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CHANGE YOUR LIFE | CHANGE YOUR WORLD



DUMPS

What to do when
you feel down

DANCING THE LIMBO

A novel way to deal
with stress

ENDTIME INSIGHTS

The Rise, Reign, and Wars
of the Antichrist, Part 3

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USA
info@activatedministries.org
(877) 862-3228

Activated Europe

Bramingham Pk. Business Ctr.
Enterprise Way
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PERSONALLY SPEAKING



Job-related stress has become a “worldwide epidemic” according to the World Health Organization (WHO). So has depression. And the two are linked: Chronic stress can lead to depression.

If “epidemic” sounds overstated or alarmist, think about it. How many people do you know who *aren't* stressed out? Bosses stress over production and profit goals, and workers stress over the demands of their jobs. And stress isn't limited to the workplace. Nearly everyone is under financial stress—if not to earn enough to get by, then enough to get more. Parents stress about their children. Children stress about peer pressure and their studies. Retired people stress about their waning health and retirement funds. Many people even get so stressed about not having enough leisure time that when they are able to get away, they often can't relax and enjoy themselves.

It's enough to get almost anyone down, and it does. According to another recent WHO study, depression is now the leading cause of disability worldwide as measured by YLDs (Years Lived with Disability) and the fourth leading contributor to the global burden of disease.

What's a person to do?

There are many products and services available for stress-relief—pharmaceuticals, herbs, yoga, fitness and wellness regimens, etc.—but many of these can be costly, ineffective, inconvenient, complicated, or have side effects.

There has to be a better way—and there is. Believe it or not, the safest, surest cure for both stress and depression is a strong personal connection with our Creator. He made us, so He understands our needs better than anyone. What's more, He has it within His power to supply those needs. He loved us enough to send His only Son to save our souls, so surely He can and will do whatever is needed to save our sanity. He's just waiting for us to turn to Him.

Keith Phillips
Keith Phillips
FOR THE ACTIVATED FAMILY

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EDITOR Keith Phillips
DESIGN Giselle LeFavre
ILLUSTRATIONS Doug Calder
PRODUCTION Francisco Lopez

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MORNING HAS BROKEN } BY RIMA PARKER

PEOPLE COMMEND ME for giving up a life of comfort and security in Europe for one of constant giving as a Christian volunteer in Africa. “That’s so noble!” “You must be a saint!” “I could never do what you do.” Sometimes I wonder if these well-meaning people realize that I’m just as vulnerable to feelings of discouragement and frustration as they are. With so much to do and so few others doing the work I’ve been called to do, the task can be daunting.

Recently I was preoccupied with problems when an old familiar song started playing in the background. Eventually the lyrics broke through my melancholic introspection.

Morning has broken like the first morning;
Blackbird has spoken like the first bird.
Praise for the singing, praise for the morning,
Praise for them, springing fresh from the Word.

I’m sure these lyrics have been interpreted in many ways by the millions of people who have heard and sung them since Eleanor Farjeon wrote them in 1930 and Cat Stevens set them to a new tune in

1970, but they stirred a fresh thought in me. *Imagine the first morning that God created—a morning of peace and hope, free from stress, frustration, and deadlines. That sounds so amazing!* Then I was reminded of a promise from the Bible: “The Lord’s mercies are new every morning” (Lamentations 3:22–23).

The truth was, morning *had* broken like the first morning. The first rays of sunlight over the horizon had greeted me with that same peace and hope, but it was up to me to savor it. Would I welcome it with praise? Would I stop to hear the blackbird’s song?

The song concludes with this:

Mine is the sunlight, mine is the morning,
Born of the one light Eden saw play.
Praise with elation, praise every morning,
God’s re-creation of the new day.

My previous feelings of frustration and discouragement dissipated as the thought hit home again. *Morning had broken! It was mine!* I looked at the beauty that surrounded me and realized that I was part of God’s beautiful new day! ■

BY C. H. SPURGEON (1834–1892) { SUFFICIENCY

THE OTHER EVENING I was riding home after a heavy day’s work. I felt very weary and depressed, when swiftly and suddenly that text came to me, “My [Jesus] grace is sufficient for thee” (2 Corinthians 12:9 KJV).

I said, “I should think it is, Lord,” and burst out laughing. It seemed to make unbelief so absurd.

It was as though some little fish, being very thirsty, was troubled about drinking the river dry, and Father Thames said,

“Drink away, little fish, my stream is sufficient for thee.”

Again, I imagined a man away up yonder, in a lofty mountain, saying to himself, “I breathe so many cubic feet of air every year, I fear I shall exhaust the oxygen in the atmosphere.” But the earth might say, “Breathe away, O man, and fill thy lungs. My atmosphere is sufficient for thee.”

Be great believers! Little faith will bring your souls to Heaven, but great faith will bring Heaven to your souls. ■

BY DAVID BRANDT BERG

DUMPS



THIS MORNING I WAS DISCOURAGED and frustrated about something. My wife sensed it, so she cheerfully began to sing this chorus:

Cheer up, you saints of God, there's nothing to worry about,
Nothing to make you feel afraid, nothing to make you doubt!
Our God has never failed, so why not trust Him and shout?
You'll be glad you trusted Him tomorrow!

