



# Biblical Wisdom

## Helping Children Cope With Trouble

By Dr. Eugene Habecker

(NAPSA)—Aidan Fontana is a six-year-old New Yorker. Last year, according to a recent *New York Times* article, Aidan developed a peculiar habit. While working in his kindergarten class, he kept building twin towers of blocks, only to have them collapse.

It was a dangerous habit that upset his teacher. Aidan, of course, always survived after his blocks would collapse. He would do this routinely, all the while wondering if he had been in a different place on a fateful September day last year whether he could have found a way to save his father, Dave Fontana, of the New York City Fire Department Squad 1 of Brooklyn.

America's children awoke to a different world last September 11. A few thousand, like Aidan, are coping with the death of moms and dads, men and women who were simply going about their business as firefighters, police officers, secretaries, stock brokers and airline passengers. Millions more saw the pictures on television and know their country is a lot less secure than it used to be.

Still, we at the American Bible Society are confident the Scriptures can provide a way for young people to find confidence and hope in what now seems to be a troubled future. The events we are planning to observe September 11—a tribute to heroes past, present and future to be held at Bible House in Manhattan, just a few miles from the demolished Twin Towers—will focus on Psalm 23. We are encouraging Americans to reflect upon the words of the psalmist and how they may be applied as consolation for our troubled children:

"I may walk through valleys as

dark as death, but I won't be afraid. You are with me, and your shepherd's rod makes me feel safe." (Contemporary English version.)

Like millions across the country that day, we will be reflecting in concrete ways about how God consoles us even as we trod through dangerous turf. Composer David Pack has written original music to accompany Psalm 23 and will perform it for our friends and benefactors. We will also be distributing Scripture, walking in prayer processions and hearing inspiring words from Lisa Jefferson, the telephone operator who prayed with Todd Beamer, a passenger on the flight that crashed in Pennsylvania September 11.

Our building will be decorated with art projects from children around the country, providing a creative look at how Psalm 23 speaks to America's youth. Leaders of Police Officers for Christ and Fire Fighters for Christ will also offer inspiring testimonies.

Many will be watching on television as our political leaders mark the solemn anniversary in New York, Washington and other cities. But we want the world to know what we're doing because we believe so strongly that Psalm 23 can provide the kind of solid building block that will never collapse. Those wishing to obtain copies of Psalm 23 set to music are invited to visit [www.american-bible.org](http://www.american-bible.org).

• *Dr. Eugene B. Habecker, President of the American Bible Society, holds a doctorate from the University of Michigan and a law degree from Temple University School of Law. He also is a graduate of Harvard University's Institute for Educational Management. His syndicated radio broadcast, The Open Book, is carried on radio stations across the U.S. Dr. Habecker is the author of dozens of articles and four books.*

*Founded in 1816 and headquartered in New York City, the American Bible Society is a non-profit, interconfessional organization with a rich Judeo-Christian heritage committed to the translation, publication and distribution of the Holy Scriptures. The American Bible Society distributes more than 107 million copies of the Bible, New Testaments and Scripture Portions in the United States each year. Its mission is to provide the Scriptures to every person in a language and format each can readily understand and afford. The American Bible Society Web site is [www.americanbible.org](http://www.americanbible.org). Also available on the Web is [ForMinistry.com](http://ForMinistry.com), sponsored by the American Bible Society. ForMinistry.com provides links to thousands of churches across the United States as well as articles offering continuing education in effective ministry.*



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