Discovering Exodus: Finding prayer points, testimonies, reflection and journaling questions that will engage your heart with the Father.

Chapter 5:

**□ The Invitation**: Invite the Holy Spirit to show you something new as you read through the chapter. The Father desires to meet with you and share something with you today. You may find it in the reading or you may hear His Voice speaking to Your Spirit in the quiet of this moment.

**□ The Reading:** Read Exodus Chapter 5. Record any thoughts from the chapter, questions you have or verses that the Holy Spirit highlighted to you while reading.

**□ The Focus**: Today’s focus is a journaling question. Write your thoughts as you meet with the Father.

At the beginning of chapter 5, Moses, the reluctant hero, with his brother, Aaron, approaches Pharaoh and tells Pharaoh that the God of Israel says, “*Let my people go, so they may hold a festival to me in the wilderness”* (verse 1). Pharaoh’s response is one of arrogance and pride, refusing to let the Israelites go. He says, *“I do not know the Lord and I will not let Israel go*” (verse 2). That same day Pharaoh increased the harsh conditions of the Israelites oppression (verses 6-18) and even the Israelite community rejects Moses and Aaron for their meddling.

The last two verses of chapter 5 are what I want to focus your attention on. “*Moses returned to the Lord and said, ‘Why Lord, why have you brought trouble on this people? Is this why you sent me? Ever since I went to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has brought trouble on this people, and you have not rescued your people at all*,’” verses 22-23. Can you hear his disappointment and discouragement? Something commendable is that Moses went straight to the Lord. He knew where to turn with his disappointment.

After the first setback, Moses wanted to quit. He had already forgotten what God spoke to him at the burning bush encounter. “*But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless a mighty hand compels him,”* Exodus 3:19. One of the hardest seasons our family has gone through began in early 2010. I was preparing for a study I was teaching and I felt the prompting from the Lord to go through Hebrews 11, what faith looks like. His whisper to me at the beginning of 2010 was that faith would be needed to walk through what was coming. Then as our “dark night of the soul” season fell upon us, I went to the Lord with questions and disappointment that looked a lot like Moses’ conversation with God. And the Lord reminded me that He had spoken to me earlier that year about what would be needed in this season, faith (what I was preparing and teaching on). It is easier to receive something needed in an encounter with God than it is when it has to be worked out in your life!

Moses’ discouragement caused him to doubt his ability and call. His fears came back and insecurity. Am I really the man for the job? And in his questions, you can hear the question that isn’t spoken: Are you really good, God? Moses had an expectation that when he approached Pharaoh with his request that it would be met with a “Yes, I will let God’s people go!” Part of Moses’ disappointment was his expectation. All disappointments are the result of an unmet expectation. Moses didn’t know the end of the story, so his strength was shaken. But the Lord was more interested than just getting freedom for His people. He wanted their hearts. He wanted them to trust Him and to know Him in an experiential way. He was preparing them to be His people. This would take more than one exchange with Pharaoh.

We know the end of Moses’ story so we can tend to get frustrated with Moses. But we don’t know the end of our own stories. We too can get stuck in discouragement and disappointment because what we expected hasn’t happened. Have you had the thought, “God are you really good?” when you have walked through a trial or a “dark night of the soul” season?

Something I want you to remember is that God uses adversity to train you! You are stronger than you think. Belief is formed in you through trials. Trust is formed in you when you see God’s faithfulness in your circumstances. God’s perspective is different than yours. Could it be that what you and I walk through is so that we would trust God more and that we would know Him better, letting Him have all of who we are.

When our family walked through this very hard season, when we even struggled to see where God was working or if He was working, I had two truths that I spoke out daily. I want to share those with you, so when you are in a trial or a “dark night of the soul”, when you can’t see what moves God is making for your deliverance, you have something to hold onto that is true. He if faithful! He is good! This I know to be true!

I woke each day saying:

1. **Today, Jesus I choose to not be offended by You no matter what my circumstances look like.**  Matthew 11:6 Jesus said, “*Blessed is he who is not offended because of me*.” (Jesus spoke this to John’s disciples. John was in prison and what he expected wasn’t happening. Jesus told his disciples to go back to John and tell him those words.)
2. **Today I will not waiver in unbelief but I will be strengthened in my faith!** Romans 4:20-21 gives the account of Abraham who waited 25 years for the promise of a son to be fulfilled. It is said of him, **“***Yet he did not waiver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised***.”** I spoke these 2 verses out loud many times a day. They brought encouragement and truth to my soul.

“Trust is a foundational belief in God’s goodness in the midst of the unexplainable.” Bart Hadaway*, Dealing With Disappointment*

Journaling question 1: Have there been times that you expected God to do something and it didn’t turn out the way you wanted?

Journaling question 2: What did you do with your disappointment? Did you push it aside and yet it still lurks in your heart? Or did you press in to God and ask Him to reveal Himself to you in a deeper way?

Journaling question 3: Are there any steps you need to take to address some unresolved issues in your heart?