

The Desert Road (2)

Ex. 13:17 – When Pharaoh let the people go, the Israelites went up out of Egypt armed for battle/in battle array. But God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country, though that was shorter. For God said, "If they face war, they might change their minds and return to Egypt." (18) So, God led the people around the **desert road** toward the Red Sea.

And for 40 years the children of God fell victim to a *desert road* that has no _____ **nat** _____. But our text deals with a new, vigorous generation of God's people who have one foot in the promised land (place of **abund** _____ life) and the other in *unproven z eal*. (13:17)

Deuteronomy 8:1 – Be careful to follow every command I am giving you today, so that you may live and increase and may enter and possess the land that the LORD promised on oath to your forefathers. **(2)** Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you so that you may know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. **(3)** He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. ...

7 For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land—a land with streams and pools of water, with springs flowing in the valleys and hills.

- Verse 7 – Notice that the “Lord is bringing you” into the “good land.”
 - The **L**_____ is leading this journey! He doesn't get lost!
 - This is a journey to a **g**_____ land (the place of God's **pur**_____).
 - This journey began in the **d**_____ under the direction of God!
 - Did this audience (children of previous generation) have anything to do with being launched into this forty-year desert road excursion?
 - So, was this a punishment period or a preparation period? (Verse 3)
- God humbles us and tests us *in order that* we will truly realize the **sub**_____ of our heart. That is, can God bless us without losing us?

- a. Can our hearts grow more **d** _____ **ed** to the One who blesses us and more delighted with His blessing simultaneously?
 - b. 8:10-19 (Rack Bible – 287)
3. The testing ground of God's choosing for this group of good people was the **d** _____ **t**.
- a. The humbling tests were/are not conducted in a **cont**_____ environment or simulator.
 - b. The humbling tests were/are conducted in the arena of **I** _____ !
 - c. The heart testing will ultimately reveal to us who we are at the **co** _____ of our being.
 - d. Exodus 13:17 to Exodus 14:10 (108)
 - e. The core of their pumped up, fantasy faith is revealed by the desert.
4. The desert is a place we seldom go willfully because it can be harsh and we're not sure how we will respond (Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 7:19-20).
- a. But God "leads" us there to experience its bane and beauty.
 - b. Looking back, my wife and I have learned that the wilderness is part of the landscape of faith. It's every bit as essential as the mountaintop. On the mountaintop we are overwhelmed by God's presence. In the wilderness we are overwhelmed by his absence. Both places should bring us to our knees; the one, in utter awe; the other, in utter dependence.
5. The Promised Land was a lush but vicious region. A generation emerged who captured it for God. Where did they come from?
- a. Out of the brutal, unforgiving, and harsh ... **d** _____!
 - b. What do your deserts look like today?
 - c. What is God doing in you in the midst of your desert?
 - d. It's much more than just "getting through it."
- * It is getting transformed by it!