



I have surely seen the affliction of my people... and have heard their groaning, and I have come down to deliver them. (Acts 7:34 ESV)

Have you ever been to a place where the circumstances of your life bring you to a position you could never have imagined - a place so barren and so desolate you think you would be better off dead, a place where only tears fill your soul? I once found myself in a similar situation. My life had always been relatively easy and filled with the blessings that come with living in America. I rarely had a trial I couldn't get myself out of. Yet one day I found myself incapacitated to the point where I couldn't even help myself - in distress, and in need of deliverance when a roadside bomb went off a couple of yards away from me on a foot patrol. I can remember thinking that I had just lost a significant portion of my face in the blast, as my own blood covered my hands and oozed over my military gear.

This event began my journey from hospital to hospital, doctor to doctor, where they would numb my eye and begin thrusting needles in it to dig the dirt out. The report wasn't good. I was told I would never regain my 20/20 vision in that eye. Inside my soul, I needed some deliverance, healing, and questions answered. Thoughts of "Why me, God?" were racing through my mind.

I had some resentment toward God, just as I am sure some of you have had resentment toward God regarding your circumstances or past. The good news was God had a plan, even though I was incapable of seeing it in my own pain, for, God is faithful, and he will not allow you to be tested beyond your power to remain firm; at the time you are put to the test, he will give you the strength to endure it, and so provide you with the way of escape. (1 Cor 10:13)

No matter how horrendously bad our circumstances may seem in front of us, whether internal issues in our heart and soul or external issues affecting our physical bodies, there are a few things to remember about God's nature and desire for us. He always makes the way of escape, and throughout the whole Bible, His plans and actions continuously and repetitively lead to redemption, healing, deliverance, and peace for our souls - just as any human father would want for his own children. The prophets, disciples, Moses, David, Job, even Jesus as He hung and bled on the cross, never fully understood why in the midst of pain. And though your affliction may last years, God delivers us in His timing. He uses our deliverance, so we can then in turn unselfishly deliver others. In the end, when all is said and done, the whys do get answered, we get double for our trouble, like Job did, when "the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before," (Job 42:10) and we end up flying higher than we have ever flown before.

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