

# Walking in the Dark

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Date: 08 September 2019

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[ 0 : 00 ] Take your Bibles and turn to the book of Job. Job chapter 1. In the Hebrew version of the Old Testament, Job is the first of the wisdom books.

! Job is the first of the wisdom books. It has the kind of wisdom that we need for living in this life. Job chapter 1.

I'll read the entire chapter. In the land of Uz, there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright.

He feared God and shunned evil. He had seven sons and three daughters. And he owned 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, and 500 donkeys, and had a large number of servants. He was the greatest man among all the people of the East. His sons used to take turns holding feasts in their homes, and they would invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them.

[ 1 : 07 ] When a period of feasting had run its course, Job would send and have them purified. Early in the morning, he would sacrifice a burnt offering for each of them, thinking, perhaps my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.

This was Job's regular custom. One day the angels came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came with them. The Lord said to Satan, Where have you come from?

Satan answered the Lord, From roaming through the earth and going back and forth in it. Then the Lord said to Satan, Have you considered my servant Job?

There is no one on earth like him. He is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil. Does Job fear God for nothing?

Satan replied, Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land.

[ 2 : 12 ] But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face. The Lord said to Satan, Very well, then, everything he has is in your hands, but on the man himself do not lay a finger.

Then Satan went out from the presence of the Lord. One day, when Job's sons and daughters were feasting and drinking wine at the oldest brother's house, a messenger came to Job and said, The oxen were plowing, and the donkeys were grazing nearby, and the Sabaeans attacked and carried them off.

They put the servants to the sword, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you. While he was still speaking, another messenger came and said, The fire of God fell from the sky and burned up the sheep and the servants, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you.

While he was still speaking, another messenger came and said, The Chaldeans formed three raiding bands and swept down on your camels and carried them off. They put the servants to the sword, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you.

While he was still speaking, yet another messenger came and said, Your sons and daughters were feasting and drinking wine at the oldest brother's house, when suddenly a mighty wind swept in from the desert and struck the four corners of the house.

[ 3 : 41 ] It collapsed on them, and they are dead, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you. At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head.

Then he fell to the ground in worship and said, Naked, I came from my mother's womb, and naked, I will depart.

The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away. May the name of the Lord be praised. In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing.

You're alone walking in a thick forest at night, and it's so dark you cannot see the light or the hand in front of your face.

What do you want? What do you need? A light. A light. You're going through a dark providence. [ 4 : 49 ] No light in the darkness you see. What do you want? What do you desperately need? A light.

I have it. Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light upon my path. We're studying from the Bible what it has to say about the providence of God.

God's power by which he upholds and controls everything. Its extent is over all his creatures, in all their actions, all the time.

And the purpose of God's providence is to bring to pass what in eternity past he has planned and purposed. For in time, he works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will.

So that all that happens in time was planned in eternity. Nothing happens in time that was not planned in eternity. Now last week, we started to consider some of the problems of God's providence.

[ 6 : 06 ] We looked at the mystery of God's providence. Providences that are strange. Providences that are hard. That are dark. That are frowning. And we spoke of the hiddenness of God.

Isaiah 45, 15. Truly you are a God who hides yourself, O Savior and God of Israel. He sometimes hides behind second causes we saw.

And we can't see him because he works through means. And we see the second cause but we miss him. Sometimes he hides the light of his face.

So that we see nothing of his justice or of his love or of his goodness in the trials that we are presently going through. No sense of his presence.

When our way is dark we have no sense of what God is doing. Where our path is leading. Why this is happening. All is darkness.

[ 7 : 11 ] Without and within. And so the Bible does not hide from us this reality. Such dark providences in the lives of yes, his people.

Even his most righteous people. Now, we look then at the question how do we respond then to this mystery of God's providence?

How do we respond to the hiddenness of God? How do we walk in the dark? Well, we saw what not to do. Don't complain and charge God foolishly as if you know better than him how to rule your life and his world.

We saw what we are rather to do. We are to expect mystery from a God whose ways are as high above our ways as the heavens are above the earth. So, we are not surprised by mystery.

We rather expect it when we are dealing with God. And then secondly, we embrace the mystery and we bow in humble worship. Not struggling and fighting against it but embracing that will of God from all eternity that he has ordered for our lives and we bow and worship thankful that we have such a great God that is so much bigger than we are.

