Grieve not, nor speak of me with tears, but laugh and talk of me as if I were beside you. **Twas
heaven here with you, I loved you so.** —Isla Paschal Richardson***

Has the body a soul? No. The soul has a body. —Lucien Price

Has this world been so kind to you that you should leave with regret? There are better things ahead than any we leave behind. —C.S. Lewis

He acted justly, loved kindness, and walked humbly with his God. —based on Micah 6:8, *The Bible*

***Here but for just a moment
Like a night time shooting star,
And although she's is in heaven
She isn't very far.*** —Unknown

Hope is grief's best music. —Unknown

***How very softly you tiptoed into our world
Almost silently
Only a moment you stayed
But what an imprint your footsteps have left upon our hearts.*** —Dorothy Ferguson

***Hush! my dear, lie still and slumber,
Holy Angels guard thy bed!
Heavenly blessings without number
Gently falling on thy head.*** —Isaac Watts

I believe that if I should die, and you were to walk near my grave, from the very depths of the earth I would hear your footsteps. —Benito Perez Galdos

I can no more imagine Death as being final than I can imagine space ending in a brick wall.... —Lord Ballantrae

I consider myself in the hands of my Creator, and that he will dispose of me after this life consistently with His justice and goodness. I leave all these matters to Him, as my creator and friend, and I hold it to be presumption in man to make an article of faith as to what the Creator will do with us hereafter. —Thomas Paine

I do not worry about an afterlife. I feel content and secure in the knowledge that the Power that gave me life is able to continue it if he decides to. It could be in any form he chooses; either with or without a body. It seems more likely to me that I will continue to exist in an afterlife, than that I existed in a life before this one. —Thomas Paine

I do not know beneath what sky nor on what seas shall be thy fate; I only know it shall be high, I only know it shall be great. —Richard Hovey

I existed from all eternity and, behold, I am here; and I shall exist till the end of time, for my being has no end. —Kahlil Gibran

I have never seen, and never shall see, that the cessation of the evidence of existence is, necessarily, evidence of the cessation of existence. —William F. De Morgan

I look at life as a gift of God. Now that he wants it back I have no right to complain. —Joyce Cary

I knew I loved you before I met you. I think I dreamed you into life. —Savage Garden song

I knew I would look back at the tears and laugh, but I never knew I would look back at the laughter and cry. —Unknown

*I Never saw a moor,
I never saw the sea;
Yet know I how the heather looks,
And what a wave must be.*

*I never spoke with God,
Nor visited in heaven;
Yet certain am I of the spot
As if the chart were given. —Emily Dickinson*

In the end, it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years. —Abraham Lincoln

***In one of the stars
I shall be living
In one of them
I shall be laughing***

*And so it will be
as if all the stars
were laughing
when you look
at the sky at night —The Little Prince, Antoine de Saint-Ex*

I said to Life, I would hear Death speak. And Life raised her voice a little higher and said, "You hear him now." —Kahlil Gibran

*It matters not how long a star shines,
What is remembered is the brightness of its light. —Unknown*

*I wrote your name in the sand...
but the waves washed it away,
I wrote your name in the sky...
but the wind blew it away,
I wrote your name in my heart...
and forever it will stay —Unknown*

*If I could have a lifetime wish,
A dream that would come true,
I'd wish with all my heart
For yesterday and you.*

*A thousand prayers can't bring you back,
I know because I've tried.
And neither can a million tears,*

I know because I've cried.

***You left behind my broken heart
And happy memories too.
I never wanted memories,
I only wanted you.*** —Unknown

If I could reach up and hold a star for every time you've made me smile, the entire evening sky would be in the palm of my hand. —Unknown

If I had a single flower for every time I think about you, I could walk forever in my garden.
—Claudia Ghandi

If tears could build a stairway and memories a lane, I'd walk right up to heaven and bring you home again. —Unknown

If there is a God, man's immortality is certain. If not, Immortality would not be worth having. —
Edgar Sheffield Brightman

*If tolling bell I ask the cause.
"A soul has gone to God,"
I'm answered in a lonesome tone;
Is heaven then so sad?*

*That bells should joyful ring to tell
A soul had gone to heaven,
Would seem to me the proper way
A good news should be given.* —Emily Dickinson

If you're afraid to die, you will not be able to live. —James Baldwin

***I'll love you forever, I'll like you for always
As long as I'm living, My baby you'll be*** —Robert Munsch, *Love You Forever*

***In a heartbeat,
A life is stilled, a dream dies,
and Heaven becomes amazingly real.*** —Dawn Siegrist Waltman

It is as natural to die as to be born; and to a little infant, perhaps, the one is as painful as the other. —Sir Francis Bacon

It is death that provides life with all its meaning. —M. Scott Peck

Just because one heart stops beating, it doesn't mean another heart stops loving. —Unknown

Let us be silent that we may hear the whisper of God. —Ralph Waldo Emerson

Life does not cease to be funny when people die any more than it ceases to be serious when people laugh. —George Bernard Shaw

Life is but a brief moment. The years go by quickly and old age arrives suddenly before we have an inkling. People desire so many things and waste their days in vain. Some yearn for gold, others for power, yet others for glory and a higher station. But when death's moment nears and they look back at their lives they've lived, they realize they've been happy only during those moments when they've loved. —Borje Vahamaki

*Life is eternal;
and love is immortal;
and death is only a horizon;
and a horizon is nothing save the limit of our sight. —Rossiter Worthington Raymond*

Life is a great surprise. I do not see why death should not be an even greater one. —Vladimir Nobokov

Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away. —Unknown

Life is weaker than death, and death is weaker than love. —Khalil Gibran

Loved with a love beyond telling, Missed with a grief beyond all tears. —Unknown

May we all find peace in the shared hope that our children who brought us joy with their short lives are now a host of angles, loving us still, feeling our love for them, awaiting our coming, and knowing that they are safely locked forever in our hearts. —Gordon Livingston

