

When Heaven Seems Silent

Sermon Title: **When Heaven Seems Silent**

Sermon Number: **8248**

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James Bronner: Don't take the presence of a storm to indicate the absence of God.

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(Music Playing: 00:00:20 - 00:00:49)

Female: And now for 8248, "When Heaven Seems Silent."

James Bronner: Welcome to Brothers of the Word because brother, you need the word.

And pastor, he informed me a few months ago that he was in his morning prayer early one morning and he said on this particular date that God had instructed for me to minister. And he's in Egypt right now exploring the pyramids with his youngest son, George. So, you all pray for him on his travels. But with God saying is for me to minister the day that tells me that this message is at least for one person today.

So, having a few months to prepare it did give me a little more confidence in the message today. And when I write(ph) would be before God I would write down whatever revelations that I would get so that I would be prepared for the day in. I went out to eat with a friend of mine who was a Bishop on this past Thursday. And before we left the lunch and he asked me, "What are you preaching on next?" and I told him about it. And the next day which was this past Friday, after I went to work and came home, and I just read it, just put the finish touchings on my message. God quickened(ph) in my spirit that it was something else that he wanted me to speak about.

How many of you know that sometimes God puts a plot twist in your script? Just turn to your neighbor and say, "plot twist". Sometimes, you will be headed down one path thinking one direction is to wait when he'll plot twist it on you at that last minute. And I tell you, I would rather stumble through a fresh word of God than to deliver in in toast master(ph) excellence, something coming out of my own mind.

And recently, my 14-year-old daughter Genesis, who is right here, stand up for me, Genesis. She came to me recently and she came

to me with some concerns that she had recently. And she said, "Dad, I haven't been feeling and experiencing God like I used to at times." She said, "I haven't been feeling His presence and hearing His voice as clearly as I did in time of olds(ph)." Sometimes when you gave me things to try(ph) and she said, "What can I do?"

And I thank God, first of all for her just having a heart to be closer to God. And I said, "Genesis, let's start with -- you got to spend quiet time, alone time with God. Everyday with just nobody but you and Him and talk to Him and allow Him to talk to you." And she said, "Dad I've been doing that." And I said, "Well, you know, a lot of times He don't speak audibly and just give you direction right then but he's got 66 books that he's already spoken to us. So, you need to just give in His word and study that and a lot of these things for life you've already spoken in His word."

So, I said, "Just reach your Bible and study daily." She said, "Daddy, I've been doing that." So, I said, "Well, Genesis, sometimes when prayer don't do it for me, and my Bible don't do it, I'll put on some worship music and I would just worship and soak in His presence and listen to and praise God." And I said, "Just feel your atmosphere with worship music and see if that will change things for you and give you that feeling you use to get." She said, "Daddy, I've even been doing that."

So, I said, "I was just sure she was going to be doing one and all (00:04:22)." I said, "I'm going to have to take it deeper." So, I said, "Genesis, you may need to tap into your spiritual gifts." And I said, "There's one called a gift of tongues where you out of unknown tongues that are unknown to you but God understands and then the enemy can understand it." So, I said, "You need to just pray in your spiritual language sometimes in your room when you're by yourself." And again to my surprise, she said, "I've even been doing that." And she but had me stopped at that point and I had to just stop and pray my own self. And I said, "Lord, you know, I'm a young man myself and I'm still learning and growing in myself and I've told my daughter all of the fundamental things to help to get her to the next level."

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And I said, "Lord, give me your wisdom." I don't have all of the answers and sometimes we as parents are just people, it's not like

we know everything even the stuff we don't know. We try to come up with an answer to make it sound sophisticated sometimes.

But sometimes, we just need to be honest. But we don't know. So, I said, "Lord I don't know, but I know one who does." And I prayed and meditated on and then thought about it, did some deep thinking and I came up with the perfect answer for that. I think it's an answer for a lot of things in these situations when you don't know any stuff like that. Came back with this deep answer. So, you need to talk to your mama.