[ 8 : 39 ] And now today, our response to the hiddenness of God's providence or how to walk in the dark is to honor God by trusting his word.

Trusting his word. Judge not the Lord by feeble sense but trust him for his grace. Behind a frowning providence he hides a smiling face.

The Bible gives us many examples of believers who were walking in the dark holding on to the flashlight of God's word.

That's how they walked in the dark. They had the light of God's word and they used it. We think of Abraham and the record given to us in Hebrews 11 and verse 8.

By faith, that is by trusting, Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went even though he did not know where he was going.

[ 9 : 42 ] Now that's walking in the dark. Not knowing where you are going. If you had met Abraham, you would have found him all packed up with all of his possessions, a big entourage coming down the road and you'd have asked him, friend, where are you going?

And he'd say, I don't know. But I just know this, that God has given me his word that he's going to lead me to a place that will be my inheritance.

That was enough light for Abraham to take another step, another step, another step. God said he would lead me and his word is all I need.

Luther says, it's the glory of faith not to know. And we need to lay hold of that. Again, we expect there to be many times in our lives when we don't know, and that's the glory of faith. Faith can go where reason can't. And so, it is the glory, the wonder of faith to not know, but to trust the word of the one we do know.

[10:48] We find the psalmist in 130 verses 5 and 6 compares himself with watchmen on the night shift, waiting through those long dark hours for the light of dawn.

And the psalmist is going through such a period in his life where all is dark and he says, my soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning.

How can you go on waiting for the light more than watchmen for the break of day? Because God's word, he says, I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I put my hope.

There it is, his word, in his word I put my hope, and that's more sure than that the sun will rise in the morning as we wait, and as the watchmen wait.

And so before the mystery of God's dark providence is we trust him. And it's not a blind faith because he has spoken to us and we have a sure word from God.

[12:02] And that word from God acts as a lamp to our feet and a light for our path. Not that it tells us what we may want to know, but it does tell us everything that we need to know in order to take another step, to walk on, not by sight, but by faith in the God who has spoken.

So we're returning to Job this morning because he was a man who walked in the dark. I think we would all agree if there was ever a man that walked in the dark, it was Job.

He didn't know why all of his children and all of his wealth and then chapter two, all of his health was stripped from him. He walked in the dark.

And his walk in the dark was not perfect, was it? Indeed, we see him starting well in chapters one and two, and we see him ending well in this long trial of darkness in his life.

But in between, the Bible does not hide from us both his failures and successes of faith. And Job had both. But in spite of his imperfect walking in the dark, in the New Testament book of James, God holds Job out to us as an example for us of patience and perseverance in the face of suffering.

[13:32] So we're asking today, what can we learn from Job about how to walk in dark providences? And I think Deuteronomy 29, 29 is important here.

We've mentioned it before, but hear it again. The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and our children forever, that we may learn to walk in his ways.

And one overarching observation is this. So there are secret things and there are revealed things. And this is the observation that I'd like for us to think about.

It seems to me Job did his worst suffering when trying to understand the secret things of God. Why this disaster had come upon him.

The reason for it. He's wanting to understand why, to give meaning to his suffering. Of course, he was pushed to this by his three friends who turned out to be miserable counselors.

[14:41] For them, the reason was clear. Job, you've sinned. You've sinned greatly against God. You're hiding it and you're not repenting of it. That's why God has sent these trials and troubles into your life.

And in searching his heart and defending himself against their charges and accusations, Job overreacts and he ends up charging God with injustice in order to clear himself.

And so God must say, who is this that darkens my counsel with words without knowledge? The why of Job's suffering, we've read.

It was a challenge, wasn't it, in heaven, between God himself and Satan. Of course he serves you, God. You're so good to him. Just take your hand and strike him and he'll curse you to his face.

And for that test to be completely effective, it was kept secret from Job. And so he has no idea why this has all happened to him.

[15:41] He's walking in the dark. And Job didn't do well at suffering while his focus was on the secret things of God. Why this? Why that?

But Job did his best suffering when he stopped trying to pry into God's secret things and rather trusted in the things that God had revealed. He turned from what he didn't know and couldn't know, God's secrets, to what he did know and did have, God's revelation.

He says, I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my daily bread. Now that, I believe, is the overarching message of Job to us.

You walk in the dark by trusting the revealed, things of God. Now, Job appears in the line of human history very early on, and so that simply means his Bible would have been very thin compared to the 66 books that we have.

