

CHAPTER 1



A Miscarried Secret

“We can’t find a heartbeat.”

“The fetus did not implant in the uterus.”

“The fetus isn’t developing properly.”

You may have heard these words from an ultrasound technician or from your physician during a routine pre-natal exam. I am certain that you cried plenty of tears, because I surely did. Day after day, I ran into my husband’s arms and just cried. We had suffered so great a loss but not many could understand the depth of our heartbreak. After hearing those words, how did you truly feel and who did you tell? If you are like most women, you probably only exposed your miscarried bundle of joy with a chosen few. Miscarriage is the most common type of pregnancy loss, according to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG).

Studies reveal that anywhere from 10-25% of all clinically recognized pregnancies will end in miscarriage.¹ The most

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common reason for miscarriage stems from chromosomal abnormalities in the fetus. An increase in maternal age can also affect the chances of miscarriage.

- Women under the age of thirty-five years old have about a 15% chance of miscarriage
- Women between the ages of thirty-five and forty-five have a 20 percent to 35 percent chance of miscarriage
- Women over the age of forty-five have a fifty percent chance of miscarriage
- Women who have experienced a previous miscarriage have a 25 percent chance of having another one. (This is only a slight increase than someone who has not had a previous miscarriage)²

Pregnancy loss is a very common, yet unspoken event that many women experience. Maurice and I chose not to share it with many people, but it definitely became a major focus of our conversation and prayers with God. It is a loss that touches more women around us than we often realize. When you look at the above statistics, it may shed a bit of light into why many people who have not experienced miscarriage have the opinion that it is not a loss as great as the pain you feel. After our first pregnancy loss, I did extensive research on the causes to see if there was anything I could have done to prevent it. I questioned if it was my fault. Did I exercise too much, not get enough rest, eat or drink the wrong things? I placed the blame on me and for a moment, also on God. I began to search the scriptures to learn about what God said about miscarriage. Here is what I found in the Word of God:

“You must serve only the Lord your God. If you do, I will bless you with food and water, and I will protect

Knowing God is more
sufficient than
knowing the *whys*
of our *sufferings*.



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you from illness. There will be no miscarriages or infertility in your land, and I will give you long, full lives.” (Exodus 23:25-26)

“In the same way, it is not my heavenly Father’s will that even one of these little ones should perish.”
(Matthew 18:14) - God is concerned about every human being that He has created.

*“You will experience all these blessings if you obey the Lord your God: Your towns and your fields will be blessed. **Your children and your crops will be blessed.** The offspring of your herds and flocks will be blessed. Your fruit baskets and breadboards will be blessed. Wherever you go and whatever you do, you will be blessed.” (Deuteronomy 28:2-6)*

How could something so common in the world be the opposite of what God has promised to His children? If God promised His children there would be no miscarriages or barrenness in the land, then why has it happened to so many women that serve Him? Is this a contradiction of His Word? How could a God who is so loving take away our heart’s greatest joy? Isn’t He the God who is faithful to fulfill what He promised? Isn’t He the God who will fully equip our bodies to function according to His design?

Having children has proved to be challenging for many women. Some women struggle to conceive or successfully carry a baby to term. In a survey of married women, the CDC found that 1.5 million women in the US (6%) are infertile.³ It is a great disappointment to desire to have a child and feel there is a possibility you will be unable to be fruitful and multiply. It can be one of the deepest levels of pain for women.

It affects our confidence, potentially shatters our dreams and makes some regret that we haven't *yet* been able to give our husbands the sons or daughters they desire.

It is a wound that is opened over and over again every time someone asks the dreaded question, "When are you going to have a baby?" I don't know about you, but whenever someone mentions "baby" in regards to me having one, the pain of my losses return and I mentally, and sometimes emotionally, relive the moments of losing our angel babies. I celebrate those around me birthing their bundles of joy while still dealing with the current reality that the children we desperately desire has proved to be one of the greatest mountains that we've ever had to climb. "Lord, when are you going to do this for me?" is a question many childless women bring to the feet of Jesus in their private prayer time.

