

SQUIRREL POWER

BY JO DIAS

“Miserable!” That was the only way to describe how I was feeling on that bright summer day. My husband had had to travel—again!—and there I was alone with our four children. Finances were low and my health was bad. My teenage daughter was going through a crisis in her life. Having to handle her problems, take care of the other children, and run the house at the same time was taking its toll on me.

Although I tried hard, it was difficult to see anything positive about my situation. I prayed—oh, how I prayed!—that the Lord would make things a little easier to bear.

Looking out onto the neighboring grove, with the beautiful trees swaying in the slight summer breeze, I thought about other times of discouragement I’d been through. I remembered that the Lord had always done something to encourage me. *But there’s always a first time!* I thought in despair.

That’s when I noticed a little squirrel squeaking away as he climbed up and down the trees. I watched as he went up one and then down and up again. I envied the little fellow who looked like he was having

such fun, without a care in the world. Meanwhile, I felt like I was on a downward spiral with no way to get up again.

My squirrel chose that moment to change tactics. Instead of running up and down the trees, he started hopping from one tree directly onto another. He jumped over to what looked like the last tree in the line, and then looked up and ahead at a tree that was at the far end of the grove. He seemed to be de-liberating.

I mentally measured the distance between trees and it seemed to me that the one at the end was definitely at least two or even three times the distance that he’d previously been jumping. “You can’t be serious, little fellow!” I whispered. But he was not looking for my advice. He had dared and won the first few rounds, but here was a massive challenge. What was he going to do?

He ran up and down the tree a few times, squealing frantically. Then he stopped and eyed the distance, crouched down, and before I knew it, he had leaped! Way out! He was sailing through the air—and for a minute I wanted to turn my eyes

from what I thought was surely going to end in tragedy.

But no! Not only did he fly across that immense span, but he landed on the other tree with the grace and glory that only comes from knowing one is *meant* to do such things. He chattered in victory and scampered up to the top, as if to his reward!

I realized that all that time I had been holding my breath. *Quite unnecessarily*, I thought with a smile. The little guy had only been obeying his instincts with the faith that comes from trusting his Maker.

I knew then what I’d been missing. I had been so busy looking at my problems—measuring the distance between the trees—that I was afraid to just let go and sail across to the other side. For a little while I had lost my faith in my Maker, my Savior, my Best Friend.

As I looked up at the squirrel, now merrily running on the branches, I knew that the Lord had answered my prayer. It was not a great big spectacular miracle, but just the chattering of a little squirrel that told me that the same God who took care of him was going to take care of me as well.

Your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. (Matthew 6:32–34 NKJ)

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