The problem is that when you're downcast, if you start talking about the situation, you usually end up voicing your complaints and doubts and speaking defeat. That's what I did when I replied half-jokingly: "Fold up, you

saints of God, there's nothing to be happy about!" I was just singing it lightheartedly, but it was really the way I was feeling—and it was kind of nice for a while. "Poor me!"

When you have the poor-mes, you're usually just trying to get attention and sympathy. When the children of Israel complained in the wilderness, they were trying to make Moses and the Lord feel sorry for them (Exodus 16:2-3). Your pride is wounded, your ego has been a little deflated, your self-confidence has been a little shaken, and you begin to wonder then if everything is a mistake. Maybe you are

IN COME
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MRS. DOUBT
AND ALL
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AND MR.
AND MRS.
DEVIL AND
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LITTLE
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YOU PULL UP
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INVITE THEM
TO TALK IT
OVER.

never right about anything! In come Mr. and Mrs. Doubt and all the little Doubtlets, and Mr. and Mrs. Devil and all the little Devils, and you pull up a chair and invite them to talk it over—and pretty soon you start agreeing with them. “Yes, that’s right! I never was very much of a Christian after all! How could God use me? I don’t really have a very victorious, overcoming life, and I’m not perfect. I’m just a big mess. I might as well quit!”

It’s because you get your eyes on yourself instead of the Lord—introspection instead of “Heaven-spection.” You think so much about yourself and your own faults, frailties, mistakes, and sins that your “self” really gets you down. The Devil, your spiritual foe and the enemy of happiness, can tell you a lot of truth about yourself that’s horrible, not to speak of the lies he tells you, so if you start listening to the Devil, there’s no end to it. If you listen to him, he can make you sound even worse than you really are, and that’s pretty bad!

Then you start listening to your critics, or perhaps some friend or member of your family makes some casual remark that they don’t really mean or that you misinterpret, and the Devil exaggerates the situation until you get disheartened and feel like giving up.

It reminds me of King David when he said, “Now I shall perish someday by the hand of Saul” (1 Samuel 27:1). How could David have made a

song out of that? It would have sounded terrible! “Someday I shall surely die! Someday I will be defeated. Someday the Devil will get me. Someday my enemies will kill me. Maybe it’s not worth it after all! God has failed me. I’m a failure. I might as well quit!”—Which was exactly what the Devil wanted to persuade David to do by that barrage of doubt and self-pity.

How could David have made a song out of that? What kind of doleful dirge, sung in a mournful minor key, would that have been? I guess that’s why you never find that in one of David’s psalms. David evidently said it, because he’s quoted in the Bible as saying it—one of those brief little outbursts prompted by the Devil that manages to get through before we catch ourselves and realize how bad it really sounds. But David had enough sense not to make a song out of it and keep singing that tune. Instead, in the book of Psalms he takes a positive approach, defying his enemies and praising God in spite of his troubles, because he knew that God would work everything out, because He always had and because He promised to.

When you’re discouraged, the Devil makes you mad at the truth because he’s about to be defeated by it. He makes you angry when people try to cheer you up, and makes you upset at the very people who are trying to help you, because you can’t enjoy your misery as much if they’re trying to make you happy. You’re ashamed because your defeatism looks so bad alongside their victorious attitude, so you attempt to cover up in a fit of fury against them, or you try to find fault with them and others and everything—even God—to excuse yourself for being such a grouch.

So this morning I was tempted to get mad at my wife when she tried to cheer me up with that song, and I responded, “Oh, yeah?” and jokingly began to sing the reverse: “Fold up, you saints of God, there’s nothing to be happy about; everything to make you feel afraid, everything to make you doubt.” That far was a little funny because it was so obviously defiant and my sin was so apparent, but when I got to the next line and saw what the reverse of the song was leading to, it scared me and I didn’t


care to go on singing it. I knew God wasn't wrong and He had never failed. So how could I sing, "Our God has always failed, so why not murmur and doubt? You'll be sorry you trusted Him tomorrow!" If there's anything I know, it is that God has never failed and I've always been glad I trusted Him tomorrow. So I knew that was a lie and I just couldn't possibly sing the song in reverse, no matter how bad I felt. It just wasn't the truth!

Look what a horrible lie even that little song is, if you sing it in reverse. That's the way the Devil operates: He starts out seemingly innocent and honest with something that doesn't seem too bad. "Fold up, you saints of God, there's nothing to be happy about"—which is the way we sometimes feel when we get discouraged. But it's the horror that this leads to that shakes us up and shocks us into realizing what a liar the Devil is and how bad a state we're getting into.

