

NAVIGATING TOWARD OUR DESTINY - I The Curse of Wandering

Text: Genesis 4:13,14

Key Word: Wandering

Key Thought: Our Lives Are Not Meant to Be Heading in an Aimless Direction

I'm sure most of you can relate with me that there are many chapters in our lives that are difficult to understand at the moment. In fact, some moments of time will never make sense, but they can still serve to develop the character that God is still producing in us. I'd like to remind you that God is more interested in developing a Godly character within us than making us comfortable in life.

In order to keep to clarity with my thoughts to discuss this I have chosen to compare how the large cargo ships navigate their way from their home port to their ports of call and return home safely. I feel we are blessed to live in Cornwall, Ontario and this area that the St. Lawrence River travels through.

The St. Lawrence Seaway Authority Corporation *“is a not-for-profit corporation responsible for the safe and efficient movement of marine traffic through the Canadian Seaway facilities, which consists of 13 of the 15 locks between Montreal and Lake Erie. The Corporation plays a pivotal role in ensuring that the waterway remains a safe and well-managed system, which it shares with its American counterpart, the Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation.”* Its mission's statement is *“We pass ships through a safe and reliable waterway system in a cost effective, efficient and environmentally responsible manner for the benefit of all our stakeholders today and into the future.”*

<http://www.greatlakes-seaway.com/en/management/slsmc>

I believe our lives and our churches would improve if we would evaluate not just the course we are taking but how safely and efficiently we are navigating our way toward our destiny. We need to be reminded that we are sharing this world with many others who are influenced by our decisions, whether good or bad.

So let's begin our journey or should I say our navigation in a manner that respects and upholds the Admiralty Law but also proves to the fact we have surrendered our lives to the Creator of the earth and His waterways of life.

I. THE CURSE OF WANDERING

I want to say up front that I am not a pastor who often speaks of the curses found in the Bible. The reason for my hesitancy is because they often get combined by conspiracy theorists to support beliefs that don't follow good Biblical exegesis (critical explanation or interpretation of the text). So let's keep this in balance anytime we use the word "**curse**" to ensure that we properly understand the context of the way it is used. This will add to how we can properly apply it to our lives, if need be.

A journey always begins with the first step. So let's familiarize ourselves with the story of the first family in the Bible. We are quickly confronted with the fact that they were a dysfunctional family. They appeared to be heading in different directions which becomes quite clear after they are driven from the Garden of Eden. Cain didn't take long to kill his brother and tried to cover his sinful action. God chose not to take his life as a form of revenge but rather decided to place a curse upon Cain.

"And Cain said to the Lord, 'This punishment is too hard for me to bear.

*14. You are driving me off the land and away from your presence. **I will be a homeless wanderer on the earth**, and anyone who finds me will kill me.'"*

Genesis 4:13,14

I wonder how many people feel they are wandering aimlessly and also feel they are "homeless." Webster's Dictionary 1913 gives "**a wanderer**" the meaning of "**one who deviates from duty.**" Perhaps you have felt this way at various stages of your life. It is not where you want to drop your anchor. It's a place of loneliness. It's a place of fear. It's a place of forgotten dreams and goals. It's a cursed place to remain for any period of time.

"A vagabond has no home; a **fugitive** is running from home; a **stranger** is away from home; but a **pilgrim** is heading home."

"The Bible Exposition Commentary: Old Testament"

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We can never become effective in guiding ANYONE with a wandering lifestyle if we aren't clear of the course that God has set for OUR lives. Our life (and those who follow us) will become filled with aimless futility. But there is something we can do about this problem. Rather than being a wanderer we need to become a minister to the wanderer. The way we do this is very important. It has a great deal to do with how we understand God's purpose for our life.

