



CHRONIC JOY® DEVOTIONAL

INVISIBLE YET ALWAYS SEEN

By Lee Ann zanon

WEARINESS

The scenario was all too familiar. Weariness consigned me to the couch mid-morning, and sadness surrounded my soul. I had said “Yes” to dinner with friends the night before and suffered a delayed reaction. Pain radiated as evidence that I had exceeded my limits.

My heart ached for encouragement. I picked up a devotional book I had recently finished. A Scripture I didn’t recall reading seemed to jump off the page:

*I will rejoice and be glad in Your steadfast love
because You have seen my affliction;
You have known the distress of my soul.*

(Psalm 31:7)

Few people other than my husband knew the price I paid for social engagement. Now, through His Word, the Lord offered compassion. I accepted that my day would be slow and allowed myself to rest. As the afternoon unfolded, peace displaced self-pity, reorienting my mind toward gratitude and trust.

FEELING UNSEEN

The invisible nature of chronic conditions is common and widespread. I think it’s one of the most significant challenges, compounding struggles inflicted by symptoms. Typically, my outward appearance appears normal and healthy. Yet daily living dictates deliberate pacing so as not to overdo, as overdoing can result in negative consequences.

It’s difficult to let others see the reality of my life. I do not like admitting my diminished capacity. To avoid the risk of pain, I often opt out of social invitations, resulting in fewer and fewer connections to the world beyond my home. An increasing sense of living “unseen” tempts me toward despair.

GOD SEES AND SUPPORTS

In Genesis 16:13, we read the story of a woman named Hagar, who fled to the wilderness in great distress. In that place, she called the Lord, God who sees me. 2 Chronicles 16:9a echoes her theme and takes it a step further: The eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth, that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His.

In His kindness, God goes beyond seeing to supporting us in our afflictions. He may intervene in a physical challenge or provide inspiration through a Bible verse, a call from a friend, or a song on the radio. Sometimes, He even brings “custom-crafted” help uniquely suited to our circumstances.

Embracing the promise of God’s personalized attention renews our faith and strength, day by day and moment by moment. In His watchful care, we find our true reason for hope.

PRAYER

Oh Lord, thank You for seeing every detail of my suffering. I entrust myself afresh to Your power and grace. I take comfort in Your faithful love. Amen.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- What aspects of your chronic condition cause you to feel unseen?
- How have you experienced the reality that God sees you?
- What truth of Scripture can you cling to on hard days?