Unfortunately, mama went around right then so she was asking, "Daddy -- " And while I'm praying about what to minister to you today, God dropped in my spirit that this is not just teenage issue, it's not just a childish issue but there are many adults that are going through the same thing. And my subject for you today is, "When Heaven Seems Silent". "When Heaven Seems Silent".

How many of you have been in the seasons of your life and you've been praying to God and just done seeing life, He is as close as He was. And other times, you may even be in trouble in these times and it just don't seem like God is as near as He was. You may have been going through issues. But I tell you, you haven't been through one of these seasons. If you just keep on living that I believed that all Christians one day will experience one of these seasons.

So, you're not going through it now or haven't been through it. Just keep the recording of this message. And I believe one day, you'll need it or need it for somebody that you know. And it doesn't matter if you are a child or a parent, you're going to go through a season of where it just seems like Heaven is silent. It doesn't matter if you are a seminary student or you're the professor in the class. You'll go through one of this seasons. It doesn't matter if you are a Church member or you're the Pastor or even if you are the Bishop or the Apostle. It doesn't matter who you are, whether you're a mother of the Church or just a child in the nursery. At one point in your life, you'll go through a period where it seems like Heaven is silent.

And we often hear testimonies of God moving in mighty ways and as He answers the prayers, the lives of a Saints. And indeed, God does answer prayer. But sometimes, when you will pray for your healing, your body will still be aching with pain. There are some

times in your life, you'll get to where you'll be praying for financial breakthrough and a release of some of the dead and pressure of finances. But it still seems like you don't have enough money to pay your bills. There are sometimes in your life that you'll encounter that you'll be in a relationship and seems like you're just going through a lot and you'll pray for Lord to help you and then do something about this other person but it still will seem like the (00:08:26) is acting crazy on you.

Sometimes, you'll go through one of these seasons. And there's times like these that make some people lose their faith because they don't know what to do when Heaven seems silent. And I want to give you three keys today on what to do on these times so that you won't fall victim to the enemy giving you thoughts of doubt and trying to make you lose hope in some of your lowest periods of life.

Key number one is to stay consistent. Stay consistent. You have to maintain a strong relationship with your Heavenly Father. If you know, if you go out to eat with somebody that's a good long term good friend. You know, that's a different lunch in a different conversation and if you go out with somebody to just out to eat with that they need something from you is different.

How many of you have these so called friends that will call you up from time to time but every time they need something or have some trouble. Raise your hand if you got some of those so-called friends. Well, if you don't want that, why would we do God like that? And sometimes, we see these friends or call and they pitch a name or come up and they just does something to you. Not even before you ask for it. They just go what they want now. You know it's going to be a problem to deal with. And we have to realize in all of life that life have ebbs and flows, ups and downs, easy times and difficult times that you'll go through. It doesn't matter what it is. But through those ebbs and flows you have to stay consistent.

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In any relationship you'll have ebbs and flows. In any business you're going to have these ebbs and flows, in your money, in your health, in your relationship, in your energy levels. You're going to just have some days you'll wake up, you'll have more energy than others. Some days it is like you have an energy that you

have at the end of other days waking up. It is the ebbs and the flows and the pattern of life that we have to go through. But you need to stay consistent no matter how you feel. Do you know what shape my body would be if I only exercise when I felt like exercising or if I only ate healthy when I felt like eating healthy? What my doctor's report would be? No, I have to do it whether I feel like it or not. I'll have to stay consistent. And my wife and I, we've been married for 21 years and one of the things that has helped us have the best marriage that we've ever had even now is that we stayed consistent on some things.

So, for 21 years we've gone out every weekend, dated like we were teenagers, no matter how many children that we have. For 21 years, every year, we've taken a vacation together without the kids and even in terms where money might have been running low, we would just drive an hour or two away and get a cabin or cheap hotel room but we stayed consistent. For 21 years, we've stayed consistent with times of intimacy whether we felt like it or not. For 21 years, I've had to maintain showing affection without expecting something to happen afterward for 21 years. And that consistency has allowed us to have a great marriage now. So, you have to stay consistent.

