

God's darkness (Catch the revival 11)

What happens in God's darkness?

D E Wasake, a servant of Jesus

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Summary of the message

We typically think of darkness as the absence of God and correctly so. For example, in the beginning, there was darkness over the waters and God said "let there be light." (Genesis 1:1-3) then when Jesus begun his ministry, about this, the bible says: "the people living in darkness have seen a great light." (Matthew 4: 16).

There is however a different kind of darkness, a hidden type of darkness - God's darkness and when the Lord was preparing me for this message, he got me to meditate in the dark and then something crazy. My wife and son heard the Lord calling to them from the darkness – but they thought it was me!

Thus, the Lord revealed to me his darkness so I can prepare you to catch your revival. This darkness of God, you will be surprised is there throughout the Bible as I will show you. For example:

- **God re-creates you in the darkness** – but be warned, he might wound you there – and then rename you, as a sign of re-creation, as he did for Jacob, who wrestled with God all night – in the darkness.
- **God seals covenants in the darkness** – as he did when Jesus died. The Passover lamb was slain in the darkness when on the cross there was darkness for about 3 hours, until Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, gave up the spirit to his father – who was right there in the darkness.
- **God builds faith in the darkness** – as he did for Abraham, as he did for David, in Psalm 23.

About me and these series

In March 2017 my life was turned upside down, and the Lord Jesus gave me a new testimony to tell the world. I had spent 20 years of rebellion until I had a radical encounter and a personal revival when Jesus visited me and by his Spirit, I repented of my many sins. I got baptized soon thereafter. Then towards the end of 2021, the Lord commissioned me to prepare a series of 12 messages called "catch the revival" of which the full series of messages can be seen here:

<https://www.shaweleroad.com/revival>

Introduction: God's presence in the darkness

So first, the seeming problem to God. In many places we know that God is light (e.g., 1 John 1: 5), and that he even wraps himself in light as a garment (Psalm 104:2) and then we find out that God also lives in a thick cloud of darkness (1 Kings 8: 12) and that he even makes darkness his covering, his canopy around him (Psalm 18: 11).

If you are like me who has always thought of God – primarily as the light, you will be VERY uncomfortable with the darkness, imagining it to be a place for the evil one. In fact, I always held this view and in fact one time at home, just before bed time, I went downstairs to get something and I was shocked! I found our 11-year-old daughter in the complete darkness – sitting on the dining table eating. I was kind of scared and asked her why she was in the darkness – she told me the

darkness was comforting. Now, I went back upstairs and told my wife about it, and I said we needed to pray for the girl, for I feared the forces of darkness were taking over my girl.

I may however have been partially wrong because when I got round to covering this topic of darkness, the Lord had given me a key verse about the darkness. This is what the verse says:

The people remained at a distance, while Moses approached the thick darkness where God was. Exodus 20: 21 (NIV).

God was in the thick darkness. The people remained at a distance; Moses went closer. The people moved further away; Moses drew nearer. The bible makes it clear by the way, this darkness wasn't comforting – it was scary! Really scary. The bible says this in the previous verses:

When the people saw the thunder and lightning and heard the trumpet and saw the mountain in smoke, they trembled with fear. They stayed at a distance and said to Moses, "Speak to us yourself and we will listen. But do not have God speak to us or we will die." Exodus 20: 18-20 (NIV).

The Bible shows that even Moses was terrified of God's darkness, it says:

The sight was so terrifying that Moses said, "I am trembling with fear." (Hebrews 12: 21).

So, here we have two groups of people. Both see the same darkness and both are terrified and tremble – but one group draws back, the other draws closer – they approach, even in their fear – like Moses.

Which one will you be?

It's when I meditated on this passage and the meaning of this message from God that I realized, I might have been missing God in the darkness while seeking him only in the light!

Was it possible he had used the example of my daughter eating in the dark to teach me something?

So I decided to start getting comfortable with the dark and so one day not long ago, I lay in bed and was in the darkness. It was not yet bed time but I lay there – just learning to be in the dark. A strange thing which I have never experienced happened!

