

MELTDOWN

Who of you have ever climbed Platteklip Gorge?

- Not the toughest thing ever.
- But, if you are unfit and you don't know what you are in for it can be a killer.
- Often gone up with people and sisters cry, brothers turn back
- Beautiful when you get to the top
- As you come down what is the question that everyone you pass asks?

How far do we still have to go?

- Are we almost there?
- How far is it to the end

I think a number of us ask that same question in life.

- Are we almost there?
- How far is it still to the End?

Having a young baby

- Pretty sure we will get out, but when?
- How much further, how much longer do I still need to walk?

Going through a difficult time spiritually ...

You have lost someone ...

- And it feels like something has been ripped from your heart.

And you ask the question ...

- How long before I wake up in the morning
- And this is not all consuming even suffocating?

Someone is supposed to be there and they are gone.

- How long will I have to wake up in the morning
- And experience this deep sense of loss?
- How long to the end? How far before I get there?

I think it is this same question that Moses is asking

- While he is stuck in the desert with a bunch of complainers.

Now, there is something very important for us to remember about Moses

- Here is what you have to remember.
- He didn't want this job to begin with.

He is a shepherd, minding his own business, attending his sheep.

- When he saw a bush burning without being consumed.
- God spoke from the bush and said
- I have heard their cries, seen their misery
- And I am concerned
- So I am sending you to Rescue them
- Moses said Thanks but no Thanks
- They won't listen
- He is slow of speech...

So you have to remember

- He did not apply for this position.
- He was recruited against his will.
- And when he gets, going with it
- The whole thing is a mess

They are Two years in ...

- They are not in Egypt.
- But they are not in the Promised Land either.

MAP

They were supposed to go from green-space to green-space

- But, they are stuck in the Land Between
- And the people are deeply resentful of Moses because of their situation.

Whenever they hit hardship, they scream at him

- Not just once or twice, but again and again and again
- And he is sick of it.

They are blocked off by the Red Sea

- Was it because there were no graves in Egypt
- That you brought us into the desert to die

They run out of water.

- You just brought us here to kill us.

They run out of food

- You just brought us here to kill us.

Midst of all of this God has provided them with manna.

- But, they are now sick and tired of it.

- And they are throwing a manna riot.

Numbers 11:4–6 ⁴ The rabble with them began to crave other food, and **AGAIN** the Israelites started wailing and said, "If only we had meat to eat!" ⁵

We remember the fish we ate in Egypt at no cost—also the cucumbers (do you remember the cucumbers? O, I remember the cucumbers), melons, leeks, onions (O, remember those onions, weren't they great) and garlic.

⁶ But now we have lost our appetite; we never see anything but this (stinking) manna!"

The question is ...

- How is Moses going to process all of this?
- There are literally hundreds of thousands of people screaming at him.
- And they didn't do this once, they did it again and again
- And NOW they are saying, **GIVE US MEAT!!**

Well, he goes to God in prayer.

- But, let's see what he says.

Numbers 11:11–15 ¹¹ He asked the Lord, "Why have you brought this trouble on your servant? What have I done to displease you that you put the **BURDEN** of all these people on me?

¹² Did I conceive all these people? Did I give them birth? Why do you tell me to carry them in my arms, as a nurse carries an infant, to the land **YOU** promised on oath to **THEIR** ancestors?

¹³ Where can I get meat for all these people? They keep wailing to me, 'Give us meat to eat!' ¹⁴ I **CANNOT** carry all these people by myself; the **BURDEN** is too **HEAVY** for me.

Can you sense his Despair and Frustration?

- Are these my babies?
- Did I go into a delivery room and give birth to all these people?
- I am **NOT** their **MOMMY** and it should not be my Responsibility
- To carry them across the desert.

You think that in the desert not much will grow. But let me tell you ...

- The land between is fertile ground for MELTDOWN!
- Let me say it again ...
- The land between is fertile ground for MELTDOWN!

He is not in a good space and he is busy losing it.

- He continues in v.15

¹⁵ If this is how you are going to treat me, please go ahead and kill me—if I have found favor in your eyes—and do not let me face my own ruin."

