

**“THE LORD HAS BEEN GOOD TO YOU”**

DEUTERONOMY 2:1-8

**INTRODUCTION**

ON JULY 27<sup>TH</sup>, MY SON JERMAINE WILL BE 31 YEARS OLD. HE WENT TO PRE-K, KINDERGARTEN, GRADE SCHOOL, MIDDLE SCHOOL, HIGH SCHOOL, AND THEN ONTO MORRIS BROWN COLLEGE IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA WHERE HE RECEIVED HIS BACHELOR’S DEGREE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION.

ON THE DAY BEFORE JERMAINE WAS BORN, I WALKED HIS MOTHER ACROSS THE HOSPITAL LAWN FOR MORE THAN 7 HOURS TRYING TO RAISE HER DIALATION NUMBERS.

1. I REMEMBER HIS FIRST WORDS, “DADA.”
2. I REMEMBER HIS FIRST STEPS.
3. I REMEMBER HIS FIRST PAIR OF BABY SHOES.
4. I REMEMBER HIS FIRST BROKEN BONE;
5. I REMEMBER HIS FIRST GIRL HE HAD A CRUSH ON.
6. I REMEMBER HIS EXCITEMENT ABOUT PLAYING BASKETBALL.
7. I REMEMBER HIS FIRST AND LAST TIME HE DISRESPECTED HIS MOTHER.
8. I REMEMBER HIS HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION.
9. I REMEMBER HIS FIRST PHONE CALL ASKING FOR MONEY WHEN HE WENT TO COLLEGE.

10. I REMEMBER THE SECOND PHONE CALL ASKING FOR MONEY WHEN HE WENT TO COLLEGE.
11. I REMEMBER THE THIRD PHONE CALL ASKING FOR MONEY WHEN HE WENT TO COLLEGE.
12. I REMEMBER IGNORING HIS FOURTH PHONE CALL, KNOWING THAT HE WOULD BE ASKING FOR MONEY WHEN HE WENT TO COLLEGE.
13. I REMEMBER HIS FIRST COLLEGE SWEETHEART.
14. I REMEMBER HIS EXCITEMENT ABOUT BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE MORRIS BROWN COLLEGE GOSPEL CHOIR.
15. I REMEMBER HIS NAME BEING CALLED WHEN HE GRADUATED FROM COLLEGE IN THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION.
16. I REMEMBER THE TEARS STREAMING DOWN MY FACE WHEN MY SON GRADUATED.

**ALTHOUGH I'M PROUD OF MY SON, I WISH THAT I COULD HAVE HAD CHILDREN LIKE THEY DO ON SOAP OPERAS.**

**LIKE YOUNG AND THE RESTLESS. ONE SEASON THEY ARE TWO AND THREE YEARS OLD, AND A FEW MONTHS LATER, THEY'RE GRADUATING FROM HIGH SCHOOL.**

**ONE MONTH THEY ARE SENT TO THEIR ROOM, AND ANOTHER MONTH, THEY ARE MOVING OUT ON THEIR OWN.**

**ONE DAY THEY ARE SIX YEARS OLD AND THE NEXT DAY THEY ARE TWENTY SIX.**

**SOAP OPERA CHILDREN CHANGE AGE QUICKLY AND YOU NEVER GET TO SEE WHAT HAPPENED BETWEEN THEIR CHILDHOOD AND THEIR ADULTHOOD.**

**OUR TEXT IS “SOAP OPERA TEXT.” MOSES, THE WRITER OF NOT JUST THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY, BUT HE IS THE AUTHOR OF MOST OF THE FIRST FIVE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE – GENESIS, EXODUS, LEVITICUS, NUMBERS AND DEUTERONOMY. IN THIS SECOND CHAPTER OF DEUTERONOMY, MOSES SHOWS US A SOAP OPERA CHILD, ISRAEL, WHO HAS LEFT THE BONDAGE OF SLAVERY IN EGYPT, AND TASTED WHAT FREEDOM FROM SLAVE MASTERS IS LIKE.**

