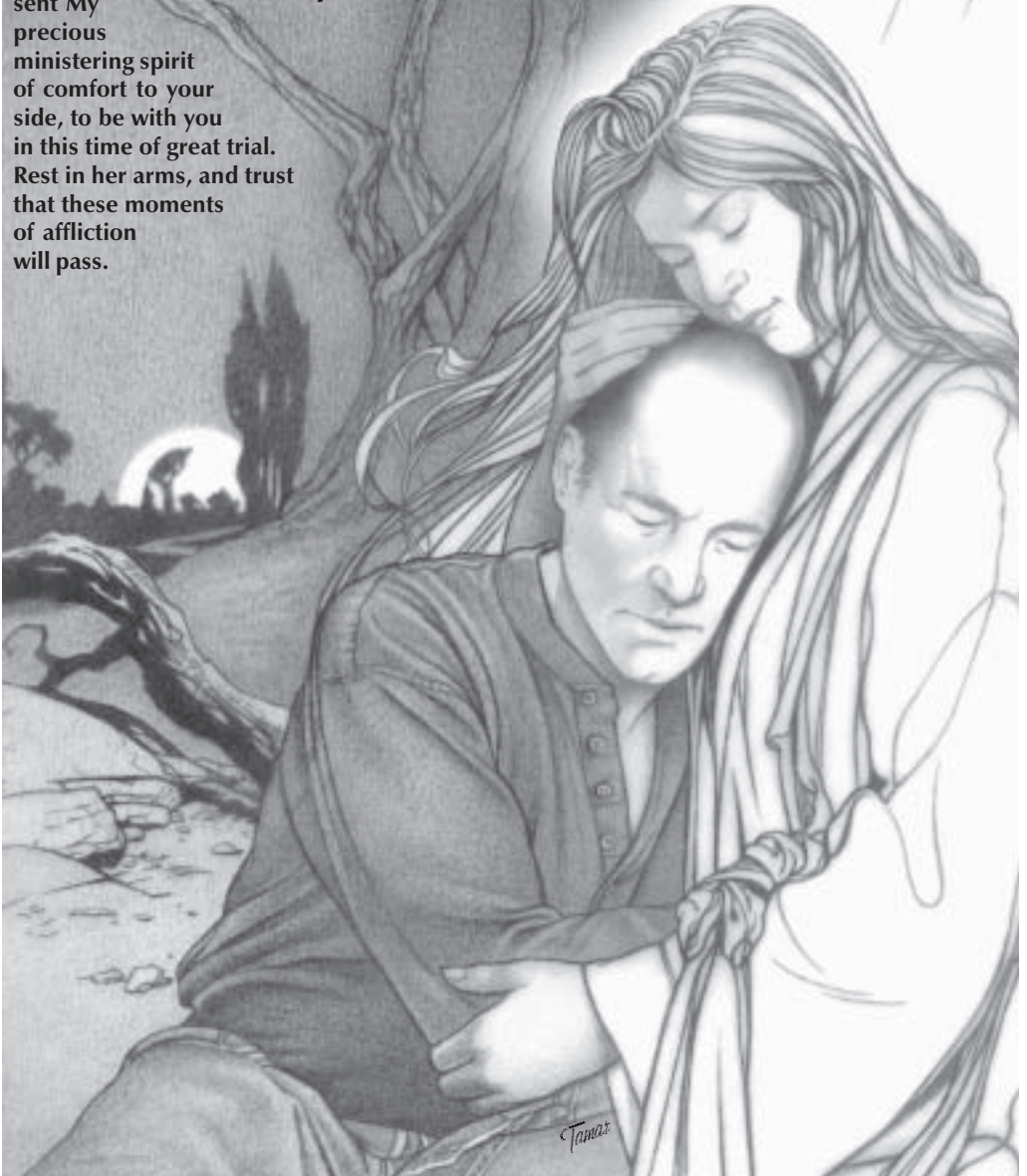


Comfort in Affliction, Part 1

CM/FM 3355
Maria #574
3/01

I have
sent My
precious
ministering spirit
of comfort to your
side, to be with you
in this time of great trial.
Rest in her arms, and trust
that these moments
of affliction
will pass.

By Maria



Comfort in Affliction, Part 1

By Maria

Maria #574 - ML # 3355 3/01

Dear Family,

I love you! We all face battles at one time or another with our health—some of us more often than others. Some of you suffer from long-term illnesses or afflictions, and I greatly admire you for your courage, bravery, and endurance. My afflictions are so minor by comparison, but I do have a lot of them, so I sympathize, and I'm amazed at how well you handle them and the grace the Lord gives to help you keep going for Him despite them. You can be sure that whenever we hear of anyone suffering from an affliction, Peter and I and our Home pray for you very fervently during our prayer vigils and during united prayer at meals and other times.

2. Over the past few years we've received so much from the Lord on sickness, healing and health, that we've compiled some of it into a series of GNs on these subjects. These GNs contain prophecy excerpts that touch on various aspects of the subject of healing and the many wonderful promises that the Lord has given—not only of how He can and will heal, but also about all He can bring into our lives through affliction and the wonderful gift from Him that it can become, if you take it as such. The Lord said He wished these Words to be “as jewels gathered together in a treasure chest, for My children to pull out what is applicable to them and claim them and be strengthened by them.” Since we all have afflictions or weak health at some time—some of us rather frequently—I believe this will be a great encouragement to each of you.

3. This first GN is mainly encouraging words from our Husband about how He sees affliction, and His promises of comfort. He frequently brings out how much He wants us to rest in His arms during times of weakness, so that He can work in our spirits and heal our bodies. It's important to have the right mindset when you're faced with sickness or weak health. As Dad said, “The greatest healing factor is faith—to know that God loves you and cares for you and is going to take care of you no matter what!” Often the first thing the Enemy tries to hit you with in times of affliction is just the opposite of that—a feeling of condemnation or discouragement.

He'll try to convince you that you're sick because you're receiving just punishment for your sins, or that you don't deserve the Lord's healing and that you're never going to get healed, or discourage you about all that you're not able to do during the time that you're sick, or make you feel like a weight and burden to the Home because you're not physically capable of keeping up with your duties.

4. Please, dear ones, recognize those lies of the Enemy for what they are! Even if you did something to bring on your affliction through disobedience to the Lord's health rules or His spiritual laws, He still wants you to be healed—not discouraged or depressed! Ask Him what the problem is and what He wants you to do about it. Lie back in your precious Husband's arms and listen to Him tell you how He sees it! Receive faith through His Words—faith that He will heal you in His time, and faith to rest in Him and receive all that He has for you during your time of physical weakness or affliction. Each of these beautiful messages you can claim as your own. And don't hesitate to ask Him for His per-

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sonal, specific, individual counsel for you, even on a daily basis. That's the first step down the road of healing—getting the Lord's perspective on the situation and following the counsel He gives as your wonderful Great Physician. I love you! You're in my prayers!

Love, Mama

Your Greatest Strength Comes Through Faith and Trust

5. (*Jesus speaking:*) Many are the afflictions of the righteous. Afflictions, no matter how small or how big, can equal My blessings in your life in some way if you will choose to look at them that way and if you will choose to receive them.

6. Afflictions are times of testing and purging, times of drawing you closer to Me, times of cleansing you from the cares and burdens of life as you rest on My bosom.

7. They are times of strengthening your connection with Me as you seek Me for healing, as you rest in My Word and hold on to it for your encouragement.

8. They are times of sweetness as you look to Me, like a little child looking to her father for help.

9. They are times of My love to you as I hold you in My arms and comfort you and caress you and nurture you back to full health.

10. Fret not for this light affliction in your life, because each time that it comes it is in answer to your prayer that you will stay close to Me and dependent upon Me, desperate in spirit and walking in humility. It's but a gentle channeling of your spirit and life, My gentle way of helping you to rest in Me and stay close to Me.

11. Fear not, for it is not an affliction of destruction, but it is one that is meant to restore your life, to renew your spark of inspiration, to refresh your appreciation for the good health that you have, to bless you with a thankful, grateful heart. For when I restore your health and you feel better, your appreciation, love and respect for Me are all so much sweeter.

12. It's a test for My older ones whenever they are tested with light afflictions, because they know their bodies are weaker, it takes them much longer to heal, and sometimes they're not as strong afterward. It's a test of your faith and trust in Me that no matter what your age, I will

still protect and heal and keep you, and that I'm still able to deliver you from any and all afflictions, just as I have promised.

13. My older ones are tempted to worry or fear when it comes to changes in their bodies, afflictions, or any signs of unusual things happening with their bodies. This is because they know that their bodies are wearing out, that they're susceptible to health problems, ailments, and even serious, life-threatening afflictions. But I say unto you that no good comes from worrying about these things. For if it is My will for you to pass through an affliction, it will be done in love for your good and according to My perfect will. So you need not worry.

14. The Enemy will tempt you to worry about your aging body, your health, to fret, "What if this or that goes wrong?" But are not these things in My hands, dear one? Trust in Me and continue to have faith, for your faith need not grow older even if your body does. Trust in My Word, knowing that My will and My power to keep and protect and heal you is the same today as yesterday.

15. It's also a test for My younger ones when they're faced with a time of affliction or physical weakness, because many are used to having lots of energy, drive, physical stamina, and endurance. To suddenly be weakened and need more rest is not a natural feeling for them, and they often fight against taking the rest that they need to strengthen and restore their body. They feel restricted, they resent the affliction, and sometimes they're so consumed by trying to be strong despite the physical weakness that they don't slow down enough to let Me speak to them and strengthen their spirit.

16. Often I wish to slow them down physically to give them a time in My bedchamber to learn of Me, to be humble, and to go slow. But if they're trying so hard to get better and not appear weak, then they miss the whole point, and their bodies are not strengthened, but weakened. They can also be tempted with worry, wondering if this affliction will last forever or will leave lasting consequences. The best thing that they can do is relax, listen to Me speak to them about it, and renew their faith and trust in Me.

17. The worst thing you can do is to yield to the Enemy's spirit of worry. For through worry you not only weaken your faith muscles but

you also weaken your body physically. Faith creates. Faith brings life and strength and energy! There is great power in faith. Whether I choose to allow a light affliction or a heavy affliction, your greatest strength will come through faith to trust in My wisdom and My will for you. *(End of message from Jesus.)*



18. *(Jesus speaking:)* Do I cause affliction, or do I simply allow it? Do I afflict My children, or is it always the work of the Enemy? These are deep questions, and hard to explain in a way that your minds can perfectly comprehend all My thoughts and workings in this matter.

19. But what you can know for a surety is that whatever happens to you, My children whom I love and who love Me, I desire to use in your life to work together for good. There are times when you are afflicted because of natural causes—you have disobeyed one of My natural rules for healthful living, and you are reaping the consequence. There are other times when you have gotten out of line in the spirit, and I know that an affliction is the quickest and best way to get your attention and get you back on the straight and narrow.

20. I never like to see you suffer, but sometimes, as a good parent, I know that you must suffer in order to achieve a greater good—to learn an important lesson, or to keep you from hurting yourself in a worse way. There are times when I wish you didn't have to go through something, but you bring it on yourself due to disobedience or foolishness. There are other times when I know that it's best for you to pass through a time of affliction, and I directly allow it in your life, even if there are not obvious natural causes.

21. But whatever the case or circumstance, I always want to bring good out of it for you, My precious ones. Whether I will it directly, or whether you are suffering the natural results of your own careless actions, I still can bring beautiful fruit out of it, and you can learn and grow and gain depth of spirit.

22. So don't neglect to seek Me about it. Don't condemn yourself or allow the Enemy to condemn you. That is his ploy to steal your faith and rob you of the comfort I want to give you. Even if it is My hand directly chastening you, even if you brought it on yourself through dis-

obedience, even if it's because you were off track, I still want to comfort you and help you through it. I love you, and will never leave you or forsake you. I never allow anything that you can't learn from or benefit from in some way, even if it's something you brought on yourself. I still allowed it, and still want to bring good out of it for you, My love. *(End of message from Jesus.)*



23. *(Jesus speaking:)* Faith is the victory!—Faith in Me, faith in My Word, faith in My promises in spite of how you feel, in spite of the circumstances, in spite of the reactions of your body. The Evil One seeks to spread fear and worry, but I am greater than him. Have faith in Me and believe, for I will see you through.

24. I'm using this little affliction, this little battle, to strengthen your faith. I have delivered and I will deliver because of your faith in Me. In spite of what it seems like outwardly, and in spite of circumstances, in spite of your feelings, you must manifest faith that I will perform My will. You must believe My promises and know that I will see you through.

25. I care for My Own, and you are one of My precious ones. So use this occasion as an opportunity to strengthen your faith, for I will see you through, and this will give you faith for the greater battles ahead. Simply believe and receive and have faith in My love and My care for you. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Jesus Understands!

26. *(Jesus speaking:)* I was in all points tempted just the same as you—especially in afflictions. I had just as many scraped knees, bumps and scratches as any little boy. Sometimes I even had to endure a lot more than you do today, because, even if I wanted to take one, there were no aspirins and painkillers. There was no sunscreen lotion for protection against the sun. There were no heaters when it was very cool at night.

27. My land was often very hot and dry in the daytime and cold at night in the winter seasons. The simple houses we lived in were built to be cool in the daytime, not to retain the heat at night, so it was cold. We did have fires, but we did not have fireplaces as you know them to be, for we did not use chimneys. We either built our fires outside the house or we had a place for

them in the middle of a large central area inside the house, open to the air, or with windows nearby for the smoke to escape. We lived as the poor do in many countries around the world today, surviving the heat in the summer and the cold in the winter the best we could, with what we had available to us.

28. As I traveled to spread My Father's message, the accommodations were often very simple, or even nonexistent. My disciples and I grew used to camping in fields or living in simple huts and barns, for there were many of us and only the very wealthy had room for us in their houses. Has it not been said that foxes had their holes and the birds of the air their nests, but the Son of Man had nowhere to lay His head? We had no steady home, but took what was offered us as we went from place to place. Sometimes it was warm, for which we were very thankful, but at other times it was cold. I was very grateful for My cloak, which I wrapped around Myself at such times to try to stay warm.

29. There were no refrigerators to keep food from spoiling. There was no purified water or many other conveniences. There were no antiseptics like you have today for cuts, or running water to clean them out. Everything took longer.

30. Just because I was the Son of God, I didn't instantly heal Myself—although I could have. But I didn't, so that the Scripture could be fulfilled that I was in all points tempted as you are, with the same afflictions. I had My afflictions in order to learn the same lessons that you go through—to draw Me closer to My Father, to help Me to learn patience and to learn to claim the Word, and sometimes just to have time alone in quietness and stillness to think and pray about things.

31. I know what it's like to be sick, to be handicapped by pain or illness, to have a throbbing headache, or to feel completely weak and debilitated by some affliction. That's why I encourage you so often to bring your infirmities and your sicknesses to Me, because I feel for you and I don't want you to go through prolonged illness, discomfort, and pain. I understand what it's like to be sick—the hardships and the suffering. This is why I gave My body for yours. After having suffered so much, I didn't want you to suffer without relief, and I gave you these two gifts, salvation and healing.

32. I went through so many afflictions and so much suffering that I wanted to save you from as much of it as possible. That's why it became so important to Me to offer healing as well as salvation, because I care about your bodies. I care about your pain. I care about your suffering. Having lived with you and having gone through the same things, I understand completely what it's like to be sick and to suffer.

33. Many times when you come to Me and ask for healing, you don't get full healing right away. I don't always instantly heal, but I do make it much lighter and I take away much of the pain. I heal you much quicker than you normally would be healed, but still leave you with a touch of the sickness so that it will have the desired effect of drawing you closer to Me and teaching you whatever lessons I want to teach you, and then I heal you.

34. Your healing is very important to Me, as are the things that you suffer, the physical afflictions that you go through. In fact, it's so important to Me that I made it part of the communion ceremony, along with salvation and the forgiveness of your sins. In some of the last words spoken to My disciples, the wine represents My blood and the bread represents My body that was broken for you.

35. So whenever you're sick, come to Me. I will understand, because I went through the same thing. Ask Me for healing, for the lessons, for whatever it is that I want to tell you or give you. Perhaps I just want you to have some quiet time with Me. I will heal you, because I don't wish for you to suffer a moment longer than necessary.

