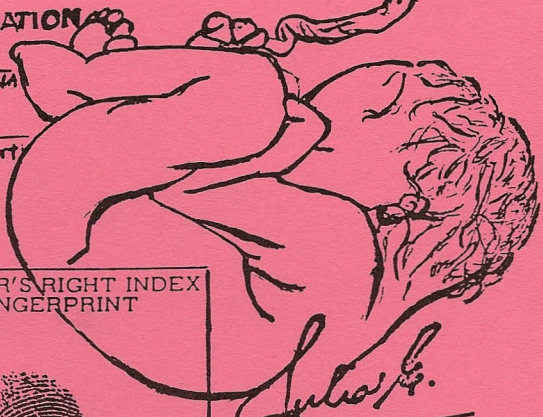




# Sorrow

## NEWBORN IDENTIFICATION



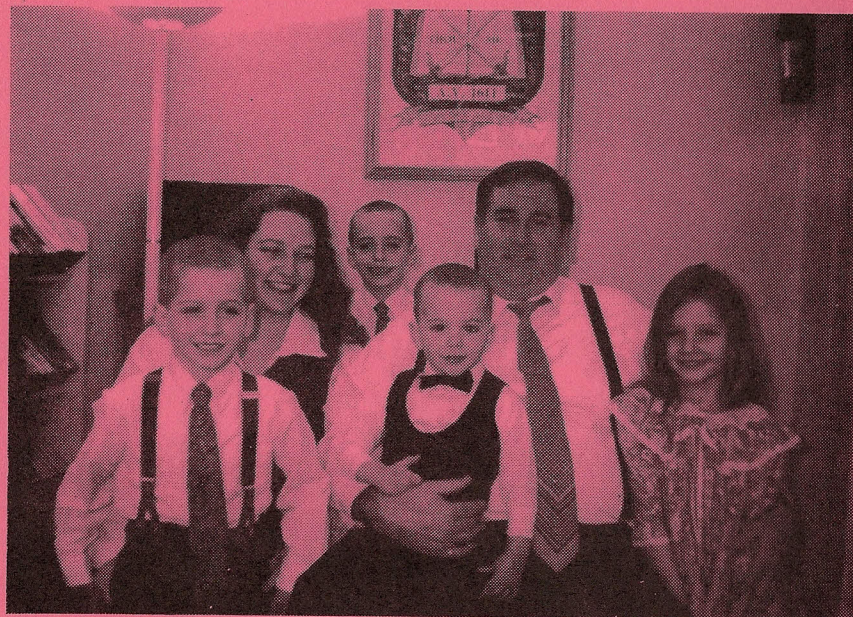
MOTHER - Name <i>Leib Terry</i>		INFANT - NAME <i>Amos</i>	
Signature, Person Taking Prints		Infant's Birth	
		Color of	
INFANT'S LEFT FOOTPRINT (or palmprint)		MOTHER'S RIGHT INDEX FINGERPRINT	
			
		STATE REGISTRAR OF STATE OF MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE CERTIFICATE OF FETAL DEATH	
FETUS - NAME		DATE OF DELIVERY	
1. <i>JONATHAN</i> FIRST		2. <i>6</i>	
SEX OF FETUS		3. <i>BALTIMORE</i>	
3. <i>MALE</i>		4. <i>1ST</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>2ND</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>3RD</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	
CITY OR TOWN OF DELIVERY		5a. <i>AMOS</i> MIDDLE	
5b. <i>TOWSON</i>		6. <i>LEIB</i> LAST	
FATHER'S NAME		7. <i>GREATER BALTIMORE</i> HOSPITAL NAME (IF NOT IN HOSPITAL GIVE)	
6a. <i>ROBERT</i>		5c. <i>LAST</i>	
MOTHER'S FULL MAIDEN NAME			
7a. <i>TERRY</i>			
USUAL RESIDENCE			

by Mrs. Terry Leib

This chronicle describes the often neglected and misunderstood grief associated with pregnancy loss. As a source of encouragement and information, Terry Leib gives hope to women in sorrow and insight to their friends and loved ones.