Did you think that conceiving and carrying a baby to term would be easy? I sure did. In fact, I thought it would be easier to get pregnant than it was to prevent it. I never fathomed that starting a family would be one of the most difficult challenges that we would encounter in our marriage. I was certain we could time it according to when *we* were ready by using our choice of preventative measures. Then, once we were ready to conceive, it would happen with no challenges, little delays and zero complications. Boy was I wrong! Everything that we have experienced has been quite the opposite and you probably feel the same way. I understand the heartbreak that lives with you daily. I know the frustrations of waiting and wondering, asking and doubting, smiling while suffering silently. There aren't enough words in any language that could describe the tremendous amount of tears that you have cried, alone.

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Why is it that so many struggle with repeated miscarriage and infertility, but it's such a taboo topic to discuss? We don't talk about it with most of our family, our close circle of friends, our pastors, or mentors, and it's certainly not a social media announcement! Instead, behind closed doors we remember. We remember the cold ultrasound room, the tears that left our eyes as the news was delivered, the outline of a baby on the screen with no heartbeat, the missing fetus that never developed, or the repeated pregnancy tests that were all negative. The growing belly, gender reveal and baby shower would not be occurring within the next nine months. We know all too well what it's like to go from cloud nine excitement to the deepest depth of discouragement. The shoulders of our husbands, and maybe our pillows, are the only ones that really know the suffering we are encountering. We wake up in the morning, get dressed, go to work, run businesses, smile and celebrate others while silently, we are suffering. We are crying on the inside while glowing on the outside. We are dealing with death without being able to openly mourn.

Miscarriage is a silent suffering. It's a private matter we dare not discuss publicly. I am choosing to break the silence in hopes that my story will transform the faith of so many women who are still waiting for their children to manifest on this side of heaven. Maybe one day, you will do the same. You are not alone and you should not have to suffer and heal alone.

It is challenging to find women who will openly share the details of their story, their pain, fears, doubts and healing. Speaking out can help so many people. Many women don't share that they have become the mother of an angel for various reasons that are personal to each person. Maybe it's because we are ashamed or we don't want others to know

His wisdom,

justice

and love greatly

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we were unsuccessful in our attempts to conceive, carry and birth a child. Maybe it's because we don't want other women to be discouraged in their efforts and hopes of conceiving. Whatever your choice is for not sharing (if that has been your story), you have a right to do what you feel is best for you.

But I pray this book is a step towards all women feeling open enough to share their pain for the purpose of helping other women to heal emotionally and spiritually. Many women wonder why God has allowed their precious bundle of joy to be stripped away from the arms that once would hold their son or daughter. Lord, why? Why did you allow this to happen to us? We serve you, we desperately want children, but we are struggling. We want to multiply but we have been unable to successfully bear the fruit of our offspring. God, what is your purpose in this pain?

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Jesus Christ – the King of all Kings – where is He in this? How is His love being displayed in my loss? Why did He take my babies from me? Is this God's fault? These were the questions I found myself asking plenty of times – even after my second miscarriage. How could my Father who is so loving, so perfect and so sovereign take my babies from me? I was reminded of Job. Just in case you aren't familiar with his story, let me share a little of it with you. Job was a blameless man of complete integrity. He feared God and stayed far away from evil. Job was a very wealthy man with seven sons and three daughters, an abundance of sheep, camels, oxen and donkeys (Job 1). Let's just say that Job didn't want for anything and

had enough wealth to share for generations to come. He was surely living the abundant life mentioned in John 10:10.

