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Om die Gees te Ken

"Die Gees van die waarheid wat die wêreld nie kan ontvang nie, omdat dit Hom nie sien en Hom nie ken nie; maar julle ken Hom, omdat Hy by julle en in julle sal wees" (Joh. 14:17).

"Weet julle nie dat julle 'n tempel van God is en die Gees van God in julle woon nie?" (1 Kor. 3:16).

Ware geestelike **insig** is vir die Christen baie belangrik. Hier kan ons die voorbeeld van 'n mens wat skielik baie geld geërf het, gebruik. So iemand is glad nie in 'n beter posisie tensy hy weet hoe om dit in ontvangs te neem nie. Net so kan God se genadegawes ook nie vir ons ten volle tot seën wees tensy ons hulle verstaan en aanneem nie.

Al die **wysheid en kennis** is in Christus verberg. Dit is juis hierdie kennis van Christus wat vir ons so kosbaar is, dat enigiets anders daarnaas nutteloos is. Omdat daar so baie Christene is wat nie oor dié kennis beskik nie, sien ons so min **krag** in die lewens van gelowiges.

Paulus het vir die Efesiërs gebid. **Hy het gebid dat die Vader hulle die Gees van wysheid sou gee sodat hulle Hom kon ken en weet oor watter heerlike rykdom hulle beskik en ook die krag in hulle binneste kon voel** (Ef. 1:17-19). Dit is 'n gebed wat ons oor en oor moet bid, nie net vir onself nie, maar ook vir ander.

Daarom is dit so belangrik om ook die **Leermeester** deur Wie hierdie kennis kom, te ken. Die Vader het nie net vir Sy kinders Sy Seun gegee nie, maar ook die Heilige Gees, die Gees van Christus en van die waarheid, *"...die Gees wat uit God is, sodat ons kan weet wat God ons uit genade geskenk het"* (1 Kor. 2:12).

HERKEN DIE GEES

Hoe weet 'n mens wanneer dit die

Gees is wat jou leer? Jou kennis van geestelike dinge kan slegs vir jou tot krag en troos wees as jy die Leermeester wat dit alles moontlik maak, **intiem ken**. Om Hom te ken sal ons die **sekerheid** gee dat die geestelike waarheid die ewige en enigste waarheid is. Ons geseënde Here gee ons die versekering dat ons die Gees sal ken.

As die Heilige Gees van die Here Jesus getuig en Hom verheerlik, moet ons aan Hom die plek en erkenning gee wat Hom toekom. So kan ons die **versekering** hê dat die kennis wat ons ontvang, inderdaad van God af kom en nie net die produk van ons menslike interpretasie van God se Woord is nie. Om die Koning se Seël as die enigste ware Seën te herken, beskerm ons teen enige vervalsing waarmee ons op ons pad te doen mag kry. Om die Gees te ken, is die goddelike oorsprong van alle **sekerheid**.

Hoe kan ons die Gees ken? Jesus sê dat ons die Gees ken omdat Hy in ons woon. Ons kan dus die argument omkeer en sê dat ons Hom nie kan ken as Hy nie in ons **woon** nie. Maar as ons Hom aanvaar en Hom toelaat om te getuig dat Jesus die Here is, openbaar Hy Homself terselfdertyd as die Gees van God: *"...en dit is die Gees wat getuig, want die Gees is die waarheid"* (1 Joh. 5:6).

Die Kerk weet te min van die rol van die Heilige Gees as Leermeester wat in ons woon, daarom sien ons ook nie genoeg openbarings van die Gees in die Kerk nie en herken gelowiges ook nie sy getuienis nie.

Maar as die Gees weer Sy regmatige **plek** in die harte en lewens van gelowiges kan inneem, sal Sy geseënde Teenwoordigheid sigbaar word en sal ons die kragtige bewyse van Sy werk sien. Dan sal ons Hom waarlik ken.



Hoe kan ons Hom herken en leer ken in hierdie tyd waarin daar so min oor Hom bekend is? As jy opreg begeer om die Heilige Gees in jou hart en lewe te ken, bestudeer dan opnuut die dinge wat die Skrif ons oor die Gees leer. Moenie tevrede wees om net uit te vind wat mense oor Hom sê nie, maar gaan kyk wat die lewende God van Sy Gees sê.

As jy die Gees van God intiem wil ken, gaan **bestudeer** die Woord soos 'n mens wat dors is, van die water van die lewe drink. Bêre alles wat die Skrif oor Hom sê, in jou hart. **Moet met niks minder as die waarhede in die Woord van God tevrede wees nie, en aanvaar dit met jou hele hart.** Bestudeer alles wat die Woord oor die Heilige Gees sê, en doen dit in nederige afhanklikheid van die Gees.

As jy 'n kind van God is, is jy gelukkig genoeg om die Heilige Gees as Leermeester te hê, al weet jy nog nie presies hoe Hy in jou binneste werk nie. **Vra** die Vader om deur Hom in jou te werk en die Woord in jou lewe te gee. Dan sal die Vader se belofte aan jou vervul word. Doen afstand van jou menslike gedagtes en insigte

en aanvaar slegs wat die Here vir jou sê. Vra God om Sy gedagtes oor die Gees aan jou te openbaar, want Hy sál dit doen - deur Sy Gees.

DIE BEWYS VAN DIE GEES

Volkome **gehoorsaamheid** is die bewys dat die Heilige Gees in jou hart en lewe woon. Die Skrif sê immers: *"... as julle deur die Gees die werke van die liggaam doodmaak, sal julle lewe. Want almal wat deur die Gees van God gelei word, dié is kinders van God"* (Rom. 8:13, 14).

"Of weet julle nie dat julle liggaam 'n tempel is van die Heilige Gees wat in julle is? Verheerlik God dan in julle lig-gaam en in julle gees wat aan God behoort" (1 Kor. 6:19, 20).

"As ons deur die Gees lewe, laat ons ook deur die Gees wandel" (Gal. 5:25); *"...word ons van gedaante verander na dieselfde beeld, van heerlijkheid tot heerlijkheid, as deur die Here wat die Gees is"* (2 Kor. 3:18). Hierdie woorde sê vir ons duidelik wat die werking van die Heilige Gees is.

God word in die eerste plek uit Sy werke geken - en so ook die Gees. Hy openbaar die wil van God en

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Die Gebreekte Albastefles

Dit was in die vroeë sewentigerjare, ongeveer 55 jaar gelede, kort na my bekering en wedergeboorte. Ek was, soos 'n jong bekeerling, vol van die Heilige Gees, en was beskikbaar vir enige gebeure en omstandighede om in die wêreld te gaan getuig van Jesus. Sy Eerste Liefde het in en deur my hart gebrand en gevloei, al was my kennis van die Skrif nog karig. Dit was toe dat ek 'n persoonlike belewenis gehad van hoe Jesus Homself aan 'n Joodse vrou openbaar het. 'n Vriend van my, 'n teologiese student en sy vrou, was kunssinnig en het die mooiste gekleurde sykousruikers gemaak om hulle studies te betaal. Op 'n dag vra ek hulle of ons Brakpan toe kan gaan omdat ek die plek geken het, want my broer het daar gewoon, met die oog op bemarking. Ek stap toe, vol ywer, met twee ruikers, een in elke hand, van winkel tot winkel in die hoofstraat af. Ek kom toe by 'n Joodse winkel en gesels met 'n ou Joodse tannie van omtrent 87 jaar. Sy was baie bitter teen God oor die vervolging van die Jode tydens die Tweede Wêreldoorlog, en vertel net vir my van hoe Hitler 6 miljoen Jode in gaskamers doodgemaak het. En sy wou weet: "Hoekom? Hoe kon God dit toelaat? Ons is mos Sy volk?" Hierdie oorlogsjare het voortgewoed tot kort voor my geboorte. So, ek het nie regtig insae daarin gehad nie.

My reaksie, onder die leiding van die Heilige Gees was dat ek vir haar gesê het: "I don't know about that, but the only thing I know is that Jesus was the only One Who ever came for love." En sy sê vir my: "But you're very religious, to which Church do you belong?" En ek sê: "That doesn't matter, I belong to Jesus!" En ek het vir haar gesê: "Go and read Isaiah 53, there you will read about Him," menende die Ou Testament wat die Jode ook ken. Sy het my weer en weer gevra na die Skrif-verwysing, sodat sy dit kon gaan lees. Ek vertrou sy het op haar oudag by Jesus uitgekom deur net Jesaja 53 te lees. So het die eerste Kerk ook gedoen met net die Ou Testament in hulle hande. Daar was nog nie 'n Nuwe Testament nie - die evangelies en sendbriewe het eers later gekom.

Hierbo het ons gefokus op die woorde van die profeet, waar die liggaam van Jesus verbrysel is vir ons sonde. En in opvolging daarvan, kry ons die gebeure wat plaasvind in die huis van Simon die Fariseër. Daar was 'n vrou, 'n sondares, wat 'n albastefles gebreek het en Jesus se Hoof gesalf het met olie. Almal rondom haar het gemurmureer, ook met die sondares self. Want kon

hierdie duursame olie nie vir 300 pennings verkoop gewees het en die geld vir die armes gegee geword het nie?

