

*Finding God in Your
Darkness*

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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INTRODUCTION

“Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me” (Micah 7:8).

Here we have a picture of a man in a dreadful situation: a soul badly bruised and beaten, wedged in the bottom of a hole, his garments torn and filthy, his back against the wall, unable to stand. In a horrible pit of his own making, he appears to be helpless as his enemies surround him, looking down, mocking him with great derision.

But Micah learned how to be liberated in the worst circumstance. When he found himself in that place, he did not blame his enemy, who may have caused him to stumble. He didn't gaze on his own shortcomings or wallow in failure. Micah took stock of his predicament, agreed quickly with his adversary, confessed his sin, accepted the immediate consequence, and became a spokesman of righteousness, 'the mouth of

God', proclaiming to the darkness the light of God.

The message in this booklet was preached with fervency, urgency, and compassion. As you read it, receive it, and consider the work of God. When we find ourselves in darkness, we will be tempted to manufacture our own light. The outcome? "Ye shall lie down in sorrow" (Isaiah 50:11). But the Lord says, "Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence you are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged" (Isaiah 51:1). God longs to show us this great deliverance.

Chapter 1

WHY GOD ALLOWS DARKNESS

It is so important to focus our thoughts when we prepare to hear from God. Psalm 111:10a says that the fear of the Lord is not just the beginning of knowledge, but it is the beginning of *wisdom*. “To fear” means to revere God’s presence with profound respect, to be reverent to God’s Word, concentrating in a solemn, sacred response to what is said and then mixing faith with what you hear. That is revering, or fearing, the Lord.

In Proverbs 8:13, “The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogance, and the evil way....” Fearing the Lord means we depart from the infections of the evil world system. It means to be absolutely conscious of the presence of God. That is precisely what revering God does: It allows the Word of God to work.

Never forget this: *The issue is never our circumstances; it is always our character.* Regardless

of the situation, I always have a choice: to function with the character of Christ or as a character in my sinful flesh. For example, if I allow someone to lean on me in a co-dependent relationship or to manipulate me through sentimentality, I prevent that person from developing a personal value system. I must not be involved in relationships that prevent me from having values of my own. I must never allow a relationship to keep me from having a personal faith in God, “for whatsoever is not of faith is sin” (Romans 14:23).

If the Word of God is not allowed to reign in me by faith then, when I find myself in darkness, I will react in my emotions. When my emotions refuse to submit to God, they will control my values. When my emotions are in control, they rule my reactions and control my disposition. If I refuse to allow God to control my emotions, I will either end up with damaged emotions or cause damage to someone else.

Sorting Out the Vile and the Precious

“Therefore thus saith the LORD, If thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt stand before me: and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth...” (Jeremiah 15:19).

Here the Word of God is saying, "If you can understand the difference between speaking the vile and speaking the precious, then you can be as God's mouth." In other words, "It is possible to be as *My mouth*," says the Lord. But for that to happen, there must be a tremendous difference between speaking the vile and speaking that which is precious. A person who speaks what is precious, who speaks words that have a wealth of eternal value, speaks as God's own mouth.

But Hosea 10:13 says, "Ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way." "Eating the fruit of lies" means accepting projections about yourself and about others, and allowing those projections (along with your feelings) to become your value system.

What Have You Been Eating?

"He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?" (Isaiah 44:20).

We have eaten the fruit of lies, and we have trusted in our own way. Now I see this verse in Isaiah 44:20 differently: "He feedeth on *ashes*." Ashes speak of the lower, circumstantial things of life that are created by the dust, the lower part

of our animal nature.” Ashes plague a person who cannot make it in life alone. This person always has to depend on or take care of someone else. I’m not speaking of normal interaction but an unnatural drive to cling to people. Unable to trust God, he is feeding on ashes. A “deceived heart” has turned him aside, and *that* is Satan, the father of lies (John 8:44).

People who feed on ashes cannot deliver their own soul, nor can they be delivered *in* their soul. Is there not a lie in their right hand that they approve of? They always approve of a lie.

