

9/11Day of Mercy

Did the disastrous day also display God's grace?



It was Sept. 10, 2001, the night before the calamity. I was leading a gathering of ministers in our building in northern New Jersey, across the Hudson River from New York City. As the leader of a Messianic worship center, I was very conscious of where we were in the biblical Hebrew calendar—these were the days of the trumpet, the biblical alarm, the warning sound of approaching danger.

That evening one of our ministers came to us heavily burdened over the fact that he had not shared the gospel with the unsaved in his life. He stayed there, praying late into the night. A few hours later, on Sept. 11, he went to work in his office inside the World Trade Center in Manhattan.

At that time there was also a woman in my life who seemed as if she could be *the* one for me. Only months earlier we had exchanged our first gifts at the ground floor of the Twin Towers. On the morning of Sept. 11, she was scheduled for an appointment at the towers just when the attack would take place.

 Tuesday the 11th was a warm and pleasant September morning.

The burdened minister was high up in the South Tower when the first plane struck. As he pondered the possibility that his life was about to end, he was all the more haunted by his failure to share God's love with the lost.

Subsequent to the plane crashing into the building, he made his way to the stairwell, which had quickly filled with others seeking to save their lives. Only a handful of minutes were left before the entire South Tower would collapse into a heap of ruins. But now, with so many people jamming the stairs,

there was hardly any movement toward escape.

The minister began praying to God for a second chance to reach the lost. Then, suddenly it seemed, he found himself at the bottom of the stairs. He rushed out the entryway. Behind him, the tower started to collapse.

Reaching safety, he called his wife and children to tell them he was alive and then, before doing anything else, called an old friend for whom he had prayed the night before, to finally share the gospel with him. 

As for the woman whom I was courting and who was also scheduled to be at the towers at the time of the attack, she learned at the last minute that her appointment in New York City was cancelled. She too was saved from the calamity. This woman is now my wife with whom I share a little boy of 2 years.

Sept. 11 was, thus, not only a day of calamity but also a day of untold mercies and countless hidden stories of those whose lives would have ended but for the grace of God in a single turn of events.

And there was something more to it.

Two years before, I had stood overlooking the Hudson River in a gathering of prayer for God's mercy on New York. It was united intercession based on a prophetic sense that a terrorist attack would come to the city in future days.

 As I led in prayer, my focus was drawn to the two towers of the World Trade Center across the water. A deep sense came over me of things yet to come for America. Two years later it would begin.

Could it be that 9/11 was, as well, a wake-up call to a nation rapidly departing from God? And *did* America wake up?

It is the call of God that we pray for our nation—for mercy and revival. And it is the Lord's charge that we make the most of every moment to share the gospel with those who are perishing—for we never know when will be our last chance to do that.

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