**THEY MURMURED, GRUMBLED AND COMPLAINED AFTER LEAVING EGYPT, AND SUFFERED AN UNSUCCESSFUL ATTACK UPON THE CANAANITES.**

**WHEN MOSES INTRODUCES THIS TEXT, ISRAEL IS A YOUNG TODDLER.**

**THEY WALKS OUT OF THE DOOR MOVING TO KADESH, AND WHEN ISRAEL WALKS BACK INTO THE PERICAPE, ISRAEL HAS BEEN WANDERING IN THE WILDERNESS FOR 38 YEARS.**

- 1. FOR 38 YEARS, THEY’VE BEEN WALKING BUT GOING NOWHERE.**
- 2. FOR 38 YEARS, THEY’VE COLLECTED SOUVENIRS, BUT NO PERMANENT PLACE TO DISPLAY THEM.**
- 3. FOR 38 YEARS, THEY’VE SEEN BIRTHS AFTER BIRTHS, AND YET HAVE BURIED THEIR SHARE OF MEN, WOMEN, BOYS AND GIRLS.**
- 4. FOR 38 YEARS THEY FOLLOWED MOSES WHO LED THEM OUT OF BONDAGE BUT DOESN’T HAVE A GPS SYSTEM IN HIS POCKET.**

**ISRAEL, MOSES’ SOAP OPERA CHILD IS NOW 38 YEARS REMOVED FROM BONDAGE.**

**AT KADESH, NUMBERING IN THE MILLIONS, ISRAEL HAS WANDERED AS A RESULT OF GOD’S OWN DECREE.**

**IN [NUMBERS 14:33-34], GOD SAYS THAT THEY WILL WANDER FOR FORTY YEARS, AND MANY OF THEM WILL DIE IN THE WILDERNESS, UNTIL ALL THE GENERATION THAT HAS DONE EVIL IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD WAS CONSUMED.**

**THEY HAVE FOLLOWED MOSES TO KADESH, AND AS THEY TRAVEL, MOSES HAS HEARD THE VOICE OF THE LORD.**

- **MOSES DOES NOT LEAD BY COMMITTEE.**
- **MOSES DOES NOT LEAD BY A MAJORITY OF THE VOTE.**
- **MOSES LEADS BY THE VOICE OF THE LORD.**

**LOOK AT WHAT HE SAYS,**

- **“WE TURNED, AS THE LORD SPOKE TO ME.”**

**I KNOW WE LIVE IN A DEMOCRACY, BUT THE CHURCH IS NOT A DEMOCRACY, IT IS A *THEOCRACY* !**

**IN OTHER WORDS, WE ARE GOVERNED BY THE LORD AND HIS WORD AND NOT OUR OWN PLANS, METHODS, AND SCHEMES!**

**GOD’S WORD IS ABLE TO CARRY US THROUGH!  
MOSES SAYS WE KEPT ON GOING.**

**MAY I SUGGEST THAT EVEN THOUGH THEY HAD BEEN IN THE WILDERNESS FOR 38 LONG YEARS THAT DOES NOT MEAN THAT GOD HAD LEFT THEM ALONE, ALL BY THEMSELVES.**

1. **TODAY, YOU CELEBRATE A CHURCH ANNIVERSARY IN A PAID OFF SANCTUARY.**
2. **TODAY, YOU CELEBRATE A CHURCH ANNIVERSARY WITH A FULL CHOIR STAND.**

3. TODAY, YOU CELEBRATE A CHURCH ANNIVERSARY WITH A SENIOR PASTOR, ASSISTANT PASTORS, ASSOCIATE MINISTERS, DEACONS, AND CHURCH LEADERS.
4. BEFORE YOU GOT TO THIS POINT IN YOUR HISTORY, THE LORD HAS BEEN WITH MONUMENTAL FOR OVER 110 YEARS.

