

# All Saints Cathedral Kampala

Sermon Notes for Morning Glory Service on Tuesday April 5, 2016

Season Theme: STUDY OF THE BOOK OF EXODUS

Day's Theme: Our God the Provider

## Introduction

Looking our theme for this morning, we see a familiar thread that runs from the earlier chapters we studied right through the entire book of Exodus. This thread is the realization the exodus was not simply a change of physical/geographical location from Egypt – the land of oppression to the promised land ultimately.

Beyond that, the entire exodus journey instead seems to have been much more about God revealing himself to his people in a manner they had not known until then. Among others, this was evident in;

- \* The miraculous multiplication of the children of Israel inspite of extreme adversity. (Exodus 1:8-12)
- \* The fear of God demonstrated by the Hebrew midwives in refusing to kill the male children of Israel at the risk of severe sanction by Pharaoh. (Exodus 1:15-21)
- \* God revealing himself to Moses through the burning bush as the Great I am. (Exodus 3)
- \* God making a clear distinction between the children of Israel and the Egyptians during the 10 plagues, culminating in the Red Sea experience. (Exodus 7 – 14)

In fact it is this revelation of God that ultimately sparked the song of praise in Exodus 15. We see this same pattern of breaking out into praise in other characters like Hannah (1 Samuel 2), David who sang many songs of praise that are recorded in the books of the Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, and the Psalms, Deborah in Judges and Mary the mother of Jesus in Luke 1. And indeed even in our lives today, every revelatory encounter of God still illicit praise...

## The Contradiction

It is therefore quite striking that only 2 months after coming out of Egypt, all the miraculous experiences seemed to vanish into distant memory. Rather than using those great miraculous experiences to build their faith to trust God for the journey ahead, the children of Israel instead succumbed to grumbling, going as far as to even suggest the unthinkable – that their lives were better off in Egypt!!!

Beloved, isn't it interesting how challenges often tend to shorten our memories and cause us to forget the good God has been to us in the past, while at the same time reducing our entire vision of the future to no more than the next moment – hour/day/deal/meal, etc.

Then suddenly we forget that God actually promised us among other things, life in its fullness (John 10:10) and a full life span ...

This was the trap Esau fell into when he sold his birthright for the proverbial plate of posho and beans, as I usually like to tell students...

Genesis 25:29-34

It is a deadly trap we need to guard against falling into!

Thinking about it closely, perhaps this grumbling was a symptom of a disease called, 'the Exodus generation syndrome' – since this was a generation comprising entirely of people who were born in Egypt, and therefore were probably not as rooted in their faith as their fathers.

We see a striking parallel of this in Judges 2:10-13, when a generation came after Joshua that did not know God and plunged Israel into cycles of darkness.

The two cases contrast sharply with the faith response of their great grand father Abraham who was the first person to whom God revealed himself as Jehovah Jireh – the Lord our Provider in Genesis 22.

### **Pertinent Lessons for Us**

Perhaps quite remarkably, it is striking that both responses of faith by Abraham on the one hand and grumbling by his descendants on the other actually obtained the provision they were seeking.

However as we see in another similar occasion in Numbers 11 when yet another craving for food (provision) led them to grumble again, that provision came at a high cost because while the meat was still in their teeth, God struck them with a plague to communicate his disapproval of grumbling as a means of seeking provision.

Numbers 11:33-34

So we need to follow Abraham's example in raising our faith to trust our God the Provider, and that not simply for manner and quail, which probably represents our immediate personal and nuclear family needs.

We must look beyond manna and quail to believe God for kingdom purposes that are far bigger than us and that will outlive us such as;

- ✓ Evangelizing the many young people of our Country
- ✓ Taking the battle to the gates of the enemy in the market place (Genesis 22:7, Psalm 127:5, 1 Corinthians 9:7)
- ✓ Wresting back governance from the ever tightening grip of the wicked.
- ✓ Fulfilling our missionary mandate as a Country
- ✓ Building the Cathedral and many other unfinished sanctuaries,
- ✓ Etc.

I believe if we Anglicans in particular needed any wake call in that regard, then we were duly served one by the recently published Census results whose headlines provided for sober reading;

Population of Muslims – Up

Population of Pentecostals – Up

Population of Anglicans – Down

Population of Catholics – Down

This telling growth trajectory suggests that the Anglicans and Catholics who largely seem to believe in growth primarily through reproduction (with most of the conversions in them being of people who already belonged to those denominations rather than attracting converts from other faiths altogether) will ultimately not cope with the Muslims and Pentecostals who believe in growth by both reproduction and conversion.

So the statistics of 85% Christian that we've for so long been finding solace in might radically change over the next 50 years and reduce us to a tiny minority if we don't shift our orientation to an offensive footing.

That will require substantial provision far beyond just manna and quail...

It's therefore my prayer that God will stir in us the level of faith to believe him for more than just manna and quail.

God bless you,

Mawa Michael

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