36. I also wish for you to use this gift of healing as a witness, as a demonstration of My love for those you come in contact with. I want you to pray for them and to heal them, so that they know that I'm alive and I care for them, I love them, I'm concerned about them, and I want to be both their healer and their Savior. It can be used as a testimony that I understand their suffering, their pain, and their sicknesses. I went through the same things that they do, and I want to touch and heal them, and I will.

37. Come unto Me, all of you who are sick and afflicted. Take My healing upon you and be made whole, for healing is one of My demonstrations of love for you. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Opportunity to Gain **The Precious Things of the Spirit!**

38. (Jesus speaking:) Don't worry, My love, this too will pass. And as it is with any affliction or battle that you look to Me in, with it will come new maturity and growth, new understanding, new grace, new faith and wisdom. I allow each experience, and through each one there is something I want to impart to you—a gift, a strengthening in some area. If you look to Me in each experience, I am able to do this easily, and you come through more complete and useful than before.

39. What does it mean to look to Me? It means to turn your face upward, to look into My eyes in the spirit by asking Me how I see things, by trusting Me that I love you and will do that which is best for you, by giving Me your will and yielding to whatever I have brought into your life, and looking for the good in it. When you do that, through our time gazing in each other's eyes in the spirit, I am able to give you not only faith and healing and comfort, but also the deeper things of the spirit that I have in store for you. You gain so much through these types of experiences.

40. It doesn't have to be something very serious to really gain a lot from it. Even if your affliction is not very serious, it can be enough for you to gain precious things from My Spirit if you want them and seek them.

41. And so, My love, I have given you this gift of a temporary affliction that through it you might find a new level of faith and trust in Me, and new things of the spirit which I will show you as you look to Me. These new things of the spirit don't always seem like revelations, but they are truths which strengthen your spirit and round you out. They soften you and make you more complete, gentler, more useful.

42. I love you, and again I tell you that there's nothing to worry about. I've promised you complete protection, and My healing power is available to you. Even if you must walk through the fire you will not be burned, for I will cover you with My presence, protecting you from any harm. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Take Advantage of the Time **To Slow Down and Be Renewed**

43. (Jesus speaking:) I realize it's difficult to endure this affliction, but know that I am near.

I'm here to hold you, to comfort you, and to carry you through. I desire to turn this time into a golden opportunity, for I want to use this time to have a little extra time of intimacy with you.

44. I know it's hard and difficult, but if you'll just take this time to lie in the bed of love with Me, I will speak intimacies in your ear—encouraging words that will be your strength. They will encourage your heart, set your mind at ease, and prepare you for the days to come.

45. Yes, I wish to use this time to speak to you heart to heart and to strengthen you. Therefore, My sweetheart, despise not this time, but use it to the full. I know it's hard. Yet if you will look on this time as a golden opportunity to hide away with Me, to cuddle up in the bed of love and let Me whisper in your ear, I will tell you words of love and comfort and encouragement that I have for you and you alone—words of enlightenment, strengthening words that will sustain you both now and in the future. If you will seize this opportunity, then this will be a time of great worth.

46. I have much to give you, much to pour out. I wish to turn this into a time of great victory—a time of lying in each other's arms, a time of strengthening in spirit. I am able to raise you up instantly, as one that is raised from the dead. Yet often I allow nature to run its course, because this works My purpose in strengthening you in spirit, and often even in body, once you have fully recovered. For just as your spirit is renewed by time with Me, your body is often renewed and regenerated by this time of rest and recuperation that you have had to take.

47. As you feed and nourish your body with the good food that I supply, this is building your bodily strength. And as you slow your pace, as you lie in the bed of love taking this extra time with Me, this provides an opportunity to feed and strengthen your spirit—free from distractions, free from the business and details of many matters that surround you each day.

48. So seize this golden opportunity, and know that I am near to hold you and to show you great things—to strengthen and to prepare you for the busy days ahead. Continue resting, staying warm, eating well, and drinking lots of liquids. Most of all, spend time reading My Words, tanking up, reviewing My written Word, and receiving new revelations—My Own personal

words of love, comfort and guidance for you personally, from My heart to yours—for these will sustain you now and in the future.

49. If you will use this time wisely, if you will see it as a golden opportunity instead of a weight or burden, then you will go from strength to strength. I am here to hold, to comfort, and to speak to your heart, and in the end I will raise you up strengthened, ready to fight the battles ahead. Cherish this time with Me as we lie in the bed of love together, for you are My precious one, and I long to whisper strengthening Words in your ear. This time will yield great victory out of seeming defeat, as you rest in My arms and hear the Words I will speak to you. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

These Tests Refine Your Spirit

50. (Jesus speaking:) Though this testing may not seem like something good at the moment, you will rejoice with Me in the fruit it will bear and be glad that I brought you through it.

51. I see things so differently. I see the long-range plan and picture. I see into eternity. But your flesh sees only the moment. I don't condemn you for that, because that's how you were created. I know that it can be hard to rise above, for I too lived in the flesh and I know the demands of the flesh.

52. But I ask you now to look beyond the realm of the flesh into the realm of the spirit, for there I do a mighty work. There I prepare your spirit for the future—not only for your future on Earth but for your eternal future. The things of this world are temporal. Your flesh will pass away, but your spirit will remain forever. This test that you're passing through is refining your beautiful spirit. It's building and enhancing your character. And when you finally arrive and walk the halls of Heaven, you will rejoice and be thankful that in My love I brought you through this special time. Though now your flesh cries out in protest and your emotions are in a whirl, and though the Tempter comes in with his lies and fears, you will be so thankful that you trusted and held on.

53. But, My love, know that I will not suffer you to be tempted beyond what you are able. I will not let this test continue one moment longer than is necessary. I'm overseeing this personally and I will be with you each step of the way. You need

only look into My face and remember how much I love you and that this is for your good, and I will bring you forth as fine gold. I will bring about a greater closeness and dependence on Me through this. I've put you in a situation where you have to be desperate. I'm making it easy for you to be good. I'm making it easy for you to learn the things I have for you at this time in your growth. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

My loving hand reaches down
To touch and soothe and heal;
To strengthen your weak and weary body
—I understand the pain you feel.

Rest in My strong and able arms
And look upon My face,
For in those moments spent with Me
The pain will be erased.

For joy will come again, I promise,
This time will be for just a while;
Soon you will be well again
And you'll remember no more the trial.

My dear and precious love, I hurt
To see you suffering so,
Yet I work to bring about
Blessings you soon will know.

So take this time to love Me, dear,
And draw even nearer to My breast.
I hold your hand and do comfort you,
And soon I will give you rest.

A Special Purpose

54. (Jesus speaking:) This affliction will be but for a short time, until it accomplishes My purpose. So look up and take advantage of these days of quietness, these days of rest, these days of repose in which you may draw strength from Me and fellowship with Me. I wish to strengthen you inwardly for the days that are coming. I wish to forge a clear channel that will remain long after this affliction has passed—a channel of wanting to know Me and hear Me, desiring and longing for My voice. It will be such a part of you that you will feel the pull when you miss a day with Me.

55. This affliction is a blessing, for in your love and care and concern you would have given your all, far beyond what is even healthy, to help those around you, to meet their needs, to make them comfortable. Though this is commendable, I have thus afflicted you for your own good, so that you could pull away and be strengthened and draw closer to Me, so that you can more fully minister to those in need and truly give of your abundance.

56. Draw from Me, so your well may be full. When you then draw out to nourish others, there will be plenty left, and you'll be firmly attached to the Source, so that your well can be continually replenished. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

A Special Opportunity To Spend Time with Our Husband

57. (Jesus speaking:) Especially when you're weary and worn, tired and sick, and so very weak, I want to show you My strength. I want to fill you with new energy, with the seeds of My strength, My healing, and My anointing.

58. Don't feel that I love you less when you're weak and sick, or that I want you less. In fact, seeing you so frail and unable to walk alone and lacking in strength makes Me all the more desirous to give you all that you need. I feel all the more compassion and understanding for you, and I want so much to help you.

59. Turn to Me in your time of trouble and call on Me. I will answer you and I will give to you out of My great abundance of strength and health and healing. You will not lack, and we will spend sweet time together in our bed of love.

60. I will transport you out of this world of pain and suffering, and will help you to feel the electricity of My Spirit and the wonderful thrills that I can give you anytime, anywhere, if you'll just open your channel to Me and receive all that I have to give you. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Chosen in the Furnace of Affliction

61. (Jesus speaking:) I have caused you to pass through the furnace of affliction, My dear one. I'm not punishing you, but I'm testing you and refining you and helping you to be an even better person. I have not afflicted you because I don't love you, for I love you very much.

62. These afflictions in your life are My

way of making you even more beautiful. Your inner beauty will shine through for all to see as you look up to Me. I will help others to see the beauty of My Spirit in you as you speak words of faith and praise and love to Me. You can be a vessel of beauty—one that is full of My love, one that others admire and seek out, if you let Me shine through you. Give yourself completely to Me—to loving Me and honoring Me—and as you do, others will see such beauty of spirit, such sweetness and love, that they will be drawn to you.

63. When you suffer and feel the pain, when you feel alone and unloved, know that I am with you, that I love you, and your family loves you. You don't suffer alone. You're not alone, for I am always by your side, loving you, caring for you, and touching you with My love. But you must look up and see Me in order to receive the love that is waiting for you. Look fully into My wonderful face and see the depth of My love for you, and as you do, you will be filled with My peace and joy and your pain will decrease. I will care for you and help you all the days of your life until I bring you Home to My arms. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

The Rainbow from the Rain

64. (Jesus speaking:) Is it raining afflictions, little flower? Don't worry, for the prayers of your precious family will cause the rainbow to shine through in all of its splendid colors, and the sunshine to break through again.

65. Is there pain and discomfort, and do you shed a few tears? Don't worry, My dear one, for it's only temporary, and the comfort you desire is just around the corner. I'm sorry for these moments of pain and affliction, and for the battle that you must fight and endure, but be not weary and be not afraid, for the end of this trying time is almost here. It's very soon, very near. Hold on.

66. Although the Enemy has been allowed to attack and bring about these afflictions in your life, I have allowed it, for it is also bringing about sweetness, tenderness, and beauty. I have smelled the sweet prayers of your precious family as they prayed for you. I see the tenderness within their hearts as they are touched with the feeling of your infirmities, and it's creating a beautiful bond of love. I will kiss away the pain and the hurt and soothe each one. You will feel

the touch of My beautiful healing hand, and you will return kisses of praise to Me.

67. Don't worry about anything, My love, for nothing will happen to you that is too difficult for you to bear. I will not let it be so. And although I know it's hard and difficult and a spiritual battle, I will help you to bear it and I will make the way easier because of the prayers of your family. You have nothing to fear, for each of their prayers is a kiss of My love and My healing for you.

68. Rest completely upon My breast, for I am giving you the grace and the strength and the help that you need. I'm proud of you for being such a cheerful, brave soldier. I'm proud of you for enduring these afflictions—even though through your tears—with such faith. I will not fail you. I will heal and help and restore your health, and you will not faint, you will not fall. My work will not stop, neither will My Words. So let your heart be at peace and look up into My face.

69. Look up into the heavens where My rainbow can be clearly seen. One end is in the heavens and the other end is in your lap. I take My jewels and gems out of My big pot of gold and send them sliding down the rainbow, right into your lap! My promises will not fail, neither will the flow of My Words stop, but My Words will go on and on and on and radiate the splendor of My light to the world.

70. Although the Enemy fights you and attacks, he cannot prevail! As long as you hold on and continue to call on My power and My strength and let Me fight for you, you will have the victory. As long as you let Me live through you and turn to Me for the help that you need, you will always have My help—not only today in this battle with these afflictions, but in every day and for every battle.

71. We'll ride into the future, into the wonders that are in store! We'll ride on that beautiful rainbow of My love! You'll glide and slide in the spirit and thrill to the ecstasies! There will be no stopping you or My Words! Ride, My love, ride! I'm right beside you and I enjoy the ride along with you. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Treasures from The Cave of Affliction

72. (Jesus speaking:) As the honey is ex-

tracted from the honeycomb through being squeezed, so does the sweetness of your spirit shine forth through this time of affliction, this time of pain. Through the squeezing and crushing of your life, the beauties of your spirit, the love within your heart, and the treasures of your soul pour forth.

73. How beautiful and marvelous in My sight is this death to everything that you are; this birth of everything that I am in you. Though the pain almost kills you, though the discomfort is almost too much to bear, though this affliction is about you like a strong iron hand that seeks to wring out every ounce of your strength, you continue to trust Me.

74. Though it hurts My heart to see you suffer so, I know that the blessings you're receiving from Me during this time of affliction are well worth the price you pay. Oh, I know. I know the pain. I can feel the pain. I know that this is no light affliction, but I promise you that it is but for a moment, and through it I am perfecting a far more exceeding and eternally wonderful and glorious work in you.

75. Though the pain runs deep, though you suffer almost to the point of death, I am near you—nearer than I've ever been before. In the times when no one else is around, it's just you and Me. I'm so close to you. I cry when you cry. I feel pain when you feel pain. But when you are weak, I remain strong. I am the strength in your weakness, the strength in your affliction. I hold you in My arms and I don't allow one bit more than I know you and I can handle and endure together.

76. My cheerful one, fighting through this intense and trying affliction, I'm so proud of you. You will not lose anything through this time; you will only gain. You're in the deep, dark cave of affliction, and the jewels that you will discover in the rocks of these hard dark walls will remain with you forever.

77. The darkness will soon be gone, My love. You'll see a speck of light in the distance, and as you keep letting Me carry you, we'll walk closer and closer to that light. The light is the light of victory, the light of My promises to you. The light will chase away the shades of night and darkness.

78. I know you can see that light now, My dear one. You can barely see it, but it's there.

So keep your eyes on the light, on the victory that's in sight. But at the same time, continue collecting those treasures and gems that you find along the way in this cave of affliction. For these are jewels from My hand that will remain with you forever, as a reminder of how I kept you and sustained you and gave you the victory. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

He's Proud of You!

(Given for someone who was suffering serious asthma attacks and colds.)

79. (Jesus speaking:) Though it hurts Me, My love, to see you suffer through your weakness in the flesh, and especially to see you suffer in your heart and mind because of the discouragement and negativity that seeks to overwhelm you, and while I also shed a tear, it's a tear of joy at seeing you stand strong and pass the tests. It makes Me so proud to see you use your training to jump the hurdles and run the sprints, all the while training and practicing for the marathon of life. The road you're going down is not an easy one, and your training program is not for the weak or faint-hearted. It's only for the strong, the steady, the determined, and those destined to be champions, created to be winners.

80. You're one of My chosen troops, My chosen players, and I've called you into one of the most elite combat units with the most specialized training—specialized in that I have catered each event of your life and tailored each battle and test especially for you. I know your makeup—your temperament, your strengths, and your weaknesses, and I know what you need most. I know what areas you most need to be strengthened in. So in order to strengthen those areas, in order to make your wits quick and your skills sharp in these weak areas, I must test and test and test, so that again and again you might have the opportunity to overcome, to fight, to be victorious. After many tests, you are well experienced at handling them, and you will have become a fighter.

81. But though the struggle may endure for a time, joy will always come again. Though weeping may endure for a night, joy will come in the morning. Though the battles may rage fast and furious, victory will always come if you keep fighting. Though battles may come again and again, and the attacks may be repeated and fre-

quent, I will always bring deliverance, and I will never give you one ounce more than you're able to take.

82. I want to make you into one of My strongest, toughest, most skilled fighters. You may look at yourself and think My goal a hopeless cause. You may feel weak in flesh and in spirit. You may feel unable to jump over these hurdles that seem to surround you on all sides. But you must stop looking just at the hurdles themselves and look up to Me. Look upward, into My face, and find there the strength, the grace, the resolve, the determination, and the will to win. For I can do all things through you, and I seek to prove to you that I can do the impossible. I can bring full health and strength to your weakened body; I can bring perfect peace and rest to your troubled mind; I can bring joy and light to your aching heart.

83. I can do the impossible, and I delight in difficult cases. I delight in using your weakness to demonstrate My strength and power, and I love your dependence upon Me and your humility before Me. This empowers Me to do great things in your life—to work great changes which, though often unseen on the surface, bring about greater depth, greater strength, and a greater closeness to Me. I can then mold you and make you into the vessel of My choice with greater ease; I can iron out the rough spots, the quirks, the kinks, and the squeaks, and make you run smoother than ever.

