



~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

“come just as you are”

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing



Vol. 18 Issue 348

Jan. 27, 2012

Worship Music

[Ain't Gonna Fight It- Daniel Amos](#)

[Shine-Newsboys](#)

[Amazing Love- Newsboys](#)

[Nothing But The Blood- Jars Of Clay](#)

[In Christ Alone-Owl City](#)

[You Raise Me Up-Selah](#)

Prayer

Lord, I want to stay in an environment that will keep my faith alive and strong. Help me recognize those relationships and places I should avoid to keep my faith from being negatively affected. As You show me places, people, and things I should avoid, give me the strength I need to do what is right—and give me the wisdom I need to know how to avoid those places and people, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Scripture

Exodus 13: 1-22 (AMP)

1 THE LORD said to Moses, 2 Sanctify (consecrate, set apart) to Me all the firstborn [males]; whatever is first to open the womb among the Israelites, both of man and of beast, is Mine. 3 And Moses said to the people, [Earnestly] remember this day in which you came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage and bondmen, for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out from this place; no leavened bread shall be eaten. 4 This day you go forth in the month Abib. 5 And when the Lord brings you into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites, and Jebusites, which He promised and swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey [a land of plenty], you shall keep this service in this month. 6 Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread and the seventh day shall be a feast to the Lord. 7 Unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days; no leavened bread shall be seen with you, neither shall there be leaven in all your territory. 8 You shall explain to your son on that day, This is done because of what the Lord did for me when I came out of Egypt. 9 It shall be as a sign to you upon your hand and as a memorial between your eyes, that the law of the Lord may be in your mouth; for with a strong hand the Lord has brought you out of Egypt. 10 You shall therefore keep this ordinance at this time from year to year. 11 And when the Lord brings you into the land of the Canaanites, as He promised and swore to you and your fathers, and shall give it to you, 12 You shall set apart to the Lord all that first opens the womb. All the firstlings of your livestock that are males shall be the Lord's. 13 Every firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem by [substituting for it] a lamb, or if you will not redeem it, then you shall break its neck; and every firstborn among your sons shall you redeem. 14 And when, in time to come, your son asks you, What does this mean? You shall say to him, By strength of hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage and bondmen. 15 For when Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let us go, the Lord slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and of livestock. Therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all the males that first open the womb; but all the firstborn of my sons I redeem. 16 And it shall be as a reminder upon your hand or as frontlets between your eyes, for by a strong hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt. 17 When Pharaoh let the people go, God led them not by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was nearer; for God said, Lest the people change their purpose when they see war and return to Egypt. 18 But God led the people around by way of the wilderness toward the Red Sea. And the Israelites went up marshaled [in ranks] out of the land of Egypt. 19 And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for [Joseph] had strictly sworn the Israelites, saying, Surely God will be with you, and you must carry my bones away from here with you. 20 They journeyed from Succoth and encamped at Etham on the edge of the wilderness. 21 The Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. 22 The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people.

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Exodus 13. The Consecration of the Firstborn

The Israelites' firstborn were to be consecrated to God perpetually, as a reminder of the Israelites' redemption by the death of Egypt's firstborn. Jesus was consecrated to God in accordance with this law, since he was Mary's firstborn son (Luke 2:7 , 22-30).

The route to Canaan which the Israelites followed (Exodus 13:17) was not the direct route along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, since there were garrisons of Egyptian soldiers stationed along this route, which also went through the country of the Philistines. The most feasible route was the longer, but safer, way through the wilderness of the Sinai Peninsula (see What Route Did the Israelites Follow After the Exodus?).

The pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night (Exodus 21-22). As they left Egypt and had to travel through hostile territory, God took them under His own care, with this visible sign of His guidance and protection. It never left them until they reached the Promised Land, 40 years later (14:19 , 24 ; 33:9 , 10 ; 40:34-38 ; Numbers 9:15 , 23 ; 10:11).

(Halley's Bible Handbook; Henry Halley; 2000; Zondervan; Bible History and Commentaries; page 143)

Sanctification Of The Firstborn: VV 1-2 God spared the firstborn. The firstborn child always belonged to God and was set apart for God. VV 11-14 The firstborn son or animal had to be redeemed. If you wanted to keep the animal, then you purchased it from God. If you wanted to keep the animal, then you purchased it from God. If you didn't redeem it, you had to kill the animal. To redeem the firstborn child, you needed to offer a sacrifice unto the Lord. VV 17-20 The easiest, closest route to Israel would be right up the coast, through the land of the Philistines, actually making the journey within a week or so. But if the Philistines were to come out to meet them with war, their faith in God was not yet strong enough. Fear would grip their hearts and they would seek to return to Egypt. Their journey in the wilderness is necessary in order that they might have the experience of trusting God, learning what it is to have faith in God, and learning the power of God.

(Old Testament Study Guide; The Word For Today; 2005; Chuck Smith; Commentaries; page 30)

Sometimes God leads us the hard way instead of the easy way because He is doing a special work in us. How will we ever learn to lean on Him if everything in our lives is easy enough for us to handle by ourselves? God led the children of Israel the long, difficult way through the wilderness to prepare them for the battles they would face in possessing the Promised Land. He was concerned that when they saw the enemy they might run back to Egypt and become enslaved again in their former bondage. God wanted to teach them Who He was and that they could depend on Him to fight their battles.

Many of us think that when we enter into our Promised Land we will have no more spiritual battles. Not so! After the Israelites crossed the Jordan River and went in to possess the land of promise, they fought one battle after another. But as they learned to fight in God's strength and under His direction, they won their battles.