Most people only dream of angels, we held one in our arms... —Unknown

Men fear death as children fear to go in the dark; and as that natural fear in children is increased with tales, so is the other. —Francis Bacon

Much of your pain is the bitter potion by which the physician within you heals your sick self. —Kahlil Gibran

*My coming, my going—
Two simple happenings
That got entangled. —Kozan Ichikyo.*

My heroes come with wings, not capes. —Unknown

***My Little One,
Where ever you travel and
Whatever you do
My love and my heart,
Are forever with you. —Tammy Becker***

My love will fly to you each night on angel's wings... —Unknown

My religion consists of a humble admiration of the illimitable superior spirit who reveals himself in the slight details we are able to perceive with our frail and feeble minds. That deeply emotional conviction of the presence of a superior reasoning power, which is revealed in the incomprehensible universe, forms my idea of God. —Albert Einstein

Never does one feel oneself so utterly helpless as in trying to speak comfort for great bereavement. I will not try it. —Jane Welsh Carlyle

Never let the pain of loss run deeper than the remembrance of love. For if it does, cherished memories will be lost and eternal purpose will be forgotten. —Unknown

No man knows whether death may not even turn out to be the greatest blessing for a human being; and yet people fear it as if they knew for certain that it is the greatest of evils. —Socrates

No one's death comes to pass without making some impression, and those close to the deceased inherit part of the liberated soul and become richer in their humaneness. —Hermann Broch

*Nature's first green is gold,
Her hardest hue to hold.
Her early leaf's a flower;
But only so an hour.
Then leaf subsides to leaf.
So Eden sank to grief,
So dawn goes down to day.
Nothing gold can stay. —Robert Frost*

***Now I lay you down to sleep,
I pray the Lord your soul to keep.
Within His arms He'll hold you tight,
My Heavenly Angel,
My Guiding Light. —Unknown***

*Oh, I have slipped the surly bonds of earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds - and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of - wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air.
Up, up the long delirious, burning blue
I've topped the windswept heights with easy grace
Where never lark, or even eagle flew.
And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod
The high untresspassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand, and touched the face of God. —John Gillespie Magee, Jr.*

One may not reach the dawn save by the path of the night. —Kahlil Gibran

*Only from the deep coal tunnels
White diamonds come.
But only by the light
They are recognized... —Akiane Kramarik, age 11, explaining her painting "Divine Knowledge."*

Only love gives us a taste of eternity. —Jewish Proverb

Out of suffering have emerged the strongest souls; the most massive characters are seared with scars. —Kahlil Gibran

Our life and death are the same thing. When we realize this fact, we have no fear of death anymore, nor actual difficulty in our life. —Shunryu Suzuki

*Our hearts still ache with sadness
And secret tears still flow
Was it meant to lose you?
No one can ever know.* —Unknown

*Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more.
It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.* —William Shakespeare

Parting is all we know of heaven, And all we need of hell. —Emily Dickinson

Perhaps they are not stars but, tiny openings in Heaven. —Unknown

People sleep, and when they die, they awake. —Muhammad

Sancho's faith is a real faith, fed on doubts. For genuine faith is maintained by doubt. Only those who doubt can believe. —Miguel de Unamuno on don Quixote

Remember, O LORD, how I have walked before you faithfully and with wholehearted devotion and have done what is good in your eyes. —The Bible, 2 Kings 20:3

***Silently, one by one, on the infinite meadows of heaven,
Blossomed the lovely stars, the forget-me-nots of angels.*** —Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Some tell me you are too painful to remember; I tell them you are too precious to forget. —Unknown

Some things have to be believed to be seen. —Ralph Hodgson

Sometimes, Love is for a lifetime. Sometimes a moment is a lifetime. —Unknown

Sadness is but a wall between two gardens. —Kahlil Gibran

Seeing death as the end of life is like seeing the horizon as the end of the ocean. —David Searls

*She died,—this was the way she died;
And when her breath was done,
Took up her simple wardrobe*

And started for the sun.

*Her little figure at the gate
The angels must have spied,
Since I could never find her
Upon the mortal side —Emily Dickinson*

**She went as quiet as the dew
From a familiar flower...
She dropt as softly as a star
From out my summer's eve;** —Emily Dickinson

Some people make the world special just by being in it. —Unknown

Take courage mortal, death cannot banish you from the universe.” —Benjamin Franklin

... To save our bodies is easy for an angel, but what is hard is that sometimes she must allow someone to fall or get hurt, according to God's laws. And I don't remember why... —Akiane Kramarik, age 10, discussing her painting "The Angel."

*Ten little fingers
Ten little toes
One belly button
One little nose*

*One tiny mouth
Two little eyes
Two little wings
And tearful goodbyes —Unknown*

*Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.
Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art; to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul. —Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

The belief in an afterlife is rational. It is based on facts that we see in the creation. —Thomas Paine

That there is one God, who made all things. That he governs the world by his providence. That he ought to be worshipped by adoration, prayer, and thanksgiving. But that the most acceptable service to God is doing good to man. That the soul is immortal. And that God will certainly reward virtue and punish vice, either here or hereafter. —Benjamin Franklin

The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or touched, but are felt in the heart. —Helen Keller

The biggest imprints are left by the smallest feet. —George G. Galdiano

The body of Benjamin Franklin, printer, like the cover of an old book, its contents torn out and stripped of its lettering and gilding, lies here, food for worms. But the work shall not be lost; for it will, as he believed, appear once more in a new and more elegant edition, revised and corrected by the Author. —Benjamin Franklin's Epitaph

Surely God would not have created such a being as man, with an ability to grasp the infinite, to exist only for a day! No, no, man was made for immortality. —Abraham Lincoln

The day which we fear as our last is but the birthday of eternity. —Lucius Annaeus Seneca

