



WEEKLY BOOK #1

When I Can't See the Road

*Stories and words to hold on to hope in the
middle of uncertainty*

Written by José Martínez · Powered by AI



*For the one who doesn't know today what
tomorrow holds,
and still gets up.*

“When I Can’t See the Road”

Weekly Book #1 of the “When I Can’t See the Road” series

Stories and words to hold on to hope in the middle of uncertainty.

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Prologue

For a long time, I asked God the same question over and over: how can I bring real value to people's lives?

Plenty of answers came to mind. Study theology. Become a pastor. Become a counselor. None of them quite fit, and the road never showed up. But one thing stayed clear, something that never shifted: I had to find a way to reach more people and bring them God's word.

Jehovah. Yahweh. The Eternal. The Creator. There are many names and many traditions. But there's one thing they all share: God.

And I believe He blessed us with the gift of living in this time, and with something even greater: the people who walk beside us. Flesh-and-blood angels who often don't even know they are one. The ones who show up when life closes in. The ones who help us get through what we could never get through alone.

Today I can finally see the road, and it's this: to hand you small books, with real stories where you might recognize yourself. Or recognize someone you love who's having a hard

time right now.

I'm not asking for much. Just that you read it. That you share it. Or that, if someone comes to mind while you're reading, you pass it along to them.

This is the blessing God allowed me to share with you. I hope it finds you well.

With all my appreciation,



José Martínez

A Letter to the Reader

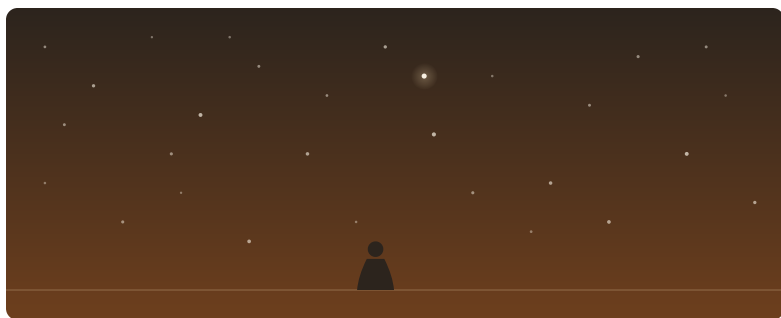
If you asked me, “What if I never find the road?” I wouldn’t tell you, “Don’t worry, everything’s going to be fine.” I’d take your hand and tell you the truth: sometimes you can’t see the road. Sometimes we walk at night, with no map, with no idea what’s around the next bend.

This book isn’t here to explain why hard things happen. It’s smaller than that, and bigger than that. It’s here to remind you — and to remind me too — that you don’t need to see the whole road to take the next step. You just need a hand to hold yours, and a light, even a small one, enough to see where to put your foot down now.

In these pages I’m going to tell you about real people: miners trapped underground, a woman hidden in a tiny room, a man who spent twenty-seven years waiting, another who lost almost everything and still found a reason to live. And I’m going to share very old words, written by people who also walked in the dark and chose to trust anyway.

I can’t promise the road will get easy. I can promise you won’t walk it alone.

Come on, take my hand. Let’s begin.



CHAPTER 1

The Stars of Abraham

There are nights when the biggest fear isn't what already happened, but what we still don't know. It's that feeling in your chest of standing in front of a closed door, with no idea what's on the other side. If you've ever felt that — the knot in your stomach, the wish that someone would just tell you “this is what's going to happen” — I want you to know you're not the only one, and this story starts right there.

A long, long time ago, there was a man named Abram. He was old — old enough that certain things had stopped feeling possible — and he had no children. For him, that ache was a kind of emptiness he carried every single day. One night, God brought him out of his tent and told him something strange: not a blueprint, not an explanation of the next twenty years of his life. He said: “Look up at the sky and

count the stars—if indeed you can count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be” (Genesis 15:5, NIV). And Abram, standing there under the night sky, with no proof and no map, decided to believe.

Do you see it? God didn’t give him an itinerary. He gave him an image. A sky full of tiny lights that can’t even be counted. And with that image alone, with none of the details, Abram started walking.

Centuries later, in 1972, a plane carrying a rugby team crashed in the Andes mountains, among snow and towering peaks. The survivors were trapped for seventy-two days, with no idea whether anyone was even looking for them, no idea if they’d make it out alive. Two of them, Nando Parrado and Roberto Canessa, made an enormous decision: to walk. With no map, with no idea what waited on the other side of the mountain, they started climbing, one step, then another, then another, for days, until they finally found someone who could help.

