

NOVEMBER STUDY

Praise Him in Times of Transition

Change. That one word can inflict a myriad of emotions from excitement to fear. Change. It is one thing in life that is inevitable. From the moment we are born we experience constant change. As Christians we look forward to that final change, when “in the moment, in the twinkling of an eye,” we will be transformed into life everlasting with our Lord. However, the changes in this life often throw us off track. Sometimes, it is chosen or expected...other times it is unexpected. Often, what happens in life is out of our control.

There are expected changes in our lifetimes. The first day we spent at school away from our mother; the day we said sacred marriage vows; or the day we bring our newborn home from the hospital—these are part of the “norm” we expect in life.

The changes we do not seek or expect in our usual life pursuit are the ones that seem to come from left field, right field, or sometimes just dropped on top of us. These events knock our legs from beneath us and take our breath away. These can include the loss of a job, a sudden relocation, illness, or death. Whatever kind of change is occurring in our lives, there has to be a transition.

Transition is internal. It is how we adjust to changes or to

what is happening in our world. The Latin root word for transition is “transpire,” meaning, “go across.” This is a beautiful image of a bridge stretching from where we are to where we need to be. Transition is not change itself, but transition is the road between the “old normal” and the “new normal” in our life journey.

We have examples in God’s Word of people in phases of change or transition.

Abraham

Abraham’s transition included relocation from Ur of the Chaldees (present day Iraq) to the unknown territory called Canaan. This was a 400-mile journey and included a side trip into Egypt! Do you sometimes feel your transition journey has no end in sight?

God’s plan also included a name change for both Abraham and Sarah. Are you in a phase of your journey where you do not even know who you are anymore?

Genesis 15:6 shows us Abraham was able to praise God through his transition because he believed the Lord.

Moses

Moses' life course changed many times. Some changes were of his own making, and some were not, but all worked together in God's plan. Moses went from his Hebrew home to the palace of the Pharaoh of Egypt. He then went from favored heir of the throne of Egypt to criminal fugitive. When he finally settled down where he was comfortable, among the herds of his father-in-law Jethro, God called him to be the deliverer of the Hebrew nation. (Read this account in Exodus 3-4:17).

had promised, he was able to sing praise to God in Exodus 15 because God had shown himself to be faithful to His people.

David

David is one of the most loved biblical figures. He is included in the "Hall of Faith" of Hebrews 11. He was the great and mighty king of Israel who committed sins against his family, his nation, and his God. Even through this, 1 Samuel 13:14 tells us God considered David a man after His own heart.

Although Moses was not in the land God had promised,
he was able to sing praise to God (Exodus 15).

When confronted with the faithfulness and provision of God, even in his own self-doubt, Moses trusted that God would make a way for the task ahead. Are you being moved from that warm comfortable place into the unknown?

One of the biggest transitions Moses faced was crossing the Red Sea. He had never seen the Red Sea part before. He was empowered by his trust in the mighty I Am, when he told the grumbling Children of Israel, "Stand still" (Exodus 14:10-31). Although Moses was not in the land God

David faced many changes. He was estranged from his people and his king. He had moral failures. He suffered through the loss of a child. His own children committed treason and plotted against him. He seemed to encounter countless enemies throughout his journey.

Your transition may include some of the same circumstances David faced. In today's world, even Christian families are found "on the outs" with one another. Have you lost a child? Is your child still living, but lost to you through their poor choices? Are

you facing opposition at work by “an enemy”? David always found a reason to praise God through the countless transitions he faced.

Conclusion

We can conclude through the examples of Abraham, Moses, and David, that it is possible to praise God in times of transition. We can praise God because of His character. What He has been for Abraham, He is for us. He is unchanging. What He was for Moses, He is for us. He is ever-present. What He was for David, the unassuming shepherd who transitioned to the mighty King of

Israel, He is for us.

He is our Salvation, our Strong Tower, our Shepherd, our Peace, our Refuge, our Very Present Help in time of trouble, The Strength of His people, and King Forever! Can we not trust Him to take us to our next destination?

Praise and adoration fills the book of Psalms. Because the Psalms are written as songs, the musical definition of *transition* might be appealing and appropriate: “a momentary modulation from one key to another.” Let us find out why and how we can praise our Lord through these-journeys.

Discussion/Study Questions

Psalm 1 gives wise advice on what not to do during your transition. What does the psalmist warn against? (verse 1)

- a.
- b.
- c.

What method does Psalm 1:2 give us to prepare our hearts for worship and praise?

- a.
- b.

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What is the result of our delight and praise? (verses 3-6)

Psalm 25 tells the reader to continue in praise in verse 1, "To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul." How can one do this?

- a. Verse 2

- b. Verse 4

- c. Verse 5

- d. Verse 15

What is the result of the above? (verses 6-22)

After reading and meditating on these verses, do you think you can praise God as you trust Him to deliver and guide you through your current transition?

Because God is faithful and unchanging, we can believe Him. Your transition may include rebuilding a reputation or relationship, facing sudden illness, or dealing with financial trouble. The conclusions in the following Scriptures tell us to praise. Read each Scripture and see why the Psalmist drew that conclusion.

1. Psalm 30

2. Psalm 32

3. Psalm 34

4. Psalm 52

5. Psalm 57

6. Psalm 63

7. Psalm 71

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God is faithful. It is His nature. Read Psalm 89:5-14. What conclusions can you draw from this Scripture concerning God's ability to bring you through your current transition with a song of praise on your tongue to Him?

About the Writer: Tracy Payne is Russell's wife and mother of five. She is a graduate of Randall University and a former finance manager. Tracy is involved in WNAC locally as prayer coordinator, field worker for the district, president of Oklahoma WAC, and nationally as a member of the board. Tracy serves her church, West Tulsa Free Will Baptist, as worship music coordinator. Her hobbies include music, reading, and finding that buried treasure at the local thrift shop.