

"In It with Me"

Jesus Is Lord



Devotional

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Devotional:

In It with Me

As I consider my life, I'm so grateful that during the toughest and darkest times of my life, I saw that Jesus Christ was right there. HE was in it with me. Here's a free devotional sharing with you some of the Scriptures that I still rely on today to remind me that I don't have to face the trials of my life alone, that Jesus Christ is in it me.

Immanuel – GOD with us.

Introduction

Are you're feeling anxious, afraid, or overwhelmed? Perhaps you've been experiencing or witnessing difficulty to such an extent that you're wondering "where is GOD?" if you answered "yes" to any of these questions, then this 4-day devotional is for you! Over the next 4 days, we'll look at specific Bible passages that answer the question of "where is GOD?" during our toughest times. Not only will we look at these examples, but we'll see how we can take comfort from those situations knowing that Jesus, The Christ, is Immanuel: GOD with us – and HE is in it with us.

Day 1

Are you feeling anxious? Worried? Alone? Maybe you're experiencing cycles of emotional turmoil or distress? You are not alone. As a result of the many things that have happened and is still happening in the world today, many believers, and unbelievers alike, are feeling anxious, stressed, emotionally outdone, and a host of other uncomfortable emotions that seem to fly more and more out of control with every news report or social media post.

Outside of the things that are impacting believers globally, there may be things that you are facing personally from day-to-day.

You may be asking, "Where is GOD in all of this?" Or maybe thinking, "Because so much is happening with the pandemic and the natural disasters increasingly occurring across the globe, does this mean GOD has abandoned us?"

Don't worry. Don't be afraid. In these times of mass anxiety, confusion, illness, and even death, it's common to wonder and many have asked these very questions. If not asked openly, surely some have thought these same thoughts. Can I further assure you that the former season

where the pandemic dominated the way we lived our lives is now over? We are in a time now where the pandemic is declining, and GOD is blessing HIS people with favor and prosperity.

Nevertheless, whether regarding this pandemic or the next tragedy to face us, the good news is that GOD, our Father, knew that troubling times would come upon the Earth and that we would have these questions. HE is not angry that we have these questions, rather HE wants us to know that HE cares and that we have the right answers to them.

GOD provided the answer to the question: “Where is GOD?”, in HIS Word so that we might understand and find comfort in our times of trouble. Whether the trouble facing us is global or personal.

What is GOD’s response to this question?

The Bible tells us in no uncertain terms 1) GOD is with us and 2) GOD will never leave us nor abandon us. Matthew 1:23; Deuteronomy 31:8

The Bible tells us that Jesus, our Lord, and Savior, is not so far removed from us that HE doesn’t know, can’t relate or have never felt what we feel. Quite the opposite. Hebrews 4:15 declares “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.” Jesus felt what we feel and HE sympathizes with us. He is compassionate toward us.

Perhaps you may be thinking you’re all alone in your emotional turmoil or distress, but know that Jesus is right in it with you. It is your spiritual enemy, Satan, that wants you to think that this dark, uncertain-feeling place that you’re in, you’re in alone – but you are not. Jesus is in the midst of it with you. He feels what you’re feeling. He sees and knows the thoughts you’re having. Jesus sees, HE knows and HE cares.

Over the next few days, we’ll continue to look at several passages of Scripture that I used to personally navigate the tough times of my life. Scriptures that let me and you know that GOD is with us in the midst of our most distressed, depressing, and darkest times.

Scripture References:

Matthew 1:23 ESV

Deuteronomy 31:8 ESV

Hebrews 4:15 ESV

Day 2

In the book of Daniel, Chapter 3, we read about 3 young men named Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These 3 young men were officials (similar to what we know as mayors or governors) over the Province of Babylon during the reign of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were Hebrew, of the tribe of Judah. They were children of GOD and therefore did not worship other GODs, even while living outside of their native land.

King Nebuchadnezzar did not follow the ways of the GOD. He worshipped other GODs as his heart so desired. Not only did he worship them, but he also commanded that the people under his reign do the same, at his command.

We read at Daniel, Chapter 3, that King Nebuchadnezzar made a huge, golden statue – 90 ft. tall and 9 ft. wide – and commanded that all Babylon bow down to it when the music plays. He also decreed that whoever does not bow down and worship the statue will immediately be thrown into a furnace of blazing fire.

