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Shirer's "Awaken: 90 days with the God who speaks" (book review)

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Book Reviews



Shirer, P. (2017). *Awaken: 90 days with the God who speaks*. Nashville: B&H Publishing Group. 362 pp. \$16.99. ISBN 9781462776344

Priscilla Shirer's first devotional book, *Awaken*, offers biblical insights for 90 days of personal spiritual growth through prayer and inspirational Bible verses. Shirer, a best-selling Christian author and presenter, is the daughter of well-known pastor Tony Evans and the sister of Christian entertainer, Anthony Evans.

Each of the devotions begin with a short anecdote that illustrates a Bible verse. The focus of each story is emphasized with additional related verses and two blank journal-style pages inviting the reader to record reflective thoughts in the daily *He Speaks to Me* section.

Awaken is not Shirer's first book, she has published Bible studies and is a celebrated motivational speaker, actress, and evangelist. There are audio versions of Shirer's books, and her narration is just as inspiring as her elegantly written devotions. Whether Shirer begins her daily passage with a real-life story about raising three active sons or a complex theological thought, she is skilled at connecting fresh insights gleaned from Scripture to ordinary life.

I commute two hours each day from work and home, which allows me ample time to listen to a variety of audio books. I downloaded another title by Shirer, *Fervent*, which is also available in print in the university library where I serve as a reference librarian. Priscilla also narrates this audiobook and her sincere passion for crafting prayers that are effective for protecting our spiritual lives is evident. When I returned to reading the book reviewed here, *Awaken*, I could still "hear" Shirer's heartfelt narrative through her written text.

The devotion for day two in *Awaken* resonated with me. Shirer begins by illustrating the link between our needs and God's answers to prayer with Elisha's response to the widow desperate for help in 2 Kings. "What can I do for you?" The prophet asked, "Tell me, what do you have in the house?" And this answer revealed to the widow that she already had the resources she needed to meet her needs within her own home. Shirer wisely points out that we all have our own little "pot of oil," perhaps overlooked or neglected, but still present, ready to be useful for our unique needs.

God provides this, always, for all of us. Shirer reminds us that “sometimes we wait impatiently on God when He is waiting patiently on us to recognize what He’s already given as part of the answer to our problem.” Shirer concluded this devotional thought by asking the reader to record “some jars of oil we might be overlooking in our lives that God has already provided?” *Awaken* provides the space to record a list in the book and keep it handy for future gratitude and reflection.

Reviewer

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