

Exodus, Daily Living
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Pastor David Brown

They go to these guys that used to own us and say hey let me have all your money and they're like okay. They knock on your door and say hey can I have all your wives jewelry; they are like yes you can. Knock on the door and say hey can I have your 401K would you cash it out? Yes you can take everything I have. See they were trying to appease this god who had brought all these plagues upon them and so they had just given all of their riches, all the riches of Egypt were given to these Israelites and here they are loaded down, they've got food, they've got money, they've got livestock. They've got everything they need and then they pass through the water and instead of taking a left they take a right. Now I want you to hear today, if you know your geography of that land, if they had taken a left they would have been in the promise land in three days. A three day journey they would have walked in the promise land they would have had all the food they needed, all the livestock they needed, they could have bought the land if they had wanted to they had so many riches and they could have moved in and things could have been just happily ever after. They could have set up places lived in houses, planted farms, raised their livestock and all would have been well and it's not that they took a wrong turn, you see because they were following God. God was leading them in a pillar of fire at night and in a cloud of smoke during the day and so God purposely took them right instead of left. Going right put them in a desert wilderness. It put them in a place that they could not take care of themselves, where they could not provide their own food, where they're money meant absolutely nothing. So why would God do this? We've talked about how it's a picture of what we've done in the Christian world. We've talked about how you ask Jesus to come in your heart and that frees you from sin and you pass through the water and we had twenty five people today go through baptism. That's an exciting day! I'll tell you we used to baptize twenty five a year and so baptizing twenty five a day is incredible and it's just the beginning of what's God's going to be doing in the next few years. But as they come through the water it seems like once you make that decision you're life should be easy. I mean you should simply live in the Promised Land right? But it seems like God turns a lot of us right instead of us left have you noticed? There's some things that we go through that are just are unexplainable. Now, some of you go through the wilderness because you chose to. You're some of you that God's saying hey, over here and you're like no I got this. You're like a man driving. You know, you don't ask for directions, you're going to go the way you know and I understand that because I'm one of them, I've never been lost in my life, I'm standing here today so I couldn't have had been lost for long. So we're like men, we go our own direction, we turn away from God and we find ourselves in the wilderness but for some of you, you're

following God and he led you into the wilderness and you think what in the world is going on God, here I am trying to live for you and all of a sudden my whole world falls apart just like the children of Israel. They turned to the right instead of the left and today I want you to see that God turned them to the right so they could learn how to depend on him daily that they needed. You see if they would have turned left and gone into the Promised Land, they wouldn't have needed God. If they would have turned left they would have had all the wealth, all the land, all the homes, they would have been fine without God so God took them to the right because he wanted them to have a relationship with them, he wanted them to depend on him every day and ladies and gentlemen, nothing has changed in our lives. Today God wants you to rely on him and to be dependent on him every day. That's what he is looking for and he is going to provide what you need. I see people in our own church and this summer it is exciting what God is doing and I hope you're part of that excitement but some of you, let's be honest today, are in the wilderness. You're hurting. You're dry, thirsty and hungry and things are going on you just can't explain and you're in a bad place. When I got back from vacation the first call I received was from the Children's Hospital in Dallas. A young single mom had woke up one morning and her child was unresponsive. She Care Flights that baby into Children's and was told her baby was basically brain dead. Two days later she calls me and asks me if I would come up while I take she takes her baby off of life support and I've seen this many times and it never gets easier so I walk into this room with this single mom who in the last year has turned her life around. This baby has come into her life, she's is going to church, given her life to Jesus, she's living for the Lord; things are going great in her life. She's even teaching Sunday School, she is heading in the right direction and all of a sudden I am watching her hold her little boy and knowing that in the next few hours that boy would breath his last and I looked at that and thought how God. I couldn't go through that, I couldn't see one of my children go through that. I've got a grandson the same age. God how can she go through this? Then I see her the next week in church, smiling and singing praises to God and I am overwhelmed. The next week I get a call on a Wednesday night and one of our deacons and his family, his wife had just brought his grandchildren back from bible school, both their daughters were in the house and one of the daughters were going through an ugly divorce and the ex husband barged into the home with a gun, shot their daughter and then turned the gun on himself and killed himself. I show up that night and I see this family that their world is literally falling apart and I think to myself God, there is no way that I could be going through this. There is no way that I could be experiencing this if this was my daughter. God, how are these people holding up? Then I see them in church the next Sunday and they're praising God and going on with their life and I am thinking God, in the wilderness, in this horrible place, not their decision, they're in this horrible place and then I realize something, your grace is sufficient God. You're grace is sufficient for that day for them. You're carrying them and you're right I couldn't make it through because I don't have that much grace because I don't need that much grace today and today you're going to see the

children of Israel and you're going to see a perfect example of how God wants us depending on him every day and every day as we depend on him, he will give us all the grace that we need to live each day one day at a time, but only one day at a time.