Abram never saw the end of his story that night under the stars. Nando and Roberto never saw, when they started climbing, the exact moment they’d find help. Both took the step before they had any certainty. That’s very different from having no fear. It’s having fear and walking anyway, because something — an image, a promise, an unseen hand — holds you up from the inside.

Sometimes I wish I had a complete map of life. To be able to say, “this will happen in ten years, this in twenty, and it will all work out.” But life doesn’t work that way, not for you and not for me. What I can offer you is this: when you can’t see

the whole road, look up. You don't need to count every star. You just need to believe they're there, even on a night when the sky is covered in clouds.

And there's something else I want you to know, something we'll come back to again and again in this book because it's the heart of everything: it was never about the valley disappearing from the map. It's about not walking through it alone. "Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me" (Psalm 23:4, NIV). The valley is still there. But there's company inside it.

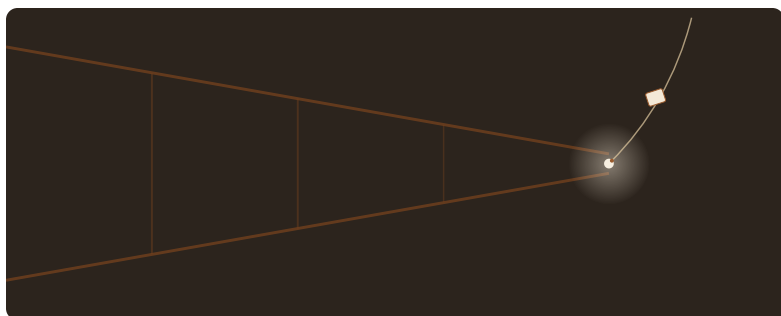
THE WORD

Genesis 15:5 (NIV)

Psalm 23:4 (NIV)

TO REFLECT ON

- Is there something in your life right now where you can't see "the whole map"?
 - If today you only had to take one step, not a hundred, what would that step be?
-



CHAPTER 2

The 33

Do you know one of the scariest parts of when something bad happens? It's not just the danger. It's thinking no one knows where you are. It's shouting and not knowing if anyone can hear you. That loneliness sometimes weighs more than the problem itself. If you've ever felt that way — lost, silent, waiting for some sign that someone is coming for you — stay with me, because this story is exactly about that.

In 2010, at a place called San José, in Chile, thirty-three men went down to work in a mine, deep in the earth, nearly seven hundred meters below the surface. And the mine collapsed. They were trapped down there, in the dark, not knowing — for seventeen days — whether anyone on the surface even knew they were still alive. Seventeen days. Imagine that:

rationing the little food they had, splitting a small can of tuna between all of them every couple of days, with no certainty that anyone was digging to find them.

Then, one day, a drill searching blindly reached them. And the miners, from down below, tied a note to the tip of that drill and sent it back up to the surface. The note said something very simple: “We are well in the shelter, the 33 of us.” They stayed trapped sixty-nine days in total, but from that moment on, they weren’t alone anymore. Someone knew they existed. Someone was searching for them. And in the end, all thirty-three came out alive.

Notice that the mine didn’t disappear. The collapse was still there. The darkness was still there. What changed wasn’t the problem — it was knowing they weren’t alone inside it. That’s exactly what I want you to understand today, because it matters so much that I already said it in the last chapter, and I’ll say it again more than once in this book: the promise was never that the dark valley would vanish from the road. The promise is the company inside the valley.

There’s an ancient verse that says, “So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you” (Isaiah 41:10, NIV). Notice it doesn’t say “nothing bad will happen to you.” It says “I am with you.” That’s different, and it’s more true. Because sometimes hard things really do happen — they happened to the miners, the mine really did collapse on top of them — but what holds you up isn’t the absence of the collapse. It’s the hand that shows up inside it.

When you feel trapped in something — a fear, a sadness, a problem you don't know how to solve — I want you to remember that note that traveled up from seven hundred meters underground: “We are well, and we are still here.” You can write that note too. You can say it to someone. You can say it to yourself. And you can trust that there is Someone, greater than the darkness, who already knows exactly where you are.

