

God's Faithfulness in a Lost Backpack

Adapted from a report by an Alliance international worker serving in West Africa

We were exhausted after our 24-hour trip returning to West Africa. Neither my wife, Linda*, nor I had slept. Our toddler, Rosy, had thrown up three times during the last couple of take offs and landings.

With Rosy strapped in a carrier to my chest, I lugged two backpacks and carry-ons through the airport customs line. Linda had our newborn and several more bags. At the security scanner, we loaded everything onto the conveyor belt. While regathering our bags, Rosy vomited again.

Once outside, we met our teammate, whose wife had dinner waiting for us at their home. Rosy and I needed to clean up, so Linda went to grab the diaper bag and my backpack. She returned minutes later, saying, "We can't find your backpack."

My heart sank. That single bag contained our prized possessions—most importantly, our hard drive with every picture and video we had from our last six years together. It was all gone.

I knew our bag was gone, but we had to try. So I got in a car with our

teammate and returned to the airport while Linda and our colleagues prayed. On the drive I wondered: *Was God stripping us of what we held dear so we would press into Him in new ways?*

At the airport, I was finally allowed to reenter after explaining the situation multiple times. I began retelling my story to a worker stationed near the scanner machine, where I thought I'd last had the bag. And there it was—sitting on top of the machine in plain sight. "That's my bag!" I screamed, running to retrieve it.

I couldn't believe that my backpack had simply sat there unnoticed. I grabbed it and quickly hurried to the exit. Once outside, I verified that everything was there.

Our return to West Africa has been a bit like this story. Reorienting and unpacking has been slow, we've had unexpected illnesses, a house needing constant repairs—the tasks are increasing in size and number. But He is in this. We prayed for a miracle when our bag was lost, and He granted one. Please join us in praying for multiple miracles surrounding our health and circumstances; by faith, we believe He'll grant those too.

**Names changed*

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Pray for Japan in Aftermath of Deadly Flooding

Torrential rains across western Japan early last month resulted in widespread floods and landslides that killed more than 200 people and forced millions to evacuate. “The two hardest-hit prefectures, Hiroshima and Ehime, are where we have the most Alliance churches,” said Japan field director Don Schaeffer. “People in 10 of the cities where we have churches have lost their lives, with 24 dead in Kure and 11 dead in Uwajima. Transportation was disrupted, and several churches were unable to have Sunday worship services.” At this writing, more than 150,000 homes are still without running water, and clean-up efforts continue.

No Alliance church buildings were affected, but believers in Kure and Uchiko have had homes flooded. Also, the roof of the Alliance seminary in Hiroshima was damaged by heavy rain.

The Japan Alliance Church (JAC) has been assisting residents of Kure City in Hiroshima and in Uwajima City in Ehime, the two cities most affected by the disaster. Alliance pastors are helping to coordinate this work, and CAMA Services has provided a \$5,000 gift toward relief efforts.

Pray for God’s mercy on the people of Japan during these difficult times and for those who have lost loved ones, homes, and possessions. Intercede especially for Alliance churches as they continue to demonstrate Christ’s love and compassion to those affected by the flooding.

Look to Jesus for Healing

The following was adapted from The Lord for the Body by A. B. Simpson published in 1925 by Christian Alliance Publishing Co.

God lifts up His Son in the midst of disease and death and bids them look to Him and live. And so if there has come to you a trial, and even through a sin, lift up your eyes and you will behold, not God’s judgment, but a blessed manifestation of Jesus Christ, and He will come into your life in some new way which you have never known before, and you will thank the devil and be glad of your trial for having brought you nearer to your Lord. God has told us that, “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.” This is God’s remedy for disease as well as sin.

Our Lord is revealed to us as the atonement for sickness, as the One “who bore our infirmities, and carried our pains” and “by His stripes we are healed.” Oh, for this revelation of Jesus! Oh, that He might come to you in the dark place, and the sad place, in the sick room, and say, “I have brought you here just so that your eyes might be turned to the cross.”

If you just receive it, it will fill your being. It is the abiding that keeps me in contact with the Living One. It will bind you up to Christ, and you will never be able to get along without Him. And your life will be one long “looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith.”

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