And a great painter once was asked, "Do you paint on a schedule or do you paint when you're inspired?" And he thought about it and he said, "I paint when I'm inspired." But he said, "Thank goodness that I'm inspired every morning at 9:00 a.m." So, he understood the power of consistency. That even when he woke up that, even if he didn't feel like painting that it took the brush and when the brush touched that canvas over a certain period of time that inspiration would come. That if he would just make the effort and be consistent that his system had gotten used to this time of day where creativity would just flow. He might not have always felt like getting out of bed but whenever he would just make the effort, get in front of the canvas, get the paints ready and get his brush, inspiration would show up if he would show up. He understood the power of consistency.

Discipline is the practice of doing what you don't feel like doing because you know you need to do it. And we are coward to have discipline. Discipline and disciples, the root word of both of those are exactly the same. We're called to be disciples of Christ. Prayer and (00:13:08) scriptural study, these are called spiritual disciplines. And they're called that because most of the time you

don't feel like doing them. But this things as Christians, that we know we ought to do on a regular basis.

Key number two, times. When it feels like Heaven in silent is to realize that the teacher is silent during test. Realize that the teacher is silent during test. In school, you can go to the same class, five days a week and listen to an hour lecture about math or science or English. But during test time, you'll come in to some of the most difficult problems that you've had all semester long. But in this time of your most difficult problems, the teacher has to remain silent. In a time where you might need to ask more questions than never trying to get greater understanding and greater clarification is the time when the teacher is the most silent.

They have to be silent so they can see what you really know. How much of the material is really on the inside of you. They can't answer to your questions right then. They have to be quiet to test you and see what you know.

Pastor can teach on faith every Sunday for a solid year. You can wake up every morning and recite faith scriptures every morning but it's not until you're in some difficult situations and until you're in a test that it will really show up how much you trust God when the test comes.

Key number three, any situations is to don't sin or lose faith because it seems that God is not watching, listening or speaking. Don't sin or lose faith because it seems that God is not watching, listening or speaking.

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And I know multiple people that turned away from God because God didn't move like they thought that God should move. He didn't move when they thought that God should move. And even some of these people, they talk Bible class in their homes on a weekly basis. They held praying meetings in their home. But when they got in these situations and they were tested and God didn't show up like they were expecting Him to come in the manner that they were expecting and the timing they were expecting, they turned and lost their faith in God.

King Saul did that in the bible in 1st Samuel Chapter 28 starting at Verse 6, it says, "They're solely inquired of the Lord. But the Lord did not answer him by dreams or more prophets." Saul was so desperate to hear from God that he consulted a spirit medium which eventually led to his death and that of his children.

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King David and Habakkuk were as closest as they were to God. At times they thought like heaven was silent to them. David in Psalms 28 said, "To you Lord I called. You are my rock. Do not turn a deaf ear to me, for if you remain silent I will be like those who go down to the pit. Hear my cry as I crawled to you for help as I lift up my hands toward your most holy place." Habakkuk, Chapter 1, Verse 2 said the same spirit, "How long Lord must I crawl for help, but you do not listen or cry out to you violence, but you do not save." And men and women throughout the bible, they voiced their disappointment when they felt that Heaven was silent.

Here they are crying out to God because God is silent to them in their own opinion. They could not see anything happening in their lives. They were getting fearful and losing hope in the situation and I understand some of you maybe in silent years, certain areas of your life and you might be telling God, "Lord, I don't understand why I'm in this situation. I shouldn't be going through this much trouble in this area. Can't take it any longer, can't live like this." And you feel God is far away and you're ready to give up the faith.

In the natural, David and Habakkuk were losing faith, but if you really continue to read their books further on down, you'll see that they waited by faith and God lifted them. When you come to that same chapter, Psalms Chapter 28, David at the same servant of God that was questioning him earlier in the chapter, here in Verse 6 says, "Praise be to the Lord for he has heard my cry for mercy. The Lord is my strength and my shield my heart trusting him and he helps me. My heart leaps for joy and with my song, I praise him."

