



GIVE US THIS DAY

Flooded with Blessings

by Debi Nelson

I loved my home! This

was the home of new beginnings and where my grandchildren first came to play. This was the home where we had family meals celebrating life and love. This home was almost paid off, and I planned to live there forever. Life, including my financial future, felt very secure in this home.

It was an unusually wet spring when the Minot, N.D., city government called for a mandatory evacuation of more than 5,000 houses due to an impending flood. My house was one of them.

Sitting dumbfounded in my office after hearing the announcement, I felt frightened, having no place to live after the evacuation. Housing (including hotels) was scarce and expensive. Amazingly, God provided a place to call “home” with a couple we didn’t know very well. A couple of co-workers helped us pack and store things.

I prayed the damage to our house would be minimal, as it was to be paid off in three months. After several weeks, the water receded and we were allowed to go back. It was a total loss. A clean-up company gutted the house down to the studs saving us at least a month of work.

With the smell of mold, rotted vegetation, and devastation everywhere, we would escape on weekends 90 miles north to the Turtle Mountains. There, we could breathe fresh air and ponder what to do with our flooded house. We learned we would only receive \$30,000 from FEMA. This was a dark time for me. Our savings and retirement annui-

ties were diminishing. I became fearful of spending any money. After many conversations long into the night with my spouse, I realized my insistence on keeping the house was because my security was tied to memories and equity in the house I loved. I heard God clearly reassure me that I was still secure and the house should be sold. I refused to listen for many days.

Finally, after much prayer, I very reluctantly agreed to sell the shell of a house for 20 percent of the pre-flood value. Signing the papers was a blur and I cried through the whole process.

Amazingly, my burden felt lighter because I knew I was following God’s direction. I had no idea how blessed I would be with not one, but two homes.

On our trips north, we found a wooded lake lot for sale. We had always wanted a cabin but never had the time or money to get serious about this dream. Our offer of several thousand less than the asking price was accepted. We hired a builder; his estimate came out much lower than we thought. Now, we had a place to call ours again! After a year, we also found very affordable housing in Minot.

As I reflect on the 2011 flood, I see many blessings that came from it. I learned true security comes from God—not a house. I also learned that a home is wherever family is. 🌿

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