

Daily Devotional, August 31, 2020 Patience, The Virtue That I Seek

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish? My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer, by night, but I find no rest. Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One; you are the one Israel praises. In you our ancestors put their trust; they trusted, and you delivered them. To you they cried and were rescued; in you they trusted and were not put to shame. Psalms 22:1-5 (NIV)

The first two verses of this Psalm hit very close to home for me this week. Life is hard, mundane, and a struggle. The Lord feels far off. Things I've been praying for months- relief, healing, restoration- have yet to be answered in the ways I would like them to be. In those first two verses I feel seen and known. David gets it. He's frustrated too.

However, verse 3 takes a big turn. Throughout the Psalms David often sits in his frustrations and sadness for long periods of time. Here he immediately reminds himself of Truth. In verses 3-5 he reflects back not on his own life, but on the faithfulness of God to his ancestors; to Abraham, Joseph, and Moses. To these men and many more, David reflects, "They trusted, and you delivered them. To you they cried and were rescued."

It is encouraging for my spirit, too, to look back on these giants of the faith, and remember God's faithfulness to them. God has always delivered on the promises He made to His people. What makes me think His faithfulness, goodness, or purposes are any different now?

The interesting thing about those men that David is remembering is that each of them saw God be faithful, but they each also walked through long seasons of waiting. For years, each of them probably prayed and felt like no one was listening, felt that life was mundane and hard, and struggled with the feeling that God was far-off. Abraham waited for over 25 years for the son that God promised him to be born. Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers at age 17, experienced brief success in Egypt before being thrown in prison where he was forgotten for several years. It wasn't until he was 30 that he was made overseer of Egypt and God made it clear what his purposes for Joseph were to be there. Moses? He killed a fellow Israelite in a fit of anger and was exiled from his people and home for 40 years. He didn't come back to lead his people out of Egypt until he was 80 years old!!

It's easy to read the stories of the Bible and be encouraged by the huge and faithful acts of God all the while forgetting that what takes us 5 minutes to read took those people a lifetime to live. A lifetime of waiting, praying, doubting, trusting, and wondering how and when God would act. Let these mighty faithful of the Bible be an encouragement to us as we wait and trust in our present moment because "in God they trusted and were not put to shame". Surely the same will be true of us. May we wait, be patient, and live our own stories well!

Prayer: Lord, I am seeking your peace and your patience. I want to learn to wait patiently for you to bring your answers to my prayers. Your Word brings me truth and strength. Your Word chases away my worry and my fears and refreshes me. Thank you for your Word. Amen.