

GLENKIRK CHURCH



WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

# DEVO

AUGUST 26 - 30, 2024



# MONDAY

Read **Exodus 6:2-8**

## **Freedom. Redemption. Provision. Promise.**

The Book of Exodus begins as a story from freedom to bondage. Before Pharaoh ruled the land, the Israelites moved to Egypt where they would settle for some time. Over this transitory time to Egypt, the Israelites started growing their community and eventually the land was filled with their people. New to power and a deep fear of a large community of non-Egyptians going against his leadership, Pharaoh enslaved the Israelites. Slave masters were tasked with making the Israelites' lives miserable as they were forced into labor to build cities and work in the fields (Exodus 1:7-12). For years to come, the Israelites remained in bondage to the Egyptians. Each day that passed slowly built their new reality of suffering with no way out on their own.

Amid their pain, bondage, and tears, God remembered the covenant made with them in Genesis. He assured the Israelites that they would not be abandoned to their suffering in Egypt. God promised not only to free them from their bondage but also to redeem them completely from the evil system Pharaoh had created. As He led them to the Promised Land, God would reveal Himself in ways that made it clear that He was their God. Through these promises, their daily sufferings would be exchanged for God's daily presence of

provision and peace. God saw their plight and responded with exactly what they needed—freedom, redemption, provision, and promise.

Since the beginning of time, God has made promises to humankind and God's people. There are countless accounts in the Bible, Church history, literature, and even our own lives where we can look back on the promises God has made and the ways God has fulfilled them. The promise made in Exodus 6 to the Israelites continues through the story of Israel, through Jesus and His ministry, and through the work of the Holy Spirit today. Where there is bondage, God will bring freedom. Where there is condemnation, God will redeem. Where there is a lack, God will provide. Where there is doubt, God will remind us of the unbreakable promise to be enough for us each day.

## QUESTIONS

How have you experienced God's promises of freedom, redemption, provision, or peace in your own life? In what areas of your life do you need to be reminded of God's provision and promise? How can you seek His presence in these areas?

## PRAYER

For His Children (FHC)

Pray that the eleven children transferred from For His Children's (FHC's) Latacunga Orphanage to its Quito Orphanage will quickly adapt to their new friends, caregivers and environment. These are children who have no significant physical or mental limitations. They have been moved to provide more room at Latacunga for FHC's unadoptable Forever Family.

# TUESDAY

Read **Exodus 16:1-30**

God's promise to bring freedom, redemption, and provision rang true as the Israelites were led out of Egypt through the Red Sea. As the Israelites felt the promised freedom on the other side, their whole being exuded joy through song and dance. However, this joy from living in the reality of God's promises faded. Upon gaining their new freedom, the Israelites would spend the next forty years wandering in the desert as they struggled to trust fully in God's daily provision.

At this point in the story, the Israelites find themselves in the desert without food or drink. Readers could only imagine how tired and hungry they must have been after traveling for over two months. Lacking their basic needs, the Israelites started to panic and doubt the security of God's promise to be their provision. Grumbling and fearing death, the Israelites only saw two ways out—either to be back under the oppressive rule of Pharaoh or to die of starvation in the barren desert.

God heard their grumbling and reminded the Israelites that He would fill their daily needs of food and water. Manna was provided in the morning and quail in the evening. God gave specific instructions on the consumption and storage of the manna. God provided enough manna each day and on the sixth day God provided enough for two

days so that the Israelites can maintain rest on the seventh day. Manna appeared every morning; therefore, they were instructed not to store any extra. If they did, the leftover manna would rot and become inedible.

Now why would God provide only enough for the day and not allow any extra? Considering how panicked the Israelites are, it seems like extra would be exactly what they needed! While stowing extra manna would solve their anxiety of lack for a short period, this does not truly solve their problem. The Israelites did not need food for the week; rather they needed to be filled each day. Therefore, God commanded the Israelites to gather only what was needed each day to embrace and live in the promise of God's daily provision. Manna is more than filling their appetite; it is an invitation to grow in trusting God.

## QUESTIONS

What does this story teach us about the importance of daily dependence on God? How can we apply this principle in our lives today?

## PRAYER

For His Children (FHC)

Pray for the "Forever" young adult orphans who, by government mandate, are too old to be adopted and who were infrequently adopted prior to turning 18 because they suffer from severe physical and mental conditions. They need more space, personalized treatment and care to cope with daily life.

# WEDNESDAY

Read **Exodus 16:31-35**

One of the most beautiful parts about being a Christian today is that we come from a long line of believers whom we can look to for encouragement and wisdom in our walk with God. As we know, the walk of a Christian is not to be done alone, but amidst the community of all believers. In times of trouble, one of my favorite ways to seek encouragement from believers of the past is to sing hymns. Seeing how fellow believers have praised God amidst their difficult circumstances gives me words to speak to God that I could not muster on my own. These words act as a physical symbol that reminds me of who God was, is, and will continue to be.

I am reminded of the privilege of the extravagant gift of the Christian community as I read about the Israelites in Exodus. A people who experienced deep suffering in a land that was not their own now moved into a new land as they seek to find where their home will be. Under great transition and high emotion, they are not only surviving each day, but they are also learning to trust in a God they have never seen. They do not have access to books to see how fellow believers have experienced God in deep times of need. They are without phones to call fellow believers to ask for wisdom on how to keep faith in God. While they have each other there to encourage one another, they must heavily trust in God.