84. Even in this battle with your health, though it has lingered long and hard, and though this affliction has been with you for many years, I am still able to deliver. Seek Me and call upon Me, that I may show you more of My plan, My will, and My purpose; that I may show you all the deep truths that I wish to shower upon you through your brokenness and your desperation, and that I may teach and instruct you in what more you can do to fight—both spiritually and physically—that you may be better prepared for the next battle; and that, in time, you may gain complete victory and constant relief.

85. I am able! I ask only for your faith, your trust, and your willingness and yieldedness to fight with all that is in you; to do it for Me; to succeed in your training and overcome your trials for My sake, and for the sake of others who I will and do use you to help and minister to.

86. It's all for a purpose. It's all for your good, and of that you have My solemn promise. I would do nothing but that which will help you and which will be for your benefit—because I love you, I need you, and I want the best for you. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

The Cross of Affliction

87. *(This will probably be very encouraging to those of you who suffer from long-term afflictions, or who may feel as if you've carried some affliction most of your life. The Lord likens it to your cross, and He promises that every cross has a crown. He's proud of you for carrying it bravely for Him!)*

88. (Jesus speaking:) **You have truly borne your cross bravely and with courage, with praise on your lips and in your heart.** Your praises and your prayers have ascended to My courts, and I have poured down grace and strength for every affliction. I have given you ministering angels who sit beside you to uphold you when you're weak and who whisper words of cheer when you're faint, who touch your lips and place within them My praise.

89. Be comforted to know that I was also greatly afflicted. People even said of Me, because of My many afflictions, "We did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." I had so many afflictions that they thought surely there was something wrong with Me; God must be displeased with Me somehow, or why would I be so afflicted. They thought, "Truly God has to deal with Him so severely because of some great fault and weakness. Maybe He's even cursed. Why else would He be so afflicted? Isn't health a blessing from God, and aren't those that are smitten cursed for some wrongdoing?"

90. No, My precious one, you have been truly blessed because of the cross of your afflictions. Each man has a personal cross that he is given to bear. Sometimes it's a cross of many years. But the cross makes you worthy of the crown. There is no cross without a crown, and though you may have to bear the cross longer than you would have chosen, please know it is a gift from Me because you are worthy, because I have chosen you. Remember that I walked this path before you. And know that when you arrive Here, as part of your reward, your spiritual body will shine with great splendor, even more

than others, as will your crown, as a testimony of the cross of the body you carried through the streets of life on Earth and the thorns of afflictions that pierced you, My precious and deserving bride! *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Strength Born of Affliction

(This was given for someone who suffered from several long-term afflictions.)

91. (Jesus speaking:) **I see deeply into your heart, more clearly than any other person ever can or will.** I know the depths of your love for Me and the great commitment and the sacrifices that you've made because of this immeasurable love. You've been a willing and yielded vessel of My love, and through your broken body I am able to pour forth My Spirit and love to others in great measure. You've been a sample to many of dedication, of perseverance, and of faith—faith that trusts in spite of circumstances, faith that proclaims in word and deed, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him."

92. I can heal and I can strengthen your wounds and your weakness, and I can make you every whit whole. For I am the Great Physician, and there is nothing that is too hard for Me. Yet I also wish for you to know that I have allowed this weakness, this suffering, this pain; for all things work together for good for those who love Me. Much good have I worked in your life, and you've become a priceless, valuable vessel.

93. Through this pain you have come to know Me in a way that would not have been possible otherwise. Through affliction you've gained understanding and compassion that would be impossible any other way. Through the sorrows and through the loneliness you've felt, you've reached out to Me and received of My Spirit in a way that you would not have been desperate enough to do if your body, mind, and spirit were whole and well.

94. Know that these sufferings and afflictions, though they are great and though they weigh upon you, can't even be compared to the glory that will be revealed in you. You will be glorious! You will shine forever as one of My valiant soldiers, My valiant knights who fought the battles of the Lord and overcame the attacks of the Enemy, one who rescued many of My lost sheep from the clutches of the Evil One

and brought them safely Home to Me. Forever your name will be written in the stars—the stars that shall shine from your crown because you have turned many to Me and have been faithful to My calling and anointing.

95. I have called you in your sorrow and pain, and you have heeded My call, following Me by faith and not by feelings and circumstances; following because of your love for Me, in spite of all that could have kept you back or caused you to falter.

96. I have helped you and given you grace to stand strong. Know that My grace will always be sufficient. My arms will ever be around you and close to you, to uphold you when you're weak, to lift you up when you fall. My care and protection will ever be around you, and the pain and affliction will never be greater than you can bear.

97. The Enemy seeks to snuff out your life and to cause you to cease from ministering, serving, and feeding My children, but My power is greater. My Spirit will overcome, and I will continue to use you to feed and strengthen many. Every day, every hour, every moment that you've spent in pouring out My Words to these will not return void, but will bring forth much fruit!

98. Truly these weights have borne good fruit, for they've made you strong. Through them you've grown wings and have flown above circumstances and into the world of My Spirit, where all things are possible to him that believeth. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Jesus Intercedes on Your Behalf

99. (Jesus speaking:) I kneel at this very moment before My Father's throne, as the Great Intercessor, to plead for your strength and health and life. You are My dear child, and I watch over you with the tenderest care. Though I am King of all, I still stoop on bended knee when I intercede on your behalf, granting you strength, faith, and trust to keep going. This I will do for you today, My dear one, so that the load will not be too heavy or too taxing.

100. I will take upon My Own shoulders a great portion of your suffering and pain. I will stand beside you, with My arms underneath you, carrying you each step of the way. Cling to My side and feel My presence, My dear one. Worry not, for I intercede on your behalf, and I will

obtain healing, pardon, and mercy for you, My love. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Ministering Spirit of Comfort

101. (Jesus speaking:) I have sent My precious ministering spirit of comfort to your side, to be with you in this time of great trial. She will remain by your side constantly until you have no further need of her. Let her take your head and rest it upon her soft bosom. Let her stroke your hair and whisper My Words in your ear. She is full of faith, for she has seen My promises fulfilled every time, and she will give you that faith and that peace.

102. I know of her great usefulness, for she came to Me when I was tempted and tossed. She held My head steady and whispered in My ear the promise of things to come. She reminded Me of My Father's Words, and through them I gained faith to carry on. I've sent her to you now, My beloved, and I know she will be a wonderful strength to you in this time of trial. She works closely with the Holy Spirit and receives power and her gifts from Her, and is sent when you need her. When she comes to be with you, you are her full concentration and focus. You can ask for her at any time.

103. My precious one, the moments are numbered; they're not endless, neither do they run by uncounted. They're all measured, and each one that passes is one less that you will ever have to endure again. These moments of affliction—though precious, and though they give you something that cannot be gained any other way—are hard to endure, so I have carefully counted them, and as they pass, they are never to return again.

104. So rest now with the beautiful spirit of comfort that I've sent to you. Rest in her arms, and trust that these moments of affliction will pass. As they pass, they will leave precious droplets of My Spirit—of wisdom, compassion, brokenness, humility, grace, and strength in weakness. Each of these little droplets is priceless, and you have been blessed with so many. So rest now as these droplets descend upon you. Trust that I'm counting the moments and that they will soon be gone.

105. I love you, My precious one. I will hold and sustain you, and will give you all that you need. *(End of message from Jesus.)* ■

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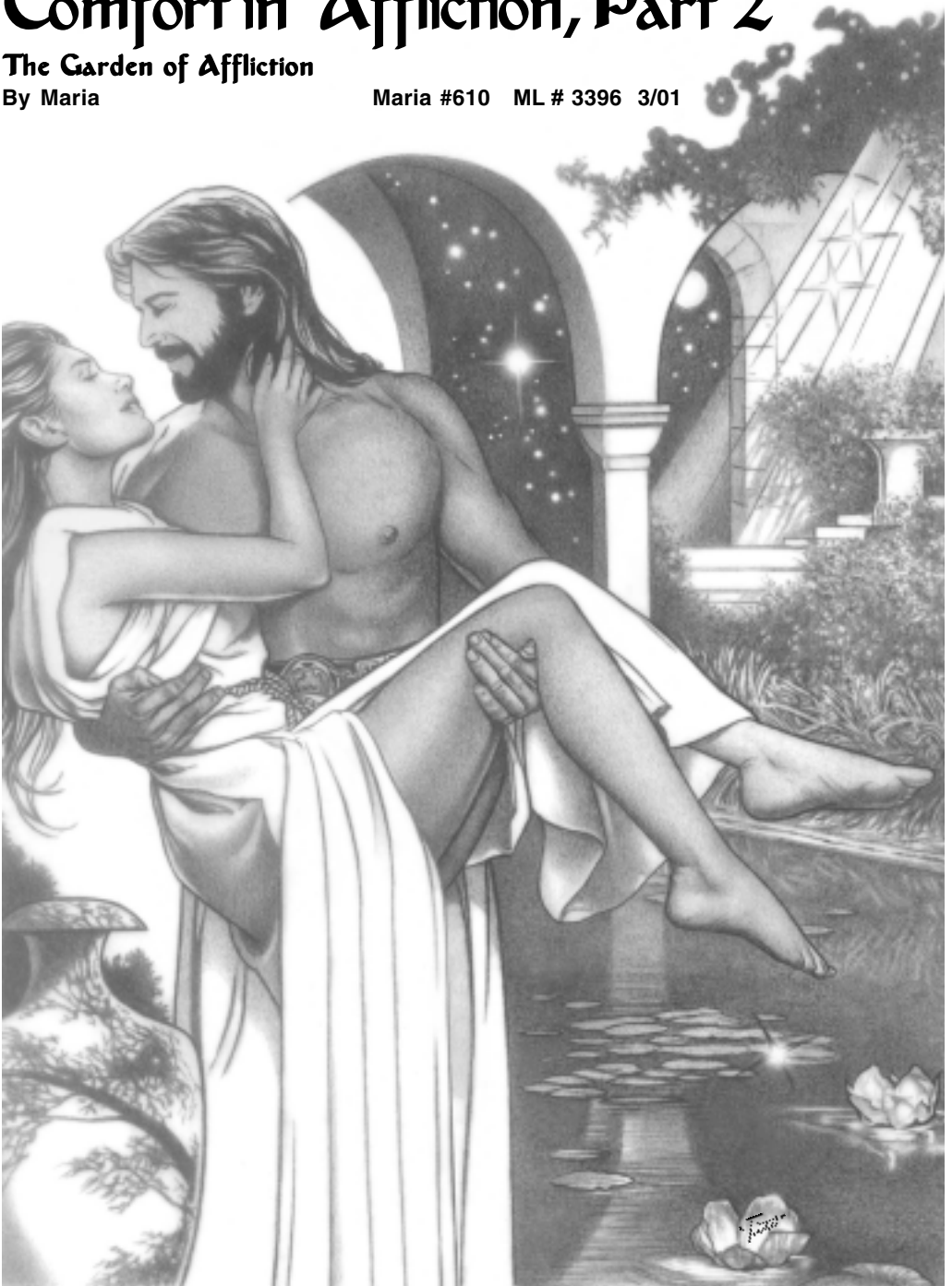
APR. 2002

Comfort in Affliction, Part 2

The Garden of Affliction

By Maria

Maria #610 ML # 3396 3/01



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Dear Family,

IN Part 1 of this series of jewels on healing, the Lord told us how He sees it when we're afflicted, and how He wants us to look at it. He also gave very beautiful encouragement and comfort that we can claim during our times of sickness.

2. In Part 2 I'll share with you more of the beautiful jewels the Lord has given on the subject of the good fruit that is borne through affliction—not just for the one who is sick, but for everyone! As you'll see when you read these, in the Lord's eyes it's a very precious, priceless experience. It's difficult to endure, and He knows and understands that. But the very desperation that it brings about in our lives is a great part of the wonderful fruit He's looking for when He allows us to suffer from an affliction or illness.

3. Most of these messages were received for individuals, but I think you'll find that many of them are applicable to all of us. Please do take the time to hear from our sweet Husband about your particular affliction and why He's allowed it, and what good fruit He's bringing out of it in your life, and continue to ask Him about it regularly, for as long as the affliction lasts. I guarantee that you'll come away feeling better, comforted, and with renewed strength to fight and hang on until relief arrives. I love you. You're in my prayers!

Yours always, Mama

The Garden of Affliction

4. We asked the Lord, "Why do some people have so many sicknesses and serious afflictions? Often we think it's because the Lord is working in their lives or it's to

keep them close to Him or it's a special touch of His love. But the Lord works in others' lives without them having to endure sickness. Those who undergo the afflictions aren't necessarily in a worse state than the others who don't have afflictions or sickness; the Lord has simply chosen to work that way in their lives. But why does the Lord work in the lives of some with afflictions, and then seemingly accomplish the same purpose in the lives of others through means that seem easier to endure?"

5. (Jesus speaking:) Ah, the mystery of affliction! The mystery of why I bring affliction into the life of one of My children and not another. The mystery of why affliction is given to one of My children to accomplish a certain purpose, and why it seems I give a smaller measure of trials and tests to another in order to accomplish the same end result. To many, My hand seems to lie heavy on one and may even be deemed as "undeserving," with a certain

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harshness to My touch. And yet others bear not affliction and seem the sweeter still.

6. These questions have remained on the lips and in the hearts of My children throughout all ages. So many questions, so many ponderings, so much searching with the natural mind trying to probe the mind of God, the mind of Infinite Wisdom and Love.

7. And yet these questions spring forth not from sin, but simply from seeing with the eyes of the natural man, the carnal mind, and not with the eyes of the spirit. I do not condemn or judge you for this, because you desire and need to know and understand these things. To you, My loves, who seek Me and love Me and desire to know Me and My ways intimately, I bare My heart. I open the door of affliction before you, so you may gaze into the beauty of her garden.

8. So many of My children see the garden of affliction as a garden of languishing, a garden of sorrow, a garden in which many fear to tread. They see the ground as harsh and rocky, and wince at the pain it will inflict on them or their loved ones. They do not see that I know the breadth, depth, and height of this garden. I know its every corner, for I hold the master keys to this garden, given to no other. But, My inquiring ones, My loves, I want you to look through this doorway not with carnal eyes but with the eyes of the spirit. Only then will you see into this garden clearly. Only then will your eyes feast upon what I see, and only then will your mind understand as I understand.

9. For I, your Husband and Lover, dwell in a very special way in this garden, because this garden is My secret garden. It is secret in the sense of being an intimate hideaway, where only the two of us spend time together and commune heart to heart,

surrounded by beauty. It is not a secret, but rather a secret garden, one like your movies have portrayed—a place of beauty hidden from the world, discovered by only one person or a small group of people, which becomes very special to them.

10. It is a garden close to My heart. And when I choose to carry one of My brides through the doorway and over the threshold into this garden, I pick her up and carry her with the greatest of tenderness, wisdom, love, and infinite foresight.

11. Here in this garden is the soil rich, and from this soil of affliction do the costliest, choicest, and rarest of flowers grow—moonflowers telling of your times spent with Me in the night seasons, orchids of rare beauty bearing the fragrance of the crushing to your earthly form, and water lilies which spring forth from your tears. Here is affliction swallowed up in victory—the victory of spirit that springs forth from time spent in this garden.

12. I carry My bride not to lay her upon a patch of stony, harsh ground, but to lay her on the choicest of spots, the very softest of grass. In the spirit, this garden is coveted and of great value. Here is where your spirit flourishes, grows, and deepens in the greatest magnitude! This magnitude will never be fully manifested in your earthly body, and your earthly frame and character will never fully bear witness to those around you of your time spent in this garden. Only My bride and I know of this time, this deepening, this great bond opened and sealed forever between us through this time spent together.

13. Many of My children, and those of the world, see this garden bearing not the light of the warm sun to brighten its day; instead this garden seems to be shrouded in darkness, and they would that the key to this garden be forever hidden or thrown

away, that some other way be found, some other means be found less painful to the flesh whereby character and spirit are formed and deepened and nurtured. They see not with My eyes or the eyes of the spirit. But if they were to gaze carefully upon it through the eyes of the spirit and with the eyes of faith, they would see that this garden is bathed in the all-knowing light of Heaven, the light of growth and true beauty.