The deeper sorrow carves into your being, the more joy you can contain. —Kahlil Gibran

The encounter with death begins at birth, not when we are actually sick and dying....If sickness, old age, and death are unfortunate, then certainly, so is birth. —Issan Dorsey

The gods conceal from men the happiness of death, that they may endure life. —Lucan

The laws [of physics] ... seem to be the product of exceedingly ingenious design... The universe must have a purpose. —Paul Davies

The lights of stars that were extinguished ages ago still reaches us. So it is with great men who died centuries ago, but still reach us with the radiations of their personalities. —Kahlil Gibran

The mention of my child's name may bring tears to my eyes, but it never fails to bring music to my ears. If you are really my friend, let me hear the beautiful music of his name. It soothes my broken heart and sings to my soul. —Unknown

The moment a child is born, a mother is also born. —Rajneesh

The moon is your cradle; The heavens your playground. —Unknown

The only way to take the sorrow out of death is to take love out of life. —Unknown

The person who fears death fears either the total loss of all consciousness or the onset of new sensations. But if you have no consciousness, you will not feel any pain, and if you acquire new sensations, you will just be a different kind of living creature and so will not cease to live. — Marcus Aurelius

The proposition, that there is one God, seems to us exceedingly plain. We understand by it, that there is one being, one mind, one person, one intelligent agent, and one only, to whom underrived and infinite perfection and dominion belong. —William E. Channing

The reason it hurts so much to separate is because our souls are connected. —Nicholas Sparks, The Notebook

***The sun may grow cold, The earth may not spin
Silver stars may fade, My eyes may grow dim
But through all time, Through all eternity
You'll be in my heart, And always loved by me.*** —George G. Galdiano

The world is my oyster, but someone stole the pearl. Life is a buffet, but someone sneezed on the dessert. —George G. Galdiano

There is for me powerful evidence that there is something behind it all.... It seems as though somebody has finely tuned nature's numbers to make the universe....The impression of design is overwhelming. —Paul Davies

There is no foot so small that it does not leave an imprint on this world. —Unknown

They gave so much to be so little, but Angels always do. —Unknown

***They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun, and in the morning,
We will remember them.*** —Laurence Binyon

***This world is not conclusion;
A sequel stands beyond,
Invisible, as music,
But positive, as sound.*** —Emily Dickinson

To believe in God is to yearn for His existence and furthermore, it is to act as if He did exist. Faith which does not doubt is dead faith. —Miguel de Unamuno

***To live in hearts we leave behind,
Is not to die.*** —Thomas Campbell

*To remember is painful,
To forget is impossible.* —Maureen Connelly

Trust in dreams, for in them is hidden the gate to eternity. —Kahlil Gibran

Ungrateful and foolish it must be for rational beings in the possession of existence, and surrounded with a kind and almighty Providence, to distrust the author thereof concerning their futurity, because they cannot comprehend the mode or manner of their succeeding and progressive existence. —Ethan Allen

***Walk tall as the trees
Live strong as the mountains
Be gentle as the spring winds
Keep the warmth of summer in your heart
And the Great Spirit will always be with you.*** —Native American Chant

We cannot change our circumstances, but we can ask God to change our attitude toward them. When we cast our cares into His sea of love, He changes not our situation, but the way it affects us. —Fr. John Maronic

We think having faith means being convinced God exists in the same way we are convinced a chair exists. People who cannot be completely convinced of God's existence think faith is impossible for them. Not so. People who doubt can have great faith because faith is something

you do, not something you think. In fact, the greater your doubt the more heroic your faith. —
Real Live Preacher

*We sometimes congratulate ourselves at the moment of waking from a troubled dream; it may
be so the moment after death. —Nathaniel Hawthorne*

We understand death for the first time when he puts his hand upon one whom we love. —
Madame De Stael

What the caterpillar perceives is the end is to the butterfly just the beginning. —Unknown

*What we have once enjoyed and deeply loved we can never lose, for all that we love deeply be-
comes a part of us. —Helen Keller*

*When a child is gone, the only joy left is the memories and faith that we will see them again, and
we will. —Aiane Kramarik at age discussing her painting, "The Separation," age 11.*

When in grief, blend your will with the Lord's and you are sure to find peace. —Author Unknown

*When you reach the end of what you should know, you will be at the beginning of what you
should sense. —Kahlil Gibran*

*When you have solved all the mysteries of life you long for death, for it is but another mystery of
life. —Kahlil Gibran*

*When God wants something great done in this world, He doesn't dispatch a legion of avenging
angels; Neither does He call forth a whirlwind nor ignite the fuse of volcanic fireworks;
No commandeering of troops into to battle nor discharging zealous crusaders to holy causes;
He does not orchestrate the burst and boom of thunder nor display His fiery arrows' majesty
across the sky to bring His purpose to pass. When God wants something done in this world. He
sends a baby, and then...He waits. —Anita Robertson*

***When she had passed, it seemed like the ceasing of exquisite music. —Henry Wadsworth
Longfellow***

***When he shall die
Take him and cut him in little stars
And he will make the face of heaven so fine
That all the world will be in love with night
And pay no worship to the garish sun. —William Shakespeare***

***When one man dies, one chapter is not torn out of the book, but translated into a better
language. —John Donne***

*When the eyes see what they had never seen before, the heart feels what it had never felt. —B.
Gracian*

Where there is sorrow, there is holy ground. —Oscar Wilde

*When you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping
for that which has been your delight. —Kahlil Gibran*

Why fear death when it is the only path to meet the Maker? —Ketaki Bhawe

Wings of angels, tears of saints won't bring you back to me. — Judy Collins

You are my heaven; your death, my hell. —George G. Galdiano

You don't have a soul. You are a Soul. You have a body. —C. S. Lewis

*Your children are not your children. They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself...
You may house their bodies but not their souls, for their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow,
which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.* — Kahlil Gibran

Your eyes, like stars

My tears, like rain —Unknown

*Your pain is the breaking of the shell that encloses your understanding. Even as the stone of the
fruit must break, that its heart may stand in the sun, so must you know pain.* —Kahlil Gibran

Bible Verses

Here are some verses about God, His nature, the extent of His involvement in our world, and faith. Verses good epitaphs are in **bold**.

