



# WAITING

## Devotional #2

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Since High School I have wanted a husband and children. I thought when I was younger that this shouldn't require faith. I just assumed it would happen. I didn't ask God about His plan. I wasn't seeking His authorship. I was just trying to think of reasonable time frames. A *reasonable* God, would follow the plans I had made. The longer I waited the more I suspected that God did not have a plan for me. I have been asking for over a decade now: What is the purpose of me being alone? I've received a lot of advice, none of it ill-intentioned. Most of it (given by friends and family just trying to help alleviate my pain) can be condensed into the following 5 ideas:

- You need to get out more.
- You need to take better care of yourself.
- You're too picky.
- Don't think about it, and it will happen.
- There is a reason for everything.

I have tried to focus on all of these suggestions at one time or another over the last decade with little success. Like me, the Israelites were waiting too. They were waiting for Messiah and, like it or not, there was no given timeline. They needed faith. *Our* reasons are not God's reasons. It is arrogant to think so, and it has brought me nothing but sadness to try to impose my own will. Let's imagine these statements expressed to the Hebrew people waiting for their Savior:

**You need to get out more - *You are not in the right place.***

If you are seeking God, listening for his voice, and obeying by faith what you hear from Him, then you **are** in the right place. The Israelites did very little choosing of their situation before Jesus came, but they did have a choice of where to place their hearts. Just like God isn't keeping me from a marriage because I didn't attend a certain lifegroup, bar, or social gathering, God is big enough to meet His people anywhere. He is an author, and He is invested in our stories as much as we are.

**You need to take better care of yourself - *God will move when you make the right change.***

This is a lie that I struggle with constantly in my situation, and it's also the lie that kept many Pharisees and Sadducees from seeing who Jesus was when He came. It isn't about still sinning while seeking God. But the idea that we need to be holy enough for God to rescue us is a lie. This was the devout Jew's focus: To prove themselves pure enough so that the Messiah would come. God was planning since the beginning of time to send His Son (Genesis 3:15). In my personal wait, I don't need to meet some bar of worthiness before God provides me with my husband and family. It would be against God's nature. God does not give us good things because of how we perform. God gives us good things because HE is kind. HE is good and wonderful. A messiah who came insisting on a people only at their best would not be from the mysterious, compassionate and reckless God that I know.

**You're too picky - *God's plan can't be that good.***

There are certain parameters that are non-negotiable and others that aren't. For me, after waiting this long, my bar is set at a man who loves Jesus more than anything; someone who will seek His will with me above everything else. In a way that has both raised and lowered the bar! I used to be looking for someone who I was attracted to who shared all my interests. Then I was willing to settle with "He goes to church on Sunday." Not anymore! The Jews waiting for Jesus had a similar struggle. They were looking for a warrior, a political leader – someone with prestige and wealth. They wanted someone to stand against the Romans, free them from taxes, and give them back the land they were promised. What they needed to be looking for was a man who was utterly surrendered to Adonai. Then they would have seen Jesus right away as the liberator of their souls; a prospect much grander than they could imagine.

**Just don't think about it - *Your over focus is stopping it from happening.***

This advice is so confusing. Have you ever tried to not think about something important to you? Try not to think about a savior when your family is being oppressed and controlled by Romans. Try not thinking about marriage when everyone around you is having babies and making plans. Try not to think about the elephant in the room. However, I do understand the motive behind this advice. The purest intention of this advice is that we need to trust that God is in control. Jews hundreds of years before Jesus came believed that He would eventually arrive. Although many lived their lives in expectation, many did not. Many turned from God because he wouldn't give them what they wanted when they wanted it. Just like the servants waiting for the return of the master, our lamps must be lit with expectation (Luke 12:35-40), but the servants would not weep every hour that He did not come. Waiting in peace is a gift and a practice that we all need because God keeps His promises, but His time is not our time. His ways are not our ways.

**There is a reason for everything - *Someday you will understand why.***

God promises us many things, but perfect understanding is not one of them. I would never be dramatic enough to compare my life to Job, but his story gives us a great perspective on understanding:

*I know that you can do all things;*

*no purpose of yours can be thwarted.*

*You asked, 'Who is this that obscures my plans without knowledge?'*

*Surely I spoke of things I did not understand,*

*things too wonderful for me to know.*

*Job 42:2-3 NIV*

I will be the first to admit I do not know the reason I am waiting. I would bet that the Israelites did not know either. However, our comfort does not come from the promise of understanding. It comes from the promise that His ways are best and that He *does* have a plan.

I do not know the reasons or timelines. All assumptions have been stripped from me over the years, and the only thing left is my God; He is my very great reward. All else comes to an end. All else is limited, but the Author of our story. For the Israelites and for us, Jesus was worth waiting for. He changed everything. And those that endured were rewarded with His presence then, now and to come.

### **Questions:**

1. When have you struggled the most with waiting?
2. What piece of advice have you heard the most in your waiting? Does your response fit into God's plan?