

Wednesday Night Bible Study October 18, 2023 Lesson 5

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Queens Chapel

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Lesson 5

"God is With Me in My Valleys"

18 October 2023

"Even though I walk through the
darkest valley, I will fear no evil,
for you are with me."

Psalm 23:4a (NIV)

In Israel, on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, there's a canyon called the Valley of Death. In his day, King David probably traveled through it many times.

Some explorers declared that some of the canyons along this road were narrow at the bottom and as tall as 800 feet. In fact, the only time one could see the sunshine at the bottom was at noon when the sun was directly overhead.

In the Bible, valleys metaphorically describe our times/seasons of darkness, defeat, discouragement, hopelessness, or depression.

"Dear friends, don't be surprised or shocked that you are going through testing that is like walking through fire."

1 Peter 4:12 (Contemporary English Version CEV)

"Even though I walk through the
darkest valley, I will fear no evil,
for you are with me."

Psalm 23:4a (NIV)

Psalm 23:4a teaches us that God is God on the Mountaintop experiences and in the valley experiences

Take this time to share with someone a mountaintop experience and a valley experience that took place in your life

Valleys are a part of life (they're impartial)

- Good things happen to bad people
- Bad things happen to good people

We're in a fallen and broken world

- No one's immune to bad things happening
- Nobody's insulated from pain
- Nobody sails through life pain and problem-free

Valleys are a part of life. They're inevitable

- You either just came out of a valley or you're in the middle of one right now or you're headed into another one because that's life.
- Jesus even said you can't avoid valleys, Instead, you can count on them invading your life.

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

John 16:33 (NIV)

- Yet, we can place our trust in Jesus because He has "overcome the world."

"The righteous person faces many troubles, but the LORD comes to the rescue each time."

Psalms 34:19 (NLT)

Valleys are unpredictable

You can't plan them; you can't time them. Problems typically catch you off guard. In fact, your valleys and your problems usually come at the worst time:

- When you're unprepared and when it's inconvenient. Wouldn't it be easier if you could schedule all your valleys in life?

"Don't brag about tomorrow, since you don't know what the day will bring."

Proverbs 27:1 (NLT)

The Bible is filled with stories about valleys. Each one represents common troubles we face.

Valley of Eshcol [ess-coll]

Numbers 13:23 (NLT)

"When they came to the valley of Eshcol, they cut down a branch with a single cluster of grapes so large that it took two of them to carry it on a pole between them! They also brought back samples of the pomegranates and figs."

- The cluster of grapes was so large that it took two men to carry it.
- They had just seen the Promised Land—the land of opportunity
- But then their tone changed

Numbers 12:32-33

31 But the other men who had explored the land with him disagreed. "We can't go up against them! They are stronger than we are!"

32 So they spread this bad report about the land among the Israelites: "The land we traveled through and explored will devour anyone who goes to live there. All the people we saw were huge.

33 We even saw giants there, the descendants of Anak. Next to them we felt like grasshoppers, and that's what they thought, too!"

- The Israelites faced a decision: Will we enter the Promised Land and claim what God has given us, or will we back off in fear, shame, and doubt?

Q = How would you respond when you're in an Eshcol Valley, faced with a decision to move forward by faith or to back off in fear?

Q = Will we see the Valley as an obstacle or an opportunity?

- Caleb and Joshua saw an opportunity—**Numbers 12:30**

"But Caleb tried to quiet the people as they stood before Moses. "Let's go at once to take the land," he said. "We can certainly conquer it!"

Q = Is there an area in your life where you are hesitating to move forward?

The Key to Overcoming Every Fear You Face **by Joyce Meyer**

Fear is a tool the devil uses against us to make us miserable and destroy our lives. It begins as a thought and then creates emotions that can rule us. It often becomes a strong, intense feeling that tries to move us to make a foolish action or tries to prevent us from doing something that would be good for us. Because it's such a common way that Satan attacks people's lives, I think of it as the master spirit he uses to manipulate people and keep them out of God's will.

When we become born again through a relationship with Jesus Christ, we actually become ...recreated in Christ Jesus, [born anew] that we may do good works which God predestined...for us...[living the good life which He prearranged and made ready for us to live] (Ephesians 2:10).

So whatever Jesus is, we are too. He is strong, and in Him, we are strong. He is

courageous; in Him, we are courageous. He is a conqueror, so we can be too. He has peace and joy, so we have peace and joy. He's capable and bold. In Christ, we can do whatever we need to do with His boldness.

As you study the Bible and meditate on what God says about you, you will be able to recognize the fears in your life that are holding you back and overcome them by seeing yourself in Christ. Then you will find you have whatever you need to do what you are created to do.

<https://joycemeyer.org/everydayanswers/the-key-to-overcoming-every-fear-you-face?>

The Valley of Eshcol [ess-col] represents "*the fear of moving forward.*"

"Even though I walk through the
darkest valley, I will fear no evil,
for you are with me."

