

DELAYED BY DESIGN

ENGAGE: Part Three

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“...God did not lead them through the land of the Philistines, although that was the most direct route from Egypt to the Promised Land. The reason was that God felt the people might become discouraged by having to fight their way through, even though they had left Egypt armed; he thought they might return to Egypt. Instead, God led them along a route through the Red Sea wilderness.” (Exodus 13:17, The Living Bible)

“Do you remember how the Lord led you through the wilderness for all those forty years, humbling you and testing you to find out how you would respond, and whether or not you would really obey him?” (Deuteronomy 8:2, The Living Bible)

“My whole being is deeply troubled. How long, O LORD, will you wait to help me?” (Psalm 6:3, GNB)

WHAT **NOT** TO DO WHILE WAITING

1. DON'T FEAR

“You did not want to go into the land, and you refused to obey the LORD your God. You stayed in your tents and grumbled, “The LORD must hate us—he brought us out of Egypt, just so he could hand us over to the Amorites and get rid of us. We are afraid, because the men who explored the land told us that the cities are large, with walls that reach to the sky. The people who live there are taller and stronger than we are, and some of them are Anakim. We have nowhere to go.”” (Deuteronomy 1:26–28, CEV)

Instead

“Don’t be afraid, for I am with you. Don’t be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.” (Isaiah 41:10, NLT)

“This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”” (Joshua 1:9, NLT)

2. DON'T FRET

“...But on the way the people lost their patience and spoke against God and Moses. They complained, “Why did you bring us out of Egypt to die in this desert, where there is no food or water? We can’t stand any more of this miserable food!”” (Numbers 21:4–5, GNB)

“Impatience will get you into trouble.” (Proverbs 19:2b, GNB)

Instead

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.” (Proverbs 3:5–6, NLT)

“Rest in the Lord; wait patiently for him to act...Stop your anger! Turn off your wrath. Don’t fret and worry—it only leads to harm.” (Psalm 37:7–8, The Living Bible)

3. **DON'T FAINT**

“All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron..., “If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this wilderness...Wouldn’t it be better for us to go back to Egypt?” And they said to each other, “We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt.”” (Numbers 14:2–4, NIV)

Instead

“So let’s not allow ourselves to get fatigued doing good. At the right time we will harvest a good crop if we don’t give up, or quit.” (Galatians 6:9, The Message)

“Jesus told his disciples a story about how they should keep on praying and never give up:” (Luke 18:1, CEV)

4. **DON'T FORGET**

“Our ancestors in Egypt did not understand God’s wonderful acts; they forgot the many times he showed them his love, and they rebelled against the Almighty at the Red Sea. But he saved them, as he had promised, in order to show his great power...Yet how quickly they forgot again!” (Psalm 106:7-8,13, GNB/The Living Bible)

Instead

“Praise the LORD, my soul, and do not forget how kind he is.” (Psalm 103:2, GNB)

“The LORD said, “I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land...So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.”” (Exodus 3:7–10, NIV)

LAST THOUGHT:

Heaven’s silence is never God’s **ABSENCE**.