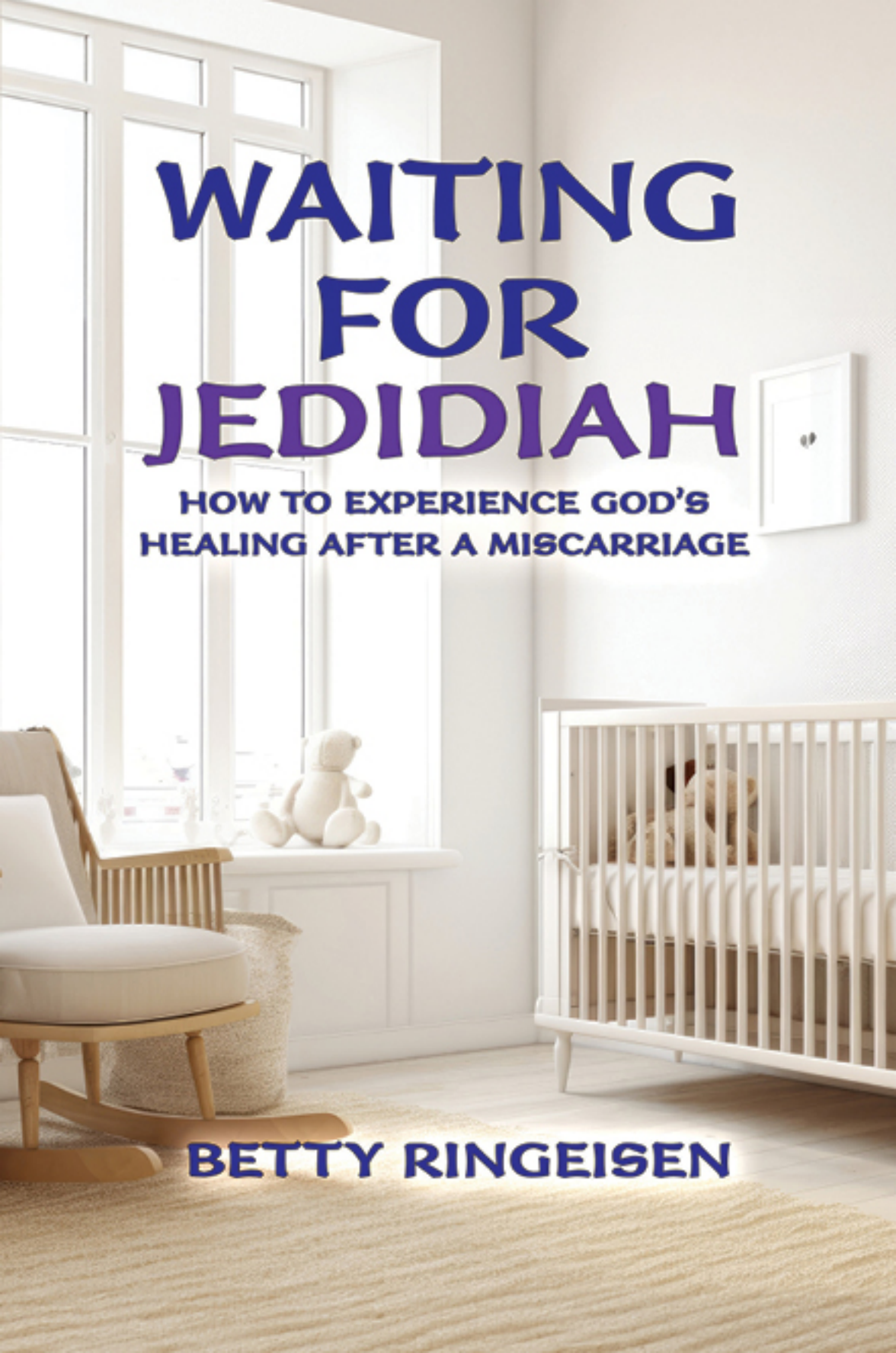

WAITING
FOR
JEDIDIAH
HOW TO EXPERIENCE GOD'S
HEALING AFTER A MISCARRIAGE
BETTY RINGEISEN

WAITING FOR JEDIDIAH:

How to Experience God's Healing After a Miscarriage

ENDORSEMENTS

In *Waiting for Jedidiah*, Betty Ringeisen has brought to the reader a scriptural playbook for walking through grief and loss. Her vulnerable and honest account helps the reader process seemingly tragic events that every human encounters. The book has practical application that facilitates transformational experiences with God at a deep and lasting level.
—**Donna Winship**, cofounder of Identity Exchange (identityexchange.com) and author of *Becoming What You Believe*

Betty Ringeisen's passion for wholeness comes across on every page. Despite her numerous losses, this testimony of God's redemption and unfailing love beautifully demonstrates His ability and willingness to transform every grave into a garden.
—**Signa Bodishbaugh**, author, founder of The Journey to Wholeness in Christ Ministry

Betty takes you on a spiritual journey. This well-written book is a guidebook for all who want to experience healing from past wounds and intimate union with Father God. Her personal stories and insights are complex and lead you directly to the Father.

This book will lead you on a journey to wholeness, whether you've had a miscarriage or not. The nuggets in this book are true and life-giving. I believe this book will forever change those who read it as they work their way through the steps. Prepare yourself to find F R E E D O M!
—**Deby Dearman**, Nashville, Tennessee, is most often found using color, texture, shapes, sounds, music and lyrics to create sacred spaces, devotions, and worship events.

Although written from a feminine position, this book is an excellent read for men as well. A Bible Study Guide with an intriguing "This is my story" shared by the author is included. Many biblical truths undergird this work such as life begins at conception and forgiveness as a lifestyle. The reference to "the altar of motherhood" is an excellent reminder of a God-given gift to women. As a pastor, I recommend this book to pastors, leaders, and especially to men in general.
—**Tommy H. Briggs Sr.,** pastor, speaker, and author of *I Wish I'd Known: Stories of Life and Faith*

In telling our stories we find each other, and often we ourselves are found. Betty Ringeisen has given us all a gift in opening her story and her journey to us. What starts out as an encouragement to hear God quickly turns into a deeply personal journey of hearing the voice of the divine during a painful reality. Her story and teaching combine to help us understand both how to practice hearing and how much we need the power of God's living voice! While you will find Betty in this book, you will much more discover an opportunity to find yourself.
—**Bob Hamp**, LMFT and author of the Think Differently series

Betty Ringeisen knows the pain of miscarriage. She's also experienced the refreshing and renewing love of the

Father. She welcomes those of us who have suffered this pain into a strong relationship with the One who knows and loves us and our babies. Read her book and find hope, peace, and healing.
—**Amy Boucher Pye**, spiritual director and author of *7 Ways to Pray*

Betty Ringeisen's book, *Waiting for Jedidiah*, has captured my heart completely. As a mom who experienced a miscarriage at twenty weeks, friends and family provided comfort by assuring me "there must have been something wrong with the baby. You're lucky it happened early; you can try again." Others expected me to simply "move on." Those words, intended to help, grieved my heart. And even though my miscarriage occurred forty-two years ago, the pain was present as I read the book. But instead of sorrow, Betty's words brought healing to my soul and the comfort of our great Savior.

For any woman who has experienced miscarriage you will find help here. For those who love her—help her mourn the loss of her child. If she needs comfort but you're not certain what to do—you will find it here. This book brings healing and hope as it builds confidence in a loving Father and restores hope for the future.
—**Deb DeArmond,** speaker & award-winning author of books on family and marriage including: *Bumper Sticker Be-Attitudes, We May Be Done, But We're Not Finished!, The Write Calling: Encouragement for the Writer's Heart*

Betty's "beauty from ashes" story will connect your heart to the Father's love. Her story of grief in the darkest moments will guide you to navigate your own journey to hope and healing. Even if Betty's story is not your story,

you will be gifted a glimpse into a personal journey of healing that will bring you hope in difficult circumstances.
—**Polly Hamp,** author, NLP-trauma recovery coach, and co-owner of Think Differently Academy

Betty's memoir about her struggle with miscarriages contains many illustrations and truths that will help any reader facing loss and grief. Her theology is practical and accurate. She clarifies who the Creator is and how Satan is the author of death. She shares advice on spiritual actions we can take (e.g., confession, forgiveness, finding peace) to enhance our walk with the heavenly Father. She offers excellent discussion questions to be used in one's personal quiet times or with a group. Because she shares stories and testimonies to illustrate this heart-felt narrative, the book is a pleasure and inspiration to read. As a clinical psychologist and Christian of over fifty years, I highly recommend *Waiting for Jedidiah: How to Experience God's Healing After Miscarriage*.
—Dr. Julie Caton, Christian psychologist and author of *Soul Pain Revealed: Bridging Psychology With Faith as the Way Through Suffering*, www.drjuliecaton.com