# Sorrow





MERCY HOPE MINISTRIES  
Bob and Terry Leib



Mrs. Terry Leib  
770 Old Lincoln Hwy.  
Stoystown, PA 15563

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Signature, Person Taking Prints		Infant's Birth	
INFANT'S LEFT FOOTPRINT (or palmprint)		MOTHER'S RIGHT INDEX FINGERPRINT	
			
FETUS-NAME FIRST JONATHAN		MIDDLE AMOS	
SEX OF FETUS 3. MALE		THIS DELIVERY 4a. SINGLE <input type="checkbox"/> TWIN <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRIPLET <input type="checkbox"/>	
CITY OR TOWN OF DELIVERY 5b. TOWSON		IF TWIN OR TRIPLET 4b. 1ST <input type="checkbox"/> 2ND <input type="checkbox"/> 3RD <input type="checkbox"/>	
FATHER'S NAME 6a. ROBERT		DATE OF DELIVERY 2a. 6	
MOTHER'S FULL MAIDEN NAME 7a. TERRY		CITY OR TOWN OF DELIVERY 5a. BALTIMOR	
USUAL RESIDENCE		HOSPITAL NAME (IF NOT IN HOSPITAL, GIVE 6b. GREATER BALTIMORE	

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## Foreword

This booklet is autobiographical in nature and content, and is not intended to be a “how to book” or “step-by-step guide” to mourning the loss of your child. For your edification I have included lists of suggestions. These are found at the end of this booklet.

What I have attempted to do is convey the devastation people feel when they lose a baby, specifically through miscarriage, ‘prenatal death’ or stillbirth. (I also believe that those who have lost newborns, or young infants, share similar feelings.)

Most people do not realize that this type of loss is fairly common. My doctor once told us that only about 50% of all pregnancies go to term, ending with a live birth. We know many people who have friends or loved ones who have lost 7, 4, 5, 2... We have lost 7. A very dear friend of mine, (They have 9 living children so far, and hope for more) knows a lady who has 4 living children, but has lost 12 babies. (She is not yet 35.)

Only the Lord knows why some people “keep on trying” despite the losses and heartbreak, and others opt for permanent sterilization. Having lost more babies than someone else certainly does not make one more spiritual.

Since it is so “commonplace” one would think that there must be lots of books about it. Unfortunately, we have found very little on the subject, even in Christian bookstores. Books about pregnancy and childbirth often mention it only in passing. Thus the need for this booklet, expressing the emotional and often spiritual devastation that can follow the loss of a baby. **Without being graphic**, I have detailed some of our experiences.

Whether you lost your baby years ago, or just recently: whether it was the first, second, third,... it is my prayer that this booklet will edify and comfort you.

Some of you have not, and may never lose a baby, but you might know someone who has. In all likelihood, someday, someone you know will lose a baby. I hope that in reading our story you will gain insight and wisdom as to the best way you can comfort "the sorrowing".



## Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION .....	ix
SORROW .....	11
TO THE SORROWING (A Suggestion List) .....	23
TO COMFORT THE SORROWING (A Suggestion List) ..	25
COMFORTING PSALMS .....	26
JONATHAN AMOS, A poem by Terry Leib, June 1990 .....	28
SCRIPTURE REFERENCES .....	29



## Introduction

“Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.”<sup>1</sup> “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;”<sup>2</sup> “...For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.”<sup>3</sup> “Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.”<sup>4</sup>

This is about a very real, very personal, and very painful sorrow. It is my hope, that in writing this, and sharing part of our lives, others may take comfort in knowing that they are not the only ones to go through this, that they are not alone, and that in time the hurt gets easier to bear. There are many who have had similar experiences, or know someone who has. Most are reluctant to talk about it, because it is just too painful, or they are afraid people will not understand. The grief is real. So are the feelings of anger, guilt and disappointment.

As I attempt to do all these things, please bear in mind that this is “our story”, and in sharing it with you, I am reliving it. I am opening up our lives, our feelings and my heart. My desire is to comfort, encourage, and inform.

Perhaps you have never lost a baby, and experienced the emptiness, and grief. Won't you please read this? In doing so, you may learn how you can be a blessing to someone who has. Rom. 12:15 says, “Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.” Also, praise God for the mercy He has bestowed upon you, and those you love.



# Sorrow

“Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children: and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.”<sup>6</sup> Most of us would agree that this verse says bringing children into the world is going to be painful, and that wives are to be subject to their husbands.” Wouldn’t you also agree with me when I say that they are important? But we have skipped over the first part of God’s judgement on the woman, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception;...” It wasn’t until I was recovering from my 4<sup>th</sup> miscarriage, (making a total of 7 babies “born out of due time”), that I noticed the semicolon. The Holy Spirit opened my eyes, and for the first time I saw, that sorrow **with** my conception: my miscarriages, and prenatal deaths (even infertility & birth defects) are a result of sin. Not my personal sin, but it is part of God’s judgement on man. If man had not fallen, we would not have to die. There would be no death, or sorrow. But, “As in Adam all die...”<sup>7</sup>, It had finally become clear to me, that I hadn’t done anything to cause my baby’s death.