Later on, Habakkuk again Chapter 3 starting at Verse 17, "And like mana, his heart turns more faithful and he says, though the fig tree does not burn and there are no grapes on the vines. Though there are left crop fields and the fields produce no food.

Though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in to stalls, yet will I rejoice in the Lord. I would be grateful in God, my savior.” And in many relationships in life, when one partner makes the other partner mad, they’ll do for what we come and let know has give them the silent treatment.

And I think because we do that as a common thing in human relationships. We in a lot of times attribute that quality onto God, so if we don’t hear anything we’ll figure that God is mad at us and has given the silent treatment. But that is not the case. God won’t move away form us. But in times, we can move away from God and he says in Hebrews 13 stating at Verse 5 he says, “Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you.”

So, we say with confidence the Lord is my helper. I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me. Listen at this very carefully, get this point. Don’t take the presence of a storm to indicate the absence of God. Don’t take the presence of a storm to indicate to you the absence of God. There are all kinds of storms that come in our lives and I’m not talking about storm when you have rain and you have winds that blow in, hale that be down upon you, I’m talking about some other kinds of storm in your life that are of a private nature. And we’ll all have storms in our lives. I’m talking about the kind of storm when your money runs tight and you don’t how you going to pay your bills.

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I’m talking about the kind of storm when a love one pass and you were praying for the healing and now you’re wondering, “How will I make it?” Talking about the kind of storm where the doctor comes and says you have a lock the day found and they have to examine and test further. I’m talking about a private storm.

You see, there’s a difference in a public storm and a private storm. In a public storm, when it’s raining it helps some because everybody is in the storm. You go out and there’s thunderstorm out there, you might have your umbrella, but you’d look around, it’s raining and pouring down on everybody. You might be getting wet, but you look around and it comforts you some and everybody is out here getting wet.

The wind may blow and blow some trees down and knock your pile out. It’ll panic before a minute, but you feel good and look at

the door and see you neighbor's pile of leaves. I billed to pay to everybody's power is out, don't affect you as much. But if something is going on in your body, it's a little different. You might have to go to work and you might not look like what you're going through. Everybody don't know what's going on in your body. You'll have to get dressed and fix up your hair and put on your make up and take up a pill and go bathe the pain and nobody on the outside is knowing what is going on on the inside.

This is a private storm and you will feel like nobody understands because it looks like everybody is going above their business and they don't know what I'm dealing with, that's a private storm. You might be dealing with an issue with your child and that's different because it's personal to you and you can't tell everybody your business, and you know they will gossip and talk about it, it's a private storm. So, difference between public and a private storm. And sometimes we buy into the false notion that if God were with us, we would have no storm. If God was with us, we wouldn't get attacked and mistreated. If God was with us, wouldn't be sick right now. If God was with me, wouldn't how this bill collectors calling me and trying to figure out. If God was with me, my spouse wouldn't be acting crazy right now. This is a false notion that we have many times.

If God was with me, I would not have lost my job. If God was with me, wouldn't have been cheated on. In the mist of storm, that gets hard to see and hard to hear those around us because the winds are boisterous and it's hard to hear somebody next to you talking to you. In the mist of all the commotion and in the mist of all the noise that is going on. But even though you can't hear him, even though it might be hard to see him through the mist and the rain, it doesn't mean that they're not there.

The Bible says that God is our refuge and strength of very present health the time of trouble. In the storm, you may not be able to see him as clear. You may not be able hear him as clear. You may not be able to feel him as strong, but just because he maybe in the bottom of the ship, doesn't mean he's jump ship on you. Doesn't mean he has abandoned the ship even if he's in the bottom of the ship. Doesn't mean he might be as sleep because he knows that everything will be all right in your life. He can see the end from the beginning. Things that worry us don't worry him because he knows the future holds it all in his hand.