Betty Ringeisen has written a must-read guide for anyone struggling with loss, accompanied by seemingly unanswered prayers. She shares her journey from brokenness to the beauty of intimacy with her heavenly Father. You will be encouraged by Betty's practical ways to discover and develop intimacy with God too.
—**Donna Scott**, LMFT and author of *The Tapestry of Trauma, Transforming the Tangles of Childhood Sexual Abuse into God's Masterpiece.*

Waiting for Jedidiah will take you on an emotional journey through some of the most vulnerable times in

Betty's life. In moments marked by grief and sadness, she illuminates the sorrow our culture too often ignores—pregnancy loss due to miscarriage. Tackling heartbreak and disappointment, Betty and her husband relentlessly rely on God, draw from his deep well, and encourage you to find him even in your darkest seasons.
—**Bethany Bomberger**, author, speaker and executive director, The Radiance Foundation.

How can trials, tribulations, and life struggles help us build greater faith in God's goodness? How do we hold fast to God when overwhelming pain is our constant companion? Is it possible to lean into God more while struggling with disappointment, the death of dreams, or broken promises? In *Waiting for Jedidiah*, Betty Ringeisen shares with honest transparency how her own journey through a valley eventually led her to a renewed and steadfast hope in God. She teaches how to lean toward God in the moment of our own tribulation to find healing, intimacy, and renewed faith. This is a great story of redemption for any of us who have been broken or lost hope. God restores, renews, and redeems our suffering.
—**Jan Greenwood**, founder of Brave Strong Girl, author of *The Grace Giving Leader*, and Pastor of Equip, Gateway Church.

WAITING FOR JEDIDIAH:

How to Experience God's Healing After a Miscarriage

Betty Ringeisen

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To the mother who weeps for the newborn she'll never hold. I wrote this for you. May you be filled with hope until the day you hold your baby in heaven.

To Joy, Joshua, Samuel, James, and John for the gift of being your mother if only for a brief season. I long for the day when we are reunited. Until then, this is your story. I love you with all my heart.

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You can't write a book about God's healing power if you haven't experienced his work in your own life. I'll be eternally thankful for Jesus's mercy and grace during the most difficult season of my life. All glory belongs to him.

Writing a book should never be attempted alone. I wouldn't have been able to retell this story without a support team. My heart overflows with gratitude for the people who encouraged me along the way. Thank you to my best friend, lover of my soul, faithful protector, and keeper of my heart. Donny, the greatest role of my life will always be your wife. Thank you for trusting me to tell our story. Your love and support are precious gifts. Thank you to my children, those on earth and those in heaven, you are the fruit of my womb, my reward, my heritage, and my legacy. You are a constant reminder of God's faithfulness to his promises. I am so proud to be your mom. To my grandchildren, Kaden and Lylelynn, you are the frosting on Nanny's cake.

Thank you to my family. The greatest blessings of my life come from being daughter, sister, niece, and aunt. I'll always be grateful for each of you.

Surviving the loss of five preborn babies and writing a book about each experience was excruciating. Reliving each loss was almost as painful as the losses themselves.

I especially want to thank the individuals who encouraged and challenged me along the way. Complete thanks to Donna, Kim, Emily, Melissa, Emma, Doris, Kristy, Jillian, and Nichole. Fred Clark and Tommy Briggs, your spiritual fathering nurtures my soul. Thank you for your wisdom and encouragement throughout the journey.

The writing world is a better place thanks to authors who have been successful in the publishing world and want to help other writers tell their story. Special thanks to the Elk Lake Publishing team. Deb and Roy, I'm honored to represent you. To my editor, Judy Hagey, thank you for helping me express myself in the most articulate way. I'm beyond grateful to my writing coach, Deb Dearmond. This book was a dream until we met. You have mentored (and lovingly pushed) me. To say I couldn't have finished this labor of love without you is an understatement. You walked with me through the darkness and carried me when the journey of remembering became too difficult. I couldn't have asked for a better companion for this sacred journey.