Thank God for His shock treatments when we realize what a terrible thing we're saying or doing as a result of some little doubt or fear or disobedience that we started with. One of the things that helped snap me out of it was when I realized what a terrible example I was being to my wife, who was trying to lift me up and encourage me, while I was resisting it. Even if I was half joking, the danger of dragging her down with me finally woke me up. I realized that I had to get the victory for her sake, if nothing else!

My grandfather used to say, "If you must go to Hell, at least don't let somebody else stumble over you into Hell too!" But this isn't possible, because if you're going to Hell you're bound to drag others with you. Everybody has influence. No man lives to himself, and no man dies to himself (Romans 14:7). Each of our lives is bound to affect others. No man is an island. Everybody's influencing somebody, even when they seem to be alone.

Sometimes just a word or a glance or a smile can make a big difference—how we act or sound or seem. If it's not cheerful and victorious and uplifting, then it could easily hurt others and pull them down with us. We're either going to



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pull people up to our level or drag them down to it, one or the other.

Just a little bit of doubt, a little bit of fear, a little bit of complaint, a little bit of discouragement, can grow and grow until you are completely defeated and a terrible influence on others. You never stop until you hit bottom—unless you repent and snap out of it and ask God to forgive you and throw out the Devil’s whole pack of lies and all your doubts and fears and discouragement, and follow Jesus and His Word, and hold on to His promises. The future is as bright as the promises of God!

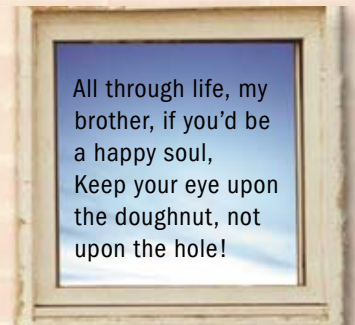
You’re going to either be positive or negative, one or the other. You can’t be just a little bit of both. That’s what the Devil will try to tell you: “It doesn’t hurt to be just a little disheartened, to feel just a little bit sorry for yourself. After all, you deserve to enjoy a little bit of discouragement so you can get some sympathy from others. Why not? Misery loves company! Let’s make everybody else a little bit miserable, too, so we can all enjoy it!”

The minute you start listening to the Devil you’re done for, because there’s no end to it, no stopping place! He’ll never

quit until he’s dragged you to the very bottom and left you utterly defeated, a terrible reproach to the cause of Christ and a drag on everybody around you.

So, if you’re discouraged, friend, for God’s sake don’t murmur, complain, and voice your doubts and fears to others! They may already have burdens more than they can bear. Yours may be the last straw.

If we don’t keep our eyes on the Lord and our mind on His Word, we’re doomed to defeat, doubt, disillusionment, and final failure!



Keep your eyes on Heaven. Keep your eyes on the goal, and the victory in your soul. Always shout, never doubt! When the Devil tempts you to get down and discouraged, fight! Don’t even listen to him, much less surrender. Start doing something positive. Start saying something cheerful and encouraging—like my wife did for me this morning, when she began to sing, “Cheer up, you saints of God” in her sweet way, the best she could, trying to remind me to trust the Lord.

Only Jesus, only Jesus, only He can satisfy.
Every burden becomes a blessing,
When I know my Lord is nigh! ■

“DUMPS” WAS EXCERPTED FROM THE ARTICLE OF THE SAME NAME. THE FULL VERSION IS AVAILABLE IN *GREATER VICTORIES*, A BOOK FROM AURORA PRODUCTION.

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HEY SAY THAT A SENSE OF HUMOR CAN HELP save the day and ease tensions during difficult times. I think God has a sense of humor. After all, He created us funny people.

Several years back, my husband Andy and I were going through a very stressful time. With three small children and number four due in a few weeks, circumstances were such that we needed to move out of the house we were living in. One after another, all of our options for new housing had fallen through. I felt like Mary on Christmas Eve, when she and Joseph were told there was no room for them at the inn.

With each passing day, things seemed to go from bad to worse and our situation became more desperate. I had tried to keep faith, tried to stay positive, but couldn't help getting discouraged. What was wrong? We had prayed so hard. How much worse could things get?

Then I had the strangest revelation. I knew it was God applying His sense of humor to an otherwise serious situation. I heard Jesus saying to me in true limbo-dance style and rhythm, "How *low* can you go? How *low* can you go?"

In case you aren't familiar with the limbo, it's a dance that originated in the West Indies—a sort of high jump in reverse. The dancers form a single file, bend backward from the knees, and move with a shuffling step under a horizontal bar that is lowered after each successive pass. Dancers are eliminated when they knock the bar from the uprights or fail to keep their balance as they pass under the bar. The dancer who goes under the lowest bar is the winner.

I had to laugh as I imagined that limbo rod being lowered to the next rung. It gave me new courage to face my problems as a challenge. "How low can you go?"—Not in a bad or despairing way, but in a fun way.

Life's struggles are not meant to crush us. They are the challenges that help us to grow, the stretching of the muscles that make us more limber so we can play limbo like a pro.