And God gave this revelation that sometimes we have to do as Jesus did on that boat. Speak to the storms and put up your hands and say, "peace, be still." But that's not all of the time, there are some storms that life has destined you to travel through that you can't just put up and say "peace, be still." There are some storms that you'll have to go through and in some of these storms, it is not the storm that you'll have to speak to. You'll have to turn inward, you'll have to speak to the third fruit of the spirit, the peace that dwells on the inside. And the revelation was instead of saying peace, be still on the outside, in a time of trouble when your peace was about to leave you, you'll have to say "Peace, sit and stay with me, be still. I have to go through this storm."

When your child is in an emergency, goes to the hospital and panic hits you. You'll have to speak to the inside and say, "Peace, don't you leave me now. Don't you go anywhere. Peace, be still. Abide with me, I need you now. Peace, be still." When you left on your job and you see a pink slip coming and you know you have a family to support and you don't know how will you make it, it's not an external storm but you'll be able to say, "Peace, be still."

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You'll have to speak to the peace on the inside and say "Don't leave me now. Stay right with me. Peace, be still on the inside. Peace, be still." He'll give you the peace to be able to walk through the water and the storm. He'll give you the peace.

Now, the revelation he gave me dealing with this was what the prophet, Elijah. He's a greater prophet as he was. He went through one of these seasons even though he was the greatest prophet of his time and the father of prophets, he is a great of a men as he was. He let a woman Jezebel, Queen Jezebel put fear into him. Jezebel was out to kill him and he knew it and it made him crumble in his boots even as an awesome prophet of the land, and he set out troubled that this queen was sending people to kill him. And he set out seeking God, set out waiting for God to come and answer his prayer and provide protection for him. He saw a wind coming and blowing to and fro and was boisterous and he said, "Surely, the awesome God has come now. I don't have to worry about Jezebel's soldiers. Surely God, the art and finish of my face is here to save me." The wind kept blowing and passed by, didn't see God.

Next, he kept waiting. He felt a little tremble looked up and rocks were crumbling. The Earth began to split apart, he said, "Now my mighty Lord has come and I don't have to worry about these soldiers. They'll see who's all powerful." And he waited to see God and the earthquake didn't find God there. He kept waiting and next was a fire. He heard the kindle of flames and saw all of the fire and says, "Surely, it'd be like the day of pinnacles were fire. He's coming in this form where I know this is God." Didn't find him in the fire, then came and still small voice.

The revelation was that couldn't find God in the storm. He couldn't find him in the earthquake, couldn't find him in the fire. The reason was because he was in him and right there with him. He wasn't in the fire, he was in him. He wasn't in the earthquake, he was in him. He wasn't in the winds, he was in with him. So, he couldn't hear that still small voice when his focus was out there and all of these winds blowing and him listening and looking at all of the commotion and that's how we are in life many of times. We're looking at all of these things watching the news and watching the reports.

Looking at all of the winds blowing and we can't hear the stillest small voice, he said "I'm not in that, I'm with you. You are my temple." That is where he was, listening to the fire, he couldn't hear the creator because it had his attention. All of this mighty stuff on the outside, but he was with him. And God will wait a lot of time until the commotion is over, until your ear is toned to him, until you listen, until your eyes are off of everything that's going on, until your eyes are off of social media, off of CNN, off of the lady's office gossip.

Offer your problems and your issues and turn to the one who is right down with you. Even though you might not have been able to see him, even in times when you can't hear him, but if you will just turn your attention away from the outside, you will recognize that he will speak to you and still small voice and say, "Child, I'm with you even until the end of the age." And God is sitting here today just to give you that one message to tell you that he is with you. He is with you no matter what you're going through, he is with you. No matter what it looks like, he is with you. No matter how distant you feel from him, he is with you. No matter what it looks like in the natural, he's with you and no matter what the report from the doctor says, he is with you. No matter what's going on with your children, he is with you. And even if you can't

see him moving, he is moving on your behalf. Even if you can't hear him speak and he's still speaking, Heaven is not silent just seems that way sometimes when we're not tuned in to his voice, he loves you and want me to tell you that he's with you. So, stay consistent, realize that the teacher is silent during testing.

And number three, don't sin and keep the faith and I'll see you on the other side of the storm. God bless you today.

00:30:00

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