

## Sermon - Don't Be Bitter, It Is About to Be Better

### Exodus 15

**<sup>22</sup> So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water.**

The journey continues. It is a new day, on their way to a new season. They had to travel to get there. Couldn't just beam them into the Promised Land. They leave the place where they had just witnessed their greatest victory over the enemy. Just left worship on Sunday and by Wednesday were facing a situation. Sometimes your breakthrough is designed to prepare you for the next challenge in your way before you reached the Promise Land.

They were looking for, desiring, and needing water. They must have been thirsty. Shur = wall.

As we begin our journey into a new season at Cloverdale, I was excited at first as we plan for revival. But then last week I hit a wall. The needs seemed greater than I could imagine.

**<sup>23</sup> And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore, the name of it was called Marah. <sup>24</sup> And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?**

They arrive at Marah = bitter, and you can imagine their hopes were high seeing the water there. You can also imagine the disappointment as they get there and realize they can't drink this water. Their outside circumstances prompted a negative internal reaction and they started to complain about Moses and wondering what they can drink.

The answer, Moses goes and tells God. Rather than sit there and complain, he cries out to God for an answer. When they complain to him, he complains to God (MH). Why ask God when everyone else is complaining? Because Moses must have figured that God must have the answer. Must have had faith and assurance that since God provided before and protected before, He would do so again. He must have figured that He didn't bring them this far to just leave them out there to die. Moses must have believed by faith that He who began a good work in them would be faithful to complete it....cause the work was just getting started.

**<sup>25</sup> And he cried unto the Lord; and the Lord shewed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them, <sup>26</sup> And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee.**

God answers. He didn't answer until He called. He will show up when you need Him. Next, he tells him about a particular tree. It wasn't just any tree. The tree also had to be cut down in order to be placed in the water. Something about the properties in the tree caused the water that once was bitter to turn



sweet. What a change and transformation. The tree turned what was useless into something that was useful. I need some of that wood.

God takes this opportunity and miracle to test them. Before you get promoted to the next level, you will often need to pass a test.

The test was an if/then statement or formula.

If you diligently listen to His voice and instructions and do right and listen and follow His commandments, then some things that other folks have to suffer and deal with won't happen to you. Obeying God equals protection, healing, and avoiding some stuff. You can bypass some trouble by just trusting and obeying God.

**<sup>27</sup> And they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm trees: and they encamped there by the waters.**

They leave there and get to Elim = palms and find 12 wells and 70 palm trees. They get to camp there.

Observations and application:

- Being free is not always trouble-free.
- The trouble may be a test that draws you closer to God.
- I wonder what the tree in the story represents. Could it be the tree that was cut down and sacrificed represents a similar tree that was cut down and placed on Calvary.
- The cross can turn your bitter into something sweet.
- You may be bitter and complaining but when you place the cross in the middle of your bitterness, it can turn into something sweet that others can enjoy and learn from.
- Trouble don't last always when you put the cross in the middle of your problem.
- Your right now trouble is probably only a test.
- Don't run into the wall, live off the wall, your Elim is waiting.
- God will always provide a rest area along the way and let you chill there.
- Obeying God has benefits.
- The cross can change you from something bitter to something sweet.
- The cross can transform you from useless to useful.
- The cross can transform you from a disappointment to a deliverer and a delight.

Today, I'm encouraged again. Being in need is part of the journey and part of the plan. God delivering us and meeting our needs is part of the plan. He is still our healer, and He will meet and provide for our needs.