I put on my smile. I lifted my chin and said, "I can do this. I can go a little lower. I haven't fallen yet, and I'm still in the game!" Each time more bad news came and things got a little worse, I would smile at Andy and say, "How *low* can you go?" It became sort of a joke and certainly helped to take the fear and tension away.

You see, I was cheating. I knew that Jesus, who had the sense of humor to give me this revelation, also had His hand under my back so I couldn't fall. He had it all under control, and all I had to do was play along. By this time I was feeling quite proud of myself for dancing the limbo so professionally, and nothing seemed quite so bad anymore.

You've probably guessed by now that we won the game. As our prize, Jesus gave us exactly what we needed—a wonderful home, just in time. ■

Life's struggles are not meant to crush us. They are the challenges that help us to grow, the stretching of the muscles that make us more limber so we can play limbo like a pro.

BY MARIA MORROW

IT HAPPENED TO ME

Dancing the Limbo

A PRAYER FOR TROUBLED TIMES

Dear Jesus,

This seems to be one of those times when troubles abound, but I know that You understand and can take care of us.

Where there are problems and pain, give Your peace and mercy.

Where there is tiredness, please give understanding of Your strength, and show us how to tap into that strength by leaning on You.

Where there are difficult decisions to make, or confusion or stress, make Your way plain and give everything needed for us to follow where You lead.

Where there is loneliness, I ask You to renew the experience of Your nearness and draw us into greater intimacy with You.

Where there is insecurity or self-doubt, please grant renewed confidence in Your abilities, more faith in You inside each of us.

Where there is fear, please demonstrate Your love and give courage, as we know You can work out any situation for the best.

Where there is something blocking fellowship with You, please reveal the obstacle and take it away—whether sin, circumstances, or lack of faith.

Where there is a need for finances or other provision, please supply as You promised in Your Word, “God will supply all your need” (Philippians 4:19 KJV).

Where there is illness, send healing by Your miracle-working power and give instruction for healthful lifestyles.

Where there is a need for friendship and love, send other believers to fill up the void, as the Bible says, “If we are living in the light of God’s presence, just as Christ does, then we have wonderful fellowship and joy with each other” (1 John 1:7 TLB).

Where there is a spiritual emptiness, send Your Word for inspiration, and grant sweet communion with You in prayer.

Whatever the need, please fill it, Jesus, as the Giver of all good things. Amen.

FEEDING READING

Faith—the key to overcoming stress, discouragement, and more

One of the greatest lessons of this life is faith—learning to believe in the unseen.

John 20:29
Romans 1:17b
Romans 8:24–25
2 Corinthians 5:7

With some people, only seeing is believing.

Mark 15:32a
John 4:48
John 6:30
John 20:25b

But that’s not how faith works; seeing is the reward of faith.

John 11:40
1 Corinthians 13:12
2 Corinthians 3:18
Hebrews 11:6
1 John 3:2

If we are carried about by our feelings or circumstances, we’re in for a rough voyage!

Matthew 14:25–31
Ephesians 4:14a
James 1:6

We don’t have to be governed by circumstances or conditions, as our faith is a determining factor.

Matthew 8:13
Matthew 9:29b
Matthew 15:28
Matthew 17:19–20
Mark 11:24
Hebrews 11:1
1 John 5:4

Faith is trusting in the Lord and His ways, which often defy natural reasoning.

1 Samuel 16:7b
Isaiah 11:3b
Isaiah 55:8–9
1 Corinthians 1:21
1 Corinthians 2:14

God’s Word is the only sure foundation for faith.