Dan kom die tweeledige antwoord uit die mond van Jesus: **"Waarom val julle haar lastig? Sy het 'n goeie daad aan My gedoen, met die oog op My begrafnis."** En : **"Wat sy kon, het sy gedoen."** Laat ons eers so 'n bietjie stilstaan by: **"met die oog op My begrafnis."** Hier lig Jesus Sy toehoorders in oor Sy dood. Maar vóór Sy dood word Hy gemartel, verbrysel op die Kruis, soos ek vir die Joodse vrou gesê het in Jes. 53 voorspel is. En vir die begrafnis moes Hy éers tot die dood toe gebreek word (Mark. 14:8). Dit is die prys wat Hy betaal het vir elkeen van ons.

Hoe is Sy liggaam gebreek? Kyk na die laaste week voor die kruisiging, die hoogtepunt van Sy ganse aardse bestaan wat vol was van lyding, vervolging, verwerping, teëstand met smarte en pyn, maar ook met ontsaglike medelye met die verlore mens. Want Hy Self het gesê: **"Ek het nie gekom om die wêreld te oordeel nie, maar om die wêreld te red,"** deur die pad van liefde te loop. En op dáárdie pad is Hy wreed vervolgtot by die Kruis. Dawid skryf só oor Hom in die Messiaanse Psalm: **"En hulle het aan my gal gegee as my spys, en vir my dors het hulle my asyn laat drink"** (Ps. 69:22). En 'n ander vertaling lui: **"Toe ek honger was, het hulle my gif aangebied, toe ek dors was, wou hulle my asyn laat drink."** Hy was 'n Man van Smarte, in die mond van die profeet Jesaja.

'n Gelowige vrou het hierdie boodskap onlangs van die Here ontvang: "Jesus is Self die Gebreekte Fles met olie, wat die olie, dit is die salwing, vrylaat uit Sy gebrokenheid." Die albastefles is gebreek, sodat die salfolie kon uitkom, met die oog op Sy begrafnis en daaropvolgende die opstanding. Maar Jesus is ook metafores die Fles wat vir ons gebreek is. Dit val stukkend op die grond. **"Dit is volbring!"** (tetelestai). En die salfolie loop uit. Oor die hele wêreld heen. Drie ure voordat Hy sterf, het dit stikdonker geword 12 uur in die middag. Toe blaas Hy Sy asem uit. En die kruik val stukkend in die put (Pred. 12:6). Ja, Hy het terwille van ons, swak en gebroke en stukkend geword soos 'n oumens wat waardeloos geword het vir die mensdom, in hulle oë (vergelyk die konteks van Pred. 12). Vir die goeie wat Hy gedoen het, het hulle Hom met haat vergeld. Hy is verbrysel. In Jes. 53 lees ons: **"Nogtans het Hy ons krankhede op Hom geneem, en ons smarte, die het Hy gedra."** Dit beteken Hy

het dit alles vir die ganse mensdom gedoen, vriend en vyand, wat ly as gevolg van die sondeval. Elkeen moet dit self besef en aanneem.

En nou staan ons vir 'n wyle stil by die tweede deel van Sy boodskap: **"Wat sy kon, het sy gedoen."** Die gebeure vind in Luk. 7:36-50 is nie dieselfde as die wat ons in Mark. 14 of in die ander Evangelies vind nie, maar dit volg dieselfde tema. Hierdie vrou word 'n sondares genoem. En as sondares het sy haar met Jesus se vergifnis vereenselwig met berou oor haar sonde, en Jesus het vir haar gesê: **"Jou sondes is jou vergewe"** En: **"Want sy het baie liefgehad."** (v. 48). Sy het Sy voete gewas met haar trane, baie trane gestort oor haar verlore toestand, om daarmee Sy voete te was! Sy droog toe Sy voete af met haar hare, want sy het nie eers 'n handdoek gehad nie! Net 'n hart vol berou. Jesus het haar toe reeds gered van sonde deur Sy bloed, en dit nog vóór die Kruis! Hy het dit met andere ook gedoen. Vergifnis geskenk nog vóór Hy gekruisig is.

'n Stukkende mens het in die huis van Simon die Fariseër salf op Jesus se Hoof uitgegiet, en self heling gekry! Die Fariseër het dit misgeloop, want hy het by homself gewonder: **"Hy, as Hy 'n profeet was, sou geweet het wie en watter soort vrou dit is wat Hom aanraak; want sy is 'n sondares"** (v. 39). Die huis het 'n lapa gehad, 'n binnehof in die buitelug, veral gewild in somermaande, wat toegang verleen het vir almal wat na die belangrike gas wou kom luister, terwyl ongenooide buitestaanders nie by die tafel aangesit het nie. Wat was sy motief - waarom het hy Jesus genooi het vir 'n ete? Niemand weet nie. Al die negatiewe en vyandiggesindes het die skone oomblik egter misgeloop, alhoewel hulle die reuk daarvan gekry het.

Derdens: Wat is ons gesindheid jeens die olie van die Heilige Gees? Die stukkende fles word oorgedra na die ware volgelingen van Jesus Christus. Die olie moet deur ons vloei na stukkende en gebroke mense wat Hy heelmaak en uitstuur om die salfolie weer verder te neem. Ons word die kruik wat stukkend en in skerwe op die vloer val. Maar die reukolie wat uitkom, vul die hele huis met die salfolie in die krag van die Heilige Gees, en God red mense deur die Woord wat ons spreek. En die Woord sê: **"En hulle het hom (die Aanklaer van die broeders) oorwin deur die bloed van die Lam en deur die woord van hulle getuienis, en hulle het tot die dood toe hulle lewe nie liefgehad nie"** (Op. 12:11). Eers

kom die bloed wat ons red, dan volg die salwing van die Heilige Gees. En ons oorwin!

Dit is die boodskap wat nie baie kinders van die Here wil hoor nie. Hulle wil net in die seën van die Here lewe - op die bergtoppe wees. Dan is dit hulle wat in die Woorde van Jesus **"arm en naak en blind"** is, wat nie diep gegrawe het en hulle huis op die Rots gebou het nie. Diesulkes kan hulleself nie help in **"die uur van beproewing"** nie, en nog minder ander wat in die vuurproef kom. Lees maar in die Evangelies en die Sendbriewe van die Apostels hoe hulle vervolgt en verdruk is. Jesus het Self ook gesê: **"In die wêreld sal julle verdrukking hê, maar hou goeie moed, Ek het die wêreld oorwin."** Palus skryf soos volg: **"...volgens my reikhalsende verwagting en hoop dat ek in niks beskaam sal word nie; maar dat Christus met alle vrymoedigheid, soos altyd so ook nou, groot gemaak sal word in my liggaam, of dit deur die lewe of deur die dood is"** (Filip. 1:20). Paulus vul in sy liggaam die lyde van Jesus Christus aan. Hy vervolg: **"Verder moet niemand my moeite aandoen nie, want ek dra die littekens van die Here Jesus in my liggaam"** (Gal. 6:17). [Lees ook van Paulus se lyding en smart in 2 Kor. 11:23-33]. Petrus vul aan: **"...maar namate julle gemeenskap het aan die lyde van Christus, moet julle bly wees, sodat julle ook by die openbaring van Sy heerlijkheid met blydschap kan jubel"** (1 Pet. 4:13). Geld dit net vir Bybelse tyd? Nee - kyk maar na die Kerk wat regdeur die eeue vervolgt is. Selfs In ons tyd word gelowiges aangeval deur ekstremiste. Ons eerste vraag mag wees: Hoekom? Wat het ek verkeerd gedoen? Is God kwaad vir my? Wat belangrik is, is dat God saam met ons in die vuuroond instap om ons te red, te heel en te genees, met 'n getuienis op ons lippe van hoe Hy ons soos goud daaruit laat kom het.

Die volgende lied kom by my op. Dit is geskryf deur Louisa M. R. Stead in 1882 kort nadat haar man tragies verdrink het:

'Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just to take Him at His Word;
Just to rest upon His promise,
And to know, "Thus saith the Lord!"

Wat is ons reaksie op Jesus se prys op die Kruis, en Sy opdrag aan ons? Jesus dra Sy salfolie oor na die kinders van God toe, en elkeen word 'n salwingdraer om God se boodskap uit te dra met hierdie woorde: **"In die wêreld sal julle verdrukking hê, maar hou goeie moed, want ek het die wêreld oorwin"** (Joh. 16:33). En Jesus se Groot Opdrag kom tot

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Om die Gees te Ken

Vervolg van p. 1
roep ons om dit na te volg. As die gelowige homself aan die Gees onderwerp en Christus se heerskappy oor sy lewe erken, sal hy eerstehands ervaar hoe die Heilige Gees in sy binneste werk. As ons ons wil aan Hom **onderwerp**, sal ons Hom intiem leer ken.

