

## Freedom Lessons

By: Rachel Lynn Drennon

Once upon a time there was a K-Kid's member named Rachel Drennon. She went to school where she learned a lot about freedom during social studies but didn't really understand what it would be like to be without freedom or how much freedom costs. Then one day Rachel noticed a little boy who looked very sad. "Are you ok," she asked. He answered, "Yeah, I guess. My dad has been in Afghanistan for almost a year, and I miss him." Rachel asked if there was anything she could do. He said, "Just pray for him to come home safely and soon." After school Rachel's mom called the boy's mom and asked if there was anything they could do. The boy's mom said, "Yes, your students can write letters to his dad?" "Of course," Rachel's mom answered. "Is there anything else we can do?" she added. "Yes," the boy's mom said, "you can save the toys that come in children's meals at the different drive through restaurants. The soldiers are using them overseas right now."

Rachel asked her K-Kids sponsor to help. Within two weeks K-Kids had hundreds of toys to send to the soldiers. She began to discuss the cost of freedom with her friends. They decided to also collect the soldier's favorite snacks. Kids were excited each day as they tossed more and more snacks, letters, and toys into the box. Finally, the group sealed up the boxes and sent them overseas.

Months passed. Some of the Kiwanis taught them how to properly take care of the flag. Some of the K-kids got together and downloaded a bunch of patriotic songs that their teacher played almost every day in class.

Then one day, the principal, walked into the classroom. Rachel noticed that there were tears rolling down her teacher's cheeks. What was wrong? Nothing – nothing at all! Into her classroom walked this very strong, handsome soldier. He was dressed in real soldier's clothes. He walked into the middle of the classroom and his son stood and stared at him. It was like he could not move. The little

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boy said, "Dad, it is you. It is really you." The soldier swallowed and gently said, "Yes, son. It is really me. I am home for two weeks."

That night the words kept playing in Rachel's head. Tears rolled down her cheeks. Her dad asked, "What's wrong?" Rachel climbed in her daddy's lap and said, "I couldn't stand it for you to be gone that long." Her dad wiped Rachel's tears, and replied, "It's not just our soldiers who pay a huge price for freedom, but it's their families and friends too." I'm proud of you for understanding how expensive your freedom is and for supporting those who protect your freedoms.

Rachel lived happily ever after and truly appreciated her freedoms. The little boy was proud of his dad and wanted to grow up to be just like him, an American soldier, fighting for the freedoms he believed in.

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