Psalms 119:89
Isaiah 40:8
Matthew 24:35
Romans 10:17
1 Peter 1:25a

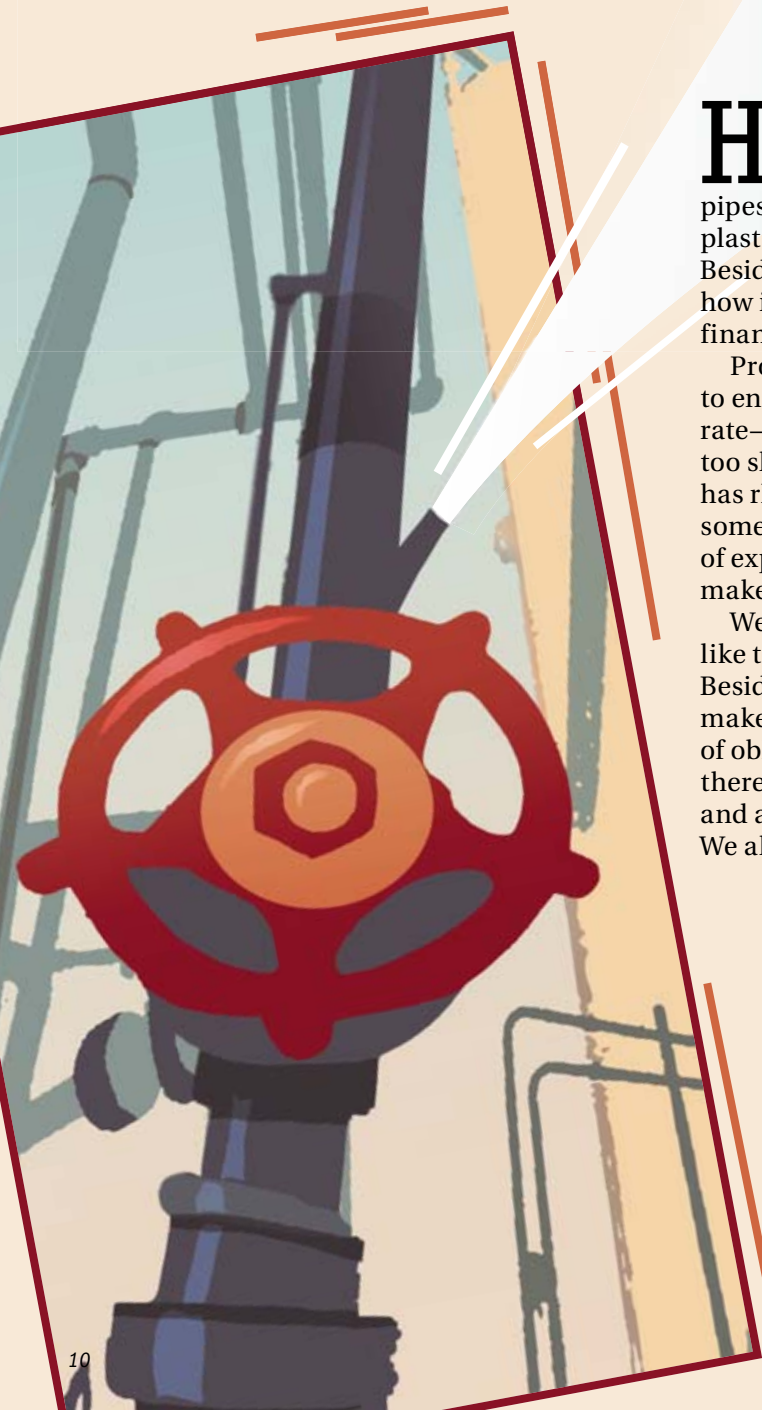
When we walk by faith, love the Lord, and obey His Word, then our relationship with Him stands firm, regardless of the outlook or how we feel.

Jeremiah 31:3b
Isaiah 42:16
Isaiah 44:21b
Isaiah 49:15
Isaiah 54:10
Hebrews 13:5b

When we’re walking by faith, we can approach each new test positively, as a challenge.

Psalms 27:13
2 Corinthians 4:16–18
James 1:2–4
1 Peter 1:6–7

breaking



HAVE YOU EVER SEEN AN OIL REFINERY? One thing that amazed me about the first one I saw up close was the intricate maze of pipes that was used to produce gas, kerosene, plastics, and a host of other petroleum products. Besides the complexity of it all, one wonders how it can all be maintained safely and still be financially viable.

Proper pressure is maintained in every pipe to ensure that the oil flows at just the right rate—not too fast lest it burst the pipes, and not too slow. All this apparent confusion of pipes has rhyme and reason to it. Of course, it took some geniuses to design it, and it takes an army of experts to maintain and monitor it all to make sure that it is properly regulated.

We may sometimes feel that our lives are like that maze of pipes under a lot of pressure. Besides our jobs and the endless chores that make up everyday living, we have a multitude of obligations to our families and friends. Then there are our responsibilities to the community, and appeals to help a world full of needy causes. We also have spiritual commitments to live our

You have to know
You have to know
your limits
your limits

and not
and not

push
push

yourself beyond them.
yourself beyond them.

Point!

BY CURTIS PETER VAN GORDER

faith—to maintain our relationship with the Lord through prayer, reading His Word, and having fellowship with other believers. Sometimes the pressure seems too much to bear. How do we keep from bursting apart at the seams?

It may surprise you to know that a certain amount of pressure is good for us. It helps us not to slip into a state of physical, mental, and spiritual lethargy. It can motivate us to win greater victories as we overcome new obstacles.

A certain amount is good for us, but too much can be our undoing. That's why we need a pressure valve, a way out. Jesus offers us just that.

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden,” Jesus tells us, “and I will give you rest.” Speaking in terms that His followers of 2,000 years ago could understand, He likened the press of daily responsibilities and problems to the load of a beast of burden: “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light” (Matthew 11:28–30). If we find our yoke too heavy, perhaps we have fashioned one for ourselves that is much heavier than the one He wants us to bear.

A large part of an engineer's job is to know exactly how much stress the structure he is designing—whether it is a bridge, an elevator, or a boat, or whatever—can take. That's why you see signs in elevators or boats telling you how many people they can safely hold. If you exceed that limit, the bridge could collapse, the boat sink, or the elevator fall.

You have to know your limits, too, and not push yourself beyond them. When things begin to get too much for you, let Jesus regulate the pressure. He knows how much is good

for you and how much you can take. Let Him take the controls, and He will make sure it's never too much.

