
USE CHRIST'S STORY TO RE-WRITE YOUR STORY

EXODUS 23:1-9



Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) was founded on September 5, 1980, in California by Candace Lightner after her 13-year-old daughter, Cari, was killed by a drunk driver. Its mission is to stop drunk driving, support those affected by drunk driving, prevent underage drinking, and strive for stricter impaired driving policy. MADD claims that drunk driving has been reduced by half since its founding. It's an encouraging example of how God uses painful stories in our past to write better stories for others. There's another reassuring example of that in Exodus 23:1-9.

LEARNING

REMEMBER THE FEELINGS OF INJUSTICE (9)

The pivotal verse in this passage is verse 9. **You know the heart of a sojourner, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.** God sums up Israel's past story of pain in just one sentence, but he uses that past story to change their whole future story.

Israel, remember what it felt like to be strangers in a strange land. Remember the feeling of being an outsider and a victim. Remember the heart-breaking injustice you suffered. Remember that pain, recall that agony, relive those feelings. Why? This isn't some kind of masochistic pleasure in personal pain. No, God is about to use their past pain for future gain.

IN GOD'S HANDS,
PAST PAIN CAN PRODUCE FUTURE GAIN.

Why then did God want them to relive their painful past? What's the gain of the pain?

PREVENT THE FEELINGS OF INJUSTICE (1-8)

God wanted them to relive their painful past, because, the more they remembered their past experience of injustice, the more it would motivate them to treat others justly in the future. **You shall not oppress a sojourner. You know the heart of a sojourner, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt** (9).

In the administration of justice, God warns, you must work hard to prevent lying witnesses (1-2), favoritism and prejudice (2-6), false accusations (7a), wrong verdicts (7b), and bribery (8).

No doubt, many of the Israelites had experienced these agonies firsthand. God is using these past memories of painful feelings to change the future of others. Recall your story so that you don't make others relive your story.

REMEMBERING YOUR STORY CAN
CHANGE THE STORIES OF OTHERS.

LOVING

What's your story? What's the pain in your past? Recalling past pain can be pointless and destructive to us and others. But with God's help and blessing it can be purposeful and constructive. He can turn our hurt into help for others.

Consider how frequently God uses the story of Christ's suffering to change our stories for the better. For example, **Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need** (Hebrews 4:14-16). That's just one example of many ways Christ's story of pain changes our story for the better. In some ways, we might say that the success of our Christian lives depends on how well we connect Christ's story with our own.

LIVING

Use Christ's painful story to change yours for the better, and then use your painful story to change others for the better. That way, we all live happily ever after.