14. Yes, wonderful graces grow from affliction which others are able to see—the gifts of greater compassion for others, and tenderness, sympathy and longsuffering. But I work an even greater work through affliction, below the surface and unseen by the eyes of man, within the heart and spirit of each one of My brides who yields and surrenders to the warm, soft touch of affliction.

15. Yes, I call it “soft,” whereas you may call it “harsh.” This is where you see not as I see, and this is where you see not as you once knew it to be. For from before the foundations of the world, your spirit communed with Me, and together we chose your destiny for your time on Earth, and whether or not the cup of affliction would be brought into your life on Earth. But this decision, this choice on your part whether you would drink of the cup of affliction, was for a specific purpose—and always based on the well being and growth of your spirit, and not out of concern for your earthly body and frame. In the world of the spirit, your earthly form is but a shell and of little consequence when compared to the measure and worth of your spirit and its growth.

16. Sometimes the purpose of affliction is plainly realized and seen on Earth, while other times the purpose of affliction while on Earth is to prepare your spirit and character for the next life and all that

will be before you in the worlds to come. This is why you cannot judge with the mind of man and with the eyes and senses of the flesh. On the surface, it may seem that the same ends are accomplished in one of My children by serving them the cup of affliction, while another is given but a teaspoon bearing not the strong liquid of affliction but the smoother, sweeter liquid of smaller tests and trials.

17. But your earthly eyes see only in part, and this is why you cannot judge from what you see and from what your senses seem to tell you. Your part, My loves, is to trust that I work a great work within each of My precious brides, My forever loves—a work which will only be partially realized on Earth, and thus the depth and spiritual growth gained will only be partially manifested on Earth.

Thank you for hanging on to Me so tightly. I love it when you squeeze My hand. As your loving Husband, I’m always by your side, looking into your eyes, checking to make sure that you’re okay, and that I can do whatever you need to lighten your load. I hate to see you hurting and suffering. It tears My heart apart, for I know the pain. I know the questions it causes in your heart, the feelings of total helplessness, and even abandonment. My darling child, I’m holding on to you and will not suffer you to be tempted or tested with more than you can bear.

18. You must simply trust Me in this, My loves. Trust Me for your life, should I hand you the cup of affliction, and trust Me when you gaze upon your loved ones, your mates, your brothers and sisters when

they have been handed the cup of affliction. Trust Me and praise Me and love Me all the more when you see Me pick up one of My brides and carry her through the door into the garden of affliction. Trust Me and pray fervently that My greater purposes will be established and wrought in the heart and spirit of each one. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

A Difference in Rewards And Blessings?

19. (Mama:) Reading the Lord's beautiful words of comfort and encouragement, it might almost sound like those who undergo affliction are more blessed than those who don't. We asked the Lord to explain more about the many blessings available to those who are afflicted and why there seemed to be a difference from those who are healthy.

20. (Jesus speaking:) You cannot see with My eyes or understand things fully there on Earth. If you weigh these promises with your physical, carnal understanding and try to make the scales balance, they never will. But I want to assure and comfort you that when you come Here, to My Heavenly Kingdom, and are able to see as I have seen all along, it will all be clear to you, and just and fair, and you will rejoice at My wisdom, omnipotence and omniscience.

21. Do not compare, My loves. Do not complain or bemoan the lot you have been given in life, for you had a part in choosing it. And your choices there on Earth complete the picture. But through all that you go through, because you love Me, and when you do your best for Me, you grow in spirit, and you store up for yourselves eternal rewards and spiritual beauty. Nothing is wasted; nothing is in vain. Every experi-

ence adds to your spiritual growth and progress, if you will let it.

22. Returning to the very special experience of affliction, those who are healthy might wonder why I give it such prominence. Why cannot they also grow in those special ways? Let Me give you a momentary glimpse of what those who suffer long-term or debilitating afflictions endure.

23. When you are having a severe trial, it's difficult to endure. But if you stop to think about it and you let Me comfort you, you know that your life will go on and change, and that things won't always be like that. Your choices affect the outcome, other people's choices affect the outcome, and even though sometimes My highest will goes through what you might feel is the most difficult of circumstances, you do have the option to choose other paths which are less difficult in the short term, although less profitable in the long term. In many ways, you yourself determine those circumstances.

24. When someone is sick, they have no control over those circumstances. Yes, they can take painkillers or they can undergo operations, but ultimately they must choose to trust Me. Every day they wake up with those circumstances, and every night they go to bed with those circumstances. It affects everything they do—their freedom of movement or mobility, their plans for the future, their interactions with others, and on and on the list goes. When it is a serious affliction, they know there is a possibility that they will have it for the remainder of their life on Earth. In some cases, they know that there's a good possibility that the affliction will play a part in the end of their life on Earth. Their times are still in My hand, but they know they might not have as long as others do.

25. All of these factors contribute to

the desperation, the degree of surrender, the degree of trust, the closeness to Me, the breaking, the purging, the refining process which brings about the most precious things of the spirit. The cross to bear is heavy for those who are afflicted, but with it come great rewards. Do not begrudge them this high honor, for they have earned it through their daily suffering. Of course, they too have the choice how much they will get out of it, how much they will grow through it, and each person is different. But this is the opportunity that is available to them. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Many Reasons for Afflictions

26. *(Jesus speaking:)* There are many reasons why I allow afflictions. The reasons why I allow afflictions, and the lessons and beauty and blessings I want to give you through them, are almost as varied as the afflictions themselves. That's why it's vital to ask Me right away what I want to show you through an affliction, why I've allowed it in your life, and what you should do to rise above or claim the victory in each situation.

27. Sometimes the cause might be physical—something in your diet or health habits that I want to bring to your attention—and allowing you to suffer affliction calls your attention to it and forces you to change. Sometimes you might need a time of rest—either physically, spiritually, or both. Allowing you to have an affliction makes it impossible for you to do anything else, and so you rest.

28. **Question:** Lord, we do rest when we're sick and confined to bed, but sometimes it doesn't feel very restful! Can You please explain more about the type of rest we get?

29. *(Jesus speaking:)* You wonder what I mean when I say that sometimes I give you afflictions to help you rest—for if you're very sick or in pain, it's often more difficult than usual to sleep or get any rest. But not all afflictions are like that. When you sprain your foot, for example, you can't go out and around as much, and it offers more opportunity to rest in Me. When you have a cold, sometimes all you feel like doing is lying in bed.

30. There are times when I know you need that time to stop—even if you don't feel it's so restful—and reflect, and also catch up on your sleep or times of peaceful resting as you recover. Sometimes I just want you to cease from your normal activities so that I have a chance to give you a clearer perspective on things, and when you have gained that, you go on to be more fruitful and happier than ever.

31. So even if you don't "feel" like your affliction is particularly restful, maybe it's the rest in spirit that I'm after, or the physical rest as you recover, or the change from your normal activities and pace that I know you need in order to prevent something much worse. In each case, as you ask Me, I'll explain it to you and show you what you needed particularly, or why I allowed it, and then you can concentrate on getting the most out of it. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

32. Sometimes there's something out of alignment in the spiritual realm that needs to be corrected—something in your heart that's not right or that needs to be corrected or adjusted. The spiritual affects the physical, and if you're not under the shelter of My wings and My full protection,

that's also sometimes the reason for an affliction coming on. Sometimes it's an outright attack of the Enemy, even if you are in My perfect will and right with Me, which I allow to teach you to fight, to stir you up in the spirit, or to strengthen you in some area.

33. Sometimes I just need to slow you down, so I use affliction. Sometimes I allow affliction to bring to your attention a much bigger problem, or to allow you the opportunity to gain a big victory in some area—such as more unity in your Home, more honesty and openness with others, more prayerfulness, etc. Sometimes I allow you to suffer a small affliction so that you might be more moved to pray for those who are desperate for your prayers for their much larger afflictions.

34. Sometimes I use affliction to humble you. Sometimes I use it to give you more compassion, understanding, or brokenness. Sometimes I allow it to keep you from moving forward in a direction that I know would lead to no good. Sometimes I just want to spend some special one-on-one time with you. Sometimes I know that you simply need a break from your normal routine, a chance to step back and see things from a different perspective, and the only way you'll step back is if you're forced to.

35. This is only the beginning of the list. There are many, many reasons—each one particular to the situation. Many times the reason might be a combination of these. The only way to know is to stop and ask Me. And don't wait to ask Me until you realize that you're not getting better! Stop and ask Me right away! Sometimes the affliction might be short-lived, but if you stop and ask Me about it at the beginning, you can get so much from it; you'll save yourself from something worse down the line,

because you will get the point easily and quickly.

36. In any and all cases, hearing from Me about the situation will give you comfort and faith. It will help you to see that I have a purpose and a plan. Even if it's simply an attack of the Enemy, I will give you My promises, and you'll be reminded and encouraged that you can rise above, that you don't have to give in to the attack! Often, too, even if it is an attack of the Enemy, there are things that I can help you learn through it—special treasures of the spirit that you wouldn't gain any other way, which you have the chance to find and collect and keep from this time of affliction. There is always good that I want to bring out of it, always something special I can give you to keep and treasure from this time.

37. Hearing from Me about the affliction will also give you faith to do whatever is needed to overcome it and even the circumstances. There might be times I want you to claim My miraculous healing, because I know the sickness doesn't have to run its natural course. There might be times when there's something you need to do—confessing or cleansing your heart before Me or before others, or uniting in prayer for something specific. There are times you need to fight the Enemy, resist the attack, and go forward in faith. There are times when you need to rest. There are times when I want you to spend more time with Me, and until you stop and lay it all aside and spend that time with Me, I can't heal you.

38. There are times when I want the whole Home to stir themselves up to pray for you, and in that case, I would wait on that to bring the healing. In other cases, I might tell you to simply wait on Me, rest in Me, do what you can, and then be patient. Other times I might show you something

physical that you can do—eating certain foods, changing something in your diet or living habits, getting more exercise, getting more rest, or even something very specific such as taking a certain vitamin, doing a certain exercise, calling a certain person for advice, etc. In every situation, I will show you what you must do in order to take hold of My healing, My blessing, My deliverance, My grace and My strength.

39. No matter what the reasons, I allow afflictions in love. Even if I allow one as a chastisement, I still want to love and comfort you through it. And many times the affliction isn't a chastisement or punishment at all; perhaps I just want to take some time with you, or I have something else special that I want to give you, or some greater good that I want to bring out of it.

40. If you allow yourself to reason things out in your mind, you'll often come to the wrong conclusions and will wind up being discouraged, or berating yourself for something that I don't condemn you for and that you shouldn't condemn yourself for. The Enemy is always right there, the accuser of the saints, to remind you of why you deserve this, of all the evil and out-of-it things you've done, and why you don't even deserve to ask for My healing, much less rise above your affliction or fight against the condemnation. He will try to convince you that it's only fair to suffer through it, that there's nothing you can do, and that you might as well just wait it out.

41. That is so contrary to My plan! Even if it is something that I'm trying to get through to you about, I'll give you My hope, peace, and promise of blessing through it. I will give you treasures of the spirit that will leave you rejoicing that I allowed you to have such an experience. I would love to turn each moment of affliction into a moment of love with Me, a moment of com-

fort and enjoying My presence, a moment of prayer for others, or of praise and thankfulness for the many blessings I give you and for My promise of healing which is on its way.

42. Even if it's an affliction which takes time to heal, or a long-term battle that you have to fight, if you're coming to Me regularly, daily, I'll continue to give you new things that you can learn from it—new promises to hang on to, new lessons that will always be with you, new strength of spirit to keep holding on. I have it all to give to you, My precious loves. So take the time to come to Me and ask Me about it. Hang on to My Words of promise, and don't let the Enemy drag you down with discouragement. Ask Me your questions, tell Me your fears, and let Me wipe away every trace of fear or condemnation with My loving and gentle fingers. I will make it right, all right. All you have to do is hear from Me. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

(Excerpts of a tape Mama made for a couple of staff members who were sick:)

Hi, dear ones,

43. I'm making this tape for both of you together because I have basically the same things to say to each of you. Nothing big or bad—just good. I wanted to tell you how very much we've been praying for you and how sad we are that you've been so sick.

44. I can only imagine how difficult this has been. From what we've heard about the symptoms, it sounds very debilitating and exhausting, and just plain miserable. So, needless to say, we've been praying desperately for you, that the Lord would raise you up quickly. It seems like it's taken a long time, but the Lord knows and He has His timetable.

45. Just like all the other things that we usually think take too long, the Lord later shows us that it was right on His timetable and His schedule.

But you poor things, I'm really, really sorry. It makes us hurt to think of how difficult it's been for both of you. On top of that, it must be very discouraging, because that seems to be one of the Enemy's main tactics with sickness. What sometimes is almost worse or just as bad as the sickness itself is wondering when it's ever going to end, why you had to get sick, and dealing with all the other emotions that come along with it.

46. But it really helps to know that Jesus understands, doesn't it?—That

He went through a lot of sickness in His life, and He must have gone through the very worst ones that we could ever imagine, just so He would understand the whole range of sickness, disease, and health problems that His creations have. I guess in some ways we have to go through these different things too for the sake of those to whom we not only minister now, but will minister to much more in the future.

47. When I once asked the Lord why we had to go through all these things—I was talking specifically about

myself, about my eyes and my toes and my teeth and my cysts and all those things—He said, "It's part of the battles of life, and everyone has to have them."

"Moreover," He said, "it helps you to relate to the people in the System who have so many afflictions and who don't just get healed at the drop of a hat." He said, "If I raised you up immediately when you got sick and healed you of all your afflictions, you'd never understand; you'd never be able to relate or have compassion on the poor folks in the System that you need to minister to."

48. Anyway, we really have been praying for you, and I hope you're getting our greetings or good wishes passed on from the others that we've mentioned it to. While you're recovering, don't get into things too quickly; really be prayerful and ask the Lord what you should do and when so that you don't overdo. Please take it easy so you don't have a relapse or come down with other things because your body is weakened from the sickness. Please go slow and pray and ask the Lord exactly what you should do and when.

49. Lord, bless them both and continue to strengthen them and speed their recovery and recuperation, and thank You, precious Husband, for the good things that You've brought out of this sickness. Thank You for how You're bringing them through, and You will heal them completely in Your time. Help them not to be discouraged, but to rest in Your arms and take advantage of this time to rest and be refilled.

The Gift of Affliction

50. (Dad speaking:) The Lord has opened to you His good treasure. It might not look that way to you right now, but you're one of His children who has sincerely asked in faith for whatever He wanted to do in your life; you opened the door and gave Him full sway, and He's giv-

ing you a priceless gift in this affliction.

51. Don't worry, it's not going to last forever. But while it does last, ask the Lord to help you see it as a priceless, wonderful gift. He values you and your love so much. He values your closeness to Him and your intimacy with Him, your times of sweet lovemaking, more than He values anything

you could accomplish for Him.

52. So He has seen fit to bless you with these special times of loving, of hearing His voice, of sitting at His feet where you're just helpless and you can't do anything else. All you can do is cry out to Him for the grace and peace to keep your mind from spinning. It's in those times that He's working in your heart and making you what He needs you to be.

53. Praise Him for this wonderful gift of affliction! Yes, the Enemy tries to get in and attack you and make it hard for you to even pray or listen to the Lord, but just rebuke him. Punch him back! If you can't concentrate enough to hear from the Lord, then simply rest in His arms and feel His love. Feel His arms around you. Every time you're tempted to feel discouraged or useless, punch the Devil back by praising the Lord and thanking Him for this sweet gift of time with Him. Praise Him for the honor of spending so much time with Him.

54. It will get better; the darkest hour is just before dawn. The Lord's not going to let you be a burden. You might feel that way right now, that you're not able to do much or even pull your own weight, but you are, in the spirit. You're praying and sucking and receiving what the Lord has for you, and that's the most important thing you could be doing right now.

55. Praise the Lord for this wonderful treasure; it really is beautiful in the spirit. It's a wonderful, priceless gift, a great honor that the Lord has seen fit to give you.

56. Sometimes we see things so differently from how the Lord sees them. There, in your frail, earthbound human flesh, you look at the gift of healing as the most precious gift that God could give. When you're so battered by affliction and you feel so weary, you think that the highest blessing, the highest honor God could give, would

be the gift of complete healing and deliverance from whatever you feel is holding you down. But the Lord sees it so differently.