So, whatever word of God he had was much smaller than that which you and I have. So, how much more should we walk in the way?

[17:29] Well, what was it that Job knew? There was much that he didn't know, but what did he know? That's what we want to see. What did he know that enabled him to walk through this dark patch of the road?

good? I must be selective and I'll just take three major texts. The first is Job chapter 1 and verses 20 to 22. If you have your Bibles, I'd encourage you to have them open.

Job 1, messenger after messenger has come to Job with the bad news all on this one dark day. no sooner does the fourth messenger tell him of the death of his ten children than he shows his deep grief by tearing his robe and shaving his head and then he fell to the ground in worship and praised the God of Providence behind all these losses.

And truth number one that Job knew is found right there in verse 21. Naked I came from my mother's womb and naked I will depart.

[18:52] Surely that's a very basic lesson, isn't it? I came into the world with nothing and that's how I'm going to depart. Therefore Job knew that everything that he had had been given to him.

If I had nothing when I came, what do I have that I've not received? Indeed, the earth is the Lord's and everything in it.

So anything I have is gift. It's been given to me. And Job is not wondering, did the stars align and give me this stuff?

No, he knew. It had been revealed to him who the giver was. It was the Lord. The Lord gave. All ten of his children, though in one sense the result of his union with his wife, were nevertheless gifts from the Lord.

Behind all of his hard work and success and building his wealth was God's giving hand. He didn't fail to see God's invisible hand of providence because of the second causes behind his success.

[20:07] And he now confesses it at the point of his loss. The Lord gave. The Lord gave. I wonder if we're as quick to see his hand giving to us.

Job believed the truth of God's providence. This is an old doctrine, folks. This goes way back. Job knew that God was the one who upholds all things, that God's the one who gives.

And it made him thankful. But it also taught Job to hold everything that he had with an open hand. Luther says it was God's before he gave it.

It was God's after he gave it. And it was God's after he took it. And Job recognizes that God took nothing from him but that he had first given to him.

And that Job therefore only held it for the giver and therefore must hold it with an open hand. After all, I'm going out with nothing. He's going to take it all from me at some point.

[21:15] And all through my life I must hold what he gives with that open hand. It's his. I am not my own. This is not my own. It's his.

Charlotte Eliot expresses it in song. If thou shouldst call me to resign what most I prize, it ne'er was mine. I only yield thee what was thine.

Thy will be done. But we notice that Job also knew the truth that the same Lord who gave was the Lord who has taken away.

Job does not say, as many today would say, that the Lord gave but the Sabeans and Chaldeans and the lightning and mother nature took away. No, he makes it very clear that the same Lord who gave is the one who took away.

The Lord has taken away. And so he sees behind the evil deeds of the Sabeans and Chaldeans. He sees behind the whirlwind and the lightning, the hand of God's providence.

[22:25] And says the Lord has taken away. He held no truncated view of the providence of God that would limit God's involvement only to good things given. We see it here, but we see it again in chapter two.

If you notice, when Job's good health was now taken from him, not just his children and his wealth, but now say, so of course he still worships him, touch his body and he'll curse you to his face.

And so he struck with boils from the top of his head to the bottom of his feet. And it was then that his wife sees him suffering, so says, well, just, you're still holding on to your integrity?

Curse God and die. And Job says, you're talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God and not trouble? Job recognizes that the same hand that gave is the hand that took away. The same hand that gives good gives trouble. And he, in saying that, is acknowledging this wonderful truth of God's providence over all his creatures, in all their actions, all the time.

[ 23 : 41 ] And in all this, Job did not sin in what he said. None of that is false. None of that is a lie. If it wasn't true, if it's not true that God gives trouble, then Job would have sinned with his mouth.

He would have blamed God for trouble when God had nothing to do with it. No, he did not sin with his lips when he said, God is the one who gives and God's the one who takes.

God is the one who gives good and God is the one who gives trouble. And since taking away was as much God's work of Providence is giving, he's to be praised for both.

May the name of the Lord be praised. So I want us to appreciate that the providence of God is a truth, a revealed truth. It's not one of the secret things.

There's many secret things about his providence, but that God is the one in control. It's not a secret thing. It's a revealed thing. It was revealed to Job. And he found great help in walking in the dark, holding on to the light of God's providence.

