



the rescue.

stories from Exodus

February 9-

Read Exodus 15

In today's society, we find ourselves celebrating so many things. Birthdays, anniversaries, holidays, the victories of our favorite football team, a good grade on a test...the list goes on and on. It's so easy to celebrate something that goes in our favor, and we often remember to thank God for His goodness when things are going right.

In Exodus 15, Moses and the Israelites sing a song to the Lord in celebration and thanksgiving of their escape from the Egyptians through the Red Sea. Verse 2 states, "The Lord is my strength and my defense: he has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him." It's so easy to remember that God is the reason for anything good in our lives when everything is good. When we've experienced a victory, it's easy to praise and thank Him and give Him the glory.

But what happens when things aren't so good? Where is our urge to give thanksgiving and praise to God when a loved one is dying, our car breaks down at the worst possible time, or our marriage is falling apart? How can we thank God for being good when we just don't see the good?

Exodus 15:13 says about the Lord, "In your unfailing love you will lead the people you have redeemed." As Christians, we have the ability to trust in God in the good times and bad because we know God's love never fails. He is always leading us to something better than we could ask or imagine. His plan for us is great, and He will always bring good out of every situation. Praising Him and thanking Him even through the trying times will help give us clarity and discernment, and it will remind us that God really is good all the time.

Reflect:

Do you find it difficult to praise and thank God when times are hard? How can you begin to give Him thanksgiving even when things don't seem to be going the right way?

How do you think your perspective of God could change if you began to praise Him in all circumstances?

Take some time today to thank God for the good in your life, and ask Him to show you the good in the situations that may be trying.



the rescue.

stories from Exodus

February 10-

Reflect on Exodus 15 and pray the following prayer:

I rejoice and sing with Miriam and the Israelites: O Lord, who is like You, majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, doing wonders? (15:11) You are my strength and my defense; You have become my salvation (15:2). I will sing to You, O Lord, for You are highly exalted (15:1). I will stand still and see Your Mighty Hand of salvation, deliverance and healing in my life and in my family. You are the Lord my Healer (15:26). Help me to count my blessings. Help me to also cultivate a heart of thanksgiving and gratitude. Cause the joy of the Lord to overflow in my heart. In Jesus' name. Amen

February 11-

Read Exodus 16, 1 Corinthians 15:57

Sometimes God's promises to us involve a fight. We have to fight to keep our focus on Him, fight to move toward the promise we know God has laid on our hearts. We have a real enemy that would love nothing more than to get us sidetracked and doubt God's promises. So we fight saying that we are going to believe God will do what He says He will do, and we keep fighting until we see that promise come to life.

In Exodus 17:8-15 the nation of Israel, freed from great oppression in Egypt was traveling to the land God promised them. Yet, Israel was fighting, again.

As the Israelites were fighting in the valley, Moses was on the hill top lifting his hands in prayer for these great fighters. Israel fought hard, and with the prayers of Moses and the help of his companions, Aaron and Hur, the Amalekites were defeated. Moses knew that it was solely because of the Lord's hand of protection and blessing on the Israelites that they won the battle. "Moses built an altar and called it The Lord is my banner" (Exodus 17:15).

In battle opposing nations would fly their own flag on a pole at each of their respective front lines. This was to give their soldiers a feeling of hope and a focal point. This is what God is to us: a banner of encouragement to give us hope and a focal point.



the rescue.

stories from Exodus

The Lord protects us, covers us with love, and blesses us continually.

The Lord is our banner. He protects us; He covers us with love; He blesses us continually. The Lord gives us hope and a place to focus during the tough fights when the enemy is trying to make us doubt God's promises.

When was the last time you sat and thanked Jesus for all the ways he is a banner in your life?

Reflect:

What is one way the Lord has been your banner?

How can you focus more today on the Lord and all the things He does for you throughout the day?

February 12-

Reflect on Exodus 16 and pray the following prayer:

Gracious Heavenly Father, every single day You manifest Your love towards us and every day You meet our needs. Help us always to be grateful and to continually praise You. In chapter sixteen, we read that when the Israelites started worrying that You would not meet their needs, they began to grumble and complain. Lord, help us not to be different and never to greet You with grumbling and complaining! We thank You for Your faithfulness. You are so worthy of our praise! In the wonderful name of Jesus we pray. Amen.



the rescue.

stories from Exodus

February 13-

Read Exodus 17

The whole goal of advertising is to convince us we need an upgrade. They try to convince us we are missing out on the latest fashion, the fastest computer, or the smartest cell phone. Advertisers want us bored and ungrateful, hoping we'll believe that our lives will be so much better if we just buy their product.

The people of Israel found themselves in a similar frame of mind during their walk in the wilderness in Exodus 17. God had shown them amazing proof of His love and presence when He moved them through the Red Sea and drowned their enemies behind them, thereby punishing Israel's slave masters and leading His children into freedom (Exodus 14:30-31).

After witnessing God's power, Israel celebrated by worshipping God, praising His strength and protection, and boldly proclaiming their confidence in His deliverance (Exodus 15:1-21). Then, something strange started happening: the Israelites started grumbling.

The Israelites, like us, had unmet expectations. When God's miracles slowed down, they stopped trusting Him and started doing things their way. They wanted more proof (Exodus 17:7). But if God led them there, wouldn't He care for them there?

Dissatisfaction arises when our attention shifts from what we have to what we don't have — from what God has done to what He hasn't yet done. God made His presence known to Israel, and He makes Himself known to us.

The wilderness can draw us closer to God, teaching us new things about His character. The way God cares for us today might be different from the way He cared for us yesterday. Don't give up seeking God's presence or settle for anything less.

Reflect:

Are you struggling to see God at work in your life? If so, why?

God wanted Israel to focus on His presence more than their possessions. Is there something in your life competing with Jesus for your heart?



the rescue.

_____stories from Exodus

Take some time this week and write out your salvation story. What was “Egypt” like for you before Jesus freed you?

February 14-

Reflect on Exodus 17 and take a few moments and write out your own prayer.

February 15-

Read Exodus 18

Our perspective — the way we interpret what’s happening around us — can make or break us in any given situation. For many of us, a new perspective is the one thing we need to help us gain a breakthrough in our walk with God.

By Exodus 18, Moses’ ministry and relationship with God had been steadily growing for years. God had delivered Moses and the Israelites from Pharaoh and the Egyptians, provided food and water while they were in the desert, and protected them from attacks by their enemies.



the rescue.

stories from Exodus

Word of what God was doing in Moses' life spread to his in-laws in Midian, so while Israel was camped at the foot of Mount Sinai, Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, came to visit. After spending some time celebrating, Jethro had a conversation with Moses that became a crucial point in Moses' life. Jethro was able to offer a new perspective to Moses in the midst of what could have become an overwhelming situation.

Sometimes a new perspective is exactly what we need. We need to let those who care about us into our lives. People who love Jesus and love us are the best at helping us to see a new perspective — whether we're in the midst of a hopeless situation or on the path to what could become a hopeless situation.

We have all gotten a gift that we did not realize we needed at the time, but later we realized it was one of the best gifts we've ever received. Sometimes the advice of a godly friend is not what we want to hear at the moment, but like Moses, a new perspective may be exactly what we need to get us to the place where God is calling us.

Reflect:

In what area of your life do you need a new perspective?

Who are some people in your life that you can invite into your situation to offer you a new perspective?

When was the last time you asked God to give you His perspective on your hopeless situation? Ask Him for that this week.