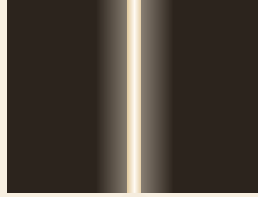
THE WORD

Psalms 23:4 (NIV)

Isaiah 41:10 (NIV)

TO REFLECT ON

- When something scares you, what helps you most to feel like you're not alone?
 - Who could you send your own “note from the shelter” to today?
-



CHAPTER 3

The Small Room

Sometimes we search for God and can't find Him. It isn't that we stop believing — it's that we look everywhere and find only silence. And that hurts in a different way than other kinds of pain, because we feel abandoned exactly when we need company the most. If you've ever prayed and felt like no one answered, I want you to know that happened to very strong people too, and it doesn't mean you did anything wrong.

Let me tell you the story of a woman named Immaculée. She lived in a country called Rwanda, in Africa, and in 1994 a terrible violence broke out there between people of the same country. Immaculée had to hide, along with seven other women, in a tiny bathroom — about the size of a small rug, imagine a space where they could barely stand — for ninety-

one days. Ninety-one days without being able to speak above a whisper, almost without moving, while outside, members of her own family were being killed.

She herself said, years later, that in that tiny room she prayed constantly, and that many times she felt nothing, heard no answer, had no sign at all that God was there. And yet she kept praying. She kept holding on to that habit, to those words, even when silence was the only thing she got back. In time, she survived, and years later she made a difficult decision: to forgive.

There's a man in a very old book, named Job, who felt exactly the same way. He said: "But if I go to the east, he is not there; if I go to the west, I do not find him. When he is at work in the north, I do not see him; when he turns to the south, I catch no glimpse of him" (Job 23:8-9, NIV). Job searched for God everywhere and couldn't find Him. But then he said something I want you to hold on to: "But he knows the way that I take" (Job 23:10, NIV). He didn't say, "Now I've found Him." He said: "even though I don't see Him, I trust that He knows exactly where I am."

Do you see the difference? It's not pretending you can see something when you see nothing at all. It's like a child walking through the house at night, holding their father's hand: they can't see him, but they can feel his hand, and that's enough. You don't need to see. You just need to not let go.

BEFORE WE GO ON

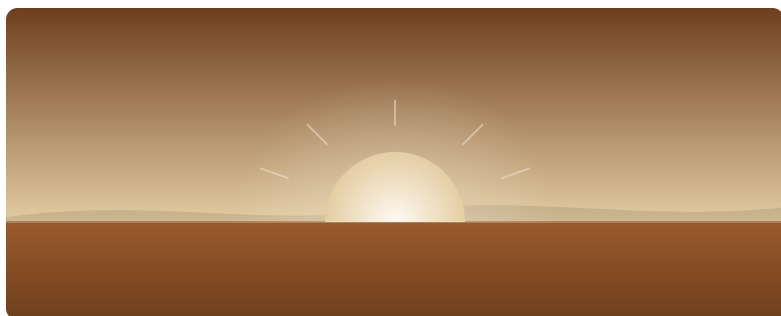
I want to tell you something important, and I want you to really hear it: if you ever feel a pain so heavy it's more than you can carry on your own, seeking help from a therapist, or from someone trained to walk alongside that kind of pain, is not a lack of faith. It's an act of self-love, just as valid as praying or asking advice from someone you trust. There is nothing to be ashamed of in asking for help.

THE WORD

Job 23:8-10 (NIV)

TO REFLECT ON

- Have you ever felt like you searched and found no answer? What did you do with that waiting?
 - Who could you ask for help today, if the weight feels like too much to carry?
-



CHAPTER 4

Every Morning

There's a kind of waiting that's different from all the rest: the kind with no end date. It's not waiting for the weekend, or waiting for a birthday. It's waiting for something without knowing when it will come, or even if it will come at all. And that kind of waiting wears you down in a deep way, because every day that passes you ask yourself, "Is this going to last forever?" If you've ever felt that exhaustion of waiting with no end in sight, this story is for you.

There was a man named Nelson Mandela who spent twenty-seven years of his life in prison. Twenty-seven years. Think about everything that can happen in twenty-seven years: a person is born, grows up, learns to walk, goes to school, becomes an adult. He spent all that time locked away, with no idea if he'd ever get out. And yet, years later, when he was

finally freed in 1990, he summed up those years in an idea that has lasted ever since: that hope never went out, and that hope was what carried him through. He didn't say he knew the exact date of his freedom. He said hope carried him while he waited with no date at all.

How does hope hold on for that long without going out? I think it's like the sun. The sun doesn't rise just once. It rises every single day, even after the night before was long and dark. There's a very old piece of writing, from a time when an entire people had lost their city and were mourning everything that was gone, that says: "Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning" (Lamentations 3:22-23, NIV). Notice something: this wasn't written on a happy day. It was written in the middle of grief, in the middle of weeping over everything that had been lost. And even so, in the middle of that pain, someone dared to say: morning is going to come again.

