

# Expectation vs. Reality - Exodus 15:22-27

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Preacher: Pastor Jared Bromka

[0:00] Oh, good morning, everybody. Welcome to Calvary Chapel Charlotte. So last week, we have traveled with our friend Moses and his ragtag band of two plus million friends as they have left Egypt and their journeying to the promised land according to God's promise, according to God's deliverance as they head towards the land of Israel.

So we saw how Moses and Israel faithfully obeyed God, went through an impossible situation, came out the other side of the Red Sea, and last week, they just, they stopped to worship the Lord. And it is appropriate for us to lift our voices in praise to God. It's appropriate to stop and say, hey, God, look at this victory you've done. You know, we're coming up on two years. March 12th is our two-year anniversary of Calvary Chapel Charlotte.

Remarkably, sometimes I feel like we've been doing it 20 years. And sometimes it's like, man, it's only been, it's been that fast? Wow, it seems like we just started. You know, look, some of you I've known for months, some for a few years, but it seems like forever, in a good way.

It's been such a blessing. And it is appropriate for us to like, hey, let's stop and let's praise God for this victory. I'm so goal-oriented in life. It's like, all right, we got to get there.

[1:17] We get there and it's like, okay, what's the next thing? I'm so bad at stopping, saying, Lord, just thank you so much. You know, it's like, okay, we got through this study. Let's prepare for the next one and the next one. And I love that.

That's how I'm wired. But for me, I have to be intentional about stopping and saying, all right, Lord, I'm just going to sit here and I'm just going to thank you for what you've done. So it is appropriate for us to praise God for victory and for deliverance.

We saw how God took the very weakest and overcame the strongest. He took these nation of slaves. They haven't been outside of Egypt in a hundred plus years, decades, centuries.

You know, they wanted to go on vacation. That was what Moses started with. You know, if we could just leave Egypt for three days and Pharaoh's like, no, no leave time, whatever. So they don't know what's coming.

They're just following the Lord in this. And I love God's word. I love how when we go line by line and verse by verse, as we go through it, we don't just make it up and come up with something. You know, what do I feel like teaching today?

[2:14] What is the cultural issues of the day? The Bible will speak to all of that. But also we hit sometimes some things where it's like, you know, I might not have taught on that ever if I had that choice.

And today is one of those, perhaps. Last week we made it through 22 verses. That might've been a record for a Sunday morning. Today we're gonna get through seven. We're gonna finish the chapter. But I think there's something here that God has for us that he wants us to kind of settle down into, kind of boil into.

And what we're gonna look at is expectations versus reality. That we all expect things to go a certain way, but the reality of it is usually very different.

You think of Israel. They've just come through the Red Sea. They're in victory. What do you think they think is next? Where is the land flowing with milk and honey? Let's do this. All right. The enemy's defeated. Victory is over.

Victory is here. There's no more battles. It's just gonna be a smooth, smooth path to the end. That silly little picture that I have. What's common about both scenarios?

[3:17] Well, there's an end point. He's moving in that direction. He's gonna get there. You see, for us, we want God to deliver us. We want to experience his victory.

We want to have those moments. But to do that, it means we have to be in impossible situations. And that's what we're gonna look at today with our friend Moses and his ragtag band of friends. So Proverbs 23, beginning in verse 17 says, Let not your heart envy sinners, but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long. For surely there is an end, and an expectation shall not be cut off. Expectation versus reality. The idea here is let not your heart envy sinners, but be in the fear of the Lord all the day long. It's easy to look at someone else and go, how come it's worked out so well for them?

How come it seems like whatever they expect to happen goes really well? He's saying, don't let your heart envy sinners. Instead, have your focus beyond what? The Lord. Keep your expectations in him.

[ 4 : 18 ] For surely there is an end, and their expectation shall not be cut off. Look it. The end will come for all of us. There is an expected end. Jeremiah 29, 11, right? I know the thoughts that I think towards you, say the Lord.

Thoughts of peace and not of evil to give you a future and a hope, an expected end. So as we go through this, Israel now is at this place where I think they have great expectations of what they think is next and what they expect God to do because of what God has done.

And there's nothing wrong with that. We should expect our God to be a great God. He is and he always will be. That doesn't mean it's always going to look like what we would expect. If you remember, Israel has just come across from the west side of the Gulf of Aquaba from the Red Sea. They've come through and they're sitting now on the east side. It seems like they've probably been there a few days, resting, recouping. Moses and the people, they sing that worship song. And last week we saw the beginning of the chapter. They're probably there for a little bit. I don't know if they're camped around God's presence. Remember that pillar of fire by night and the pillar of cloud by day? My guess is they are because when the ark eventually comes into being, they encamp around it.

[ 5 : 31 ] My guess is it's the same way. They're probably surrounding God's presence. And at some point, God's presence lifts and begins to move. It's like, all right, it's time to go. And all I can think of is as we go through their wilderness wanderings is I picture like my house, right?

And if my house was a tent and we're following the Lord's presence and it's like we just get it set up. And then up goes the pillar and it starts to move. And I can just imagine the conversations within my house.

I can't believe it. We just got settled. I need to go talk to Moses. This is ridiculous. Or perhaps my wife's saying, go talk to Moses. I just got things set. I just got things how I want them.

I can't believe we're moving. How long have we been here? One week? One month? There's a lot of that that's going to happen as these people begin to follow the Lord. But at some point now, they need to move forward.