Geloof hou verband met dinge wat nie gesien kan word nie en dikwels ook met dinge wat vir die mens onmoontlik en onwaarskynlik lyk. Die Goddelike in Jesus is immers agter 'n doodgewone uiterlike verberg. Hy het dertig jaar lank in die skrynwerkershuisie in Nasaret gewoon en niemand het gesien of geweet dat Hy God was nie. Sy Goddelikheid en Seunskap het eers ná Sy doop duidelik geword. Dit is

ook opvallend dat Sy Goddelikheid met tye selfs vir Sy dissipels verborge was. As die lewe van God die sondige hart en wese van die mens binnedring, het ons inderdaad geloof nodig om dit te herken!

Leer die gewoonte aan om in ootmoed en in stilte voor God te buig en aan die Gees die **erkenning** te gee wat Hom toekom. Wag in diepe **afhanklikheid** op Hom. Dink diep na oor al die waarhede rondom die Heilige Gees en glo, al kan jy niks sien nie glo, dan sal Hy jou in staat stel om Hom te leer ken, al getuig jou emosies ook nie daarvan nie. Hou net aan om te te sien.

'n Mens weet nie hoe 'n vrug smaak tensy jy daaraan proe nie.

En jy weet ook nie hoe skerp die lig is tensy jy daarin staan nie. Daar is net één manier om 'n mens te leer ken, en dit is deur met hom te praat en **tyd** saam met Hom deur te bring.

So is daar ook net één manier om die Heilige Gees te ken, en dit is deur jou aan Hom te onderwerp en Hom die beheer oor jou hart en lewe te gee. Laat Hy jou hele wese vul. As jy **in die Gees lewe**, sal jy Hom ook leer ken.

Vir Paulus was niks so belangrik as om **Christus te ken** nie. Alle ander dinge het daarnaas verwaag. Moet ons dan nie ook bereid wees om **afstand te doen** van alle ander dinge vir die voorreg om die Gees van die verheerlikte Christus te kan ken nie?

Laat ons onself volkome **onderwerp** aan die Heilige Gees wat in ons woon.

Gebod: Geseënde Vader, stel my tog in staat om U Gees te ken deur Hom in my te laat woon. Laat Sy getuienis oor Jesus helder en duidelik in my lewe wees en laat Sy leiding en heiligmaking kragtig in my na vore kom. Laat Hom in volmaakte krag en waarheid in my woon, sodat my lewe in Hom die één groot realiteit vir my sal wees. Here God, help my en al U kinders om U Gees te leer ken - om te weet dat Hy in ons woon en om Hom te ken waar Hy die Seun openbaar en U as die Vader verheerlik. Amen.

- Die Volheid van die Heilige Gees, Andrew Murray, VGU, 1996.

O MONGWE FELA. LEINA LA GAGWE KE JESU (HE IS THE ONE. HIS NAME IS JESUS)

LEINA LE LE LENGWE
“Pholoso ga e a bonwa mo go ope mongwe, gonne ga go leina le lengwe le le mo godimo ga loapi le le neilweng batho le re tshwantseng go pholosiwa ka lone” (Ditiro 4:12).

Leina la Jesu le kwa godimo ga maina otlhe mo hisitoring, e seng fela jaaka setlhopha, mme jaaka senotlolo sa pholoso. Mo lefatsheng le le tletseng dithuto, dithuto tsa tumelo le ditshwantsho tsa bodumedi, Baebele e bolela ka bopelokgale: pholoso e fitlhelwa fela ka Jesu.

Seno ga se go ikgogomosa, mme ke lerato la Modimo le ponatshego ya boammaaruri. Modimo, ka bopelonomi jwa gagwe, o file tsela e le nngwe e e tiileng ya gore batho botlhe ba boele kwa go Ene. Leina la Jesu le emela tiro e kgolo ya bopelonomi ya Modimo - go tla mo lefatsheng, go nna le rona, le go re boloka le go re pholosa.

Fa re bitsa leina la Jesu, ga re bitse modimo yo o kgakala, mme Mopholosi yo o re itseng, yo o re ratang, yo o nang le maatla a go fetola matshelo a rona. Ke leina le le tlisang tsholofelo mo go ba ba se nang yona, phodiso mo go ba ba lwalang, le botshelo mo go ba ba suleng.

MOTSEREGANYI A LE MONGWE
“Gonne go na le Modimo a le mongwe le motsereganyi a le mongwe fa gare ga Modimo le batho, e leng motho Keresete Jesu...” (1 Timotheo 2:5).

Tlhokego e kgolo ya batho ke go boelana le Modimo, mme boleo jwa rona bo dira tshireletso e kgolo. Bodumedi le ditiro tse di molemo di palelwa ke go dira kgolagano e. Baebele e ruta gore Jesu ke ene fela motseraganyi fa gare ga Modimo le rona, ka setlhabelo sa gagwe re bona kagiso. Fela jaaka a le Modimo ka botlalo le motho ka botlalo, o re tlhaloganya sentle a bo a re emela mo go Rara.

Ka Jesu re na le tsela e e bulegileng go ya kwa Modimong, e seng ka melao kgotsa batlhokomedi, mme ka kamano ya botho. Boammaaruri jono bo re tlišetsa kgomotso le tsholofelo; ga re sa tshwanetse go tshaba katlholo, gonne re setse re amogetswe ka ntlha ya Mopholosi wa rona.

SETLHABELO SE LE SENGWE
“Mme ene Jesu, e rile a sena go isetsa maleo setlhabelo se le sengwe, a ya go nnela ruri ka fa letsogong le le jang la Modimo, a ntse a letetse gore baba ba gagwe ba be ba dirwe sebeo sa dinao tsa gagwe. Gonne ba ba itshepisiwang o ba dirile ba ba botlalo ka bosakhutleng ka setlhabelo se le sengwe fela.” (Baheberu 10:12-14).

Mo kgolaganong ya bogologolo go ne go tlhokega ditlhabelo tse di boeletswang, tse di neng di bontsha boleo jwa batho. Fela Jesu, jaaka Moperesiti yo Mogolo, o ne a itlhabela gangwe fela. Setlhabelo sa gagwe se ne se lekane, se feletse, gape se lekane dibe tsothle. Go farologana le

ditlhabelo tsa bogologolo, loso lwa gagwe mo sefapaanong lo re buletse bosakhutleng. Jaanong o ntse fa letsogong le le jang la Modimo, go bontsha gore tiro ya gagwe e weditse. Ba ba mo dumelang ga ba tlhoke go itshwenya kgotsa go amogela boitshwarelo ka ditiro. Re bolokwa mme re tlhatswiwa ke madi a ga Jesu mme re dirwa tshweu mo pele ga Modimo. Sefapaano ke pontsho e kgolo ya lorato le katlholo ya Modimo.

TSELA E LE NNGWE
“Jesu a araba, a re: ‘Ke nna tsela, boammaaruri le botshelo. Ga go na ope yo o yang kwa go Rara fa e se ka nna’” (Johane 14:6).

Mo nakong e batho ba bantsi ba dumelang gore ditsela tsothle di ya kwa Modimong. Lefoko la ga Jesu le a tlhaloganyega: Ke ene fela tsela. Ga a bontshe fela tsela ke ENE tsela. Polelo eno ga e re kgaoganye, mme e re laletsa botlhe go itse Modimo wa nnete. Jesu ke borogo fa gare ga legodimo le lefatsho, tsela e e re busetsang gae. Go latela Jesu ke go tsamaya mo leseding, go itse boammaaruri, le go bona botshelelo jo bo tletseng.

KGORO E LE NNGWE
“Ammaaruri ke a lo raya, lona Bafarasai: yo o sa tseneng ka kgoro mo lesakeng... ke legodu. Ke nna kgoro; yo o tsenang ka nna o tla pholoswa. O tla tsena le go tswa, a fitlhela mafulo a matalana” (Johane 10:1,9).

Jesu o dirisa setshwantsho sa



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modisa le kgoro go tlhalosa boemo jwa gagwe. Mo malatsing a bogologolo, modisa o ne a robala mo kgorong go sireletsa dinku. Jesu ke ene fela tsela e e siameng ya go tsena mo lapeng la Modimo. Ditsela tse dingwe tsothle di ka go timetsa. Ka Jesu re bona tshireletso, tlhokomelo, le maikaelelo.

KAKARETSO
Mo go tsothle, Jesu ke ENA Mopholosi, Moemedi, Setlhabelo, Tsela le Kgoro. Leina la gagwe le kwa godimo ga maina otlhe. A re mo ikanye, re mo latele, re phatlalatse bogolo jwa gagwe mo lefatsheng.

“Gonne Modimo o ratile lefatsho mo go kalo, mo o bileng wa le neela Morwaaona yo o tsetsweng a le esi, gore mongwe le mongwe yo o dumelang mo go ene a se ka a latlhaga, mme a nne le bophelo jo bo sa khutleng (Johane 3:16).

