

**Devotional Thoughts :: GOD, WHERE ARE YOU? by David Wilkerson**

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One night Jacob sat in an open field and had it out (wrestled) with the Lord: "God, how did I end up in this mess? You made such great promises to me. You told me You would guide me, keep me, fulfill Your plans in me. How could any of this be Your leading? What kind of covenant walk is this? Lord, I simply have no future" (see Genesis 32:24-26).

Now, you may reason to yourself, "Maybe Jacob didn't seek God about some of the choices he made. Maybe he acted out of his flesh." Well, perhaps he did, but all that is beside the point. God could have intervened on Jacob's behalf at any time but He did not.

The fact is, we can have a contrite spirit and still have problems. You and your spouse may be going through a terrible trial. You have prayed, "Lord, I don't understand. I know my heart is right, and I'm walking with You, so why are You allowing this awful trial?"

Most of us think, as Jacob did, that contrite, praying Christians should not have to endure great sorrows. We should not have to face awful times or fearful conditions in which our very future is threatened. Yet, the reality is that humble, repentant, praying Christians still suffer great peril and sorrows.

Nowhere in the Bible does God promise to keep us from problems. Never does He promise us a smooth ride in our job or career. Nor does He promise us exemption from affliction. In fact, He says: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all" (Psalm 34:19). This verse does not say God delivers us from afflictions, but out of them.

Paul speaks of knowing the heights and depths of God's love for him. Yet the Lord didn't keep Paul's ship from sinking. In fact, He allowed the apostle to be stoned, beaten and disgraced. Paul says he was exposed to perils on land and on sea, from robbers and from his own countrymen.

At times we may weep, wondering, "God, where are You? Why haven't You taken me out of this?" But even though the Lord allows us to go through things that try our souls, in one way or another He delivers us out of them all, just as He did Jacob and Paul.

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