

Staying Steady in Your Faith During Change

On their journey from Egypt to the promised land, the Israelites spent a period of time in Elim, “where there were twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees” (Ex. 15:27). This was a place of refreshing for them—a comfortable place where they undoubtedly would like to have stayed.

But it was only a stopover. Before long, God took them through the Wilderness of Sin to Rephidim, where “there was no water for the people to drink” (Ex. 17:1).

Can you imagine their reaction? “I don’t understand. Why leave Elim? The blessings are flowing, the teaching is good, the house is nice and the palm trees sway in the breeze. And now God shocks us by telling us to move on!

“And where does He take us? He leads us straight to Rephidim, where there is no water. That’s not fair. Why would God take us from wells and palms to Rephidim?”

EVERYONE HAS A REPHIDIM Every believer who has walked with Jesus for any length of time will end up in Rephidim at some point. Perhaps you’re there right now—walking through a challenging season such as you’ve never before experienced.

And maybe you’re handling it all wrong. Instead of binding the devil, you need to see it as the plan of the Lord.

God has commanded His church to come into this season because He wants to take us from under the palm trees, where we’ve gotten soft, fat and flabby, and send us on a journey of conquest.

I know from experience that within all of us is an overwhelming desire to stay at Elim. You see, religion loves

to settle down. We want to get to a place where we say: "Oh, this is wonderful. I love my church, we are busy in the community, we are touching the people around us, and we saw four individuals saved in the last quarter."

We get comfortable, we make a decision to plant a few more palm trees, dig a few more wells, learn some new worship then God decides to move us.

Rephidim is the place where there is no water. Do you realize that if you follow God, He will take you into some challenging places? If you really want to do something for God, He will take you up to the high places.

Actually, "high places" is just a nice, soothing term for "hard places." It's above the tree line where nothing exists but dirt and rocks.

You know that no one would come to your church if you sang, "Let's go up to the hard places." You also know that those are the places where you break through and see great victories in God.

I am sure that out of 3 million plus Israelites, there were some who did not want to move when the fire and cloud did. Can't you hear them?

"Oh, Jacob, I just enrolled the kids in Elim School of the Pentateuch. We can't leave now. They will wind up on drugs and become dysfunctional. We'll have to go on the Moshie Ruben chickens are hatching; the baby is crawling...."

Too bad! Throw them in the wagon, and let's go.

The cloud represented their protection, their covering and their provision. To stay behind was certain death.

God is moving us by commands, not suggestions. We have a job to do. We're on a mission. We have a world to conquer. We have the lost to bring in.

We have our cities to purge and cleanse, renew and restore. These things will never happen if we just sit under swaying palm trees sipping little charismatic cocktails.

Come on, friend, let's finish this thing. Elim is great, but after a while, the challenge is gone and boredom sets in.

There is a whole land out there just waiting for you, if you will keep going. Nations will come under the anointing if you will run with God.

So that brings you to your choice. Are you going to let this be the place where you prove God and go in and possess His promises?

God wants to prove Himself to you right now. In the hard places where there is no water and everything seems unfair, God is shaping you to possess greater things than you have ever known. This is not the devil's hour; this is God's hour.

What is happening right now is not the devil's plan, but God's plan, so that we can grow up and put a sharp edge to our spirit. God wants to bring forth a strong people. Rest assured, Rephidim is only a pit stop on the way to the promised land.

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