



# the rescue.

## \_\_\_\_\_stories from Exodus

January 19-

Reflect on Exodus 4 and take some time to write out your own prayer for the day.

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January 20-

Read

Exodus 5

You can't seem to please anyone — your boss, your spouse, your parents. Maybe you've been rejected, made to feel like an outsider because of your obedience to God. You've been doing everything right. You're reading your Bible, going to church, praying. You expected God to give you more than He has right now. Your circumstances stink. Your expectations haven't been met, and in the space between what you expected and reality, you've grown disappointed.

It's easy to shake your fist at God and ask, "Why?" But complaining and turning away from God does not remove the disappointment. Instead the despair deepens.

Consider for a second this possibility: That God's plans for you are greater than the greatest plans you could ever make for yourself.

In Exodus 5, the Hebrews' lives were made harder when Moses and Aaron obediently went to Pharaoh and requested the Hebrews be let go to hold a festival honoring God in the desert. Pharaoh, not knowing God and thus unable to understand obedience to Him, not only denied the request, but made the Hebrew plight much worse. Under the circumstances, the Hebrews turned on Moses and Aaron rather than trusting God had greater plans for them.



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## stories from Exodus

God is at work in all of our circumstances, even the painful ones, and He wants more for us than we could ever want or imagine for ourselves. So what if we stopped asking why, and instead asked, “What can I learn in the midst of this?” Neither question changes our circumstances, but the second changes us. It shifts our attitude from victim to victor. It turns our eyes from the earthly to the eternal, and allows what was meant to harm us to help us.

Reflect:

Is there an area of your life where you’re deeply disappointed, suffering or feeling like you just can’t win? What’s one area of your life where you just want to ask, “Why?”

How does your perspective on that situation change when you stop focusing on why and start asking, “What can I learn?”

God can work through our pain to show us things about ourselves and about Himself. What’s one thing you want to learn about God in this situation? What’s one thing He might be teaching you about yourself?

January 21-

Reflect on Exodus 5 and pray the following prayer:

Mighty God, You are the great I AM—our Deliverer. Nothing is too hard for you.

Praise Your Holy Name. You, who heard the cries of the Israelites, saw their suffering as slaves under the oppression of the Egyptians, you hear my cry, O Lord. Have mercy on me. Thank you for sending Jesus to be my Deliverer who came to set the oppressed free, to release those held captive by sin, shame, pain, grief, loss and the stresses of life (Luke 4:18). Help me, Lord, to walk in the freedom that you have won. Thank you for giving me perfect peace and rest. I am fixing my heart and mind upon You, in Jesus’ name. Amen.



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## stories from Exodus

January 22-

Read

Exodus 6

In Exodus 6:6, God tells Israel: “I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment.”

Moses was a messenger with great news. God was promising to free His people, yet hopelessness kept them from accepting that promise. The Bible says, “... they refused to listen anymore. They had become too discouraged by the brutality of their slavery” (Exodus 6:9, NLT).

Don’t we do the same when Jesus tries to speak to us today? We get so caught up in what’s happening around us, we find it hard to believe there is any other way to live.

Moses’ mission to free Israel is a perfect parallel to Jesus’ mission to free us. God sent His Son to free us from sin and give us eternal life. But like Israel, we can be so blinded by our circumstances we refuse to listen when the Lord speaks (Exodus 6:8).

We don’t believe Jesus’ offer when we hear it because it sounds too good to be true. Or maybe we don’t hear it at all because we’re too busy trying to stay afloat to be distracted by something as daunting as a brand new life (2 Corinthians 5:17). But God keeps pursuing us the same way He kept pursuing Moses and His people in Egypt.

Even after we first believe, God keeps setting us free — removing our old feelings, our old ways of doing things and replacing them with better ones (Ephesians 4:22-24). And over time, as we lean in and listen, we begin to find God working through us, like He did with Moses, to help set others free!

Reflect:

Do you relate more to Israel or Moses in this story? Why?

What, if anything, stops you from hearing from God?

What, if anything, do you want to be free of today?



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## \_\_\_\_\_stories from Exodus

January 23-

Reflect on Exodus 6 and pray the following prayer:

Our precious Heavenly Father, as we advance into chapter six of our study, we find that the Israelites in Egypt are down and depressed. Only You can deliver them, but how? We thank you, Lord, that You are still the same compassionate God who repeatedly rescues and delivers us in our times of difficulty and discouragement in today's world. We can always count on Your promises; thank You, You have promised never to fail us and You never do. Amen.

January 24-

Read Exodus 7

"If at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again!"

That old saying was written by T. H. Palmer, someone who had surely failed. Too often, we define ourselves by our failures. We look back at the dreams we had and feel empty and unsuccessful if they didn't become reality.

We are not alone with our failures. Almost every hero in the Bible failed God in some way. What makes the men and women in the Bible heroic is that they humbled themselves, kept trusting God, and kept persevering in the faith, despite their mistakes.

Moses was a reluctant hero, telling God he couldn't possibly lead Israel out of slavery. At the time, Moses was 80 years old and Aaron was 83! But once Moses began the task the Lord set before him, he kept trying despite Pharaoh's refusal to listen.

The lesson of success is not to concentrate on what we failed to do, but to concentrate on the one who is giving the instructions. Even though Moses failed to turn Pharaoh's heart many times, Moses returned to Pharaoh again and again. Moses trusted God and continued to do what God was leading him to do.

It's never too late to trust the Lord. And it's never too late to try again.



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\_\_\_\_\_ stories from Exodus

Reflect:

Looking back, has there been a time where a failure turned into a success because you tried again? How has this refined your definition of success?

Is there something the Lord is asking you to do that you feel you cannot finish with success? What next step do you need to take to trust the Lord and follow His command?

January 25-

Read today's scripture and take a few moments to write out your own prayer.

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