[ 24 : 50 ] What else did Job know? Turn toward the back of Job chapter 42 and verse 2. We're seeing how Job suffers best when he walks in the light of God's revealed truth.

What did Job know? He tells us right here in verse 2 of chapter 42, I know that you can do all things. No plan of yours can be thwarted.

Job was taught by God the truth of God's omnipotence, that nothing is too hard for him, that he's able to do all things, that he was no helpless bystander when all this disaster cut loose in his life. No, he could have directed the whirlwind to hit elsewhere, but instead he chose the very house where all ten of his children were and their lives were taken.

He could have directed the lightning to miss his livestock and the thieves to raid someone else's wealth, but he directed them directly on Job's flocks, Job's wealth.

[ 26 : 14 ] It's helpful in our darkness and in our losses to know that God can do all things. It's not that he was somehow standing by as a helpless bystander when the disaster hit.

No, he could have changed the whole outcome of that storm. He could have changed the whole day that was Job's bankruptcy, but he didn't.

Oh, he could have, but he didn't. Then this must be a part of a bigger plan than I understand. He thought about it and he chose what was best and it wasn't this, so it was this.

And that's what he speaks about, the plan of God. No plan of yours can be thwarted. And so to recognize that God could do all things but hasn't in this situation reminds us that God has plans laid in eternity that are far above our understanding and they can no more be improved upon than they can be thwarted.

They will happen in time. They did happen in time. And Job comes to bow before that truth. He confesses it. It's light upon his path.

[ 27 : 37 ] I'm in the dark. Why is this happening? Well, I know it wasn't because God wasn't strong enough to change the outcome. Therefore, he has a plan. He's a plan.

What a comforting truth. to know that our losses are not the result of some unfortunate chance. We just happen to have bad luck. And things just happen to unfold in such a terrible way.

No. I know you can do all things. But you chose not to act in this way this time. That's what Job knows, that God is a God of plans.

And behind all of this pain stands God's plan for me. It came upon me so suddenly, so blindsidedly, so unpreparedly, but you had planned it from all eternity.

All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be, the psalmist says. so he's thought of me. And he's planned this trial specifically for me.

[ 28 : 51 ] It's weight, it's length, it's timing, it's every detail, even considering my ability to bear it. What a blessed consolation to know that this patch of darkness, this trial, has come from the hand of God, tailor-made for me.

The very one who died for me is the one who planned this trial for me. The very hand that was pierced on Calvary, if you will, is the hand that hands my trial to me.

This God, we can trust him. There is no meaningless suffering, that's what it teaches us. There's no purposeless pain, it's all fulfilling a higher end for his glory.

I may not know or understand his plan, but he knows what he's doing, and so I'll trust him even though he slay me. That's what Job says. I'll trust him even though he slay me.

And though my way is hidden from me, he knows the way I take, and when I have been tested, I will come forth as gold. So that's what Job knows. he lives in a world that's been planned by God, and a God who could do all things, and has chosen to do certain things that have happened to us.

[ 30 : 21 ] So we find rest in that. What else does Job know that God has revealed to him? Job chapter 19, right in the middle of the book, we have this burst burst of light.

Job 19 and verse 25. I know, Job, what do you know?

Not what has God kept hidden in secret, but what has God revealed? Well, I know this, he says, I know that my redeemer lives. my redeemer, what words of light, whatever God had revealed to Job about his redeemer, it was a comfort to him in his suffering.

It was the light he needed in the dark, that a redeemer is coming to redeem me, to save me, to save me out of my sin and suffering. He's coming.

Now, here we are living on this side of the redeemer having come. How much more light do we have than Job had about our redeemer? I know I have a redeemer.

[ 31 : 37 ] What a precious truth. And we know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that we were redeemed from that empty way of life handed down to us from our forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish or defect.

Yes, he redeemed me with his blood. Our redemption would come at the great price of our redeemer as we've been singing this morning. And we suffer best with our eyes upon our suffering redeemer.

Whatever our suffering, it's not what we deserve. our suffering causes weeping for a night, but joy comes in the morning.

And if we got what we deserved, we would be weeping and gnashing our teeth forever in hell. So whatever our suffering, it's not what we deserve, and it's not what Jesus stepped onto the cross of Calvary and bore in our place.

He suffered far more than we will ever suffer. In writing to those who had lost loved ones, Martin Luther would say that we make too much of our own sufferings and not enough about his.

