

I believe one of the main reasons for the lack of harmony in our world today is because we are all concerned about losing our rights. So, when *my* rights interfere with *your* rights, or vice versa, there is discord. Even as Christians, we begin to believe that God owes us certain rights. When we begin to question why God has allowed us to bear a certain sickness, or sour relationship, or financial hardship, down deep inside we are thinking that as God's child we have a right to be healthy, wealthy, and living in peace.

Recently, in my study of the life of Moses, I have been convicted of my own wrongful thinking concerning my rights from God. The Biblical account of God, through Moses, leading the Israelites out of Egypt and into the Promised Land is a picture of God leading believers out of their slavery to Satan and to His Kingdom in Heaven. If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, you are living in that frame of time between the escape from bondage and the future promised land. What can you expect on the journey?

After God had so miraculously rescued the Israelites from Pharaoh, there was no question that He could care for them. However, He allowed them to suffer thirst. He allowed them to be hungry. Even when he miraculously provided them with manna and quail for 40 years, it was merely a provision. God was not spoiling them in the desert with all kind of menu options. Can you imagine eating the same thing for your meals every day for 40 years? Most of us complain if we must have leftovers for more than one day.

What was God thinking? These were His children. Didn't He care enough to make the journey a pleasant one? This can be our thinking too: *Doesn't God care about what I am going through? After all, I am His child, and I would never let my child go through this.* I admit that this is an easy way to think.

But God did not rescue the Israelites so that they could live a comfortable life in the desert. No, He rescued them to bring them to the promised land. God loves his children so much that He doesn't want them to settle for the good and miss the best. God kept telling the Israelites that the reason for many of their circumstances were that they "*would know*" [Him]. If we get too comfortable here, our eyes are focused on how we can make this desert experience comfortable, rather than getting to know the One who rescued us and is bringing us to His home."

So, don't we have any rights? Yes, we do. We have the right that "*he who began a good work in you*" (rescued you) "*will bring it to completion*" (bring you through the desert) "*at the day of Jesus Christ*" (the Promised Land) *Philippians 1:6*

This poem has helped to change the way I think about the circumstances God has provided in my life. I hope it will do the same for you.

Gaining Through Losing

I asked God for strength, that I might achieve,

I was made weak, that I might learn humbly to obey.

***I asked for health, that I might do greater things,
I was given infirmity, that I might do better things.***

***I asked for riches, that I might be happy,
I was given poverty, that I might be wise.***

***I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men,
I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God.***

***I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life,
I was given life, that I might enjoy all things.***

***I got nothing that I asked for – but everything I had hoped for.
Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered.***

I am, among all men, most richly blessed. – Author unknown

Let's make the best of our desert experience by claiming our right to know our Deliverer better.

-Linda McCarthy