I. THE CURSE OF WANDERING (Contd.)

A. A Pilgrim vs a Wanderer

Some of the greatest leaders in the Bible were considered as “pilgrims” or a “sojourners.” It is a word to often describe a person who leaves their homeland to visit a holy site. It can also mean a by-resident. No greater example can be given then that of Abram who journeyed to a place he did not know.. He did not walk aimlessly but was given a heavenly roadmap which he had to manoeuver one step at a time. He walked by faith not by sight.

“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.”

Hebrews 11:1

You may think that no one in their right mind would do that. I rather believe that no one who has a habit of wandering aimlessly would want to be forced to make that kind of a decision. Only those who know that God can be trusted begin the process that God has ordained.

“By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.

9. By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise.

10. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.”

Hebrews 11:8-10

It almost seems ironic that someone who left everything to follow God’s plan actually was beginning a process that was leading to an eternal reward. Yet this is the way God often works out His strategies. **He doesn’t ask for our willingness. He demands our obedience.** Nothing significant happens until we surrender and accept His direction without fully knowing the details of our journey. We do much better when we delight in God’s demands even though the journey may be rough at times.

“As you obey God’s Word and rely on his strengthening power, you can count on Biblical change to occur in every area of your life.”

[John C. Broger](#)

I. THE CURSE OF WANDERING (Contd.)

A. A Pilgrim vs a Wanderer (Contd.)

*“The Lord makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him;
24. though he may stumble, he will not fall, for the Lord upholds him with his hand.”*

Psalm 37:23,24

I would rather make the mistake of stumbling than becoming stagnant in life. We can't accomplish anything by doing nothing. It will always take risks to move ahead. Not everyone will understand or even agree with you. **Obedience to God needs to be closely linked to trust not to fear.**

B. A Pilgrim vs a Vagabond

To give it an even more explicit name we could call Cain a vagabond. The Oxford University Dictionary describes a vagabond as someone **“having no settled home.”** There is a big difference between Cain and Abram. Cain was not just **a wanderer who neglected his duty** but also was a vagabond **who never had a settled home**. He just kept living an aimless life. It left him feeling empty, lonely, without purpose and filled with fear. His life became meaningless just like the children of Israel in the Sinai desert.

*“Some wandered in desert wastelands, finding no way to a city where they could settle.
5. They were hungry and thirsty, and their lives ebbed away.
6. Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress
7. He led them by a straight way to a city they could settle.*

Psalm 107:4-7

There was a big difference when you compare the life of Abram. He travelled many roads and temporarily settled in a number of places while living the entire time in a tent. Even though he didn't know precisely where his journey would head each day, **he did know his destiny**. He looked forward to his final home in heaven with God and the family of God. He lived in this transient world but placed his hope in God who had promised him an enduring home. He received the promise of God while living on earth and eventually experienced the promise (Hebrews 11:13,14).

I. THE CURSE OF WANDERING (Contd.)

B. A Pilgrim vs a Vagabond (Contd.)

The apostle Paul strove toward the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:15). He also envisioned his heavenly reward (II Timothy 4:6-8). He also lived from place to place and most likely because he was a tentmaker by trade, we never read of him living in a permanent home on earth. He accepted his call as an apostle of Jesus Christ travelling to carry the gospel message to those who never heard it. Instead of being cursed he was blessed.

“Blessed are those whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage.”

Psalm 84:5

Lord, I’m Coming Home

1. I’ve wandered far away from God
Now I’m coming home
The paths of sin too long I’ve trod
Lord, I’m coming home

Coming home, coming home
Nevermore to roam
Open wide thine arms of love
Lord, I’m coming home

4. My soul is sick, my heart is sore
Now I’m coming home
My strength renew, my hope restore
Lord, I’m coming home

William Kirpatrick
1892

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Date: Jan 8/17

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: Arms of Love - G

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A. A Pilgrim vs a Wanderer - *Hebrews 11:1; Hebrews 11:8-10; Psalm 37:23,24*

B. A Pilgrim vs a Vagabond - *Psalm 107:4-7; Hebrews 11:13,14; Psalm 84:5*