*One day the members of the heavenly court came to present themselves before the Lord, and the Accuser, Satan, came with them. "Where have you come from?" The Lord asked Satan. Satan answered the Lord, "I have been patrolling the earth, watching everything that's going on. Then the Lord asked Satan, "Have you noticed my servant Job? He is the finest man in all the earth. He is blameless - a man of complete integrity. He fears God and stays away from evil. Satan replied to the Lord, "Yes, but Job has good reason to fear God. You have always put a wall of protection around him and his home and his property. You have made him prosper in everything he does. Look how rich he is! But reach out and take away everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face!" "All right, you may test him," the Lord said to Satan. **"Do whatever you want with everything he possesses, but don't harm him physically."** So Satan left the Lord's presence. (Job 1:6-12)*

God was well pleased with Job and His commitment to living his life according to God's commandments. Isn't it both powerful and refreshing to know that God had to give Satan permission to test Job? Satan felt like it made perfect sense in the natural for Job to love God so wholeheartedly because God had allowed him to prosper in everything. Satan was sure that if Job had lost the resources that made his life so comfortable and fulfilling, he would surely turn away from God!

As you read the story of Job in its entirety, calamity breaks out before chapter one even comes to a close. Job's character

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God's intention in the
test is to increase and
prove the *strength*
of our character and
the *fortitude*
of our faith.



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is attacked, he loses his property, his children, and then his health deteriorates! I don't know about you, but at this point, I would just about lose it. His own wife told him to curse God and die. But through all of his suffering, Job remained faithful to God. In spite of the great losses that he suffered, he acknowledged God's sovereign authority over everything he possessed. He truly loved God for who he was and not for what He was able to give.

While we are sitting in this season of waiting for children and having our angel babies taken from us, you may, like me, feel like Job in various aspects. Living in a society of instant gratification has negatively impacted our ability to trust God's timing and wait. How do you think Job felt when he lost not one, not two, but all of his children? Job had built a life with his sons and daughters. He loved each one of them from the very depths of his heart, yet God had allowed them to be taken away at the very blink of an eye. Don't you sympathize with Job because you, too, know what it feels like for the child whom you love (before you've ever laid eyes on them) to be snatched? Job asked God why (Job 10:3, 13:23-24) and I am sure that you also asked God why he chose you to suffer such an unexplainable pain. I know I did. But *knowing* God is more sufficient than knowing the *whys* of our sufferings.

There have been moments in my life when I felt like Job. I felt as if the deepest desires of my heart were taken from me with no reason why. But here is the truth that God wants us to see through our trials of repeated miscarriages and infertility - His wisdom, justice and love *greatly* overshadows our suffering. God is not the cause of your miscarriage or inability to conceive. He allowed you to experience this pain to strengthen your faith, to deepen your relationship with

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Him and to create an opportunity for you to see that He has His hand on your life in such a way that your coming victory could only be because of Him!

God is the Creator of all things. He is accountable to no one and has authority over all. He is sovereign, The King with the highest status. He rules and reigns over our lives, our desires, our suffering, our challenges and our triumphs. He is the author of our situations. God's stamp of approval is on your story because He already knows the outcome of your situation. We must not have a limited understanding and acceptance of God's wisdom. If we refuse to accept only the good and do away with the bad, we may completely reject what God is trying to do through us when things don't work out the way we desired. God is in control of all things and he permits His children to endure testing. That's right, ladies. This journey that we are walking through together is a test.

“Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides. You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors. So don't try to get out of anything prematurely. Let it do its work so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way.” (John 1:2-4 MSG)

A gift?! What about this suffering is a gift? I had to spend some time meditating on the above scripture, because wanting a baby and experiencing difficulties having one didn't exactly feel like a box I would joyfully open! The Holy Spirit led me to think about the end result. Imagine unwrapping a box to find just a few puzzle pieces. The images on each piece aren't even enough for you to have some idea

The blessings that come
without *challenges*
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of the final picture. Then there is a note at the bottom that says this:

“Every day, you will be gifted with a small puzzle piece as you travel along this journey of life. Some pieces will be for your picture and some will be for others. It may be quite a frustrating experience now because your burden has become heavy, but at the end of your journey, you will see the beautiful picture I was creating all along.” Love, God.

