



5/12/26

I'm really looking forward to our Summit Point event tonight, Holy Reflections. I hope to see you there!!!

*Blessings,
Jonna*

Joshua 24:14-18, Luke 11:11-13

Before I jump in to these passages, I want to look and see where I am in the timeline with Joshua. Joshua was the assistant to Moses. He had the privilege of leading the Israelites into the Promised Land after Moses died. At this point, the Israelites have gone through the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. They've gone in and taken the land God had promised to give them hundreds of years earlier when He called Abraham to go. Hebrews 11:8-9 says, "By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise." Abraham got to live in that land in tents... it was temporary for him. Then his son, Jacob, moved the family to Egypt when God brought them there through Jacob's son, Joseph, to protect them from a famine. While they were there, several things happened. 1. They started worshiping foreign false gods. 2. They became slaves of the Egyptians for 400 years. 3. God used that time to grow them from 70 people to over a million, where they became unified as a people. And even though they were not serving God, He delivered them from that slavery.

Now, in Joshua 24, Joshua is calling them to stand firm in their faith and lead their families to be centered on the Lord alone.

Joshua 24:14-18 ~

As Joshua was about to tell the Israelites to serve the Lord faithfully, he gave them the reason for their obedience. He spoke the words of God who said, "I gave you a land on which you had not labored and cities that you had not built, and you dwell in them. You eat the fruit

of vineyards and olive orchards that you did not plant." God gave us the reason WHY.

In all my difficult circumstances, it's so easy to get stuck on the question, "Why?" I find that I don't ask that question so much or as emphatically when my circumstances are good... "Lord, why would You be so generous with me?" But here... God gives the answer to why. Nothing I have gained was done in my own strength. He provides everything I have. In fact, the enemy will do everything he can to take away or destroy the good I have. It's the Lord who protects me.

In light of that... Joshua calls all the Israelites (and for sure, this applies to all believers) to...

- *Fear the LORD Yahweh. To fear Him is to worship Him, trust Him, and love Him.*
- *Serve Him in sincerity. Serve Him with a genuine heart, full of gratitude for what He's done for me.*
- *Serve Him in faithfulness... regardless of my circumstances. "Is it faith at all if it is hard to trust when things are entirely bewildering?" (Amy Carmichael). To serve the Lord faithfully is to stay true to Him even when I don't understand the "why".*
- *Put away the gods that your fathers served... and instead, serve the LORD Yahweh. The Israelite forefathers served idols made with wood, gold, and silver. My idols are trickier because I can't see them. But the heart behind the idol worship is the same. It's putting something or someone as higher priority than God to please SELF. But God is the one who protects me, loves me more than anyone else loves me, and provides for me. False gods only bring false hope and false protection. They're lies. Serve the LORD who is faithful even when I'm not. Let me not forget that it was God who delivered the Israelites even when they didn't ask Him to... and it is Jesus who came and gave His life for me even when I didn't ask Him to.*

Joshua said, "If it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day WHOM you WILL serve." Don't vacillate between the Lord and your false gods. Keep in mind, that choice is always before you. You had opportunity to choose false gods while you were in slavery to sin, and you are surrounded now by people in this world who choose those false gods. Who will you serve?

Joshua said, "As for me AND MY HOUSE, we WILL serve the LORD." It's a daily decision. If we're not intentional about serving the Lord, we WILL drift to those idols that are so easily accessible and are always trying to grab our attention. I KNOW this partly because of the example I see in the Israelites... and because of the example I see in me. How often have I been drawn away from the Lord by the lies and deceptions of false idols???

The Israelites answered, "Far be it from us that we would forsake the LORD to serve other gods! We totally get that it was the LORD who delivered us from slavery and did amazing things in our sight, and even drove out the people who lived in the land (who by the way, were horrifically evil). We are choosing... we WILL serve the LORD. He is our God." That sounds so

great, but in the very next book of the Bible and then so many other Old Testament books, I see that they continued to fall back to serving false gods. And God continued to deliver them over and over again because He is so merciful and gracious!!!

I could point my finger at them in judgment of their fickle faith, but I'm just as bad as they were. I have to intentionally choose every single day, every minute who I will serve! Why would I ever choose a false god? The devil is sneaky. He disguises the idols. He surrounds us with people from the world who proclaim the idols are worthy of my attention. He whispers lies into my mind that say I would be better off with those idols. And when circumstances pop up that make it seem like God is absent or not caring or not doing what's best for me... if I'm not holding fast to Him, I will drift to those lies. This is why I have to intentionally pursue my relationship with Him and serve Him genuinely and faithfully... and be that example to my family, so that as they grow they won't say things like, "My parents were Sunday worshipers only. The people they were on Sundays did not reflect who they were the rest of the week." O Lord, I pray that my grown kids will still see a genuine love for You in me... and I pray that my grandchildren will see the same. I want to be wholly genuine. Please open my eyes to see the deception of the idols and help me to cling to You for help! If I'm clinging to You, the idols won't get my attention. I will see how they're just fake, rusty, fool's gold... but You are ALL. You are holy, holy, holy... You are holy love, holy truth, holy worthy of my worship.

Luke 11:11-13 helps me to see the Father You are, how generous You are, and what I REALLY need... which no idol could ever provide.

Jesus said, "What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion?" Well... no good father would ever do that. But here's the problem. With the Father in heaven, I often ask for the serpent and the scorpion and don't understand why He would say no!!! Can I trust that what He gives me is good? Can I trust that serving idols is slavery and He is the one who gives true freedom? Can I trust that serving Him IS the best place to be? O Lord, there have been many times that I haven't... that I've questioned Your goodness. I would love to say that's a thing of the past, but I was just questioning You THIS MORNING!!! I praise You that You met me where I was and showed me Your goodness before any circumstance had changed... but I still look forward to the day that the thought will never again enter my mind. You ARE good. You are ALWAYS good. You can be nothing but GOOD... because You are good in Your very being... with not even a speck of deceit in any part of You. Praise Your name.

Well, what is this goodness God wants to give me? Jesus said, "If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" I LOVE my kids, and I want to give them only good. But there's one thing, the most important thing, I could never give them. That gift can only come from the Lord... the Holy Spirit. I can point them to the Lord, but I can't make them embrace Him and I can't steal what only the Lord can give in order to give the Spirit to them. What I can do is embrace everything about the beauty of having the Holy Spirit in my life and pray that they will, too.

How is the Holy Spirit such a great gift that Jesus says, "HOW MUCH MORE will the Father give the Holy Spirit TO THOSE WHO ASK HIM?" The Holy Spirit is the one who sealed me when I confessed Jesus as my Lord. He leads me. He fills me. He pours the love of God into my heart. He transforms me. He fills me with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control. He teaches me what really matters. He gently convicts my sinful heart so that He can rescue me from the lies and not condemn me in them. He is FAR better than fish or eggs... He will never give me a serpent or a scorpion. He delivers me from them!

O Lord, I choose You today. When I'm drawn to the fish and the egg, I will remember that seeking You first provides me with way more than just what I need in the moment. You provide me with everything I need for life and godliness... through Your Spirit. So I choose to love You and worship You, and I choose to serve You faithfully. That means I have to deny SELF. I'm good with that. Please protect me from the drift. Help me to stay close to You. Praise that You want me to!!!