

Yahweh your healer

SMALL GROUP NOTES

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Scriptures

Exodus 15: 22-27

Scripture context

The people of Israel have been miraculously rescued. They have walked through the sea on dry land, their pursuing enemies consumed behind them. The Lord has redeemed them from slavery.

But the rejoicing we read about in Exodus 15: 1-21 quickly disappears at the first sign of trouble. The tambourines go silent; the dancing stops, the grumbling starts. They are in the wilderness and the only water is undrinkable because of its bitterness. The issue is not that their situation wasn't challenging – naturally they needed drinking water or they would die. The problem was their quick forgetfulness of the Lord's power and faithfulness. But rather than rebuke them, God uses the opportunity to reveal a new name to them; 'Yahweh your healer.'

Did you know?

- Exodus 12: 37-38 tells us that there were about six hundred thousand men as well as women and children who made up the travelling nation, as well as all their livestock. Therefore the absence of drinkable water at Marah was a massive issue.
- The word for 'healer' in verse 26 is the Hebrew word *ropeh* and means heal, restore and make healthy.

Question for study and discussion

1. When you're faced with a challenging situation, are you more likely to respond like the people of Israel or Moses?
2. The Lord turns the bitter water sweet. What gospel truth do you see in this picture?
3. Read verse 26. God's promise of healing and protection for Israel seems to be conditional on their obedience. What do we make of that and is the same true for us today?
4. What do you need healing for? Share and pray for one another.

Digging Deeper

Do a word study around *water*, *rivers* and *streams*. What themes do you see emerging and what do these tell us about our condition and God's heart.

Resources for further study / devotion

Incomparable; Explorations in the character of God, by Andrew Wilson.

Surprised by the power of the Spirit, by Jack Deere; Chapter 9: Why does God heal? & Chapter 11 Why God doesn't heal?

Everyday Supernatural, by Mike Pilivachi & Andy Croft; Chapter 9: 'Praying for Healing.'

Following his talk from Sunday Geoff fed back that he felt that as a congregation we participated in a significant time of listening and responding to the Holy Spirit. Some people may value returning to words of knowledge / prophecies that were shared for further reflection and prayer. So we have transcribed these here to make them available to you:

Encouragement from Mark:

I feel today what the Lord wants to do with us is surgery. Sometimes we lay hands on people and they are healed instantly and it's wonderful. That might happen this morning – people are prayed for and healed straight away. We know that we have a God that heals.

But I also feel this morning that for some people there is a balance between aesthetic and surgery. Now the anaesthetic can take pain away. But it's pointless without the surgery. So this isn't a time of just sharing things that make people feel good.

But also if there was surgery without anaesthetic that would be an incredibly painful experience. Actually things might get sorted out but the experience could just be too painful.

What I feel this morning is that as people come up the front and share what the Lord has given them it is so important that we get that balance right between love and truth. That's what our Father wants to do this morning.

Some people have already shared some stuff with me that soon I'll be asking them to share. It is so important that as we pray together and respond that this is a safe place. People need to know that there is abounding love from the Lord. Also there is real truth, God doesn't just want to make us feel good does he? He is actually serious about this and wants to get us in a long-term healthy place.

Those are the principals that we are working within this morning, that whether people are sharing words for individuals or us as a congregation. It is to build people up and encourage them. Making sure there isn't condemnation lumped on people.

I would love you to pray in small groups with those around you and respond to what God is saying:

Kim:

While we were busy preparing this morning, two words that the Lord gave me were reconciliation and restoration. I really felt like the Lord wants to restore fathers to their sons. If you have angered your son - it says "...Do not provoke your children to anger...". I just felt like you need to restore that relationship with your child. If you are a son and you have caused that anger, you have dishonoured your parents... I feel like there is so much restoration that needs to be done in that. This is for mothers to daughters and fathers to sons.

This is also for sons in the house of a church. If you have dishonoured leadership in any way this morning I feel like there is restoration that needs to take place. There needs to be a reconciliation of your heart towards the leaders in the church as well.

So if that is in your heart this morning I feel like the Lord wants to reconcile but then restore. There comes a brokenness in our hearts when we have dishonoured one another. I really felt this morning: reconciliation is going to take place and with that the restoration where growth can come.

God want to bring a unity in this church like we have never seen. I think it starts with confessing our sin one to another. So if there is any discord between brothers this morning – sometimes we heckle and are just jovially joking. But something takes root in our heart. I just feel like God wants to uproot that and bring reconciliation. So that restoration can come.

Sarah:

I feel like there is a lady here who, you really love to sing and I just had a picture of overwhelming waves of depression each morning. Where you just wake up and it's like a black cloud over you and you're just struggling to see. I just felt that the presence of God want to come to you just like a mighty wind blow that cloud away.

To refresh you and to restore your soul. To enable you to sing and victory will come as you sing. There are stories of battle in the Old Testament where the people walked out and they didn't actually fight. They just sang and the enemies were slaughtered. Victory came. I pray that for you this morning.

Kathryn:

I was reading the story of Matthew 8 in the Jesus Storybook Bible to Annabeth the other day. It is a story where Jesus is on a boat and he's with his disciples and they face a great storm. The winds and waves are tossing this boat around. The disciples in the boat are incredibly frightened and are wondering where God is. They wake Jesus up and Jesus says "Why where you worried?" He stands up and faces the storm and goes: "Shhhhh".

