



Tuesday Devotion: Exodus Week 2 April 7, 2020

Bread & Quail (aka Money & Toilet Paper)

Bible Reference: Exodus 16

I went up to my office yesterday because Tracy said I received a package. I opened it up anticipating the books my mom was sending for Gavin, but what I found was a new book sent to me from one of our prayer warriors. The book is called “The Red Sea Rules.”

A few years ago Jesus blessed Mt. Calvary with some prayer warriors. We already had some, but this time Jesus sent an army of prayer warriors. They created a Saturday prayer time and they asked me for prayers. They anticipated receiving prayers about my everyday life, but instead I laid out a list of 10 things the Lord had me praying about for our future at Mt. Calvary. They also began praying with me before services. The messages I was preaching felt like a new energy the Holy Spirit had put inside me.

One of the requests they were praying about was how to use our building and land. I think we all knew Jesus was about to do something big. I thought the prayer warriors had come so that we could do something with our land that few other churches were doing. I thought they had come to bring more people to Jesus who would sit in our pews. I thought they had come so that more preschool families would see the love of Jesus through our teachers who teach through play everyday. And then the world shut down, and our preschool and church were shut down right along with it. I had to ask Jesus, “What are we doing?” I was nervous about all the restaurants being shut down. I worried about our offerings. I worried about jobs that were going to be lost. I worried how we were going to get our church online. And then Jesus gave me rule #1 from that book I received yesterday... Realize that God means for you to be where you are.

Last week when I began this Exodus devotional series with you, I had accepted that rule even though I didn't know about it yet (I didn't even know about the book). Jesus had led me to the book of Exodus in the Bible, where we could relate with the children of Israel in their wilderness season since we were in one of our own. I wanted to share that wisdom with our church and any others struggling with what was going on. Jesus began to show me the benefits of this wilderness season...a slower pace, more family time, an opportunity to be creative in cooking, and the greatest chance to share the message of Jesus because hurting people would be looking for Hope!

In Chapter 16 of Exodus, the Israelites had not accepted that God meant for them to be where they were. They spent this chapter looking back at their time in slavery, remembering the food to be better, and whining to God, Moses, and anyone else who would listen.

First question for self-reflection: What were you enslaved to in your life before?

For me this was hard to answer. Could I have possibly been enslaved or addicted to the relationships I had? Is that even possible? It was what I missed most. It was what I cried about because I felt like I couldn't live without them, and I wanted to go back to the time when I could see my congregation and hang out with people at lunch. Does that mean enslavement?

Second Question: What daily bread are you missing?

The Israelites complained about the food, even when God Himself provided it for them each day. Each of us relies on Jesus to provide every day, but we also go buy what we need. We go to the store when we want, we eat out when we want, and we never worry about running out of toilet paper. I know this has been a joke, but the truth is, someone started this madness that leaves the paper good shelves empty. It is crazy right, but the Israelites did it to. Even though God gave them rules and said He would keep providing for them each day, they still tried to hoard what He provided.

Third Question: What are you hoarding?

Finally, God gave them enough food one day so they could rest the next day. Jesus gave them enough so they could have a true Sabbath, a true day of rest. A year or so ago I read a book about the Sabbath that gave permission for my family and I not go anywhere on Saturdays. My kids fought it, but I insisted Saturday was our day of rest. Now Jesus is giving us weeks of Sabbaths.

Fourth Question: Are you resting?

None of these have easy answers, but they are lessons we can learn from the Israelites, and they bring us back to the fact that Jesus intended you to be in this season. I told Tracy the other day that I watched my dad prepare for Y2K and I learned lessons I never knew I would need. I prayed to be a chef and Jesus made me one (in my own home). Jesus will show you how He prepared you for the wilderness. Listen and turn those worries into prayers, crying out to Jesus to show you how He prepared you to be here. Why were Moses and Aaron ok in the wilderness? I believe they understood Jesus intended them to be there.

Prayer: Jesus, show us how You prepared us to be in the wilderness. Let us stop hoarding and embrace the daily bread You bring. Let us enjoy the Sabbath You have given. Amen!

God's Peace,
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