



# A TIME FOR EVERY MATTER:

Navigating Through Life's Transitions by Denise Goosby

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## Chapter One

# A Time To Be Born, A Time To Die

“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.”

Ecclesiastes 3:1

The driveway to the Motel 6 came quick and I turned right sharply and headed to the now familiar space in the southwest corner of the lot. Slowly, almost painfully I climbed out of the driver’s seat, shut and locked the door of my dad’s silver Taurus and headed to my room. The noise of people and cars and life danced around me, but I was numb to it all. When my key buzzed green, I pushed open the door, closed it behind me, and gingerly sat in a chair.

How did I get here?

More importantly, where would I go from here? The house I had bought as a young teacher 19 years ago, was about to close escrow. In a few days, it would be someone else’s home.

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Sentimentality aside, that was a good thing. Until the money from the sell came through, I couldn't move into the new apartment I found. Motel 6 was home—at least, for a few more days. Normally, that wouldn't bother me. I had already been there a week. It was in a familiar area. I could run errands, do business, and see my dad at the assisted living center and be back by early evening for dinner.

Dad.

I had gone to see him this morning. He had looked tired and ill the night before. I didn't want to leave him. But I knew God wanted me to have an evening away from the sights and sounds of the facility where dad had spent the last three months.

When I visited him around 9:30 that morning, dad was struggling to breathe. I grabbed his hand and sat with him. Occasionally, I would look at the news on his roommate's tv for a few moments—when it hurt too much to look at him. By noon, he had transitioned to glory to hear the words, “Well done, My good and faithful servant.”

Poppa's 88 hard, heart-breaking years on earth culminated into a victorious eternity with Jesus. That makes me smile. Yet, sitting in that motel room after saying goodbye to my dad...the one person who I never doubted loved me...I couldn't help thinking what my life would be like without “my Moses.” My leader. My shepherd. I owed so much to this man who parented me and took care of me and introduced me to God my Savior. Without him, I felt incomplete. Adrift. Uncertain.

I was in transition...

## Chapter Two

# A Time To Plant, A Time To Uproot

The Merriam -Webster Dictionary.com defines transition as “a passage from one state, stage, subject, or place to another.” This change can be quick, slow, or gradual. It can be instantaneous or take years. But the effects of transitions can be long-lasting and deeply impactful.

Life is always happening. And, that means that we confront transitions big or small all the time. Changing jobs, schools, and houses are changes we’ve come to expect. Death, illness, divorce, and loss are changes we’ve come to fear. With our current pandemic, we seem to be in perpetual transition. It can get overwhelming fast.

That is why hope is so important.

The Ancient Hebrew Scriptures in the Book of Jeremiah brought comfort to the Jewish people transitioning from freedom to Babylonian captivity. God promised them that even in bondage, He would be with them. Not only that, but God had plans for them that were good and loving and designed to bring them hope. Because of God, they could expect prosperity even in their pain. God would see to it. (see Jeremiah 29:11).

He did that for me.

Hope was the word God gave me for 2018 following my dad’s death. I held on to it. Looked for it. And found it often. Whether it was in art or in writing, it was a word that I always seemed to come across. In my grief, in navigating my dad’s affairs (including the eventual selling of my childhood home), in meeting new people and learning new things, I moved forward—with hope.



### **Chapter Three**

## **A Time To Tear Down, A Time To Build**

God always gives His people what they need.

I am reminded of Moses' assistant Joshua. Joshua had to face life without the man he had served for 40 years. This man whom God used to deliver the Jewish people from slavery with signs and miracles. Now God had charged Joshua—an old man in his eighties—with leading the Hebrew people into battle for the Promised Land. Joshua would be the “new Moses.” He was terrified.

Yet, through His dealings with Joshua, God shows us how to navigate transitions. Yes, God gave Joshua hope. Change was coming. Joshua and the Jewish people had to prepare. God promised Joshua that He would be with him and that He would act on Joshua's behalf and He wouldn't play favorites.

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“As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.” (Joshua 1:5 NIV)

Even with God, at our side, moving into the unknown is scary. Three times in verses 6, 7, and 9, God implores Joshua to “be strong and courageous.” He tells Joshua to press on even though he feels afraid. God didn’t want Joshua enslaved by emotion. God doesn’t want us held captive by what scares us either. As I’ve heard Bible teacher Joyce Meyer say many times: if you have to, do it afraid.