As I began to **really** think about it, many things came to mind. Jesus was acquainted with grief”.<sup>8</sup> He mourned. “O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem...”<sup>9</sup> He wept for Lazarus.<sup>10</sup> His sorrow in the Garden of Gethsemane,<sup>11</sup> and on Calvary’s cross, (when even His father had forsaken him);<sup>12</sup> no mere man would have been able to bear the heartbreak.

I wonder if God grieved that He had to send his only Son to earth to be born to die for the soul’s of men? As Michael carried the news to Mary that she had been chosen to carry, birth, and raise God’s ONLY begotten Son, did His heart ache? When Mary and Joseph rejoiced, at the sound of Jesus’ first cry, did God’s heart break? How the Father must have agonized as He saw His son suffering, shedding His sinless blood to make full atonement for a world unable to save itself! All this God allowed, because He is not willing that any should perish. (God has been merciful and we have not had to watch



any of our little ones suffer. We have peace knowing they are with the Lord.)

Nevertheless, few things hurt as badly as the death of a child. Born or “pre-born”, young or old, the circumstances matter very little, the grief is the same. I believe miscarriages, prenatal deaths and stillbirths are so difficult to bear because all the hopes, dreams, and plans you had will never be fulfilled. What you are left with: is a great emptiness: few or no memories: sorrow, and at times, anger, guilt, and disbelief. The grief is real. You mourn for what could have been. You have lost someone you loved dearly, and you must allow yourself to cry. Sadly, people, often even Christians, feel that you should “just get over it, and go on with your life”. To some degree they are right, but this is not the time to admonish, but to comfort. Everyone mourns in a different way, especially when it involves the loss of a child. Some people offer “comfort” in “strange ways”, telling you, “You can always have another”. Meanwhile you’re wondering, “Don’t they realize what happened? I just lost my baby! Not some ‘thing’. I can’t just run out to the store and get another one!” With tears in your eyes, you manage to smile. Their intentions were good. But you can’t help but wonder, “would they feel that way if it were **their** child?”

For us, the first loss was the most devastating, and totally unexpected. Since my first 2 pregnancies ended joyously, we expected to have our 4th child, live and healthy. God had already given us 3 children, (a single, and a double, having them helped me go on). Trouble began during my 3<sup>rd</sup> pregnancy. I was very sick, and lost a lot of weight. I was diagnosed as having hyperthyroidism, which required weekly doctor visits. At about 19 weeks the “all-day sickness” had finally ended, and I felt good. I had even gained a few pounds, and felt a few light kicks now and then. At 20 weeks, the Dr. commented that my uterus was not as big as it should be, but, since all my babies had been large (9lbs. 20z.; 6lbs. 6oz.; 6lbs. 9oz.), he was unconcerned. It was a routine “belly-check”: weight, B/P, urine and heartbeat. After several attempts at trying, no heartbeat could be found. Fear gripped my heart. Praying did not seem to help. I was sent for an ultrasound to make a final determination. When the sonographer did not point out our

baby's heart, spine, head, hands... as all the other sonographers had routinely done, we knew our little one had passed away.

Arrangements were made for induction of labour. A "sitter" for our 3 little ones (David-2 1/2 yrs., Joshua and Charity 10 mos.), was found and the sad news was given to our family and friends. One nurse had a "fetal demise" too. She recommended that we get a lock of hair and footprints, take pictures, and do anything else we could to make it easier. At that point I was not even sure I wanted to know our baby's sex, or look at "it", and she's saying "take pictures"!

My doctors were wonderful, caring, kind men. We felt that they were grieving for us, and our loss. We were given a private birthing room. I remember hearing the "pounding" of the fetal monitor next door, and wishing mine was not silent. Induction began with prostaglandin which made me very sick, with a fever, chills, diarrhea. The pain medication let me sleep through most of the labour which was a blessing.

We were grief-stricken.

As I slept and we waited for our baby to come, Bob grieved, cried, and prayed with a Pastor whom we had never met before. (We didn't have a local Pastor .) We did not have money for a cemetery plot, so a family in his church (we don't know who they are), payed for one for our baby.

When the birth was imminent, Bob was called, and arrived in the room just moments after our son was born. It was a very easy delivery. Somewhere in our minds, I think we really wanted to see some obvious deformity, then everyone, including us, would have agreed "it was for the best". But Jonathan Amos Leib was perfect, and beautiful. Sad does not seem to be an adequate word to describe it, and yet, it is the only word to describe it. We felt a life had been wasted because this child did not live. We held him, loved him and kissed him. Bob took pictures of us, (mother and son) and of him. The pictures and footprints are all we have and I am so thankful for them.

The grave site the Lord provided for Jonathan is in a beautiful cemetery, in a section called GARDEN OF INNOCENTS. There is a small duck pond nearby, flowers and trees.



