



Midweek Study Notes

17th October 2021

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Night Seasons - Part 1

Angela spoke to us about *night seasons*; difficult periods in our life that can be dark, painful and challenging to our faith.

Have you ever been through a *night season* yourself? Or do you feel like you are going through a *night season* at the moment?



Angela reminded us that God supports us through - and helps us to reach the end of - these dark nights of the soul and spirit, and she shared a number of verses that can support us through troubling times.

Reread the verses that Angela displayed on the screen (**Isaiah 50:10, Psalm 23:4, Psalm 30:5 and 2 Corinthians 4:8-9**) Which of these verses do you find the most helpful? What is it about the particular verse that brings you comfort?

Angela went on to look at the stories of Tamar (**Genesis 38**) and Ruth (**Ruth 1-4**), two of just five women to be named in the genealogy of Jesus in **Matthew 1:1-17**. Despite their backgrounds, both women were called by God to be associated with Jesus Christ. Both experienced difficult *night seasons* in their lives, but God did not overlook or abandon them.

What is it about the stories of Tamar and/or Ruth that encourages you personally? What can we learn from these two women today?

Like Tamar and Ruth, we may find ourselves hard pressed on every side, perplexed, persecuted and struck down, but as **2 Corinthians 4:8-9** reminds us: '*we are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.*'

Angela finished by reading **2 Corinthians 4:16-18**, which encourages us not to lose heart, even during the most challenging times in our life. God gave Tamar and Ruth victory, and he can and will do the same for us. *Read the verses out loud to provide encouragement to each other.*

Further Discussion Suggestion

Mervyn shared that sometimes when God takes things away from us it can reveal our inner attitudes. *Can you think of a time in your life when God took something away from you? How did you react?*

Suggestions For Prayer

If you feel like you are going through your own *night season*, ask others to pray for you. Or you know of someone else who is going through a *night season*, pray for them.

Mervyn mentioned **Matthew 3:2** *'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near,'* and reminded us that repentance is a wonderful thing that allows us to be completely honest with God and also enables us to put things right with Him. Spend some time - in silence if you prefer - being open and honest with God about your own shortcomings.

Pray for the members of our church congregation, as well as friends or family members, who are in need of physical healing.

Pray for those who are part of our church but who are not currently able to join us on a Sunday morning.