The Book of Proverbs tells us to get all the wisdom and knowledge that we can. Joshua had been beside Moses for decades. Even with his own life and experience there was still so much that Joshua didn’t know. God directed him to read, study, think about, and do what was written in the Hebrew Scriptures:

“Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.” (Joshua 1:8)

We can’t meet the challenge of transition on our own. Although God is our ultimate Source for every good thing, God often uses the support, resources, counsel, even the opposition of others, to navigate us through seasons of change. God honored Joshua before the Hebrews—who, in turn, promised him their loyalty and obedience.

“Whatever you have commanded us, we will do, and wherever you send us we will go.” (Joshua 1:16)

The Jewish people’s view of Joshua also underwent transition. No longer was Joshua Moses’ assistant. No longer was he the submissive partner charged with serving the needs of his leader.

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Joshua was the leader now—with all the responsibilities, rewards, expectations, and challenges that position carries. It was during this time that Joshua instructed his compatriots to take an inventory of their resources and to survey the new land they were entering. It is here where God's people partnered with God and prepared themselves for the changes that a shift in their circumstances would bring them.



## Chapter Four

# A Time To Be Tear, A Time To

Not everyone will honor or understand our transitions.

The enemies who occupied the territory the Hebrews were preparing to enter certainly didn't. They wanted the Jewish people to remain west of Canaan. In fact, two and half Hebrew tribes decided to do just that.

Those closest to you may not want to journey with you into the unknown. But Joshua and the other tribes knew God's blessing would only be found in Canaan. In transition, triumph comes when we follow God's leading by faith.

That may mean letting go of what we think triumph should look like.

For Joshua and the Jewish people triumph probably looked like quickly engaging the enemy in battle. A swift victory. An easy victory. God had other plans. His way involved having Joshua and his followers cross the Jordan at flood stage. His way involved memorializing that crossing with stones of remembrance. His way was for the Hebrews to wait, separate themselves from those around them, and stay close to God. In a time of uncertainty, His way was for the Joshua and those he led to walk by faith. To move when He moved. And to trust Him.

“When you see the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD your God, and the Levitical priests carrying it, you are to move out from your positions and follow it. Then you will know which way to go, since you have not been this way before. But don't move too fast...”

Psalm 75:6-7 tells us that promotion—a transition from one place to another—comes from God.