Die Lewende Brood

Elkeen van ons het bepaalde basiese behoeftes: voedsel, klere, suurstof. Maar dan ook dieper behoeftes - hunkeringe: 'n stimulerende omgewing, goeie opvoeding, vervullende werk, 'n gevoel van veiligheid en geborgenheid, liefde en aanvaarding. Iemand wat ons verstaan en erken. Maar die grootste behoefte is om te weet dat ons in 'n regte verhouding met God staan, en dat Hy ons die ewige lewe gee. In Johannes 9 (die verhaal van die vermeerdering van die brode) beweeg Jesus meesterlik vanaf die basiese menslike behoeftes en vestig Sy toehoorders se aandag op hul grootste geestelike nood. Hy wys hulle dan ook daarop dat Hy die Oplossing hiervan is, en dit alles volgens God se wil. Kom ons oorweeg enkele aspekte van hierdie verhaal.

1. OU TESTAMENTIESE HEENWYSINGS

Eerstens herinner die gebeure sterk aan die Pasga. Guzik wys daarop dat Johannes die enigste evangelieskrywer is wat noem dat dit die tyd van die Pasga was toe hierdie wonderwerk gebeur het. Ons lees in Eksodus 12 dat die Pasga (die Fees van die Onge-suurde Brode) 'n herdenking van die Israel se bevryding uit Egipte is. Dit is vandag nog een van die belangrikste feeste van Judaïsme. Die Engelse benaming, "Passover," beskryf hoe God die Israeliete verbygegaan het (He passed over them) tydens die tiende plaag, toe die eersgeborenes van mens en dier van Egipte getref is met die dood as 'n straf vir hulle rebelse afgodery. Maar die Israeliete moes God se spesifieke voorskrifte nakom. In ryke simboliek moes die vader van die gesin 'n perfekte, eenjarige lam vir sy gesin neem. Hierdie lam moes geslag word, en die bloed daarvan moes aan hulle deurkosyne gesmeer word. Hulle moes die lam rooster en dit eet, asook suurdeegvrye brood en bitter kruie (wat swaarkry simboliseer) daarmee saam. Die bloed van die lam sou waarborg dat God die Israeliete sou oorsien. Daar is ook tye van samekoms en geen werk word gedoen nie. Die vermyding van suurdeeg wys na die spoedige en haastige bevryding ("Eksodus" beteken "uittog" en verwys na Israel se bevryding van hulle Egiptiese heersers), maar ook na Israel se afskeiding van korrupsie en sondige gedrag of invloed (verwys na Gal. 5:9).

'n Tweede sterk historiese tema wat in Johannes 9 na vore kom, is die manna wat God aan Israel voorsien het (Eks. 16). Die volk het gemurmureer omdat hulle nie kos in die woestyn gehad het nie, en het teruggehunker na die vleispotte van Egipte (wat sim-

bolies kan wees van mense wat 'n sondige lewe agtergelaat het, maar weer na die plesier van sonde wil terugkeer; verwys na 2 Pet. 2:22). Moses het die volk daarop gewys dat hulle nie teen 'n mens nie, maar teen God murmurereer. Hy het op God se woord aan hulle meegedeel dat God manna en vleis sal voorsien (iets wat haas onmoontlik gelyk het vir so baie mense in die wildernis - verskillende berekeninge skat dat dit miljoene tot miljarde rande sou kos en 'n enorme organisatoriese taak sou wees om 2 - 3 miljoen mense te voed). Ons sien dus 'n wonderwerk van God se voorsiening deur Sy almag. Hy het ook aan Moses gesê dat die mense deur hierdie wonderwerk sou besef dat Hy God is.

2. DIE BEHOEFTE

Net soos in die woestyn waar daar miljoene hongeriges was, is daar 'n parallel in die tyd van Jesus. Daar was duisende wat Hom gevolg het, en soos wat die tyd verbygegaan het en hulle in 'n onherbergsame, afgeleë wildernes beland het, het hulle mettertyd honger geword. Jesus het geweet dat Hy 'n wonderwerk sou doen - meer as 'n wonderwerk, 'n teken wat 'n geestelike les sou bied. Maar Hy gebruik hierdie nood om Sy dissipels se geloof te toets. "Toe Jesus opkyk en sien dat daar 'n groot skare na Hom op pad is, sê Hy vir Filippus: 'Waar sal ons brood te koop kry om hierdie mense te laat eet?'" (Joh. 6:5 DV). Die behoefte is oorweldigend. Filippus pas menslike logika toe en bevestig dat dit haas onmoontlik is om brood te gaan koop om so baie mense te voed. Andreas kom 'n bietjie nader aan 'n oplossing deurdat hy 'n seuntjie se vyf broodjies en twee vissies aanbied, maar ook hy bevestig dat dit gans en al te min sou wees vir so baie mense. Die fisiese behoefte is duidelik. Maar Jesus gebruik hierdie geleentheid om die toehoorders te laat nadink oor hulle geestelike behoefte. Hulle mag dalk nie bewus wees hiervan of kan dalk nie die vinger op die vae hunkering lê nie, maar elke mens weet in hul diepste wese dat daar iets kortkom. Die fisiese behoefte aan brood word dan 'n metafoor vir ons diepste geestelike nood. Dit herinner aan die verhaal van die lam man in Matteus 9. Die voordiehandliggende behoefte is die fisiese een - hy is verlam. Maar Jesus spreek eerste sy geestelike nood aan: "En kyk, hulle het 'n verlamde man wat op 'n slaapmat lê, na Hom gebring. En toe Jesus hulle geloof sien, sê Hy vir die verlamde: 'Hou moed, kind, jou sondes word vergewe'" (v. 2, DV).

3. DIE OPLOSSING

Die mense het Jesus die volgende dag kom soek, omdat hulle weer

brood wou hê. Hy wys hul egter daarop dat hulle geestelike brood moet soek: "Julle moet nie werk vir die voedsel wat vergaan nie, maar vir die voedsel wat hou tot in die ewige lewe. Dit sal die Seun van die Mens vir julle gee, want op Hom het God die Vader Sy seël geplaas.' Hulle het Hom gevra: 'Wat moet ons doen sodat ons die werke kan verrig wat God wil hê?' En Jesus het hulle geantwoord: 'Dit is die werk van God: Dat julle glo in die Een wat Hy gestuur het'" (Joh. 6:27 - 29 DV). Jesus maak beide hul nood en die oplossing hiervan duidelik. Meer as fisiese brood, benodig ons elkeen geestelike brood. En Hy is hierdie Brood. Hoe ironies dat die mense 'n teken vra, net nadat Jesus die vorige dag die wonder verrig het om die brode en die visse te vermeerder. Meer nog, Jesus IS die teken: "Jesus het vir hulle gesê: 'Ek is die brood van die lewe. Wie na My toe kom, sal nooit honger word nie, en wie in My glo, sal nooit weer dors word nie'" (v. 35).

4. DIE WIL VAN DIE VADER

Soos Jesus met Sy toehoorders in gesprek tree oor hul diepste behoefte, kom die vraag op - wat wil God dan hê dat hulle (en ons) moet doen? Hy antwoord as volg: "Elkeen wat die Vader vir My gee, sal na My kom, en Ek sal die een wat na My kom, nooit verstoot nie; want Ek het uit die hemel neergedaal, nie om My wil uit te voer nie maar die wil van Hom wat My gestuur het. En dit is die wil van Hom wat My gestuur het: Dat Ek van almal wat Hy My gegee het, nie 'n enkele een verlore sal laat gaan nie, maar hulle op die laaste dag sal opwek. Want dit is die wil van My Vader: Dat elkeen wat die Seun sien en in Hom glo die ewige lewe sal hê, en Ek sal elkeen van hulle op die laaste dag laat opstaan" (Joh. 6:37-40 DV). Eerstens doen Jesus die Vader se wil, deur na die aarde te kom om die te soek wat verlore is. Hy het gekom dat hulle gered kan word en die ewige lewe kan hê (Hy sal hulle opwek in die laaste dag; dit is terloops 'n heenwysing na Sy Goddelikheid, omdat net God dit kan doen). Tweedens moet ons God se wil doen deur in Jesus te glo. Die wat Jesus sien ("steadily and continuously contemplates") moet glo ("entrusts himself in a full moral surrender to the Son").