My wife came into the room, switched on one of the lights and started it seems looking for something. I was watching her silently, but mainly meditating on the Lord. Then out of the blue as her back was turned to me, she turn around and then said: "Yes honey?" I replied "Yes, what?" She said: "You called me." I told her, "no I didn't." I didn't think much of it. She switched off the light and left the room. I continued my meditation.

Later on, my son came into the room. He also switched on a light and was rummaging through a closet looking for something. Then just like my wife, his back initially turned to me, he out of the blue pops his head out of the closet and also said: "Yes?" I replied again, "Yes, what?" He said: "You called me." I replied, this time perplexed, "No I didn't." It took me a while to realize what had just happened. Both my wife and son, had thought I called them – meaning they had heard a loud/audible voice sounding like mine and in both instances, I was watching them, completely silent!

I later realized, that most likely God had been there with me, in the darkness – like he had stood there and called to the boy Samuel – who instead mistakenly thought it was the priest Eli (1 Samuel 3). It would seem the Lord was using this episode to tell me something – he inhabits the darkness!

It is this instance in which the Lord revealed himself to me, using my wife and son as a demonstration of him as the God of the darkness, I have come to conclude that perhaps we his people – should not be afraid to look for God, in the darkness – scary as it is, for we might be missing a mystery to God and this mystery is really critical to finding him in this season of revival.

But what are some of the good things God does in the dark that we could now learn?

3 things God does in the dark

#1. God creates in the dark.

Just like God created the heavens and the earth starting in the darkness, hovering over the waters, God creates you and I in the dark and when he is preparing to revive you, he will re-create you, in the darkness. Moses was therefore going into the darkness to be re- created, as a baby is created in the darkness of its mother's womb. Moses was being carried by God – as a mother eagle to be re-created in order that he would be able to teach the 10 commandments and God's other laws to the Israelites.

God in a season of preparing you for revival will therefore use his darkness to re-create you – to teach you new things, to give you new revelations. These lessons don't take place in public, in the light – but are in a dark place. Enjoy the darkness but I must warn you, God is dangerous, he could wound you in the darkness - wound you to heal you. Do you realize for example that he appeared to Jacob and wrestled with him all night – in the darkness. He only left him as day was breaking – as light was coming. Isn't it ironic, the one who is light, wrestled in the dark. When he left Jacob, you know what happened? He had re-created him, as evidenced by the fact that he gave him a new name – Israel, but meanwhile, he had wounded him, he left him limping! Genesis 32: 22-32.

If you want God to re-create you, to teach you new revelations and prepare you to catch his revival, you must go to him in the darkness – and be prepared for him to wound you and then heal you.

The darkness might also be the time when you go to die, so God can raise you – but I will come to that later.

#2. God seals covenants in the dark.

Every time God has enacted an important covenant with men, he has done it in the darkness. Of course, in addition to giving the 10 commandments to Moses in the thick darkness of a cloud there are other instances. You wouldn't believe it until you saw it, so here are some examples:

- **Abraham.** Right after God met Abraham in a vision and told him that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars (Genesis 15: 5), to seal the covenant the bible says this: *As the sun was setting, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a thick and dreadful darkness came over him. Then the Lord said to him.. (Genesis 15: 12).* We see here that God was in the dreadful darkness – for he spoke to Abram during this time, scary as it was. Abraham of course was the father of faith – and God's covenant of faith with Abraham is how God reconciled all of us non jews to himself.
- **Israelites and the Passover.** When God told the Israelites to obey his instructions to slaughter the Passover lamb and put its blood above their door posts, he confirmed his covenant of protection over them by passing over them in the darkness for the bible says. *At midnight the Lord struck down all the firstborn in Egypt... (Exodus 12: 29).* Once again, the

Lord is in the darkness – destroying his enemies and yet at the same time, protecting his covenant people, in the dark.

- **Jesus.** Do you realise even Jesus died in the darkness and yet God was there with him? The bible says this: *It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last. Luke 23: 44-46 (NIV).* Jesus, our Passover lamb who sealed the new covenant of God with his blood, died in the darkness and God was right there with him – receiving his spirit.