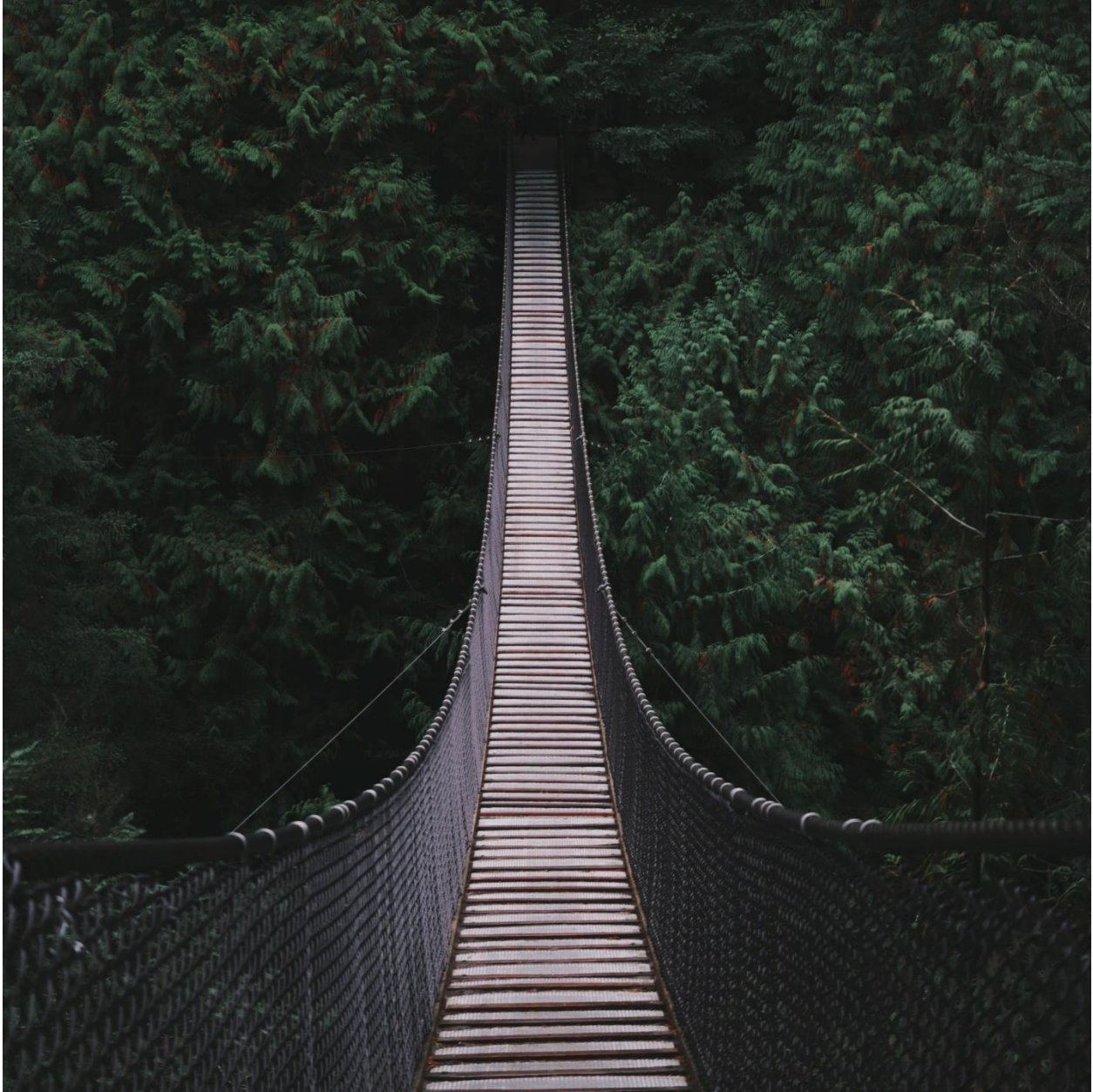
It is His work to use that change (a move, a new job, even death itself) as a bridge to get us to the

place He has prepared for us to be. Like Joshua, God used the death of my dad to propel me into places I had never been and to people I had never met, so I could do the things He had already planned for me to do (see Ephesians 2:10).

Let me show you how God can work...

A few days after I moved into my new apartment building, I attended a Christmas party for the residents. It was one of those “ugly Christmas sweater” events. Not my thing. I was tired from all the unpacking. I was nervous and fighting a cold. I hadn’t even buried my dad yet. But I knew in my spirit that God wanted me to go. So, I went. There I met Marcela. We had attended the same group years ago. Yet, there she was walking up to me with a big smile and a willingness to talk. I learned that her dad had passed away the year before. Generously, she gave me advice and connected me with a lawyer who helped to get my dad’s affairs in order.

Three months later, a former neighbor invited me to a Bible study that her friend was hosting. Another former neighbor wanted to attend and offered to drive me. I looked forward to enjoying a night out with people I knew. Normally, I wouldn’t go to a gathering in a church I was unfamiliar with. But God meets us when we move towards the unfamiliar in faith.



## **Chapter Five**

# **A Time To Be Silent, A Time To Speak**

That one night of Bible study turned into an eight-week “journey of purpose” filled with speakers, worship, teaching, fasting, and self-reflection. It was during this time that God started

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calling me to use my gifts, talents, and treasure to form a nonprofit called Healing Song Ministries (now Ministry).

Healing Song Ministry is a music therapy ministry that brings comfort and encouragement to seniors, veterans, and the hurting in South Los Angeles County. In the past two years, we have ministered in convalescent homes, to victims of street racing, to former soldiers, and to the community during the Christmas season.

Most of my adult life has been spent as an educator. But at 53, God brought me into the nonprofit realm. He opened the door for me to go back to college. This past May, I graduated from Biola University with a master's degree in nonprofit management. Now I had the training I needed to build my nonprofit or work for a nonprofit or teach about a nonprofit. I just had to wait like Joshua and follow where God would lead me "since I hadn't been this way before."