5. DIE OFFER VAN JESUS

Jesus gaan voort om Sy toehoorders te leer wat die geestelike brood is wat Hy sal gee. Meer as die ongesuurde pasgabrood, of die manna in die wildernis, WORD Hy die Paasofferlam en die Lewende Brood vir elk van ons wat glo. "En die brood wat Ek sal gee, is My liggaam wat Ek gee vir die lewe van die wêreld. Daarop sê Jesus vir hulle: 'Amen, amen, Ek sê vir julle: As julle nie die

liggaam van die Seun van die Mens eet en sy bloed drink nie, het julle geen lewe in julle nie. Wie My liggaam eet en My bloed drink, het die ewige lewe, en Ek sal hom op die laaste dag laat opstaan. Want My liggaam is ware voedsel, en My bloed is ware drank. Wie My liggaam eet en My bloed drink, bly in My en Ek in hom. Soos die lewende Vader My gestuur het, en Ek deur die Vader leef, so sal die een wat My eet, ook deur My leef. Dit is die brood wat uit die hemel neergedaal het - nie soos die manna wat die vaders geëet het en nogtans gesterf het nie. Wie hierdie brood eet, sal vir ewig leef'" (Joh. 6:51, 53-58 DV). Hierdie stelling was skokkend vir Jode, omdat hulle verbied is om enige bloed te drink (Gen. 9:4; Lev. 17:10-16). Maar Jesus praat duidelik simbolies, verwysend na Sy kruisdood as prys vir ons sonde. Een kommentator stel dit as volg: "These words point still more distinctly to His propitiatory [substitutionary] death; for 'the blood is the life' which He offered up for the sins of the world. The eating and drinking are not faith, but the appropriation [acceptance and making of one's own] of His death; faith leads us to eat and drink and is the means of appropriation. Taken separately, the Flesh represents sacrifice and sustenance, the Blood represents atonement and life."

6. ONS KEUSE

Baie toehoorders het gesê dat dit 'n harde, onverstaanbare woord was. Hulle harte was verhard, trots en rebels. Hulle denke was geslote. Klink dit nie ook maar soos ons nie? Baie het Jesus verwerp, maar nie almal nie: "Daarop het Jesus vir die twaalf gesê: 'Julle wil tog seker nie ook weggaan nie?' Simon Petrus het Hom geantwoord: 'Here, na wie toe sal ons gaan? U het woorde van die ewige lewe. En ons glo en weet dat U die Heilige [Messias] van God is'" (Joh. 6:67-69 DV). Ons elkeen staan voor die keuse of ons van die geestelike Brood wil eet, en of ons elders voeding sal gaan soek. God roep ons na Hom en gee ons die vermoë om hierdie roeping te beantwoord.

TEN SLOTTE

Kom ons dank God vir Sy onmeetlike voorsiening, nie net in ons fisiese behoeftes nie, maar ook in ons diepste geestelike nood. Watter prys het dit Hom nie gekos nie! Hy het oor die huise van Israeliete in Egipte beweeg waarvan die deurposte met bloed bestryk was. So sal ons ook gevrywaar wees van Sy oordeel net indien ons hartsdeure met die Bloed van Jesus bestryk is. Laat ons dan vandag God se wil doen: dat ons in Sy Seun sal glo en só die ewige lewe sal beërwe!

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He Won't Leave You

Do you ever feel like life has knocked the breath out of you? If so, you're not alone. In fact, it's no secret that this world is full of both goodness and trouble. King David, whose life was recorded in various parts of the Old Testament, was highly accustomed to trouble - constantly threatened by legitimate enemies and faced with the reality of impending death. Yet, inspired by the Holy Spirit, he wrote: *"The righteous person faces many troubles, but the Lord comes to the rescue each time"* (Psalm 34:19 NLT). If there's one thing you can depend on, it's that God is alive, active, and ever-present in your life - yes, even the hardest parts of your life.

But who is the "righteous per-

son" David speaks of in this particular Psalm, when other parts of the Bible say things like, *"no one is righteous - not even one"*? (Romans 3:10, Psalm 14:3). Although this is an at-first-glance contradiction, it can be understood if we remember that righteousness can't be achieved, but it can be given. When we trust in God, as well as His Son, Jesus Christ (Who sacrificed His life so that we could truly live), we're trusting that His righteousness will extend to us as well.

To put it simply, a righteous person is one who relies on God's righteousness. It seems unfair and unmerited, doesn't it? But that's grace. It's by grace, through faith, that we - that you - can be counted as righteous. You can't

work for it and you can't buy it. Because of that, when we're facing difficult seasons in life, we can expect God to show up in a million unique ways. Not because we're righteous on our own, but because He is righteous on His Own. And His righteousness has no limits.

So how does God show up? He guides. He comforts. He corrects. He reroutes. He reminds us of true things. He helps us persevere. He brings wisdom and discernment to our minds. He inspires others to help us. He compels us to help others. He gives us peace in the midst of trouble. He encourages us as we stand boldly in faith. He works and works and works in mysterious ways. And just when you might wonder if your needi-

ness is becoming a nuisance to God, remember: God's Presence is inexhaustible and His resources are limitless. It's good to need God every moment of every day. To breathe. To survive. To flourish.

So yes, trouble will come. But God will never leave your side.

Prayer: God, I know that in this world, I will have many troubles. But I also know that You are with me. I am grateful that I can trust You to guide and protect me as I go through hard circumstances. Please give me peace during challenges, and allow me to rest in the promises You made. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

- Selected

Raadpleeg God oor jou daaglikse doenlysie

"Die HERE bepaal die rigting van 'n mens met wie se lewe Hy tevrede is" (Psalm 37:23 NLV).

Wanneer jy 'n daaglikse doenlysie wil opstel wat jou vrede en vreugde verseker, moet jy God raadpleeg. Wanneer jy **te veel** op jouself neem, stel jy jouself vir mislukking - en stres - oop. As jy wys is, sal jy nie meer as een of twee 'groot' dinge 'n dag skeduleer nie. Die lewe verloop nie glad nie, maak nie saak hoe graag jy dit glad wil laat verloop nie.

Maak dus tyd vir onderbrekings, verkeersknope, verlore sleutels, mense wat stadig beweeg, ensovoorts.

Wees ook versigtig om **te veel dinge op dieselfde tyd** te probeer doen. Studies het 'n verband tussen hoë-stres 'multitasking' en korttermyn geheueverlies ontdek. Navorsers het bevind dat 'multitasking' jou minder doeltreffend maak, omdat dit die beskikbare breinkrag wat jy vir elke taak benodig, verminder.

Maak dus seker dat jy een taak voltooi voor jy met 'n volgende een begin. Om produktief te wees, moet jy gefokus wees.

Nog 'n baie belangrike gedagte: **Stiltetyd is noodsaaklik vir sukses!** Voor Jesus Sy dissipels gekies het, die skare gevoed het en die storm laat bedaar het, het Hy tyd geneem om alleen met God in gebed te wees.

Ons doen dit nie altyd nie - en ons resultate wys dit! Ons kies die verkeerde mense, ons het nie die nodige hulpbronne om aan die behoefte te voldoen nie en word deur die storms van die lewe oorweldig. Die wonderlike ding van gebed is dat jy dit enige plek kan doen - in die verkeer, in die ry by die winkel, wanneer jy middagete geniet, of wanneer jy jou oë in die oggende oopmaak.

As jy glo dat die Here die rigting van jou lewe bepaal, moet jy begin om Hom meer daarby te betrek.

- Bob & Debby Gass

"Now may the God of Hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Romans 15:13).

*Dear God of Hope,
Fill us with all joy and peace in believing,
so that we will abound in hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

*You have caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; therefore, we hope in what we do not see.
This world is not our home or reality,
but the Lord is our Rock, our Truth, our Certainty.*

*God of Hope, we pour out our praise
and are filled with Your powerful Presence.
We pour out repentance of sin
and are filled with forgiveness and righteousness.
We pour out pain from the attacks of the enemy - anxiousness,
fear, anger - and You fill us with courage, assurance, and love.*

*We pour out our needs, the desires of our hearts,
and are filled with Your Kingdom provision and purpose.
We pour out our hearts for our nation, for the people and places,
relationships, and responsibilities the Lord has established: the Church, Family, Education, Business, Military, Arts, Entertainment, Media, and Government.
May all who live, serve, and steward in these be filled with Your purpose, wisdom, strength, and truth.
Let Your lovingkindness, O LORD, be upon us, as we have hoped in You.
In abounding hope, anchored by our hope in the Name of Jesus, we pray.
Amen!*

Waiting Well

1. TEACH ME, LORD, TO WAIT
“But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint” (Isaiah 40:31 NIV).

“Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord” (Psalm 27:14 NIV).

“Since ancient times no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides You, Who acts on behalf of those who wait for Him” (Isaiah 64:4 NIV).

Music is the life source of our family; it marks our culture and family bond. My uncle Teddy Grover wrote a song inspired by Isaiah 40:31: *“They who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.”*

I grew up singing that song again and again - in churches and nursing homes, in my parents’ studio where they wrote and produced music, at family gatherings and in everyday moments. The simple chorus of Uncle Teddy’s song is Isaiah 40:31 verbatim, and then the last line of the chorus simply says, “Teach me, Lord, to wait.”

Have you ever prayed a prayer without knowing it? I look back on the thousands of times I sang that song over the years and can see the power of my prayer with twenty-twenty vision. The declaration of faith I sang was a prophetic statement for my life journey.

