

A 40-DAY EXPERIENCE
OF DARING FAITH

SUN
STAND
STILL

DEVOTIONAL

STEVEN FURTICK

NEW YORK TIMES BEST-SELLING AUTHOR

A 40-DAY EXPERIENCE
TO ACTIVATE YOUR FAITH

THE
**SUN
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STILL**
DEVOTIONAL

STEVEN FURTICK

with Eric Stanford

NEW YORK TIMES BEST-SELLING AUTHOR



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Italics in Scripture quotations reflect the author's added emphasis.

Details in some anecdotes and stories have been changed to protect the identities of the persons involved.

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PREFACE

The Cure for the Ache of the Ordinary

Thank you for picking up this copy of *The Sun Stand Still Devotional*. Whoever you are, whatever you're going through, I pray God will use it to elevate your life to a new level.

This book provides forty daily readings paired with powerful Bible passages and targeted prayer suggestions for use in your quiet time with God. The daily readings are based on my book *Sun Stand Still* and on other things I've written or preached on the topic of audacious faith. They are designed to help you become someone who dares to believe God for the impossible.

In *Sun Stand Still* I retell the biblical story of Joshua, who—in the middle of a battle—threw out one of the most amazing prayers recorded in the Bible. With sunset approaching and Israel's enemies on the run, he actually asked God to stop the sun and moon, to extend the day, so Israel could complete its victory. Most people would never even think of praying a prayer like that. Yet Joshua not only thought it; he prayed it. And even more amazing—God did it.

“The sun stopped in the middle of the sky,” we’re told, “and delayed going down about a full day. There has never been a day like it before or since, a day when the LORD listened to a man” (Joshua 10:13–14).

That’s audacious faith.

That’s the impossible made actual.

And what I suggest in the book is, why can’t it happen again? Why can’t we have faith like Joshua’s? And why can’t the very same God who made the sun stand still in the sky for Joshua do equally incredible things for us?

I’ve seen God answer Sun Stand Still prayers many times in my own life. He’s still doing it. And more than that, over and over again people have come up to me to tell me about the amazing things God is doing in their lives in response to their bold prayers. I never get tired of hearing these stories.

Of course, the reality is that most of us don’t go from ordinary faith to audacious faith overnight. Audacious faith normally has to be formed within us over time.

And that’s where *The Sun Stand Still Devotional* comes in.

If you’re feeling what I call “the ache of the ordinary”—discouraged because your life of faith in Jesus seems like nothing much—then let this book of short readings become a tool God can use to transform the ordinary into the extraordinary in your life. In *The Sun Stand Still Devotional*, you will learn more about our miracle-working God through His Word, submit yourself daily to Him in prayer for the changes He wants to make, and develop an audacious faith of your own.

There's a move of God under way, and all of Jesus's followers are supposed to be a part of it. His work in our world and in our lives is always far beyond what we can do on our own. But that's only half the truth. The other half is this: with God's power unleashed in your life and mine through faith, the impossible *will* become possible.

DAY 1

The Prayer That Stopped the Sun

Joshua said to the LORD in the presence of Israel:

“O sun, stand still over Gibeon,

O moon, over the Valley of Aijalon.”

So the sun stood still,

and the moon stopped,

till the nation avenged itself on its enemies.

—JOSHUA 10:12–13

Today's Bible reading: Joshua 10:1–14

Right here on Day 1, I'm going to throw out a challenge to you: If you're not daring to believe God for the impossible, you're sleeping through some of the best parts of your Christian life. And further still, if the size of your vision for your life isn't intimidating to you, there's a good chance it's insulting to God. You should be living by audacious faith every day. Audacity is not just for “elite Christians.” It's intended for every believer. So today we're beginning a spiritual journey toward trusting God for what seems impossible. I'm thrilled to think about what it's going to do for our lives and our world.

A story from the life of Joshua serves as our template for audacious faith.

The Israelites unleash a surprise attack on the Amorites, and right from the beginning the battle goes well. But as the sun sinks toward the horizon, General Joshua faces a decision. The victory isn't complete, and once it gets dark, the rest of the Amorites will slip away. Joshua sizes up the situation and delivers one of the most gloriously unorthodox prayers in the Bible. He has the audacity to ask God to make the sun stop in the sky. To freeze time on behalf of his people.

And God gives Joshua exactly what he asked for.