Many little babies are buried there, and this was a great comfort to me. I felt like” at least he’s not alone”. Being able to bury our son was good, and helped finalize what had taken place. We took our 3 living children with us, and they each placed a favorite toy in the grave with their brother. (Oh! How I longed to see and hold him just one last time! In heaven I can hold him for a thousand years.) Another miraculous provision from the Lord was when someone at the cemetery gave us a headstone. Even though it was almost 5 years ago, to the day, (Today is June 4, 1995), the pain, and emptiness are still very real, but time has made it easier to bear..

We claimed Job 1:21b, ...the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord.” and went on with our lives. These proved to be easy words to say, but hard to live by. (A lot of times just seeing a baby hurt!) God is so good, and only by His Grace were we able to go on. Only through the comfort of the Holy Spirit and His Word were we able to trust Him as we waited for another baby. It was about this time that we decided to let the Lord plan our family. He was “in charge” anyway. Our previous attempts at birth control gave us 3 “surprise” blessings. (David, Joshua, & Charity).

Two months later, I was expecting again. Oh! the joy, and the fear that seemed to overwhelm me. Knowing fear is not of the Lord did not take it away.<sup>13</sup> When my fears were realized and I lost our baby (whom I call Precious), at 10 weeks, guilt reared its ugly head. I truly believed that somehow my fear, and lack of faith, had caused me to lose our baby. Somehow, we/I managed to go on, leaning on His breast for comfort. Pleading for “another chance”.

The news, “Honey, I’m pregnant!”, now receives a nod of the head, and a mumbled “Let’s see what happens”. For us, pregnancy has become the equivalent of “walking on eggshells”. We wait until my pregnancy “announces itself”, and pray, and hope for the best. My Bible reading has become a time of searching for promises to claim. Promises that I can quote back to God, as I plead for the life of my baby to be spared the “sting of death”, and for us to be spared the agony of “empty arms”.

(Though we have 3 living children, we still long for those we never heard cry, or listened to them sleep. No memories of stubbed toes on the way to get the baby for his 3rd. nighttime feeding. Only a void that no other child, not even another baby, can fill.)

As we passed the 10 wk. "danger point": things seemed to be going along fine. Surely the Lord would give us this one. He had already taken 2 others to be with him. Sadly, at 15 weeks, I lost our 6th child. Ben was born in the emergency room, and HE was perfect.

Even as I laid in the hospital knowing that I had lost this baby too, I can remember trying to calculate how soon I could try to become pregnant, and how soon we would have another baby. Meanwhile, through it all. Bob keeps on telling me, "If it's too much on you, we'll stop." The idea of "giving up" sounds logical. But, the joys of mothering a new baby are worth "trying again.", and risking the possibility of another loss.

All the autopsies, genetic screening and counseling, blood tests, even a chromosome study were inconclusive. No abnormalities were found. Having had 3 healthy children confuses the doctors. It makes no sense to us. But,... "we know that all things work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose". God makes no mistakes.

Beginning the 6th pregnancy, all is well. We gradually, and happily pass all previous "danger points" 10, 15, 20 weeks. All is well.? Once again, this time at 24 weeks, there is no heartbeat, and the ultrasound confirms that our 7<sup>th</sup> child is with the Lord. My emotions this time are very different. I will not accept it! A rage like I never felt before enters my heart. "How could He? How could God do this to me again?" Then denial, as I hope for a miracle. I try to will my baby back to life, praying for God to do a miracle. He does not. My prayers are futile.

So, we begin the process of induction, and labour will not start. It is long and tiring, and non-progressive. (I now believe it went slowly, so that I had lots of time to get things



right with the Lord, and to draw close to Him, and His strength.) Finally, on the third day the dosage of pitocin and prostaglandin are increased. They also give me medication for pain, fever, and diarrhea. Then we wait. Within several hours labor is well established and at 5:46 PM, Melinda Sue was born. She was a beautiful baby, all 13oz. of her. There was no “new born cry”. No rush to clean and weigh her, or to rush her off to the nursery. For her, it is too late. Everyone is silent, and it is deafening. I had my heart set on having another girl, which made her death harder for me. That, and the fact that we had made it so far along without any complications. As I held her, I counted her fingers and toes, examined her for imperfections, and looked for the family resemblance. Then, Bob held his second daughter for the first and last time. We tried to squeeze a lifetime of love into a few moments of time. We told her how much we loved her, and had wanted her, and that we would always miss her. We told her about her brothers and sister, and how much they loved her. And how sorry we were that we would not get to know her. As I held her and kissed her, the knowledge that this is the first and last time we would see her this side of heaven began to sink in, and I didn’t want to let her go. You wish that it is just a bad dream, and you’ll wake up at home in your own bed with your big round belly, and your little baby kicking “Good morning, Mommy! I’m still here. I’m O.K..” Reality check, the nurse comes in to take her, and you say your final earthly good-bye.