In a sense, my life journey is no different from yours. You know about struggling with the tension of Earth and eternity, present and future, pause and press. You’ve endured much over arduously long stretches of time. You are living it now.

Waiting is inescapable. And while we might feel like a whole lot of nothing is going on, we couldn’t be more wrong. There most definitely is something going on.

Whether we’re dealing with divorce, heartbreak, sickness, loneliness, betrayal, or confusion, God will use our pain to serve His purpose. We always can keep trusting him to do that. When we don’t trust Him, though, our pain can lead us to waste the wait.

A season of waiting is one of the greatest invitations you will have in life. God wants to give you a pace and perspective that only comes from the wait; He’ll give you time to reflect, renew, and then refocus. I believe you are in your finest hour because God is close, and I have great expectation for all He desires to do in your life from the inside out.

2. WHEN TEARS FALL
“Those who sow with tears will reap with songs of joy. Those who go out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with them” (Psalm 126:5-6 NIV).

“For His anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning” (Psalms 30:5 NIV).

“Jesus wept” (John 11:35 NIV).

Love, God’s faithful love, proves itself time and time again. The story God has for you and me is one of waiting and finding love as faithful as the dawn - even while we are still in the dark. It is love that meets you in the dark and also brings the light.

Sometimes we are in the dark with the pain of life, feeling the impact of the illness or job loss, the betrayal or broken relationship. As painful as the season is, it gives us an opportunity to assess our priorities and values and move toward purification and growth.

But what about when we feel so broken that all we have to “sow” is tears? Receive the reassuring words of Psalm 126: *“Those who sow in tears shall reap with shouts of joy! He who goes out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his*

sheaves with him” (vv. 5-6).

Here is a promise to hold on to in the dark! God says our tears are our seeds to sow and our season of sorrow will not last forever. The psalmist described eruptive joy and bountiful sheaves - bundles of harvested grain stalks, the result of much effort and patience.

Hannah sowed tears of trust and honesty. David sowed tears of repentance as he wept for the sins he had committed against God. The woman with the alabaster box sowed tears of adoration and worship. The common reality among them? They all eventually reaped their harvest with a heart of joy. *“Weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning” (Psalm 30:5 NIV).*

“Jesus wept,” Scripture tells us (John 11:35). It’s a powerful statement revealing a Saviour acquainted with our grief. The strongest Man in history knew that surrendering His tears to the Father only made Him stronger. After Jesus wept, He defeated the grave and redeemed every tear He had shed as Lazarus walked out of his grave.

Don’t mistake your tears as the final harvest of grief. No, friend, they are seeds, and every drop is an expression of faith in a God Who redeems all.

3. CHOOSING TO TRIUMPH OVER FEAR
“There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. So Moses thought, ‘I will go over and see this strange sight - why the bush does not burn up.’ When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, ‘Moses! Moses!’ And Moses said, ‘Here I am’ (Ex. 3:2-4 NIV).

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with My righteous right hand” (Isaiah 41:10 NIV).

“Have I not commanded you? Be

strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9 NIV).

When fear reigns in us, it leaves us in a prison of waiting with no hope of release. We start to believe the intimidating thoughts of the Enemy that come into our head - and if we continue in that vein, we’ll never be ready for what God is calling us to. One of the most important things I have learned is to guard my mind. I have developed a practice of evicting thoughts of fear; I don’t let them take up space. When they try to “enter the room,” I shift my thoughts in another direction.

Sometimes we are in the grip of fear without naming it. Maybe we are stagnant, and we label it waiting when in fact we are hiding. Have you ever been there? Deep in your heart you hold dynamic, beautiful dreams, but you can’t break out of your own chains of insecurity and self-doubt. You might be able to see there is plenty to be done now, but you can’t seem to push through the fear.

I imagine Moses had similar thoughts before he found himself speaking with God at the burning bush. He’d been hiding for forty years, trying to live a simple life, when God sought him out and called him by name to tell him that he would be the one to lead God’s people out of slavery in Egypt. God called to him: *“Moses! Moses!”* Moses responded, *‘Here I am’*” (Exodus 3:4).

Today, God calls you by name. You may have ignored Him the first time or wasted away the last few years - but today, as you read this, hear heaven call you by name once more. Now is the time to say, “Here I am.” Why don’t you say that right now in your heart as you are reading? “Here I am.” The first thing to do in a God moment is respond. You don’t have to pull all the pieces together or fix yourself up. Even your waiting in the desert that seemed like a lost season has prepared you for this moment.

Continued on p. 7



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Waiting Well

Continued from p. 6

Don't let fear or failure stop you from answering the call. God calls us to surrender with a heart that says, "I'm not running away or hiding; I'm worshipping. I'll get lost in Your love and move forward with Your Spirit."

4. REDEFINE YOUR WAIT

"I have considered my ways and have turned my steps to Your statutes" (Psalm 119:59 NIV).

"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland" (Isaiah 43:18-19 NIV).

"For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us

power, love and self-discipline" (2 Timothy 1:7 NIV).

How do we know we are on the right path as we walk forward in our wait? We keep checking in with ourselves: What am I fixated on?

Psalm 119:59 in The Message says, *"When I took a long, careful look at Your ways, I got my feet back on the trail you blazed."* We want to keep taking *"a long, careful look"* at the One we are walking with.

I grew up with 3D posters, those crazy designs where you stare and stare at the formless, chaotic art until your eyes recognise a different dimension that was there all along. Taking *"a long, careful look"* allows you to see

something you didn't see before. Your focus will unlock a new dimension of revelation. Give yourself to the practice of soaking in God's ways! He is faithful, just, and loving, and He will fill you with wonder.

There may be times when you don't know why you keep wandering in your wait. It may feel like one step forward and two steps back. Keep in mind that, when we wander, we really are searching. There is a restlessness we can bring to Christ; we can ask Him to help us find satisfaction in Him.

Know that your wait doesn't have to be wasted. It can be the greatest journey of your life. But it starts from a place of knowing you are already safe and secure in God's Hands. He is leading you on

a journey all the way to the home He has prepared for you in heaven.

Isaiah prophesied of the coming goodness by relaying these words from God: *"Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert"* (43:18–19).

Today is the perfect day to redefine your wait. You are not destined to be in a stuck place forever. You are walking to the promised land with God.

- Dawncheré Wilkerson, *Slow Burn: The Work and Wonder of the Wait*

The Two Lost Sons

The Bible's most potent depiction of the truth that there's more than one way to be lost is crystallised in Luke 15:11-32. The broad outline of the parable is familiar: a father has two sons, the younger of whom demands his share of the inheritance and then moves to a far country, where he squanders it on wild living. Eventually, after coming to his senses, the prodigal returns home empty-handed and broken; he simply hopes his father will take him back as a hired servant. But seeing his wayward son from a long way off, the father runs to meet him and requests a party thrown in his honour.

Many people tend to stop there, at least in terms of emphasis, which is why it's known to history as the parable of the prodigal son - singular. But the returning son isn't the only prodigal. That's actually the whole point. Jesus is not addressing the wayward but is aiming the story, like a heat-seeking missile, at the religiously devout. Note the context of the chapter: *"Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear [Jesus]. And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, 'This man receives sinners and eats with them.'*" So he told them this parable... (Luke 15:1-3).

In light of the audience, then, we dare not overlook the dramatic final scene: *"Now [the father's] older son was in the field, and as*

he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.' But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, *'Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!'* And he said to him, *'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found'* (Luke 15:25-32).

On September 11, 2005, Tim Keller preached a sermon titled "The Prodigal Sons" - plural - which became the genesis of his 2008 bestseller *The Prodigal God: Recovering the Heart of the Christian Faith*. This book captures the most distilled essence of Keller's teaching regarding the heart. Near the beginning he credits a sermon on Luke 15 by his mentor, Ed Clowney, that altered his understanding: "Listening to that sermon changed the

way I understood Christianity. I almost felt I had discovered the secret heart of Christianity. Over the years I have often returned to teach and counsel from this parable. I have seen more people encouraged, enlightened, and helped by this passage, when I explained the true meaning of it, than by any other text."

That last sentence is a remarkable statement. What about the parable is so powerful? If you compare the teaching of Jesus to a lake, Keller says, this parable is "one of the clearest spots where we can see all the way to the bottom." And that's because what Jesus says about the elder brother is one of Scripture's most vital teachings. We impoverish ourselves, therefore, when we fixate on the younger brother: "The first time I heard the parable, I imagined Jesus's original listeners' eyes welling up with tears as they heard how God will always love and welcome them, no matter what they've done. We sentimentalise this parable if we do that. The targets of this story are not 'wayward sinners' but religious people who [think they] do everything the Bible requires. Jesus is pleading not so much with immoral outsiders as with moral insiders. He wants to show them their blindness, narrowness, and self-righteousness, and how these things are destroying both their own souls and the lives of the people around them. It is a mistake, then, to think that Jesus

tells this story primarily to assure younger brothers of His unconditional love."