57. In this case, the Lord is giving you very great and precious gifts—the gift of weakness, the gift of affliction, the gift of complete dependence upon Him. Along with these gifts come many other gifts—the gift of humility, the gift of special times with Him. If you were strong you would be working, your mind would be focused on other things, you would be busy doing His work; but right now, He just wants you.

58. So don't let the Enemy get in and discourage you or condemn you. Don't let him tempt you to feel that you've made a mistake or sinned and brought this upon yourself, because it's a beautiful, wonderful gift from our sweet Jesus to you. Milk it for all it's worth, every moment you can, loving and receiving love from your wonderful Husband. Seize every opportunity to humble yourself before Him and receive His Words, His instruction.

59. And when you can't do anything else, rest in His arms and trust. That in itself is a wonderful gift from your heart to His, that you trust in His care and have set everything else aside, lying there quietly and peacefully, shutting out all the distractions or fears of the Enemy, and letting the Lord kiss you and hold you.

60. It's very precious to Him. It's just as precious to Him as if you were giving 24 hours a day in His service, which you are; but if you're not strong enough to do that in the physical, then simply lie down and rest. It means just as much to Him to receive your love when He knows you can't get up, that you can't put your love in action in the way you'd like. He values your love as well as your work.

61. When you're tempted to feel discouraged, ask the Lord to help you to see

it as He sees it. He'll give you pictures and visions that will give you peace, and He will bring the gift of healing in His time. *(End of message from Dad.)*

The Magic Wand Of Spiritual Weaponry

62. *(Jesus speaking:)* During this time of affliction, I'm giving you the opportunity to become adept and proficient in your use of the magic wand of My Spirit. Do you know what the magic wand is? It's a bit of a mystery to you now, kind of like the elixir of love. It's the power of My Spirit, and you always have it available to you. It's there for you through prayer, through the power of the Word, through your times of communion with Me. But when you're physically weak, you hang on to the wand tighter, and it becomes all the more powerful.

63. The wand represents the power that is generated when you pray for others. Do the witnesses need an extra boost? Do the children need strengthening in some area? Does someone in your Home need encouragement? Wave your wand, and it will be done!

64. This magic wand also represents the power which is generated by the spiritual weapons that you have always available to you. Some people are more proficient in their use than others. But when you're sick and physically weaker than normal, it's a special opportunity to learn to use your wand more. There's not much else you can do. It's like the quote you've heard many times, "When you're weakest in the flesh, you're strongest in the spirit." It's only when you stop trying in your own strength that you realize how strong I really am. So it is with this wand. Now that you can't do much in the physical, you're forced to depend on your magic wand, and you will

As you suffer with Me, I will reward you with many beautiful gifts of My Spirit. You will become as a magic one, given many anointings from Me, with the special ability to command My magic wand.

This time that has been so difficult to bear and to understand is a time of reward and of blessing. I'm rewarding you openly and showing you My love, perhaps in ways which you may not understand fully now, but which will be evident to you as you begin to feel the power of the Spirit working and accomplishing what you could never have done before.

Each time you feel discouraged and feel that you're reaching your limit, stop, breathe deeply, and hold the wand tighter. As you hold it tight between your hands of faith, you will feel its warmth and life, and the power of the spirit that it holds to help and to heal.

come to realize just how powerful it really is—both in supplying you with the comfort and healing that you need, as well as sending forth power to help others as you pray for them.

65. **I know it's difficult to go through these afflictions.** I weep with you. I hold you through the long nights. I never sleep. I'm always awake, right there by your side, ready to attend to your slightest whisper. When the pain is intense or the night is long, squeeze your wand tighter and let the power flow into you and revive you. When you think of something that you wish you could do or are reminded of someone who

needs help, point your wand in that direction and watch Me take care of it for you. (End of message from Jesus.)

A Testimony **To the Lord's Power**

66. (Jesus speaking:) I love the broken and desperate spirit that I see before Me—the open and receptive vessel that I now have in you. In your weakness and brokenness, you are truly a testimony to others of My power. They see and know how weak you are, how afflicted, how troubled, even how discouraged at times. Yet they also see how I strengthen you, and how, when it seems you can't walk one more step, I give you the boost of strength you need to get you through. (End of message from Jesus.)

It Gets Everyone Praying!

67. (Dad speaking:) I really understand, because I battled a lot with afflictions too, as you know. Sometimes the hardest part of enduring affliction for me was the humiliation—or worse yet, the condemnation. Here I was, one of God's prophets, and I had this affliction or that affliction, and so often the Family had to stop and take their time to pray for me. Oh, that was really difficult! But then the Lord and Mama would encourage me that it was good for everyone involved, and I'd relent and quit feeling sorry for myself and praise the Lord! Then I'd feel better. (End of message from Dad.)



68. (The following message was received for a man in our Home who was very sick—so sick that the Lord showed us that our Home needed to form a continual prayer vigil chain for him. Besides praying for him at meals and whenever we were together, each hour someone took 15 minutes of that hour to do vigil for him as well as for others

of our dear Family who were sick or needed prayer for some reason.)

69. (Jesus speaking:) Don't worry about these many afflictions, because going through them and enduring and fighting and drawing closer to Me is only bearing more fruit in your life. And now your whole Home is benefiting greatly in getting to partake of this wonderful privilege of fighting the Enemy, claiming healing and victory, and it's bearing fruit in everyone's life.

70. Don't fret or think that it's taking so much of everyone's time, for this is time well spent. In obeying and doing this, each person is getting special quality time with Me, and in return, getting strengthened themselves. They will be more fit for the busy days ahead. This united vigil time will bring the whole Home closer together, as it's an important, privileged activity in the spirit that everyone is taking part in.

71. What greater work is there than spending time with Me in prayer? What could be more important than laying down your life and time for Me and the brethren? So through this, you're doing Me a favor! You're helping the whole Home spend extra time with Me. But I promise that I will greatly multiply and bless their efforts, because they're putting Me and My priority needs first. Didn't I go out and seek that one lost sheep? This is following My sample. I laid down My life for you, so each and every one of you ought to lay down your life for the brethren. (End of message from Jesus.)

In Each Affliction **There's a Great Prize!**

72. (Jesus speaking:) My sweet, sweet love! Each day you're becoming more beautiful, drawing closer to Me, radiating My Spirit!

73. You say, “How am I becoming more beautiful and radiant? I fight all these afflictions daily and it’s a real weight to carry.” Well, you know what? As you learn to fight them, there’s beauty for ashes, there’s joy in place of sorrow, there’s real happiness. As you see Me answer the prayers for each affliction, you’re drawing ever closer to Me and receiving more of My beauty.

74. Yes, this sickness is an attack of the Enemy, but I’m using it to draw you ever so close to Me. If you didn’t have afflictions, you wouldn’t be so desperate; it would be your own strength and beauty showing. But now it’s My beauty that has come through testing and purging, and it’s a much more valuable prize.

75. Did you know that in each affliction there’s a great prize? There are great lessons learned through each one. I have a purpose for each affliction. Just ask Me, “Lord, what are You trying to show me?” All things do work together for good, so praise Me in each trial, in each affliction. This is the beautiful sample of My queen, who also suffers many afflictions, but who does so cheerfully and without complaint. You will see that as you thank Me in each affliction, it will be easier to bear.

76. Seek for that prize, that pearl that comes with the affliction. There is a purpose. Sometimes there are lessons in learning how to fight, how to trust, how to pray, how to praise, to call out for the help of others. There are so many lessons. And don’t be afraid to be open and honest. Open your heart to those around you.

77. As you suffer much, you can also be of great understanding and compassion to others who suffer. When you’re battling an affliction and turn to Me for help in prayer, also say a prayer for others. Pray for My queen, My king, for those with critical life-and-death conditions, for the

health of others in your Home. Many will benefit from your prayers. And as you pray for these and thank Me for other afflictions that I have healed you from, you’ll see that the burden of your own affliction will be so much easier to bear.

78. So don’t despair or fear with every new affliction, but thank Me for the good health you do have. Seek Me in prayer and find the jewel. With each affliction comes testing, but that’s also how I give you great victories. I promise you, I will not let you suffer more than you are able to bear. Remember to lift others up; so will your own burden get easier. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Brokenness Brings Sweetness And Greater Usefulness

79. (Jenny Lind speaking:) The sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thoughts, and the most beautiful tunes come from the heart that is broken, the spirit that is humble, the life that has been tested and tried and crushed in the hands of the Great Musician. There are some songs that can only be sung once one has been through the depths, once one has felt so low, so weak, so helpless, so insufficient, and so incapable.

80. It’s easy enough to sing songs and compose songs, to live life, and to trust Jesus when you don’t feel the pain, when your heart hasn’t been broken, when your body hasn’t been crushed. But the songs from the heart of one who is trusting completely in their Lover are the masterpieces, the unforgettable tunes.

81. I was called the Swedish Nightingale—not because I was beautiful, not because of my voice, but because of my broken heart. I was called the Swedish Nightingale because I sang through my tears. I sang through my heartache. I sang through my disappointment. I sang

through my despair. I sang through my pain.

82. When my life had no struggles, my songs didn't touch people. When I didn't feel the pain, my songs didn't reach into people's hearts. It was only after the pain, after the defeat, after the loss, after the brokenness, after the test, after I decided to sing through my tears, that my songs rang out and found a place deep in the hearts of others. As you sing your songs through the pain, through the struggle, through the seeming defeat, through the battles, you're touching the lives and hearts of others.

83. Your sweet songs of surrender, trust, and yieldedness come before the throne of Heaven. Jesus hears your songs of desperation and they are as sweet music to His ears. He sees your songs of yieldedness; they dance through the air and are beautiful to Him. He smells your songs of trust; their fragrance is sweeter than the sweetest perfume. Your songs of surrender, yieldedness, trust, and desperation come before the Lord's throne as gifts and tokens of your love for Him.

84. He knows that it's hard for you to sing, dear nightingale. He knows that your afflictions are the trying of your faith, and that's why He values and treasures your tunes of love. You are honored in the courts of Heaven. Your songs reach deep into your Lover's heart and He longs to hold you and kiss you and love you.

85. Just melt into His arms when you feel like fainting. Look into His eyes when you cannot look about you. Let Him touch your head when you find no relief. On His lips is the balm of healing, and as you lie in His arms, He'll kiss you.

86. He knows the pain. He knows the hurt. He knows that this cross is heavy to bear, but He will not allow you to be tempted above what you are able to en-

dure. He uses this affliction in your life to keep you close to Him. He uses this affliction in your life to bring out the sweetness—the sweet songs of surrender that you sing to Him as a token of your love for Him.

87. You don't see all of the reasons why you're afflicted in such a monumental way, but it's because of your afflictions that you have such great faith. Your afflictions are what have kept you soft, warm, moldable, trusting and broken.

88. Some want these priceless gifts, but they're not willing to pay the price that goes with them. Some want the gifts of humility, desperation, dependence on the Lord, yieldedness, faith and trust and utter acceptance, but they aren't willing to go through the battles.

89. I wanted to be a world-famous singer, but at first I wasn't willing to pay the price. So my singing instructor broke my heart and helped me to pay the price. The price wasn't easy. I went through great turmoil and feelings of loss, but the end result was my heart's desire. I found my dream, but I didn't find it exactly the way that I would have imagined it.

90. The Lord does that with many of His children. If He gave you a choice as to whether you would endure an affliction, I'm sure that you wouldn't choose to go through with it. But He—in His great wisdom and foresight—has allowed this in your life. And although this may not be as you would have imagined it to be, the end result will be the desire of your heart.

91. You have smiled through the rain. You have sung through your tears. You have fought a good fight, and for this you are honored before your Lover. He loves your love songs. He sings both day and night of you, His lover, His nightingale who sings so sweetly. You have a special place in His heart, and there's not a moment that

He doesn't see you. There's not a moment that He doesn't care for you. There's not a moment that He isn't touched with the feelings of your infirmity.

92. The storm will pass. The raging torrents will settle. The stormy winds will turn to stillness, and you—the one who has sung through the storm and found peace when others would find calamity and confusion—will be raised to everlasting honor. *(End of message from Jenny Lind.)*

Sometimes afflictions come as a gift of My love, to bring you to a point where you can't do anything else but lie in My arms and rest in My bed; you can't think or move or talk or even pray. All you can do is relax and let Me comfort you and soothe you. It's a love gift to you. Even though it's difficult to see My reasoning behind the pain and discomfort, I'm using it to draw you ever so close to My bosom, where you can see and hear things of the spirit, and where I can spend close, intimate, personal time with you, and whisper My love and secrets of love to you.

Squeezing of the Honeycomb

93. (Jesus speaking:) As the hand squeezes the honeycomb and out comes the honey, so am I squeezing you, and out comes the honey of your love for Me. It is high-grade honey, sweet and refined, pure and of finest quality.

94. I'm sorry for the pain My squeezes of love cause you, but these squeezes are only for a time. They shall soon pass, and then shall those about you eat of this delicious honey love that has come from My hand. They will know that My honeycomb has been with the Master. Only those who

have been squeezed by the Master have such quality, such sweetness.

95. You please Me by praising Me, My honeycomb. I see your silent tears. I feel the intensity of your pain. Yet you praise Me, you smile, you walk in faith, trusting in Me, letting Me have My way and My will in your life. For this you will be blessed, My precious honeycomb.

96. Don't hesitate to come and spend time with Me to be renewed and strengthened. For not one minute you spend with Me will be wasted, but I will return an hundredfold to My beloved honeycomb.

97. Take the time you need to be with Me, for when you are weak, I am strong, and I can renew your strength so that you will mount up with wings of the eagle; so that you will run and not be weary, so that you will walk and not faint. I love you, My precious honeycomb. Your willingness to let Me squeeze you in such a fashion is a sign of great love which I hold dear to My heart. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Affliction Brings You Closer to Jesus and the Spirit

98. (Jesus speaking:) Through this experience you're getting to know the spirit world in a new and different way, drawing closer to Me and the Spirit. We're becoming one more each day. This is a priceless privilege that you could otherwise have missed. So count it a blessing! I rejoice to see you so much in love with Me, and how your love for Me is getting stronger every day. Our love will grow and blossom, and you will obtain greater riches than you ever have before! It's costing you much, you're paying a price, but oh, the rewards are so great and it will be a great testimony! For it is beauty that's coming forth out of ashes, and victory out of defeat!

99. You can look forward to each day!

My grace is sufficient for you and My presence will go with you. Even in the night seasons I'm sending My helpers to assist you in ways you have not known before. So take comfort in My Word and promises, for I never fail to help you, and I am healing you! *(End of message from Jesus.)*

A Reminder That It's Got to Be Him!

100. *(Jesus speaking:)* This is not a punishment, but rather a special time when we can spend extra time together. It's a special time that I wanted to give you so you might remember that I must do the work through you; you cannot do it in the arm of the flesh.

101. You can do your part to press in and apply yourself and handle the projects set before you, but ultimately it's My responsibility to see that they get done. I want to relieve you of feeling that you must try to do it. I will help you in your work, but you must take that special time with Me that I want and crave from you.

102. I allowed this to happen as a gentle reminder of My desire for you, which is far greater than any accomplishments you could give Me, any presents you could give Me through your service or your sacrifice. Although I value your service and all your work, I value you, My worker, even above your works, as I do all My children.

103. Although My children know they are saved by grace, they also try to justify themselves by works at times. This is not to say that they try to save themselves by their works, but that they try to establish their value by their works. But I have established their value already by dying for them, so that they might live forever with Me.

104. Take these quiet moments in My arms and be refreshed. This small affliction is given to you with much love, for I

knew that you would immediately stop and ask Me about it, and thus would receive My Words of love and desire. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Made Stronger Through Weakness

105. *(Jesus speaking:)* There are many reasons for sickness. As your Father David often said, I get a lot of mileage out of afflictions, working both in the life of the one who is sick and the ones around him or her.

106. One of the reasons I've allowed this is to remind you once again that you cannot do My work without My power. As this sickness has weakened you to where you have no energy to do anything, so you see what it's like if I were to withdraw My anointing and power.

107. Of your own self you can do nothing, just as you can do nothing now. So you must seek Me diligently before you do anything, not becoming familiar with your anointing or My power within you. You must seek Me fervently as you have during this sickness, that I might manifest My power fully through you. Lean fully on Me, that I might fully empower you.