And we pick up there at verse 22, where Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea. So they picked up. God's presence has begun to move. Moses, yes, is bringing them forward. But how is he doing that?

[ 6 : 32 ] He's doing it by following God's presence. And they went out into the wilderness of Shur. They said to Moses, are you sure? And he said, yeah, I'm sure. Let's go this way. And they went three days into the wilderness and found no water.

So here you can see where we've come across from the Nuwabi Beach. We've come across the Red Sea. We've come 10 miles across, 800 feet down, back up to the other side. And now we've moved into this area, which is called the wilderness of Shur.

Next week in chapter 16, we'll get into the wilderness of Sin. I mean, do we need to make application there? You don't want to be in the wilderness of Sin. Sin, it's not actually pronounced sin and meaning sin like we would think of it, but it works well enough.

You can see it's a root word of Sinai, right? Sin, Sinai. But this area, as they begin to travel along the kind of the inland coast of the sea, this is called the wilderness of Shur.

Shur means a wall. And they went three days into the wilderness. And what happens? They found no water. So they obviously didn't have water from the Red Sea. It's saline.

[ 7 : 37 ] It's salty. So whatever water they had been carrying with them, they're now three days in. And their water source must be running out. God had intended Israel to go from glory to glory and victory to victory.

That was his plan for them. He designed it that they would walk in continued victory. They're not going to walk into defeat. But to do so, it would mean being in impossible situations, impossible circumstances.

2 Corinthians 3, beginning in verse 17, Paul writes, Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory.

Even as by the Spirit of the Lord. God's desire for us is to go from glory to glory, from victory to victory. But how do we do that? It's by keeping our focus where? On the Lord.

The Lord is the Spirit. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is victory. There is liberty. By keeping our face beholden to Him, looking to Him. This idea is I'm looking in a mirror and the reflection coming off of me, I'm getting a God tan, right?

[ 8 : 41 ] I'm getting changed into His image, into His glory. But that doesn't mean that our walk will be full of ease and comfort. Victory doesn't mean ease and comfort. What it means is being comforted when I'm in an experience that's not easy.

That's what walking in victory is. It doesn't mean, oh, man, we come through the Red Sea. This is easy. This is great. Well, Israel, I think, thought that.

I think they thought, well, this is going to just be a cakewalk now. We did the hard part, God. We followed you. We obeyed you. The enemy is defeated. What's left but to walk right in to glory?

Israel, in the wilderness of shore, the wilderness of the wall, they hit the wall.

They hit a wall when life did not go as they expected. And on the other side of deliverance, they expected a cakewalk. And what they found instead was they were without resources.

What is expectation? Expectation. The word expectation, it means to have a previous apprehension of something future, whether good or bad, to entertain at least a slight belief that an event will happen.

[ 9 : 46 ] So an expectation is just something you think will happen. We just came through the season of the Super Bowl, right? And before, who do you think will win? Who do you expect to win? How do you expect it to go?

Millions of people lost millions of dollars, and a few people made millions of dollars, over those expectations, right? Oh, I expect it to go this way. I have an apprehension of how something will play out in the future.

That's an expectation, very simply. How did you expect your morning to go? Did it go like you expected it to? How have you expected your life to go? Is it gone how you've expected it to? We all have expectations.

For Israel, they are now in victory. And their expectations caused them to let their guard down. Very easy to let our guard down in victory. But you can't blame them. Look at where they're at.

For Israel, for the first time in their life, there is now no more enemy. For Israel, they're in a place now where there's no more pressure. When Egypt was pressing them against the Red Sea, boom, they're gone.

[ 10 : 49 ] There is nothing at their back pressing them forward. There's no more desperation or need for deliverance. Hey, we're good. We're just going to walk this out. But there's also no more need to cry out to God.

And the architect engineer in me really loves how that played out, that each line was a little bit longer than the next one. I didn't do that on purpose, but I saw this morning. I'm like, that was cool. And when they came to Marah, verse 23, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter.

Therefore, the name of it was called Marah. Guess what Marah means? Bitter. Remember when Naomi, in the book of Ruth, leaves Israel because there's a famine and she goes to Moab and her and her husband, Elkanah, and their two sons, Malon and Chilin, which literally means sickly and puny.

You know, come on, son. They go, they marry these two women. The two boys die. Her husband dies. And she comes back. And one of her daughter-in-laws comes back with her, Ruth.

She says, your people will be my people. Your God will be my God. I will die where you will die. And when she comes back, all the ladies of the village say, oh, look, it's Naomi, which means pleasant. Just don't call me pleasant.

[ 12 : 00 ] Call me Marah. Call me bitter. Because God has taken me out full and I've come back empty. Who was Ruth, the mother of? Who was Ruth, the great-grandmother of?

David. Who was David? Who was David's descendant? The Messiah. She didn't come back empty. She came back with the whole package. That's what Boaz thought when he looked at Ruth. But she came back with the entire package where contained in this woman was the very line of Messiah. But the point is, she said, hey, I'm bitter. I have come back and I'm very bitter. About this. When they finally came to water after three days, they finally come to water.

Imagine you're traveling with Moses. You've got your family. You've got the kids. You've got the animals. You're thirsty. And there it is. There's the water. And you run forward. Someone drinks in. Spits it out. It's bitter.

We finally found a source of life. And it's contaminated. At this point, the water isn't the only thing that was bitter. If you look in verse 23, the word bitter, look how many times it appears.