Apart from Jesus Christ, flagrant lawbreaking and fastidious rule keeping are dead ends. In Keller's words: "Jesus's purpose is not to warm our hearts but to shatter our categories."

Each brother in the parable represents "a different way to be alienated from God," and both ways are strikingly resonant with the late-modern West. Keller dubs the approaches "the way of moral conformity and the way of self-discovery." In fact, he observes, Western culture is "so deeply divided between these two approaches" that it's difficult to imagine an alternative option: "If you criticise or distance yourself from one, everyone assumes you have chosen to follow the other, because each of these approaches tends to divide the whole world into two basic groups. The moral conformists say: 'The immoral people - the people who 'do their own thing' - are the problem with the world, and moral people are the solution.' The advocates of self-discovery say: 'The bigoted people - the people who say, 'We have the Truth' - are the problem with the world, and progressive people are the solution.' Each side says: 'Our way is the way the world will be put to rights, and if you are not with us, you are against us.'"

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The Two Lost Sons

Continued from p. 7

But King Jesus is not kind to false dichotomies. Nor is He beholden to natural expectations: “So we have two sons, one ‘bad’ by conventional standards and one ‘good,’ yet both are alienated from the father. The father has to go out and invite each of them to come into the feast of his love... But Act 2 comes to an unthinkable conclusion. Jesus, the Story-teller, deliberately leaves the elder brother in his alienated state. The bad son enters the father’s feast but the good son will not. The lover of prostitutes is saved, but the man of moral rectitude is still lost. We can almost hear the Pharisees gasp as the story ends. It was the complete reversal of everything they had ever been taught. Both sons are lost, but only one knows it. You are lost, Jesus is saying, but you refuse to know it.

SELF-SALVATION PROJECTS

It’s sobering to notice that when the older son protests, “*Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command*” (Luke 15:29), the father doesn’t disagree! His first-born has been obedient; he has done everything “right.” And ironically, it’s keeping him from the feast. His outward goodness - and resultant pride - has erected a barrier between him and the father’s love.

An elder-brother mindset can haunt us all. Keller offers an example: “I knew a woman who had worked for many years in Christian ministry. When chronic illness overtook her in middle age, it threw her into despair. Eventually she realised that deep in her heart she felt that God owed her a better life, after all she had done for Him. That assumption made it extremely difficult for her to climb out of her pit, though climb she did. The key to her improvement, however, was to recognise the elder-brother mindset within. Elder brothers obey God to get things. They don’t obey God to get God Himself - in order to resemble Him, love Him, know Him, and delight Him. So religious and moral people can be avoiding Jesus as Saviour and Lord as much as the younger brothers who say they don’t believe in God and define right and wrong for themselves.

The stakes are that high. If you think God should accept you because you’re good, “then Jesus may be your Helper, your Example, even your Inspiration, but He is not your Saviour.” How could He be? You are occupying that role. Keller concludes, “So

there are two ways, not one, to be your own Saviour and Lord: you can break all the moral rules and chart your own course, or you can try keeping all the external moral rules and seek to earn heaven’s favour. Both are strategies for avoiding God. Apart from Jesus Christ, every person is ‘dedicated to a project of self-salvation, to using God and others in order to get power and control for themselves. We are just going about it in different ways.”

EQUALLY WRONG, NOT EQUALLY DANGEROUS

By the end of Jesus’s parable, only one son has been reconciled to his father. Why conclude like this? The reason certainly isn’t that elder brothers are hopeless; if they were, the father wouldn’t have gone into the field and pleaded at all. We can’t know for sure, of course, but perhaps Jesus is conveying that while “both forms of the self-salvation project are equally wrong,” they are not “equally dangerous.” The younger brother’s rebellion is obvious; the elder brother’s is not. And therein lies the danger: “He would have been horribly offended by the suggestion that he was rebelling against the father’s authority and love, but he was, deeply. Because the elder brother is more blind to what is going on, being an elder-brother Pharisee is a more spiritually desperate condition. “How dare you say that?” is how religious people respond if you suggest their relationship with God isn’t right. “I’m there every time the church doors are open.” Jesus says, in effect, “That doesn’t matter.”

The takeaway, Keller says, is shocking: “Careful obedience to God’s law may serve as a strategy for rebelling against God.” He often returned to an image of two people sitting side by side in the same pew - hearing the same sermons, singing the same songs, engaging in the same spiritual activities - but for utterly different reasons. One does it all to please God; the other does it to justify self. And yet on the outside, they look exactly the same.

THE TRUE ELDER BROTHER

When it comes to pleasing God, both the rebellious path and the religious path are dead ends. But Jesus shows us a more excellent way. It is not a comfortable middle option between Earthly extremes, for His Gospel occupies a transcendent plane.

In the parable, the older son should have gone into the far country in pursuit of his wayward

brother. He should have rejoiced at his return. He should have gladly relinquished part of his inheritance in order to reinstate his brother’s. He should have joined the party. But, as Keller observes, “By putting a flawed elder brother in the story, Jesus is inviting us to imagine and yearn for a true one.”

Jesus Christ is the ultimate Elder Brother Who didn’t just travel to a far country; He descended from heaven to Earth to seek and save the lost. “Who is the true elder brother?” Keller asked in a funeral sermon for his own younger brother Billy. “Who is the One who truly obeyed the Father completely? Who truly has lost His robe so He [could] put it on us? Jesus!” He is the “God of Great Expenditure,” Who, at infinite cost to Himself, paid our debt and now binds our wounds and brings us home to the Father.

This message is true, but it’s not tame. The process of reckoning with it is disruptive to idol-ridden hearts. Keller recounts a time when a woman coming to Redeemer [his church congregation] was hearing, for the first time, that she could be accepted not on the basis of her behaviour but by God’s sheer grace. Keller was intrigued by her response: “That is a scary idea! Oh, it’s good scary, but still scary.” When he asked what was so scary about unmerited free grace, she replied, “If I was saved by my good works - then there would be a limit to what God could ask of me or put me

through. I would be like a taxpayer with rights. I would have done my duty and now I would deserve a certain quality of life. But if it is really true that I am a sinner saved by sheer grace - at God’s infinite cost - then there’s nothing He cannot ask of me.”

Keller comments, “She could see... the wonderful-beyond-belief teaching of salvation by sheer grace had two edges to it. On the one hand it cut away slavish fear. God loves us freely, despite our flaws and failures. Yet she also knew that if Jesus really had done this for her - she was not on her own. She was bought with a price.”

As we wait in hope for the ultimate feast and eternal party, may we never get over what it cost to bring us home. In December 1662, a Scottish minister named David Dickson lay dying when a close friend of over fifty years arrived to inquire how he was. The eighty-year-old man replied, “I have taken all my good deeds, and all my bad deeds, and have cast them together in a heap before the Lord, and have fled from both to Jesus Christ, and in Him I have sweet peace.”

That is the message of the Gospel, and it is the message Tim Keller loved to communicate. Don’t just flee your bad works. Flee your “good” works, too. Flee them both and collapse into the open arms of Jesus Christ.

- Matt Smethurst

Die Gebreekte Albastefles

Vervolg van p. 2

ons almal wat dit met blydschap deurgee. Jesus het gesê: “*Gaan dan heen, maak dissipels van al die nasies, en doop hulle in die Naam van die Vader en die Seun en die Heilige Gees; en leer hulle om alles te onderhou wat Ek julle beveel het*” (Matt. 28:19). En dit geld tot vandag toe, vir alle gelowiges wat Jesus aangeneem het en Hom bely. Want oral waar die gelowiges die boodskap van verlossing in Jesus bring, sal hulle vervolg word totdat Jesus kom. Bring jou offer vir Hom en gaan waarheen Hy jou ook al met die Blye Boodskap stuur.

Moenie nalaat om jou stukkende kruik na die Here toe te neem nie, sodat die salfolie tot genesing en heling oor die gebrokenes heen kan vloei, waar die Here jou ook al wil gebruik, ten spyte van vervolging en lyding. Hoe feller die vervolging, hoe helderder skyn jou lig deur. Dawid sê: “*U, Here, laat my lamp helder skyn; my God gee lig as dit donker is om my*” (Ps. 18:29). Onthou, God is aan jou kant (Ps. 118:6). Paulus bemoedig ons ten slotte: “*As God vir ons is, wie kan teen ons wees?*” (Rom. 8:31). Laat ons dan die brandhoute uit die vuur ruk in die Naam van die Here! Kom ons laat toe dat Sy salfolie deur ons vloei!