God has led me back to the future by calling me to write.

As a young woman, I studied journalism and wrote for a community newspaper. I wrote articles for The Mount and Radiance magazines. In church, I wrote a play and devotions for the singles ministry. My dream back then was to be city editor of the Los Angeles Times. I wanted to be Nancy Drew with a pen and help others through the words that I wrote.

That dream lived deep within me despite life and loss and pivots and...transitions.

In August I launched a blog and business as ministry company called Denise's Healing Journey. It contains articles, devotions, poetry, songs, and videos. Soon I will have books, worship music and other areas of ministry to offer.

In midlife, I am using my words in service to God and others because the gifts He gives will not be revoked. (see Romans 11:29). I am learning that everything can be a gift—even pain if it drives us to our destiny. Now I know I am called to be God’s messenger in word, song, and deed. I’m guessing that I won’t be city editor of the Los Angeles Times. I suspect God has bigger plans for me. He has big plans for you too.

Don’t be afraid of transition. You might feel afraid-- but don’t let that stop you. Have the courage of Joshua. Have hope. Know that God is with you. Know that He will send the people and resources you need to move forward. Prepare yourself, but stay open to the unexpected. Most importantly, put God first. Listen to Him by sitting still, praying, and reading the Bible. Then, when He says go, you go. Trembling, with tears, or with supernatural boldness Your time is now.

Don’t waste a moment of it.

## Study Questions

# A Place To Study And Meditate

Pick one of these Bible figures to read about and to study how they handled transitions.

- Adam
- Joseph
- Esther
- Noah
- Moses
- Jesus
- Abraham
- Ruth

1. How is your life in transition right now?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What has been your biggest concern?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What has been your biggest blessing?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What Bible figure speaks to you about your own transition? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What have you learned about transitions from their experience?  
What have you learned about transitions from your own experience?

## Scriptures On Transactions

# Verses To Guide Us As We Transition

These verses have strengthened and comforted me through my own times of change.

I pray they will do the same for you.

- Genesis 2:24 “That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.”
- Genesis 12:1 “The LORD has said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.”
- Genesis 41:52 “...For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.”
- Psalm 23:1 “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.”
- Psalm 25:1-4 NIV “To You, O LORD, I lift up my soul. In You I trust, O my God. Do not let me be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me. Those who hope in You will never be put to shame. But they will be put to shame who are treacherous without excuse. Show me Your ways, O LORD. Teach me Your paths. Guide me in Your truth and teach me. For You are God my Savior, and my hope is in You all day long.”
- Psalm 138:8a NIV “The LORD will fulfill His purpose for me.”
- Jeremiah 29:11 “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”
- Jeremiah 32:27 “I am the LORD, the God of all mankind. Is anything too hard for me?”
- Isaiah 43:2 “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.”

**Personal Scriptures**

**Verses That Have Encouraged You**

What Scriptures are close to your heart?

What verses give you strength?

Write down a few of them (and, if you like, a few from above) and pray through them for yourself. Prayer avails much!



**Prayer Journal Page**

**A Place To Share Your Heart**

Use this space to write out your own prayer(s) about what you have been experiencing through your life transitions. Even in your pain, confusion—or joy—pour out your heart. Thank God for His promise never to leave nor forsake you.

## **Author's Biography**

Denise Ann Goosby has written for the Paramount News Tribune Newspaper, Radiance Magazine, and The Mount Magazine for Mount St. Mary's College (now university) in Los Angeles. She has also written devotions for Calvary Chapel South Bay's former singles ministry All 4 Christ.

Miss Goosby also served as an educator of adults and children for the Los Angeles Unified School District and for Pines Christian School for more than 20 years. She founded a nonprofit music therapy ministry—Healing Song Ministries (now ministry)—in 2018.

Currently, she writes a blog and manages a 'business as ministry' called Denise's Healing Journey. She is scheduled to be a featured writer in the "She Writes for Him" compilation book by Redemption Press.

Miss Goosby has a master's in print journalism from the University of Southern California and another master's degree in nonprofit management from Biola University. She is single and living in Southern California.

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By Denise Goosby

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