[13:00] Marah means bitter. They could, they came, and when they came to Marah, one, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. Therefore, the name was called Marah. This is a very bitter situation.

It's not just that the water didn't taste good. At this point, it wasn't only the water that was bitter. Now, bitter in the sense here, it means like poison, as there's a poison in it.

You think of, it's not so much that the flavor, like we think of bitterness as a taste. Grapefruit is bitter.

Coffee can be bitter. And that can be a good thing, that flavor. But this is talking more about this idea that there is a poison. And bitterness, we know, as Naomi experienced, she isn't talking about that her body's full of poison.

But there's a poison. There's something that's entered into her heart. But bitterness, and this is my definition, bitterness is an unshakable feeling of resentment stemming from an unrealized expectation.

[14:00] I think of someone who's bitter. You think of bitterness. Well, what is bitterness? It's, oh, they're so bitter. Someone just walks around with a sour face. No, I don't think so. I think it's the unshakable feeling of resentment. That could be years.

Years could have passed since whatever that was that happened in that name or situation comes up. That unshakable feeling of resentment, it rises up. And it came from what?

Well, I think it came from an unrealized expectation. The easiest way to point this out is, you know, the generation today, and people pick on the generation. It was no different than, you know, the baby boomer generation. It's just that sense of entitlement, right?

Someone who grows up thinking that they deserve something, that they should have something, and then they are bitter at the world because they didn't get what they expected. There is an unrealized expectation.

But we only expect things from a source that we believe is going to be reliable. So I think bitterness, ultimately, it stems from a sense of betrayal.

[14:58] Because betrayal can only take place by those who were expected to act otherwise. So Israel, in this instance, they've just come to this place, and what do they expect? Moses, God, you're not supposed to act this way.

I feel betrayed. I had these expectations that we would come to this place in victory, and we wouldn't have to deal with this. This wouldn't be there. Betrayal only takes place by those who are expected to act otherwise.

Anybody ever been betrayed by an enemy? That's what the enemy does, you know? Oh, shoot, my enemy betrayed me. That'd be a good thing. That means they're now betraying you and not acting evil, and they're being good to you. Right? They betrayed you.

They didn't act like you expected. No, we're only betrayed. Betrayal is only by those who are the closest to us, who we put the most expectation in. Bitterness results from a real or perceived evil derived from a source expected to be incapable of such evil.

Say that again. Bitterness, that feeling of unshakable resentment, it's derived, it comes from, it's a result of a real or perceived evil.

[16:08] Like the instance we just used, the example of someone who thinks the world owes them something. Well, that's just perceived. But for them, it's a real thing. It's a perceived evil that was derived from a source that they expected to be incapable of such evil.

Bitterness is because I thought otherwise, and I feel betrayed. Now, I may not process all of that in that moment, but that is when those feelings of unshakable resentment over a situation or a person

come out, it's because of that, because you didn't expect that.

Moses, I didn't expect this of you. God, you just delivered me. This should be otherwise. Now, real or true, that's the way they feel. Proverbs 17, 17 says, A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

It doesn't mean, those of you who have brothers, that your brother was born to be an adversary. It means that he's born to be with you in adversity. The idea being here, this is what a friend does. They love at all times. This is what a brother's for. That siblings, by birth, God places something in there that you just, it's more natural to be there for one another.

[17:18] Proverbs 18, 19 tells us, A brother offended is harder to be one than a strong city, and their contentions are like the bars of a castle.

When everything seems to go wrong, when there is that unexpected sense of betrayal from a source you did not expect it from, because you see, when you defeat a castle, when you go and you take over a city, it's done.

But, when there's an offense, when there's bitterness, it's a continual battle that just comes up over and over and over. For Israel at this time, I think they're very frustrated.

I think they're very resentful. I think they're very bitter against God and against Moses because of what they expected. Now, that brings in a sense of what? A sense of debt.

A sense of being owed. You owed me, and you didn't fulfill what was owed to me. That is the root for forgiveness and unforgiveness. Forgiveness means to release.

[18:20] Literally, it's a term meaning to release from debt. I released you. This debt that you owe me in the relationship. Bitterness is rooted in unforgiveness. That's where it finds its source.

Because we're saying, hey, I expected this of you. I feel betrayed you didn't give it to me. And now, you owe me. And I'm holding you to that. I have a sense now of unforgiveness.

Putting this all together in a little diagram, that's what it would kind of look like. Bitterness is resentment, rooted in unforgiveness, stemming from betrayal. So, we just usually experience the resentment.

You experience that feeling of angst, like, ugh, that person, that situation. And listen, there are some things that are unforgivable. There are some things that are completely inexcusable.

A child abused by an adult, by a parent, that is inexcusable. How do you process that? It's inexcusable. You can't forgive that. How are you going to forgive that?

[19:17] Not all unforgiveness is because I don't want to forgive. Sometimes it's simply because it's inexcusable. But either way, from that, we experience that resentment, but it's because of that betrayal.

And the thing is, that root of bitterness, the longer it sits in that ground of unforgiveness, those roots grow deeper and stronger and deeper and stronger and deeper and stronger. We experience that feeling of, mm, the resentment.

But it's stemmed in betrayal. And that's usually where our mind goes. You think it over and over and over. And you try and process, why did that person do that?

How do I work through this? And all you're doing is you're adding to that stalk, that trunk of betrayal. That feeling is just growing bigger and bigger and bigger. Hebrews chapter 12, verse 14, Paul says, or sorry, the writer of Hebrews.