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I Am Thirsty

“So He came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus, tired as He was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, ‘Will you give me a drink?’ (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, ‘You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?’ (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, ‘If you knew the gift of God and Who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked Him and He would have given you living water.’ ‘Sir,’ the woman said, ‘You have nothing to draw with and the well

is deep. Where can You get this living water? Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?’ Jesus answered, ‘Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life’ (John 4:5-14 NIV). “Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, ‘I am thirsty’” (John 19:28 NIV). A family excitedly opened their door to a team of volunteers who’d traveled to their village in a

rural region of Mexico to install a simple home water filter system. Demonstrating how the filter would provide safe water to quench their thirst, the team also told the family about “living water” that would satisfy their deepest need - peace with God. The team members followed Christ’s example of explaining a spiritual reality by relating it to a person’s need to satisfy physical thirst. Weary from travel, Jesus sat down beside a well. After asking a woman there for water, He addressed her deeper need: “Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again. But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again” (John 4:13-14). Jesus offered her soul refreshment through a relationship with God.

To offer this living water to all people, Christ had to go through the anguish of thirst again. As He hung on the cross, He cried out, “I am thirsty” (John 19:28) - a sign that His life was ebbing away. He willingly suffered, enduring the pain of physical thirst, knowing that God would raise Him to life again. Like the woman at the well, we can have access to living water for our thirsty souls through faith in Jesus. The volunteer team celebrated when the family enjoyed clean water and rejoiced when they also accepted the gift of living water Christ offers. It’s a gift available to anyone whose soul thirsts. - Lisa M. Samra

GOD’S LOVE, OUR LIFE STRATEGY

Her life was a mess. Emotionally she hit the lowest point ever. The house she grew up in and inherited from her parents was, to her, in every respect, home. The memories, her friends, every single thing she loved had to stay behind. Her sadness turned into a deep depression and she felt broken beyond words. Cleaning up the attic she came upon a box that contained her great-aunt Grace’s few Earthly leftovers. Aunt Grace had lived

with them when she was a little girl. Cheery Aunt Grace was just a distant memory now. That was when she found the diary. She started reading and was surprised to learn that Aunt Grace had had a sweetheart that was killed in war and her greatest battle was not to succumb to despair. The church in Corinth was a mess too. Corruption and every conceivable sin was at the order of the day and sadly had seeped into the church. Paul, at the end of his

tether with these Christians wrote to them, his frustration and annoyance clear. He wrote them a powerful letter of instruction as to how to restore purity and holiness again. He reprimanded them that their so-called “freedom” in Christ was in no way permission to sin. Their loveless, senseless conflicts only served to cause harm. “It is love that strengthens the church” and reminding them that “the person who loves God is the One Whom God recognises” (1 Cor. 8:1,3). Aunt Grace’s diary brought clarity that day. In spite of her own battle with grief and sadness, she was desperate for a life strategy. “My unhappiness is a bottomless cup. I know I must be cheerful, living in this large family upon whom I am dependent, yet gloom haunts me... Something has to change or I shall be sick. Clearly, my situation is not going to - I have to change. BUT HOW?”



Helen du Plessis

phagus of self.”

Die Vader is so wys en liefdevol en goed vir ons. Geen wonder mense verstaan Hom nie en begryp nie wat Hy doen nie... Hy is die Bron, Gids en Doel van alles wat bestaan. Prys Sy Naam!...

Nou goed, broers en susters, juis daarom moet julle God se goedertierenheid in julle lewe as instrument gebruik om julleself aan Hom terug te gee. Wat anders kan ons doen, wetend wat Hy alles vir ons gedoen het? Moenie toelaat dat die wêreldstelsel julle in hulle kunsmatige vorm indwing nie. Nee, breek uit deur God se Gees toe te laat om julle splinternuwe gedagtes te gee. Dan sal julle die goeie en volmaakte lewe kan lei en geniet wat God vir julle bestem het.

- LETTERS TO STREET CHRISTIANS ('N PARAFRASE VAN ROMEINE 11:33,36; 12:1-2)

After much thought, Aunt Grace wrote down a simple life strategy which she resolved to keep on a daily basis.

1. Do something for someone else.
2. Do something for myself.
3. Do something I don’t want to do that needs doing.
4. Do physical exercise.
5. Do a mental exercise.
6. Do an original prayer that always includes counting my blessings.

She knew: “I alone can take the initiative to escape ‘the sarco-

Paul, ever wise and helpful, in his desperation, gave the very best advice for a life strategy that would make all the difference in the world. The ever-encouraging chapter on love is the very best strategy anyone could ever need. Without love, life would be the greatest imaginable misery. Make it your own today. Be patient and kind. Don’t demand your own way. Don’t be irritable and never keep a record of being wronged. “Three things will last forever - faith, hope, and love - and the greatest of these is love” (1 Corinthians 13). Love will last right into eternity. Let’s make it our own: live in the wisdom of God’s love!

- Helen du Plessis, 083 332 0895.

GOD IS ONS HELPER

Vir jare het Stefan Dreyer, 'n branderplankryer van Kaapstad daarvan gedroom om by Donkiebaai in Namibie te gaan branderplankry. Sy droom het amper sy lewe gekos...

"Op ons laaste oggend in Namibië, het ek saam met ander Suid-Afrikaners teen die mistige kus opgestap. Alhoewel ons almal saam in die water ingegaan het, verloor ons mekaar gewoonlik gou in die branders, aangesien dit tot twee kilometer langs die kus af breek. Met my derde of vierde brander van die oggend, het my kop met 'n harde slag in 'n vlak sandbank ingeboor. In 'n oogwink was ek verlam. Onder die water kon ek my arms en bene gevoelloos langs my sien hang terwyl my asem vinnig besig was om op te raak.

"'n Brander het oor my gebreek. Vir 'n oomblik kon ek asemhaal en om hulp skree voordat my kop weer onder die water beland het. Met die digte mis kon ek niemand naby aan my sien nie. Die sekondes het verbygetik en my asem was weer besig om op te raak. Sou ek hier verdrink?

Al wat ek kon doen was om na God uit te roep.

"Naby aan verdrinking, het arms meteens van agter om my gevou en my omgeswaai sodat ek kon asemhaal. Dit was Eli Olsen, legendariese branderplankryer van Hawaii. Op die strand het Eli vir my 'n sandnekstut gebou om my nekwerwel te beskerm terwyl ons vir die ambulans gewag het.

"Wat hierdie redding veral besonders maak, is dat Eli in die verlede reeds drie ander branderplankryers met soortgelyke beserings uit die water gered het. Hy het dus presies geweet wat om te doen en nie te doen nie om te verhoed dat ek permanent verlam gelaat word.

"Terug in Suid-Afrika was die dokters dit eens dat min mense met dié beserings (beide 'n skedelfraktur en beserings aan my nek en rug) nie verlam gelaat is nie. Al wat ek kon doen, was om God te dank. Hy was teenwoordig daardie oggend in die branders. Hy het Eli geposisioneer om op die regte tyd op die regte plek te wees om my te help. Ek eer God daarvoor!"

In Hebreërs 13:6 lees ons: *"Die Here is my Helper, ek ken geen vrees nie."* Ook in Psalm 121:2 lees ons: *"My hulp kom van die Here wat hemel en aarde gemaak het."*

God is ons HELPER. Hy hoor as ons na Hom roep. En Hy gebruik mense om ons daarvan bewus te maak.

God posisioneer mense om ons te help. Ons besef dit gewoonlik eers na die tyd.

- God is Stééds God, 2020, Benescke Janse van Rensburg

The Gospel in 4 Points





GOD LOVES ME

God loves people so much that from the beginning it was His plan to be in a relationship with them. At that time everything in this world was in order. There were no wars, no injustice, no division, and everything was perfect. Man lived in peace and harmony with God.

"God saw all that He had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning - the sixth day" (Genesis 1:31 NIV).



SEPARATION FROM GOD

Man chose to go his own way and turned away from God in order to be independent. This decision makes us guilty before God and separates us from Him. Today we see the consequences of this decision: instead of living in peace and harmony with each other, there are lies, hatred, jealousy, disease, and war. But even worse is that this guilt separates us from God eternally. The problem is that man cannot re-establish relationship with God by his own efforts.

"When He [the Spirit] comes, He will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: about sin, because people do not believe in Me" (John 16:8-9 NIV).

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23 NIV).



JESUS GAVE EVERYTHING FOR ME

We cannot free ourselves from guilt, but what was impossible for man, God has done for us. Because God loves us so much, He has the perfect way out for every human being, through which you too can reconnect with Him. God demonstrated this love by sending His only Son, Jesus Christ, into the world. When Jesus died on the cross, He took upon Himself our guilt that separates us from God. Through this, God has forgiven us our sin and guilt. On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead, just as he had announced. He lives today and through Him the way to God is accessible again.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16 NIV).



DO I WANT TO LIVE WITH JESUS?

Because Jesus is the only way to God and forgiveness is already possible, everyone is faced with the decision to accept or reject this truth. Do you want to have this connection to God? Believing in Jesus is a decision - the first step can be a simple prayer. Read Romans 10:9-10.

- GO MOVEMENT, <https://gomovement.world>

Jer. 20:11

★★★ **B&B** *Uit die Hand*

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JOI-Kinderdienste 9:30

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OASE VAN HOOP

-KOFFIE KAFEE-

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est. 2023