I hear comments like, “I’ve got to do this! If I don’t, I’ve let someone down” —that is a lie! People who make statements like that approve of a lie and feed on ashes. They eat the fruit of lies and trust in their own way of doing things.

Israel, in Exodus 20:19, didn’t want to hear directly from God. Instead, they wanted to hear through a man. They knew if they heard from God directly, His voice would come to them out of darkness (Deuteronomy 5:23-28), and they feared lest they should die. Theirs was a fear that revealed their condition, and it prevented them from knowing God intimately.

Go Where God Is

“Then spake Solomon, The Lord said that he would dwell in the thick darkness” (1 Kings 8:12).

In Exodus 20:21, “Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.”

Where is God? He is in *thick darkness*.

Psalms 18:11a, “He made *darkness* his secret place.”

I’ve seen it over and over again. *People do not know how to meet God in thick darkness.*

In Exodus 14:20, the cloud was darkness to Egyptians but light to Israel. If you’re having a problem with darkness, it’s because you’re on the Egyptian side of the Cross!

I received a letter from a pastor in another ministry who loves God deeply and was asking for counsel. After a conspiracy in his church, he had an emotional breakdown and was in an institution for three months. The conspiracy was not caused by adultery or mishandling of finances, but by one elder who had differences with his administration.

After a solid year of hearing our radio broadcast and listening to tapes, the pastor’s wife contacted us first, saying, “The turning point in his deliverance was a message you

spoke from Isaiah 45:3—how believers will find treasures in darkness and hidden riches of secret places.” At first, he couldn’t figure out why, after attending Bible college and working so diligently, that his first ministry, which had grown beautifully, ended up in a conspiracy. But, *he found grace in darkness*. During and after his time in the institution, hearing messages daily on grace and mercy from the Word, he found that God was there in thick darkness. Like Moses, he drew near the thick darkness, God’s *secret* place. Today, this man is a full-time servant of God, and he is doing great.

Chapter 2

A CANDLE IN DARKNESS

A family in our ministry was on their way to a Bible study on a Friday evening when a car ran into them. Their daughter in the back seat was killed. Their son had broken legs. The wife received head injuries and spent several days in the hospital. Her husband could not accept this tragedy except by these truths: God is in this; everything will work together for good; and Jesus Christ will bring an eternal blessing out of the darkness. Today, that family is flourishing in one of our churches.

I want you to see what the Word of God says in Psalm 18:28: "For thou wilt light my candle: the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness." Though the verse doesn't say that the darkness is in the mind, that is the connotation. He will *enlighten* my darkness! Who will fear the Lord and obey the voice of His servant? Who, when he walks in darkness and has no light, will trust

in the name of the Lord and stay upon his God (Isaiah 50:10)? Who, when he has darkness and no light, will fear God and obey the voice of the pastor-teacher? Who, when he has no understanding of his affliction, will still totally trust in the character of God and stay upon Him?

This is the beautiful thing about darkness. Fanny Crosby was totally and permanently blind, yet she wrote verses that painted Finished Work images:

*Perfect submission, perfect delight,
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
Angels descending bring from above
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.**

Her outer world was dark, and her inner world was dark, yet she wrote over eight hundred hymns that still move us deeply today, because she chose to know God in her thick darkness.

Light to Walk in Darkness

I wish you could see with me that it is so important to discover a faith in the God who dwells in darkness, a faith in the God who allows pain. When there is no light, where there is no apparent reason, where there is no understanding: God is there.

Remember this. Job 29:3 said, “When his candle [the human spirit (Proverbs 20:27)] did shine upon my head [my mind],” then, “by his light...”—and God’s Word brings in light (Psalm 119:130)—“...I walked through darkness.” By the Word of God that enters into my soul, I am able to walk through the darkness!

When Job 29:6 says, “I washed my steps with butter,” that means the milk of the Word is churned into substance by meditating on it day and night. Then the Word of God says, “And the rock poured me out rivers of oil,” speaking of a constant filling by the Holy Spirit.