After God provided daily manna to the Israelites, God commanded them to create a symbol for future generations to remember what had happened in the desert. They were instructed to place manna in a jar so that future generations could see what God had provided as food in the desert. Manna became more than just sustenance; it was also a powerful symbol of remembrance that God would continue the promise given in the desert to future generations. They would see manna and remember the bread of the desert that gave sustenance and placed God in the proper place as the source from whom all things come.

## QUESTIONS

The manna in the jar was a symbol of remembrance for the Israelites. What are your symbols of remembrance? How has this helped you to remember who God is?

## PRAYER

### For His Children (FHC)

Pray for the children as they enjoy their summer break and attend VBS. FHC staff prepared activities and lessons to share with them to reinforce the truths about the Jesus they have learned about at church.

# THURSDAY

Read **Mark 6:30-44, 50-52**

Mark 6 begins with Jesus and His disciples resting on a boat. From the shore many people saw them and a crowd formed. Jesus, seeing the crowd, stepped out of the boat and taught them until the evening. As night approached, the disciples wanted to send the crowd away to get something to eat. Refusing to send them away hungry, Jesus sent the disciples to find food to feed the crowd. They returned with five loaves and two fish. Taking the five loaves and two fish, Jesus looked to heaven, blessed the food, and gave the food to all who were present. They ate until all were satisfied (Mark 6:41-42).

After the crowd was fed, Jesus retreated to the mountain to pray while the disciples returned to the boat. As a storm arose, Jesus saw the disciples struggling and miraculously walked on the water toward their boat. Understandably, the disciples were awe-struck by seeing a Man walk on water; Mark 6:52 says, *“They were completely amazed, for they had not understood about the loaves.”*

What was so baffling about the loaves that Jesus walking on the water did not have their full attention? There was something about the loaves that the disciples were unable to discern. Perhaps they wanted to know precisely how five loaves and two fish fed five thousand people, but maybe it reminded them of something they had heard before. (Cynthia Jarvis and Elizabeth Johnson, Editors)

As I read this miracle of Jesus, I am reminded of the manna God provided in the desert. God gave the Israelites enough for each day just as Jesus gave everyone in the crowd enough to satisfy them. Could this be why the disciples were so perplexed? Could they see the connection Jesus was trying to make?

For generations, the symbol of manna had been passed down to remind people of God’s promise to them. Only God could rain down manna from heaven! Only God could provide enough food for five thousand people to be satisfied! In Mark 6, Jesus showed the disciples that He is the Son of God by recalling a story many would know, showing them and the crowd that He would fulfill the promises God had made many years before. (Jarvis and Johnson)

## QUESTIONS

Has there been a time in your life when you did not understand something God was trying to make you aware of? What was your understanding? What was God trying to teach you?

## PRAYER

For His Children (FHC)

Pray for the spiritual life of the staff at FHC. Pray that God will provide opportunities for them to share, to speak boldly about the Gospel, and to show His endless love, grace, mercy and compassion.

# FRIDAY

Read [John 6:30-40](#)

## From Heaven for the Life of the World

Today's pericope in John begins with a question from the disciples about what sign Jesus will give them so they can know for certain they are to believe in Him. It should not come as a shock to us that the disciples mentioned the manna from Exodus as we know this was a story of promise long passed down. By asking this, the disciples wanted to know that Jesus would provide their daily needs just as God did for their ancestors. Rather than just confirming that Jesus would provide the daily bread that God did, Jesus proclaims He is the true bread, the Bread of Life.

While Jesus does have concern for the physical needs of people, this passage seeks to illuminate the ways Jesus provides for our spiritual needs. Jesus has come to earth by the will of the Father to bring whoever believes in Him into eternal life. The bread Jesus offers, then, is not one of physical sustenance but of spiritual wholeness where every physical, emotional, and spiritual need is met. Belief in Jesus is the promise of His perpetual availability to us in the present life and eternal life.

Jesus is the sign the disciples had asked for. He is the sign that the promise of the manna still rings true, and He is the promise there is a greater hope for those who believe in Him. The continued promise from the desert is now extended to eternal life with Jesus as He

asks us to believe in Him. Belief in Jesus is not just subscribing to a set of beliefs, but it is entering into a relationship that dramatically alters the way we live.

Through knowing Jesus, we slowly become more like Jesus as our actions and thoughts are transformed to look more like the mindset of heaven as we love others deeply, seek justice and freedom passionately, and pray for all to be redeemed to God. In accepting the invitation Jesus offers, we experience the promise in its entirety while becoming bearers of the same promise to the entire world.

## QUESTIONS

In what ways has God shown you that He gives life to the world? How does this promise of "life to the world" expand our understanding of God? How does it affect our participation in our faith? How does it affect our relationships with others?

## PRAYER

### For His Children (FHC)

Praise God for His protection over little Rebecca as she had pneumonia and was hospitalized. She is back at the home and recovering well. Also, give thanks and praises for the very talented hospital medical personnel who are available to FHC when it needs care beyond its capabilities.



## Sources

- Thoughts for Thursday and Friday were taken from the *Feasting on the Gospels* series, Cynthia A. Jarvis and E. Elizabeth Johnson, Editors (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015).

*These devotionals are written by a team of Glenkirk volunteers who represent a range of beliefs within the evangelical spectrum. As such, some of the expressed views may not necessarily represent those of pastoral leadership. If you find yourself challenged by a devo, explore why that might be and, should you have questions or concerns, please reach out to Pastor Kate Wallace Nunneley at [KNunneley@GlenkirkChurch.org](mailto:KNunneley@GlenkirkChurch.org). If you are interested in joining those who pen Glenkirk devotionals, please contact Pastor Kate.*

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