I mourned and cried for days as each month passed and I did not conceive. I wondered, “Since ‘the fruit of the womb is his reward’<sup>15</sup> What sin have I done that God would judge me this way?”. When pregnancy did not take place, I was angry with my husband for “not doing his job”. Then, I would give him the old “I’ve got a headache routine” when he wanted to get close, for fear of becoming pregnant. Doubting my abilities as a wife and mother had become a way of life. Whenever things went wrong, it was my fault because I was a such a lousy mom, (What other possible reason could there be!).

It was a very low point for me spiritually. I began reading books on prayer, getting your prayers answered, that sort of thing. Many evenings I spent crying, begging God for an-

other living child, asking forgiveness for whatever sin I did that made God take my unborn babies from us, and mourning the daughter I would never know.

Gradually, the Lord comforted me. The Psalms have been my greatest comfort. It seems that whatever my need, it is filled there. So many times I was unable to pray for lack of knowing how or what to pray. At these times I was reminded that the Holy Spirit “maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered”<sup>16</sup> what a comfort that has been.

After about 6 months, the longest interval between pregnancies, I was finally pregnant. This was a difficult pregnancy in a spiritual sense. Each day, hour, and at times, minutes, were battles. Battles against fear. I continuously struggled to keep my hopes up and trust the Lord. “What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.”<sup>17</sup> As we gradually passed all 4 “danger points”, my confidence grew, as did my fear of the past repeating itself. Each doctors visit was nerve-wracking as I waited for my turn. It was not until we heard a strong, steady heartbeat, that my fears would be abated. If I had been especially busy and hadn’t noticed the baby moving, I’d sit down and “prod” “him” till I got kicked enough to calm my fears. At no time did I really believe 100% that we would have a live, healthy child. I remember telling my husband that we were due for an “ugly duckling/terror”.

When labour began 4 days before I was due, I had mixed emotions. I did not want to get too excited. This was my longest labour, nearly 24 hours. After laboring so long, and with almost no progress, (they put me in bed), I was given something to help me sleep. Bob watched the monitor, and saw the contractions had eased some, so I sent him to get something to eat. We had planned on having a natural, normal delivery, and as I started to drift to sleep. I overheard the doctor say they didn’t want to rush to do a repeat c-section (I had one with the twins). As I heard all this. I realized that all I really cared about was having a live baby, so I prayed and told the Lord whatever way the baby had to be born, even another c-section, I didn’t care. I had barely finished my prayer and everything changed. In just a few seconds my contractions got longer but not harder, and suddenly my water broke. I’m



screaming, "Get my husband! Get my husband! The baby's coming! I have to push! As they scrambled to wheel me into the delivery room they are telling me, "Don't push! You can't deliver your baby on this dirty bed". And I'm thinking, "It's my bed, and this is my baby, who cares". All along I'm still calling for Bob. Finally we're in the delivery room, within just 3 minutes or so.— "It's a Boy!!" But, I'm straining my ears, to hear a cry, and there is a little whimper. The nurse brings him to me to hold, and he is beautiful. I'm so sorry Bob missed it all. I can't believe he missed it all. As they give me a few stitches, and clean me up, I lay there and watch my new, bright-eyed son. Daniel is such a quiet baby, so I keep asking the nurses if he's o.k.. They assure me he is, and wheel him to the nursery, and me to recovery. In a few minutes Bob is back. He can't find me. The nurses congratulate him in the hallway. As you can imagine he's stunned. Although all babies are miracles, we can't help but feel that Daniel is an extra special one.

Daniel is our quietest baby. The least fussy, and the best sleeper. From the age of 3 days, he woke only once at night for feeding. And I expected a terror!

With the birth of this baby, I felt like I was given back my motherhood in some indescribable sense. I no longer felt like a failure. And, we believed that "the chain" had been broken.

Daniel was 4 months old when I became pregnant with baby no. 9. For the first time in 3 years, I was not especially fearful. But, death darkened our doors at 9 weeks. For the first time ever, I was taken by ambulance to the hospital. I was prepped for a D&C. In recovery we were told that the doctor didn't find a baby, only the partially formed placenta. This was a first. We did not chose a name this time. I do not remember feeling as great a loss, perhaps because there was no recognizable baby.

