

Hope from Genesis: My Story of Miscarriage and Infertility



by AMANDA FORBES

I met Kate at a party. While we talked, she told me her miscarriage story. She and her husband already had a vivacious toddler when they found out they were expecting again, but early in the pregnancy, they lost the baby. It was many months since their loss, but as she shared her story with me that day, what struck me was her comment that Psalm 139 brought her through it. “Ah, yes,” I thought. “I can see that. It is such a beautiful passage about God weaving us together in our mothers’ wombs and fearfully, wonderfully making us. That is deeply comforting.” But Kate’s comment also caught me off guard as I wondered to myself: “What carried me through my miscarriage?” Honestly, I didn’t have an answer. Although I was a longtime follower of Jesus and sought to lean into him closely during the lingering months of grief after the miscarriage, I was still struggling. A lot, in fact. As I talked to Kate, it seemed that she found a sense of closure. For me, though, closure had not come.

As I sat across the table from Kate, I felt both comforted and unsettled. Comforted because I felt less alone in the experience of loss, but unsettled because my own story didn’t feel like it reached the same culmination as Kate’s. Several months after the miscarriage, grief was still my close companion, quick to pounce upon me in vulnerable and

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unexpected moments. The sense of loss was compounded as month after month passed and we were unable to conceive again. Friends around me continued to announce their pregnancies and welcome their newborns into the world. But I felt stuck.

Any woman who experiences a miscarriage will quickly learn that the readiest “comfort” offered by others is to try again soon for another child. So less than forty-eight hours after my miscarriage, I sat in my obstetrician’s office already thinking about the next pregnancy. But just a week or two later, I was back for a follow-up appointment requesting a referral to a counselor. I was crushed by the reality of what happened to my baby and my heart was raw with grief.

As my journey through miscarriage unfolded, I’ve discovered that not many people talk about the liminal space—that point in time after the most acute grief passes, but when healing feels elusive. Many articles come from the perspective of years passed and subsequent children born. What I haven’t found much of, though, is how to navigate the months following the loss of a baby, especially if there is no new pregnancy. The grief of miscarriage has no quick fix. It is a journey with the Lord that sometimes allows us to experience deep comfort, but at other times reveals more questions than answers, more sorrow than closure. What sustained me during my months of lingering grief were the stories from the book of Genesis, where people wrestled with similar sorrows and questions—and found God faithful through them all. I share my story in the hope that something in it might speak to others who have walked a similar journey, though I am acutely aware that we all walk through grief, loss, and longing in different ways.

Discovering God’s Comfort in Genesis

Long before our baby was conceived, my women’s Bible study group had committed to a nine-month study in the book of Genesis. It would become my faithful companion in both my early days of pregnancy and after the loss. Although I wouldn’t realize it immediately, it contained the poignant, personal truths my heart yearned for—just like Kate found in Psalm 139. It wouldn’t take away all my grief, but it would serve as a chisel to touch every edge of my raw pain as God carved out something new in me. In what follows, I will walk through some well-known stories

from Genesis. These stories—and these people!—are complex, and my purpose is not to avoid the theological riches or sidestep anyone’s shortcomings; rather, my aim is to share the aspects of these stories that God used to minister to me in the grief-stricken months after my miscarriage.

Genesis opens with those timeless, awe-inspiring words, “In the beginning, God created.” These coincided so beautifully with the wonder of a new life growing inside my womb. The repeated refrain—“And God saw that it was good”—reminded me that when God creates, it is *always* with good intent. I knew that the life inside me was part of his marvelous creation, made with a good purpose. This was a bedrock truth I held on to during the early weeks of pregnancy as I

began to experience miscarriage symptoms that led me to the emergency room. In the weeks that followed, there were multiple times when it seemed we would lose the baby, but each time our little one rallied

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and defied the doctors’ expectations. By the time of our ultrasound at eight weeks, our baby was growing beautifully and we heard a robust heartbeat on the ultrasound. I remember hugging my husband in the doctor’s office, sharing a moment of wonder after seeing our baby and receiving good news about the baby’s growth. All seemed well, and it finally felt like I could let my guard down and begin to really anticipate the birth of this child. But the following Thursday, I started experiencing miscarriage symptoms again, and two days later, we lost our baby.

As I was going through the most acute moments of the miscarriage, I kept my Genesis study nearby. We were studying Noah and the flood that week. And in the immediate aftermath of our loss, God used the imagery of the flood to remind me that he is merciful even in devastation and loss. I saw that mercy through his willingness to inflict temporary suffering upon human history in order to fulfill a much greater act of redemption in the future. This excruciating truth held me together in an unexpected way in those early days. Although I couldn’t understand why our growing baby was suddenly gone, this story helped me to lean into the truth that sometimes God allows “severe mercies.”¹ Our study earlier

1. I draw this term from a classic book titled *A Severe Mercy* by Sheldon Vanauken.

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