

11052023 Thankful in the Desert..... All of us have had trials that seem like a never ending desert... trials that don't seem to have an end, and what appears to be an end turns out to be a mirage... sometimes our minds play trick with us ...and we can't believe were another trial, because we think we should only have them once in a great while....and when we do they should be over fairly quickly...That thinking is what creates much of our emotional problems in our trials.... Because we think we should be exempt somehow! As if We can determine how many trials we should have and not have...and what kind of trials.....We fantasize that we have the ability somehow to control everything that comes into our lives...

Here are two truths to digest: One I have quite a bit of control what trials I choose to bring into my life by my actions and choices... Two I have far less control of trials that come into my life through the actions of others, evil, nature, my genetics, out of my control circumstances, what God chooses to allow... attacks of the enemy...

Bottom line...as long as I live their will be trouble!!

I have a saying...we are either in a trial, leaving a trial or getting ready to enter a trial....

So Why does God allow trials That seem like deserts...?

Because to take us out of trials and sorrows...he would have to take us out of this world...

NLT John 16:³³ I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."

- *And some day he will...but until then...have peace and take heart*
- **Heart ...means be strong in your mind and emotions...in other words expect this...be stout hearted be prepared...but know Jesus has overcome...He is more powerful...than the trails and**

sorrows that will come upon us...**How? trials and sorrow never has the last word! Jesus does !!**

- The opposite of fear is peace...how? Fear is a flesh thing an emotion attached to this world... based on our circumstances...
- God's peace is based on the spiritual...when I know God is in absolute control and has absolute power to achieve what he desires...I can have a peace that passes my understanding of the situation and circumstance...because it is based on his power and love for us And we win! **and the belief in that is called Faith! in that is ca! And we win!**

*NLT Rom 8:15 So you have not received a **spirit** that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's **Spirit** when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, "Abba, Father." ¹⁶ For his **Spirit** joins with our **spirit** to affirm that we are God's children. ¹⁷ And since we are his children, we are **his heirs**. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory. But if we are to share **his glory**, we must also share **his suffering**. ¹⁸ Yet what **we suffer now** is nothing compared to the **glory he will reveal to us later**.*

- **We must have absolute faith in that! Our Human spirit Receives his Spirit...His spirit is the proof of kinshipthe adopting us as Children of God.. making us heirs of the Kingdom and sharers of the Glory of God in his Kingdom...**
- **But while here on the earthly realm will have suffering like he did here...but later we enter the glory of His Kingdom**
- **And when we do suffer in trials and sorrow here... He will make it work for Good.. because he is able too and cannot be overcome...He does this because he loves us...something I can always give thanks for!!**

²⁸ *And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.*

- **It is a faith issue...faith in Jesus and the word of God...though I see it not in the natural ...I am fully confident ...his plans will be achieved...And because of that...I can be thankful...**

So with that knowledge we can find a place to be joyful in our spirit during trials and sorrow.. it is a faith issue!!

James 1:2 Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. ³ For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.

- *Endurance in what? Faith...faith is tangible (like working out)it is a hard exercise to keep staying in faith in trials and sorrows.. ...and faith becomes stronger as it is exercised ...*
- *The result...*

⁴ *So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.*

- **This exercise through endurance trials with faith...makes you a Faith Beast...so that no matter what happens your faith is rock solid!!**
- *NIVGal 3: 11.....“the righteous will live by faith.”*

The situation that James is addressing... as all trials have context...

These Jewish believers were at the heart of the Resurrection...the church was blowing up! It was the best of times in one way...then it all went north east south and west.....Hence his letter.....

James 1:1 This letter is from James,— James the Just, the half-brother of Jesus (Mark 6:3), who initially was unbelieving but later came to faith

after encountering the risen Jesus.. emerged as the leader of the church movement in Jerusalem (Acts 15:13). His audience is comprised of Jewish believers. Those described as “dispersed abroad” those believers who suffered under the first great persecution of the church. Led by Saul against the Jewish believers

NLT Acts 8:records, 8:1 Saul was one of the witnesses, and he agreed completely with the killing of Stephen A great wave of persecution began that day, sweeping over the church in Jerusalem; and all the believers except the apostles were scattered through the regions of Judea and Samaria. ³ But Saul was going everywhere to destroy the church.....

⁴ But the believers who were scattered preached the Good News about Jesus wherever they went.

So here is where we learn to be thankful.... When we are miles miles away from where we thought we would be...thought we should be...

James say trials teach us to endure in our faith...to exercise faith in every situation...this is also an opportunity to practice gratefulness or express great joy! **By taking a mature perspective in our trials...How?**

- By not choosing to go sideways because of your disappointment, sorrow in the trial....the length of the trial...the crushing circumstances of the trial... rejoice that you still walk in faith.....no matter what**
- Walking in faith does not take away the trials and all the sorrows of life..it gives us the strength to bear up..and keep moving... as Peter says...**

NLT 1peter 1:6 So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while. ⁷ These trials will show

that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world. ⁸ You love him even though you have never seen him. Though you do not see him now, you trust him; and you rejoice with a glorious, inexpressible joy. ⁹ The reward for trusting him will be the salvation of your souls.

- **We are on the journey toward heaven the eternal...while living in a body and in a world that is destined to end...**
- **But the opposite is happening spiritually or inwardly we are growing...day by day...incrementally... and getting closer to our destiny...scattering everywhere we go, the fragrance of Jesus...to a world in desperate need...**
- **So We must engage the worldbut engage it in our peripheral vision ...not our focused vision.**

- **Here is a warning...**

1JN 2:28 And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming.