If you know God has asked you to do something, do not back down just because it gets hard. When things get tough, spend more time with Him, lean more on Him, and receive more grace from Him. Realize that grace comes at no cost to you; grace is the power of God working in you and through you to do those things you cannot do. As you face challenges in your life, beware of thoughts that say, I can't do this; it's just too hard. Do not let your mind give up! Satan knows that if he can defeat you in your mind, he can defeat you in your experience. That is why it is so important not to lose heart and not to grow weary or faint. You can be sure that wherever God leads you, He is able to keep you. He never will allow more to come on you than you can bear (see 1 Corinthians 10:13). You do not have to live in a constant struggle if you learn to continually lean on Him for the strength you need. The Everyday Life Bible.

Is It Time To Make a Change In Your Environment?**Hebrews 12:1**

Your biggest potential enemy in life (besides your own wrong thinking and the devil himself) is the environment in which you live. For instance, if you constantly live in an atmosphere of doubt and unbelief, it's just a fact that you'll have a much more difficult time maintaining a walk of strong faith. That doubt-filled environment will try to rub off on you! It's just a fact that your environment tends to affect you and the way you think. For example, if you used to smoke or if you used to have a drinking problem, it's obviously not a smart idea for you to hang around smokers or drinkers—unless, that is, you want to be influenced to return to your old habits. Hanging around people who still do these things may lure you to pick up a cigarette to take a smoke or to allow yourself one more small drink. However, those little allowances may possibly be the very hook that the devil uses to drag you back into the bondage from which Jesus Christ already delivered you. That's why it's vital for you to understand that the environment surrounding you is very important!

With this in mind, look at the phrase "... the sin which doth so easily beset us...." What kind of sin is this verse talking about? The words "so easily beset us" are from the Greek word euperistatos, a compound of three words: eu, peri, and statos. Let's look at all three of these words. The word eu usually means well, but in this case it carries the idea of something that feels well or something that is comfortable. The Greek word peri means around or being completely surrounded. The word statos is from the root word istimi, meaning to stand. When these three words are compounded, the new word describes something that comfortably stands all around you, such as a comfortable environment.

So this phrase in Hebrews 12:1 could be understood to say:

"... Lay aside the sin and the environment that so comfortably envelops you...."

Sometimes in order to make necessary changes in your life, you must physically remove yourself from an unprofitable situation. If you're not strong enough in your faith to stay there without being affected, you need to get up and get out of that unbelieving, negative environment—the one you've been comfortably living in for a long, long time. If you're not strong enough to overcome it, it will unquestionably try to reach out and drag you back into your old behavior again.

If God's admonition to lay aside every weight applies to you, then obey Him and make a break from that unhealthy environment! Perhaps old friends, old places, or wrong believing are trying to exert a bad influence on you and you're not resisting that influence too well. If that's the case, get out of there! For you, that environment is sin if it keeps you from fulfilling your potential in Jesus Christ.

Be honest as you consider your workplace, your friends, and your living conditions. Ask yourself, Is this environment conducive to my walk in Christ, or is it dragging me back down into the mire I was delivered from?

Your friends and your job are not so important that you should let them destroy your spiritual life. If you cannot successfully handle the environment you're in, get out of there. Then watch the Lord provide a better job and better friends than you've ever had in your life!

Your Christian life is serious business. Don't let your environment fill you with doubt and knock you out of your spiritual race! If you can't handle your environment victoriously, initiate a plan of action to change it today!

QUESTIONS FOR YOU TO CONSIDER

Have you been in any relationships or environments that you should have avoided? How did they affect your walk with God?

Are there any unprofitable situations or relationships that you need to remove yourself from now?

What steps can you take to start making better choices of friends and environments? What do you think the Lord wants you to do with your current relationships and places that you frequent?

Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

Psalm 48:1-14 (AMP)

1 GREAT IS the Lord, and highly to be praised in the city of our God! His holy mountain, 2 Fair and beautiful in elevation, is the joy of all the earth—Mount Zion [the City of David], to the northern side [Mount Moriah and the temple], the [whole] city of the Great King! 3 God has made Himself known in her palaces as a Refuge (a High Tower and a Stronghold). 4 For, behold, the kings assembled, they came onward and they passed away together. 5 They looked, they were amazed; they were stricken with terror and took to flight [affrighted and dismayed]. 6 Trembling took hold of them there, and pain as of a woman in childbirth. 7 With the east wind You shattered the ships of Tarshish. 8 As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it forever. Selah [pause, and calmly think of that]! 9 We have thought of Your steadfast love, O God, in the midst of Your temple. 10 As is Your name, O God, so is Your praise to the ends of the earth; Your right hand is full of righteousness (rightness and justice). 11 Let Mount Zion be glad! Let the daughters of Judah rejoice because of Your [righteous] judgments! 12 Walk about Zion, and go round about her, number her towers (her lofty and noble deeds of past days), 13 Consider well her ramparts, go through her palaces and citadels, that you may tell the next generation [and cease recalling disappointments]. 14 For this God is our God forever and ever; He will be our guide [even] until death.

(AMP Bible; The Everyday Life Bible; Joyce Meyers; Scripture; Commentaries; Past Pastor Sermons; Dictionary; 2006; pgs 107-108)
(Word 9 Bible Software; 2010; Concordance, Dictionary, Scripture, Sermons of Saints past, Maps, Devotionals; Sparkling Gems From The Greek)