This story is found in Exodus 16. I'm not going to read it all to you, it's there. I'm going to tell you the story more than read it because I want you to get a picture of what is going on. Now, they turn right, they're wandering in this desert. It's a barren place, it's a desolate place and about two months in, their food runs out and just like you when you get hungry you get cranky. Let's be honest, you don't feed me at a point of time, I'm in a bad mood. There are times I find myself in a bad mood and I'm like what's wrong? I'm like; I need to eat something, that's what's wrong. These children of Israel, they're going through this land and there's no McDonalds, there's no H-E-B, no place to stop to get food and they start getting hungry and the first thing they start doing when they get hungry is they start grumbling. They start murmuring; they start complaining and guess who they complain to or about? Moses and Aaron the leaders, of course, they are complaining about the leaders. They are upset and they do something amazing and it's something every one of us does. They begin to whine and moan and complain and they say this, oh if we could only be back in Egypt where we sat around pots of meat and we ate to our hearts content but you led us out here and now we're all going to starve in the wilderness. This is what happens when we get in a bad place in our life. We romanticize the past. We stop thinking about the bad things in our past and we all of a sudden turn it into something wonderful. We think about that old relationship we were in, you know that old relationship we were in you know that real dysfunctional, unhealthy relationship? But all we remember is the good part of that relationship. All we remember is the fun time in that relationship and we say if only I had been back with that person then my life would be wonderful. We romanticize the past. You've heard me talk before about the good old days, there is no such thing as the good old days. That's people romanticizing about the past because there was not a good day in existence before air conditioning and indoor plumbing. 103 degrees in Texas, it's a good day sitting outside smelling yourself? That's not a good day! The cold nights we have as many times as I got to get up and go to the bathroom, outhouse, really? They say you didn't do that because there was a pot under your bed. That's disgusting! The good old days...I don't think so. For some of you young people with children, you know you have it happen to you I know probably two or three times a week. You have somebody come up to you and go, awe, look at those precious kids; I remember when my kids were young. This is the best time of your life! Listen, if somebody tells you that, do you know why they're telling you that? Because they are old. They've forgotten, they're romanticizing the past. They're thinking about how wonderful it was for those little kids to be loving and you could hug them and hold them. No, they forget that they wanted to tear their hair out and scream. They forget all of that, they romanticize the past so the next time that old person tells you this is the best time of your life, give them your kid. Enjoy! In two hours they will bring that kids back and

they'll be in tears and they'll stop mouthing off and romanticizing the past because whenever we get into a bad place in our life we look at our past and think if only I had of...then I would be... It's not true. You don't remember the bad things. Here the children of Israel are out in the wilderness and they're hungry and they're thinking if I could just go back to Egypt, really?! Back into slavery, back into being abused, back into your children being slaughtered, you really want to go back to that so that your stomach can be full? Come on, but that's what we do, we hit our wilderness and we look at our past and think if only I was in that situation then everything would be fine. It's amazing how we romanticize the past and do all of these things; we forget how hard it was. God say's listen, this is what I am going to do, he takes Moses and Aaron and he says to all the Israelites I'll tell you what, I'm going to let you know that I am God so in the evening I'm going to bring quail in so you have meat to eat and in the morning I'm going to bring bread from heaven. I've heard you grumbling, now here's a great line, I've heard you grumbling against me, that's not who they are grumbling against, they're grumbling against Moses and Aaron so why does God say hey, I hear you grumbling against me? Because those were the appointed leaders that God had and I want you to know when you grumble against your leadership, you're only grumbling against God. You say whoa, the leadership is church staff, you think you're all that? No, Moses says it, he says you're grumbling against me, I'm nothing, I'm nobody, and I'm just trying to follow God. I'm just trying to follow God so when I tell you when you grumble against your leadership, you're grumbling against God. It's not because we're somebody. I know who I am, I'm a nobody, I'm just a guy trying to follow God the best I can and he's put me in a position to lead other's to find him, that's it. So, I want you to know the children of Israel are grumbling and it ends up costing them forty years in the wilderness and this entire generation dies without seeing the promise of God because they can't keep their mouth shut. They continue to grumble when God says listen to me, this is what I am going to do, I'm going to show you that I am God. I'm going to provide meat and in the morning you're going to go out and you're going to pick up this bread and get enough for you, now I want you to hear this because as he goes out in the morning they have to do something and I want you to see this. It's real important. This manna, do you know what the word manna means? I love to hear people talk about manna. They say I just need the sweet manna from heaven; oh I want my fill of manna. Do you know what manna actually means in Hebrew? What is it. That's all it means. They walked out that morning, they looked on the ground and they went, what is it? Go gather some what is it. Now you OCD people are already freaking out because they gathered it off the floor. You're like, I'm not eating that! Yeah you would if you're hungry you're going to eat it. So they go out in the morning and this is what they do, they go out in the morning, they get out of their tent, and they gather. They're not on some manna IV up in their tent waiting for God to bless them and a lot of you, that's how you're living your life for God. You're living your life and you're in the wilderness and you're lying up in the bed, lying up in your house saying oh God just bless me, please help me. Get up, get out of the