I think it was Paul. Follow peace with all men and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. Looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God.

[20:20] Lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you and thereby many be defiled. How do we keep that root? Starts a little root from springing up and growing into that full-blown bitterness?

Well, we look diligently. Lest the grace of God, lest any man fail of the grace of God. Well, what is God's grace in my life? It's that he released me. It's that I've been forgiven.

It's that I've experienced the fact that I have betrayed. That I have not acted as expected and God released me. I focus on the fact that forgiveness isn't something that's coming from inside myself.

It comes from outside of myself. My forgiveness came by grace. It came through the Lord. Luke chapter 6, Jesus writes in verse 36, Be you therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

Judge not, you shall not be judged. Condemn not, you shall not be condemned. Forgive and you shall be forgiven. That's kind of like the parallel to Matthew 5, the Beatitudes.

[21:28] We were looking at the Beatitudes with the young adults this last week. And it's not about, how am I going to do that? I wonder where to start. Which one should I start working on first? That's

not the point at all.

That's not going to be our attitude unless first he be our Father, right? Be you therefore merciful, as your Father. It's a family trait.

It's something that starts inward. We recognize the source of forgiveness is outside of myself. Colossians chapter 3, verse 13 says, That we're to forbear one another and forgive one another. If any man have a quarrel against any, how do I do that? Well, as Christ forgave you, so also do you. You see, Israel and Moses here, they've come to this point, and their focus is in the wrong place.

Their focus is on what they expected, and how they're going to figure out how to deal with this situation. But Paul tells us in the New Testament, that it's not as we are able to forgive, but only as we have been forgiven.

[ 22 : 33 ] The relationships that we have, relationships are not for taking, but for giving. Whenever I look at a relationship, like you guys, if I think, well, you know what?

I expect to receive from this relationship a certain something. If you do that with your spouse, I have a certain expectation out of this relationship. And there's nothing wrong with that in the sense that, well, you know, I expect to have meals on the table and my clothes to be ironed.

No, that's not. No, but you expect faithfulness. You expect love, right? But if I put that expectation in that person, you got to supply that. Now I've placed a heavy weight upon them, and I'm looking to receive something from that relationship.

You're not giving me what is owed in this relationship. I need more. And now I feel betrayed. I feel let down. And the root of bitterness has the potential to spring up because of that.

Jesus never took from any relationship he was a part of. You never will see Jesus needing to take from a relationship as that the source of life that he has. But he only gives.

[ 23 : 38 ] Mark 10, 45, we read, for even the son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many. If I look to my relationships as a source, if I expect them to supply life or something to me, now I'm placing something upon them that they were never intended to bear.

You know, maybe you've met people, or maybe you have relationships with people like that. You love them, but afterwards you're like, man, I feel like the life sucked out of me when I'm done talking with them.

I love them, but wow, they're, you know, they're extra, or they're high maintenance, or they're, you know, what is that? Well, maybe they're looking to you with expectation as a source of something that you can't provide.

No? Well, moms, be careful with your sons. It is appropriate for them to leave and cleave, right? If you expect them to be a source of something in your life that needs to carry through your life, you could put a burden upon that relationship.

All relationship must flow outward. It never flows in. It must. You say, well, wait a minute. I derive so much from our fellowship. I derive so much from you, and I hope you derive from me.

[ 24 : 56 ] Well, yes, because if you're looking to give into the relationship, and I'm looking to give into the relationship, then it's wonderful. Then there's so much to experience. There's so much life that is flowing through us, but I'm not expecting it from you.

I'm not looking to you to supply something that you can't supply. That is what fellowship is. When John writes and says, you know, I write these things unto you, little children, that we may have fellowship with one another.

And truly, our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. Well, how is that fellowship? How is your fellowship with the Lord? When you're done with your time with the Lord, are you like, man, that took a lot out of me.

God needed a lot today. No. No, when you come to the Lord, it's like, oh, He just gives. It's so refreshing. But what He gives to you, you end up just pouring right back out to Him.

That's what fellowship is. John 15, Jesus says, this is my commandment, that you love one another as I've loved you. And how has He done that?

[ 25 : 56 ] It's a continual giving love. It's a selfless love. Sacrificial. Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. When relationship flows outward, the response of the recipient is immaterial.

When the relationship flows out, it doesn't matter how the person receives that because that's not what's important. If I'm expecting a certain response from you, I'm expecting something back from you, and I'm not getting that, well, that can lead to a root of bitterness because I'm going to feel betrayed because my expectation wasn't realized.

But if it's always flowing in one direction, Jesus says in Matthew 5, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be the children of your Father, which is in heaven.

For He makes His Son to rise on the evil and on the good, and He sends rain on the just and the unjust. You know, it's sunny today. It's not like as you head to Harris Teeter and you're going in in the parking lot, there's a bunch of people with the sun shining on them, but there's a few that are in the dark.

There's a cloud, right? No. They must be evil. God doesn't shine His Son on them. No, it's the same. The source is the same. Did Jesus show love to the Pharisees? He did.

[ 27 : 14 ] He did. He didn't say, get out of here, I reject you. Now, His interaction with them was very different based upon their response, but the source of love wasn't any different. For if you love them which love you, what reward have you?

Don't the Gentiles the same? And if you salute your brethren only, well, what are you doing different than anyone else? Do not even the publicans the same? Be you therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

Be complete, be whole. Why? If we're complete and we're whole, not in ourself, but in the Lord, if there's a wholeness and a completeness, I don't need that from you. I don't need to pull from you to maintain that.