“He setteth an end to darkness, and searcheth out all perfection: the stones of darkness, and the shadow of death” (Job 28:3). Here, the Word says that God puts an end to darkness as He seeks the maturity of His Finished Work revelation in us who were in darkness. Psalm 107:14 says, “He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder.”

In Darkness, Don't Eat the Fruit of Lies

The place where we meet God, the place where God dwells, is the very place where people become familiar. Deceived by the atmos-

phere of the world's system, they feed upon ashes, and their heart is turned aside. They don't even know that they approve of a lie; yet, they eat the fruit of lies and trust in natural, human realities instead of divine propositions.

God wants to instruct us because every one of us will face darkness, and every single individual will face *thick* darkness. In that darkness, God's voice speaks to His people (Deuteronomy 5:23): We hear the voice of His servant, but we fear *God* as we obey the servant's voice.

We have no light; yet, in the angelic contest, we honor God. We *honor* Him. We do not withdraw into negativity. We do not withdraw into reactions. Rather, *we accept the darkness as part of the total plan of Almighty God.*

Job said in chapter 30, verse 26, "When I looked for good, then evil came unto me: and when I waited for light, there came darkness." And in that darkness, Job went through nine terrible months of trials.

"Darkness" can mean that God has postponed His answers to our prayer. It may *appear* as though God is procrastinating. We cannot touch Him by our faith. We cannot feel Him. We cannot sense His presence. Not a single thing makes sense—and there, God dwells.

He may seem to be impersonal. He may seem to be abstract. Four times in the Bible, it appears that God is hiding Himself (Psalms 10:11; 104:29, Isaiah 45:15, Habakkuk 3:4). *Where is He?*

The Word of God makes it clear that God is right there, and only faith in the voice of His Word, only faith in what He says—utter faith and total confidence—begins to give us victory. Then, in comes light *while* we're in that darkness. By that pure light, the candle of God through the Word shines upon our mind.

From the hymn "Blessed Assurance," written by Fanny J. Crosby, 1873.

Chapter 3

THERE IS AN END TO DARKNESS

We walk by faith. We have no 'sight', no evidence that God is working. Often, loved ones do not understand us, and they may go against us. There may be serious domestic problems. You may not have what you desire with all your heart: an answer to prayer. Because of love and because of your desire, everything seems dark. But remember this: God, in Job 28:3, puts an end to the darkness! And in Psalm 107:14, I repeat: God brings His people out of darkness.

In darkness, when a person begins to edify with his tongue, his mouth acts as *the* mouth of God. As the mouth of God, he speaks valuable, precious things. He does not speak from the world of ashes nor from the dungeon of despair. Instead, he expresses the promises of God in a living faith, though everything is against him and God seems to slay him.

I think of the dear family in that terrible car

accident. They wept in my arms, and as they wept they said, "Our daughter is home with Jesus, and God was in this darkness. We discovered treasures of intimacy that we never understood, and that we never even remotely knew. At the hospital and in the funeral parlor, we discovered hidden riches in secret places. Secret riches were in darkness that we could never understand until now."

And that pastor, after suffering a nervous breakdown, became a Finished Work man of God. He discovered secret riches in darkness.

The Word of God says in Psalm 139:12 that darkness and light are alike to God. "Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day." They are the same! There is no difference, from God's viewpoint.

In Psalm 18:28, "...the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness." That is the verse that says, "Circumstances have not changed, but circumstances do not control me." By the light of God's Word, the character of Christ is being formed in me.

We are in a body of death. We are in a body of sin. We're in a world where every single nation has come into judgment. According to 2 Timothy 3, we are living in perilous times,

where men are “lovers of their own selves” more than of God. We are in a time when people have a form of godliness—but only a form—through knowledge. Those same people deny the very power of faith (2 Timothy 3:5). They deny the power of faith in the thick darkness.