“He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall, but those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint” (Isaiah 40:29–31). ■

The secret to overcoming stress ...

... is learning to rest in the Lord. Jesus promises to give us “rest for our souls,” but He has set one condition: “Come to Me” (Matthew 11:28–30). When you are wearied with the strain of it all, you can fly to Jesus on the wings of prayer and faith and get the relief that He alone can give you. He knows what you need most of all: rest of body, mind, and spirit, fellowship with Him, and the spiritual strengthening that comes from reading and absorbing His Word. “And you will find rest for your souls.” Not many people understand that a soul is both body and spirit. If you don't rest spiritually in the Lord, you are going to wear out your body.

—DAVID BRANDT BERG

Combating Depression

I've learned to trust God and have seen Him answer some of my prayers, but one thing that prayer doesn't seem to be able to do for me is help me overcome the bouts of depression that I go through from time to time. Why does God seem so distant when I need Him most?

A: DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY are rampant in the world today—even chronic depression, overwhelming depression, to where people completely lose the desire to live.

When depression hits, it's sometimes hard to know what to do or how to cope. But even if you find that you've "made your bed in the middle of Hell itself"—which the world today sometimes resembles—God will be right there with you. Read it in Psalm 139: "Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into Heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in Hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me" (Psalm 139:7–10). "[Jesus] will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5).

What can help you more than anything else to stay upbeat and positive and free from the grip of depression, or help you pull out

of it if you get sucked down, is keeping a connection with God through reading His Word and seeking Him in prayer. His love is *always* there for you. Even in the times when you're down, very discouraged, or depressed, even when you feel He couldn't possibly love you or care about you, He still does!

One fundamental point to remember is that it's not God who sends discouragement and depression your way, but the Devil. The Devil's ultimate goal is to separate you from God, and one of the main tactics he will try to use to that end is telling you that God doesn't love you personally. First he gets you depressed over something else—often some little thing that he blows up way out of proportion—and then he tries to get you to doubt or even blame God for not immediately coming to your rescue. He tempts you to doubt God's love, to stop believing that He cares about you personally, or even to stop believing that He exists.

Whatever you do, don't believe those lies! Hold on to your faith and trust in God, because when it gets down to the wire, He is your only hope and the only One who can help you make it through your

PUTTING THINGS IN

P E R S P E C T I V E

present difficulty and the others that are sure to come your way.

Those who choose to hold on to their faith when difficulties come their way find that it *is* possible to keep their faith—and God *does* help them through their difficulties. It may not happen immediately or exactly the way they hoped and prayed for, but in the end God makes things go smoother and turn out better than if they had tried to go it alone by letting go of their faith. They've seen that their faith can get them through the rough times. They find that their "faith connection" is their greatest asset when depression strikes.

So when you find yourself besieged by feelings of depression, melancholy, or hopelessness, when you feel that God doesn't love you, or whatever the source of your depression may be, don't try to fight it out on your own. Recognize depression as the spiritual attack of the Enemy that it is, and take a stand against it in the spirit.

It often helps to get prayer and encouragement from people who know and love you and understand the spiritual warfare you're fighting. But even if there is no one around who you can call on for backup, call out to God for His help, and He'll be there. You're not stronger than the Devil, but God is. Ask Him to come to your defense, and He will. He loves you and He is ready and waiting to fight for you! ■

How brief is our span of life compared with the time since You created the universe. How tiny we are compared with the enormity of Your universe. How trivial are our concerns compared with the complexity of Your universe. How stupid we are compared with the genius of Your creation.

Yet during every minute and every second of our lives You are present, within and around us. You give Your attention to each and every one of us. Our concerns are Your concerns. And You are infinitely patient with our stupidity. I thank You with all my heart, knowing that my thanks are as nothing compared to Your greatness.

—SAINT FULBERT OF CHARTRES (960–1028)

faith in God can move a mighty mountain

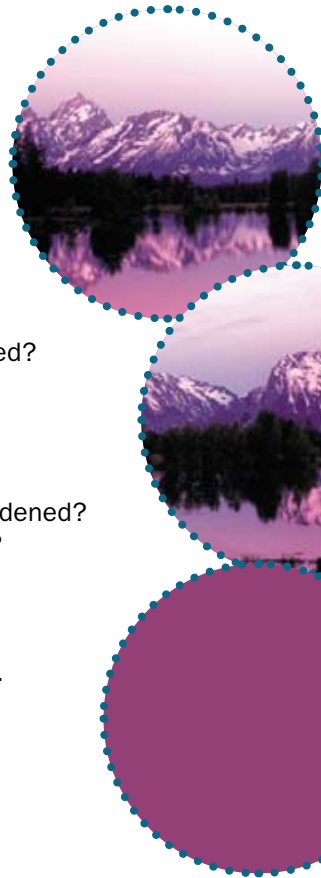
Have you prayers that seem to be unanswered?
Anxious moments, trials hard to bear?
Have faith in His promise unfailing.
God will hear; He will answer your prayer.

