***When the WAIT is prolonged***

Nobody likes to wait for long periods of time. We have been under stay at home orders for over a month now and extended stay for another month is the new government guidelines. Chances are you have thought or shared with someone the frustration that comes with this prolonged period saying, “When will this end!”

King David found himself asking the same question out of despair: *“How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow` in my heart?”* (Psalm13:2a)

Thoughts, emotions and actions spring from what is in our hearts. During this pandemic wait, we’ve experienced many different emotions; we’ve suffered losses of many kinds… financial, social and emotional security, some have lost family and friends. Our daily normalcy has been abruptly disturbed by fear and uncertainty. All this emotional turmoil can make us react like David did at the beginning of this Psalm “How long, oh Lord?”

More than a mere complaint, David engages in an honest dialogue with God that allows him to first identify his emotions and then, shift his heart mode from frustration of his circumstances to trust in God. We should do the same. Instead of giving way to exasperation, let us approach God openly with our feelings, trusting He will give us the added faith, strength and wisdom we need.

God doesn’t promise we won’t have to wait. He promises He’ll be with us all the way until the very end. Abraham, Joseph and Job endured suffering and anxiety after years of waiting. Nevertheless, they all deepened their relationship with God as a result of that waiting.

Abraham’s waiting for the promise was prolonged for many years! Yes, he had his moments of doubts, but he persevered and saw the child of the promise. It was after all that wait, he was able to understand God’s faithfulness.

Joseph’s blessing for what had been revealed to him in a dream was prolonged for years. In the process, he was rejected by his own siblings, sold as a slave and taken to Egypt. After working in the palace, he was unfairly imprisoned. He waited for over seven more years until the day he faced his brothers again. It was not until that prolonged wait that Joseph experienced the depth of God’s grace and was able to show mercy to his brothers.

Job’s wait was also prolonged. He lost his wealth, his children, friends and his own health in the process. At the end, he gained a deeper knowledge of God and His sovereignty over all creation, including Job himself.

In prolonged periods of waiting, God is not tested; we are. David realized God was not only in control of the situation but was providing His loving goodness to David in the process. That’s why David closes this Psalm acknowledging his trust in God’s love and declaring his renewed strength to rejoice in God’s salvation (Ps.13:5).

Let’s not just maintain but deepen our faith as we go through this prolonged wait. Like David, each of us have discovered new things about ourselves, about our family relationships and our community. We realize the opportunity God is giving us all to change gears for the better.

God is not oblivious to our needs and emotions while we wait. Instead, He’s instilling in us added faith, added strength and hope for the today and the tomorrow. You’re stronger today than when this crisis started. Think about this for a moment…

David ends this psalm declaring he’d rejoice in the Lord’s salvation. God’s salvation always brings deliverance to whatever we’re facing. May you nurture your heart with God’s goodness and faithfulness so that like David, you too can “sing to the Lord for he has been good to me” (Ps.13:6).

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Let’s explore this together!

What were the circumstances that led David write this psalm?

What did Abraham, Joseph and Job learn about God after their prolonged wait?

What are you learning about yourself and God during these days of waiting?

Knowing there’s a purpose in all we experience, what areas of spiritual growth are happening in you as a result of this waiting period?

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