Then I have a source that's flowing out. And whether you receive that or not, it doesn't change whether I show that love. It doesn't change what I'm willing to give. Now, it may change the way we interact in a relationship.

If you refuse to reject and refuse to receive and you completely reject the friendship, love, and fellowship that's coming from someone into a relationship, well, that's gonna bust up the fellowship part because then you're just trying to pull in or rejecting one or the other.

[ 28 : 19 ] And it makes fellowship very difficult. But I can still love. You know, to love your enemy, does that mean you're inviting him over for dinner? It says to pray for those that persecute you.

Bless. Well, I can do all that. When relationship flows outward, the response of the recipient is immaterial. When I expect the relationship to be a source of supply, then I have placed unrealistic expectations upon the relationship.

I'm expecting it to be something it was never intended to be. And you see this a lot of time in marriages that are struggling hard. They are expecting something from that person that it's never meant to be.

Expectations are a weight that no relationship can bear. In Jeremiah 17, Jeremiah writes, beginning in verse five, thus saith the Lord, cursed be the man that trusts in man.

That's not what God's saying. Curse you because you trusted man. No, he's saying it will be a curse to you to put your trust in man and makes flesh his arm and whose heart departs from the Lord.

[ 29 : 23 ] Maintains another source, looks for another source. For he shall be like the heath in the desert and shall not see when good comes, but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness and a salt land and not inhabited.

And I just see Israel here. They're at this place. It's dry. It's bitter. It's not what they expected, but blessed is the man that trusts in the Lord and whose hope the Lord is.

Blessed is that man whose source is not dependent upon his situation or the people around him. Israel expected Moses to be their source of life. When Moses could not live up to their expectations, they grew bitter against Moses.

Moses, we expected you to provide a source for us. We expected you to be that source. Don't look at me as any source except what I should be. Man, a source, the same source that you should be for me.

A source through which the ultimate source flows through. Source of truth and of love and of blessing, whether it's received or not. So they grow bitter against Moses.

[ 30 : 26 ] They have feelings of resentment and betrayal resulting from a real or perceived evil. In this instance, it's completely perceived because they believe Moses completely incapable of doing this.

You tricked us, Moses. God, you let us out here. How could you do this? Bitterness is only prevented, as we read in Jeremiah, when our expectations are in the right place.

Putting our trust in any source other than the source will lead to disappointment. And then the people, I mean, just explain all that. So that's where we're at.

That's the picture of the heart of what's happening with these people. In verse 24, and they murmured against Moses. Murmurs means to lodge or stubbornly abide. It's kind of like they pegged Moses.

They put it all on him. They stubbornly refused to not see the situation other than what it is. They murmured against Moses saying, what shall we drink? Their murmuring was a result of what?

[ 31 : 25 ] Their unrealistic expectations they placed upon Moses. They're murmuring because they thought Moses was going to do something different. Their unrealistic expectations, they kept them focused on who?

Moses, instead of God. You're the problem. If you would just act differently, everything would be fine. Well, maybe the problem is I'm looking at the response instead of focusing on the source so that I can be a correct source.

It doesn't matter what the response is. The people, they recognized correctly that their source of life was contaminated. Moses, we're at a place that we can't drink from this.

We're going to die here. They were just expecting the wrong person to supply the source. They were looking to Moses. You know, you and I, we know we can't blame God. That's very logical.

Romans 9.20 tells us that. It says, Nay, but O man, who are you that you reply against God? Who are you to question God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why have you made me thus? All right, well, I won't blame God.

[ 32 : 27 ] I'll blame God's people. That's what we do. We don't blame God, but we blame his people. They knew they could not blame God, so they look for an easier target. God's people.

Moses, what had Moses done? That rat. Moses had led Israel faithfully where no one else could. He did for them what for centuries not one other person was able to do.

Moses stood in the presence of the enemy again and again and again on behalf of these people. How many times did he stand before Pharaoh? Moses had given up his life and future for them.

The man's 80 years old. Retire. Now, his whole future now was tied to these people. And he had faithfully represented God to them, faithfully given them God's word over and over and over.

Moses' love and care for these people was squashed under the weight of expectations, wasn't it? How does Moses respond?

[ 33 : 31 ] Moses says, you hard-hearted and stiff-necked people, come on. No. Moses did not lash out. Moses did not answer back.

You don't see him saying, listen, let me explain the situation. He didn't take up an offense. He said, you know what? I expected more from you people. No, he knew what to expect from them. He didn't grow better himself and he didn't defend himself.

1 Peter 2.23, we read that Jesus, when he was reviled, when he reviled not again, when he suffered, when he threatened not, but he committed himself to him that judges righteously.

It's not easy. There's some things that, some offenses that are inexcusable. How can I excuse that? You know, Jesus experienced inexcusable offense.

The son of God, the creator, put to death. Moses, as a beautiful type of Christ, before his accusers, he was silent.

[ 34 : 37 ] But his voice didn't stay silent before the Lord. And he cried unto the Lord, Moses did. What did Moses do? He turned to the Lord. And the Lord showed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet.

And there he made for them a statute, an ordinance, and there he proved them. Speaking of the Lord, there he, the Lord, made for them a statute, an ordinance, and proved them. What did Moses do?

When Moses was experiencing this bitterness, now listen, there's two sides of that. You could be the one that, that feeling of resentment's coming up and you have that expectation, you felt betrayed, and there's that bitterness.