A LETTER TO YOU

Dear Beloved,

I've written this book for you out of the most painful season of my life. I wrote this story again and again in my mind over the years, praying about what to share with you. God challenged me to share with vulnerability and transparency—not only the pain, but also God's promises and power.

At times, I found writing difficult because I had to recall the moments I had worked hard to forget. And to experience the pain I never wanted to feel again. The agony will be worth enduring if you find God's encouragement and meet him as the faithful Father who desires to carry you through the darkest valley of life.

I'm telling my story for two reasons. I want the world to know there were five Ringeisen babies who lived, if only for a short time, in me and with me. Their lives mattered to us, and they mattered to God. I want this book to encourage you to keep moving forward on your pathway to completeness in Christ ... even when you feel you can't take one more step.

When life goes off the rails, we must decide what to do with the unexpected events in our lives. How can the tribulations build greater faith? Over time, I've learned to ask two helpful questions: How will this season define me?

And what is God saying through this tragedy? You do not have to allow the devastation of this moment to define you. By the end of this book, my desire is you'll have learned how to remove the emotional and spiritual obstacles that prevent you from moving forward when life doesn't meet your expectations.

God desires you to walk courageously into the next season of life by confronting the trauma of this one. I yearn for you to be filled with expectation for the future, not dread the unknown the future holds. This book teaches you to take care of your soul by learning how to nurture your inner self and rid yourself of the things that prevent you from experiencing the abundant life Jesus died to give you.

As I look back, the most astounding aspect of the journey was how little I understood about God and my relationship with him. After years of counseling women, I've learned many of us struggle with this key concept of spiritual growth. Tragic events cause many to throw in the towel and walk away from the God who loves them and wants to comfort them. Our souls cannot be healed until we believe the Father loves us. Then, and only then, will our lives be transformed the way God intended.

I believe my story will help you discover the depth of God's affection for you and encourage you to grieve in his presence.

With much love,

Betty

CHAPTER ONE

Intimacy with God

Ask me and I will tell you remarkable secrets you do not know about things to come. (Jeremiah 33:3)

The day began like any other. Meditation, workout, drop kids at school, and finalize plans for my daughter Malady's sweet-sixteen party. One quick trip to the bathroom revealed spotting. A wave of fear engulfed me as I raced to the phone, certain my best friend would understand my panic. "Relax. A little blood is normal," she assured. Within hours the situation grew worse—more blood, more cramps. My doctor scheduled a sonogram for the following Monday. In the meantime, he advised me to rest and drink plenty of water.

As I lay on the couch, God showed me a vision. I sat in a rocking chair while a baby nursed. The Father stood over me and whispered, "There will be more babies." I wasn't clear if he meant this baby would survive or not. I prayed the former was true. Forty-eight hours later, the sonogram revealed our

worst nightmare: an empty uterus. Our daughter was gone. Joy slipped into eternity during the night.

I wailed like a wounded animal as the doctors and nurses ducked out of the room to give us time alone.

An Unlived Life

> He heals the brokenhearted and bandages their wounds. (Psalm 147:3)

The death of a child, at any stage of life, is surreal. The experience is like a nightmare. You're trapped in darkness, desperate to wake up until you realize you're not asleep. For days after Joy died, I instinctively ran my hand over my swollen abdomen. Within seconds each time, the memory of an empty uterus on the screen rushed in and reminded me she was gone. Loneliness and sadness covered me like the crushing pressure of a wet wool blanket on limbs powerless to escape from the weight. I felt numb and disconnected from life. When people spoke, I heard their words, but nothing in me wanted to respond to their questions. My face hid the scream inside. *Can't you tell I'm dying right now? I don't care about whatever you're saying.*

The Darkest Valley

> The Lord is my shepherd; I have all that I need. (Psalm 23:1)

Most of the cards we received quoted Psalm 23. "Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and staff protect and comfort me" (v. 4). I heard the familiar psalm at every funeral I attended as a child. For most of my life, I believed the passage was about God guiding us to heaven after we die. But the psalm is not about death. Instead, David wrote

the song as a testimony of how God guided him through the darkest valleys of his life.