That's the kind of hope I want to talk to you about: not the kind that pretends nothing bad is happening, but the kind that renews itself every morning, right inside the real pain. You don't have to stop crying to have hope. You can cry and, at the same time, expect the morning to come again.

There's another old line I love, and I want to give it to you today: "Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see" (Hebrews 11:1, NIV). Notice it doesn't say "faith is seeing the future." It says faith is holding on to something you can't see yet, like someone holding a seed in their hand without yet seeing the tree it will

become. Mandela never saw, for twenty-seven years, the exact day of his freedom. But he held that seed every single day, and he never let it go.

When something is taking a long time in your life — an answer, a solution, a dream — remember this: you don't need to see the ending to hold on to hope every morning. You just need to wake up, one more day, and choose to hold on to it again.

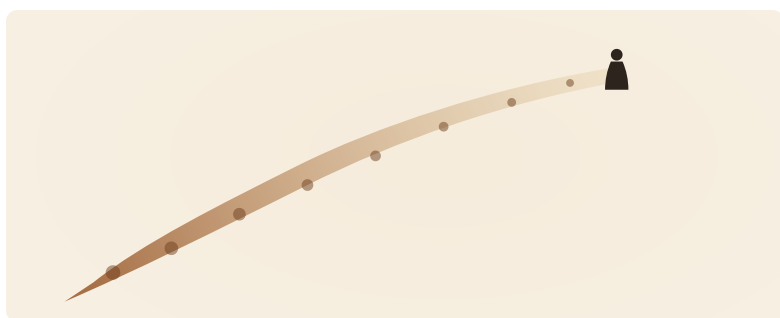
THE WORD

Lamentations 3:22-23 (NIV)

Hebrews 11:1 (NIV)

TO REFLECT ON

- Is there something you've been waiting on for a long time, with no idea when it will arrive?
 - What would it mean for you to “renew your hope” tomorrow morning, even if today was a hard day?
-



CHAPTER 5

The Man Who Searched for Meaning

There's a question that sometimes gets stuck in our chest, and it's the hardest one of all: "why did this happen to me?" Not the question of "what am I going to do now," but the deeper one, the one searching for meaning. If you've ever felt like your pain didn't just hurt but also seemed to have no purpose at all, let me tell you about two men who asked themselves that same question, each in his own way.

The first was named Viktor Frankl. He was a doctor, and he lived through one of the darkest periods humanity has ever known: he lost his wife, his parents, and his brother during the Holocaust, that terrible time when millions of people were persecuted and killed simply for being who they were. Frankl survived, and years later he wrote a book called *Man's*

Search for Meaning. In it, he described something he witnessed with his own eyes, in the hardest places that ever existed: the people who managed to connect with some kind of purpose — no matter how small, like the memory of someone they loved, or the hope of seeing something beautiful again — held up better through the hardest days.

Notice that Frankl never said finding meaning made the pain disappear. The pain stayed real, just as real as ever. But meaning gave people something to hold on to while the pain swept over them, like someone gripping a log while a river's current rushes past.

Now let me tell you about another man, one much older, named Joseph. When he was young, his own brothers betrayed him: they sold him into slavery, and he ended up far from home, with no idea if he'd ever see his family again. Many, many years passed. And one day, after all that time, Joseph met those same brothers again, and instead of taking revenge, he told them something that can only be said looking back, after walking the whole road: "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives" (Genesis 50:20, NIV).

I want you to notice something important, because it's easy to get this wrong: Joseph didn't say these words the day he was sold. He didn't say them to anyone who was suffering in that moment. He said them many years later, looking back, once he could finally see the whole road he'd walked. Never tell someone who is suffering right now that "everything bad is actually good." That's not something to say in the middle

of someone's pain — only sometimes, with time, and only each person can say it to themselves, looking back at their own story. No one has the right to say it to someone else while that person is still carrying their night.

What we can say is this: just as Frankl found meaning in the middle of the worst of it, and Joseph only understood his story after walking it all the way through, you don't need to understand today everything you're living right now either. Sometimes meaning shows up as you walk forward, and sometimes it only shows up looking back, much later. Both are okay.

AND HERE I WANT TO SAY AGAIN

What I told you before: if the pain in your story weighs more than you can carry alone, talking to a therapist or a professional trained to walk alongside that pain is not weakness, and it's not a lack of faith. It's wisdom, and it's caring for yourself the way you would care for someone you love.