All verses NASB unless otherwise noted.

Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him. —Genesis 5:24

The LORD will fight for you while you keep silent. —Exodus 14:14

But from there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find Him if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul. —Deuteronomy 4:29

The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law. —Deuteronomy 29:29

The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. —Deuteronomy 33:27a, NIV

No man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you. —Joshua 1:5

He keeps the feet of His godly ones, —1 Samuel 2:9

He makes my feet like hinds' feet, And sets me on my high places. —2 Samuel 22:34

*Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD, "**Remember, O LORD, how I have walked before you faithfully and with wholehearted devotion and have done what is good in your eyes.**" And Hezekiah wept bitterly.* —2 Kings 20:2-3

For the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His. —2 Chronicles 16:9b.

The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised. —Job 1:21

Though He slay me, I will hope in Him. —Job 13:15a

I was crying to the LORD with my voice, And He answered me from His holy mountain. —Psalms 3:4

I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, Who have set themselves against me... —Psalms 3:6.

But know that the LORD has set apart the godly man for Himself; The LORD hears when I call to Him. —Psalm 4:3

In Peace I will both lie down and sleep, for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety. —Psalms 4:8

Give ear to my words, O LORD, Consider my groaning. Heed the sound of my cry for help, my King and my God, For to You I pray. —Psalms 5:1

In the morning, O LORD, You will hear my voice; In the morning I will order my prayer to You and eagerly watch. —Psalms 5:3

For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness; No evil dwells with You. —Psalms 5:4

But let all who take refuge in You be glad, Let them ever sing for joy; And may You shelter them, That those who love Your name may exult in You. —Psalms 5:11

For it is You who blesses the righteous man, O LORD, You surround him with favor as with a shield. —Psalms 5:12

The LORD has heard my supplication, The LORD receives my prayer. —Psalms 6:9

How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, Having sorrow in my heart all the day? How long will my enemy be exalted over me? —Psalms 13:1–2

Consider and answer me, O LORD my God; Enlighten my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death, And my enemy will say, I have overcome him, And my adversaries will rejoice when I am shaken. —Psalms 13:2–4

But I have trusted in Your loving kindness; My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation. I will sing to the LORD, Because He has dealt bountifully with me. —Psalms 13:5–6

Arise, O LORD, confront him, bring him low; Deliver my soul from the wicked with Your sword, —Psalms 17:14

I love You, O LORD, my strength. —Psalms 18:1

The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. —Psalms 18:2

I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised, And I am saved from my enemies. —Psalms 18:3

In my distress I called upon the LORD, And cried to my God for help; He heard my voice out of His temple, And my cry for help before Him came into His ears. —Psalms 18:6

He delivered me from my strong enemy, And from those who hated me, for they were too mighty for me. —Psalms 18:17

He brought me forth also into a broad place; He rescued me, because He delighted in me. —Psalms 18:19

As for God, His way is blameless; The word of the LORD is tried; He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him. —Psalm 18:30

He makes my feet like hinds' feet, And sets me upon my high places. —Psalms 18:33

He asked life of You, You gave it to him, Length of days forever and ever. —Psalms 21:4

In You our fathers trusted; They trusted and You delivered them. To You they cried out and were delivered; In You they trusted and were not disappointed. —Psalms 22:4–5

No one whose hope is in you will ever be put to shame. —Psalms 25:3

Wait for the LORD; Be strong and let your heart take courage; Yes, wait for the LORD. —Psalms 27:14

Blessed be the LORD, Because He has heard the voice of my supplication. —Psalms 28:6

I will extol You, O LORD, for You have lifted me up, And have not let my enemies rejoice over me. —Psalms 30:1

O LORD my God, I cried to You for help, and You healed me. —Psalms 30:2

For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning. —Psalms 30:5, NIV

Hear, O LORD, and be merciful to me; O LORD, be my help. You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, that my heart may sing to you and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give you thanks forever. —Psalms 30:10–12, NIV

Since you are my rock and my fortress, for the sake of your name lead and guide me. —Psalms 31:3, NIV

Into your hands I commit my spirit; redeem me, O LORD, the God of truth. —Psalms 31:5

I will be glad and rejoice in your love, for you saw my affliction and knew the anguish of my soul. —Psalms 31:7, NIV

Be merciful to me, O LORD, for I am in distress; my eyes grow weak with sorrow, my soul and my body with grief. —Psalms 31:9, NIV

My life is consumed by anguish and my years by groaning; my strength fails because of my affliction, and my bones grow weak. —Psalms 31:10, NIV

But I trust in you, O LORD; I say, "You are my God." My times are in your hands; —
Psalms 31:14-15a, NIV

How great is your goodness, which you have stored up for those who fear you, which you bestow in the sight of men on those who take refuge in you. —Psalms 31:19, NIV

In my alarm I said, "I am cut off from your sight!" Yet you heard my cry for mercy when I called to you for help. —Psalms 31:22, NIV

Love the LORD, all his saints! The LORD preserves the faithful, but the proud he pays back in full. Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the LORD. —Psalms 31:23–24, NIV

You are my hiding place; You preserve me from trouble; You surround me with songs of deliverance. —Psalms 32:7

The LORD nullifies the counsel of the nations; He frustrates the plans of the peoples. —Psalms 33:10

The counsel of the LORD stands forever, The plans of His heart from generation to generation. —Psalms 33:11