But there could also be that you're the one where, man, the expectation's been placed in you. That people are bitter against you because they thought you would be more. They thought you should have fulfilled this.

What do you do in a situation like that? Well, Moses, what he did do, Moses did take his complaint to God. He didn't just sit on it and stew on it. He went to the Lord. Moses did wait upon God for an answer and for direction.

[ 35 : 42 ] He recognized the situation. Was deadly. That there's no source of life here. That this was a bitter situation. Moses did receive the solution from God. Moses did hear and obey God's word when he spoke it.

And then Moses faithfully spoke God's word in response to complaint and bitterness. He didn't worry about how it was going to be received. He said, Hey, this is the, I know the source and I'm responsible to give the source.

Psalms 34, verse four, David writes, I sought the Lord and he heard me remarkably and delivered me from all my fears. They looked unto him and were lightened and their faces were not ashamed. This poor man cried and the Lord heard him and saved him out of all his troubles. Every single one of them. Because why? Well, where was his source?

Who was he looking to? Where was expectations placed? Well, they were in the Lord. They weren't in someone else. Moses. And Moses cries unto the Lord and the Lord shows him a tree.

[ 36 : 47 ] Moses, the deliverer, he now takes a tree of life and introduces it into their contaminated source. Moses, our type of Christ, Moses, our deliverer, just introduces a tree into the water.

And it makes the water pleasant. That word sweet there, it means to be pleasant. In Acts 25, I mean, sorry, Acts 5, verse 29, Peter, responding to the Sanhedrin with all the apostles, says, Peter and the other apostles answered and said, we ought to obey God rather than men.

The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you slew, Sanhedrin, and hanged on, on where? On a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a savior for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

The Lord showed Moses a tree where bitter things are made sweet and where bitterness would find its end. A tree introduced into a bitter situation turned the whole thing sweet from a source of death to a source of life.

Colossians chapter 2, beginning in verse 13, we read, and you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, the most bitter state we've ever found ourselves, has he quickened together with him, having forgiven you, having released you of all trespasses, blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to the cross.

[ 38 : 18 ] You see, once Moses introduced this tree, the bitterness was gone. That's it? That's going to take care of it? Just going to a tree?

I used to, it's the cross. It's okay. This whole situation is going to be, yes, yes. That situation of unrealized expectations, that bitter situation, the only cure for it, the only solution is to bring the cross into the situation.

Once the tree was introduced to the water, everything looked the same. Nothing changed. Wait a minute. I thought this was supposed to cure everything. thing. The water looked the same.

The people were still the same. The only thing that had changed that there was now a tree floating in their source of life. And as every person would come and drink, they would stand there at that water's edge. Nothing looked different except Moses threw in this branch and said, okay, now you can drink.

You first. they would have to take by faith that God's word was true when it declared a tree would accomplish what was needed.

[ 39 : 25 ] That a tree would purify their source of water. That faith would be individually tested as each person drank from that source for themselves. Nobody could drink for them.

John chapter 7, verse 37. Jesus, in that last day, that great day of the feast, he stood up and cried, saying, if any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. The source now has been cleansed.

There is a source of life because at God's word, a man inserted a tree into the most bitter moment of our history. And now Jesus has come and drink, but you have to come individually.

Nobody can do it for you. And he says here that God made a statute and an ordinance. I was like, well, what does that mean? Well, it means a boundary and a judgment to be proved, to be tried, or to be tested.

God knew what was in Israel's heart, but they would not know until they'd been proved, until they'd been tried, until they'd been tested. And so God set the boundary of that test. And what was it?

You're gonna have to drink from the water if you wanna live.

[ 40 : 28 ] The boundary is you're gonna have to accept God's word that throwing in this branch did it. It was enough. It was finished after that. There's no other source that's needed.

God knew, but they didn't. And they would only experience it one at a time as they drank from that source. Our view of reality is rarely what reality turns out to be, is it?

Proverbs 18, 17 tells us that he that is first in his own cause seems just, but his neighbor comes and searches him afterwards. Like, everything seems, this is what it seems like to me.

Reality looks like this and then someone else comes and says, but did you consider that? And you're like, oh, no, I didn't. Our view of reality is very rarely what reality actually proves to be.

At this place for Israel, their reality was, this water's no good. What was the solution? Moses, provide us with another source. Moses says, no, no, no.

[ 41 : 32 ] God said, no, Moses, that's not the solution and that's not the problem. Solution is, I just need to enter into the source. I just need to be brought into the source to take that bitter situation and make it sweet.

At the place where the tree gave life and removed bitterness, God established there the bounds of justice. It's there that God's people are proved and tried and it's there they're proved and tried every day today at that place of the tree.

Will you accept that that cross that Jesus went to that God inserted into our history, that's enough? I don't need another source. I don't need you or you, not that we don't need each other, but I don't need to drive that source from anywhere other than him.

Can I believe that every bitter situation is made sweet because of the cross? And the Lord says through Moses in verse 26, if you, Israel, will diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord your God and will do that which is right in his sight and will give ear to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon you which I have brought upon the Egyptians for I am the Lord that heals you.

This is kind of a funny verse to stick in here at this, excuse me, this moment. God has an expectation of Israel. He's saying, Israel, here's what I expect.

[ 42 : 52 ] I expect you to hearken to my word, to do what is right in my sight. That word there where it says give ear to his commandments is to listen sharply. I expect you to listen sharply to obey and to prioritize my statutes.

