

Seeing The Pillar of Cloud And Pillar of Fire in The Wilderness

Sister Catherine Zhou 周姐妹 /2025-06



Last month at the beginning of the month, there was a sudden change at work. My boss transferred me from my original supervisor to work under another female supervisor. This supervisor is notoriously “difficult” in the company—bad-tempered, domineering, and extremely demanding of her subordinates. The moment I received the news, I felt very uneasy, because I knew tough days were ahead.

But once something happens, you just have to face it. I had no choice but to pray and ask God for wisdom to know how to get along with this new supervisor.

Sure enough, she started giving me a hard time in the first week: she didn’t give me any basic introduction to the project, wouldn’t let me attend meetings, and wouldn’t allow me to do on-site visits. She simply dumped a shared drive and a project email inbox on me—containing seven years’ worth of emails and files—and told me to “figure it out myself.” She also told me to do a payment claim but gave no reference documents at all. I was completely lost, like groping in total darkness. Even though I tried hard to adapt, she was still dissatisfied with much of my work. I lived in constant fear every day, not knowing if she would lash out at me the next moment.

One day, near the end of a finance meeting, my boss casually asked, “How’s it going working with your new supervisor? Been to any meetings yet?” I truthfully replied, no. It was a simple question, but my supervisor suddenly lost control. She repeated four or five times in front of everyone: “She is not ready yet! She is NOT READY YET!! She doesn’t know anything—how can she attend meetings?” She even turned to me and shouted, “Didn’t I already tell you? You’re not ready yet!” Then rolled her eyes at me.

My boss sensed she was out of line and quickly changed the subject. Later, I heard that after the meeting, the boss scolded her severely. Not long after, she called me in for a talk and loudly questioned whether I had complained behind her back, speaking in a very hostile tone. I didn’t know how to respond at all.

At this most difficult time, my small group was studying Exodus chapters 13 and 14: God led the Israelites out of Egypt, but Pharaoh regretted letting them go and sent his army to pursue them. The people, in despair, complained to Moses and said they would rather go back and be slaves. But Moses said to them, *“Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today.”*

When I read this, I had a question in my heart: since they could see the pillar of cloud and fire, why didn’t they believe in God? Suddenly, the Holy Spirit illuminated me: wasn’t I just like those Israelites? When faced with pressure and suffering, I also questioned God: “Are You really with me? I don’t see Your protection.” I was reminded that I needed to learn to trust God—even in moments that seemed the loneliest and darkest.

One day, my supervisor suddenly asked me to accompany her to a meeting, a forty-minute drive away. I was terrified that she might scold me again in the car. Before getting in, I silently prayed in the passenger seat, asking God to be with me and give me peace and wisdom.

Right after I prayed, an English worship song happened to be playing in the car. When the lyrics came to:

**“Still You hear me when I’m calling,
Lord, You catch me when I’m falling,
And You’ve told me who I am... I am Yours.”**

tears immediately fell from my eyes. I had heard this song before, but at that moment, it became a message from God directly to me. I knew that God had heard my weak prayer, and His presence had not left me. That day, the meeting surprisingly went smoothly, and my supervisor barely said anything along the way.

Later, I noticed she had a Bible in her car and realized she was a Christian. I was momentarily confused—how could a Christian lack love and compassion even more than non-believers? But it reminded me of the book of Habakkuk, where the prophet also questioned God: “Though we are sinful, why do You raise up even more wicked people to punish us?” I came to understand that God can use anyone, even those who are weak and flawed, as His instruments. Perhaps in

my life, she was the “Pharaoh” or “Babylon” that God was using so I could experience His guidance more deeply.

When I shared this experience with my small group, our preacher said something that left a deep impression on me:

“She may be a Christian, but she’s also a sinner. She has her own lessons to learn, and God is also disciplining her. We shouldn’t focus only on the speck in others’ eyes while ignoring the plank in our own.”

Eventually, I couldn’t bear it anymore and mustered the courage to write to my boss about the situation. The boss called me in for a conversation and said, “I know what she did to you. You’re not the first person who couldn’t survive under her. I’ll transfer you to another position.” Just like that, a month of trials came to an end.

This experience helped me realize:

God’s grace often doesn’t lie in immediate change of circumstances, but in our ability to see the pillar of fire in the darkness—to hear Him say in the wilderness: ‘You are Mine.’

May all glory be to God.