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“UNSHACKLED!” - Pacific Garden Mission
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Daily Devotional

“The More Fortunate” – Elly Matz

ANNCR: April 19th, “The More Fortunate.” Have you ever been singled out? Most likely you have, and it might have even been for something good. But additional attention, even good attention, can still be a difficult thing to handle. We can feel guilty about those who were overlooked in our favor. So, how should we understand God and the world around us when we seem to have received more benevolence in our life...while others struggled beside us? Today we'll hear from a woman whose family was devastated by hardship, yet she had difficulty understanding why she alone was allowed to survive. She's here to share with us her true story on this Unshackled Daily Devotional.

ELLY: I'm Elly Matz, born and raised in Russia under communism. My family ate roots and grass during the famine. In winter we tied rags on our feet. My father refused to disown God and was sent to Siberia. We never saw him again.

In 1941 the Germans invaded. I came home from visiting my husband in the army, and the whole village was gone. I thought I

would go mad that winter. My baby died at birth, only my little boy and I were left, starving.

The Germans came and forced me to be interpreter. At least they fed us. When they retreated to Czechoslovakia, I escaped Russia but nearly died of typhoid. Nineteen weeks I lay in hospital where a nurse told me about Jesus, and I asked him into my heart.

The Russian Army came through and forced me to be interpreter for them. I couldn't stand communism and tried to commit suicide. When I recovered, they sent me and my son to concentration camp.

There I met and fell in love with a man who helped us to escape to the West. We married and immigrated to the U.S. in 1951. Then came the guilt for my lost family. I lived with depression for nine years and did not find real freedom until I read the Bible for the first time and was born again through faith in Jesus Christ.

ANNCR: When Moses asked to see God's glory – an act that would have killed him – God responded in Exodus chapter 33, verse 19 by shielding his face and saying, ***“I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have***

compassion.” Friend, maybe you were born into a free country and a good family, possessing no physical or mental challenges. And maybe you’ve realized what a rare gift this is. Or maybe you’ve survived a traumatic event that others didn’t. The reality of these situations can be haunting. But here is the good news. There is no need for you to defend the grace you have been given. It has not been given to you because you earned it. It has been given to you to accomplish God’s purpose – so, you can help others from this grace you have received. Will you find peace in this truth today?

CREDITS: Unshackled Daily Devotionals are produced by Pacific Garden Mission along with our Unshackled Audio Dramas. To find even more true stories of God’s saving, transforming power, visit our website, unshackled.org.

This episode was written by Kennetha Gaebler and Elizabeth Kupfershmid and narrated by Tim Gregory and Fern Persons.

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