These are the four things that God is saying I expect of you, Israel. And if you do those things, I will not put any of these diseases upon you which I've put upon Egypt. Well, Jared, that just undermines your entire message because here God's expecting of Israel to do something.

He's putting that on them. No, he's not. You see, our expectation is in God but he expects us to respond as expected for someone who expects much of God.

That made sense, right? Our expectation is in God. So God is expecting that if that's true, there's going to be a certain response in our life. It's going to happen. Yes, God knows that.

As I put my trust in him, God can truly and accurately look at my life and go, there is an expected response. There's a future and a hope. There's an expected end because I'm at work in that life.

Oh, I expect this of you not because of who you are.

[ 43 : 56 ] Oh, no, no, no, no. But because you've made me your expectation because I've looked to God first as my source. Reality is when our expectations are in God. That's when reality becomes a true reality.

You see, I'm going to hearken to his word well because I have great expectation in who he is and so I want to hear his word. I'm going to do what's right in his sight because I expect that his way is the right way.

I'm going to listen to obey because I know and expect from God that there is no other way. I'm going to prioritize his statutes because I know the bounds of his judgment. Man, I can expect that that's not going to fail.

My soul, wait thou only upon God for my expectation is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation. When God is my expectation, when he's my rock and my salvation, nothing else is and nothing else needs to be.

God's people, God is telling them, hey, I will not bring upon you. I will not appoint to you is what that word means, to bring upon you. He's saying, this is not your appointed end. This isn't appointed for you.

[ 45 : 04 ] I have a different expectation for you. Your appointed end is wholeness. I want you to be whole. I will not bring any of these things upon you because your expectation is in me. 1 Thessalonians 5, verse 9, for God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

We have an expectation. God says, this is my expectation. You put your hope in me, you put your expectations in me, guess what? God's expectations are never failed. They never fail, right? He's never disappointed. He never has unrealistic expectations. However, our response to God's word will determine our appointed end. That expectation and that appointment that God has for each one of us is, man, I have such great things in store for you, but it is completely determined upon our response.

Will we hear to obey? Will we pursue righteousness? Will we be quick to respond, and will we observe his boundaries? And then again, it's not anything that like, I gotta do this or this isn't gonna happen.

And that is in a response to, because we put our trust in him, those things begin to work in our life. I don't have to make them up. In verse 27, I'm assuming they all drink from this source at Mara, you know, as one does and then another and then another and then another and then another and isn't that how life works?

[ 46 : 23 ] As you see, whoa, man, look at how the Lord brought them through that situation. Okay, they didn't die. I'm gonna go try and drink from that source. They just brought Jesus into that moment?

They just brought the cross in? They just threw in a tree? Verse 27, they came to Elam where there were 12 wells of water.

Elam just means like palm tree. And three score and 10 palm trees. Well, there they are. Or in the non-King James, 70. And they encamped there by the waters.

How many wells of water were there? And how many tribes are there? There's a source for each tribe. Do you know how many days away Elam is from Marah?

A place where they're bitter and complaining because God had disappointed. It was one day. One more day. And there is a source of life and refreshing. 2 Corinthians 9, 8 says, And God is able to make all grace abound towards you, that you always having all sufficiency in all things may abound to every good work.

[ 47 : 28 ] God's able to do that. You don't ever have to fear that God's left me without resources. But complaining does not reveal a deficit in God. Like, wow, God let me down.

No, it reveals a deficit in my heart when I'm complaining. God had a source and a supply. Elam was in the heart of God at Marah. You realize that? At that place of bitterness, God knew, man, you get through this if you just by faith accept the fact that that tree will purify the water, will make the bitter situation sweet, I have a place of refreshing in store for you.

Matthew 6, 8, For your father knows what things you have need of before you ask him. Man, if you notice a need, don't you know that your father already noticed it? Don't you know he already knows and he's already planned for it?

It is only as Israel continued to walk forward that they discovered God had already placed a plan in place for their fulfillment. Only as they continued to walk in that path.

If they stayed at that place of Marah, they would have never realized the fulfillment that God had in store for them. The wells of living water, they came for Israel only after the bitter water was made sweet.

[ 48 : 44 ] Only after they came to that place of bitterness where the bitter water was made sweet and they passed through that could they then enter into that place of refreshing. You can't skip Marah to get to Elam. You see, we see every bitter situation as an unrealized expectation.

Something, something didn't work out right. But God sees every bitter situation as an opportunity for his love. For him, he's like, yes! This is fantastic! This is a place for me to make up the deficit. This is a place for me to make sweet. I can do this. If only they would put their trust in me. At Marah and at Elam, God cared for Israel in both places.

At Marah and at Elam, God gave life to Israel in both places. And at Marah and at Elam, God refreshed Israel. But which place displayed God's love in a greater way?

The place of bitterness. Right? The place where God took something that looked like death and he made it sweet. Yeah, Elam was there. A place of refreshing. But God's love was displayed in the

bitterest of situations.

[ 49 : 59 ] As Jesus hung on that cross, in the bitterest moment of humanity's existence was the greatest display of his love. Here in his love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us.

And he sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins. He is the release of all of our sins and of our death. Only after we receive the life-giving water at Marah can we then move on to wells of refreshing at Elam.

We read John 7, 37. In that last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. And look at the next verse. And he that believes on me, as the scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

First, we come and we drink at the source that Jesus has for us. Then, we have a well of refreshing. That source that continually goes where? Outward. And outward.