During the dedication ceremony of the golden statue, the King's men played the music and all the people bowed down to it according to the King's decree. That is, all the people, except Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

It was reported to the King that 3 of his officials: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, did not obey his command to bow down to the golden statue that he had erected. Immediately the King became furious and commanded that they be brought to him. Once the young men were brought in front of the King, the King instructed them to bow down to the golden statue. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego responded that they would not. After denying the King a second time, the King commanded that the young men be thrown into the furnace. Because he was so angry, the King commanded the furnace be turned up seven times hotter than usual. The fire in the furnace was so hot that it killed those that opened the doors for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to enter.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego went into the furnace with the conviction that they would still not bow down to the golden statue the King erected. Everyone, including the King expected the 3 young officials to have been killed by the fire, just like those that had escorted them to their supposed doom. But, when the King looked into the fiery furnace, he said to those closest to him, "Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?" When they answered "yes", the King said, "But I see four men unbound, walking amid the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a Son of the gods."

Look at what the King says, "I see four men walking in the midst of the fire ... and the fourth is like a Son of the gods."

King Nebuchadnezzar saw The Lord, Jesus Christ, amid the fire with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

Isn't that mind-blowing? And isn't this a powerful message: The Lord will walk right in the fire with HIS people? The Bible doesn't tell us that the King saw a fourth person standing along the outside of the furnace or that he saw a fourth person hovering above the young men walking in the fire. It says that HE (Jesus) *walked in the fire with them*.

What this tells us is that The Lord will also walk with us in, during, and through our fiery trials. Whether those trials are emotional, mental, physical, or spiritual, The Lord will be right in the midst of them walking beside you.

Just as with the 3 young officials, Jesus doesn't stand alongside observing you as you walk through the trials of your life, not floating somewhere above your issue, but HE is right there where you are – feeling what you feel, keeping you safe, and caring for you.

Isn't it amazing to know that we serve a GOD that is familiar with our trials and is not afraid is to get right down in the midst of them with us – no matter how hot or "fiery" the situation may be?

Hallelujah!

Scripture References:

Daniel 3:24-25

Daniel 3:1-28

Day 3

In the Book of John, Chapter 11 we read about the death of a man named Lazarus of Bethany. Lazarus was the brother of Martha and Mary, 2 of the women that followed Jesus' ministry throughout Jerusalem. The Bible says Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus.

One day as Jesus walked throughout Jerusalem preaching and teaching the Word of GOD, the sisters sent word to HIM that Lazarus had fallen ill and for HIM to come quickly. Instead of going, Jesus sent word back to them that Lazarus' sickness would not lead to death, but that it is for the Glory of GOD – so that the Son of GOD may be glorified through it. Jesus knew Lazarus was sick, but HE didn't immediately run to heal him, HE remained in Jerusalem. *(Have you ever cried out to Jesus, and HE not come to deliver you right then and there? I know I have. There were times Jesus let me stand in the storm. Just like HE responded to the sisters, HIS delay is not so that we perish or be overcome by our illness or issue, but rather that glory of GOD may be revealed to us and through us and as a result, cause others to also give glory to GOD.)*

After just a little while, Jesus decided to go to Judea (where Lazarus was) because by this time Lazarus has died. Jesus says to HIS disciples, "Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him."

As Jesus traveled to Bethany before HE reached the Village, Martha came out to where Jesus was, then Mary came out just a bit later. The Bible reads at vs. 33-35, "When Jesus saw Mary weeping, and the Jews who had come with her weeping, HE was deeply moved in HIS spirit and greatly troubled. And HE said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to HIM, 'Lord come and see.' Jesus wept."

Jesus wept? If you're like me, you're wondering or wondered what would make Jesus, The Christ, The Savior of the world, weep?

If we look back at the passage of Scripture, we see clearly the answer to that question. We see that Jesus was deeply moved (emotionally) by the weeping of those HE loved and that caused HIM to weep.

So, even though Jesus knew in just little while HE would resurrect Lazarus from the dead, when HE FELT the deep sorrow the people were feeling, HE was moved to tears. HE was *in* the sorrow with them, *in* the distress with them, *in* the feeling of despair with them and HE wept with them. HE felt what they felt.

JESUS is so compassionate and empathetic toward us that our sadness, our grief, our burdens deeply affect HIM and compels HIM to walk with us in the midst of the situation, the trial, and/or the loss. HE is so concerned about us and connected to us that HE also feels when we experience deep grief, loss, emotional turmoil, etc. The Bible also says HE is near the broken-hearted and saves the crushed in spirit. (Psalm 34:18)

We have read over the last 3 days examples of instances where Jesus was with the ones suffering, not from the position of being on the outside looking in, but from the inside – walking right alongside them, feeling what they felt. Just as HE is not on the outside of our lives, our situations, our trauma looking in. He was *in it me* and HE's *in it with you*. **Right now!**

Jesus was present with the 3 young officials in the fire, HE was with Martha and Mary in their distress, in the turmoil, in the despair – knowing that in just a little while HE would deliver each of them safely the dark places they were in. For those we read about, they were actual dark places.

