

Theme: Break camp and advance

Text: Deuteronomy 1:6-8, 21

From our All-Age Story today, particularly (in Deuteronomy 6b), God spoke through Moses to the Israelites in these words, “Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount”. Simply put, you (the Israelites) have dwelt in a temporary place (camp) for so long a time. So, in verse 21, He (God) commands the Israelites His people to break camp without fear or discouragement and advance their journey in order to possess the land (their promise); That is to say, go for victory - move on to a land flowing with milk & honey.

Now the open question is, are we certain what our camp(s) is/are? And is it such a bad thing to be in a camp? Per my personal understanding and thoughts, a **Camp**: is your temporary place, circumstance, position, not your required defined position God wants to place you. A camp is also a preparatory (planning, strategizing stage, lesson-learning platform) place in order to attain victory or in order to propel one to a “final destination”.

Put differently, a camp isn't and can't be your required and defined position God really wants you to be. It is not where your destiny ends. In a camp, a good plan or strategy is drawn so that one can succeed or be victorious. For example, soldiers camp in order to strategize for a win (triumph, victory) in a battle. Hence, when they break camp, they know exactly what they ought to do.

Now it is evidently clear that the people of Israel were in a camp when they were moving from Egypt to the Promised Land. God made the people of Israel go around the wilderness and mountains for 40 years on purpose – to toughen them for what was ahead I suspect. Afterwards, He said, it was time to move on to a

new land which was occupied by giants & surrounded with mountains. He knew they were now prepared for that battle.

Christians (individuals or churches) in Ghana and elsewhere sometimes organize or embark on camps i.e., conventions, camp meetings, crusades, revivals, etc. These events or places aren't permanent since the participants retire home after some hours or days of prayers, preparation, etc. in anticipation for victory. Through that they receive directions from God. People discern their destination while waiting on God and relying on Him, so that He orders their steps/paths. At these "camps", they normally resort to prayers, fasting, studying, and meditating on His WORD, so they can overcome certain obstacles and thus, become victorious in life. This indicates that camps are not bad per se, but they are not our destination.

Beloved in Christ, so the question is, do you know the camp you find yourself in now? (in other words, have you identified this camp?), where are you breaking your camp to?? (your "final destination"), is the time ripe to do that? (In other words, do you have an idea when exactly to break camp?).

Some camps can be extremely comfortable or a pleasant abode, whereas others are the exact opposite. Some camps are pleasant yeah because the Israelites were being fed by God in the wilderness, yet they had to break camp in order to get to their final spot. Other camps may be weird, ugly circumstances including sicknesses, addiction, relationship issues, sin, bad habits, bad grades at school, etc. From the scriptures, we can find a myriad of examples: the lady with the issue of blood, the Samaritan woman at the well, the blind, lame, etc.

In **Genesis 28: 11-22**, Jacob while running away from his brother Esau had to camp somewhere. We are told that he used stones as pillow and had a dream: he

encountered the presence of God, angels ascending and descending at a place he later called Bethel. He had to exit that camp nonetheless and continue his journey (arrive at his destination) although it was a “good camp” so to speak.

In Babylon, Daniel and his 3 friends found themselves in a camp. He (Daniel) however, knew the camp he was in. Hence, he purposed in his heart not to defile himself. He knew his destination and the right time to break that camp. His 3 other friends were equally convinced that they were in a camp and at some point, they would get to their permanent or actual place of abode. They therefore persevered and prepared adequately towards that day.

Special one (Brothers and sisters), the lepers in the book of Kings were also in a camp. The lepers were also camped because of their predicament which meant that they should not be stationed with the so-called “normal or healthy people” per the practice in Israel. Hence, they were isolated, separated and kept in a camp remote from the towns - **II Kings 7:1-20**. Scripture says these lepers were hungry and thus, thought it wise to break their camp and move into the city because they had nothing to lose. We are told that they reasoned amongst themselves and arrived at the inference that if they stayed in their camp, they’ll die out of hunger. On the contrary, if they leave camp, they might chance on some food hence, they decided to take their destinies into their own hands and fight for their survival. This singular act of the lepers helped rescue the whole of Israel from the threat they were facing in battle against the Syrians.

Brethren, we must know the season (appointed time), the right opportunity and make the most of it. We also need to prepare because when preparations are adequate, we will definitely succeed when handed the opportunity (chance).

Discerning time and judgement, we must have a feeling (signal) when the time is

ripe for us to reap the harvest. We don't have to procrastinate or postpone breaking the camp when the time is ripe.

“And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.” - **Genesis 1:28**, we are told of the account of creation and God's ultimate command to man and his partner after they were both placed in a camp, Garden of Eden to be precise. From that encounter we can decipher what God's instructions exactly is when we find ourselves in a certain camp. “Be fruitful” means to flourish, grow, increase, and become productive. “Multiply” means to yield dividend, increase by a factor of say ten thousand (10,000) and become a multitude. “Replenish” means filling it, making it full by populating it. “Subdue” means to enslave, molest, arrest a situation by bringing it into subjection (bondage), to tame a situation or conquer it. “Have dominion” means rule, to have authority and power over a situation. In essence, God says regardless of our camps, we must be successful (win) at the end of it all.

Note, we might not have necessarily chosen the camps we find ourselves in now. We get to most of these camps by accident or mere coincidence. Nevertheless, we must make strides to make the most of the camps we find ourselves in. We must endeavour to learn lessons from it and fix certain mistakes and become better people afterwards.

We cannot leave without camps for sure. In other words, when we break one camp, another one might be at the corner, waiting for its turn. However, we must learn from each camp and break it when the time is due. So, whatever the camp

is, one thing is for sure; we must break the camp because it is clearly not our destination.

I urge us all to therefore, pray to locate our present and respective camps. **(Jeremiah 1; 29:11 and 2 Chronicles 7:14) scripture** tells us that when we submit anything to God in prayer, we will break the camp and win the battles of life and hence, direct us to our destination.

The time to break that yoke (camp) is now. I challenge you brethren that it's about time we end the unpleasant or pleasant camps we find ourselves today. We should not keep procrastinating or postponing or contemplating when to break camp.

Most importantly, we must break camp to perfect holiness according to **II Corinthians 7:1**. We must break camp to claim the promises of God upon our lives - blessings, prosperity, favour, power. Leaving all the things that so easily beset us - we must have a unique focus (Jesus) as believers - **Hebrews 12:1, 2**. We must henceforth, zero in on our divinely ordained purpose and mandate. May Elohim see us through it all. Amen