WHEN REV. C. H. GARLICK PASTORED IN 1900 GOD WAS WITH YOU!

WHEN REV. WILLIAM S. SMITH PASTORED IN 1903, GOD WAS WITH YOU!

WHEN REV. WILLIAM FITZGERALD PASTORED IN 1943, GOD WAS WITH YOU!

WHEN REV ERCEL F. WEBB PASTORED IN 1943 GOD WAS WITH YOU!

WHEN WILLARD W. C. ASHLEY PASTORED IN 1986, GOD WAS WITH YOU!

WHEN PASTOR JOSEPH JONES BECAME YOUR PASTOR IN 1996, GOD IS STILL WITH YOU!

SOME COME, SOME GO, YOU'VE GONE FROM A SMALL SANCTUARY TO A CATHEDRAL,

YOU'VE GONE FROM NO STAFF TO CHURCH STAFF,

YOU'VE GONE FROM A HANDFUL TO HUNDREDS! GOD IS STILL WITH YOU!

MATTER OF FACT, YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH SOME THINGS, BUT GOD IS STILL WITH YOU!

**YOU'VE GONE THROUGH HEARTACHES AND PAIN AND  
DISAPPOINTMENTS AND TROUBLE;**

**YOU HAVE GONE THROUGH JOB LOSS AND  
PROMOTIONS;**

**YOU'VE GONE THROUGH RENTS AND MORTGAGES  
BUT GOD IS STILL WITH YOU!**

**THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL DIDN'T KNOW WHERE  
THEY WERE GOING; HOWEVER, GOD STILL GAVE  
MOSES THE WORD TO MAKE A TURN!**

**I'M IN BIBLE TERRITORY HERE, EVEN THOUGH GOD  
MAY BE DISPLEASED WITH ME, I STILL WANT HIM TO  
TALK TO ME,**

**WHEN I'VE DONE WRONG, I STILL WANT HIM TO TALK  
WITH ME!**

**WHEN I'M IN A STORM, I WANT GOD TO TALK TO ME!**

**I KNOW I'VE DONE WRONG, BUT I WANT GOD TO TALK  
TO ME!**

**I'VE SAID SOME THINGS I SHOULDN'T HAVE, BUT I  
WANT GOD TO TALK TO ME!**

**I'M ABOUT TO LOSE MY MIND UP IN HERE UP IN HERE,  
BUT I WANT GOD TALK TO ME!**

**GOD SPOKE TO MOSES, TOLD HIM TO TELL THE  
CHILDREN TO TURN, AND THEY TURNED AND  
STARTED TO CIRCLE AN AREA CALLED MOUNT SEIR.**

**MOUNT SEIR WAS PART OF THE EDMITE AREA.**

**MOUNT SEIR WAS PART OF THE AREA THAT WAS  
SETTLED BY THE DESCENDENTS OF ESAU.**

**THE HORITES SETTLED THERE, JUST SOUTHEAST OF CANAAN.**

**THEY MARCHED, CIRCLING MOUNT SEIR.**

**CAN'T YOU SEE, 1 TO 2 MILLION PEOPLE, MARCHING AROUND THIS AREA?**

**MOUNT SEIR WAS A WOODY, ROCKY, MOUNTAINOUS AREA THAT WAS DOTTED WITH SPRINGS AND FRESH WATER.**

**THEY MARCHED AROUND MOUNT SEIR TIME AND TIME AGAIN.**

**THEY KEPT ON MARCHING AROUND MOUNT SEIR.**

**IT HAD TO BE MONOTONOUS – CAN'T YOU IMAGINE WHAT THEY WERE SAYING IN THE CAMP?**

1. **“HAVEN'T WE BEEN THIS WAY BEFORE?”**
2. **“WHAT IS THIS MOSES DOING?”**
3. **“WHERE IN THE WORLD ARE WE GOING?”**
4. **“WHAT DID Y'ALL DO WITH THAT MAP?”**
5. **“DIDN'T WE SEE THIS ROAD A FEW DAYS AGO?”**
6. **“MAMA, ARE WE THERE YET?”**
7. **“WHY WE GOT TO DO THIS?”**
8. **“AIN'T THERE A SHORTCUT?”**