Ok God, do me a favor ...

- I only have one request.
- If you are going to treat me this way, kill me right now!

Is it just me or is this guy having a bad day?

- He is Discouraged, he is Disillusioned, he is Frustrated.
- He is Tired and Weary

So what does he do?

- He opens his HEART to God and he says...
- To Heavy!!!
- This Burden is to heavy...
- And I CANNOT carry it anymore.

Have you ever experienced that or seen that?

- Where you feel like your burden or someone else's burden.
- Is to heavy!

EXAMPLE

- The depression just won't lift.
- You feel like you are in quick sand ...
- And while you are sinking it feels like
- Life is just throwing more and more sand on you.
- And you cannot breathe any more.

You try job after job, but it doesn't work out.

OR maybe as a teenager.

- Everyone is expecting something from you.
- Your parents, your friends, your teacher.
- Strangers ...
- You are not coping and you are asking ...
- How much longer must I walk this trail before I get to the end?

Moses is feeling the same thing and he is saying ...

- This burden us to Heavy
- I did not conceive these people
- They are not my babies

- So, if this is how you are going to treat me
- Kill me right now!

You read his prayer and you think?

- IS THIS LEGAL
- Can he say that?

Is he any different from the rest of the Nation with all their complaining?

Let me tell you the difference?

- They were complaining ABOUT God
- He was complaining TO God

They had their backs to God saying...

- We were better off in Egypt
- We were better off as Slaves
- God, we were better off without you

Moses didn't have his back to God

- He was facing God and opened up his heart to God saying ...
- This Burden is to HEAVY!!!!

And that is the pattern that we see in the scriptures...

- As to how mature men and women of God
- Deal with difficulty and meltdown.

They open their heart to God

How do you deal with Meltdowns?

- We need to open our hearts to God.

Jesus said in ... [Matthew 11:28](#) ²⁸ "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

Don't complain about me, rather come to me.

The apostle Peter said the same thing ...

[1 Peter 5:7](#) ⁷ Cast all your anxiety on him (WHY?) because he cares for you.

That is what we see the great men and woman of the bible do!

- They open their hearts to God.

As a young man (actually a teenager)

- David was anointed to be the next King of Israel.

- But things soon began to unravel as Saul (the reigning king) becomes
- Insanely jealous of David's growing popularity and military success.

From there David literally spends decades in the land between ...

- Ducking and diving as he is hunted like an animal.

After Saul's death (about 40 years later) David becomes king ...

- But is again plagued with a ton of difficulties.

It is during these various times of difficulty that he penned down his prayers

- In the form of songs, known to us as the Psalms.

It is a place where he pours out his heart to God.

- His anguish, pain and despair
- As well as his faith, hope and trust.

Psalm 69:1–3 ¹ Save me, O God, for the waters have come up to my neck.

- This is a prayer of a drowning man.

Save me, for I am drowning!

² I sink in the miry (my-e-rie) depths, where there is no foothold I have come into the deep waters; the floods engulf me ...

³ I am worn out calling for help; my throat is parched. My eyes fail, looking for my God.

I AM DROWNING GOD!!!

- Is that you?
- Are you drowning?
- Drowning in debt and it doesn't seem like there is any way out?

Drowning in family issues?

- In guilt over past mistakes or current sin?
- Drowning in Despair?
- ...

I'm Drowning

God, I feel like I am drowning!

My grief and despair has pulled me out to sea.

I feel like I am swimming in sorrow.

I am screaming for help, but there is nobody there.

I am adrift, lost at sea.

My throat is parched from crying for help.

I don't know how to make it back to shore father.

I feel like I am drowning.

What if the Psalms are there to give us a language for prayer.

- When we feel lost and numb and have no idea what to say.
- Can we maybe borrow from their language?

Should we maybe scan through the Psalms ...

- See if there is any that connect to us?
- And then borrow from their language?

Let's look at another one ...

Psalms 13:1–2 ¹ How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?

² How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me?

Did you notice a couple of words being repeated 4 times?