Now, I am beginning to think that maybe we should just give up. Throw in the towel. Tie my tubes and be done with it. But, ever since I was a little girl, all I EVER wanted to do was be a mother to a lot of children. When we would play house, I'd put as many dolls as I could under my dress and

“give birth” to 10, 11, 12 babies at a time. And, of course, each one had a name. I cannot turn my heart away from my babies. Not the ones we have with us now, or those who await us in glory, or those who have not yet been conceived.

Yes, 3 months later I’m pregnant again. I’ve also got my first infection, and I’m spotting at 8 weeks. The spotting stops and the infection passes, and we’re on our way. We pass all the “danger points” with flying colors, and we’re in the Home Stretch. Our 10th baby has died. The doctor suspected it when she began the exam, and when there was no heartbeat, the ultrasound confirmed it. At 28 weeks, we were so close!

Our children are old enough now to feel sorrow. We are all crying as we make arrangements for the birth. I need extra time to prepare myself, so we wait an extra day. We spend it with our 4 children at the shore.

Leaving for the hospital is terrible. Tears are in everyones eyes. It is so sad!

We are given a private isolation room, NOT on the maternity floor. They do all the routine blood tests, and finally, start the pitocin. The last time it took 3 days, so we are prepared for a long ordeal, but labour begins within minutes. Bob is running back and forth from home to the hospital, calling me in between to check my progress. Meanwhile I read John, listen to Christian radio and pray. God is merciful, and our baby girl is born at 5PM the same day. Mercy Hope is much, much bigger than all the others, but she was so much “older”. The nurse takes her from the room to get a blanket to wrap her in, and take footprints. As we wait, the song *Through It All* plays softly on the radio. A gentle reminder from our wonderful Saviour of His omniscience, even in the face of death.

I feel rather possessive as I hold my little sleeping daughter. I stare at her chest and try to will her to breathe. My heart breaks as I realize that the sound I longed to hear most, her cry, will never be heard. She has such a look of peace, and yet I can’t help but wonder, “Did it hurt when she died?”

This time would be the hardest to “give her back” to the nurse. We wanted to just bring her home, and keep her



somehow. I know it sounds morbid, but she is our daughter. Bob holds her and can't seem to believe she is really dead either. All he keeps saying is "It's so sad". There seem to be no other words to describe it. We prayed there with her in my arms. I counted her toes, and fingers. She looked so much like "a Leib". This good-bye is long, and hard. "Can I really let her go?" "Do I really have to?" "I don't want to!" But I have no choice. After some final "I love you's", and kisses, and "just a few more minutes". I reluctantly handed her to the nurse, and in my heart, to the Lord.

Our pictures turned out reasonably well, and the children saw their little sleeping sister. They saw her tiny footprints too.. This made it more real to them. Now when we say "there's a baby in Mommy's belly" it means something to them.

That Sunday, Bob dedicated the service as a memorial to Mercy Hope Leib. He did not preach, but he played a preaching tape we had just received. It was about "Your Treasure", and how that God sometimes takes away the thing that's the most precious to your heart to draw you closer to Him. What perfect timing!

This is not the end. We had another miscarriage at 12 weeks. Another son: he is our 11th child, and the 7th one to go on to glory. We did not have an autopsy, and we refused to give him to the hospital. Instead, we had our own funeral. His casket was a gold ring box, with a black velvet lining, (the one my engagement ring came in). I wrapped him in a piece of cloth diaper, and a bit of lace, and tied it up with a few strands of my hair. It was the middle of winter, so he was "buried at sea" (A river, actually). This was meaningful to all of us.

There are nights, when seeing the empty crib is more than I can bear.

The baby clothes stored on the closet shelf go unused, but not unnoticed.

There are days, and weeks at a time that we/I don't think too much about our little lambs in glory. Then there are days when the little newborn crying in the supermarket makes my heart ache, and brings tears to my eyes.

There are times when just looking at any baby is painful, and the baby department is a place to avoid at any cost.

There are days when I am jealous. Jealous that some drug addict had a healthy, live baby. ("Let not thine heart envy sinners..."<sup>18</sup>) Jealous over some pregnant stranger on the street. "Why can't that be me!" And jealous over the tiny baby in the carriage. This jealousy is the most short-lived since I don't know what she went through to have her baby. Her story may be like mine.

As the children pray daily for more brothers and sisters, my heart breaks and I am sorry that they have to go through this too. We get so caught up in what we are feeling that we have forgotten that they hurt too. After all, that little baby was their brother or sister. One with whom they will never play or fight, one that they will never have to "take up for". The children have a void too. Questions like "Why does God keep letting our babies die?" are impossible to answer.

I was recently "given a verse" to encourage me not to give up and to keep trusting God. Ps. 94:19 says, "In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul."