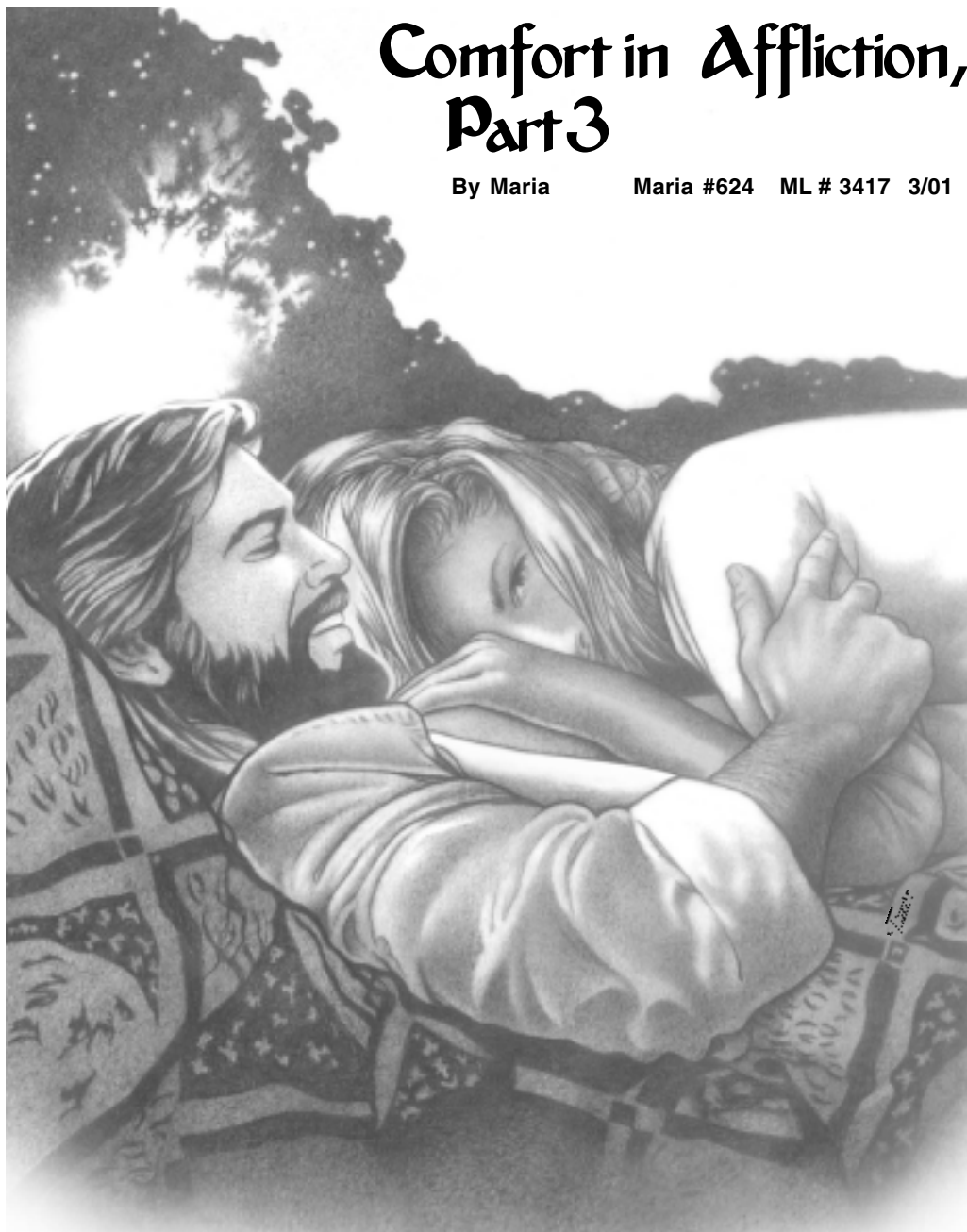
108. This is a lesson that I must continually teach My children, for it is so easy for them to go running off in the energy of their own flesh to work, to accomplish, to do things. Or they utter a brief prayer before they begin, but still forge ahead as if they had to do it themselves.

109. I bring home this lesson to many through affliction, when they're in bed on their back and can only look up to Me. In those hours or days or weeks, I remind them that without Me they can do nothing, that their strength, competency and power is only from Me, and that through weakness they are made stronger. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Comfort in Affliction, Part 3

By Maria

Maria #624 ML # 3417 3/01



No matter how bad you're feeling, come to Me during this time of affliction, and I'll speak to you. Open your heart and your ears to Me, and listen to the important Words that I'm waiting to tell you as you lie in My arms.

Comfort in Affliction, Part 3

By Maria

Maria #624 ML # 3417 3/01

Dear Family,

I love you! Thank you so much for being faithful prayer warriors for Peter and me and our health, and for all our precious loved ones who are on the prayer lists, as well as any others that you're aware of who are battling affliction. I know that it's a sacrifice to pray. It requires time and effort in the spirit, and because you don't always see immediate benefits, the Enemy can try to make you feel that it's not really worth it. But it is! (See all that the Lord said about intercessory prayer in the "Action Through Prayer" series.)

2. Besides the many benefits for the person who is sick and the wonderful good the Lord wants to bring out of it in their life, there's also a very direct benefit for those who are around or aware of the need, if they're faithful to pray. It unites you in the spirit; it gives you more time with the Lord; it helps you to be more in tune with the Spirit—more desperate, more unselfish and more aware of the needs of others. There are all kinds of wonderful benefits when we take the time to be intercessors for one another in prayer! And I can testify, as I'm sure most of you can, that when you're sick, there's almost nothing more comforting than knowing that your Family is praying for you. Please don't stop! Be faithful intercessors!

3. Obviously, there are many reasons why the Lord allows us to have afflictions and sickness. Sometimes it's just a special gift of His love to help us learn or grow in some area. Sometimes it's to shake us up and give us some incentive to get desperate with Him. Sometimes it's a form of His chastisements. Sometimes He just knows that we need the humbling, and will be better for it. Sometimes He even allows sickness as an

attack of the Enemy to teach us to fight back, to stir us up, to strengthen us, and to draw us closer to Him. Sometimes it's a combination of many factors. In every case, He has a good reason. I can't stress enough how important it is to take the time to hear from Him personally and receive His counsel and instruction about your situation. It will make all the difference in the world!

A Time of Spiritual Reflection And Checking Your Heart

4. (*Jesus speaking:*) You're so precious to Me, and when you suffer, I also suffer. I will be very near to you, fighting for you and sending My ministering spirits to comfort you and to bring you speedy recovery and healing.

5. I call you to come to Me in earnestness at this time, to draw closer to Me and to let Me speak to you. Open your heart and your ears to Me, and listen to the important Words that I'm

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waiting to tell you as you lie in My arms.

6. I know that you may not feel strong enough to hear from Me at this time, but don't let this opportunity pass you by. As you begin to feel better, before you get back into your daily routine, please be sure to take the time to hear from Me the specific things that I wish to speak to you about.

7. There are many reasons why I allow afflictions. To some, I speak concerning My garden. As a gardener must be vigilant to purge his garden of weeds, to clear it of rubble, and to protect its tender plants from the pests and plagues that would infest the fruits and produce, so must I be vigilant to protect the gardens of your hearts and homes, to keep them purged and cleaned and protected from anything that would eat up the fruits and spoil the tender vines.

8. You are My garden, and I must make sure that you don't become weakened by the pests of the Enemy, and that he is not able to come in and plant any weeds that would choke out the good seeds of My Words. I must take special care to make sure that your plants don't become diseased or weakened in any way. So although it hurts Me, I must allow you to be purged of anything that is not of Me.

9. Therefore, if you will look to Me, I will use this attack on your health to purge you of those things that would weaken your spirit and hurt your fruitfulness. I ask you to check your heart, to make certain that you don't allow any weeds to grow up next to your vines, and that you don't allow parasitic pests to suck from you the life-giving sap of My Words. The fruit that you bear must be good and free from disease and pests; it must give life and nourishment to others.

10. For some of you, I use affliction as a time of softening your spirit, a time to help you appreciate others more and to appreciate all that I do to keep you and protect you. But there are many who battle debilitating illnesses—not for one day or two, but for weeks and months on end. Many of your brethren are often attacked with sickness of one kind or another. During those times, they struggle to take care of each

other, while having to continue to care for their children and also be concerned about raising their support and taking care of their ministries.

11. So please use the time that you're in bed to pray for your Family worldwide, and especially for those who are fighting life-threatening and very debilitating diseases. Take this time to praise Me for the blessings of protection and good health that I normally give you because you have given your all to Me. Let this time soften your heart for those in need, those who are weak and afflicted and who need your fervent daily prayers.

12. Everything good comes from My hand. Your health and strength, your supply and protection, your talents and abilities, your ministries and your service—all these are from Me and are given according to My will. During this time when you are weak and not able to carry on as you normally do, please remember how nothing you are without Me, and how much you depend on Me to accomplish anything through you. Without Me you can do nothing good, so praise Me for all that you normally have, for health and happiness, for good times and for your many blessings. Blessings upon blessings have I showered upon your head!

13. For some, I use affliction and sickness to be a serious time of reflection, a time to realize what can happen when you let down your guard in any way, allowing a breach in your spiritual protection. I do not afflict willingly; I am more than able to keep you from attacks on your health and home. But each of you must stay very close to Me and within the circle of My protection. Truly, the Enemy is as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, and you are each responsible to keep the standard high in your hearts and spirits, so that he may not find a breach of any kind or any means of entering into your Heavenly Home.

14. As you come to Me, I will speak to your heart and show you what I want you to learn from this sickness; there is something in it for you. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

15. (Mama:) I wondered about the place in that message where the Lord said that He understands if you don't have the strength to hear from Him in the throes of your sickness. I was concerned that if someone didn't have the strength to hear from the Lord while they were sick, or until they were almost better, that they wouldn't be able to benefit from the Lord's comfort during that time, or whatever He wanted to tell them about recovering and how to best claim His healing, and I wondered what the solution was. Here is what the Lord said when we asked Him about that.

16. (Jesus speaking:) There are times when My children feel so weak that they don't have the strength to make the effort in the spirit to hear from Me aloud. But they can always hear My voice in their heart. They can always lift their heart to Me and be comforted by My Words. When I say that I understand that they may not have the strength to hear from Me, that's because in some cases they don't have the strength to receive a long complete message regarding why they're sick, or

about some other major question.

17. But they can always point their antenna toward Me, ask Me to speak to them, and I will. They don't even have to feel like they have to record it. They can just lie in My arms and hear My whispers, between Me and them. Some of the most precious times are had in this way. Then, when they feel stronger and can put forth more effort to receive a message that will be recorded and more complete, they can do so. But they will have benefited from My whispers all along.

18. In times when someone is very sick, it often helps to have someone else pray and receive a message for them about things, if they so desire. Each case is different, and in some cases they might feel up to it themselves. But if they feel too weak, they can just listen to My whispers and have private conversations with Me, and someone else can help to receive more of the details or the complete message that I want to give for the sake of the body or whatever the case may be. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

What the Lord Means When He Calls It a "Chastening"

19. (Mama:) First of all, what does chastening itself mean? As Dad has taught us, it's based on a Greek word meaning to train up a child; to discipline, to instruct, to teach. And the word discipline comes from the Latin word *disciplina*, literally "instruction given to a disciple." So please bear in mind that when the Lord uses the word chastening, He often means more than punishment or discipline. But even if He is disciplining you through sickness or affliction, He doesn't want you to be discouraged about it. Here's some very good counsel on "how to take it."

20. (Jesus speaking:) As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Oh, how My children cringe when they hear that verse. How they dread My

chastening hand. But My hand of chastening is sent with as much love as My hand of blessing—and indeed they are one and the same. All that comes into your life from Me is given with such great love—the same love that compelled Me to lay down My life for you. And yet you dread it or try to turn away from it.

21. It is through the chastening—the blessing, the love which is given in a way most precious, the instruction, the guidance—that you are able to stay on track and useful to Me. Without it you would grow cold and hard; you would stray and become of no use. And so it is that out of love I give My children that which they dread—but which I know they need so desperately.

22. Yet, even though at times I may call it chastening, for the most part I call it blessings in disguise—treasures hidden under hard places,

precious experiences and lessons learned from trial and affliction, gifts of great value earned through the struggle and the tears. It all brings about the same result when My children are exercised thereby.

23. When I work in your life through sickness or trials, it doesn't always mean that you've gotten greatly off track. Sometimes I allow these things to keep you from getting off track, or to simply purify and soften you and make you more dependent on Me. Sometimes the changes in your spirit are so slight that you and others around you might not even notice them—but I notice them, and I know that you will be much happier if you're purged and gently brought back to the place of humility and gentle and complete submission to Me.

24. There are other times when I allow sickness or afflictions, chastenings or scourgings, to prepare you for something which is soon to come. You have not yet come face to face with the need, but I know that it stands around the corner, so out of My love for you I prepare you for it.

25. No, to Me chastening doesn't hold the same meaning as it does to you and to so many of My children. To Me, it's a part of My pure love for you. As many as I love, I chasten, because I deal with you as My sons and daughters, for your profit and benefit, that you might become all that you need to be and wish to be. It's not a sign of My angry displeasure or wrath, or that I think you any worse than another. It's not a sign that I'm nearly giving up on you. It's not a sign that My love for you has lessened or that I'm allowing nature to take its course unchecked. No, it's a sign that I care deeply about you, that I need you and want you, and that I'm either gently trying to bring you back onto the right track, or that I'm preparing you or simply purifying you and making you all the more precious to Me. All are for the best, all are given with great love, and all will bring about good fruit—if you let them.

26. If My children could only realize this, they would be so much happier. They would not dread My chastening and instruction and they

would not fall so easily into condemnation and discouragement when they are faced with My love in the form of chastening. For as soon as I move My hand in one of My children's lives to bring about good fruit, the Evil One is there just as quickly to point out to them their many failings and sins, and through pride and discouragement and condemnation keep them from grabbing hold of My promises—which brings faith, and thus the victory, and with the victory the purity of My strength and grace and overcoming.

27. When they lay hold on Me and My Words, when they rest in My arms and surrender all to Me, it becomes a cycle of faith and victory. When they're besieged by the Enemy and don't recognize his device of discouragement and condemnation for what it is, they're caught in a vicious cycle of doubt, weakening, lack of faith, failure, and continued defeat.

28. My poor loves—if only they could learn to recognize My love in the form of chastening! It often seems grievous to them rather than joyous, but that's because they do not see the peaceable fruit of righteousness, the good fruit, which will result from it as they learn their lessons and grow! My chastening is a sign of My love and care, and should be considered a positive experience, a compliment of love.

29. I want to help you see things more as I see them. I know you're thankful for My working in your life, and you even pray for it and desire it. But still you consider it a difficulty; you look at it through the eyes of discouragement. You want My correction, because you desire to do well for Me and be what I want you to be, but when I give you a touch of My love, you become discouraged, thinking that if you'd been doing better, you wouldn't have had to suffer such a thing.

30. You're seeing things all wrong. No wonder it's so difficult for you to receive; you take it as a punishment rather than a compliment. Learn to see it as I see it, and receive it as the wonderful gift that it is, and it will delight and encourage your heart. You'll grow more through it and enjoy life more—I promise! (*End of message from Jesus.*)

The Variety of Reasons

The Lord Allows Afflictions

31. (*Mama:*) When you take the time to listen to the Lord about what He wants to show you through your affliction, you'll probably often find that He's allowed it in your life for many reasons, not just one!

32. (*Jesus speaking:*) Often I use small afflictions in the lives of My children to give them a spiritual tune-up. Stop for a moment and consider what it does to you when you face a little affliction like this.

33. Right away, it slows you down. You're not able to keep going along, business as usual.

34. It checks you in the spirit. You check your heart. You examine your life and see whether you're doing those things which you know please Me. You take stock of whether you've been getting your Word time. You're reminded to reevaluate your priorities.

35. It humbles you, because it reminds you how weak you are, and it often humbles you because you realize there's something I want to teach you through it. You become more open to My Spirit, and you ask Me if there's anything I want to show you.

36. It forces you to ask for prayer, and to depend on the body not only for their prayers, but often for physical help as well. It gives you more time with Me if it's something that requires rest. If it's something contagious that can easily be spread to others, it gives you time away from everything and everyone, which helps you to see things more clearly, and often to get My perspective on things.

