

When Loss Launches Your Destiny

*We can continue to live by **faith** and walk in favor even when our **prophetic destiny** seems to be on hold.*

Have you ever had a **promise** from **God** that you kept expecting to be fulfilled, but nothing ever happened? Have you had a desire that you felt God put in your heart that never materialized?

Did you once have faith to see the plan of God for your life manifest, but now that faith seems dry and distant? Have you had great **expectations** for God to move on your behalf, but you are still waiting?

This is perhaps the most difficult aspect of **prophetic fulfillment: hope deferred**. It can be experienced as a promise that seems as though it will never be fulfilled, or it can be a promise fulfilled, but the fruit of that promise is dead.

Have you ever experienced the death of a promise? It can truly cause the heart to become sick (see Prov. 13:12). I know this is true from my own life.

God's Greater Plan Nov. 3, 1984, was a day of prophetic fulfillment for the Pierce family. It was on that autumn day that our beautiful daughter, Rebekah, was born. It was a joyful day that followed years of anguish, waiting and believing that God would come through on His word.

In 1980 God had spoken to my wife, Pam, and assured her that she would have twins. At that time, however, she was barren.

After the barrenness was broken, she gave birth to Rebekah and then to our son John Mark. In 1987 she became pregnant again—with twins!

Pam carried the babies to term and on Feb. 6, 1988, gave birth to beautiful identical twin boys whom we named Jesse David and Jacob Levi. God's promise was fulfilled!

But something was wrong in their little bodies. One baby had a serious heart problem, and the other had a serious liver problem. Within one week of their birth, both of our new sons had died.

I watched as they were born, and I held them as they died. The grief and mourning were almost overwhelming. The promise of these twins was the reason we could believe that the barrenness in our lives would be broken, and now, just as it was being fulfilled, that promise had died.

When the second of our twins died, we had an outdoor memorial service, and Pam sang a beautiful song out over the field. It was an incredible moment.

One week later a friend called and said he had a real problem with God's allowing the children to die. The person also had a problem with Pam's seemingly unshakable faith.

My wife told our friend: "If there's one thing I've learned in my life, it's that the quicker I submit to the hand of God, the quicker I can resist the devil. I have chosen to submit to God's hand in this circumstance. And in submitting to the hand of God, I will receive the ability to overcome the enemy so that the double portion that has been robbed will be returned."

The Lord was speaking through my beautiful wife. Those words went deep into my spirit, and I have carried them since that time.

In the midst of our loss and resulting grief, we need to learn to submit quickly to God's greater plan for our lives. If we always do this, the incredibly hard things we go through will truly become a blessing in the hand of the Lord that will

produce a greater prophetic fulfillment in our lives.

In my case, the Lord used the twins' deaths to bring tremendous restoration in my family. In this terrible loss and trauma, I watched Him restore our extended family, which had been so fragmented.

The death of one promise was the catalyst for bringing life and fulfillment to another; that is God's way. What happened in my family was a true miracle.

Loss Has Benefits We should allow God to work our situation for good and respond to His love no matter how difficult our circumstances may be. Loss can produce a great acknowledgement of God within you if you will submit to His hand. There are other benefits as well.

Loss produces shaking. During times of loss, God begins to remove legalism, fear, condemnation and erroneous thinking about Himself. If you can endure the shaking, you come out in a much stronger place, which results in greater maturity.

Loss produces joy. There are many scriptures that link loss to joy (see Ps. 30; John 16:22). There is a certain level of joy we would never come to know if we had not experienced loss.

Loss produces change. In *A Grace Disguised* (Zondervan), Gerald L. Sittser, who lost his mother, wife and young daughter in a tragic car accident, wrote: "function as a catalyst that pushes us in a new direction, like a closed road that forces us to turn around and find another way to our destination."

Loss produces resurrection. David W. Wiersbe, in *Gone But Not Lost* (Baker), wrote: "God's response to death is always life. That doesn't mean He gives another child when one dies. It means that out of the sorrow and ruin of your 'other' life, God gives you a new life. God's response to loss is always restoration in some form."

When we are in very difficult situations, we can easily lose sight of God's promise. This is how we get off target in seeing God fulfill our prophetic destinies.

WHEN EXPECTATIONS ARE GONE Even though the body of Christ goes through great times of testing, we are not to grow fearful and discouraged. Discouragement breeds "hope deferred," which makes the heart sick.