[ 33 : 14 ] Indeed, our sufferings are ameliorated and put in a proper context. when we see them in the light of his sufferings, I know that my Redeemer lives.

He who redeemed me, the cost of his own blood. I think of my blessed Redeemer. I think of him all the day long. It's the light of Calvary that shows that our sufferings comparatively so are very light and momentary.

So let your sufferings lead you to your Redeemer. And his sufferings. But he goes on, I know that my Redeemer lives. Here's a revealed truth for us that sheds its light on our darkened path.

My Redeemer who died for me now lives and lives for me. Again, we're looking at it from this side of the cross. Job found encouragement in knowing that his Redeemer lived.

How much more we that he lives triumphant over sin and death and suffering and the curse. He who suffered for me now suffers with me because we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with us in our weakness but has a fellow feeling in his own heart with that that is going on in our hearts.

[ 34 : 38 ] He understands even when friends like Job had don't understand. No one understands like Jesus I know that my Redeemer lives and he lives for me here in my suffering here in my darkness and he has just the mercy and grace to help me in my time of need.

We don't have some impersonal fate that we are living out. We have a living Redeemer a living Redeemer who walks in the dark with us and lightens every load.

But there's more to this living Redeemer to help us walk in the dark. It says that he's coming back. I know that my Redeemer lives and that in the end he will stand upon the earth and after my skin has been destroyed yet in my flesh I will see God.

I myself will see him with my own eyes. I and not another how my heart yearns within me. Learn from Job that we suffer best when we keep the end in view.

The return of our blessed Redeemer when he will stand on the earth a totally redeemed earth and we will stand with him in totally redeemed bodies and souls and in our flesh we will see God.

[ 36 : 03 ] it takes the end to make sense of the dark mysteries of God's providence and that's what Job looks to.

I know that in the end my redeemer will stand triumphant. The end shines light back upon all that was dark in this life.

Then we'll see what he was doing. Then we'll see why it was so needful, why it was so perfect, how it was so wise and kind of God to deal as he did with us and then our greatest trials will be the source of our greatest joys for our light and momentary afflictions are achieving for us a far greater weight of glory.

A glory that is eternal, that outweighs them all so we fix our eyes, not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. The end, the view from the end, casts its light into our present darkness.

So I consider that the present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us, Romans 8, 18. Only from the end view can dark providences be rightly judged.

[ 37 : 28 ] And faith is willing to wait to the end. Trials dark on every hand. And we cannot understand all the ways that God will lead us to that blessed promised land, but he guides us with his eye and will follow till we die.

For we'll understand it better by and by. By and by, when the morning comes, when the dawn of light comes, when all the saints of God have gathered home, we'll tell the story how we've overcome and we'll understand it better by and by.

Simple song, precious truth to help us walk in the night, in the dark. And if ever we needed the patience of Job, it's while we are walking in the dark, waiting for the end.

And if we don't wait for the end, we'll misjudge God. James 5.11, you've heard about the patience of Job and have seen the end of the Lord.

You saw what the Lord did at the end of Job's trial. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy, but if you judge God's providence before the end, you'll misjudge him.

[ 38 : 44 ] You must wait till the end and what he does at the end. 2 Corinthians 4.5 is talking about other people judging us, but I think it has as much truth to say about our judging God's providences when it says judge nothing before the appointed time, wait for the Lord's return.

Don't judge God's providence until he comes back, till the end. you don't like it when people judge your situation before the end.

So you're a wife and you're in the kitchen and you're making corn bread and you've mixed up the corn meal and the eggs and the milk and your hubby comes through and puts his finger in the batter and licks it and says, oh, that's nasty.

And you chase him out of the kitchen and you say, you come back in 20 minutes and he comes back and he has a piece of that brown crispy on the outside, tender on the inside, corn bread with butter melting and maple syrup.

He takes a bite and he says, amazing. Something so nasty could turn out so delicious. He needed to wait to the end.

[ 40 : 07 ] And if we judge what God is doing with us now, we will come to the wrong conclusion about God, his goodness, his justice, his love, his presence. Wait till he returns.

Dark providences are hard to interpret. God is his own interpreter and he will make it plain. His purposes will ripen fast, unfolding every hour.

The bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flower. don't bite the bud. Wait for the flower. Wait for the full fruit.