37. It gives you a greater appreciation for the good health you normally have. It gives you greater compassion on others who battle afflictions, and it makes you more desperate in your prayers for them.

38. It helps you to be desperate with Me personally, because you don't want it to continue forever, so it stirs you up in the spirit. It helps you to fight the Enemy. You're willing to make commitments that I'm asking of you in order to receive My healing. You're motivated

to make progress in the spirit.

39. Often you get hit with other tests at the same time—discouragement, condemnation, etc., and again, that's a wonderful opportunity to draw close to Me.

40. It takes you a step back from your work. Sometimes you have to stop your work completely; other times you just have to slow down. It reminds you that you're not indispensable. If you're not able to do as much as normal, it helps you to look at your priorities and remember those things which are really important.

41. It brings out the best in others and teaches them about loving and caring for those who are weak. It's humbling for you to be waited on or cared for, and that's also a good experience. It makes you appreciative of your loving Family and those around you who care for you.

42. It stirs everyone up to pray and generates more prayer, which is always a good thing. It reminds you to pray for others who are struggling or suffering, and each time you pray for yourself, you're convicted to pray more for others. You realize how important prayer is.

43. Often I also use it to get you to change physical habits, to live more healthfully or more godly. I use it to regulate your work. If you've been pushing too hard in the physical and you're getting out of step with Me, an affliction slows you down real fast. If you need to rest more, eat better, or take better care of yourself, an affliction will often be a catalyst to bring those things about.

44. You see? So many benefits—and those aren't even all of them! I use afflictions and sickness with My children to help them get tuned up in the spirit. It pulls you up in areas where you've been slacking, and it motivates you to grow, to progress. It automatically makes you desperate. It draws you closer to those around you and helps you depend on the prayers and love of others. It unites you. The desperation cleanses your spirit, and you often come out of it with a clearer perspective of the way that I see things, and a clearer sense of priorities. All of these things are healthy for your spirit. I could bring about some of the same benefits in other

ways, but they're often more costly to the work.

45. Sickness and affliction also affect others, but even the effects on others are good—teaching greater sacrifice, uniting together, fighting together, caring for each other, generating more prayer and desperation in general, and the list goes on. I know that sometimes it seems that more is left undone and that the effects are not good. But whenever I allow sickness or affliction, it's because I want to bring good not only in the life of the person who is afflicted, but in the lives of all those who are around. So look for the blessings, the benefits, the lessons, so that you can benefit fully, and so will My purpose be accomplished. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

To Humble Us and Keep Us Humble

(Received by someone who was new on the staff, who was immediately hit with several debilitating afflictions.)

46. (Dad speaking:) You probably don't feel that you're being much of a blessing, and I'm sure that's one of your biggest battles—feeling so useless. Isn't that how you feel—that you're just being a burden, that you can hardly do anything, that you take people's time, that you don't contribute what you'd like to, when you want to be such a blessing and get so much done?

47. I know it's very humbling for you to be in such a needy situation, because you're the one who's used to doing the serving and being needed and being in control. You've been strong in your mind, strong in your determination, almost self-willed. You've had such strong willpower that in some cases it's almost been a matter of making up your mind to do something, and then with all of the strength you can muster up, you bring it to pass.

48. But I've gotta tell you, those days are over, because you don't have enough strength. You don't have enough willpower. You can't, through your own determination, make it any longer.

49. That's what the Lord is trying to show you, that only He can do it—only His strength, His Word, His inspiration. So He's brought you to the place where all you can do is just lie in

His arms. He's made it so obvious because He's taken away all of your strength, all of your natural ability, all of the strength of your mind, your power of concentration, your ability to accomplish—it's all gone.

50. But don't worry, this is all a part of His plan. This is all a part of the humbling. It's all part of making you a great man, by making you a weak man. So just relax and let the Lord do it, and flow with His plan. It's simple! Just ask the questions, hear His Words, and do what He says.

51. I know you're trying hard to learn your lessons, you're trying hard to be humble, and now you're trying hard to be weak. But you see, all you have to do is yield and let the Lord do it. He is doing it! Because your heart is in the right place, the Lord is doing it and you are learning your lessons, you are being made humble, and you are becoming weak in yourself.

52. It's not something that you can try to do in the arm of the flesh. You can't even work up these lessons or these personal changes, this progress in the spirit. All you can do is yield to what the Lord is doing in your life, the circumstances that He's placed you in, and then He will bring it to pass. Yes, you've gotta do what you can, and you are doing what you can. You're asking for prayer, you're confessing your weaknesses and faults and sins to your loved ones, you're hearing from the Lord and from me, and you're doing what you can to put the counsel we give into practice.

53. But other than that, you just have to trust that the Lord is doing the rest, and He will, and He is! So know that all is well. Be encouraged. I love you! Love, Dad. *(End of message from Dad.)*

The Humbling Keeps You Useful

54. (Jesus speaking:) My dear son, this light affliction which is but for a moment worketh for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. I know that I must keep you humble. I know that I must keep you very close to Me, so I use these things in your life to accomplish that purpose. But it's only because of My great love for you. It's only because I greatly value your

usefulness in My hands. So I care for you as I know I must, in order that you might bring forth sweetness to glorify Me.

55. Don't be discouraged or worry that I'm displeased with you—for the contrary is true! I'm very proud of you. I allowed this weakening affliction at this time so that you would not be tempted to be proud of yourself, but so that you could remember how weak you are before Me in the spirit.

56. Thank you for being willing to be a vessel of love for Me to pour through. It comes with a high price. These humblings are part of that price. For what is it that I want to get across? Is it a sample of perfection? No! The sample I wish to portray is that of vessels of My love—faulty in themselves, but with such great love for Me that they're willing to go back and back and back again to the potter's wheel, that they might be re-formed according to My desire. Willing to be humbled that others might learn. Willing to be open, honest, sharing their hearts, knowing that they themselves have nothing good to show, but because I have asked it of them, they will do it for Me. Willing to live My Law of Love, even with the price that is required. Willing to give up the freedoms of the flesh in order to accomplish My purpose.

57. It is only for a short while. Soon time will be no more, and these weights of the flesh will fall from you. It will be such freedom. Thank you for being willing to be My tool, useful in My hand, and kept close to My bosom. Thank you for enduring these things in order to learn the strength of weakness. I know that lesson is far more valuable to you, and the humility you will gain through this time of weakness is far more important than all that you could be accomplishing now if you were whole.

58. I knew that you would be tempted with pride, so I allowed this to keep you soft and humble, because I have great need of you. I can't use you when you're proud or stiff in My hand. So receive it as a compliment, that I need you so greatly that I'm willing to give you this suffering, that you might once again be soft and humble before Me. I need you, and I love you dearly. I

kiss you with My kisses of love and healing—
healing of body and healing of spirit.

59. When you recover, you will be stronger for it—weaker in the flesh and in your own eyes, but stronger in the knowledge that in yourself dwells no good thing, and thus stronger in dependence on Me. I will continue to keep you close to Me, that I might use you fully. When you're strong in yourself, you're more wobbly, and with cracks and weak spots. But when you're weak in yourself, and so very desperate with Me, you're a strong staff of support that others can lean upon, for they know that your strength is in Me.

60. So rejoice for this humbling, because it's a sign that I will continue to use you and will continue to mold you into the vessel of My choosing. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

A More Humble Man

61. (Jesus speaking:) I know that the difficulties you face with your back being out have been discouraging for you. You see it as a hindrance to the work, a hindrance to doing the things you want to be doing. But through this affliction I've shown you a better way, a more humble way, and you've yielded your spirit to Me. You've accepted this "intolerable compliment" as a gift from My hand, so I've been able to use it to work in your life.

62. Even though you may not see all the ways it has changed you or it has helped you, I see and others see. They see a more humble you walking around, one who is not so confident and capable in himself, one who is weak in himself. Though it's been hard for you to be like this, it helps to show you how I wish for you to be always. For it is through humility and weakness that I can work through you and use you to accomplish My will.

63. I have blessed you with this affliction. I've been teaching you and showing you the better way through this affliction and through all you've been through in the last few months—showing you that through your weakness I will be able to be made strong. It's a manifestation in the flesh of what I'm doing in the spirit. It has

forced you to slow down, it has humbled you, and through your yieldedness I've been able to use it in your life.

64. Take care to not lose the lessons or the humility and dependence on Me that you've gained through this experience. The man that I need for your tasks ahead will be a new man—not one who operates in his old mindset or weaknesses, but one who is dependent on Me, one who cares about My plan and My will above his own, one who is willing to seek Me about each facet of this plan, one who is not sure of himself or his abilities and talents, but who humbly acknowledges that he doesn't know enough to be able to accomplish the task in front of him, and who is willing to ask others for their help and input and to ask Me most of all. And this is the man that I see before Me now.

65. It's been at the expense of your pride and self-assurance, but it's been worth it, for the fruits of the Spirit it has borne in your life have been beautiful and have made you a better, more useful man. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Touches of Love To Slow You Down

66. (Jesus speaking:) You have been touched with My love. I will release My hand and release this touch when the time is come and it has accomplished its purpose.

67. There is no fear in love, because perfect love casts out fear. This touch of love causes you to love more. It causes you to stop, to look, to listen, to be strengthened, to be desperate, to seek Me, to cry out to Me, and in this I am well pleased.

68. I'm trying to stop you from the busyness, the affairs of the Kingdom, so that you will look up and live. The addiction is strong, and I'm making you go cold turkey. I wish to break the addiction so you will understand that time with Me is more important.

69. Be not afraid that it takes time, because it is time well spent, for it is time with Me. Ask yourself, without this, would you have stopped and taken this much time? Would you have praised Me this much? Would you have cried

out to Me this much? Would you have sung to Me this much? Would you have loved Me this much and worshiped Me this much had you not had this touch of love? No, it would have been impossible; you just wouldn't have stopped. But I do all things well, for I have a plan and a purpose, and I will accomplish that plan and bring forth that purpose. I will bring it all to pass.

70. When I've taught you these lessons of love and faith, trust and prayer, I will lift My touch from you. You'll be new and you'll have a greater depth of understanding. You'll see things more as I see them, and you'll understand in a new and better way. You must hear My voice and follow My instructions and spend time with Me and with those things that I have commissioned to help you and to serve you, to counsel you and to guide you. The answers you seek are not in the busyness, the discussions, or the hurrying. You will not find them in rushing and worrying. The answers and greatest accomplishments come in prayer, in quietness, in listening, in peace and in calm.

71. As much as you pushed in the accomplishments and the getting things done and the hurrying and the deadlines and the seeking of information, that is how much you must now push the quietness and the confidence and the peace which passes all understanding, and the seeking of answers in prayer and in quietness and in love.

72. I wish to tip the scales heavily the other way, and where can I start but here? Ask yourself, would you have stopped without this touch of love? Would you have trusted Me? No. But now you are stopped and you are looking and you are listening. You're not worrying about the wings. You're beginning to understand that the answers are in the temple. The answers are here with Me.

73. So fret not and worry not because of these afflictions, for they work well in many ways. They draw you close to Me. They cause you to trust Me. They cause you to love Me. They make you stop. They cause others to pray. I do all things well. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Slowing Down Helps Us Pace Ourselves

74. (*Jesus speaking:*) You need a little extra rest, My dear one. With all that there is to do and yet to do, your body has become tired from the constant pressure, the projects, the many things to pray about and discuss. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak, and when your body gets tired you suffer afflictions easily.

75. I allowed this affliction to help you to slow down a little and pace yourself, so that you can keep running the race and accomplishing My work. There's still more to do, and I'll help you as you work day by day. I'll give you the spiritual and physical strength that you need to keep going and accomplishing one task after the other.

76. Even though there's much to do, continue to look to Me each step of the way and I will help you to do each project, to finish it, and to go on to another one. You can't do it all, you can't work on all the projects at once, but you can work on one at a time. You can pray and ask Me what to do, which one needs your time and attention today, which job needs to be taken care of first, and I'll show you. And as you keep looking to Me, each project will be taken care of and finished according to My timetable.

77. Don't let yourself feel the pressure, but have faith, trust Me, and let Me take the pressure for you. I am with you, and all that you're doing is being guided by My voice. You're doing the things that I want you to do and you're accomplishing My will one step at a time. (*End of message from Jesus.*)

Afflictions Help Us Gain Understanding

78. (*Jesus speaking:*) Everything that happens to you is part of a plan and there is always a reason. I have allowed this affliction over the last few weeks for two reasons. The first is to help you to learn to go slower, and you have been, as you don't really have a choice. The second is to teach you to have more compassion on others who have afflictions and things that keep them from going as fast as you.

79. In the past you've been hard on those who you thought couldn't keep up, either physically or mentally. You didn't understand what was wrong with them. Well, now you're seeing what it feels like to not be able to move around as fast as you want. I want you to learn more love and compassion. This affliction is just for a time, but in this time you need to learn the lessons that I have for you, so I can be free to finish the healing process. (*End of message from Jesus.*)

Being Weaker in the Flesh Teaches Patience

80. (*Jesus speaking:*) I wish to instruct you in patience, even as you wait for the pain to go away and to subside.

81. You must learn patience, for you are too quickly impatient. You want things to happen immediately; you want the pain to go away immediately. But this I don't allow, that you may learn to endure, that you may learn to go on despite the difficulty, despite the pain—even as My children around the world go on, despite the pain, despite the difficulties in their lives. They're learning patience—patience in waiting on Me—and you must learn patience—patience in waiting on Me, and patience with others. The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God, and the impatience of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

82. You must be patient with those who are weaker, or those who struggle or battle. You mustn't look down on them. You mustn't look upon them condescendingly. You mustn't expect them to get instant victories. This is self-righteousness. This is pride. This is not of Me. I am patient with you in many ways, and in many areas of your life which you have yet to change and grow in. Therefore you must be patient with others and you must learn this, and this pain will remind you of this. (*End of message from Jesus.*)

We Learn Endurance and Faith

83. (*Jesus speaking:*) Through your afflictions you're learning to endure, and you're learning to smile through the pain. You're learning to speak faith, to trust, and to know that

even if it looks as though everything is not going the way it should go, I'm not failing, and I'm not deserting or forsaking you. I am answering your prayers. I'm healing you by strengthening your faith and your spirit. For faith is believing in things you don't see or feel. Faith is knowing. (*End of message from Jesus.*)

**It Helps You Pray More,
And Makes You More Thankful**

84. (*Jesus speaking:*) One thing sickness does is help you to be more prayerful, more mindful to pray and not take prayer or health or safety or the times when things do run smoothly for granted. It reminds you that everything depends on prayer, everything needs prayer, and without prayer anything can go wrong.

85. Sickness helps to put more meaning in your prayers, so prayer doesn't become a ritual or meaningless or a vain repetition where you get in the habit of just mumbling, "Please bless this food," and afterwards can hardly remember if you prayed for the food or not. Once you've been sick, you pray a lot more fervently for health and safety and protection. You pray more whole-hearted prayers, because you know what can happen if you don't.

86. Sickness also helps you to be more praiseful and thankful. When you get very sick and it's hard to do anything or painful to do anything—to move, to sleep, to eat, to go to the bathroom—then that helps you to be thankful for these seemingly small things, to be thankful for good health, or the strength, or the energy just to do a normal day's work, even thankful for every breath you take, or just to be able to sit up in bed.

87. Sickness is much like the verse about correction, in that's it's grievous at the moment, but afterwards yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness. After you've returned to good health, although the sickness was hard to bear at the time and difficult to go through, you will be happier, more thankful, more praiseful and more prayerful, and it will bear a lot of very good fruit. (*End of message from Jesus.*)

**There's a Reason for Affliction
—Nothing Happens by Accident**

88. (*Jesus speaking:*) Behold and marvel at the beauties of My creation—the endless blue of the sky, often covered by a cotton blanket of clouds, the waves that splash upon the sand in such beautiful rhythm, the majestic heights and valleys, shadowed in vegetation, the colors of the tropics, and the contrasting sandy or snowy regions. I created all these things in perfect balance, perfect alignment, and perfect sync, with a word of My mouth.