Psalm 23:4a (NIV)

Valley of Elah [el-ah]

1 Samuel 17:1-11 (NLT)

1 The Philistines now mustered their army for battle and camped between Socoh in Judah and Azekah at Ephes-dammim. 2 Saul countered by gathering his Israelite troops near the valley of Elah. 3 So the Philistines and Israelites faced each other on opposite hills, with the valley between them.

4 Then Goliath, a Philistine champion from Gath, came out of the Philistine ranks to face the forces of Israel. He was over nine feet tall! 5 He wore a bronze helmet, and his bronze coat of mail weighed 125 pounds. 6 He also wore bronze leg armor, and he carried a bronze javelin on his shoulder. 7 The shaft of his spear was as heavy and thick as a weaver's beam, tipped with an iron spearhead that weighed 15 pounds. His armor bearer walked ahead of him carrying a shield.

8 Goliath stood and shouted a taunt across to the Israelites. "Why are you all coming out to fight?" he called. "I am the Philistine champion, but you are only the servants of Saul. Choose one man to come down here and fight me! 9 If he kills me, then we will be your slaves. But if I kill him, you will be our slaves! 10 I defy the armies of Israel today! Send me a man who will fight

me!" 11 When Saul and the Israelites heard this, they were terrified and deeply shaken.

- The Valley of Elah is where David met the Giant Goliath
- David's response, even though he was just a shepherd boy, was that he was not afraid, he was willing to face the demonic force.

Elah is the Valley where we've come face to face with demonic challenges, forces, or opponent that could take you out.

Ephesians 6:12

"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places."

Q = Have you gone through a Valley of Elah? How did God help you face the forces of evil? How did the experience impact your faith?

Valley of Baca [ba-cha]

- In Hebrew, the word baca means **weeping**. So, the Valley of baca is the Valley of Weeping
- The Valley of Baca was a dry and dusty wasteland, but if you wanted to go to Jerusalem as a pilgrim, you had to most likely pass through the Valley of Baca.

When your joy and gladness dried up, that's when you're in your own Valley of Baca.

- Nothing seems to grow there
- Nothing seems productive
- It's a place where you feel abandoned—especially by God

Good News:

Psalm 84:5-9 (English Standard Version ESV)

5 Blessed are those whose strength is in you, in whose heart are the highways to Zion.

6 As they go through the Valley of Baca they make it a place of springs; the early rain also covers it with pools.

- God will turn your tears into refreshing waters

Psalm 30:4-5 (English Standard Version ESV)

4 Sing praises to the Lord, O you his saints, and give thanks to his holy name.

5 For his anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.

We may not be in the Valley of the Shadow of Death like David mentions in **Psalm 23...**

“Even though I walk through the
darkest valley, I will fear no evil,
for you are with me.”

Psalm 23:4a (NIV)

We may be in another valley. Either way, these are hard places, where it's easy to doubt or overlook God's goodness. But you can always trust that God is in the valley with you

Three things to remember when we're in the Valley**1 Remember: You are not alone:**

- Sooner or later the shadow of death is going to cross our lives. You may lose your mom or dad, a brother or sister, your spouse, or a friend. The shadows we face seem scary, but the truth is they are often bigger than the real thing.
- A shadow is an image without substance. There cannot be a shadow without a light

- Remember, the shadows in our lives are evidence of the presence of The Light in our lives

Q = How do we deal with the Shadow?

- We turn our backs to the shadow and look at the Light

"Once again Jesus spoke to the people. This time he said,
"I am the light for the world! Follow me, and you won't be
walking in the dark. You will have the light that gives life."

John 8:12 (Contemporary English Version CEV)

- When we're going through a tunnel, how do we make it through? We focus our eyes on the light at the end and keep moving towards it.

"When you go through deep waters, I will be with you.
When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown.
When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not
be burned up; the flames will not consume you."

Isaiah 43:2 (NLT)

2 Remember: God has a good purpose for your valley

- God cannot do evil. Even when we're facing problems, conflict, grief, fear, or failure, God is at work creating good from your valley.
- God is not only with you in the valleys; God also strengthens us to make it through.

3 Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings,
knowing that suffering produces endurance,
4 and endurance produces character, and character
produces hope,
5 and hope does not put us to shame, because God's
love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy
Spirit who has been given to us.

Romans 5:3-5 (English Standard Version ESV)

- Until we get to heaven, we're going to face valleys: accidents, disappointments, financial problems, family issues, mental illness, and physical disease.
- For a follower of Jesus Christ, going through a valley is different, not because of the absence of shadows, but the presence of the Shepherd.

Even though I walk through the
darkest valley, I will fear no evil,
for you are with me."

Psalm 23:4a (NIV)

3 Remember: The reward will last forever

16 That is why we never give up. Though our bodies are dying, our spirits are being renewed every day.

17 For our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever!

2 Corinthians 4:16-17 (NLT)

- We're going to be rewarded for being faithful to Christ while in the Valleys. When we pass from this life into eternity, we'll wonder why we complained so much, or why we worried, or why we felt defeated.
- Remember: All valleys are temporary when seen in the Light of Christ grace, mercy, and power. We all have a decision to make—trust Christ or yourself

Joel 3:14 English Standard Version (ESV)

"Multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of decision
For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.