

still waters

home church studies

Psalm 105.1-6, 37-45 [Worship]

1 O give thanks to the LORD, call on his name, make known his deeds among the peoples. 2 Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wonderful works. 3 Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice. 4 Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually. 5 Remember the wonderful works he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he uttered, 6 O offspring of his servant Abraham, children of Jacob, his chosen ones.

37 Then he brought Israel out with silver and gold, and there was no one among their tribes who stumbled. 38 Egypt was glad when they departed, for dread of them had fallen upon it. 39 He spread a cloud for a covering, and fire to give light by night. 40 They asked, and he brought quails, and gave them food from heaven in abundance. 41 He opened the rock, and water gushed out; it flowed through the desert like a river. 42 For he remembered his holy promise, and Abraham, his servant. 43 So he brought his people out with joy, his chosen ones with singing. 44 He gave them the lands of the nations, and they took possession of the wealth of the peoples, 45 that they might keep his statutes and observe his laws. Praise the LORD!

Consider:

[Think & Pray...]

There's nothing like coming face to face with existential dilemmas right in the middle of scripture. In Exodus we witness the portrayal of one of the most archetypal struggles of the human condition—human freedom. Like the Israelites, we experience it on our own desert journeys toward liberation. The exodus is not a one-time event but an ever-present invitation to march with God through the desert, aiming for freedom.

Like the Israelites, our faith often gives way and we find ourselves longing for the comfort and security of spiritual slavery, someone telling us what is right and wrong, what to do, where to go. We long for a "Santa Claus God" who will allow us to remain spiritually passive and dependent, not a God who demands our input and active effort to maintain the covenant. The Israelites never finally solved the dilemma of human freedom, and neither have we. Our religious inheritance is the struggle itself, trying to balance the gift and responsibility of freedom with our inclination toward fear and the need for security and control.

As Christians, our journey toward freedom begins and ends with Christ, whose body becomes the anchor that grounds our lives and prevents us from being swept away by so many winds. When we accept our freedom and joyfully build Christ's body, every hour and every day, we too become sources of strength and stability for others—and bread for the life of the world. —Michaela Bruzzese



[Scripture]

Philippians 1.21-30

21 For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. 22 If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. 23 I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; 24 but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. 25 Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, 26 so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again. 27 Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, 28 and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. 29 For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well— 30 since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.