- **Though his children...we can be ashamed at his coming? How by being so focused on our trials and sorrows that we lose focus of the bigger picture and are ruled by our circumstances as if they have the final say.**
- ***How does this happen.* When we think we should be exempt from certain kinds of trials and sorrow in this life...but it is a much bigger and much future receiving....we fall in a trap...**

For it is in the journey in trials that most of our encounters with God's power and presence and plans take place.

Abraham and Sarah had to leave the security their home in the Ur of the Chaldees to journey toward the promised land....because he was promised amazing things by God...

12 The LORD had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.”² “I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.³ I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.

- **Beautiful, inspiring, incredible compelling promises.... Yet At the end of Abraham’s life all he owned was the burial plot he had purchased for Sarah.**

Gen23:1 Sarah lived to be a hundred and twenty-seven years old.² She died at Kiriath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham went to mourn for Sarah and to weep over her.³ Then Abraham rose from beside his dead wife and spoke to the Hittites. He said,⁴ “I am a foreigner and stranger among you. Sell me some property for a burial site here so I can bury my dead.”

- **But God only promised to show him the land and he did... he wandered throughout the promised Land...but never received it in this life...**
- **The great nation part would be way in the future, along with the blessings to come from his lineage.....namely Jesus.**
- **So as he matured in faith...with a number of failings...he began to understand the bigger picture ...He considered himself a wanderer and a foreigner...**

But the end of his story is not the end of the story ...all his promise to Abraham came true...just not in his lifetime...

NLT Gal 3:6..... “Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith.” ⁷ *The real children of Abraham, then, are those who put their faith in God.*

⁸ *What’s more, the Scriptures looked forward to this time when God would make the Gentiles right in his sight because of their faith. God proclaimed this good news to Abraham long ago when he said, “All nations will be blessed through you.”*

¹⁶ *God gave the promises to Abraham and his child. And notice that the Scripture doesn’t say “to his children,” as if it meant many descendants. Rather, it says “to his child”—and that, of course, means Christ.*

Abraham...Isaac ...Jacob...Judah...Jesus...one child!

²⁶ *For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus.*

²⁹ *And now that you belong to Christ, you are the true children of Abraham. You are his heirs, and God’s promise to Abraham belongs to you.*

• **Be Thankful...but there is more every promise in Jesus is for us**

NIV 1 Cor 2:20 For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God. 21 Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, 22 set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

Every promise is a yes in Jesus... not maybe but yes...you have to wait for them... Let me give you some promises:

The humble He will exalt...The Proud he will humble 1 peter 5:5

To all that call on the name of the Lord he will save Rom 10:13

To His lost he will find...To His hurting he will help

He will answer every prayer according to his will it

He has promised us a new beginning every day

He promised if we hear his voice today...he will save today

He promised the sick he will comfort them

He has promised to the generous he will give generously...He has promised his children to do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine

He has promised To the compassionate he will show

compassion...he has promised to the repentant he will restore them

He promised the weary and heavy burdened that if you come to him he will give you rest

He promised to show us a way out of temptation

He promised if we confess our sin he will forgive and cleanse us...

He will work all things for our good...turning tragedy into Triumph

He has promised to never leave us or forsake us

He has promised to wipe every tear from our eyes

To those who believe will never be put to shame...He has promised that he has overcome the world

He has promised that nothing is too hard for him...He has promised to not forget to forget my sins

He has promised that the moment we leave this body...we will be in His presence

He promised the devil cannot harm us

To those that love him, He has promised to bless our families for a thousand generations

He has promised to hear all our prayers

He has promised to answer all our prayers according to his will

What is sown will be reaped...What he starts he will finish

All things will work for the good of his children

He will never leave nor forsake us...He is our shield

He has promised that His word is true...the bible

He is our great reward...yet will reward us for all we do in his name..... He will discipline us for our good

He is preparing a place in heaven for us and will come and take us to be with him there

He has promised there to wipe away every tear from our eyes ...He has promised us a place where sin and death no longer exist

He has promised us a joy unending...He has promised us a new heaven and a new earth with him ...a home of complete righteousness

- **You can't help the promises of God.....You can't hurry the promises of God**
- **and you cannot figure out how the promises will be fulfilled but you can...**
- **believe the promises....depend on the promises... wait on the promise...You can walk in faith daily**
- *How do we walk in this faith....Pass out communion.*

*NLT Hebrews 12:2 We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he **endured** the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne. 3 Think of all the hostility he **endured** from sinful people; then you won't become weary and give up*

So we celebrate with Thankfulness what Jesus did for us...going to the cross to remove our sin... that which separated us...to unite us..and the joy of fulfilling all the promises to us ...as we await his return for their full completion...

NLT 1 Cor11: 23 For I pass on to you what I received from the Lord himself. On the night when he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took some bread ²⁴ and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broke it in pieces and said, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance

of me.”²⁵ *In the same way, he took the cup of wine after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood.*

- ***Fulfilled the Abraham promise now will fulfill his COVENANT WITH US....***

Do this in remembrance of me as often as you drink it.”²⁶ For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are announcing the Lord’s death until he comes again.

Leave here today knowing that every promise God has made ...He will keep...Nothing will be left undone... We have discovered that to walk in relationship with God one must exercise faith... Faith is the unshakeable belief that God will do everything He has promised to do even before there is visible evidence to that effect.

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