I sought the LORD, and He answered me, And delivered me from all my fears. —Psalms 34:4

The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear Him, And rescues them. —Psalms 34:7

The righteous cry, and the LORD hears And delivers them out of all their troubles. —Psalms 34:17

The Lord is near the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in Spirit. —Psalms 34:18

The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous And His ears are open to their cry. The face of the LORD is against evildoers, To cut off the memory of them from the earth. The righteous cry, and the LORD hears And delivers them out of all their troubles. —Psalm 34:15–17

Delight yourself in the LORD; And He will give you the desires of your heart. —Psalms 37:4

Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, and He will do it. —Psalms 37:5

Rest in the LORD and wait patiently for Him; —Psalms 37:7a

For the LORD loves justice And does not forsake His godly ones; They are preserved forever, But the descendants of the wicked will be cut off. —Psalms 37:28

For I hope in You, O LORD; You will answer, O Lord my God. —Psalms 38:15

"LORD, make me to know my end, And what is the extent of my days; Let me know how transient I am. Behold, You have made my days as handbreadths, And my lifetime as nothing in Your sight; Surely every man at his best is a mere breath." —Psalms 39:4–5

"And now, Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in You." —Psalms 39:7

"Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear to my cry; Do not be silent at my tears; For I am a stranger with You, A sojourner like all my fathers." Turn Your gaze away from me, that I may smile again Before I depart and am no more." —Psalms 39:12–13

I waited patiently for the LORD; And He inclined to me and heard my cry. —Psalms 40:1

God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. —Psalms 46:1

But God will redeem my life from the grave; he will surely take me to himself. —Psalms 49:15, NIV

Listen to my prayer, O God, do not ignore my plea; hear me and answer me. My thoughts trouble me and I am distraught —Psalms 55:1–2, NIV

Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me. —Psalms 50:15

I would hasten to my place of refuge, From the stormy wind and tempest. —Psalms 55:8

Cast your burden upon the LORD and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken. —Psalm 55:22

You have taken account of my wanderings; Put my tears in Your bottle. Are they not in Your book? —Psalms 56:8

Then my enemies will turn back in the day when I call; This I know, that God is for me. —Psalms 56:9

Because of his strength I will watch for You, For God is my stronghold. My God in His loving-kindness will meet me; God will let me look triumphantly upon my foes. —Psalms 56:8

Hear my voice, O God, in my complaint; Preserve my life from dread of the enemy. Hide me from the secret counsel of evildoers, From the tumult of those who do iniquity, Who have sharpened their tongue like a sword They aimed bitter speech as their arrow, To shoot from concealment at the blameless; Suddenly they shoot at him, and do not fear. —Psalms 64:1–4

But God will shoot at them with an arrow; Suddenly they will be wounded. So they will make him stumble; Their own tongue is against them; All who see them will shake the head. Then all men will fear, And they will declare the work of God, And will consider what He has done. The righteous man will be glad in the LORD and will take refuge in Him; And all the upright in heart will glory. —Psalms 64:7–10

O You who hear prayer, To You all men come. —Psalms 65:2

How blessed is the one whom You choose and bring near to You To dwell in Your courts We will be satisfied with the goodness of Your house, Your holy temple. —Psalms 65:4

By awesome deeds You answer us in righteousness, O God of our salvation, You who are the trust of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest sea; —Psalms 65:5

For you, O God, tested us; you refined us like silver. —Psalms 66:10

But certainly God has heard; He has given heed to the voice of my prayer. —Psalms 66:19

Blessed be God, Who has not turned away my prayer, Nor His lovingkindness from me. —Psalms 66:20

Blessed be the Lord, who daily bears our burden, The God who is our salvation. . . —Psalms 68:19

Save me, O God, For the waters have threatened my life. I have sunk in deep mire, and there is no foothold; I have come into deep waters, and a flood overflows me. —Psalms 69:1–2

I am weary with my crying; my throat is parched; My eyes fail while I wait for my God. —Psalms 69:3

Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head; Those who would destroy me are powerful, being wrongfully my enemies; What I did not steal, I then have to restore. —Psalms 69:4

May those who wait for You not be ashamed through me, O Lord GOD of hosts; May those who seek You not be dishonored through me, O God of Israel, —Psalms 69:6

But as for me, my prayer is to You, O LORD, at an acceptable time; O God, in the greatness of Your lovingkindness, Answer me with Your saving truth. —Psalms 69:13

Answer me, O LORD, for Your lovingkindness is good; According to the greatness of Your compassion, turn to me, And do not hide Your face from Your servant, For I am in distress; answer me quickly. Oh draw near to my soul and redeem it; Ransom me because of my enemies! —Psalms 69: 16–18

Reproach has broken my heart and I am so sick, And I looked for sympathy, but there was none, And for comforters, but I found none. —Psalms 69:20

*But I am afflicted and in pain; **May Your salvation, O God, set me securely on high.** —Psalms 69:29*

I will praise the name of God with song, And magnify Him with thanksgiving. Psalms 69:30

Psalms 71:1–24

But as for me, I will declare it forever; I will sing praises to the God of Jacob. —Psalms 75:9

My voice rises to God, and I will cry aloud; My voice rises to God, and He will hear me. —Psalms 77:1

You have held my eyelids open; I am so troubled that I cannot speak. —Psalms 77:4

I shall remember the deeds of the LORD; Surely I will remember Your wonders of old. —Psalms 77:11

You are the God who works wonders; You have made known Your strength among the peoples. —Psalms 77:14

"You called in trouble and I rescued you; I answered you in the hiding place of thunder;". —Psalms 81:7a

Incline Your ear, O LORD, and answer me; For I am afflicted and needy. Preserve my soul, for I am a godly man; O You my God, save Your servant who trusts in You. Be gracious to me, O Lord, For to You I cry all day long. —Psalms 86:1–3

