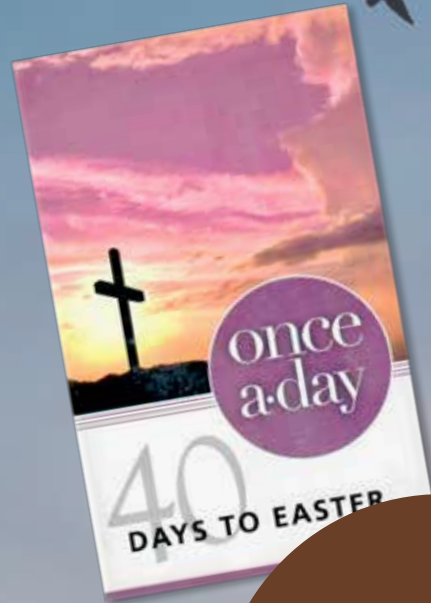


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## THE PROMISES OF GOD

### CALLED TO STAND FIRM

Every year storms originating in equatorial regions of the Atlantic Ocean furiously pound the eastern coast of the United States. A typical post-hurricane photo shows scores of boats piled up like so much kindling. Moorings that are adequate in balmy weather are no match for the pounding surf that results in winds that clock over one hundred miles per hour.

Similarly, where a person ends up after a storm in life tells a lot about the strength of his or her moorings. And the time to check those moorings is before the storm hits. Christians are moored to an unmovable, unshakable rock that is Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 10:4). We are tied to Him by faith, which remains untested until the storms come. Since we know that He will never be moved, the question is one of our faithfulness. What is there in our calling from God that will keep us tied firmly to Jesus until the end? A group of Christians in Thessalonica received counsel from the apostle Paul on this subject.

Paul wrote to the Thessalonians about a great time of testing that they—or the church in the future—were destined to go through. A “man of lawlessness” (2 Thess. 2:3) would, as a pawn of Satan, challenge the work of God and attempt to lead astray the people of God. What defense would they have against such a satanic storm? Only one, Paul said. He encouraged his readers to “stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught . . . [by] us” (2:15) and to remember that they had been chosen by God “from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit” (2:13).

This is the mooring that, still today, ensures that believers will share in the glory of

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Christ when He returns. When the storm is over, others who thought they were secure may be scattered and shattered. But those who rest in the strength of this salvation will remain anchored to the Rock.

Have you responded to God’s call through the gospel? If so, you are tied securely to the rock that is Christ. That’s not a reason to relax, but it is a reason to examine your faith and make sure it is adequate for every test. “Faithful is He who calls [us]” (1 Thess. 5:24); let us be faithful as well.

#### God’s Promise:

No storm can dislodge the one who is anchored to His Son.

Reflections Ministries  
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## REFLECTIONS

A teaching letter encouraging believers to develop a clear mind and a warm heart

### THE TRUE GOD-MAN

God of promise, You have been working throughout history to overcome the alienation and estrangement that took place at the Fall. Your glorious redemptive plan that led to the incarnation of Your Son provides the only basis for our forgiveness, atonement, and eternal life. But since the days of His earthly ministry, there has been a concerted effort by the enemy of our faith to distort the biblical teaching about His identity. Teachers have denied Jesus’ full

deity on the one hand or denied His full humanity on the other, and this still happens now. We are such creatures of extremes—the extremes of Jesus as God but not man, and of Jesus as man but not God; the extremes of asceticism and of indulgence; the extremes of seeing matter as evil and of worshipping the earth. But only the biblical revelation of the full God-man is enough to save us from our sins.

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# Once-a-Day 40 Days to Easter Devotional

BY KEN BOA

## Lent -- Day One

### Genesis 3:17-19, 23-24

To Adam [the Lord God] said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat from it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

### Matthew 27:50-51a

And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

### Colossians 2:13-14

When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.

### Hebrews 10:19-22

Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

### Meditation

Since the day humans fell in the garden, people have lived with the knowledge that they are separated from their Creator. Jews in Jesus' day knew this full well, and in case they forgot, there was the curtain -- the great, heavy, blue/purple curtain of twisted linen. Four inches thick and so strong the historian Josephus said that horses tied to either side of it pulling could not tear it in two, it separated two rooms in the tabernacle. Though the curtain was beautiful, its real purpose was not. It did not simply separate two rooms, it existed to bar entrance to God's Holy Place. It sent a message about the separation between God and people, serving as a reminder that no one was to ever approach God, except in the limited ways he meticulously prescribed. The curtain represented a closed door, open only to the High Priest, and to him only once each year. And the only way he could survive entrance to that Holy Place was by the sprinkling of blood. The curtain constantly reminded God's people of their sin and the separation it brought between them and the One they longed for. The curtain, in one piece for so many years, communicated that God is holy and his people, in their sin, were not. As we enter this Lenten season, we prepare our hearts to celebrate the day the curtain was torn in two, from top to bottom, from God to man. A true and perfect sacrifice having been provided, the curtain no longer served a purpose. We have a great High Priest, who enters the temple by the sacrifice of His own blood. Let us not remember His sacrifice lightly, but solemnly, yet in the freedom and joy provided the day the Holy Place was opened to us.

## Prayer

*Almighty Father, I rejoice in the revelation that you actually want to be with me and me with you. However, I acknowledge that I am unable to escape your judgment through my own righteousness. I cannot see how you could wish to have such intimacy with me as sinful as I am, but I see that the depths of your grace are far beyond my ability to comprehend. You have gone to such great lengths to provide an entrance into your presence. The sword of judgment that should have been held over me was broken on your Son and that has removed all barriers between us now. Teach me how to come before you during this season, with the proper mix of humility and confidence. Confessing my need and trusting in what you have done for me, I pray.*

*Amen.*

One Piedmont Center, Suite 130 • Atlanta, GA 30305  
info@kenboa.org

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