But maybe for you, that dark place is mental, emotional, physical, or spiritual. Maybe for you that dark place is anxiety, brokenness, emotional turmoil, distress, heartbreak or trauma. Whatever the dark place is, take comfort knowing that YES, JESUS will deliver you safely from that place of turmoil. Also know this, if HE doesn't bring you out immediately, HE will walk in the midst of it with you until HE does.

Isn't it amazing to know that we serve a GOD that even though HE knows HE is going to solve our problem, provide us relief, and make us whole in just a little while – HE is still moved by our suffering? HE feels what we feel. HE experiences what we experience. HE is Immanuel! HE is GOD with us! Jesus is in it with us!

Isn't that good news?

Hallelujah!

Scripture References:

John 11:33-35 ESV

John 11:11-44 ESV

Psalm 34:18 ESV

Day 4

Finally, in Psalm 139, a question is posed that we all should ponder and evaluate in times of trouble, anxiety, fear, emotional distress and/or turmoil to find comfort.

When we are feeling alone, anxious, overwhelmed, emotionally outdone, we should think about the question asked in Psalm 139: where shall I flee from YOUR Presence? In other words: Where can I ever go, and YOU will NOT be there?? Where can I go emotionally, spiritually, or physically that YOU will not be there?

Psalm 139 reads, “If I ascend to heaven, YOU are there! If I make my bed in Sheol (Hell), YOU are there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and YOUR right hand shall hold me.”

In this passage, the writer isn’t speaking of actually sprouting wings and flying away or swimming to the deepest depths of the sea and knowing that The Lord is there. He is speaking of the spiritual and emotional highs and lows he’s experienced and the confidence he’s gained because of those experiences. Because of his experiences, the writer is saying “during my highest, most joyful, light-filled moments, I know it’s YOUR hand leading me there, and during my darkest, heaviest, scariest, most-suffocating moments, I know YOUR hand will hold me.”

What I love about this passage is, just like the others we’ve read these past days, it shows GOD in the midst of our lives with us. The writer didn’t stop at noting that he couldn’t escape GOD’s presence, but rather he went on to talk about how GOD interacted with him in both good times and bad. The writer tells of GOD being with him in the midst of his life and not just existing around the edges of his life.

The take-away message in these verses is so powerful because not only does it speak to the faith that the writer had in The Lord, but it also tells us that we, too, can trust that The Lord will be there for us if *we just put our faith in HIM!* We can take comfort in knowing that The Lord will lead us to great highs (times of celebration!) and guide us through our emotional lows (trauma, loss, heartbreak, etc.). Regardless of the situation, just like we read in Psalm 139, we can rest assured that The Lord is with us, no matter where we go.

As with those that we’ve read about over the last few days, we can take comfort knowing that we are never alone no matter the spiritual, mental, or emotional turmoil we may find ourselves in. Whether it be crushing pain, mentally exhausting anxiety, or the heaviness and confusion of stress we may feel.

So, to answer the question: "Where is GOD?"

We can take comfort knowing we have a Lord, a Savior, and a Friend with us that promised to *always* be with us and we will never be abandoned. In fact, HE is a Friend who sticks closer than a brother. Just like a brother can never become unrelated, that Friend promises to always be right here with us.

That Friend, that One that promised to always be there is Jesus Christ.

HE is Jesus. HE is GOD. HE is Lord.

HE is Immanuel – GOD with us.

Hallelujah!

Psalms 139:7-10

John 1:1-5

Proverbs 18:24

Matthew 1:23

Prayer:

Father, thank YOU for Who YOU are in my life. I am grateful that YOU are not angry with me, scared off or intimidated by the storms of my emotions or the highs and lows of my life. I am grateful that YOU are willing to lead me to exciting highs - things I can't even imagine - and walk with me through the tough times if I put my trust in YOU. Lord, when I can't see YOU, help me to remember that YOU are here, right here with me and that YOU are concerned about the details of my life. Lord, I ask that YOU increase my faith and trust as YOU teach me to not live on the wings of my emotions and circumstances but that I learn to live according to the leading of YOUR Holy Spirit. Thank you for loving me so much that YOU're patient with me as I learn. Lord, draw me closer to YOU in every area of my life in Jesus Name. Amen.

Have you accepted Christ into your heart and into your life? The Bible says that if you believe in your heart that Jesus is Lord and verbally confess the existence of that belief, then you are saved. It is that simple! If you just accepted Jesus in your heart or if you haven't, but are thinking about it, reach out to us. If and you would like to talk about what's next or if you have questions, we'd would love to talk to you and pray with you. Email us at info@iamdianet.com and we'll get back to you!

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Have comments? We'd love to hear from you! Contact us via any of the links provided or comment here on the website! Have an amazing day!