

Dear Friends,

Exodus 17: 5-7

The people are anxious. In the wilderness they do not have enough water to drink. Moses is frightened, the mood of the people is becoming nasty, he fears that they are about to pick up stones and throw them at him. God is teaching Moses to manage his fear. He has received part one of a two-part lesson in overcoming it. He has learnt that there is no way around fear. He is going to have to face it and go through it.

God, however, has other instructions which will help Moses and will result in the people getting the water they need. God tells Moses to pass before the people with his staff in his hand. He is then to go to a rock. What could be drier than a rock in the desert? Is there anywhere where you are less likely to find water? God promises to stand on the rock in front of Moses. There's part two of Moses lesson in overcoming fear. When the dreaded moment arrives, God will be with him. It's also a lesson for you. When you pass through the waters, God will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned and the flame shall not consume you. Even though you walk through the darkest valley you need fear no evil for God is with you.

So, God will be ahead of Moses standing on the rock. Moses is to strike the rock with his staff. When he does, water will flow and the people may drink.

It would be nice for Moses to have a trial run. He could go out at night, when everyone's asleep and no one is looking. He could tap the rock with his staff and see if it works, see if the water comes. If it does it will give him confidence to pass before the menacing group of people. But God does not invite Moses to have a dummy run. He is going to have to trust God in the moment when it matters.

Moses is open to God and what God says. He passes before the people. They do not stone him. He goes to the rock. He takes his staff and strikes it. Water flows and the people drink.

They learn that the Lord is their shepherd. They shall not want. He makes them lie down in green pastures. He leads them beside still waters. He restores their souls.

God worked with that group of people, setting them free from fear and anxiety, teaching them to trust and be open to God. God is now working with you, setting you free from fear and anxiety, teaching you to trust and be open to God.

God fed them with bread from heaven, bread for their bodies, but also bread for their souls for you shall not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God. God is now feeding you with bread from heaven, the word that comes from God's mouth.

As God gave them water from a rock, so God leads you to Jesus, the spiritual rock, and to his cross and to the water that flows from his side, water which is as bright as crystal, living water which gushes up in you to eternal life.

God bless you,

Tony