

"Seeking Strength" - by Lorelei Pepe

That was the last "straw" as they say. I just went through another Hurricane, named Irma, in Miami, Florida. I had enough of them and although this was not as destructive as others, I was tired, weak and felt so defeated. I didn't think I even had the strength to clean up the mess. It took down my back wooden fence and the wind and rain nearly blew my back door off the screened in porch and tore holes in the screens. The muddy waters had risen up to my sliding glass doors and started to seep into my living room too.

I was happy I survived unscathed but the anxiety of going through it for hours still terrified me. We would lose power and have to use flashlights and candles. In the Miami heat, it was stifling! And then there was always the fear of tornadoes! My house was old and needed work in the kitchen and a new a/c unit. Way beyond my budget, so I just sat down in the big old easy chair and talked to God. I was sad and needed his guidance. Should I move? I needed the courage and strength to forge ahead. After many prayers, I decided even though this was a huge undertaking, I put the house up for sale "as is" . I knew in my heart it was time to leave, but God gave me confirmation as it sold within 3 months, an amazing short time on the market. So I began a new life somewhere else in another place.

Another man in the Bible, called Ezra, needed strength, and solace from God too. His mission was to teach the pagan people about God's ways. He was directed to return to Babylon where they were exiled for many years and rebuild the temple and start a new life. He worked with another man Nehemiah, who helped with administrative duties, but he had the task of convincing the people to turn from their pagan ways, repent and worship one true God. They faced many obstacles in rebuilding also due to lack of money and manpower. As his faith became stronger under the guidance of God, he was able to accomplish his goals. When he was weak and struggled, God was his source of strength and he realized he was never alone.

In the end, God saved Ezra and his people. He brought them to victory and the temple became a reality and many had turned from their false worship of idols. God can give us all the strength and fortitude to carry on, if we have faith, trust and believe and let him. If only we let him!!