

*Thank God for My ‘Dry Places!’*

*“Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. - Exodus 3:1.*

## **1. The Importance of ‘Dry Places.’**

Perhaps in search of food, Moses led the flock to the backside of the desert - a very dry place. Yet it is at that ‘dry place’ where he had an encounter with God. Moses did not set out on a journey to Mt. Horeb. His main purpose was to seek out greener pastures for his flock. However, it was in the pursuit of that specific purpose that he came upon the mountain of God.

Moreover, owing to its location - the ‘backside of the desert’ - Moses may not have been successful in finding an adequate source of food for his animals. What was certain was that he set out for this distant land because all other sources of food for the flock were dried up. Therefore, he may have been disappointed, if his journey appeared to be in vain.

Two important points are worthy of consideration. First, the ‘dry places’ in our lives, marked by trials and lack, can cause us to come face to face with God. We should not really frown upon life’s trials. Why? Because our trials - our ‘dry places’ - should be constant reminders that God is always nearby.

Second, those dry place provides the fertile ground needed for God to impregnate us with His purpose. Moses was led to the backside of the desert, where he soon realized that God had a greater plan for his life - he was destined to be a shepherd of the flock of Israel, and to lead God’s people out of a dry place of bondage and misery.

In short, our dry places provide the necessary conditions for us to step up and to go higher with God.

## **2. Don’t Always Expect Life’s Conditions to Be Right!**

There is a common, albeit mistaken belief, that one will do God’s will only when things are perfect and settled in life. There is nothing further from the truth! Moses led the flock in search of food to the back side of the dessert. Perhaps to his disappointment, he arrived at a dry place - Mount Horeb. The online definition of the Hebrew word ‘Horeb’ states:

*“The verb חרב (hareb) means to dry up, be in ruins, lay waste.*

*Adjective חרב (hareb) means dry or desolate.*

*Noun חרב (horeb) means dryness or desolation.*

*Noun חרבה (horba) means waste or ruins.*

*Noun* חרבה (*haraba*) describes dry land.  
*Noun* חרבון (*herabon*) means drought.”<sup>1</sup>

Moses’ environment - the backside of the desert- was described as a place that lay waste, and one which was dry, desolate, and in ruin. These conditions seem far from perfect to have an encounter with God. Yet they provide the necessary conditions for him to meet face to face with almighty God - the ‘I AM THAT I AM.’.

In life, there are times when nothing seems to go right, and stress and worries are the order of the day. Instead of focusing on everything that is wrong - the problems, lack and trials - we should expect a divine appointment with God in our ‘dry places.’ These situations should bring us into a fertile place in the spirit where our prayer, praise and our strong relationship with God provide the right conditions for us to grow spiritually, and to gain a deeper understanding of our diving purpose.

### **3. We Are Never Too Far From God.**

Moses was in ‘no-man’s land’ - at the backside of the desert. Apart from Jethro’s flock, he was alone in a distant place. He soon found out that no place is too far for God to appear. 2 Chronicles 16:9 states:

*“For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.”*

The King James versions states:

*“For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the **whole** earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.”*

First, God is omnipresent, and He loves you. He is always looking over you, and will always be near, in spite of how far you have drifted away from Him, and from everybody else. He is ready to stand strong on our behalf - in times of our weaknesses - and to give us the much needed grace and strength to cope with every trial that we may face.

Life can be a downward spiral of sin, where we only stop when we have reached ‘rock bottom’ ( see the story of the prodigal son). Rest assured, when everything and everyone has failed you, Jesus is always there with His outstretched loving arms waiting to help you back to your feet and to comfort you.

### **4. Alone With God.**

God uses circumstances to bring us to a place when we are all alone. Families and friends may abandon us, or we may find ourselves on life’s lonely path, and seemingly lost.

Moses embarked on a path which took him to the backside of the desert, far away from every one. Moses was alone and away from life’s distractions.

Separation from the hustle and bustle of life is important for two main reasons. First, it allows us to spend quality time with God, where we can take time to listen to Him when He speaks, especially through His Word.

Second, being alone prepares you for the journey ahead. At times, it can be a lonely road when you decide to pursue God's will. You may find yourself going against the tides of human opinion, stinging criticism, and also doing things which do not make sense to others. In short, when you look for support from others, do not be surprised if there is little or none, and you find yourself pursuing God's purpose in the company of One - God and God alone. But once you know that you know that you are in the will of God, then that is all that matters. Rest assured that the Holy Spirit will be your Guide, and Jesus and His army of angels are always there with you each step along the way.

## **5. The Mountain of God.**

Moses came to the mountain of God, even though he was in a 'dry place.' In other words, his 'dry place' led him to the mountain of God. The mountain may represent life's obstacles and problems. But those same challenges provide the perfect conditions for God - who sits high above the mountains - to manifest and do wonders.

As stated before, Mt. Horeb was a desolate and dry place. Yet it was called the mountain of God - a place where God is was expected to turn up. Perhaps, this may be a description of how our life may be right now. There may be lack, disappointment and frustration. Do not despair! As stated before, these are ideal conditions for God to make Himself known to you. When we approach life's mountain, let us make time for God, and seek His face. Start to see trials as opportunities for God to appear and to make Himself know to you.

Interestingly, where there is a mountain there is a God. God created the mountain. Therefore, it is called the mountain of God. The problem or 'mountain' that I face belongs to God! Even though that mountain may tower over me, I will not allow it to overwhelm me. For I know atop every mountain sits the omnipotent God - for what is impossible with man is possible for God. To God be the glory.

Whew!...My 'dry place' may not be so 'dry' after all! Be blessed.

### **Key Principles: In stepping up...**

- I will embrace my 'dry places' and see them as opportunities to meet with God;
- I will not despair if my conditions are not right, but allow them to help me grow spiritually;
- I recognize that I am never too far from God;
- I will separate myself from the hustle and bustle of life;
- I realize that every mountain or problem belongs to God.

Reference:

Abarim Publications. <http://www.abarim-publications.com/Meaning/Horeb.html#.XdUhIHdFzIU>.  
Another name that means Dry Place is *Zion*, which is also a mountain.

*Heavenly Father,*

*Thank You for my 'dry places' in life and for these opportunities to meet face to face with You. I will not wait for life's conditions to become perfect, before I turn to You. Instead, give me the will to seek Your face, in spite of the trials that I face. For I recognize that You are never too far from me, especially in my moments of need.*

*Let me always be mindful of the many distractions that seek to lure me away from You. In times when I may feel alone or even lonely, remind me that these are opportunities to spend quality time in Your presence. Help me to understand that I am never really alone, for Christ and His armies of angels constantly surround me.*

*Holy Spirit continue to be my Guide, along life's difficult paths. I constantly pray for wisdom, knowledge, understanding and the spirit of discernment. Forgive me, O Lord, when I fall short, and continue to have Your way in my life. In Jesus' name I pray with thanksgiving. Amen.*

Memory Verse:

*"For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him." - Chronicles 16:9*

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