When I am sad, and begin to wonder "why?", I realize that when we do know why, it won't matter. I wonder if the Lord is trying to draw my heart a little closer to heaven. "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also"<sup>19</sup>. But maybe it is just "...That we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."<sup>20</sup>

As you mourn your loss, keep in mind that this too is temporal. There is no sorrow in Heaven, no death. Life is short. "For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away."<sup>4</sup>

I tell people we have a heavenly welcoming committee waiting for our arrival. "Our story" will not be over until we join them on the other side.



## To the Sorrowing

- \* Remember the Holy Spirit is with you to comfort you.”
- \* **Do NOT feel guilty.**
- \* If you are hurting or angry, take it to the Lord in prayer. “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”<sup>22</sup>
- \* Lean on the Lord. His grace is sufficient, and made perfect in our weakness.<sup>23</sup> He will never leave you or forsake you.<sup>24</sup>
- \* Remember other women and families have experienced this same loss; you are not alone.
- \* You have just experienced a tremendous loss. Your body will return to normal quickly, but you must allow yourself to grieve. Crying is normal, and to be expected.
- \* Choose a name for your baby. If the sex could not be determined due to his/her size/age pick one that could fit either. Use his/her name when speaking about them.
- \* Have a memorial service even if only your immediate family and good friends who knew can attend. If possible, bury your baby.
- \* Talk **only** with people you trust, people who are sympathetic. Talking about the loss of your baby is hard, but helps the grieving process. The more you talk about it the easier and the less painful it becomes.
- \* Excuse yourself, or change the subject if you are asked probing questions, even of good friends or family.
- \* Remember your baby is with the Lord.

If the loss of your baby is not sudden, and you have time to prepare, as in the case of “prenatal death”, or a sick newborn, the

following suggestions may help ease the pain of your loss.

- \* If possible, take pictures, get hand and footprints, and a lock of hair. Ask them to make an arm band for your baby as a keepsake. Tuck them away for safe keeping. Then, when you are ready, you'll have them.
- \* Unless physically unable, be sure to look at, touch, hold, kiss and love your baby. Talking to your baby is also good. Doing these things has given me peace, and I have no regrets.



## To Comfort the Sorrowing

- \* Pray for them; for their physical, emotional, and especially their spiritual needs.
- \* Send a sympathy card or a note of encouragement with flowers or a small gift (bath oil, cologne, hair accessory). If you're very close, a more personal gift, such as a pretty nightgown, blouse, or small piece of jewelry would be appropriate. AVOID GIVING STUFFED ANIMALS. With babies fresh in their mind, these tend to be unpleasant reminders of what could have been.
- \* Offer to tell their family or friends for them (that they lost the baby). Do not press them if they decline.
- \* Be available to listen. Please do not ask probing questions or offer unsolicited advice.
- \* Rather than using cliché's such as "Time heals all wounds", "It was probably for the best", "You can always try again"; let them know you are praying for them, remind them of God's omniscience, or quote scripture.
- \* Bring a casserole, takeout meal or milk, bread and eggs for the family. No-one wants to cook or shop.
- \* Offers to help are often refused even if wanted. So, just go by to visit, and wash a few dishes, vacuum rugs, or take the children to the park.
- \* Give them this booklet with a brief explanation, and tell them they can read it when they are up to it.

## Comforting Psalms

*Choosing specific Psalms was very difficult for me. Certain verses spoke to me in different ways, according to my need on any given day. I feel the Psalms are such a comfort because David himself went through so many tragedies, including the death of a child. This seems to carry-over somehow into many of his Psalms. Many times, David's cry was the same as mine. I have tried to include some that have been especially comforting and meaningful to me. My prayer is that they will help you as well.*

“Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine. Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he is our help and our shield. For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name. Let thy mercy. O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.” Psalm 33:18-22

“BE merciful unto me. O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.” Psalm 57:1

“HEAR my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.” Psalm 61:1,2

“Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah.” Psalm 62:8

“My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.” Psalm 73:26

“He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.” Psalm 91:4

“He maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the LORD. · Psalm 113:9

“I LOVE the LORD, because he hath heard my voice and my



supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live. The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the LORD; O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul. Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful." Psalm 116:1-5

"O GIVE thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: because his mercy endureth forever." Psalm 118:1

## Jonathan Amos

We love you our son,  
our little Jonathan  
Only those who know us,  
know our deep love for you.

You'll always be  
our little boy.  
our only fourth child.  
No other child can take  
your place, that will never change.

We heard your heartbeat,  
I felt the flutters of your  
life,  
But you went so quietly.  
Your life was so short,  
we have only a few memories.