With everything in me, I believe God still desires to make the sun stand still over the life of every believer. Obviously, not in the unique way He did for Joshua, but in ways that are equally spectacular (although not always quite as dramatic), God is perfectly willing to perform the impossible in our everyday lives. If we have the audacity to ask.



RT God is ready to act if we will be bold enough to ask, not just for a good day or a better life, but for the impossible. #sunstandstill

I tried this one time.

My wife and I moved to Charlotte, North Carolina, with seven other families. We set a goal of reaching over one thousand people in our first year of ministry. Since the average church size in America is less than ninety, I guess we were overshooting a bit. But we

wanted to see God accomplish something so exponentially amazing that it would leave no doubt who deserved the credit.


So we shamelessly asked God to exceed our wildest dreams.

The story of our church is still being written. But here's what I can tell you now. After seven years of ministry, our church has grown to more than twelve thousand people in regular attendance. Since our opening day, thousands of people have publicly professed faith in Christ.

Sometimes when we consider the rate at which God has multiplied this ministry, we feel like we're living in a warp-speed dream world. But the story is real. We are living in the middle of a move of God.

Is there something that is seemingly impossible that you'd like to see God do through you? Maybe God has already been working in your spirit, planting a desire, sparking ideas about the much bigger things He wants to accomplish.

There's nothing our world needs more desperately today—in individuals, families, businesses, churches, and communities—than God's saving, supernatural acts. And God is ready to act if we will be bold enough to ask, not just for a good day or a better life, but for the impossible and then will step forward to act in audacious faith.

 **PRAYER FOCUS:** Over the next forty days, pray for God to build audacious faith within you and to show you where He wants you to apply it.

DAY 2

Your Page 23 Vision

I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you.

—ACTS 26:16

Today's Bible reading: Acts 26:1–23

Saul of Tarsus is going along on his religious way when one day Jesus decides, *Enough of the ordinary religious order for this guy. I'm going to demonstrate My grace to him in an extraordinary way.* I can almost hear Jesus chuckling to Himself as He prepares His bolt of lightning for the unsuspecting traveler.

Saul—nowadays better known as Paul—was never the same after Jesus waylaid him on the road to Damascus. The world has never been the same either. Because Jesus used Paul as a gospel luminary to take the message of faith in Christ to the peoples of the earth. “I am sending you to [the Gentiles],” Jesus told Saul, “to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light” (Acts 26:17–18).

God has a way of opening our eyes with a near-blinding epiphany when He's about to do something new through us.

A few months after my commitment to Christ at age sixteen, someone slipped me a book called *Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire*. Written by a pastor in Brooklyn named Jim Cymbala, it read like a highlight reel of the miracles God had performed in Cymbala's church. I was mesmerized.



RT Accomplishing the impossible starts with seeing the invisible. #sunstandstill

As I sat at my parents' kitchen table with the open book, I stumbled across a line that set the trajectory of my life. It was on page 23: "I despaired at the thought that my life might slip by without seeing God show himself mightily on our behalf."

Somehow I knew: *One day I'm going to start a church in a big city to reach people far from God.*

The words in the Cymbala book set off a nuclear reaction in my soul. In retrospect I can identify it as an epiphany. At the time, though, it was just a strong impulse and a naive enthusiasm. I couldn't know what it would lead to. In fact, everything would change.


If it hasn't already happened to you, I believe *you* will have a Page 23 vision. A Damascus road moment. My prayer for you is that your epiphany happens very soon. It will start with a seed of inspiration that takes root in your imagination. Over time it will produce a harvest of obedience for the glory of God. And the whole process will take place deep in the soil of your faith.

To be clear, I'm not suggesting that the only visions God gives

are about starting a church or doing the kinds of things we typically associate with “ministry.” In fact, in most cases there is no lightning bolt and no connection to a religious profession.

But the bottom line is this: if you’re going to ask God to do something impossible in your life, you have to have some clarity about what you’re asking for. You have to know you’re not just spinning a fantasy or going on a delusional ego trip.

Meditate on this thought as you go through the day: *Accomplishing the impossible starts with seeing the invisible.*

 PRAYER FOCUS: If you haven’t already received a Page 23 vision, ask God to make you ready for it and receptive to it, sensitive to His word for you.



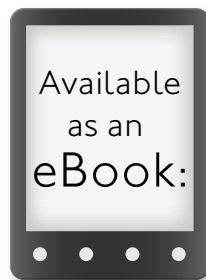
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