When Joy died, I felt alone in the dark tunnel of death. But the Good Shepherd found me, picked me up, and carried me across his shoulders. God was my refuge in the darkness and provided everything I needed to survive the loss of our baby girl. He brought guidance and comfort when I felt too overwhelmed to carry on. In his embrace, I mourned for Joy and the life we would no longer share. When I was ready, the Lord gave me the strength to rise from the depths of grief and walk again. The Good Shepherd wiped the tears from my face and showed me how to live without my beloved child. Always before me was his promise: *there will be more babies*.

I learned many things about God and myself in the valley of the shadow of death while I waited for the fulfillment of his promise. In these pages, I open the vulnerable places of my heart to let you know you are not alone.

Face to Face

> If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me. (Jeremiah 29:13)

When I first began to study the Bible, one thing was clear: God desires to connect with his people. From Genesis to Revelation, true intimacy between God and man is the overall theme. Throughout the Scriptures, he told men stories, answered their questions, and offered guidance to navigate life on earth. I didn't question whether God spoke, but desperately desired to know if he wanted to speak to me.

Did he want to walk in the cool of the day with me as he did with Adam and Eve? Were the face-to-face conversations Moses experienced available to me too? Would he give me a new name like he did for Sarah? Could I encounter him

in the same way David did? Was John the last human being to view visions of heaven, or could I see too? The desire to answer these questions began the greatest pursuit of my life: intimacy with the Father.

Conversations

They know his voice. (John 10:4)

In *The Pursuit of God*, A. W. Tozer claimed God "fills the world with His speaking voice."[1] If this is true, and I believe Tozer is right, we need to cultivate our ears to listen for the Lord's ever-present voice.

Over the years, I've learned the ability to see and hear God is not limited to mystics or super-spiritual people. His presence is available to everyone. When we are intimate with God, he illuminates truth, transforms our life, and strengthens us for the journey ahead.

Throughout the Scriptures, God conversed with people, and they responded to his voice. Communication with God was a regular part of their life. Men, women, children, and even a donkey heard from him. Don't believe me? Read Numbers 22:28. If a donkey can learn to recognize the voice of his Creator, I think human beings can too.

God created us for dialogue with him. Dallas Willard, author of *Hearing God*, wrote, "Accordingly, we seek to interact with God in a relationship of listening and speaking."[2] When God speaks, we listen. Then we talk, and he tunes in. Like a parent engaged in every aspect of the child's life, God wants to interact with us about everything that concerns us. Our relationship with the Father is like no other bond.

When I first began this two-way communication with God, I talked and assumed he listened. Over time, my monologues

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developed into dialogues, and our conversations became more balanced and intimate. I shared my struggles with him and the Father assured me of his grace. Our face-to-face encounters helped me mature in my faith.

Leanne Payne, author of *Listening Prayer*, observed, "To listen in prayer for the voice of the Lord is to find the mind of Christ; it is to gain transcendent wisdom, a wisdom that includes understanding, guidance, knowledge, exhortation, and consolation."[3] Throughout her life, Leanne Payne taught people how to experience an intimate relationship with God. As one of her students, I learned how to walk with God and receive his guidance for my life. These principles were instrumental to my spiritual, emotional, and physical healing after I lost the babies.

A Lifeline

> Yes, and the Lord will deliver me from every evil attack and will bring me safely into his heavenly Kingdom. (2 Timothy 4:18)

Effective rapport is the most important aspect of any relationship. Both parties must listen to understand what's said, so both feel heard. Peter Lord, author of *Hearing God*, stated, "If the capacity is there, the ability must be developed."[4] As more babies died in my womb, my eagerness to connect with God increased. He was essential to my survival. The Lord's voice became a lifeline, and I clung to my Savior like a drowning woman clinging to a life preserver. When no one realized my pain and how little I had to hold on to, Jesus threw me a life-saving rope and stabilized me.

I've heard intimacy defined as "into-me-see." Not surprisingly, the ability to see into the human heart is

3

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an attribute of God. The Hebrew name El Roi means the God who sees me. A woman named Hagar was the first to recognize the God who sees us. If you're not familiar with Hagar's story, let me give you a brief history.

God promised Abram (the father and patriarch of the Jewish nation) he would have countless offspring. However, as Abram approached his 100th birthday, he and his wife Sarai remained childless. Sarai, desperate for a baby, became impatient and took matters into her own hands. Sarai insisted Abram take her maidservant, Hagar, as his wife. Sarai's goal was to build a family through another woman. Hagar had no trouble conceiving. Sarai seethed with jealousy. Another woman produced the one thing she couldn't—a baby. Enraged by her circumstances, Sarai unleashed her frustration on Hagar.