I feel like God wants to bring peace to storms within heads this morning. I feel like if you are somebody who struggles with anxiety similar to Geoff – as he so bravely shared with us. I feel like can I ask you to be brave this morning – place your hand on your head, I just want to pray for you:

Lord Jesus - thank you so much that you are powerful enough to calm the storms. We thank you that the wind and the waves know your name. So we speak to these anxious thoughts. These thoughts of fear and we say cease now in Jesus' name. We say be quiet in Jesus' name. We say you have no place in the mind of this son or daughter of the living God in Jesus' name. We pray "Shhhhh, shhhhh" in Jesus' name. Hallelujah.

Mike:

I believe I have a word for those of you who feel crushed by the world. The Bible describes the world as one of our enemies. "...The world, the flesh and the devil..."

Being out in the world – we're commanded to do it and be there. But it is a place that is corrupted. It can corrupt us. We can take on the values and behaviours of the world. I believe this morning God wants to heal you of that, he wants to take those things off. He wants to take off those effects. He wants to take away those attitudes and behaviours. So that you can go into the world.

This is Mark 16: "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to all creation." A verse or so later: "These signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will drive out demons. They will speak in new tongues. They will pick up snakes in their hands and when they drink deadly poison it will not hurt them at all. They will place their hands on sick people and they will get well."

Not only does God want to heal you from the impact of the world. He wants to –proof you from the impact of the world. So that you can go out there and impact if for him.

Luke:

A few weeks ago God brought this to mind. God highlights things because he loves us, very much so. I feel the some people here. You are looking at things that you shouldn't look at. That you are playing around with people that you shouldn't be playing around with.

God loves us because he highlights that. He wants you to walk into the light not hide things. He loves us so much. If that's you I would encourage you to share that with someone that you trust so that they can walk that through with you.

Also there was someone else I felt that possibly a family member had spoken over you that "You were no good". This was spoken to you and you believed it. You believed a lie that you are no good. God says that you are my beloved child. He wants to replace the hurt and the pain with joy and peace in your heart to take away all that pain and hurt from you.

Penny:

Geoff was speaking about healing of emotions, physical healing and spiritual healing. Also in that I just felt really drawn to: God want so heal those of us who suffer with mental illness. In 2 Timothy 1 v7: Kathryn preached on this recently. "For Gods has not given us a spirit of fear but of power and of love and of a sound mind."

How do we get a sound mind? God says to be transformed by the renewal or our minds.

I'm aware that often God has promises for us. But there is something he wants us to do here. We have that responsibility. To be transformed by the renewal of our mind is to feed ourselves on his truth, on his word and all these truths we have heard today.

When we feed on Him, when we seek Him with all our hearts he says: "We will find him, he will come to us." He will bring that healing in every area of our lives that we need.

Joshua:

I just felt the Lord give me a word for someone: He has given you a heart for Africa. Specifically children that are going hungry. But he is calling you to be patient.

Just like David was anointed to be king but he had to go back into the fields first. To be a Shepherd. God was equipping him there. I sense the Lord saying to someone today: yes you have a heart for Africa. But you can't feed them until you have been fed. So be fed by the Lord!

If that's you God's calling you to be patient, here is calling you to spend time with the Lord and be fed. That you would then be able to feed others.

Seb:

God gave me a picture last week. I suddenly felt it was relevant for today. It was quite simply an expanse of water. Very still. In French we say that "it is water like oil" It's so still it doesn't move – there are no ripples. I had this perfect reflection on it. The reflection was words of anxiety, nervousness and fear. Those words were all over the reflection. They gripped me and I could feel the weight of them on my heart and on my shoulders. I heard God say "Step into the water, that's where my Spirit is."

As I put my foot in a couple of ripples went out and they disturbed the water and those words of anxiety, nervousness, angst and fear getting a bit shaky.

I felt – quite good about that. Unfortunately the water went still again and those words came back. I heard God again say "Walk in to the water". And as I walked into the water I disturbed the water even more. The reflection got even fuzzier and it was a weight off my shoulders.

But every time I stopped going into the water those words came back. God said "Just dive in, that's where I am. I am in the water."

We've talked about water so much today in terms of his Holy Spirit. "Dive into my Holy Spirit, dive into my water". As I did that those words disappeared. I could not see the reflection anymore. Whether it was disturbed or not anymore it wouldn't matter. I was in his Spirit. It covered me and all of that weight just disappeared.

If you are seeing anxiety or nervousness or fear before you. If you are being weighed down by one of these: dive into the spirit. Not just step in, not just walk in and walk back out. Just go dive in and allow God to take that weight and allow him to take that yolk as Jesus did on the cross.

That same Jesus who said in Matthew 11: Come to me all labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. We sometimes sing "Holy spirit you are welcome here, come flood this place and fill the atmosphere." That idea of flood is dunked under, completely diving in. It continues "Your glory God is what our heart longs for, to be overcome by your presence Lord."

That's just the encouragement this morning: let yourself be overcome, not by angst, not by fear but by His presence and his spirit. Dive in and be healed

Tom:

There is a woman here who has a miscarriage, and she is pregnant and she has a clawing fear about the outcome of the pregnancy. This is not a genealogical word. This is a word that the Lord wants to take away that clawing, intense anxiety and fear. He wants to come and give profound peace.

I just want to pray for you to respond within your own heart: Lord I pray for peace to come you. I pray for the peace of the Lord to flood into her in the name of Jesus.