

Cross Before Crown

Though God may, for a time, order his people to encamp by the bitter waters of Marah, that shall not always be their lot. Let us not faint at tribulations. – *Matthew Henry*

Exodus 15:22-24

22So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water.

23And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they *were* bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah.

24And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?

So soon after the miracle of the parting of the Red Sea and the singing of Moses and the children of Israel praises to the LORD; singing that He had triumphed gloriously (**Exodus 1:1**) and the LORD shall reign forever and ever (**Exodus 15:18**) the people soon forgot how the LORD had delivered them. But let us not judge too harshly the Children of Israel. Are we not also guilty of forgetting the grace and mercy of the LORD? Does not also a lack of trust and faithlessness spring forth from our hearts during times of tribulation? Are not tribulations the Divine Principle in the training of God's people? To make us fit for the LORDS service. **Zechariah 13:9** *And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.* **1Peter 1:7** *That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:*

Yes beloved we do well to remember the following:

Marah before Elim

Exodus 15:22-24

22So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water.

23And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they *were* bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah.

24And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?

The LORD could have led His children to sweet water before the bitter had He so chosen; but instead He took them to the bitter water at Marah. It is so often true in this fallen world that the LORD leads us through the bitter before He allows us to taste the sweet. This allows us to see the works He is doing in our lives and to recognize and experience His Love, Grace, and Faithfulness toward His children. Remember Marah before Elim and the wilderness before Canaan

Exodus 15:25-27

25And he cried unto the LORD; and the LORD shewed him a tree, *which* when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them,

As the tree made the waters sweet so did the work of Jesus the Christ on the cross; taking away the bitterness of sin and death from those that believes and accepts Him as LORD and SAVIOR.

What changes bitter to sweet for us?-the Cross, the remembrance of Christ's death. 'Consider Him that endured.' The Cross is the true tree which, when 'cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet.' - *MacLaren*

26And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I *am* the LORD that healeth thee.

27And they came to Elim, where *were* twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm trees: and they encamped there by the waters.

Cross Before Crown

Jesus endured the Cross before receiving the Crown. Are we any better than Jesus? God forbid the prideful heart that thinks so; for it is by the cross each of us carries and the burden we must endure that we are refined and grow in Christ and it is then that we most recognize His Grace and Strength upon us.

Matthew 10:38

And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

Matthew 16:24

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me*

Luke 9:23

And he said to *them* all, *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.*

We all have our crosses to bear; oh but to know Jesus is with us always and a Crown awaits those that love Him.

James 1:12

Blessed *is* the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

Worse before Better

John 2:10

And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: *but* thou hast kept the good wine until now.

While we will have to endure often times the worst in this fallen world; sin, sickness, and death; the good is yet to come to those who remain faithful and believe.

John 14:1-3

1Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

2In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

3And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

Suffering before Glory

Let us be wary of thinking that we should not have to endure hardship as the LORD Jesus had to suffer. For we surely think not that we are better than our Savior the LORD Jesus Christ.

Luke 24:26, 46

26Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

46And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

2Timothy 2:11-12

11It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him:

12If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:

Romans 8:17-18

17And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

18For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

2Corinthians 4:17-18

17For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory;

18While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.

1Peter 1:11

Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

1Peter 4:13

But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

1Peter 5:1,10

1The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

10But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle *you*.

Hebrews 12:11

Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

Psalms 126:6

He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves *with him*.

Psalms 66:10-12

10For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.

11Thou broughtest us into the net; thou laidst affliction upon our loins.

12Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy *place*.

John 16:20,22

20Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

22And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

Revelation 2:10

Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

Dearly beloved there shall surely be suffering in this fallen world; but we are not asked to partake of anything that our LORD and Savior has not already partaken of Himself. There is suffering before Glory, chastening before Righteousness, weeping before Rejoicing. However we will never be yoked with anything that we cannot bear. Let us

be Faithful. There is surely the cross before the crown; but a Crown and Eternal life surely awaits the children of the Living God.

1Corinthians 10:13

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*.

1Peter 5:4

And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

JESUS SAVES

R.E.G.