

At the same time, I was memorizing Exodus, Chapter 19. It was the “hinge” chapter of the whole book. God had taken the Israelites out of Egypt and now He was taking Egypt out of them. It was at a “hinge” time for me too; a mid-point of sorts.

My ears perked up when God led Moses with the following directions. “This is what you are to say to the descendants of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel.” (Exodus 19:3 NIV) What followed astounded me. In verses 4-6 God enumerated five longings of His heart concerning you and me. Even more astounding was that all three, single-spaced pages fit into one of those five categories.

The five longings are:

1. FREEDOM – “I carried you on eagles’ wings....” (verse 4)
2. CONNECTION – “...and brought you to myself.” (verse 4)
3. TREASURE – “out of all nations you will be my treasure possession.” (verse 5)
4. PRIESTHOOD – “you will be for me a kingdom of priests” (verse 6)
5. HOLINESS – “...and a holy nation.” (verse 6)

God longs for you and me to have freedom in our spirits. He is the bondage-breaker, longing to see us soar on eagles’ wings. He wants us close and connected. He wants us to know without a doubt that He is crazy in love with us. We are His treasure. He wants to give us purpose for living by placing us in a priesthood ministry. The root Latin word for “priest” is “pontus”. A pontage is a bridge toll. A pontoon boat is a vessel with two floating devices connected by a bridge. When we act as priests, we build bridges between God and man and man and man. And, He wants us to live in holiness because “without holiness no one sees the Lord.” (Hebrews 12:14 NIV)

And, lest you think these longings are only in the Old Testament, I direct your eyes to 1 Peter 2:9 NIV. “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”

What difference does this make? It changes EVERYTHING! Now, I pray every day that by God’s grace I will come alongside His heart longings. At least, I won’t get in the way of them. Before every speaking event, at every

one on one mentoring moment, in every prayer session and each quiet time in the Word, my prayer is: “Let me live Your longings by Your grace. May the people I encounter know more of Your freedom, more authentic connection with You, more convincing of Your love, more priesthood purpose and more holiness because of me, instead of in spite of me.”

The exciting thing is, YOU can live these longings too!

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