

## SOMETIMES IT GETS WORSE BEFORE IT GETS BETTER

MAY 10, 2020

If you're a praying person, like I am, you know all too well, that the answer to prayer can be YES, NO, or WAIT. We rejoice when the answer is yes. Earlier this week, I was making up for not walking much the previous day, by taking a 5 mile trek. I prayed and asked God to give me strength. As I approached the half-way point, the point where I would turn around for the 2.5 miles back to my home, one of my favorite, high-tempo gospel songs came on. I jogged about a block listening to it as I was reinvigorated with energy to finish my walk. The answer to my prayer was YES, and I was grateful.



When the answer is WAIT, it can really seem like NO. We wonder, we come up with different scenarios in our own minds. We pray some more, we wait. If you're like me you consider what you can do because the answer must be, no. I find that I am constantly having to keep Kim in-check. I tell myself, "Stop." "Breathe." "Don't be petty." "Chill." "Stop trying to fix it." "You have prayed about it, now leave it alone." "Think of all the prayers God has answered in your favor." "Get behind me Satan." The gamut. It's so easy to pray then act, but I believe God prefers that we pray then wait. Well, for how long?

In the Old Testament Book of 1 Samuel, we read about King David. In 1 Samuel 16 we read that the Lord rejected Saul as king and he sent Samuel out to locate and anoint a new king. He sends him to Jesse, one of his sons will be king of Israel to succeed Saul. Jesse had nearly exhausted all of his sons, never considering that his youngest son, David, would be the one God had chosen. (v. 12) We do not know his exact age, but he is described as "glowing with health and had a fine appearance and handsome features." David is taken to King Saul who likes him and makes him one of his armour bearers. Remember, however, David had been anointed king. Saul is stricken with an

evil spirit that taunts him. He learns that David can play the lyre and it's music soothes his spirit -- but isn't David supposed to be the new king? We read in the 17th chapter and the giant Philistine, Goliath who came for forty days straight to taunt the Israelites. Finally, in verse 32, David decides to fight him. Saul tells him no, because he is only a young man. But David goes, in the name of the Lord, and defeats Goliath. Saul becomes worried about David's apparent strength and favor with God and wants him dead. We read 1 Samuel Chapters 18 - 31, then 2 Samuel 1- 5 as David is on the run from Saul. He hides in pastures, in caves, in the mountains, in the dessert - he asks, Saul's son Johnathan, "What have I done? What is my crime? How have I wronged your father, that he is trying to kill me?" This continues until finally we read, "David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years." (2 Samuel 5:4)

Biblical scholars estimate David was on the run for 14 or 15 years. He was anointed king then had to run for his life. Life definitely got worse before it got better. We can learn from this that God wants us to remain faithful to Him. He does not want us to sin while we wait. He wants us to be patient and realize that He is in control. Sometimes his work takes time. As David waited, I am sure he learned a great deal, he may have preferred to learn those things in a different way, but God knows best.

I know this is never what we want to hear, but quite often things do worsen before they get better. We can be comforted, in whatever our circumstances, through God's Word as He promises better days ahead.

~1 Peter 5:7 ESV

Casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.

~Jeremiah 29:11 ESV

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

~Philippians 4:6-7 ESV

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

~Isaiah 41:10 ESV

Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.