Each piece of the puzzle represents each moment we experience in our lives, good or bad. If we continue to trust that God is in control, we will see that He was always working all things out for our good. God’s intention in allowing us to be tested is to increase and prove the strength of our character and the fortitude of our faith. It is our response to the testing that determines the effect it will have in our lives and in our relationship with Jesus Christ. Though Satan was working against Job, it was God who allowed or authorized everything that was happening in Job’s life. God’s promise is that believers will not be tempted beyond what they can endure.

You, woman of God, can endure this. It is only a test of your faith. Will you rise up and pray or will you throw in the towel and give up? Will you allow God to use you to strengthen the faith of other women believing for children or will you, like many, convince yourself that maybe, just maybe, God doesn’t hear the cries of your heart? How will your response to this test of faith impact the outcome?

“The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow

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the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure.” (1 Corinthians 10:13)

*“No **test or temptation** that comes your way is beyond the course of what others have had to face. All you need to remember is that God will never let you down; **he’ll never let you be pushed past your limit**; he’ll always be there to help you come through it.” (1 Corinthians 10:13 MSG)*



“Hardships often prepare ordinary people for an extraordinary destiny.” (C.S. Lewis)



The blessings that come without challenges sometimes aren't appreciated as much as those that arrive after a struggle. Many things in life have come easy to me, including degrees, jobs, good grades, etcetera. I don't say this to boast or brag. I say it because this realization was a vivid revelation for me. The absence of real challenges in my life has not afforded me the opportunity to build my faith in the area of trusting God to do the impossible. I often pray and believe God to work miracles in the lives of others, but when I need a miracle, doubt kicks into gear. I have witnessed God work miracles for others. Since He is not a respecter of persons and doesn't show favoritism, then why wouldn't He manifest what I am confessing?

God is our Father; thus, He corrects, disciplines and rewards us in a similar manner as our earthly father may have

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done. As we are in this season of testing, awaiting our precious babies from heaven, I am convinced that God is conditioning our faith to trust Him on levels that we've never had to before. He wants our test to be evidence of His miracles to encourage others who will eventually walk in these same shoes. He has authorized everything that is happening, or not happening, in our lives. Where is your level of faith and what events or challenges have occurred in your life that have strengthened your faith? If your situation is currently contrary to what you prayed for, will you allow your situation to have authority over you? What will you authorize for your life or will you allow Satan to write the end of this chapter.

The Word has the final authority over your life and God's Word says,

"That is why we never give up. Though our bodies are dying, our spirits are being renewed every day. For our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever! So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever." (2 Corinthians 4:16-18)

Job didn't curse God, He endured.

The children of Israel were delivered and entered into the Promised Land - after enduring plagues.

Paul and Silas didn't give up. They praised their way through and the prison doors were opened.

Daniel wasn't intimidated by the lion. His prayers and belief in God shut the mouth of the lion.

Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego didn't die in the fire. Their belief and trust in the God they served faithfully delivered them from the fiery furnace.

The Israelites didn't stop on six. They marched around the seventh time as instructed and Jericho was delivered into their hands.

And you will be delivered from the disappointments you have experienced. The other side of this looks so much greater than the view of your current circumstance. Keep walking through the valley and climbing over the mountain. Don't stop believing God to perform the impossible, improbable and amazing miracle you are waiting on. Just as Job, Daniel and the Israelites endured the test, you, too, must endure. You must pray, praise, worship and trust your way through this situation until your Jericho is delivered unto you! The babies you desire will come. But it requires faith - the faith that is small as a mustard seed, but mighty enough to move mountains. You must endure and overcome the temporary pain and emptiness of your temporary infertility or ability to conceive, carry and birth. You have the power to say "This is not how my story is going to end." And so shall it be.

God had His hand on every test displayed throughout the Bible and these stories are a reminder of God's power from generations past and for generations to come. Your story may not be for you. Maybe it's for someone else. God uses us for His glory and often it doesn't feel good; it's uncomfortable, it's hurtful, disappointing, and maybe even unfair. Your hardship is just a requirement for the manifestation of your destiny! It is an opportunity to build a relationship with God that will be stronger because of what you have experienced.