

“So Moses cried out to the Lord for help, and the Lord showed him a piece of wood. Moses threw it into the water, and this made the water good to drink. It was there at Marah that the Lord set before them the following decree as a standard to test their faithfulness to him. He said, “If you will listen carefully to the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in his sight, obeying his commands and keeping all his decrees, then I will not make you suffer any of the diseases I sent on the Egyptians; for I am the Lord who heals you.” Exodus 15:25-26 NLT

lectio // Exodus 15:22-27

There are to be places and experiences that are just bad, bitter-bad. This bitter place was called Marah which is Hebrew for bitter. This is what Naomi (which means pleasant) in the book of Ruth, wants her named to be changed to Mara (which means bitter). Which just so “happens” to be the name of Jesus’ mother - Mary. Life can be bitter at times. And many of the paths that lead us to promise or places filled with “milk and honey” will take us through these bitter places. The bitter water found three days into the desert from the Red Sea experience must have given them all PTSD. They remembered how awful the plagues were back in Egypt, the ones that attacked the country in their health, social life, and economy (sound familiar). God made a solid promise to them even before the ten commandments existed. “Listen,” God said. “Do right,” he said. “Obey,” he said. And, if you’ll do that the Egyptian curses will just be a long forgotten, bitter memory. Then he said, “I AM... the Lord who heals.” So going forward, bitter or bad or plague style catastrophes, even if you get them - God will provide the piece of wood (forward look at the cross) to heal you. Do we still run into “bitter waters” after wandering three days, in the desert, looking for water? Yep, we sure do. And through the provided “wood” there will be a solution, a cleansing, a healing of that bitter place. The very next stop after Marah, bitter springs and bad memories we find them at “the oasis of Elim, where they found twelve springs and seventy palm trees.” Exodus 15:27

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Dad,

I certainly don’t want to stuck at some bitter springs, puking my guts out and having flashbacks of being in Downey, I am Egypt! I know the roads I travel to the places and purposes you have for me WILL include Marah’s. I want to hold on to your word to listen, do right and obey. I know healing will be there and you’ll get me a little further down the trail to the oasis of twelve springs and seventy palm trees. And don’t think I didn’t notice the number reflecting the future tribes of Israel and the Seventy elders who were appointed by Moses 😊.

contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root