

Rain on Me

DEVOTIONS OF
HOPE & ENCOURAGEMENT
FOR DIFFICULT TIMES

by HOLLEY GERTH



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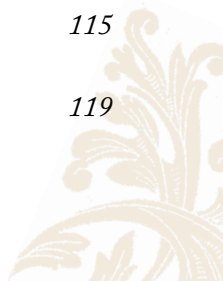
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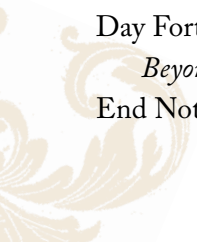
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I N T R O D U C T I O N

Every Storm Begins with One Drop

Scientists recently discovered that raindrops hit the earth at speeds up to twenty miles an hour. Each one is like a miniature hammer pounding away dirt and scattering debris. Whether it's a small shower or a huge hurricane, raindrops make an impact.

Your first drop may have been a diagnosis given by a doctor with a grim face. Perhaps it was a note left on the kitchen table that said, "I'm sorry, but I don't love you anymore." It could have been a phone call late at night and someone on the other end telling you the unthinkable.

On the other hand, your first drop may have come so softly you didn't even recognize it. You tried to start a family and, after another negative pregnancy test, realized something might be wrong. You took a promising job and one day discovered that your computer screen might as well be a dead end sign. You began a relationship only to discover that your dream come true had started to feel a bit like a nightmare.

No matter how your first drop fell, it was probably followed by another...and another...and another. Now your heart is soaking wet and you're wondering if you'll ever feel warm and dry again.

The good news is, God knows even more about rain than those scientists. He knows the destruction it can bring. He also knows how to use it to bring beauty and hope to our lives. Take a quick look out your window. Every flower or tree you see owes its life to rain. Every bird singing, every frog hopping, every living thing draws its strength from storms.

I'm not saying God caused the storm in your life. We live in a broken world, and things are not as they should be. But I do believe that God is the Redeemer of the Rain. He longs to bring beauty out of brokenness, healing out of hurts, and new life out of losses.

I know this is true because I've experienced it personally. I'm not writing this book as someone who has stayed dry and watched others struggle outside my window. Several years ago God allowed a storm to brew in my life that I never expected when my husband and I began trying to start a family. Our infertility began as a drop, became a drizzle, and finally the heavens opened, and we found ourselves in an outright downpour when we lost our long-awaited baby to a miscarriage.

Over the past few years, there have been as many tears as there have been raindrops in my life. Through that journey, however, I've also seen what God can do with our greatest hurts and disappointments.

I've read many books in which the authors are looking back on the storms in their lives. This book is different because I'm still in the storm. I don't believe we have to wait for blue skies in order for God to use the rain. It can start right here, right now.

So wherever you are and whatever your storm may be, know that you are not alone. God is with you, and He is whispering messages about the rain to your heart that will change your world forever if you only dare to believe them.

I'm committed to walking through the rain with you, too. I'm praying for you as I write these words, and I'll still be praying for you as you read them.

May God redeem the rain in all of our lives.

—Holley Gerth

It's Okay to Not Be Okay

I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

ROMANS 8:38-39



*M*y grandmother has a cartoon on her refrigerator. It shows a cow on its back with all four legs in the air. The caption reads, “I’m fine, really, I’m fine.” A lot of us handle the storms in our lives like that cow. We stand in the rain, soaking wet, with a smile on our faces, and say, “I’m dry, really, I’m dry.”

I know what that’s like because I did it for years. Somewhere along the way I was told, “Christians need to be happy all the time. If you’re not happy, what will people think about Jesus?” If you want to breed a herd of perfectionists, just say that a few times from the pulpit.

For many years my life was mostly sunny. I could grin and bear it through the few showers that came along. But then

came *The Storm*—the kind of storm that makes the weather channel flash maps covered with red and send warnings about taking shelter immediately.

It's one thing to stand outside in a nice little shower. It's another thing altogether to be that crazy news anchor hanging onto a light pole in the middle of a hurricane. I couldn't do it anymore. Like the rain that streamed down in my world, something opened in my heart, and hurt poured out from a place I had kept locked for years.

Then I waited. I listened for the rebukes. I watched for the disapproving stares. I stiffened my soul for the hard hand of God.

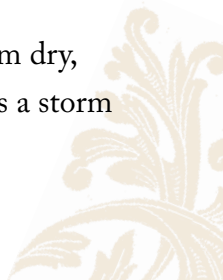
But instead of those things, I encountered the last thing I ever expected to find.

Love.

I felt it in the kindness of friends and family. I heard it in comforting words. I discovered it deep within my heart as God whispered, *I'm here with you.*

I also realized I wasn't the only one who was wet. People began to open up to me. Everyone I knew had some type of rain in their lives. We were one great, big, beautiful, soggy mess—and God loved us all.

So if you're still muttering under your breath, "I'm dry, really, I'm dry," then I invite you to admit that there's a storm in your life.



It's okay not to be okay.

When we embrace that grace, we're finally free to discover that love is waiting for us in the center of the storm.

READ

Romans 8:26-30

REFLECT

What storm are you walking through right now? _____

What are you feeling as you walk through the rain? _____

How can you share those feelings with God and others? _____

RESPOND

Lord, my heart is in the midst of a storm right now. Please help me to be honest with myself and with You about all that I'm feeling. I especially want to tell You _____

Amen.