THE WORD

Genesis 50:20 (NIV)

TO REFLECT ON

- Is there something in your past that you understand differently today than you did in the moment it happened?
 - What small purpose — a person, a dream, a task — helps you hold on through your hardest days?
-



Four Things I Want to Teach You

Come, sit with me for a moment. Before you keep walking through life on your own, I want to leave you four small things, like four stones you can carry in your pocket.

1

First: name it before you move forward. When you feel fear, sadness, or that strange tightness in your chest, don't push it back down. Give it a name, even if it's only for yourself: "I'm afraid," "I'm sad," "this hurts." Naming what you feel makes it smaller and easier to carry, like when you turn on the light in your room and that "something" that scared you in the dark turns out to be just your coat hanging on the chair.

- 2 Second: today's step, not the whole staircase.** You don't need to see every step to climb the first one. Remember learning to climb the stairs at home? You didn't look all the way up to the last step — you looked at the one right under your foot. Life works the same way. One step. Then another.
- 3 Third: honest gratitude.** This doesn't mean pretending everything is fine when it isn't. It means that, even while it's pouring rain outside, you can switch on a small light inside your own lantern and say, "this I do have today, this is good." The storm doesn't vanish because you turned on the light. But with the light on, you walk through it better.
- 4 Fourth: walking without the whole map.** Think of a child walking hand in hand with their father through a place they've never seen before: they don't know the road, they don't know what's around the next corner. But they aren't afraid, because they're holding on to that hand. That's what I want you to learn: you don't need to know the whole road. You need a hand, and the decision to not let go.

Keep these four stones close. You'll need them more than once.

A Closing Word

I want to close this book with a blessing, something like the one a child receives when they're tucked in and a hand rests gently on their head before the light goes out.

May the Creator, the Eternal, the One so many different voices have called by so many names across the centuries, hold you through the nights when you can't see the road. May He give you an image, even when there's no complete map. May He place someone by your side in the valley, even when the valley doesn't disappear. May He renew your hope every morning, even after a long night before. May He give you meaning to hold on to, even when you don't understand today everything you're living through.

And above all, may you never forget this: it doesn't matter what you call God, or what tradition you grew up seeking Him in — whether you were taught to call Him Father, Lord, the Eternal, or the God of your ancestors — what matters is that you do not walk alone. You have never walked alone.

I don't know everything that's going to happen in your life either. But I know this: for as long as I can, I'll hold your hand. And when I no longer can, there is Someone greater who never lets go.

Before You Close the Book

This week we walked together through five stories: stars Abraham couldn't count, a note that traveled up from seven hundred meters underground, a room as small as a rug, twenty-seven years of waiting, and a meaning that could only be understood looking back.

None of these stories promises that the road will get easy. All of them promise the same thing: that you don't walk it alone.

A question for this week: *What is today's step — not the whole road, just today's step — that you can take, even if you still can't see where it leads?*

Carry this question with you over the next few days. Write it somewhere you'll see it. Come back to it when fear shows up.

Next week, in Book #2, we're going to talk about something that's sometimes harder than walking in the dark: hearing the quiet voice that speaks to us in the middle of the noise. See you then.

With love,
José.

Bibliography and Sources

Nothing you read here is made up. Every ancient word and every story has its own source, and here it is, in case something moved you and you want to go find it.

The Scriptures

All quotations come from the **New International Version (NIV)**, © Biblica, Inc. They are quoted verbatim, and each one was checked individually against the official text.

- **Genesis 15:5** — the promise of the stars to Abram
- **Genesis 50:20** — Joseph's words to his brothers
- **Psalms 23:4** — the valley and the company within it
- **Job 23:8-10** — searching for God and not finding Him
- **Isaiah 41:10** — "I am with you"
- **Lamentations 3:22-23** — the mercies renewed every morning
- **Hebrews 11:1** — the assurance of what is not seen

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An Honest Note

Immaculée Ilibagiza's account is her own personal testimony, and that's how we share it here: as her testimony. None of these stories is presented here as proof of anything. They are real people who lived through uncertainty. Each reader is free to read them through the lens of their own faith.

END OF WEEKLY BOOK #1



*“A new book every week, for the days
you can’t see the road.”*

This is the first of many. Every week, a true story and an ancient word to help you hold on to hope. If something here moved you, don’t keep it to yourself — share it with someone who needs it today.

This book is a gift, and it’s yours. Download it, share it, give it to whoever needs it today: it’s free, and it always will be.

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