#3. God builds faith in the dark.

Most of us are used to seeing something – in order to believe, but what did Jesus tell doubting Thomas? *Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." John 20: 29 (NIV).*

Put another way – blessed are you who believe in God, even when it is dark, even when surrounded by God's darkness. God mysteriously uses the darkness to build you up, for your faith to grow like a seed, in fact the bible says this:

Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. Mark 4: 27 (NIV).

Faith is built on the word of God and we don't know how, but God mysteriously uses even the night to make us sprout and grow – like seeds, which are planted in the darkness in the soil, they die there and then grow upwards, to the light.

If God therefore takes you through darkness, where it is a season or gives you an experience of darkness – it is because he is trying to teach you to believe, to grow in faith and remember that he is with you, even in the darkness for the darkness is like light to him (Psalm 139: 12) and no wonder David, moved by the Holy Spirit could write so confidently:

Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Psalm 23: 4 (NLT).

David had found out the mystery – God inhabits the darkness and in fact it is likely that it was God his shepherd who had led David into the darkness – and he was there with him.

Conclusion

What does this message mean for you? It means in a season of revival - chances are high you will be surrounded by darkness, God's darkness - it will likely be very scary and you will likely tremble with fear but it's the time when God will encounter you. Remember, he is dangerous but good, it is likely he will wound you – to heal you, kill you, to resurrect you. He will then enter into a covenant with you – but not only for you, but you and your descendants, the ones near and far. He will fill you with so much faith that you will not be afraid to walk in death's shadow.

Do you know what happens to people who are revived, after they are with God in the darkness?

Psalm 23 says this is what David experienced after:

You prepare a feast for me in the presence of my enemies. You honor me by anointing my head with oil. My cup overflows with blessings. Psalm 23: 5 (NLT).

Meanwhile after Moses spent more with God including from the darkness, the bible says:

When Moses went down from Mount Sinai carrying the Ten Commandments, his face was shining because he had been speaking with the Lord; but he did not know it. Exodus 34: 29 (GNT).

Now, the bible says that Moses had an inferior covenant (Hebrews 8: 6) and yet after he spent time with God, he was shining, what then will happen when you come down from the mountain with the God of the new covenant? Imagine what will happen to you when you spend time in the darkness with the resurrected Lord Jesus who after he overcome conquered death and is now seated at the right hand of God to permanently intercede for you?

My God, My God, what a revival it will be!

With such wonderful promises, I can only cry, "Maranatha - Lord Jesus come."

The message Jesus wants me to pass on to you

God shows no favouritism and from every nation – even those who sit in the darkness of their sin, he accepts to come to the light, those who fear him and turn to do what is right. For those who are seeking God's friendship, scary as it might be, he is kind and gracious and reaches down from his holy throne to show us his mercy and so appointed his son Jesus, who came to this earth as Passover lamb to be killed in our place. Jesus came to this earth and went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by Satan, the prince of the outer darkness.

Jesus was however rejected by evil people and they killed him, but they didn't know this was in accordance with God's mysterious plan to use what they meant for evil, to turn into good for all men, and so Jesus rose again from the dead after 3 days!

He is now seated at the right hand of the Lord almighty and is the mediator of a superior covenant for you and I, a covenant of faith. He is also the one who God, the Ancient of Days has appointed as righteous judge over the living and the dead, the one with the power to forgive all our sins. Everyone who believes this message as he has commanded me to preach and accepts this Jesus as Lord and asks for forgiveness, they will receive this forgiveness and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit who God promised all those who believe in Jesus his son.ⁱ

Do you believe this? Do you want God's forgiveness, to walk in both God's light and hide in safety beneath his shadow?

If so, pray with me:

"God of heaven, I confess that I am a sinner and have been one since birth, but I have heard that you can make me new, and you sent your son Jesus to die for me. He rose again and it is he who can give me his Holy Spirit. Please forgive me and welcome me into your Kingdom, teach me how to follow you. In Jesus' name, Amen"

ⁱ Parts of this message come from Peter preaching to Cornelius and his family as told in Acts 10: 34-43