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. —Psalms 91:1, NIV

I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust." —Psalms 91:2, NIV

Surely he will save you from the fowler's snare and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart. —Psalms 91:3–4, NIV

You will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the plague that destroys at midday. —Psalms 91:5–6, NIV

If you make the Most High your dwelling—even the LORD, who is my refuge—then no harm will befall you, no disaster will come near your tent. —Psalms 91:9–10, NIV

For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone. —Psalms 91:11–12, NIV

*"Because he loves me," says the LORD, **"I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name.** He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him and show him my salvation." —Psalms 91:14–16, NIV*

The LORD knows the thoughts of man; he knows that they are futile. —Psalms 94:11, NIV

For the LORD will not abandon His people, nor will He forsake His inheritance. —Psalms 94:14

When I said, "My foot is slipping," your love, O LORD, supported me. When anxiety was great within me, your consolation brought joy to my soul. —Psalms 94:18–19, NIV

For He is our God, And we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand. —Psalms 95:7a

[H]e does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. —Psalms 103:10, NIV

Just as a father has compassion on his children, So the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him. —Psalms 103:13

Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. —Psalms 107:1

Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble; He saved them out of their distresses. —Psalms 107:13

I love the LORD, because He hears, My voice and my supplications. Because He has inclined His ear to me, Therefore I shall call upon Him as long as I live. —Psalms 116:1–2

The cords of death entangled me, the anguish of the grave came upon me; I was overcome by trouble and sorrow. —Psalms 116:3, NIV

Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His godly ones. —Psalms 116:15

The LORD is for me; I will not fear; What can man do to me? —Psalms 118:6

I shall give thanks to You, for You have answered me, And You have become my salvation. —Psalms 118:21

The earth is filled with your love, O LORD; —Psalms 119:64a, NIV

I know, O LORD, that Your judgments are righteous, And that in faithfulness You have afflicted me. —Psalms 119:75

Sustain me according to your promise, and I will live; do not let my hopes be dashed. —Psalm 119:116

Great peace have they who love your law, and nothing can make them stumble. —Psalms 119:165

In my trouble I cried to the LORD, And He answered me. —Psalms 120:1

My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth. —Psalms 121:2

The LORD will protect you from all evil; He will keep your soul. The LORD will guard your going out and your coming in From this time forth and forever. —Psalms 121:7–8

Behold, children are a gift of the LORD, The fruit of the womb is a reward. —Psalms 127:3

Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one's youth. —Psalms 127:4

How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them; They will not be ashamed When they speak with their enemies in the gate. —Psalms 127:5

Put your hope in the LORD both now and forevermore. —Psalm 131:3

On the day I called, You answered me; You made me bold with strength in my soul. —Psalms 138:3

O LORD, You have searched me and known me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You understand my thought from afar. —Psalm 139:1–2

You scrutinize my path and my lying down, And are intimately acquainted with all my ways. —Psalms 139:3

Even before there is a word on my tongue, Behold, O LORD, You know it all. —Psalms 139:4

You have enclosed me behind and before, And laid Your hand upon me. —Psalms 139:5

Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the

dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, Even there Your hand will lead me, And Your right hand will lay hold of me. —Psalms 139:7–10

For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works, And my soul knows it very well. —Psalms 139:13–14

My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth; —Psalms 139:15

Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Your book were all written, The days that were ordained for me, When as yet there was not one of them. —Psalms 139:16

How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How vast is the sum of them! If I should count them, they would outnumber the sand, When I awake, I am still with You. —Psalms 139:17–18

Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way. —Psalms 139:23–24

I cry aloud with my voice to the LORD; I make supplication with my voice to the LORD. —Psalms 142:1

I pour out my complaint before Him; I declare my trouble before Him. —Psalms 142:2

When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, You knew my path. —Psalms 142:3a

Give heed to my cry, For I am brought very low; Deliver me from my persecutors, For they are too strong for me. —Psalms 142:6

Bring my soul out of prison, So that I may give thanks to Your name; The righteous will surround me, For You will deal bountifully with me. —Psalms 142:7

O LORD, hear my prayer, listen to my cry for mercy; in your faithfulness and righteousness come to my relief. —Psalms 143:1, NIV

The enemy pursues me, he crushes me to the ground; he makes me dwell in darkness like those long dead. So my spirit grows faint within me; my heart within me is dismayed. —Psalms 143:3–4, NIV

I spread out my hands to you; my soul thirsts for you like a parched land. —Psalms 143:6, NIV

Answer me quickly, O LORD; my spirit fails. Do not hide your face from me or I will be like those who go down to the pit. —Psalms 143:7, NIV

Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul. —Psalms 143:8, NIV

Rescue me from my enemies, O LORD, for I hide myself in you. —Psalms 143:9, NIV

Teach me to do your will, for you are my God; may your good Spirit lead me on level ground. —Psalms 143:10, NIV

For your name's sake, O LORD, preserve my life; in your righteousness, bring me out of trouble. —Psalms 143:11, NIV

In your unfailing love, silence my enemies; destroy all my foes, for I am your servant. —Psalms 143:12, NIV

He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him; He will also hear their cry and will save them. —Psalms 145:19

The LORD keeps all who love Him, But all the wicked He will destroy. —Psalms 145:20

Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD! —Psalms 150:6

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. —Proverbs 3:5–6

What the wicked fears will come upon him, But the desire of the righteous will be granted. —Proverbs 10:24

Anxiety in a man's heart weighs it down, But a good word makes it glad. —Proverbs 12:25

In the way of righteousness is life, And in its pathway there is no death. —Proverbs 12:28

Hope deferred makes the heart sick, But desire fulfilled is a tree of life. —Proverbs 13:12

Even in laughter the heart may be in pain, And the end of joy may be grief. —Proverbs 14:13

The eyes of the LORD are in every place, Watching the evil and the good. —Proverbs 15:3

