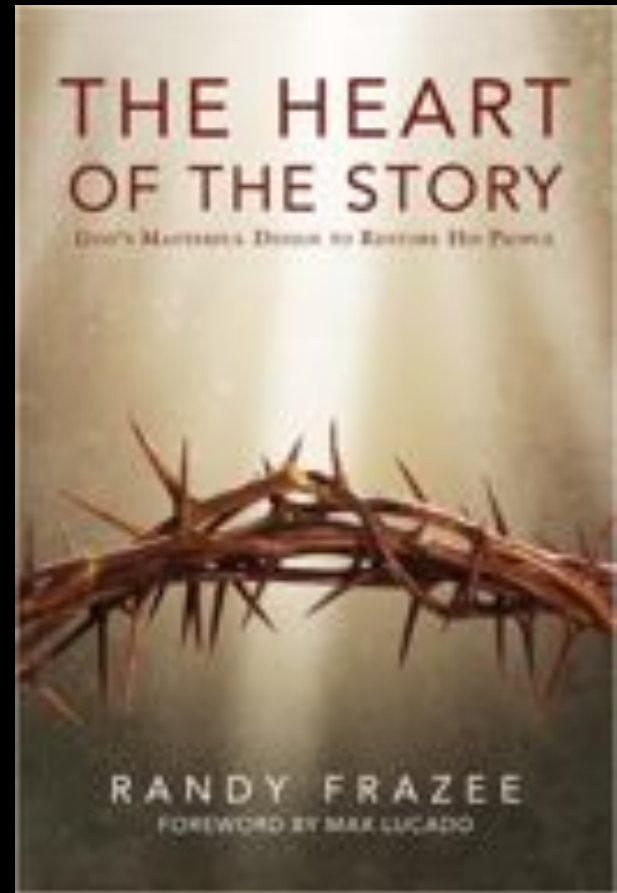


The Heart of the Story

Chapter 6: Are We There Yet?

November 2, 2011



ROAD TRIP!!!



“What would you do...

- ...if you were in the middle of the wilderness with a bunch of people, and the guy who is leading the way keeps repeating a promise he says was handed down from his ancestors for the past 650 years? When you ask him where you're going and when you'll get there, he tells you to just be patient because we're going to end up in a really neat place. Talk about not having GPS back then!” (p. 68)*

A Long Road Trip

- *“Moses was the driver; the children of Israel were in the back seat.”* (p. 68)
- *“Poor Moses had an impossible job.”* (p. 69)



A Promise Fulfilled???

- *“We’re getting out of this wilderness, and soon we will be able to let our sheep graze in green pastures and grow more crops than we could ever use. And best of all, we will finally be that great nation that God said we would be.” (p. 69)*
- *“Such happy thinking lasted only about three days.” (p. 69)*

A Promised Fulfilled??

- *“For the briefest time they were able to enter the Upper Story of a God who keeps his promises.” (p. 69)*
- *“But all too soon, they fell back into the tunnel vision of their Lower Story. It’s hot. It’s dusty. We’re tired. It’s taking a lot longer than we thought it would.” (p. 70)*

The People Complained

- They complained about the food
 - No food
 - Lack of Variety
 - Longed for “the good old days”
- You can’t have your cake and eat it too!
- *“The Bible tells us they want meat, but it’s clear that what they want is control.” (p. 70)*
 - GOD is in control

Is It OK to Complain?



Psalm 142

- ¹ I cry aloud to the LORD; I lift up my voice to the LORD for mercy.*
- ² I pour out my complaint before him; before him I tell my trouble.*
- ³ When my spirit grows faint within me, it is you who know my way. In the path where I walk men have hidden a snare for me.*
- ⁴ Look to my right and see; no one is concerned for me. I have no refuge; no one cares for my life.*
- ⁵ I cry to you, O LORD; I say, “You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.”*
- ⁶ Listen to my cry, for I am in desperate need; rescue me from those who pursue me, for they are too strong for me.*
- ⁷ Set me free from my prison, that I may praise your name. Then the righteous will gather about me because of your goodness to me.*

Psalms of Lament

- Individual:
 - 3, 22, 31, 39, 42, 57, 71, 120, 139, 142
- Community:
 - 12, 44, 80, 94

Psalms of Lament

- Deliberately Ambiguous-
- In the lament psalms, the exact reason or cause of the lament is usually not known or stated. Most often the psalmists do not give the specifics about their suffering, just that they are suffering and are in need of help.
- This is important because it gives the psalm greater use in worship and individual study.

Psalms of Lament

- The psalm does have a specific meaning but each worshiper can identify with the situation. People can see themselves in the lament.
- This makes the lament useful to more than just the writer. All people can identify with this feeling and the feeling of rescue that God gives. Things are not right in life but in the end we give praise to God.

The Book of Lamentations

- “How!”



LAMENTATIONS

THOUGH I MAY LAMENT THE CHANGES IN THIS
BRAVE NEW WORLD, I SUSPECT ULTIMATELY
IT'S MY YOUTH THAT I'M MOURNING.

Laments

- It is OK to channel anger to and through God.
- It is OK to feel anger but we must be careful not to do anger.

²⁶ *“In your anger do not sin”:*
Do not let the sun go down
while you are still angry,
²⁷ *and do not give the devil*
a foothold. -Ephesians 4:26-27



Let's Complain!



Back to our book...

- *“...he not only rescued them from their misery; he made his presence known to them in a tangible way... ‘I’m right here with you...’”* (p. 71)
- God does the same for us. Even as we complain today, God still comes to us in a tangible way in bread and wine, His very body and blood.

Called to the Principals Office

- *“...it can be tempting to conclude that God is mean-spirited and enjoys punishing people.” (p. 72)*
- *“Their Lower Story expectations got in the way of the Upper Story’s development.” (p. 73)*



A Promise Fulfilled!!

- *“The Israelites kept forgetting that God always keeps his promises. The land of milk and honey would be theirs, and while the journey might be long and difficult, he was right there with them along the way—just as he is right here with us in the midst of our own often difficult journeys.” (p. 73)*

“Our life is like a road trip.” (p. 74)

- *“God wants to lead us every step of the way from his GPS.” (p. 74)*
 - **G**- God’s
 - **P**- Plan of
 - **S**- Salvation
- I would argue that we are not even in the drivers seat, but we want to wrest control from God and that is what gets us into trouble.
- When we go our own way, God is there to forgive and will welcome us back.

“Are we there yet?” (p. 75)

- *“No, not yet. But just sit back and enjoy the ride. Our heavenly Father knows exactly what he’s doing, and he will keep his promise to be with us always.” (p. 75)*

