

The Bulwark

JUNE 25, 2023

DRIFTING ALONG...

Ah, the bliss of floating along a river on a beautiful warm summer day. The current gently carrying you merrily downstream. Could life be any better? Noted author, podcaster and science writer, Shankar Vedantam set to words in his book "The Hidden Brain" the experience he had one day when he decided to indulge himself with a leisurely swim. The water was glass-like and he felt a certain amount of pride in himself for covering a considerable distance easily. He decided to swim out of the bay into the open water. However, when he tried to swim back in, he struggled to make progress. He had been duped by the water, or more specifically the current. The truth be known, the ease of his swimming had not been his strength, rather the unseen current moving the water outward.

Some vital spiritual life lessons can be taken away from the example seen above. Not the least of which is the unseen currents in life make us think we may be stronger than we really are. Such would seem to have been the case with the children of Israel. In the eighth chapter of Deuteronomy and verses eleven through twenty, the depiction is that the Israelites had been blessed by God with tremendous prosperity; which they happily accepted. But they became full of themselves and thought they could go it alone,

that is until an enemy rose up against them. Only then did they come to realize how weak they were and needed God's help.



"When they had pasture they were filled; they were filled and their heart was exalted; therefore they forgot Me." (Hosea 13:6) It is no wonder that Paul in the fifteenth chapter of Romans writes in verse four, *"For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope."* We today struggle with the under currents of life. When life is going easy, our minds can trick us into thinking it is due to our own strength. Then when trouble rises up and gives us a swift kick; we awaken to how little strength we have. A mindful reminder of how helpless we can become.

The author of Hebrews mindful of how easily it is to get lulled by the under-currents in life, opens chapter two with the following. *"For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it."* In verse three a penetrating question is asked, *"how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?"* As children of God we must be mindful not to drift.

When life is going swimmingly along, we need to stand back and look deeply into self and make sure there is no self-deception. Think back to the passage in Hosea seen earlier and how the people forgot God. Pride had entered in and little by little that attitude caused them to drift away from God.

"Have this attitude in yourselves which was also seen in Jesus..." (Philippians 2:5) The attitude that Jesus embraced, was that of humility (see verses 7-8). Pride will take us where we clearly do not want to go. Whereas humility will keep us where we need to be. Fully grateful to God and ever leaning on Him for strength. Take note of what is found in Philippians 4:13. (wbe)

A Publication of the Winnetka Ave. Church of Christ

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