The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, But the prayer of the upright is His delight. —Proverbs 15:8

The way of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, But He loves one who pursues righteousness. —Proverbs 15:9

A joyful heart makes a cheerful face, But when the heart is sad, the spirit is broken. —Proverbs 15:13

All the days of the afflicted are bad, But a cheerful heart has a continual feast. —Proverbs 15:15

The LORD is far from the wicked, But He hears the prayer of the righteous. —Proverbs 15:29

Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and your plans will succeed. —Proverbs 16:3

When a man's ways are pleasing to the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him. —Proverbs 16:7

In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps. —Proverbs 16:9

The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, But the LORD tests hearts. —Proverbs 17:3

He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous, Both of them alike are an abomination to the LORD. —Proverbs 17:15

Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails. —Proverbs 19:21

Do not say, "I will repay evil"; Wait for the LORD, and He will save you. —Proverbs 20:22

*Stripes that wound scour away evil, And strokes reach the innermost parts. —Proverbs 20:30
The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He wishes. —Proverbs 21:1*

There is no wisdom and no understanding And no counsel against the LORD. —Proverbs 21:30

For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again, But the wicked stumble in time of calamity. — Proverbs 24:16

Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, And do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles; Or the LORD will see it and be displeased, And turn His anger away from him. —Proverbs 24:17–18

Like one who takes off a garment on a cold day, or like vinegar on soda, Is he who sings songs to a troubled heart. —Proverbs 25:20

Do not boast about tomorrow, For you do not know what a day may bring forth. —Proverbs 27:1

The crucible is for silver and the furnace for gold, And each is tested by the praise accorded him. —Proverbs 27:21

The wicked flee when no one is pursuing, But the righteous are bold as a lion. — Proverbs 28:1

Blessed is the man who always fears the LORD, but he who hardens his heart falls into trouble. —Proverbs 28:14, NIV

A man who is laden with the guilt of human blood Will be a fugitive until death; let no one support him. —Proverbs 28:17

When the wicked rise, men hide themselves; But when they perish, the righteous increase. — Proverbs 28:28

Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD is kept safe. —Proverbs 29:25

Many seek the ruler's favor, But justice for man comes from the LORD. —Proverbs 29:26

There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven. —Ecclesiastes 3:1

He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end. —Ecclesiastes 3:11, NIV

*Put me like a seal over your heart, Like a seal on your arm, **For love is as strong as death.** — Song of Solomon 8:6*

"Devise a plan, but it will be thwarted; State a proposal, but it will not stand, For God is with us." —Isaiah 8:10

The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace because he trusts in you —Isaiah 26:3

O people in Zion, inhabitant in Jerusalem, you will weep no longer. He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry; when He hears it, He will answer you. —Isaiah 30:19

For the LORD is our judge, The LORD is our lawgiver, The LORD is our king; He will save us... —Isaiah 33:22

He gives strength to the weary, and to him who lacks might He increases power. —Isaiah 40:29

But those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. —Isaiah 40:31

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. —Isaiah 41:10, NIV

For I am the LORD your God, who upholds your right hand, who says to you, "Do not fear, I will help you." —Isaiah 41:13, NIV

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine! —Isaiah 43:1b

Behold, I will do something new, Now it will spring forth; Will you not be aware of it? I will even make a roadway in the wilderness, Rivers in the desert. —Isaiah 43:19

"Even to your old age I will be the same, And even to your graying years I will bear you! I have done it, and I will carry you; And I will bear you and I will deliver you." —Isaiah 46:4

Can a woman forget her nursing child, And have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not forget you. —Isaiah 49:15

Lift up your eyes to the sky, Then look to the earth beneath; For the sky will vanish like smoke, And the earth will wear out like a garment And its inhabitants will die in like manner; But My salvation will be forever, And My righteousness will not wane. —Isaiah 51:6

"No weapon that is formed against you will prosper"; —Isaiah 54:17

Good people pass away; the godly often die before their time. But no one seems to care or wonder why. No one seems to understand that God is protecting them from the evil to come. —Isaiah 57:1, NLT

The Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear. —Isaiah 59:1

Since ancient times no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who acts on behalf of those who wait for him. —Isaiah 64:4, NIV

I will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear. —Isaiah 65:24

Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you. —Jeremiah 1:5a

Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, And whose trust is the LORD. —Jeremiah 17:7

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” —Jeremiah 29:11

“Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.” —Jeremiah 29:12

I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore I have drawn you with loving kindness. —Jeremiah 31:3b

*Thus says the LORD,
“A voice is heard in Ramah, Lamentation and bitter weeping
Rachel is weeping for her children;
She refuses to be comforted for her children,
Because they are no more.” —Jeremiah 31:15*

*Thus says the LORD,
“Restrain your voice from weeping
And your eyes from tears;
For your (B)work will be rewarded,” declares the LORD,
“And they will return from the land of the enemy.” —Jeremiah 31:16*

Ah Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and by Your outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for You. —Jeremiah 32:7

“Call to Me and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and mighty things, which you do not know.” —Jeremiah 33:3

“And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of the LORD, Will be delivered;” —Joel 2:32b

Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. —Lamentations 3:22–23

The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, To the person who seeks Him. —Lamentations 3:25

Who can speak and have it happen if the Lord has not decreed it? —Lamentations 3:37

You drew near when I called on You; You said, "Do not fear!" —Lamentations 3:57

In my distress I called to the LORD, and he answered me. From the depths of the grave I called for help, and you listened to my cry. —Jonah 2:2, NIV

While I was fainting away, I remembered the LORD, And my prayer came to You, Into Your holy temple. —Jonah 2:7

He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God? —Micah 6:8

How long, O LORD, will I call for help, And You will not hear? —Habakkuk 1:2a

The Lord GOD is my strength, And He has made my feet like hinds' feet, And makes me walk on my high places. —Habakkuk 3:19

