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## Rock Solid

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On September 11, 2004, hurricane Ivan struck Grand Cayman Island. The Category 3 hurricane swept away trees, stripped asphalt off the roads, and sent oceangoing cargo containers tumbling inland like giant Legos.

My husband and I arrived only a few weeks after Georgetown, the capital, reopened. We had hired a birding guide to visit less traveled areas. This was the first time our guide had ventured to this coastal area since the storm.

He climbed to a slight promontory overlooking the turquoise waters. Looking stunned, he explained these rocks had been jet black. For years they had looked volcanic. Now it was clear that they were limestone or shell-based marl. The pockmarked surface was a brilliant chalk-white color.

He hypothesized the black had been a veneer accumulated over years. The rocks were not inherently black. The tidal surge and wave action had scrubbed every vestige of color until the original white was revealed.

Thinking about the restoration process that had begun to take place on the island, the rocks represented to me the solid goodness of God's creation, which cannot be swept away. The black rocks had been prized as tourist attractions. Yet the port of Georgetown was teeming with happy tourists. The change in rock color went mainly unnoticed.

The people of Grand Cayman had immediately begun the process of restoration after the storm. The foundation of their lives still remained. What was on the surface might have been swept away - buildings, vegetation, asphalt. But in a sense, that was like the veneer.

Something truly substantial and important remained - qualities such as courage, wisdom, and integrity. It is good qualities such as these that make a solid foundation that cannot be washed away by storms, no matter how devastating.

Individuals can build their lives on a metaphorical rock. The Bible associates God with a rock. God as the Rock represents protection and salvation. "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower" (Ps. 18:2).

This rock is the high ground or spiritual insight that gives courage and strength. It is the firm foundation that keeps a person from being swept away in floods of emotion and hurt.

The divine rock gives a person a foundation to stand on and one on which to rebuild. As Jesus said to his disciples, listening to God's Word and following its guidance is like building a house on a rock (see Matt. 7:24, 25).

There was a time in my family's life when we lost everything except for our car and two suitcases of clothes. It wasn't due to a hurricane, but to the storms of life.

Feelings of fear and confusion can seem overwhelming. But my mother clung steadfastly to God as the Rock of salvation. Daily we prayed. Moment by moment we turned to God, the divine Mind, for courage, inspiration, and guidance.

One Bible passage that anchored our prayer was "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Prov. 3:5, 6).

A temporary job, housing, and furniture were provided within weeks. Daily study of the Bible and "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" by Mary Baker Eddy kept us firmly grounded on God's rock. Employment and housing steadily improved until everyone felt a new strength from lives rebuilt.

Like the white rocks of Grand Cayman, God's foundation stands firm. God will give the courage and strength to hold on and go forward.