

Where's God?

Have you ever been in a desert place in your journey with God wandering around in circles just existing day to day? Has there been the promise of a better day, but the way is unclear and time seems endless?

Your strength and energy is just enough for the day, but life seems meaningless without purpose. You know God is there somewhere, but His presence seems faint. Anxiety heightens. Anger towards God's seemingly lack of intervention arises within.

In the midst of uncertainty, you cry out, "God, if you would just give me clear direction I will follow you." All you hear is the deafening silence as you wait for the darkness of the night to pass. The suffocating feeling of loneliness and abandonment encompasses you.

Panic begins to enter in as racing thoughts permeate your mind. "Is this the way it will always be?", you ask. Little by little pieces of your hope of a better day begin to whittle away.

- Hope of your relationship getting better.
- Hope that there is a purpose for this desert time.
- Hope that there is still a God who cares and wants the best for you.
- Hope there is a divine plan.

During this relentless time, your voice is not heard by others. Your energy is drained having to constantly prove your value. Responsibilities of everyday life weigh you down and become overwhelming. High expectations from others makes you feel you are not measuring up.

Your heart is broken by past experiences. Grief over your losses of significant relationships engulf you. Shattered dreams lie crumbled on the floor. Reality is hard to face.

It is at these times that we can find comfort in scripture. In Psalm 27:14 it says, *Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.* The Lord is always working even if we cannot see it. These are times of strengthening our faith and trusting God moment by moment that in time He will reveal His purposes.

As we read in scripture, Joshua had a desert experience that prepared him to become the leader of the Israelite people after Moses' death. Joshua experienced the loss of a friend, one in which he worked side by side on a daily basis. Having no home, he along with the Israelites wandered in the desert for forty years.

He had seen the power of God over and over again giving provision and protection for the Israelite people from the time they left Egypt to wander in the desert to the fulfillment of God's promise to the Israelites. He saw God minister justice to those who were disobedient.

Joshua knew the Israelites would enter the Promised Land as God said, but he did not know when that would occur. He like the others had waited forty years yet he still believed it would happen. God had been preparing Joshua to fulfill His purposes.

In the waiting time, God is molding and shaping us to be His vessel preparing us for His purposes. In the busyness of life, we need to take time to “be”.

Be still before God

Be in His presence

Be open to hearing His voice

Be in God’s Word

Be with God’s people

After Moses’ death, the Lord told Joshua to get ready to cross the Jordan River to the land that was promised. Can you imagine what was going through Joshua’s mind? It could have been a range of emotions from utter excitement to utter terror of the unknown. He had to be overwhelmed by all the responsibilities with no co-leader to help, yet he was not alone.

The Lord reassured him. *No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.*

Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them. Be strong and very courageous. . . Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged for the Lord, your God, will be with you wherever you go.

Joshua 1:5-9 NIV.

Joshua was instructed by the Lord. As the Israelites approached the Jordan River at **flood stage**, the priests with the Ark of the Covenant were to step into the water’s edge and then God would make a way. As the priest’s feet touched the river, the waters from upstream stopped flowing. The look on their faces must have been one of awe and amazement. Once again they had experienced the power and provision of God.

The priests with the Ark of the Covenant stood firm in the **middle** of the Jordan River on dry ground as the Israelites crossed over to the Promised Land. A member from each of the twelve tribes of Israel was instructed to pick up a stone from the **middle** of the river and bring it to the other shore.

The stones were heavy enough that they had to be carried on their shoulders. These stones were then placed together where they camped as a memorial of what God had done for his people. Each future generation would be reminded of God’s faithfulness.

In the **middle** of the uncertainty of life, God is there. When we are overcome with life’s storms, God is there. When dreams are shattered and losses engulf us, God is there. When life seems bleak and the path unclear, God is there.

He's parting the flood waters, standing in the middle, preventing the waters from overtaking us, providing a firm ground to stand, and making a way where there seems to be no way. God proves over and over again His faithfulness and love for us.

We need to allow God to work in our lives and to trust Him remembering what He has done for us.

What memorial stones have you collected in your journey with God? Take time to list God's miracles, wonders, and provision on a daily basis. As you do, you will be more keenly aware of God's presence in your life and His compassion for you.

Be strong and courageous for our God goes before you.

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