

When God Waits to Say Yes

Genesis 2:5 Now **no shrub** of the field was yet in the earth, and **no plant** of the field had yet sprouted, for the LORD God had **not sent rain** upon the earth; and there was **no man** to cultivate the ground...

Genesis 2:18 Then the Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone (i.e., **no woman**)...

Have you ever wanted something God promises a lot sooner than He gives it to you? Of course, you have. Relief from fear. Joy. A sense of dignity. An end to loneliness. Relief from pain. All are good desires; all are sometimes delayed. Delays can lead us to doubt whether God's gift will ever appear. Waiting is hard. It's also real because sometimes God waits (and doesn't tell us why).

The second chapter of Genesis is a prime example. Scan the chapter, and you'll find item after item that is absent, at least for a time: no shrubs, no plants, no rain, no man, and no woman.

Sometimes God waits before He gives us His gifts. Plants, rain, and people are indeed absent. But absent doesn't mean never. Delays don't change the fact that God gives lavishly; they simply alter the timing of when His gift arrives.

When God Waits, He Doesn't Wait Forever

Water, people, and plants – at first absent...then supplied. God fills each emptiness; He doesn't delay forever. He notices and cares about the things missing in our lives. No water? No problem. God supplies water, first a mist then four rushing rivers. No man? Wait... now one appears. No garden home for the man? God remedies that with a lush garden. No woman? God forms the one for whom Adam longs and brings her to him. God notices empty places and always, consistently and dependably, fills those voids. Generously. Consider God's promise in Philippians 4:19...*and my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus*. Notice the word “all” – it cements the reality of God's continued lavish giving. Take a look at how God lives out the Philippians promise in Genesis 2:

- **In answer to the missing water**
Genesis 2:6 But a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground ...
Genesis 2:10 Now a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden; and from there it divided and became four rivers.
- **In answer to the missing man:**
Genesis 2:7 Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.
- **In answer to the missing garden home:**
Genesis 2:8 And the LORD God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed
Genesis 2:9 And out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- **In answer to the missing woman (and Adam's aloneness)**
Genesis 2:18 Then the Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.” ...
Genesis 2:21 So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh at that place. *2:22* And the LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man.

A Few Questions

- How do you respond when you and God differ about the timing of His provision? Do you question God's character? Do you think He is ignoring you? Indifferent to you? Angry with you?
- Have you considered that God might be *delaying* His gift rather than *depriving* you? Would you be willing to see "empty places" as temporary?
- Do you think we have to wait until heaven for God's Edenic generosity to reappear?
- Do you think you know better than God not only *what* you need but *when* you need it?
- If you knew that God's delays were for your benefit, would you be more willing to trust His timing?
- When God waits, do you suspect deprivation, or do you expect that abundance is on the way?

How might your life change if you knew that God delights to fill ALL your needs and promises to do just that? (See Philippians 4:19.)

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