Are there loved ones yet for whom you're burdened?
Lonely nights spent bowed in fervent prayer?
God sees ev'ry tear and your heartache,
So just cast upon Him all your care.

Then keep faith, although the way be rugged.
Do not doubt His deep, unfailing love.
Sufficient each day for the trial
Is His promise of grace from above.

Faith in God can move a mighty mountain,
Faith can calm the troubled sea;
Faith can make a desert like a fountain,
Faith can bring the victory.

—JOHN W. PETERSON, ALFRED E. SMITH, AND GRACE WATKINS-BOLTON



THE RISE, REIGN, AND WARS OF THE ANTICHRIST

Daniel 11, Part 3

■ *In Parts 1 and 2 of this article, the prophet Daniel (circa 538 BC) recounted a vision concerning the “latter days,” also known as the End-time—the time in which we are living. In verses 21 through 38, Daniel described in some detail the coming world dictator known as the Antichrist, as well as the first three wars he will wage to seize and try to hold on to power. But there is still more. ...*

VERSE 39: “Thus he [the Antichrist] shall act against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god, which he shall acknowledge, and advance its glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and divide the land for gain.”

This “foreign god” could turn out to be the image of the Beast, which is described in Revelation 13:14–15: “He [the Antichrist’s false prophet] deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the Beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the Beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. He was

granted power to give breath to the image of the Beast, that the image of the Beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the Beast to be killed.”

This image is likely to be an incredibly high-tech supercomputer accessing massive unified databases containing detailed personal information on most of the world’s population and linked to the Antichrist’s telecommunications network. Through the image of the Beast, a universal economic and financial system will be instituted. The number 666 will somehow be central to this system.

Revelation 13:16–18: “He [again, the Antichrist’s false prophet] causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the Beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the Beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.”

DANIEL 11:40–42—THE FOURTH ANTICHRIST WAR?

Verse 40: “At the time of the end the king of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through.”

This war takes place during the three-and-a-half-year Great Tribulation—probably near the end because the Antichrist meets *his* end just a few verses later—and is once again fought between the king of the North (the Antichrist) and the enigmatic king of the South (possibly U.S.-backed Israel). Daniel could only use terms he was familiar with to describe the modern warfare he saw in this vision—tanks and personnel carriers as chariots, massive air strikes as a whirlwind, and so on.

Verse 41: “He [the Antichrist] shall also enter the Glorious Land [Israel], and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon.”

Edom, Moab, and Ammon are contained in modern-day Jordan.

Verse 42: “He shall stretch out his hand against the countries [that sided with the king of the South], and the land of Egypt shall not escape.”

Verse 43: “He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; also the Libyans and Ethiopians shall follow at his heels.

“He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver” indicates that the Antichrist will hold economic control, which we also know to be the case from Revelation 13:16–18 and other passages. “The Libyans and Ethiopians shall follow at his heels” means that these countries will be subservient to the Antichrist.

DANIEL 11:44—THE FIFTH ANTICHRIST WAR?

Verse 44: “But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many.”

That sounds like either another war, or a continuation of the war described in verses 40 through 42, and probably happens near the end of the Tribulation. If this is another war—the fifth war of the Antichrist—it seems it

is against eastern nations.

“News from the north” could mean a threatened coup or other problems of dissent in his own country, or possibly troubling developments in North America.

