

Prophet: Worshipping God Through Uncertain Times

Today's world is filled with so many uncertainties! Life seems to be more like a turbulent roller coaster ride with no clear end in sight rather than a nice walk in the park.

Many things are not turning out the way we thought they would. We have a lot of choices to make in how we live our lives in the midst of on-going issues such as:

- COVID-19.
- Political unrest.
- Chaos and confusion
- Economic upheaval.
- Social media censorship.
- Values in education.

I have personally lived through a lot of uncertainty. I have felt like a boat tossed around by choppy waves and blown around by the winds of change. I knew how to pray until the bottom fell out. Then I had to adapt to the new turf. I learned to worship God in new ways. Some ways were deeper, others more stripped-down.

In fact, I discovered, you do not have to call out to Jesus in a prescribed way, using special religious language. You certainly do not have to figure out a preset pattern. When you call out to Jesus, you can bring anything to him, even your unresolved questions. This can actually be a form of radical, pure worship.

Worship God With Your Questions?

You would want your questions answered, wouldn't you? Yes, but I have discovered that one of the best ways to get them answered is to entrust them to Him in worship. Worship Him by trusting Him with your biggest, messiest questions. Tell Him you do not know the answers, but you know He does and will wait in full expectation for something good to come. He wants you to do this, whether you bring Him some big philosophical or religious question or (more than likely) some emotion-laden practical thing.

Here is an example: My wife had some horses, and somebody needed to keep taking care of them after she died. My youngest son sacrificially went down to the barn and fed the horses every day for the entire first year, when I just could not emotionally go down there. That barn represented so much pain for me because it was a place Michal Ann so cherished. I could not stand that barn because she had loved it and found so much intimacy with God in that broken-down barn. For me, her dream place was now my death trap.

Then the time came when I just had to get over it. I went down there for about an hour, hay allergies and all. I fed the horses. My eyes watered; my nose ran, and I hated every minute of it. I went again, and it did not get any easier. I remember the day I went to the barn and crawled up into the loft that was full of hay. I was simply overwhelmed. I opened the hayloft doors, and I released my pain as I screamed and wept. I needed to let it out and express my feelings, and I decided that I was safe to do so with God. He's capable of handling our distress. I found out that He was not the least bit offended when I told Him how much I hurt and could not stand that barn.

I don't remember what I yelled, but I can tell you that it was not "I hate you" or anything like that. I just screamed my pain. And guess what? My scream of pain turned into praise. I just started thanking God for those horses and for that barn. I started thanking God for that stinking hay.

I did not understand it all, but when I turned all of my unanswered questions into praise, I could begin to offer a true sacrifice of praise. I stood right there on the edge of the loft floor peering through open doors, looking out onto what once was our “field of dreams.” From that lofty perch of that sacred barn, I started to thank the Lord!

It’s a Matter of the Heart

True worship comes from the heart. I learned how to take care of the barn and the horses. (I tried anyway.) And I learned to love that place ... enjoy it, even. It became a place of healing for me. Worshipping in one of the places of my greatest pain enabled me to trust Him with all my heart. Oh, the agony and the ecstasy!

Trusting means not leaning on my own understanding (Prov. 3:5–6). And out of that comes hope and a certain amount of joy. I might never understand the answers to all my questions on this side of heaven, but one day, I will. The reality is that, right now, we all see through a mirror dimly (1 Cor. 13:12), and sometimes the only way to worship is to worship God with our questions.

I Urge You Therefore

Knowing that many are still facing uncertainty and have numerous questions, I think they might want to tear a page out of my life’s book and learn to “worship God with your questions.” Yes, this is relevant, even in this time of Purim and Lent leading up to the Passion of Christ.

I urge you, therefore, to worship God in uncertain times. It is the pathway of deliverance. It is the road less traveled. It is the road of a true disciple in Christ Jesus. For He alone is worthy of our worship and praise! {eo}

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