To escape Sarai's wrath, Hagar fled to the desert where she encountered the Lord's messenger. He commanded her to return to Sarai but promised she would become the mother of many generations through her son. After the exchange, Hagar proclaimed, "You are the God who sees me." As an act of faith, Hagar returned to Sarai. Later, she gave birth to a boy and named him Ishmael, which means "God has heard." When Hagar felt alone and unseen, she experienced intimacy with God. El Roi saw and acknowledged Hagar's suffering. God comforted and gave hope for the future when Hagar felt alone in her circumstances.

My sister, God is with you. He hears your cries and will give you the comfort and hope for the future you need. You may feel as if you're alone in the desert, but I assure you from personal experience, God sees you and hears your suffering.

Intimate Dialogue

> When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man and his wife heard the Lord God walking about in the garden. (Genesis 3:8)

Before the fall, Adam and Eve lived in close relationship with God. This may be hard for us to imagine, but when the day grew cool, God came to walk and talk with them. We might be tempted to believe this type of relationship with God is out of our reach, but the Bible is filled with stories of people like you and me who heard God and responded to his voice.

My favorite is the story of a young child named Samuel. His parents dedicated his life to the Lord from the time he was about three years old. They sent him to seminary early. As a boy, Samuel lived in the place where God spoke to his people—the temple.

One night, as Samuel lay near the ark of the covenant, God called him by name. Samuel didn't recognize God's voice. The young boy assumed Eli, the high priest, called out to him. Little Samuel ran to the old man, but Eli denied the voice was his and sent the boy back to bed—numerous times.

After three attempts, Eli finally realized who was speaking to Samuel and instructed him to respond, "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening."

When the fourth call came, Samuel was ready. "Speak, your servant is listening." When God spoke, he gave Samuel (a young kid!) insight into what he was about to do in Israel. You can read the complete account in 1 Samuel chapter 3.

Samuel's story encourages me in many ways, but mostly his legacy challenges me to believe God yearns to speak to those eager to listen. The Bible abounds with stories of others who communicated with God as Samuel did. Once you investigate, you'll discover how their connection to God revolutionized their lives.

Meaningful Dialogue

> Look! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends. (Revelation 3:20)

Many followers of Jesus would say they talk to God, which means they pray to God and wait for him to answer their prayers. They memorize Bible verses and keep meticulous prayer journals. At the end of their "God time," they place their Bible and journal on the shelf and move on to the next part of their day. Box checked. What's my next task?

God desires much more than a monologue with his kids. The one who formed and knit you together in your mother's womb (Psalm 139:13) is eager to begin a two-way dialogue. If you listen, you'll hear the knock on the door of your heart. Will you respond like Samuel with "Speak, your servant is listening"?

After Joy, we experienced four miscarriages. With each loss, God invited me deeper into friendship with him. When I read the Bible, I assumed the Lord wanted to reveal something unique to me. One day, as I read the account of the first week of creation, I recognized how God shaped the world from a formless void with his words. As I pondered the thought, I sensed him say, "I know you feel like a formless void right now, but my words will restore life, peace, and joy to you. I will order the chaos you're experiencing into something beautiful for you and your family."

Another time, the Father spoke during my morning run. The darkness of early morning added to the cold and harshness I felt after the loss of another baby. With each step, the sound of dry, dead leaves echoed through my soul and confirmed I was surrounded by death. The barrenness of the woods reminded me of the emptiness of my womb.

As sunlight peeked over the horizon, the sunshine cast light onto my surroundings. My eyes caught the red wings of the cardinals perched in the trees. When I looked down, I saw the tiny stems of crocuses as they peeked through the lifeless leaves. The Lord whispered, "Look for life even

when you feel like there's nothing but death in and around you." Our relationship grew as he guided me through loss after loss. I poured out my pain and sadness, sought his will and guidance for my future, and thanked him for carrying me through the dark days. And there were many of those.

