When I got back from Cleveland last week, I asked Wednesday what she learned in school, And very enthusiastically she looked at me and said, “Nothing”. I was like, really nothing, you, you learned nothing in school having gone for eight days. She said, No, nothing. So, I started asking her about the subjects. I was, like, okay, what'd you learn in math? Nothing, Science, Nothing. Going going, finally, I'm like, okay, how about reading? How was reading while I was gone? She said, I learned nothing in reading. I'm like, now, come on. I was gone eight days. You can't still be on the same book, and she said, no we're reading non-fiction. Nobody likes reading non-fiction.

So we talked a little bit about it. And it got me thinking a couple of conversations I had earlier, too, was about reading the Bible and how we read the Bible. Where we see it, cuz we know reading, we know that reading, non-fiction is very hard, and it's very boring a lot of times.

You know, I just finished reading Jesus and John Wayne. Great book talking about conservativism and their Republican party. I don't know if I took from it what the author wanted me to take from it. But by the end of it, I did not want to read it again. I didn't want to read anything else by that author for a little while, so I understand that difference. It's like reading the Bible. We go into it; when you read certain parts, you don't really want to read it again. You get through it. It's good; you're okay. But the question is, are you reading it in a form of non-fiction, or are you reading it as literature so that you learn, so you get something different from it each time? So, it's saying a little bit more than what it's really saying.

We know that the Book of Genesis was written by at least four people.There's four different ways that the verbs are used for different types of language used within it. The word God is at least 16 different ways set throughout it. So, we see these differences. Exodus, Deuteronomy all the same way just continues to carry on.

So that got me thinking of today's reading. If we read it from a historical landmark, it doesn't really fit. For example, Moses probably would not have been able to take the Jews through Egypt and into the Red Sea. It's so far off from where they were going. They would have had to go all the way up and then come back down to go over. So to put in perspective for us, it would be like if we started walking today and made it all the way to Lake Michigan without being caught by the Egyptians while they're on chariots, and they're on horseback. And we're just walking, carrying anything we can carry. And we're about the same age range too, so we'd have to get that far. Well, there's a sea closer to where they would have been called the Reed Sea. And that would have been like us walking from here to the north end of Big Creek and going through that same part. Dimensions, perspective, all of that would be the same, but does it really matter? Does it take away from the message that God is trying to tell us in this? By reading it from a literary point, I started thinking about what is God trying to tell me?

Sometimes we have addictive personalities. There are things that we like to do that aren't necessarily good for us. Like doom scrolling, being on social media, and having to watch Big Brother, make sure you get there in time to see every episode live, so there's no surprises. In my case, smoking. My last cigarette was November 16, 2008, and every day I want one. Still, every single day, I wake up wanting one. The best thing I ever did was get rid of my old truck, because every time I got into it, I would roll down my window and get ready to light a cigarette. It became such a part of me and such a terrible part of me. I was enslaved to it. And it took a long time for me to stop doing it. It took that moment of realization where I'm like, I don't have to do this. I don't have to be a part of this anymore. This doesn't have to be a part of my life. God gave

me the strength to get through it, much like he did Moses. In my case, the Red Sea was smoking. God, give me the power to say no more, and it took time, it took patience, it took practice. But I got to the other side. And now, even though I want it, I don't do it. I don't have to have it anymore.

Now, I know it's a stretch comparing myself to Moses. Moses was a much worse person, really. We think that he was fantastic because he did all these great things. But Moses was a murderer. He killed people. Killed one person in particular. So, we all have those moments. We all have those opportunities where we are better than we think we are. We have gifts given to us through God to help us get to the other side, to split that sea, to make that difference, so that we can stop doing the things that are enslaving us. We get to stop being that part because God gives us the strength to do it. God gives us the opportunities to be better than who we are. And not just be better than who we are, but make us better for other people, too. Make us better so that we can go and help other people follow the way we fail. Because we all have those we have friends that do continue to do the same things we used to do. We have family members that continue to do the same things that we used to do, who need help to get through it. They need help to get through whatever is hurting them., whatever is stopping them. Whether it's addiction, whether it's loneliness, depression. There's always something that we can do to help somebody else. We can be that soft that someone. We can create that division within the sea. We can be the person to show somebody else the way across and out.

Let us pray.