

625 Words

A Life of Purpose

by

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I despise being trampled, crushed, and ignored. I'm trapped with no control over my destiny. The frustration compounds as I ponder the contributions I've made and the places I've been. I'm certain I was no accident. I was created with purpose, but have I completed my assignment? Am I to sit while the dust of time covers me, or is there more to do?

I began life in a desert. The backdrop for my childhood was an endless parade of hot days linked by cold nights. Long hours of nothing consumed the calendar. I wanted to travel and see the world, and my opportunity came when neighbors moved next door.

Theirs was a large family, wandering the desert, and treading on everything as though they owned it all. The leader was familiar, a grizzled explorer who camped beside me years ago. He walked barefoot in the sand and talked to bushes on his last visit. Now his daily fare was an unending banquet of complaining and grouching served to him by his followers.

"We're hungry."

"We're thirsty."

"Let's go home."

The leader's quiet reflection was interrupted by the kvetching crowd demanding water. He trembled with anger as he took his staff and delivered a resounding whack. My home split in two and water gushed out, enough to satisfy the thirsty multitude. The flood swept me across the sand and a child hid me in the pocket of his robe. When the family broke camp a few days later, I was on my first journey.

The child grew, became a man, and then an old man. He walked with difficulty, but I remained his prized possession. The tears dripped down his cheeks as he held me and prayed. My presence reminded him of that day in the desert when water gushed from a stone, and the memory seemed to enliven him. When the old man died, his belongings were distributed. One man's treasure is another man's trash. I was tossed into the stream beside the garden.

I jostled for position as the rains fell season after season. A lad dressed as a shepherd stood in the stream. He pulled me from the water and dropped me into his leather bag. Soon I heard the sounds of battle, and the shepherd's hand closed around me. From his leather sling, I flew high into the air. A huge man stood before me, and I sank into the soft spot between his eyes. The giant tumbled to the ground. The shepherd drew the warrior's sword and severed the head. I fell to the side, forgotten.

I heard a disturbance one morning. A rowdy crowd approached the village square shoving a man before them.

"Stone him."

"Stone him."

The villagers picked up stones and the hand of a boy wrapped around me. It was a gory scene as the victim was hit repeatedly. As the swarm of stones slowed, the boy took his turn and pitched. His aim was off and I landed in the dust. I was thankful I had not added to the victim's

suffering. As the mangled man died, I heard his last words. They echo across the years.

"Forgive them!"

I've pictured his face for centuries, trying to forget him but I cannot. Who was the man and why was he killed? Were his actions or his words so disruptive to those around him? I'm only a stone, but the Creator has used me for His purposes. My history is flush with choice assignments. Was this man's death part of the higher purpose for his life? Can death hold significance?

While I ponder the mysteries and yearn for answers, I wait. It is all I can do.

THE END