A well that continues to go out. Out into the lives around me. Doesn't need to take in because God is my source. God had desired a reality for Israel and for us that resulted in a continual state of life and refreshing.

[ 51 : 10 ] At Marah and at Elam, God had a plan, right? In the bitterest moment, God already has Elam in his mind and in his heart.

You know, we think, this is never going to happen. This is never going to be a sweet situation. It's never going to turn around one day later. Oh, we're at Elam. This is pretty nice. God was able to do that.

You know, in the moments of our Marah when that bitter situation is in front of us and God's like, just bring the cross into that. Lord, I need some answers. I need some help.

That's not going to do it. And we bring in Jesus, we bring the cross and we pray and like nothing changes. Seems like everything's the same. It looks no different. We still feel that unmistakable and unshakable feeling of resentment that stems from that unrealized expectation.

how do I move forward in this? The same way Israel did. We do it one drink and one sip at a time. Right?

[ 52 : 15 ] They didn't drink once at Marah. They're like, well, man, I'm good forever. Then they came back. They were thirsty again and they came back and we come back one sip, one act of faith at a time again and again and again.

Jeremiah 29, 11. And I didn't realize until after, I had made this, this is a very jarring color. For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord.

Thoughts of peace and not of evil to give you an expected end. You see, we can release bitterness, unforgiveness, and resentment because we've been released from bitterness, unforgiveness, and resentment.

We can think thoughts of peace and not of evil and our relationships can have a sweetness to them because thoughts of peace and not of evil have been thought towards us.

The cross is the place where bitter things are made sweet and where bitterness would find its end. You know, the cross may not change our situation. Everything may look the same, but it does change what we receive from that situation.

[ 53 : 27 ] It does change whether we're going to receive bitterness or whether we're going to receive life. And where the rubber meets the road is when I need to go take another sip. It's in that moment when the resentment builds and the branch, the thick trunk is starting to get bigger.

It's in that moment that I say, Lord, I can't, I can't overcome this thought. Lord, you know where my mind's going to go. It's going to try and replay and it's going to try and think and it's going to try and, would you please take these thoughts, Lord?

I can't, I can't figure this out. Lord, you know how hurt I am. Lord, you know how frustrated I am and bitter with that person or how frustrated I am that they're bitter with me. God, you got to insert yourself into this situation.

I, I need a source of life, of peace, of sweetness and of forgiveness. The cross will not change our situation necessarily, how it looks and the shape of it, but it does, it does change what we receive from that situation.

The cross adds life where there was death, it adds sweetness where there was bitterness and it adds wholeness where things were broken. The truth and reality of Jesus' work must be appropriated one person at a time, one situation at a time, one moment, one thought and one sip of water at a time as we act by faith to say, yes God, I'm again going to put my trust in you for the

hundredth time today.

[ 54 : 54 ] The cross opens to us a source of life that is unending and it is always fresh. But whosoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, saith the Lord. But the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

I don't know where you're at, but like we said last week, you know, we're not dogs and cats so I don't know the spirit of a dog or a cat but we're all men. We're all people. We're all humankind and so we all have the same feelings and experiences.

And all I know is that God desires for your life to be a source of life and refreshing for the lives around you. Whether they receive it or not, I don't know. That's not up to us.

Right? If there's a root, if there's a stem, if there's a whole tree in your life that's full of bitterness and resentment, know that God has an answering tree that he would like to insert in place of that one at the cross.

Father, thank you that your word speaks to areas of our life, Lord, that maybe we would rather we keep covered or hidden or they hurt too much or we don't understand them.

[ 56 : 12 ] Thank you, Lord, that, Lord, when we're at Marah, it's already in your heart for us to be at Elam. You already know the next step is this place of refreshing.

Lord, let us not be like Israel. And I am, Lord, so turn my eyes back to you and to the source. Lord, I can look to the bitter situation and be frustrated and think, okay, fine, I'll look to Moses.

I'll go listen to that teaching again. That pastor always spoke to me. That one devotional, well, that didn't work either. No, Lord, we must look beyond that.

We must see you as the source in actuality and reality, not as a one-time event. Well, yeah, okay, I went to the cross as a kid and mm-mm. Every time we approach that bitter situation, what needs to be in view, the thing we need to see is the cross.

God, it's the only thing that can make that situation sweet. It's the only thing that brings sweetness and pleasantness to my life. It's the only thing that's going to be in me a source for anybody else of any type of life.

[ 57 : 21 ] God, bring that sweetness. It's not about confessing, okay, I've had unforgiveness and I've been so bitter. Yes, okay, but that's just reality. Maybe we have too much expectation in ourselves that I'm expecting too much of myself, but I'm a Christian and I've been so for 20 plus years and I go to Calvary Chapel Charlotte.

I should know better than this. We should, but you don't put those expectations in us. Our expectation and our hope is in you.

It's not about coming and trying to just do these things on our own. No, it's coming and confessing, Lord, I need you to enter into a situation that I have no control over. And Father, we ask you to do that.

We trust that our expectations will never be unrealized in you. Lord, let's not put unrealistic expectations on you. The idea that the walk through this life, a walk of victory, means ease and comfort.

Lord, let our hope and expectation be in who you are, not what you can do for us. So we invite you into every situation in our lives, Lord. Thank you that you bring a sweetness that no man can.

[ 58 : 35 ] Amen. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you. The Lord be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you and give you peace.

God bless you.