tent and go gather the grace that God has for you because it's there. Here's the cool thing, they go out and they gather it up and they bring it back in and the one that gathered just a little, had just enough and the one that gathered a whole lot, had just enough and that's a beautiful picture of grace because I want you to know something, God gives you just enough grace for the day you're in and Miss Sanders and the Elam's have more grace had to go through these situations they've just been through. If you were in the situation, God would give you the grace that's what he promises. Just enough grace for that day so when I look at them and think I couldn't handle it, you're right, I can't handle it. I don't have enough grace today but if I need that grace tomorrow, guess what? It will be there. But I've got to get up out of the tent and I got to go get it. I want you to see three things in this story that I want you to hold on to and I want you to grab a hold of and understand that whatever circumstance, whatever situation you find yourself in today, maybe you're in a tough spot and you don't think you can make it another day, you don't think you can make it another week, you know you definitely can't make it another year, I want you to see the Israelites were in the same situation. They had wealth, they had possessions and if they would have walked into the Promised Land, they would have never needed God. So God had to take them into the wilderness. For some of you today, you have to be in the wilderness and some of you in our culture it's emotional breakdown because you have everything else that you need so God let's you go through some very hard times so you can depend on him. If he had taken the children of Israel left they would have never been totally dependent on God, that's his desire for you today.

So three things I want you to remember when you find yourself in the wilderness, God expected you to be there. God is expecting your unexpected. When a tragedy happens, when something horrible happens in your life, even when you make a wrong choice, God knew that's where you were going to be and he's there waiting for you with enough grace to take you through your times. The times that you dishonor him, the times that you reject him, the times that you're disobedient to him, he loves you. It's say he loves you even when you're a sinner, he sent his Son to die for you so wherever you find yourself today, God's not surprised. He doesn't look down and go, oh, there you are. He knew exactly where you'd be today and he wants to give you the amount of grace you need today to be okay. Let's be honest, if we're honest all of our families at one time or another could be a soap opera. Is that true? No, let's even be more honest, all of our families could be on Jerry Springer. At one time or another, in our lives, our families could be on Jerry Springer. I promise I would probably change the channel if my family was on Jerry Springer. I wouldn't recognize it, I would be like hey that families crazy! All of us have situations in our lives that we think how did this happen. How did we get here? God's expecting it and he's going to give you the grace to get through it. Constantly giving you the grace that you need no matter where you are today, if you find yourself crying out to God, God is there. When you find yourself in that desert experience, when we find ourselves needing something, God is there. In 2 Peter 1:3, he says that his divine

power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness, his divine power we have everything we need to live every day.

The second thing I want to hold on to is God provides all the grace you need when you need it. Many of you are in that dry desert right now, you're wondering why God let this happen. Why am I going through this rough time? You're looking at God wondering why he isn't taking care of you, why is he not helping you. I want you to look at the Israelites though. You see, they prayed for God to take care of them and meet their needs and he did but they stayed in the desert. So guess what? Today because you pray you may not be out of the woods, you may still be going through a terrible time in your life, you may still be going through divorce, you may still be going through an illness, you may be going through a job loss, you may be going through all these things and just because you pray doesn't mean it ends, it just means God's going to take you one day at a time and give you enough grace. That's what his manna's about. He says I'm going to walk with you through the valley, I'm not going to take you out of the valley, I'm going to walk with you through the valley, I'm going to be with you until the end of the age whatever happens in your life I'm going to take you one step at a time and if you will depend on me, you can make it through anything this world throws at you I am sufficient for you. I will take care of you. He provides everything you need for today. Now I want to hit on that because you need to understand it, we in our culture have a tendency to come to church on Sunday and try to gather up all we need for the week. We come to church on Sunday and we try to get all we need and it's supposed to last us to next Sunday and if the preacher does a good job, boy we just gather all we need and boy, I'm good, I'm so glad I came to church and then some of you want to come on Wednesday nights to get a little booster shot. I'm going to come on Wednesday night and I'm going to get all I need. Let me tell you the children of Israel, some of them, went out and they gathered what they needed and then they put some back and they hid it because they weren't sure that God was going to provide for the next day and so they tried to store it up and that next morning they woke up and said something stinks and they looked and it was full of maggots and it was foul because God said that's not for tomorrow, that's for today. You can't store up God but some of you try to do that. A lot of you women are about to go to Women of Faith and what a great event, you go and get all pumped up and say I just can't wait till next year. Next year, really? You're not going to eat for an entire year? You're not going to get your daily needs met for an entire year? You're not going to get out of your tent and go find the grace of God for a year? Come on, everyday, daily relationship with God is what he's striving for. He could meet all of your needs immediately and make your life easy. When you get out of baptism he could bless you with wealth, he could bless you with a job, with a house, he could give you the perfect spouse and you never need him. He wants you to have that daily dose. See one of the reasons this church is exploding like it is, is because we keep teaching you about grace. Grace is what we live for; grace is how we live day to day.