Get to Know God in Darkness

I have gotten to know God more in darkness than I ever did in the light. I have gotten to know God more on my knees, weeping and very near to despair—living in the paradox of faith but trusting God, not situations. Then, as I trust Him, obedient to the light that I have, God imparts His character through His promises.

With the impartation of God’s truth comes spiritual reality, and a man’s voice becomes, indeed, the mouth of God. Moses’ voice became the mouth of God. Abraham and Sarah could not conceive their promised son Isaac, and when God postponed that conception until they were old and past age, Abraham believed God, “who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were” (Romans 4:17). The things that were not, were now the things that were happening!

Their faith said, “Though these things have

not happened, they *are* happening. God is in this time when we have to wait.”

God has never let a person down. Jesus Christ will never leave us nor forsake us—not one single time. Not only is God waiting in thick darkness, but also He is waiting to enlighten our darkness. He is waiting to help us walk through it. He’s waiting to teach us to go from faith to faith into a new stage of supernatural trust, a new stage of reliance. He is waiting for us to enter a new stage where we are divorced from the things that are by sight, and we enter into intimacy with the things that are strictly from God. We must not forget this, because every single one of us will face the most unusual adversity.

A well-known writer and servant of God who wrote a great theological work heard that he had terminal cancer. When he was told the prognosis, this man said, “I believe God wants me to write more volumes for Him. I’m willing to go home to be with Him, but He wants me to write more.”

And so, given up to die within a matter of four or five weeks, the Holy Spirit came and beautifully visited him and brought an end to his darkness. God brought him out of that darkness to complete his work. Healed, he lived for

several more years.

Many of you remember the precious pastor Vernon McGee who lived many years after being told he would die. God delivered him from the darkness of death and gave him eighteen more years, even though he had a terminal cancer.

God is in darkness. Don't withdraw into your flesh. Don't withdraw into despair. Don't eat the fruit of lies, and don't feed on ashes. That is not God's will, it is not God's life, and it is *not* God's light.

Remember this: Your character will overcome your circumstances. Your faith will overcome the world system, and Jesus Christ has already overcome your old sin nature.

"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God" (Romans 7:4). We are married to One who has been raised from the dead. Because we have the Spirit of Resurrection (Romans 6:13; 8:11), we are *married* to Him. And because we are, we have power in darkness, power in pain, power in faith, power that can remove mountains.

Speak the Truth in Darkness

God has given us this mystical faith that comes from Himself, and that's why He wants our mouth to be as the mouth of God. Don't speak something vile. Don't speak with words of doubting. Don't speak with words of mistrust. Don't speak with words that uncover your circumstances, and don't energize the plan of the atmosphere to disannul God's *purpose* for the darkness. Instead, remember this:

In that darkness, you will reign in Christ through righteousness and by grace. Reign in reality, not in familiarity. Reign in truth, not in sentimentality. Reign by godly decisions throughout the week. Keep making *godly* decisions.

Then, as the Word of God beautifully says, "...darkness was under his feet" (Psalm 18:9). You are hid with Christ in God (Colossians 3:3); therefore, that darkness is under your feet. You may be *in* it, but it's *under* your feet!

Not only is darkness under your feet, but what is darkness to the world is light to you. You have the light of a living fellowship—a living faith in a living Christ—and you are married to Him.

CONCLUSION

In Isaiah 52:1-2, the Word of God says, "Awake, awake; put on thy strength....Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion." Shake off the dust! Be loosened!

We have an opportunity to gain so much from this message, to drive the stakes into the ground and to establish spiritual gains and spiritual victories. Don't let it pass by, but remember the verses and the words that were given. Ponder and meditate upon them. Wash your steps in the butter of the milk of God's Word as the candle shines upon your mind and as the Rock pours out rivers of oil to make it a reality.

Father, lead us with the presence of truth motivating and manifesting Jesus Christ to us individually, personally. When we are reduced to thick darkness, may we glorify God by the light of faith. In Jesus' name, Amen.