

The Blessedness of Rest Series: 4

Enter The Rest By Faith

Hebrews 3.19 - Hebrews 4.3

Exodus 3.7-10

'*land flowing with milk and honey*' this phrase is recorded as spoken 5 times before Children of Israel arrive at Kadesh Barnea. After the spies had gone into the land and came back to report, twice it is used to describe the land.

They were in slavery, oppressed, in pain - 'I have come down to deliver them.. to bring them to a good and large land, flowing with milk and honey' I have come to give them rest. God had promised this people a land of blessing beyond their wildest dreams.

Exodus 4.30-31

"And Aaron spoke all the words which the LORD had spoken to Moses. Then he did the signs in the sight of the people. So the people believed; and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel and that He had looked on their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped"

The people ***believed the word*** spoken by Moses & Aaron. They were prepared to act on the word of God and leave Egypt.

This generation had never known blessing, only oppression and pain – but their faith in God brought them out. They had heard of the faith adventures of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and now the same God was about to take them on an adventure of faith.

- They saw the mighty hand of God at work to bring them out..
- They knew the blessing, prosperity and favour of God upon them..
- They saw God deliver them through the Red Sea..
- They saw their enemies (the Egyptians) defeated...
- For the first time in over 400 years they were out of Egypt and enjoyed camping at Elim (where they spent approx 1 month)...

Exodus 15.27

"Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees; so they camped there by the waters."

- Elim was an oasis in the desert place.
 - It was a place of palm trees and springs of fresh water, a place to be refreshed, and for the people of God to rediscover themselves and start to become the nation that God had purposed.
- Although they enjoyed 'resting' at Elim, this was not the rest that God had promised. There was something better ahead for them and the time came to move on.

Exodus 16.1

“And they journeyed from Elim, and the whole assembly of the children of Israel came into the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departure out of the land of Egypt”

- Next stop on the journey to this '*land flowing with milk and honey*' was Sinai.
- They entered the Wilderness of Sin 2½ months after leaving Egypt.
- It was here that they grumbled and complained about the lack of food/meat and God sent the Manna for them every morning and quail in the evening.
- After this they complained about the lack of water to drink (**Exodus 17.2**) and God provided water from the rock.
- God gave them a great victory over the Amalekites

Exodus 19.1-2

“In the third month after the children of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on the same day, they came to the Wilderness of Sinai. For they had departed from Rephidim, had come to the Wilderness of Sinai, and camped in the wilderness. So Israel camped there before the mountain”

Their arrival at Sinai was in the **third month** after leaving Egypt. They camped here for 2 years

- Here they received the Law – this would be the foundation of the forming of their nation.
- God gave Moses the instructions for building the Tabernacle – the place of meeting with God.

Even though they stayed here a long while, still this was not the rest that God had purposed for them and the time came for them to move on.

2 years 2 months 20 days after leaving Egypt they leave for the borders of the Promised Land – the place of rest.

“Now it came to pass on the twentieth *day* of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud was taken up from above the tabernacle of the Testimony. And the children of Israel set out from the Wilderness of Sinai on their journeys; then the cloud settled down in the Wilderness of Paran” Numbers 10.11-12

Because of their complaining they spend approx another 40 days under the judgement of God (Numbers 11-12)

Numbers 11.19-20, 33 (*one month*) Numbers 12.15-16 (*7 days*)

Moses sent twelve spies to go in and spy out the land (Numbers 13) – they were there for forty days (Numbers 13.25)

Numbers 14.1-11, 20-24

Approximately 2 years and 6 months after leaving Egypt the people were now ready to go in and possess the Promised Land, they were ready to enter the rest.

The twelve spies had gone through the land and brought back word concerning it. It was **just as God had said** – truly a land that flowed with milk and honey. Two of them, Caleb and Joshua, encouraged the people to believe God and enter in. But the other ten reported that it couldn't be done, the people are too strong, the cities fortified, there are giants in the land, the inhabitants are oppressed there – **it would be Egypt all over again.**

Here they are at the borders of the land and the rest that God had always promised them, but they didn't believe the word spoken by Joshua and Caleb, they rebelled against the word and rejected God.

Unbelief is the greatest sin – we need to have the spirit that Caleb had, the spirit of faith.

Because of their faith Joshua & Caleb were the only two of that entire generation that entered in to the land. The others could not enter in because of unbelief.

Lot's of Christians are like that – they have faith to be saved, but then struggle believing that God has something better for them. Maybe that's because too many well-intentioned Christians give bad reports like:

- “that was Bible days, this is the 21st century, things are different now”
- “worrying about it just shows you care”
- “you have to work when you can, the bills don't pay themselves”
- “those miracles passed away a long time ago”
- “you can't expect to be healthy all the time, everybody gets sick sooner or later”

Everybody has something to say – but what does God say? We need to put our faith in God and His word.

- Faith enters in to rest.
- When we trust God we can rest.
- When we have our confidence in God we can rest.

Next time we shall look at Abraham and see that he had an unwavering trust in God which led him to rest in God, even through the dark times.