**BEFORE WE JUMP ON THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, THERE ARE SOME CHILDREN OF THE CHURCH, THAT REFUSE TO READ THE WORD, STUDY THE BIBLE, PRAISE THE LORD, GIVE THEIR TITHE, WALK THE WALK, TALK THE TALK,**

**SING THE PRAISE, LIFT THEIR HANDS, OPEN THEIR MOUTH,  
JUMP FOR JOY – BECAUSE OF SOME SAYINGS IN THE CAMP?**

- 1. “WHY DO WE HAVE TO PRAY?”**
- 2. “WHERE ARE WE GOING?”**
- 3. “DIDN’T WE SING THIS BEFORE?”**
- 4. “WHY DO I HAVE TO TITHE?”**
- 5. “WHY DO WE HAVE TO GO TO EARLY MORNING PRAYER?”**

**ISRAEL KEPT ON MARCHING UNTIL GOD SAID IT’S ENOUGH.**

**I DON’T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT I HAVE DECIDED TO KEEP  
ON SERVING GOD UNTIL THE LORD SAYS, “YOU’VE DONE  
THIS LONG ENOUGH.”**

- 1. I’M GOING TO SHOUT UNTIL HE SAYS “ENOUGH.”**
- 2. I’M GOING TO PRAY UNTIL HE SAYS “ENOUGH.”**
- 3. I’M GOING TO LOVE MY ENEMIES UNTIL HE SAYS “ENOUGH.”**
- 4. I’M GOING TO GIVE MY TITHES UNTIL HE SAYS “ENOUGH.”**
- 5. I’M GOING TO PRAISE HIS NAME UNTIL HE SAYS “ENOUGH.”**

**THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL FOLLOWED MOSES, GOING NORTH, ON THEIR WAY TO THE PROMISED LAND. HOWEVER, THERE IS AN OBSTACLE BETWEEN MOUNT SEIR AND CANAAN AND THAT WAS THE LAND OF SEIR.**

**THEY WOULD HAVE TO GO THROUGH THE LAND OF THEIR KINFOLK, THROUGH THE DRY, PARCHED LAND OF SEIR,**

**WHERE IT ONLY RAINED FIVE INCHES OF RAIN A YEAR, TO GET TO THE LAND THAT WAS FLOWING WITH MILK AND HONEY.**

**SOMETIMES TO GET TO WHERE GOD WANTS TO TAKE YOU, YOU'VE GOT TO GO THROUGH SOME THINGS!**

**THEY WOULD HAVE TO GO THROUGH THAT LAND BUT LISTEN TO WHAT GOD HAS TOLD THEM.**

**YOU ARE TO GO THROUGH THEM. THEY WILL BE AFRAID OF YOU; HOWEVER, DON'T PICK ANY FIGHTS WITH THEM.**

**MATTER OF FACT, IF YOU NEED SUPPLIES, BUY IT FROM THEM.**

**YOU ARE NOT TO BE A CONQUEROR HERE, BUT A CONSUMER! DON'T YOU TAKE IT FROM THEM, BUY IT FROM THEM.**

**THE SITUATION IS THAT 38 YEARS AGO, WHEN THEY LAST SAW OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, THEY WERE A PEOPLE IN BONDAGE;**

