

ANXIETY AND FEAR DISPOSAL (2)

In Exodus 14, God actually takes His people into harm's way. When they escaped Egypt, they were taken by a route that trapped them. The Egyptian army was behind them and the sea was in front of them. Some situations are not always what they seem.

In Exodus 16, we have the story of how the Lord provides manna for His people in the desert. It is a valuable lesson about fear and worry. God does not use our timetable which is "right now." We want "enough" "right now" to have plenty for ourselves and the next five generations. If God allowed that to take place, we would begin to trust in ourselves and our stuff. (See Proverbs 30:8, 9)

1. JUST IN TIME

One of God's parenting strategies is to make us wait. Why? The greatest gift in this world is faith, in which we learn to trust God in good and bad times. Anyone open to learning from these opportunities will learn to be fearless, free, and content. Think about it – you will trust in something or someone. Trust in things that are untrustworthy is like quicksand. You are trusting in things that cannot sustain the weight of your trust.

Remember Exodus 14? Pharaoh smelled blood. Exodus 14:11-14 says *"They said to Moses, Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us into the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? In Egypt, did not we say 'Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than die in the wilderness.!' Moses answered the people 'Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians that you see today you will never see again. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still.'"*

Nice deliverance. Walking through the sea on dry land? Can you think of times when things seemed hopeless only to find God guiding you on a path through the trouble? If so-

A. Describe such a time

B. Are there any places in your life where you are feeling trapped right now?

C. A good question for us to keep in mind is, "I wonder how God is going to deliver this time?"

II. THE MANNA MIRACLE

When God parted the sea, he was only getting warmed up. Do you remember the passage in Matthew 6:25-34? Jesus says His Father cares for flowers and birds which are members of creation of less importance than us. Do you remember how He ends the passage? **"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself."** It is not inconceivable that Jesus was thinking about this experience in Exodus 16.

This was 11th hour deliverance. There are no crops in the desert and the people are hungry. In classic human style, grumbling and mumbling takes place. The manna God sends is meant to do more than satisfy their appetite. It also is meant to convey some important lessons.

1. It teaches that we must rely on the grace God gives *today* by collecting the manna and enjoying it.

2. It teaches that we are to trust God for tomorrow.

Anxiety and worry are always off in the future. They run ahead and spy on the enemy.

A. Where in your life do you need God's manna?

B. How could making the manna story your own change the way you live?

C. Can you think of times you thought the ground would be bare and He gave you just what you needed?

D. Are you worried because you don't have the grace yet to deal with something that might or might not happen in the future? Like what?

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were put in a tough spot (or should I say a hot spot). They were Jewish teenagers. Notice how they dealt with their adversity. Among other things, they

said:

1. We trust in God not because he delivers us from every fearful situation, but because He alone is king.
2. God will always be with us
3. God will deliver His people

Think about it; they were expecting death by fire – hardly a pleasant thought. Instead of trusting in themselves or even deliverance, they trust in God.

E. Do you think such truth is possible for you?

“When I am afraid, I will trust in you. In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I will not be afraid. What can mortal man do to me? (Psalm 56:3-4)

CONCLUSION:

1. Remember that any deliverance God brings that does not bring us to greater trust is not a blessing, but a curse.
2. Make the “manna principle” your own
3. Discover ways that God brings you manna, or grace.