89. Then I created man—and though I could have spoken a word and it would have been done, I chose instead to mold him and fashion him with My Own two hands. I took special care to put every bone, muscle, and organ in its proper place. The intricacies of the human body could have only been fashioned by Me; the capabilities of the human body are unfathomable. Although modern man tries to emulate My work of art in creating a living and thinking being, they fall so very short, and there are countless defects that render their creations faulty.

90. Each of you has been fashioned and formed by My Own two hands, has received the breath of life from My mouth, and is created perfect in My sight. You seek to know why, then, so many afflictions and so many physical ailments befall you, and befall those about you. These too are given or allowed by My hand, as a chastisement to some and a reward to others. For some it is the only way to get them to look to Me and spend time with Me. For others it is a physical manifestation of the spiritual or emotional, that something is out of alignment, that proper care is not being bestowed on their temple.

91. For you it is not a punishment, nor because you've left the straight and narrow and I'm trying to call you back; but it is My love for you, My gift of love to cause you to desperately cry out to Me, to see that you're nothing in yourself and you need Me, your other half, your whole, to survive. I have asked more of some, because I know they can do more than merely survive these testings that I bring their way—they can thrive from them, they can flourish and

grow. Troubles and difficulties are the fertilizer that you need to spring up and mature quickly and become ripe and ready for Me to harvest and use.

92. I need for you to remain especially close to Me, to spend more time with Me than with anyone else, hearing My Words, sitting at My feet, feasting upon My love, drinking in the whispers of My voice. And so I have called you to set aside these times when you are suffering, alone in your room, to cause you to cry out to Me and seek Me for your daily strength, for you now know you cannot make it without Me.

93. I also ask you to pray for My children during your times of loneliness, when you can't work, can't eat, can't get anything done in the way of accomplishments. To be a prayer warrior is a very important mission, and one which I call you to during these days.

94. Praise Me for these times that you can spend with Me, just you and Me together. Thank Me for them, because these times are what keep you close to Me. You'll look back on these precious times nestled in My arms with great fondness and thankfulness for all that you learned, and the comfort that you received, the training I gave you in the quiet of your bed through My communing with you, the accomplishments of your prayers, and the weakness you found in yourself which was overshadowed by the strength you found in Me. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

The Lord Needs Your Love!

(The following was received by someone who hurt their eye in a little accident in the course of their daily duties. Thankfully, there was no permanent damage done, but it was very sore for a few days.)

95. (Jesus speaking:) Yes, I allowed this to happen to you. It was no accident in that sense of the word. I wanted to get your attention, to draw your attention to some things in your life.

96. Honey, I want you at My feet drinking in My seeds and My love. I want you desiring My attention. I know you say how much you need Me and how you can't make a move with-

out Me, that you need Me so desperately, and I'm so very thankful for that. But I want to drive the point home that this is true and I don't want you to make a move without Me. I don't want just lip service, I want action. I want to see your eyes and your heart turned up to Me, yearning for Me and My touch of love.

97. You've been allowing too many things to come between you and Me lately. I feel more like a convenience in your life than a Lover. You come to Me when you need direction and counsel, you try to ask before you do things, but these are like a service without love. I know you have a great love for Me, but I haven't felt it so much lately; all I feel is your desperation for answers or guidance, but not for My overflowing love to come upon you.

98. I poked you in the eye to wake you up to what you're doing to us. You're going too fast and not taking love-up time with Me. I need your love most of all. I'm glad you're seeking Me more in prophecy and trying to ask Me before you do anything, but what is all of that without your love for Me? It's a works religion, not a love religion. You're fulfilling the letter of the law. I want your love, Sweetheart. I want to hear those love words to Me again. I want to hear how you hunger for My touch, how you love My arms around you.

99. I don't want to cause you pain and I'm so sorry you're suffering. But as with a child, I sometimes need to give you a spanking to wake you up, and so I have. I want you to spend time with Me in the bed of love, not just in the duties. I want a love relationship with you, not a job relationship.

100. I so love you and so long for you. My heart beats fast when I think you're going to come to Me in the bed of love and love Me passionately, but then I'm disappointed when you only stay with Me for such a short time.

101. Right now, Honey, I need your love, just you. I will heal your eye as you come to Me. I love you, My darling bride, and long for you as a bridegroom longs for his bride. Please don't disappoint Me. Please come to Me. I'm begging. Please come so we can get full of each other.

Let's dwell in the bed of love till we are full. I love you, My precious bride. Hurry into My arms for a love feast. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Love Links

(Someone received this prophecy when they experienced some strong pains in their heart. This pain has recurred from time to time. As the message says, it's the Lord's love gift to them, and He always uses it to pull them back to His side when they start to stray.)

102. (Jesus speaking:) My heart belongs to you, and when you get distant from it, it begins to hurt and cause Me pain. So I've given you this thorn, this blessing that keeps you close on the end of My key chain. You're like a special gift to Me, and I guard it and keep it. When you start getting too far away, I just give a little tug on the key chain connecting us and your heart quickly returns to Me.

103. Do you realize what a blessing this is, what a blessing it can be? For this is the golden cord of My love. This is My precious love chain that keeps us close together in love. I love you so much that when you start to pull away, it hurts Me so, and so I have given you this feeling of My heart, My touch of love, letting you know just how much I love you and care for you.

104. It's not a punishment, but a blessing—a gift of love from Me, a way to know that I'm calling you and asking you to come and be close to Me. It is as a beautiful ring with a diamond-studded chain that is connected to My heart, a hot-link with Me and with My love. Whenever you feel My little tug on your ring, you know that you're getting too far away and that it's starting to pain Me. When you feel that tug, come running back to Me and shorten the cord, and I'll feel better again.

105. I love you so much that even the thought of losing you is more than I can bear, so I've installed My special love chain, My special love gift to you from Me. Do you like it? Will you be thankful for it and not murmur? If I gave you a special gift and all you did was murmur and com-

plain about it, what would I feel like? Or if you gave Me a special gift and all I did was seek out the impurities and weaknesses, how would you feel? So it is with Me.

106. In My great love I've given you this gift. In My great caring for you I've given you this blessed present, a special attachment of My love, a love link, just between you and Me. How about that? A love link! I love you. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Honeymoon of Affliction

107. (Jesus speaking:) My precious sweetheart, you are My love! Our love affair is strong and deep, which began in the honeymoon of affliction where I taught you how to make love with Me, where your heart learned to put Me first, where I taught your ears to hear My voice and I trained your eyes to look up. In the passion of our lovemaking, the seed of faith was planted and conceived, watered by My love, so that out of your weakness has sprung forth strength.

108. The lame shall take the prey. I have laid you down in the bed of affliction that I might raise you up in My time. I set you apart that you might learn of Me. You had no friends, that I might become your Best Friend. I took away the earthly desires so that I could give you heavenly burdens.

109. Oh, how I wish that all My brides would give themselves to such passion, putting Me first, loving Me most, in such intimate lovemaking with Me, to give them the faith, the victory, the dedication, the conviction, the boldness, the courage, and the love that comes through having such an affair with Me!

110. My beautiful bride whom I adore, because you adore Me!—Continue to be open to Me, and I will reveal to you those things you have asked for in secret. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Gentle Love Pats

111. (Jesus speaking:) This is a light affliction which works in you a far greater reward. I am once again reminding you of your

weakness, of your need for Me, of your need to depend on Me. You are one with much determination, much strength of will, much ability to press forward. But with these strengths is also the weakness of the tendency to lean to the arm of the flesh and to push too hard beyond your strength and capabilities, so that you no longer depend on Me but on yourself.

112. So I give you these afflictions of the flesh to weaken you, to slow you down, to cause you to be more prayerful, to cause you to reflect more. In your weakness, you look to Me more, and thus I am able to speak to you and direct you and lead and guide you in the way that you should go.

113. Don't fear that you've displeased Me or that you've gotten outside of the protection of My will, but know that this is My intolerable compliment, as I keep you weak and small in your own eyes and tender before Me, constantly knowing that without Me, you can do nothing.

114. I would be able to deliver you from these afflictions of the flesh, and I would be able to bless you with more strength and freedom from this pain and from this annoyance and from this weakness of the flesh if you were more faithful when you were strong to take time with Me, so that I could speak to you. If you were faithful in your strength and your health to take time with Me and hear from Me and rest in Me, then I would not have to afflict you with these light afflictions to keep you constantly weak and to constantly remind you of your need for Me.

115. Look to Me. Rest in Me. Hear from Me daily. Put that as your priority. When I know that you'll take time for Me even when you're healthy and strong, then I'll be able to deliver you from these weaknesses and these afflictions, and I'll be able to bless you with greater strength and greater freedom from pain.

116. Every day, before you do anything else, take time with Me. Rest in My arms and hear My Words and let Me speak to your heart about your priorities, lead and guide you, remind you, instruct you, and speak to you with My still, small voice. Take time each day to be My channel. Take time each day to hear My Words, to

love Me, to rest in Me. Make this your priority. And when this has become a part of your nature, when I know that you will no longer neglect it, when I know that you will be faithful to do so even when you're strong, then I will deliver you from these thorns in the flesh and this weakness of the flesh.

117. But for now, I must keep you ever close to Me, so I must remove from you some of the strength of your flesh. But this is only for a time, and it depends upon you and your willingness to put Me first and put taking time with Me first.

118. You are prayerful in your labors, and you are hungry in the spirit, but all of this is part of your service for the Kingdom. You are faithful and diligent and conscientious, and I am well pleased. But you must constantly remember that before being a servant in the Kingdom, you are My bride and My lover. I must always have first place in your heart before your work, before other relationships, before the needs of the flesh. Before all else, I must come first.

119. So take your choice. If you choose to take that time with Me each day, first and foremost before anything else, then I will be able to deliver you and bless you and strengthen you with strength that you know not of. But you can't be driven by your strength of determination, by your willpower, by your enthusiasm, by your desire to see the job done. You must be carried along by My Spirit and My strength. I've given you gifts and strengths of the flesh, but they must always take second place to the strength of the Spirit.

120. Put Me first in all that you do. Drink deeply of the wells of My water. Let Me refresh your spirit every day, without fail. Rest in My arms every day, without fail. Let Me speak to your heart and establish your thoughts every day, without fail. In doing so, I will not fail to give you all that you need.

121. Don't be disheartened by these many reminders. Don't become discouraged that I tell you again and again of your need for Me, for these are just little love pats that keep you on the straight and narrow, lest you stray. I want

to keep you walking down the perfect center of My will where I can continue to use you and lavish upon you blessing after blessing—showers of blessings as long as you stay in the center of My will. Don't be weary of these love pats that keep you walking straight ahead, straight down the narrow path of My perfect will. This is My way of strengthening you and fashioning you and molding you, to make of you the vessel that I so desire.

122. This is not a chastisement or a rebuke.

These are just My gentle love pats, My light afflictions and My words of instruction so that you may grow thereby. I am well pleased in your love and in your labors. It's just that you're so dear to Me that I want more of you—more of your time, more of your thoughts, more of your undivided attention. I have in My hands deliverance and strength and renewal. But first come to Me and drink deeply of My waters and My Spirit every day without fail, putting Me first. Then everything else will fall into place, for it will be a work of My Spirit.

123. You're My lover and My bride, and I only want the best for you. These light afflictions are tokens of My love, disguised if you will, but My love nonetheless. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

The Weaknesses of the Flesh
Keep You Strong in Spirit

124. (Mama:) The Lord gave this for me during one of the many times when I was constantly feeling on the verge of a serious cold, and I asked Him why that was, or if there was anything I could do to prevent it.

125. (Jesus speaking:) These weaknesses of your flesh help to keep you strong in My Spirit. These light afflictions help you to cling to Me, because you're constantly having to seek Me and pray for My strength to keep going. These afflictions help to keep you bathed in prayer as you constantly beseech your loved ones to pray for you. This surrounds you with a force field of protection and gives you spiritual strength and power.

126. If you didn't have these light afflictions, constantly having the initial symptoms of a bad cold, then your loved ones wouldn't be so compelled to pray fervently for your strength and resistance, for your protection and health. I take their prayers and translate them into the things that you need—not only for physical health, but also for spiritual wisdom, discernment, understanding, and the leading of My Spirit.

127. I delight to keep you close to Me, My love. Your light afflictions keep you constantly coming to Me and help you remain firmly connected to Me. It keeps you and your helpers seeking Me, running to Me for the strength and anointing of My Spirit that you need. I'm sorry that it's difficult in the flesh to endure, but know that it's accomplishing a very worthwhile work in the spirit. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

The Road of Affliction

128. (Jesus speaking:) You are afflicted to keep you close and to keep you seeking, for you've asked to remain close to Me. You've pledged to do all that I've called you to do, and you seek to walk hand-in-hand with Me. You desire that closeness with Me in spirit. But there is a price to pay, for the Enemy seeks to have you drift or falter, and his attacks on you drive you to Me.

129. Do you feel it's worth it? It's not an easy road. It's a road of hardship and of difficulty, but it's the road of My will. It's a road of communion with Me. It's a road of dedication. It's a road of My anointing. If you will choose this road and follow it, I will bless you and honor you, and I will love you through your sufferings and through your afflictions, through your difficulties in flesh and in spirit.

130. I know your heart. I know that you choose this road out of your love for Me. I will carry you through the hard times and help you through the rough spots. Let Me carry you, and have faith, for I will strengthen you. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

A Time to Be Alone with the Lord

131. (*Jesus speaking:*) Think of this as a good time when you can rest not only your body but your spirit in My arms. When your body is tired and sick, you can't use it to work or move around very much; you have to give it the rest it needs. This is My way of also giving you time alone with Me—time to pray and listen to My Spirit, time to think and meditate and talk to Me, to reflect and commune with Me. Even though your body isn't feeling well, your spirit can spend more time with Me in the bed of love.

132. You work so hard, My love. You're constantly busy with My work, serving Me, ministering, researching, and spending long hours at your ministry. All of this takes a toll on your body and spirit, and there comes a time when you must rest.

133. This is a sweet touch of My love for you—a time when you can set your work aside, your deadlines and the business of the day, and leave it all behind. It will be there waiting for you as soon as you're better. No one is going to steal your crown of service, for it is your crown which I have given to you, and it's waiting for you to pick up again as soon as you're strengthened and have recuperated. I've chosen this time for you to be sick, to lie back on your bed, so that you could also lie back and rest in the spirit and take the time your spirit needs to commune with Me.

134. You must not worry about the work, for if you worry about it, it will not help you to get better as quickly. You must trust Me that I will help you to do your work even better, even more quickly and prayerfully and with the anointing of My Spirit, if you take this time now to rest and trust and depend on Me.

135. I know your heart's desire is to be able to do your work and meet your deadlines, but I want you in My bed of love right now. I want you to cuddle up in the arms of My Spirit and lie with Me. I appreciate your service, and I want you to continue to serve Me, and I will raise you up again to serve Me. But I know what's best for you, and right now time in My arms is even more important than your service.

136. Even in this discouragement you're being blessed and strengthened as you draw close to Me and let Me uphold you and sustain you. The Enemy would like to keep you discouraged and tell you that you're really out of it or have done something very bad. He'd like you to believe that you're failing or that I am judging you for your sins and shortcomings, that this results from My anger toward you rather than My love for you. He tries to tell all My children the same lies whenever they fight afflictions. But you must not listen to his doubts and fears; you must simply look up to Me and let Me fill you with My whispers, My encouragement, and let Me hold you close and comfort you.

137. This is not a time of punishment, failure, or defeat, but rather it's a sweet time of communing with Me. A time when your physical body is too weak to do anything but rest on My strength. A time when you must show Me how much you trust in My perfect will by lying back and letting Me take full control of the day and the events, of your work and deadlines. A time when you must simply trust My Spirit to heal you, and a time when you must look to Me for the grace and strength that you need.

138. Isn't it a blessing and a wonderful thing to have this special time of sickness when you can draw even closer to Me and listen to My whispers? Know that as you do this, I will strengthen you, I will help you, and I will speak to you, so that when you get up from your bed you will find new strength and a new peace of heart and mind. Make wise use of this time of rest, for your work awaits you, and many things await you.

139. Invest your time wisely now as you rest in My arms. Use this time to talk to Me, to listen to Me, and to draw new strength of spirit, answers, and a renewing of My Spirit for the days ahead. My Spirit and My anointing are powerful, and I am able to fill your tired and weak body and spirit with even more strength than you had before. (*End of message from Jesus.*)