**NO ORGANIZATION, NO ABILITIES, NO LEADERSHIP, MAKING BRICKS FOR EGYPTIANS.**

**BUT NOW, THE SOAP OPERA CHILD, IT'S 38 YEARS LATER.**

**THEY WILL SAY "I'M SCARED OF YOU" BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU HAVE BECOME IN THE LORD.**

**ANYBODY HERE – HAVE YOU EVER BEEN IN THIS PREDICAMENT?**

**PEOPLE REMEMBER WHAT YOU USED TO BE, HOW YOU USED TO ACT, WHAT YOU USED TO DRIVE, WHAT YOU USED TO SAY, AND NOW THAT THE LORD HAS COME INTO YOUR LIFE, YOU'RE NOT THE SAME THAT YOU USED TO BE.**

**GOD HAS CHANGED YOUR HEART, YOUR MIND, YOUR WAYS,  
YOUR WALK, YOUR TALK, AND EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU.**

**NOW, LOOK AT THEM WHAT THEY SAY . . .**

1. **“I’M SCARED OF YOU . . .” WITH YOUR SMILE ON YOUR FACE.**
2. **“I’M SCARED OF YOU . . .” WITH THE JOY IN YOUR HEART.**
3. **“I’M SCARED OF YOU . . .” WITH YOUR NON-COMPLAINING SELF.**
4. **“I’M SCARED OF YOU . . .” WITH YOUR HUSBAND AND CHILDREN.**
5. **“I’M SCARED OF YOU . . .” WITH YOUR WIFE AND A JOB.**
6. **“I’M SCARED OF YOU . . .” WITH YOUR BLING-BLING AROUND YOUR NECK.**
7. **“I’M SCARED OF YOU . . .” WITH YOUR BIBLE IN YOUR HAND.**
8. **“I’M SCARED OF YOU . . .” WITH YOUR LIFE TURNED AROUND.**

**YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS OUGHT TO BE SCARED OF YOU  
BECAUSE YOU’RE NOT THE SAME PEOPLE YOU USED TO BE.**

1. **SOME OF YOU HAVE GONE THROUGH SPIRITUAL INTENSIVE CARE,**
2. **SOME OF YOU HAVE HAD SPIRITUAL SURGERY,**
3. **SOME OF YOU HAVE GONE THROUGH SPIRITUAL REHAB.**

4. **GOD HAS CHANGED YOU AND YOU'RE NOT WHAT YOU USED TO BE.**
5. **LOOK AT SOMEONE AND TELL THEM: YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN ME BEFORE THE LORD LAID HIS HANDS ON ME.**
6. **YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN ME BEFORE HE TURNED MY LIFE AROUND.**
7. **YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN ME BEFORE HE GAVE ME A NEW WALK.**

**ISRAEL IS ON THEIR WAY TO THE PROMISED LAND. THIS SOAP OPERA IS ABOUT TO END,**

**THEY HAVE PRESSED THEIR WAY FROM KADESH. THEY HAVE PRESSED THEIR WAY TO THE AREA OF MOUNT SEIR. THEY HAVE PRESSED WAY TO THE AREA OF SEIR, ON THEIR WAY TO THE PROMISE LAND.**

**BEFORE THEY GET THERE, JUST LIKE ANY GOOD SOAP OPERA, AT THE END OF THE SHOW, THEY RUN THE CREDITS.**

**THE CREDITS ACKNOWLEDGE THE WORK AND THE CONTRIBUTION OF THOSE WHO MADE IT ALL POSSIBLE.**

**THE CREDITS LIST THE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, THE PRODUCERS, THE DIRECTOR, THE CASTING DIRECTOR, THE FILM DIRECTOR, THE CHIEF PHOTOGRAPHER, THE ACTORS, THE STAGE HANDS, THE WRITERS, THE EDITORS, THE GRIPS, AND ANYBODY WHO HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE PRODUCTION.**

