

# Living Up A Dead-end Street

## Exodus 4:29 – 5:21

I've titled my message "**Living Up A Dead End Street**". What do I mean by that? Well, let me give you an example of a people who were living up a dead-end street . . . Israel - slaves for 400 yrs . . . their lives were stuck, they were going no-where, there was no future in the present, and if something radical didn't happen now, they would find themselves in the same dead-end 100 years from now.

If a generation is 25 years . . . that meant that your grand father had been a slave, and his father, and his father, and his father. Infact it meant that their great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great grandfather had been a slave! That's a dead-end street.

So God said enough – the time for the exodus has come!

Do you feel as though your job is like that? Going nowhere? Your just scrapping a living, there's no hope for a career, for a promotion, for recognition, for a raise . . . it's just a dead-end job. You're stuck. Sometimes, when you're in a dead-end job, the best thing that could happen to you is something radical – like getting fired.

Sometimes the job isn't the problem – it's your life that's going nowhere! You're stuck in the dead end of harmful addictions and habits – to alcohol, to pornography, to dead-end friends living dead-end lives. To a dead-end courtship or a dead-end marriage.

This church has been living in a dead-end street for 5 years now, on a dead-end property of half an acre. The potential is great, but as long as we stay where we are we will go nowhere, none of our dreams will be realized, our growth will be compromised, and our future will be stunted. But God has said "*Enough – the time has come for an exodus*".

So what can we learn about dead-ends from the Israelites? Several things but let me focus on 4 for today . . .

### 1. **Leaving a dead-ends street means change . . . and nobody likes change (Vs 5:19 – 21)**

- Change means hardship . . . were exposed to insecurity, hunger, tiredness and thirst.
- Change means you are working with an undefined script whose outcome you don't really know . . . they had no clue what lay ahead of them . . . God did not inform them of the details because they would have become afraid.
- Change means letting go of what you have for certain, to grasp what you don't yet have.

You won't find new shores unless you leave the old familiar ones. You've got to get into the boat and face the vast sea.

### 2. **Most people living in a dead-end street live for the present – not for the future! (Ex 16: 1 – 3)**

- If feels safe
- It is the known
- And you have already adjusted to it's challenges

Whenever Israel hit a problem, their minds went back to the past, how much they had, instead of how much they lacked.

- They forgot the hard, futile labor
- They forgot the abuse of basic human rights
- They forgot the fact that they had no dreams to live for while they were in Egypt
- They even forgot it was they who had cried and groaned to God for deliverance

Instead what they remembered was the droppings from Pharaohs table and how sweet they tasted. Their perspective was completely warped! But dead-end street living does that to you.

So where will you be 10 years from today? Will you be still living in your present, or will you have moved into your future?

In the face of change – they basically did 3 things :

- ***They dwelt on the past*** - The past looked better than it actually was . . . nostalgia . . . Ex 16:3 . . . even though the past is not God’s will for them.
- ***They forgot God’s faithfulness***
- ***They attacked their leadership*** (vs 11; Ex 16:2)

Picture of Chapel’s future  
The challenges – esp financially

### **3. But leaving a dead-end street also means a fresh encounter with God - faith and growth (the 10 plagues, the parting of the Red Sea, the pillars of fire and cloud, etc)**

For 400 yrs they had had no real encounter with God, but once they left they saw miracle after miracle . . .

- The 10 plagues
- A leader
- The parting of the Red Sea

Once we decided to get out of our dead end street we too started seeing a new movement of God among us

- The land & 40 million Kshs – in 5 months
- This year – giving hit a top of 7 million
- Tent
- Custom exemption
- People who have come forward
- 20 million gift

We knew none of these things. We would have seen none of these things until we began the journey out of our dead-end street. Make a covenant with yourself and with God – not to focus on the past, but on the future, Not on the leeks and garlic, but on the promised land; and get moving!

### **4. When you leave the dead-end street sometimes your loudest cheerleaders will become your loudest critics – your mother, your girlfriend, your husband.**

**Miriam Ex 15:19 - 21** – Miriam’s song vs Num 12

- Miriam was Moses sister
- Miriam was a prophetess
- Miriam was the ‘Women’s Leader’
- Miriam’s criticism was petty – Cushite woman; but the real hidden agenda was envy.

All it was doing was undermining Moses leadership, trying to take away his credibility, bringing discontent among the people.

God was angered by this – “*Moses is my chosen leader. Why were you not afraid to speak against my servant?*”

- In Vs 9 it says God left Miriam; he removed his protection from Miriam for attacking his servant.
- And in vs 14 it says he shamed her for 7 days.

**Korah** (Ex 16: 1 – 4)

- Korah was a Levite – this was like Moses Worship leader criticizing him
- 250 of Moses leaders
- Their criticism wasn’t going to help the community – it was going to divide it

**Jethro** : Now compare this with the criticism that Moses Father-in-law, Jethro, brought against Moses.

- Jethro focused not on people, but on the problem
- Jethro had no hidden agenda
- Jethro suggested a way to resolve the problem
- In the end Jethro’s criticism helped Moses and the people.

Well enough said about dead end streets. What is God’s message for us today? It is this – we are about to leave a dead end street. Before us is going to be change, hardship and trial. We will be tempted to live in the past instead of living for the future – the obvious

advantages of having remained at the chapel will stare us in the face – the comfortable, all weather buildings, the convenience of paved walkways, the lovely bucket seats here – the advantages of this place will be remembered and will look sweeter with time, but will you be living for the future or for the past.

In those moments of hardship we will be tempted to attack our leaders. Why did they bring us here to die, why can't they get their act together, why don't we stir up others and all leave to go back?

I have determined to

1. Live for the future God is calling us to. 6 months ago I told the elders “*Guys, give me just 50 people to go to the Ngong Rd land with and God will bless us - we will start a phenomenal church there that will change this city . . . I don't even need 500 people*”.
2. See this as an exciting adventure of faith – with the pillar of fire going before me to show us the way, and the pillar of cloud going behind us to protect us – I wouldn't give up anything for this. This is the most exciting place to be at.
3. I am determined to enjoy every moment of it, and to grow in my faith. I know I will grow in my knowledge and trust of God as a result of the road he will lead us along . . . already that is true. Just 3 days ago in my quiet time I was reading Is 43 . . .

*<sup>1</sup> But now, this is what the LORD says--  
he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel:  
"Fear not, for I have redeemed you;  
I have summoned you by name; you are mine.*

*<sup>2</sup> When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;  
and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep  
over you.  
When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned;  
the flames will not set you ablaze.*

*<sup>3</sup> For I am the LORD, your God.*

and I felt the Lord telling me Oscar be courageous

- *You will go thru the waters . . . but I will be with you*

- *You will go thru the rivers . . . but they will not sweep over you*
- *You will go thru fire . . . but you will not be burned.*
- *My presence will be with you.*

Forget the former things - Is 43:18 says

*Do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing!  
I am making a way in the desert  
and streams in the wastelands.*

### **Conclusion and Prayer**

I want to invite you to make a similar covenant. A covenant of faith. Some of you are living up a dead-end street, and the Lord is saying arise and move camp, but you're saying “*But at least I've got the leeks and garlic of a meager dead-end salary*”

- Get up and go and study.
- Get up and go and start that business you've been praying for
- Leave the dead-end street
- People will call you foolish. People will criticize you . . . the road will be tough, you will pass thru the waters and the fire . . . but 10 yrs from today you will look back and marvel at what the Lord did thru you.

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Special category of people here – their life is a dead end . . . accept Jesus.