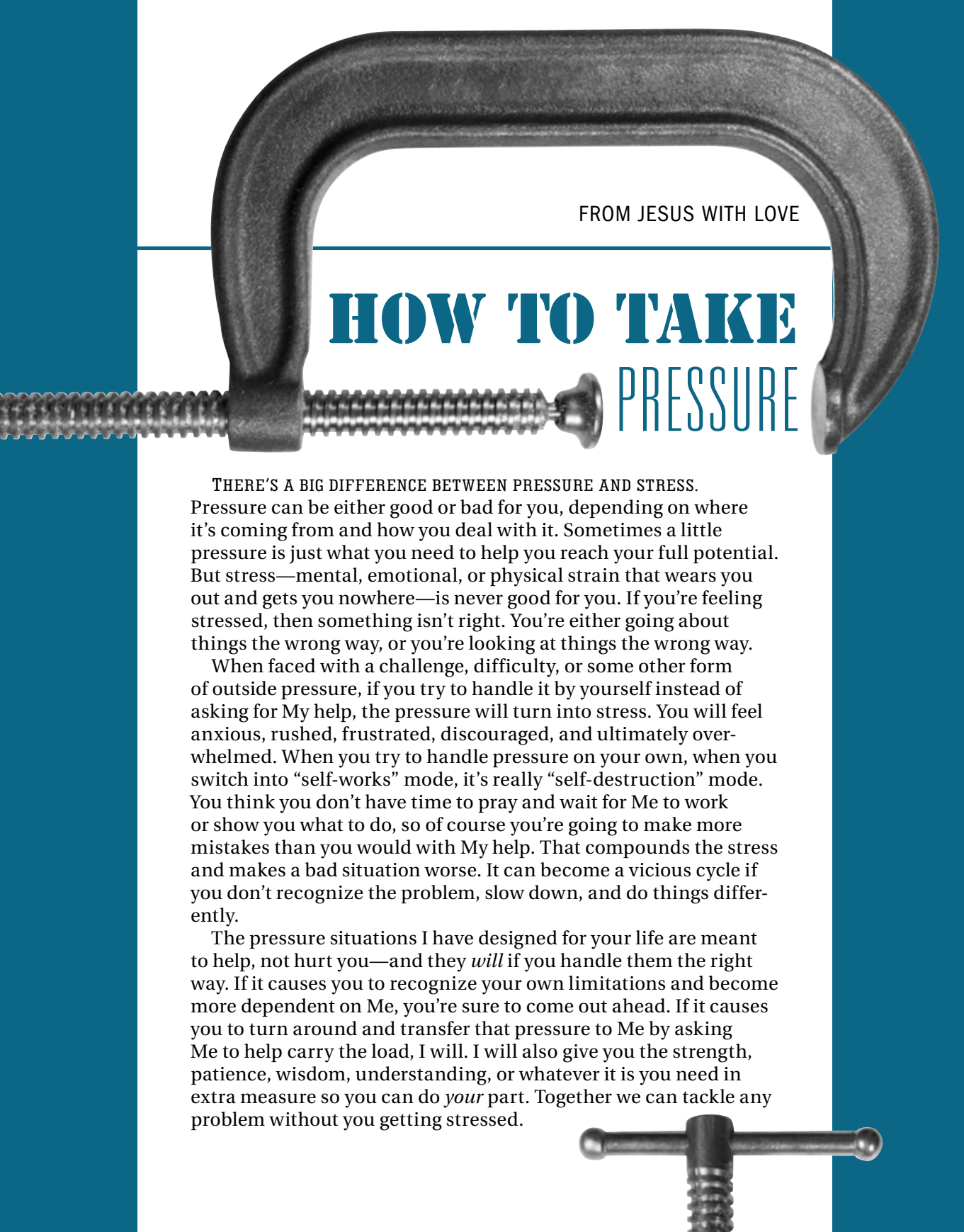
“He shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many.” This could be the war—possibly nuclear—in which the Antichrist and his allies obliterate “Babylon,” as described in Revelation 14:8; 17:16; and chapter 18. This war probably takes place not long before Jesus’ return and the Rapture.

Verse 45: “And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him.”

The “glorious holy mountain” is Jerusalem’s Mount Moriah. That doesn’t necessarily mean that the Antichrist waits until this point to set up his headquarters on Mount Moriah; it’s just an acknowledgment of what he most likely did three and a half years earlier when he broke the covenant, placed the image of the Beast in the Temple area (Daniel 11:30–31), sat in the Temple claiming to be God, and abolished all religions other than worship of himself (2 Thessalonians 2:3–4)—these events triggering the Great Tribulation.



“Yet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him.” At Megiddo, overlooking the plains of Armageddon in northern Israel, the Antichrist musters his armies for his greatest campaign against the nations that still oppose him, but Jesus and His heavenly army, including the resurrected believers from throughout the ages, intercede by returning to earth and utterly destroying the Antichrist and his forces at the Battle of the Great Day of God Almighty (Revelation 16:12–16; 19:11–21). He then ushers in 1,000 years of peace on earth—a period known as the Millennium. The happy beginning! ■



FROM JESUS WITH LOVE

HOW TO TAKE PRESSURE

THERE'S A BIG DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PRESSURE AND STRESS.

Pressure can be either good or bad for you, depending on where it's coming from and how you deal with it. Sometimes a little pressure is just what you need to help you reach your full potential. But stress—mental, emotional, or physical strain that wears you out and gets you nowhere—is never good for you. If you're feeling stressed, then something isn't right. You're either going about things the wrong way, or you're looking at things the wrong way.

When faced with a challenge, difficulty, or some other form of outside pressure, if you try to handle it by yourself instead of asking for My help, the pressure will turn into stress. You will feel anxious, rushed, frustrated, discouraged, and ultimately overwhelmed. When you try to handle pressure on your own, when you switch into “self-works” mode, it's really “self-destruction” mode. You think you don't have time to pray and wait for Me to work or show you what to do, so of course you're going to make more mistakes than you would with My help. That compounds the stress and makes a bad situation worse. It can become a vicious cycle if you don't recognize the problem, slow down, and do things differently.

The pressure situations I have designed for your life are meant to help, not hurt you—and they *will* if you handle them the right way. If it causes you to recognize your own limitations and become more dependent on Me, you're sure to come out ahead. If it causes you to turn around and transfer that pressure to Me by asking Me to help carry the load, I will. I will also give you the strength, patience, wisdom, understanding, or whatever it is you need in extra measure so you can do *your* part. Together we can tackle any problem without you getting stressed.