

Dear Friend

You might find today's thought from me a little random – so first, some background information!

I am reading a book on women in the Italian resistance during the latter part of WW2. There are two reasons for this – firstly, I am woefully ignorant when it comes to history and this book looked light-hearted when I picked it up in the book shop (it isn't – but has what looked like a very happy picture on the cover despite the guns) and the second is that I do enjoy learning about the amazing things that women have achieved over the years, often against many odds.

I read a part last night that spoke of how Ada (a resistance fighter) took a captured tommy gun (I have no idea what that is!) apart and hid the pieces in the lining of her coat before walking through the town to deliver it to another fighter. As she passed a café, she slipped and fell over and the German soldiers in the café came out to help her to her feet. Amazingly, she managed to get away without them discovering the contents of her outfit!

Huge acts of bravery and courage like this are brought about often by people who are so badly treated by others that they feel they have nothing left to lose. Their lives are not valued by those who mistreat them, so why should we expect them to feel their life is of any value?

Today's verse then is from Deuteronomy 31:6

*Be strong and bold; have no fear or dread of them, because it is the LORD your God who goes with you; he will not fail you or forsake you.*

It's simple enough. Whatever has happened, or whatever you expect to happen, know that God goes with you and will not fail or forsake you – in other words, God will take care of you. This idea that at our lowest point, when we are facing danger and there seems to be no escape route, no way out, we can be bold and strong is quite overwhelming. As human beings, this is the point where we really want to run for cover, not stand strong and face the music!

With God in our lives though, we know that we can face these difficult times. We have done so for the last few months, on a daily (and even hourly) basis. And, at various points in history, we know that others have also done this. Psalm 27 gives us further encouragement:

*The LORD is my light and my salvation;  
whom shall I fear?*

*The LORD is the stronghold of my life;  
of whom shall I be afraid?*

Here in this psalm we have real confidence support – with God in our lives, we can achieve anything that God wishes. Just typing that put a smile on my face – it is a huge comfort to know that whatever is in front of us, God will not let us be alone and will not let us fail in the path laid out for us. In my book, as the Allies start to make progress across Europe, Ada worries about the 'new order' that is to come and how she would remake herself. But she recalls, as the planes swoop down over the road she is cycling, and drop their bombs around her that 'as always when I do not pay attention to something dangerous, I arrive *at my destination* unharmed.' We will arrive, with God's assistance, at a new normal.

So today, my prayer is that we will all take comfort from the presence of God in our lives – as indeed did Ada!

Blessings and peace  
Linda