

Former Refugee Finds Supernatural Power Through Prayer

Every two seconds, someone across the globe is displaced from home. Among those displaced are more than 25.4 million refugees—more than half of whom are under the age of 18, according to a report by the U.N. Refugee Agency. At a young age, Dania Yadago became one of those harrowing statistics.

Dania grew up in a war-torn area in the Middle East where she experienced extreme poverty and faced persecution for her Christian faith. She vividly remembers life in her small and nearly empty house, where she would sometimes endure days without food. Her family had few possessions and struggled to purchase basic necessities. In the midst of hardship and suffering, Dania remembers one consistent lifeline through it all: prayer.

“I saw a powerful prayer life in my parents at an early age,” Dania said. “I remember my dad would kneel on the floor and cry out to God to provide for our family.”

Dania’s mother also had a profound impact on shaping Dania’s faith. She taught Dania to memorize Psalm 23 ever since she was a little girl. There was a constant encouraging voice echoing in her thoughts throughout her childhood as she read the Psalm over and over: “God is my shepherd, and He will take care of me.”

Taking this Scripture to heart, Dania once prayed fervently for a radio in order to connect to the news. It may have seemed like an odd request when there were so many other basic necessities she desperately needed like food, water and clothes, but she was taught to bring every petition and anxious thought to the Lord through prayer.

He answered.

One day upon entering church, Dania noticed there were huge brown boxes filled with shoeboxes. They were sent from the United States through a ministry called Operation Christmas Child, a project of Samaritan's Purse that delivers gift-filled shoeboxes to demonstrate God's love in a tangible way to children facing difficult circumstances around the world. Name after name was called until finally, it was Dania's turn. She recalls her little heart beating so fast as the shoebox gift was placed in her hands. It was the first gift Dania had ever received. As she unpacked her shoebox gift, she found personal care items, toys and to her complete amazement—a radio.

“It was an answer to prayer. We always knew it was a gift from God—it was Him who made it possible,” Dania recalled. “It was very special. I remember being so excited I could barely breathe!”

Her family once felt isolated, certain they had been forgotten. But when that shoebox gift arrived, they were astonished to find that not only was a stranger thinking about them, but God had led this person to pack such a specific item Dania had prayed to receive. This simple gift reshaped the lives of her entire family and marked a beautiful reminder in their journey of the power of prayer.

This moment reaffirmed their faith that there was a God in heaven who loved them and cared for them so much that he prompted someone from across the world to take the time to prayerfully pack a shoebox gift to help a child like Dania overseas. God can use something as simple as packing a shoebox with basic things like hygiene items, school supplies, fun toys and even a small radio to brighten a child's day and reignite a passion for prayer.

God's faithfulness to answer Dania's prayer enabled her later

to trust Him again as she faced the most difficult circumstance of her life—fleeing home. Dania experienced persecution for her faith and death threats, but she clung to the promises of Psalm 23 and held on to the items she received in her shoebox gift to remind her of the time God provided for her. It kept her moving and became a constant source of comfort and encouragement. The shoebox gift established a strong foundation of prayer as her family was forced to roam through countries in the Middle East in search of a safe place. There was little they could do but pray and hope God would hear them and protect them.

When Dania was 17, the Lord answered another prayer. Her family had eagerly hoped to leave the Middle East in the midst of persecution and suffering in hopes of a better future. Dania had always dreamed of going to America. While she was working one day, her father shared the news that they had been approved to go to the U.S. God had yet again provided for her.

Dania and her family have been living in the U.S. since 2010. She graduated in May 2017 with a bachelor's degree in education. She now serves full time with Operation Christmas Child as a national spokesperson. As she looks back on all God has done for her, she is grateful for the power of prayer that she experienced as a young girl and still experiences today.

“Today every time I have a need I bring it to God in prayer. It reminds me of the time he answered my prayer while I was in desperate need so many years ago. He truly was—and is—the good Shepherd.”

To learn more about how Operation Christmas Child is impacting the lives of children overseas, visit [www.operationchristmaschild.org](#).