- How long?
- How long?
- How long?
- How long?

It is the language of the trail.

- How long do I have to keep walking before I get there?

It is like David is asking ...

- Why is it that I keep on praying ... Keep on begging...?
- And it doesn't seem like you are not doing anything the help me?
- How long? How long O Lord, how long?

Is that you?

- How long until this house sells?
- How long until my wayward child turns their heart.
- How long until the situation that is ripping us apart, resolves itself?
- How long? How long?

How Long?

How long ... Oh Lord ...

How long will I work a job I detest?

I feel like I am dying a day at a time.

How long will I pray this prayer before you provide something else?

How long?

How many days, how many months?

How long will I feel like my abilities are going wasted?

When you are drained and numb and you don't know what to say.

- Borrow the language of the Psalms.
- I think it is there to help us frame our prayers
- And give us the language when we don't know what to say or do.

When you go through a Meltdown you have to open your heart to God

- To express your anxiety, concern and despair ...

BUT it doesn't end there ...

- You also have to open your heart to receive his grace and peace.

Paul says it this way ... **Philippians 4:6–7** ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. (Open your heart to God.)

Open your heart to God.

- Express your anxiety and despair.
- But do it with thanksgiving.
- Thanksgiving for his work in you.
- Thanksgiving for his goodness in the past.

⁷ AND the peace of God, which transcends all understanding ...

- A peace that doesn't make sense.
- I peace that you cannot bring about yourself.

... will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

What we need most in our times of meltdown and despair.

- Is not for our problems to be solved.
- But for our hearts to be guarded by and through his peace.

We see this flow of events, constantly through the Psalms

Let's look again at ... **Psalm 13:1–2** ¹ How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?

² How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me?

Now see how he changes gears ...

Psalm 13:5–6 ⁵ But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. ⁶ I will sing the Lord's praise, for he has been good to me.

Four verses after the How long? How long? How long?

- He says, I will continue to praise my God
- Because he has been good to me.

His goodness in the past ...

- Provides fuel in the present and hope for the future.

Your prayer might look something like this.

How Long?

Although it feels like I am living in despair

I trust in your unfailing love

For you have proven yourself to me again and again

My heart rejoices because of the relationship that I have with you

Please ... Please ... Protect me from having a sulking and a self-pitying spirit.

That is not who I want to be.

Your heart is open to release your trouble.

- But it is also open to express trust and to receive his peace ...
- Or whatever good, God in his grace ...
- May be pleased to provide you.

One of favorite stories in the bible is the one of Elijah in 1 Kings 19

- He lived several hundreds of years after Moses
- And he is absolutely spent
- He tried to lead the nation in this national revival
- And the reigning queen Jezebel is tracking him down
- Trying to kill him.

And he runs into the desert.

1 Kings 19:4–5 ⁴ ... while he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness. He came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die.

"I have had enough, Lord," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors."⁵ Then he lay down under the bush and fell asleep.

Like Moses, he is good to go...

- Kill me right now!

But, then see what happens ... ⁵ All at once an angel touched him and said, "Get up and

eat." ⁶ He looked around, and there by his head was some bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water.

Now, if the loaf of bread is baking over hot coals.

- It means that he could not only see it,
- But he could also smell it. (Smell it.)
- This is not day old discounted bread.

This is a hot, fresh, baked bread.

And I love this story ...

- Because it shows you the heart of God.

You think that God is going to give him a speech.

- Who told you to run!?
- Get back in there and do the work I called you to do!

BUT, instead of God giving him a speech.

- God makes him lunch.

It was as if God was saying ...

- Dude, it seems like you are taking an enormous amount of strain.
- And can do with some lunch.

When Elijah is disappointed, discouraged and melting down.

- He turns to God and opens up his heart.
- "I am taking strain, I just want to die."

BUT, he also keeps his heart open ...

- To receive God's goodness and to receive his peace.

YES, the Land Between is fertile ground for meltdown.

- BUT, if you open your heart to God to express your despair
- It is also fertile ground to surrender and experience his peace.