

See the Signs

Inspired by Luke 21:25-28, 34-36

Isabella said to her family, “I am going away to be by myself for a while. I need to sit with the sun, and the moon, and the stars. My world is full of dismay and I’m perplexed. I am going to sit by the sea and listen to the roar of the waves. There I hope to see a sign that I can find some peace. Otherwise, I feel I may die of fright anticipating what might be coming next. Only God and the powers of Heaven can shake me out of this space where I have been living.

“Please pray for me,” she continued. “That I may see the Son of Man coming in the clouds as I ponder the endless horizon on the shore. May I feel His love and mercy in a powerful, glorious way. If it is His will, when these signs begin to happen, I will once again stand erect and raise my head to face the world again. May God grant me redemption over all the trials my life has handed me.” Isabella’s family hugged her tightly and sent her away with some hesitancy. After all, she is their baby sister and she has suffered so much these past seven years. First, battling breast cancer, then losing a child to suicide. On top of those struggles, the pandemic shut down the small company where she had worked for 20 years, and her husband decided this was the time to tell her that he found someone else and he was leaving her.

So, yes, Izzy needed some peace and healing. She needed a great overhaul of her life. While she had so many wonderful family and friends who loved her deeply, she felt terribly alone. It was a loneliness she couldn’t explain. Only someone experienced in it could understand. If you haven’t been there, you cannot comprehend feeling deeply alone in a room filled with excitement and celebration. You will not understand how the truth of sorrow can be masked behind a beautiful smile.

Mark, the eldest sibling did not know this tunnel of pitch black darkness personally. But, he was very in tune to the severity of Isabella’s pain and sorrow. He is a doctor, and knows he can’t simply hand her a prescription to cure what ails his sister. So, Mark handed Izzy a Bible and a blank journal. “Read God’s word, sis. His word has the saving power. Write down how you feel — all the feelings, good and bad. Jesus will walk with you in those dark spaces and bring you light. Beware that your heart isn’t taken over by the anxieties of your life. You can’t drown them in sleep or drunkenness. Starting with a little bit of wine to numb the pain can catch you by surprise and snare you like a trap,” he warned. “Every one who lives

on the face of the earth has something.” he added. “You have a whole lot more than most, Izzy. Be vigilant and pray. God will give you the strength to escape the maze of fear and memories that haunt your life. An end to it all is imminent. You will one day stand before the Son of Man a whole woman again.”

Throughout her retreat at the beach, Isabella walked the shoreline every morning and every evening. She recalled Mark’s words of Wisdom and drew strength from them. She read, prayed, and wrote it all out, trying to deliver the fears and terrors from her system. She began to notice how fresh and clean the sand looked first thing in the morning. She began to see stability and strength in the bright spots of starlight that sprinkled the endless black of the night sky. She began to hear the beautiful song of the birds filling her ears and surrounding her heart. She began to notice new flowers budding and bringing beauty and newness of life. She began to understand these are the signs that God is with her, and she began to loosen the grip of what was to let in a glimmer of the good that is yet to come.

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