

# When God Lets You Down

**Introduction.** God uprooted Abraham from his family in Ur and brought him to a new place. When Abraham arrived at Haran, God told him he was not there yet (Genesis 11:31). Abraham moved again to Canaan and he worshiped God (Genesis 12:4-8). The mystery was finally over. Then the famine hit and they had to leave the land (Genesis 12:10). Several years later, after moving several more times, he confessed to some Canaanites that he was an alien in their land (Genesis 23:4).

What do you do when you feel that God has let you down? We have all felt it. Some of us have trusted Him as much as we have been able and yet we have greatly suffered. We have fervently prayed for outcomes and did not get them. We have suffered humiliations of one kind or another, all the while thinking that God could and should have done something about it.

The feeling of being “let down” by God is not new. Jeremiah asked God if he was going to be like a “deceitful brook” (15:18). During the rainy season there were dozens of them everywhere you looked, but in the dry season — when you really needed them — they were dry. Eight hundred years before that, Moses did his own complaining (Numbers 11:10-15). Job was frustrated with God, and accused Him of injustice (Job 9:13-35). If you feel God has let you down, you are in good company.

How should we respond when we feel that way? There are no easy answers when severe pain comes into your soul. What cannot be cured must be endured, but here are some suggestions that can make life easier for you.

## ***I. Do Not Give Up On God***

- A. Many upright people did not give up on God. Abraham groaned in protest when he heard Ishmael was not the heir but he never gave up on God (Genesis 17:18). Moses ended his life singing God’s praises in Deuteronomy 31:30-33:29 and Jeremiah, for all his complaining, still wrote Lamentations 3:22-23. Job endured to see a better day (Job 42:10-17) and Christ ended His trial by commending Himself to His Father’s care (Luke 23:46).
- B. Do not give up on God — He is not the cause of suffering (Job 1:6-7; 2:6; Luke 13:16; 2 Corinthians 12:7-9; 1 John 5:19). The aforementioned people did not give up on God and they eventually found rest. The same will be true if we have patience and wait on the Lord (Isaiah 40:27-31).

## ***II. Stop Viewing God As A “Heavenly Sweetheart”***

- A. Some preachers sing romantic ballads about God. We hear that God is so full of love that He will never let His children be hurt. If we get too

much of that, God becomes soft without an ounce of depth to Him. A soft view of God can destroy us when tragedy comes.

- B. God is not interested so much in making our life easy, but making it strong, deep, and rich. He does not simply want to be good to us — He wants us to be good. That means testing us in the furnace of affliction (1 Peter 1:6-7).
- C. Suffering and trials are not strange for a Christian (1 Peter 4:12-13). God does not “pick on” anybody, but He does not play favorites either (1 Timothy 5:21). Hardship is part of the price of living in a world distorted by sin, and to save us (and our neighbors through us) God permits His loved ones to be hurt. Christ never apologized for getting His disciples into trouble, He just offered assurance for when the trouble came (John 16:33).

### ***III. Keep Yourself Out Of Focus***

- A. Sometimes we think it is God’s business to keep us from being hurt. We see so much suffering and we appreciate its honor and necessity, but when our turn comes, we ask, “Why me?”
- B. We are thrilled to see Joseph’s suffering used by God, and are happy that Joseph found a deeper, richer life through suffering (Genesis 50:20). However, if God allows us to suffer so others might benefit, we object. Countless thousands have suffered through the years for our benefit, so we need to prepare ourselves.
- C. If you are facing a serious battle, pull yourself out of focus and remember those who are undergoing the same or worse, and work to be a blessing to them (1 Corinthians 10:24, 33; Philippians 2:4).

### ***IV. Do Not Create Your Own Pain***

- A. We may complain to God about our troubles only to find that the cause of our pain was our own making (Galatians 6:7). In the case of the Midianites, the wickedness of the Israelites caused the judgment (Judges 6:1, 13). Because of David’s infidelity, he lost several children (2 Samuel 12:18; 13:28-29; 18:33).
- B. If a man goes to prison for stealing, is it not his fault? If a man is executed for murder, will God be blamed? You may argue that God could have prevented the crime and the suffering, but not if He wanted to preserve man’s ability to choose. God limits His own activity by granting man freewill (1 Peter 4:15).
- C. Take a close look at your hardship and see if there is something you should be doing about it, such as repenting for ungodliness. If you are creating the problem then at least you will know what direction to take to get rid of it.

## ***V. Keep The Love Of God In Your Mind***

- A. We have a significant advantage over Abraham. While Abraham saw Isaac at Moriah, we have seen Jesus at Calvary. Out of that darkness, God speaks to us — not as a spectator, but as a fellow-sufferer (John 3:16; cp. Isaiah 53:10).
- B. Being a lifelong pilgrim did not blind Abraham to God's love, nor did a famine in Canaan which drove him out of it again. God will not always be gentle, but He will always be loving (Hebrews 12:4-13). Paul earnestly examined all of his sufferings (2 Corinthians 11:23-29) and said that nothing could persuade him that God does not love him (Romans 8:31-39).

**Conclusion.** Again, there are no easy answers. However, if you follow these steps, then you will learn to cope when it seems God has let you down. When you feel that way, you are in good company. Remember, God is not interested in making your life easy; He wants to make it strong, deep, and rich. If you want to have a life in Christ, it sometimes will not be easy, but it will be right. You will be free from sin's guilt and be able to live a more rewarding existence, looking for your heavenly home.