

AT THE EDGE OF DELIVERANCE

Bits of Hope from 11-09-08

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Exodus 14:10-18

Though we love children, we have to admit that there are times when their actions are annoying. We were all children once. Do you remember the experience of annoyingly, constantly, asking the famous question, “Are we there yet?” as you traveled with your family? Now that we are adults we find ourselves constantly asking, “God, are we there yet?” You’ve done what God has told you to do but still you haven’t been delivered. You ask, “God, are we there yet?” America has come a long way from the past but we are still in recession, and disease is still running rampant. America isn’t there yet.

What do you do when you are on the edge of your deliverance? You can see that you are close to it but there is a barrier in front of you and your past is pursuing you. In the text, God gave a promise for Israel to Moses but the Israelites kept experiencing many obstacles on the way to that promise. They became uncomfortable with freedom. God leads us to places that may seem uncomfortable. However, if He leads you to it He will bring you through it. God will step in at the right time. In the mean time before the deliverance comes, what do you do? You don’t retreat to your former life. In **verse 10**, the Israelites found themselves in a difficult situation so they desired to go back to slavery in Egypt. Freedom was too uncomfortable and uncertain for them. The past is comfortable because you know about the past. You have to walk into the newness that God has called for you despite the uncertainty. At the first sign of trouble, you can’t try to go back to pick up the yoke God has already destroyed.

We, as African Americans, should understand that if our ancestors kept trying to go back because of the threat of trouble, there would not have been a Sojourner Truth, W. E. B. Dubois, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, The Civil Rights movement, or a Barack Obama as President. God can step in and change any situation. You do not have to revert to who you were. **2 Corinthians 5:17** You can’t retreat at the first sign of conflict when God has freed you. From what has God freed you? What is your Egypt? Is it low self-esteem, a bad relationship, no confidence, or your past? Bondage may be comfortable for now but freedom is better. Don’t go back to a place from which God has already delivered you. There is a reason the rearview mirror is smaller than the windshield.

You must stand firm in God. To stand still means to stay put. In the military, when soldiers stand at attention, they don’t move until they are released to move. They must stand still until they get further instruction from the commanding officer. Stand firm and wait for your instruction from God. Why is it that when we are in trouble, we retreat from the church? The church has people who have been through what you are going through. The church is the place where you can meet God to get your instruction. Don’t deviate from your devotional life because you are mad at God. That is the time to seek God more. **I John 4:4** Even at the edge of deliverance, greater is He that is in you than he that

is in the world. The Israelites looked up to see the enemy approaching them but they did not notice the presence of God was still with them.

You have to constantly look up and focus on God. God's presence is always there no matter where you are in your situation. God has to do something with you so that you can bless someone else. Your situation is not just for you. It is all in God's plan. He is pruning you so that you can bear more fruit. Why do you feel that during your pruning process God is not there? If He is pruning you, He has His hands on you. If He is taking things from you, He has His hands on you. Even if what you are going through is painful, you are still in His hands. He wants you to become better in Him.

When you are standing on the edge of deliverance, not only do you have to resist the desire to retreat, stand firm, and focus on God; but you must also give God the glory. In the text, the Israelites praised God when they were delivered. They should have praised Him before their deliverance. If God doesn't come the way you want Him to come or when you think He should come, will you be able to still give Him glory? Can you praise Him for what He has already done? Remember God shows up and shows out at just the right time.

Peace