The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing. —Zephaniah 3:17, English Standard Version

Return to your fortress, O prisoners of hope; even now I announce that I will restore twice as much to you. —Zechariah 9:12

I will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried. They shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, "It is my people," and they shall say, "Jehovah is my God." —Zechariah 13:9

He will sit as a smelter and purifier of silver. —Malachi 3:3a

"Then I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of the ground; nor will your vine in the field cast its grapes," says the LORD of hosts. —Malachi 3:11

A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more. —Matthew 2:18

Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? —Matthew 6:26–27

Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. —Matthew 5:7–8

If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him! —Matthew 7:11

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and said, "Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" And He called a child to Himself and set him before them, and said, "Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. "And whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me; but whoever causes one of these

little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea. —Matthew 18:1-6

But Jesus said, "Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." —Matthew 19:14

"Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it at all." —Mark 10:15

Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, Be taken up and cast into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it will be granted him. —Mark 11:23

Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they will be granted you. —Mark 11:24

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. —John 5:24

So it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones perish. —Matthew 18:14

Everything is possible for him who believes. —Mark 9:23b

Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" —Mark 9:24

Are not five sparrows sold for two cents? Yet not one of them is forgotten before God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows. —Luke 12:6-7

"Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers." —Luke 22:31-32

All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. —John 6:37

For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. —John 6:38-39

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. —John 6:47

For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day. —John 6:40

My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. —John 10:29

I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. —John 11:25–26

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. —John 14:3, NIV

"Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it." —John 14:13–14

If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. —John 15:7

...whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you. —John 15:16b

"In that day you will not question Me about anything. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask the Father for anything in My name, He will give it to you." —John 16:23

...ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full. —John 16:24

These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world. —John 16:33

He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation. —Acts 17:26

And now it is because of my hope in what God has promised our fathers that I am on trial today. —Acts 26:6

... We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. —Romans 5:1

And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been (K)poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. Romans —5:3-5

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. —Romans 5:8

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. —Romans 6:23

For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, [b]in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God —Romans 8:20–21

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. —Romans 8:28

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? —Romans 8:31–32

*In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. **For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angles, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.** —Romans 8:37–39*

His plan is good and pleasing and perfect. —Romans 12:2b, New International Reader's Version.

*However, as it is written: **"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him."** —1 Corinthians 2:9, NIV*

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it. —1 Corinthians 10:13

***[Love] bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.** —1 Corinthians 13:7*

Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, —1 Corinthians 13:4

***And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.** —1 Corinthians 13:13*

***The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.** —1 Corinthians 15:26, NIV*

***O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?** —1 Corinthians 15:55*

If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it. —2 Corinthians 12:26

***[God] comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.** —2 Corinthians 1:4*

***[W]e are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed** —2 Corinthians 4:8–9*

For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal —2 Corinthians 4:17–18

***Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands.** —2 Corinthians 5:1*

***We live by faith, not by sight.** —2 Corinthians 5:7*

***For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.** —2 Corinthians 5:14*

God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them. —2 Corinthians 5:19

We are treated as deceivers and yet are truthful; as unrecognized and yet acknowledged; as dying and behold we live; as chastised and yet not put to death; as sorrowful yet always rejoicing; as poor yet enriching many; as having nothing and yet possessing all things. —2 Corinthians 6:8–10

[God] works all things after the counsel of His will. —Ephesians 1:11

[H]ow wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ —Ephesians 3:18b, NIV

[God] is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us. —Ephesians 3:20

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. —Philippians 4:6–7

Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. —1 Thessalonians 4:13, NIV

For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. *After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words.* —1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

...in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. —1 Thessalonians 5:18

But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one. —2 Thessalonians 3:3

Now may the Lord of peace Himself continually grant you peace in every circumstance. —2 Thessalonians 3:16

[God] has loved us and given us eternal comfort and good hope by grace. —2 Thessalonians 16:17

I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day. —2 Timothy 1:12b

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing. —2 Timothy 4:7–8

A faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time. —Titus 1:2

There is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. —Hebrews 4:13

Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. —Hebrews 4:16

Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. —Hebrews 7:25

But my righteous one shall live by faith; and if he shrinks back, My soul has no pleasure in Him. —Hebrews 10:38

Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the belief in things unseen. —Hebrews 11:1

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. —Hebrews 11:6

Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let that endurance have its perfect result so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. —James 1:2–4

Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love him. —James 1:12

Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you. —James 4:10

The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much. —James 5:16b

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. —1 Peter 1:3–5

In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; —Peter 1:6–7

And though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls. —1 Peter 1:8–9

FOR THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE TOWARD THE RIGHTEOUS, AND HIS EARS ATTEND TO THEIR PRAYER, BUT THE FACE OF THE LORD IS AGAINST THOSE WHO DO EVIL. —1 Peter 3:12

Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you. —1 Peter 5:7

The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. —2 Peter 3:9

See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; —1 John 3:1a

And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight. —1 John 3:22

God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. —1 John 4:16

*And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. This Is Written That You May Know **These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.*** —1 John 5:11–13

This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him. —1 John 5:14–15

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. —Jude 1:24–25

What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open. —Revelation 3:7

He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away. —Revelation 21:4

End Notes

¹ Quoted in *Dying: A Book of Comfort*, Pat McNees (ed.), Warner Books, p.221.

² Adapted from United States Department of Health and Humans Services' website at mental-health.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/walletcard/engwalletcard.asp and www.family.samhsa.gov/get/suicidewarn.aspx; WebMD's website at www.webmd.com/depression/guide/depression-recognizing-signs-of-suicide

³ Adapted from *Empty Cradle, Broken Heart* by Deborah L. Davis, Ph.D, Fulcrum Publishing, Golden, Colorado, p. 156

⁴ IBID

⁵ IBID

⁶ IBID