And for the end, waiting for the end, we have his word to help us. We have a more sure word of prophecy and you will do well to pay attention to it as to a light shining in a dark place until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

So leave the secret things to God and lay hold of the revealed things. What have we learned from Job this morning?

[ 41 : 23 ] We learned that he suffered best when he had his eyes on the things he knew because God had revealed them and when he was not seeking to pry into the secret things that he had not revealed.

And surely we learned from Job that it's one thing to believe in the providence of God which he did and it's another thing to daily live upon it.

Sure I believe in the providence of God. We've got a whole chapter in our confession of faith and I believe every word of it. That's one thing. And then when you're walking in the dark you feel lost.

And it feels like God is a million miles away and he's forgotten you. We are very susceptible walking in the dark to believe that lie that a hidden God is an absent God.

That he really isn't with us. He's not really thinking of us. That we're out here on our own and all these forces are having their best with us as wave upon wave batters upon us.

[ 42 : 40 ] Just because I can't feel God's presence and just because I can't see him working in my life doesn't mean that he is not personally involved with me.

We need to come back to God's revealed word. Even the truth of God's providence that Job lived upon so many years ago to this God most high who is fulfilling his purpose for me.

Psalm 57 2 who's not far off but is daily having personal dealings with me. That's the reality. God seems far off in the dark.

We can't see, can't feel, but the reality is that every day he's having personal dealings with me. And sometimes we need to be brought back to reality by the simple little things.

There's a sparrow and he's eating. Oh, God is not far away. He's feeding that sparrow and I am worth far more to him.

[ 43 : 53 ] His son bought me with his own blood and he cares for me and three times a day he brings food to my table and to my mouth.

He's very involved in my life. And another little thing. And let me speak to your children. You've been sitting there so well.

Some 40 minutes now and we'll close with this. But while you've been sitting there you've been breathing, haven't you?

You've been breathing and not even thinking about it. And all night last night, you breathed. Do you know why?

The Bible tells us that in Acts 17 25 that God is the one who gives life and breath and everything else. That one little word and breath has come home with fresh power to me.

[ 45 : 01 ] You see little Maya has a problem. her mind doesn't always tell the muscles in her diaphragm to take a breath and then to exhale.

God's providence in your life is telling you children all day and all night without you even thinking about it.

He is telling your brain to send a signal to your muscles to take a breath and breathe out. It is from him that we have life and breath.

And so how many times in one minute during the course of a day God is actively involved in our lives. He doesn't just wind up a machine called our bodies and then just let it go.

No, he is actively feeding, actively giving breath to every one of us as we sit here not even thinking about him. And we hardly even appreciate it until we see someone who God's providence and strange providence is such that the mind of Maya doesn't always send the signal.

[ 46 : 15 ] And so she stops breathing and she must have help or she would die. And that too is God's providence to have the help that keeps her alive.

I say that children for you to realize just how dependent you are upon God but I say that too for us adults that we might appreciate that no matter how dark and how distant God might feel to us, he's very near.

He's having dealings, personal dealings with us every day. And that's true in the physical realm and it's true in the spiritual. He's holding us up with everlasting arms.

So go on honoring him by trusting in his word as you walk in the dark. At the end you'll not only see all that the Lord was doing in your life's darkest days but you'll see him.

That's what Job said. And oh what a precious truth that is as we walk in the dark. You're going to see the king in all of his beauty face to face with him who handpicked this darkness for you.

[ 47 : 33 ] That marked out this path for you. Who in providence has brought it to you. who died on the cross and rose again and now reigns God most high over everything that happens in your life.

And you'll meet him face to face. I want to meet him and hear from his lips well done. Well done good and faithful servant.

And that well done will more than make up for all the steps in the dark here below. It will be worth it all when we see Jesus. Life's trials will seem so small when we see Christ.

One glimpse of his dear face all sorrow will erase. So bravely bravely run the race till we see Christ. Let's pray. We thank you Lord that you are God most high that you are our father and that you are fulfilling all your purposes for us.

[ 48 : 41 ] We thank you for the light that you've given us in your word that tells us that things are not always as they appear. That there is light that will dawn for the righteous even in the dark.

We thank you for the things you've told us. Help us to treasure them more than are necessary our daily bread and to live upon them. Lord we we're half alive to your providence and yet it surrounds us.

In you we live and move and have our being open our eyes to see you and to trust you that you might be honored. We ask in Jesus name.

Amen.