Like the afternoon summer rain, God showered me with grace. Through his Word, tangible presence, and creation, he reminded me I am his beloved daughter. His unconditional love restored and transformed my soul when the sadness threatened to overtake me. Leanne Payne stated, "Knowing that Jesus is truly Emmanuel, God with us, and learning to hear his voice is vital to becoming spiritually mature."[5] God was with me through five miscarriages. When death enveloped me again and again, I lived with the gentle reminder of Emmanuel's presence and grace. My faith flourished despite my circumstances. I'm sure you'll find this hard to comprehend right now, but in your darkest moments, you will experience renewal and life too, because Jesus is truly Emmanuel—God with you.

What God Said

> My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. (John 10:27)

Hearing God was a foreign concept to me when I first sought deeper intimacy with my Creator. As I looked to Scripture, I began to see the interactions man experienced with God throughout history. I first noticed how often I breezed over conversations between God and man. One day, I noticed a pattern.

When the Israelites complained, Samuel (now a grown man) listened, then prayed to the Lord for direction, and

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the Lord answered. I googled how many times the phrase "the Lord answered" appears in the Bible? Depending on the translation, the phrase occurs over five hundred times. The Scriptures confirm God speaks, so what's preventing us from hearing him?

Obstacles to Hearing God

> My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?
> Why are you so far away when I groan for help?
> (Psalm 22:1)

Perhaps you've wrestled with your communication with God. Over the years, I've learned to recognize hindrances to God's voice. Throughout this book, we'll seek to overcome these barriers. Listed here are the top five.

- **Busyness**—You can't hear God if you don't make time for him. Many times, the distractions of life prevent us from listening to him.
- **Other voices**—We hear three voices: the voice of the world, the voice of the enemy, and the voice of God. The more time we spend listening to God rather than the other two, the more familiar we become with his voice.
- **Fear**—Many of us are afraid of God—and even more afraid of what he wants to say to us.
- **Idols**—I'll cover more about idols of the heart in a later chapter, but for now, an idol is any person or thing we put before God.
- **Unconfessed sin**—Sin hardens our hearts and draws us away from God. The remedy for unconfessed sin is to confess and repent.

Listening to God is difficult when we've allowed barriers between him and us. During our time together, I pledge

to teach you how to remove these hindrances and open a pathway to an interactive relationship between you and God. This is your moment to allow him to take you to a new level of connection as you mourn the loss of your precious baby.

Application

In this book, you'll find an application section at the end of every chapter. Each appplication will guide you through Scriptures and questions designed to help you engage with God's Word. Spend time on them. The Father says, "Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10). To hear him, we may need to become still and tune our spiritual ears to his voice. Often, he speaks with a still, small voice (1 Kings 19:12), but his words are easily drowned out because of the busyness of our lives. Don't rush the process. Allow God to speak to you as you work through his written Word and the material presented in this book.

Spend some time looking for encounters with God this week. Here are a few suggestions for how to begin:

- Choose a quiet time and place.
- Set aside twenty minutes.
- Ask God what he'd like to talk about.
- If you have a random thought come into your mind (even if you hear "I need to buy milk today"), pause and write the words down and refocus.
- Read one of the suggested Scripture passages.
- Ask God what he wants you to know about the verses you've read. Why did he write them? What meaning do they have for you today?
- Write what you hear him say.
- Use a journal—I suggest you buy a new one for this season. Writing engages both sides of your brain and

helps you focus. A written record also reveals your growth as you listen to the Father's voice. (I often use two colored pens—my words are one color, and God's are another.)

- If you are unsure what you're seeing and hearing is from the Father, test the revelation. The voice of the Father produces fruit: life, peace, joy, etc. If what you're hearing does not produce these fruits, you can be sure the words are not from Holy Spirit.

Scriptures to Encourage:

- God spoke through the Bible: 2 Timothy 3:14–17; Hebrews 4:12
- God spoke through his Son: Matthew 17:5–8; John 1:14–17
- God continues to speak: John 6:63; Acts 2:17; Revelation 2:7
- God invites us to listen: Isaiah 55:3; Jeremiah 33:3; Matthew 11:15; James 1:5; Revelation 3:20

Questions to Ponder:

- Do you believe God speaks? Why or why not?
- Describe a time when you heard God talk to you.
- Based on the above Scriptures, describe some ways God communicates through the Bible.
- Why do you think friendship with God is important during this season?

Prayer: *Holy Spirit, teach me to listen to your voice. My heart is broken, and I'm weary. Give me ears to hear the words you're saying to me through this season.*