You came easily,  
so tiny, so perfect,  
so peaceful, so frail.  
We held you, kissed you,  
loved you, as you were.  
Your hands, feet, fingers,  
and toes, were so perfectly formed,  
just the right size.  
Your ears were just right,  
and so were your eyes.  
The time was so short,  
to say good-bye.

The Lord gave you to us,  
He took you away,  
I know you are with Him now.  
So, to you my son,  
I say good-bye, til we meet,  
at Jesus feet,  
on the other side.

I Love You Always, Mommy



## Scripture References

- <sup>1</sup> II Corinthians 2:14
- <sup>2</sup> II Corinthians 4:17
- <sup>3</sup> James 4:14
- <sup>4</sup> Romans 12:15
- <sup>5</sup> Genesis 3:16
- <sup>6</sup> Ephesians 5:22; Colossians 3:18; I Peter 3:1
- <sup>7</sup> I Corinthians 15:22
- <sup>8</sup> Isaiah 53:3
- <sup>9</sup> Matthew 23:37; Luke 13:34
- <sup>10</sup> John 6:35
- <sup>11</sup> Matthew 26:28; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42
- <sup>12</sup> Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34
- <sup>13</sup> I Timothy 1:7
- <sup>14</sup> Romans 8:28
- <sup>15</sup> Psalm 127:3b
- <sup>16</sup> Romans 8:26,27
- <sup>17</sup> Psalm 56:3
- <sup>18</sup> Proverbs 23:17
- <sup>19</sup> Luke 12:33
- <sup>20</sup> II Corinthians 1:4
- <sup>21</sup> John 14:16
- <sup>22</sup> Hebrews 4:16
- <sup>23</sup> II Corinthians 12:9
- <sup>24</sup> Hebrews 13:5

All scripture references are from the King James Authorized Version.

## Addendum

When the final draft of this booklet was complete we suspected that once again we were expecting. At the time, fear of losing that baby kept me from including the blessed news at the end of our story. Truly our story was not and is not complete! The ominous conclusion made it sound as though we were feeling sorry for ourselves, when quite the opposite was true. We were admonished for dwelling in the past, when all we had attempted to do was comfort and encourage other who have suffered like us. I cannot take credit for any of it. It is all the Lord and His working in our lives. His Grace has kept us going, and His Strength has allowed us to continue trusting Him.

If you have suffered as we have, do not be disheartened. Perhaps the Lord will do for you what He has done for us.

After my last miscarriage in February of 1995, I came to the realization that trusting the Lord for our family size meant accepting all the children He has for us when HE sees fit to give them to us. To this day I do not fully understand, nor do I believe I ever will understand this side of eternity, why The Lord allows pregnancy loss to occur. What I do know is that when I left the hospital that time I believed in my heart that I probably would not have any more live births. I recognized that it was out of my control and purposed that regardless of the outcome of any future pregnancies, I had to continue trusting Him. Then I made a conscious decision NOT to count days, or "worry" about when my fertile days were. I gave my burden to the Lord. This was not as easy as I've made it sound. Each month, EACH DAY, I had to remind myself of my promise. Finally it happened-- I was late. This was June and February seemed a long, long time away. So much could happen! I couldn't help but wonder "Would we make it this time?", "Would the Lord give us a living child to love and nurture?" Fear crept in daily, often several times a day, which kept me on the prayer line to Heaven, seeking peace from the Lord. Without fail He calmed my fear. As time progressed, and my waistline grew, our hope soared just a bit higher. Then my due date came, and went. Now that baby didn't seem to want to come out! On February 18th, at 3:10a.m. labor began. We arrived at the hospital around 5a.m. At about 8:50, midst the flurry of activity, with Bob by my side, (he didn't go anywhere this time) we saw our baby crown. Moments later we heard our baby cry. At 9:11a.m.- "It's a GIRL!" Oh! the rejoicing that went on in that labour suite! Our hearts overflowed with joy and praise to our Great God, for the grace and mercy He'd shown us. Joy Daisy weighed in at 9lbs.4oz., living, healthy, and whole.

Her name suits her so well. She has brought nothing but joy to our family, and she never fails to delight us all. Her life is a testimony to the grace, power, mercy, and love of God to us. Each day we thank the Lord for giving us such a special blessing.

On April 25, 1998, Joy became a big sister. Her brother, Nathanael John joined our family, weighing in at ELEVEN pounds 4 ounces. What a whopper! My greatest fear aside from losing him, was that baby would be too big and I'd need a C-section. The Lord put that fear to rest, permanently.

\*\*Six years have passed since Nathanael was born. Praise the Lord! We've suffered no losses, but each month is a test of faith and trust in the Lord, for His timing and His will.\*\*





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