When we have a measure of hopelessness within us, we lose our expectation of God. Then the biggest demonic force we have to contend with seems to be self-pity. It draws attention to our losses and stops us from seeing God's glory manifested in our lives.

Instead of allowing our losses to direct us to God's continued perfect plan for our lives, we have a tendency to accuse God for the traumas we are experiencing. The power of this accusation leads to a type of fatherlessness.

Instead of experiencing the spirit of adoption, we feel abandoned. We can become unteachable and fall into apathy because we have no hope of healing or restoration.

We are called to fellowship with His sufferings. This fellowship must lead to the manifestation of His resurrection power in us.

We turn to self when we lose sight of the love of God. But faith works by love. Once we experience His liberty and love, we will be able to resist self-pity and overthrow hope deferred. An excellent scriptural example of this truth is found in the life of Joseph.

Joseph's Hope Deferred When we first read of Joseph, he is a young man with incredible favor and many prophetic promises. The famous "coat of many colors" represented both favor and a double portion anointing from his father.

In their jealousy over Joseph's favor, his brothers became enraged and literally tore Joseph's garments off. He was sold into slavery, and his favor was stripped from him.

But Joseph submitted to the Lord in the midst of the betrayal of his brothers, and the Lord brought him into a new position of favor with his master (see Gen. 39:4).

Then Joseph suffered further loss through false accusations by his master's wife. She ripped his robe off his body and used it as evidence against him.

Joseph was sent to prison, where he seemed forgotten and abandoned. Prophetic fulfillment seemed very unlikely by this point.

Yet, his circumstances did not stop him from moving into a new dimension of favor. Genesis 39:21 says the Lord showed mercy on him and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

While in prison he allowed the Lord to continue working through him in the interpretation of dreams. Joseph did not stop moving forward in the plan of God for his life. As a result, God found the perfect time to move on Pharaoh's heart and bring Joseph out of prison so that he could clothe him with favor once again (see Gen. 41:14).

But God Just as God moved on Pharaoh on Joseph's behalf, He can move on anybody on your behalf. We need to have confidence in God.

One of the most effective faith-building phrases in the Bible is "but God." It is in these amazing words that we find hope for what lies ahead because we know it will be in contrast to what we are experiencing. The following verses are just a few examples:

"My flesh and my heart fail; *but God* is the strength of my

heart and my portion forever” (Ps. 73:26, NKJV).

“For indeed he was sick almost unto death; *but God* had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow” (Phil. 2:27).

Joseph knew that (but) God had been at work in his life (see Gen. 50:20). In each instance when he was stripped of favor, God showed him mercy and reclothed him.

God brought about the prophetic fulfillment and destiny that was meant to be Joseph’s portion. It was through this rejected prisoner that God saved the entire region from a devastating famine and restored the promises made to Abraham concerning his family line.

Regardless of what you have been through that has deferred your hope, God is still able to fulfill the promises He has for you.

Just as the clothing that Joseph wore signified the favor he enjoyed, in the same way the spiritual garments that we are wearing represent our condition. Our garments may be made up of the pain of losses and hope deferred.

It doesn’t matter what the enemy has done to distort your identity in God. You can shake off the remnants of those tattered garments and be reclothed!

You do this by making a declaration of what you believe God will do. Declare these verses over your life, and allow your expectations of (but) God to be renewed:

- Expect the Lord to raise up a standard against your foes (see Is. 59:19).
- Expect your spirit to arise with glory so that oppression and depression break off you (see Is. 60:1).
- Expect the Lord’s presence to rest on you (see v. 2).
- Expect new vision to arise within you (see v. 4).

- Expect new joy to overwhelm you (see v. 5).
- Expect new favor to come upon you and new doors and connections to open for you (see v. 10).
- Expect the spirit of poverty that has been holding your gates shut to let go, and expect the gate of provision to come open and stay open (see v. 11).

After the loss of our twins, the doctors warned us not to have any more children because they might be born with the same defects. But God did not agree.

Since that time we have had two beautiful, healthy boys. I can't say that it was all easy, especially the first year after our loss, but God has shown Himself faithful to heal and restore. He has moved us forward to new levels of prophetic fulfillment and continues to lead us on an incredible journey of faith and joy.

Loss is a painful fact of life. Yet as we submit to the hand of God, it can become a tool that propels us into a new season of promise and joyous prophetic fulfillment.

Read a companion devotional.

Chuck Pierce and Rebecca Wagner Sytsema have co-authored several books, including *Possessing Your Inheritance* and *The Future War of the Church*. Both are published by Renew.