There are a lot of churches that love the law. They love to make rules. It's funny they've taken the Old Testament law and they've done away with it but they've created a New Testament law and as long as you do everything you're supposed to do, which is you've got to go to church, you've got to read you're bible daily, you've got to pray, you've got to win somebody to the Lord, you've got to tithe, that's not living daily for God. That's a checklist that has nothing to do with the relationship. If I got up every morning and I kissed my wife goodbye because I had to check it off my list, you think she'd feel valued? But that's how we treat God. As long as I do what I'm supposed to, listen it's not about a rule, it's about a relationship with him that is a daily event. We don't like to make it a daily event because we like to store it up and we like to go our way and God says you can't do it like that. Some of you say I've never seen God meet my needs supernaturally. Yeah you have. Let me show you something in John 6. In John 6 verse 30, the Israelites are gathered around Jesus and they ask him "What miraculous sign will you then give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do for us? Our forefathers ate manna in the dessert as it is written. He gave them bread from heaven to eat. Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who's given you the bread from heaven, but my father who gives you true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." So they say, sir from now on give us this bread. Isn't it amazing we always miss it? God says something beautiful and we are like, huh? Give us some bread man, that's cool. So Jesus looks at them and says I'm the bread of life, he who comes to me will never go hungry and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. We have a journey we're on from slavery to freedom and we live daily in relationship to Jesus Christ and we don't have to wonder what it is, we know what it is. It's the Savior who gave his life so we could live by grace every day, his grace is sufficient. Whatever you find yourself into today, whatever situation, whether you did it to yourself or whether it just happened in your life or whether God has taken you out to test you and to humble you, do you know that? In fact that's why he took the Israelites right. It says in Deuteronomy 8, remember how the Lord led you all the way into the desert those forty years? Why'd he do it? To humble you, to test you, in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. Whether or not you would keep his commands, God let you go through these things in your life so he can see where your heart is. Do you truly depend on him on a daily basis? He continues on and says he humbled you causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna which nether you or your fathers had known to teach you that man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. He is the living bread that has come down for you to have every day. Not just once. Oh, I'm so tired of hearing people tell me; yeah I got saved when I was nine. Really, are you living for God today? I come to church occasionally. See, God wants a daily commitment. We don't want that because you see we are self sufficient. We want to do things our own way and for some of us its pride that keeps us from depending on God. I got this God; I can handle it so God has to bring us into the wilderness

where we have no options left but to turn to him. For others of you it's fear. You really don't trust that God's going to take care of you so you try to take care of yourself. You don't believe that God is good. So what is it today that's keeping you from that daily commitment, from that daily walk, that daily being filled with the spirit of God taking the bread of heaven? Today some of you are in the wilderness and all you're doing is grumbling and complaining about it. You're living your life grumbling and complaining, you're wasting your time circling through the desert when God has a Promise Land for you. Some of you don't know if you're going to make it through the next week, the next month or the next year. For some of you God is humbling you. Other's he's testing to see what's in your heart. Today I'm asking you to turn your heart over to God to humble yourself. These people today, they humbled themselves. Out of that twenty five only two of them were children. The rest were grown adults who said it doesn't matter what I think, it doesn't matter if I'm embarrassed, it doesn't matter what happens, I'm going to follow God through the water. He's going to be first in my life. The stories are amazing. There are so many stories of the people who have followed him through the water and I wish God would take every one of them left, but I know he's going to turn many of them right and you're going to struggle and you're going to be in a bad spot and maybe you're there right now. I want you to hear me very clearly, God's grace is sufficient, but you've got to get out of the tent, you've got to deny yourself, pick up your cross, and follow him. You've got to get out of your tent and receive the grace that he wants to give you. No IV's in the kingdom of God. Come experience that grace today.