**MOSES SAYS THAT IN CASE YOU NEED TO KNOW WHO TO THANK FOR 110 YEARS.**

**IN CASE, YOU NEED TO KNOW, WHO TO THANK FOR SAVING YOUR SOULS.**

**IN CASE, YOU NEED TO KNOW, WHO TO THANK FOR WATCHING OVER YOU BOTH DAY AND NIGHT.**

**IN CASE, YOU NEED TO KNOW, WHO TO BLESS FOR TAKING CARE OF YOU. IT WAS THE LORD!**

**LOOK AT WHAT MOSES SAYS, “FOR THE LORD THY GOD HATH BLESSED THEE IN ALL THE WORKS OF THY HAND: HE KNOWETH THY WALKING THROUGH THIS GREAT WILDERNESS: THESE FORTY YEARS THE LORD THY GOD HATH BEEN WITH THEE; THOU HAST LACKED NOTHING.”**

**IS THERE ANYBODY HERE THAT THE LORD HAS BLESSED?**

**HE’S BLESSED THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS, HE HAS BEEN WITH YOU FOR 110 YEARS LATER, AND HE’S STILL BLESSING THE WORKS OF OUR HANDS.**

**HE’S STILL BLESSING YOUR FAMILIES!**

**HE’S STILL BLESSING YOUR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS!**

**HE’S STILL BLESSING YOUR PREACHERS!**

**HE’S STILL BLESSING YOUR PASTORS!**

**YOU HAVEN’T LACKED ANYTHING!**

- 1. WHEN YOU NEED A PLACE TO WORSHIP – GOD PROVIDED IT!**
- 2. WHEN YOU NEEDED A PASTOR – GOD PROVIDED HIM!**
- 3. WHEN YOU NEEDED WORKERS – GOD PROVIDED THEM!**
- 4. WHEN YOU NEEDED FOOD – GOD PROVIDED IT!**
- 5. WHEN YOU NEED MUSICIANS – GOD PROVIDED THEM!**

- 6. WHEN YOU NEEDED TEACHERS – GOD PROVIDED THEM!**
- 7. WHEN YOU NEEDED LEADERS – GOD PROVIDED THEM!**
- 8. WHEN YOU NEEDED PRAY-ERS – GOD PROVIDED THEM!**
- 9. WHEN YOU NEEDED EVANGELIZERS – GOD PROVIDED THEM!**
- 10. WHEN YOU NEEDED STUDIERS – GOD PROVIDED THEM!**
- 11. WHEN YOU NEEDED TITHERS – GOD PROVIDED THEM!**
- 12. WHEN YOU NEEDED SOULS TO MINISTER TO – GOD PROVIDED THEM!**

**SOMEBODY HERE NEEDS TO MAKE THIS PERSONAL . . .**

- 1. WHEN I NEEDED JOY – GOD PROVIDED IT!**
  - 2. WHEN I NEEDED A COMPANY KEEPER – GOD PROVIDED IT!**
  - 3. WHEN I NEEDED HOPE – GOD PROVIDED IT!**
  - 4. WHEN I NEEDED HEALING – GOD PROVIDED IT!**
- TELL YOUR NEIGHBOR – WE HAVEN'T LACKED A THING!**
- 5. WHEN I NEEDED MY SOUL SAVED, GOD PROVIDED IT!**

**A. HE HELD A MEETING IN HEAVEN, DECIDED TO SEND HIS OWN BEGOTTEN SON,**

- WRAPPED HIM IN HUMAN FLESH,**

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- **PLACED HIM IN A HUMAN WOMB,**
- **BIRTHED INTO A HUMAN WORLD,**
- **BAPTIZED HIM IN EARTHEN WATER,**
- **SET HIM UP IN HUMAN CIRCUMSTANCE,**
- **TRIED HIM IN A HUMAN COURT,**
- **BEAT HIM IN A HUMAN JAIL,**
- **KILLED HIM ON A HUMAN-MADE CROSS,**
- **BURIED HIM IN A HUMAN'S GRAVE.**

**BUT EARLY SUNDAY MORNING, HE RAISED HIM WITH ALL POWER, IN HIS HAND! THAT'S WHY I PRAISE HIM!**