

We Will Not Forget the Lessons in the Wilderness

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Do we want to enter into the promise land? **God wants us to also!** Yet, He won't allow Egypt / worldly mindsets to inherit this promise land, they can't. That is why throughout the centuries of Gods dealings with His people there has been a place called the 'wilderness' which God has led His people through. He does this in order to bring us to a place where we can go into our true inheritance; the Garden / the Promise Land. At the fall of mankind God took us out of the garden, a type of the Kingdom or God's dominion through mankind. This was because our right standing with God was broken by sin, our disobedience to His perfect will, and we see in Scripture that access into the Kingdom of God, the land of promise, only comes through right relationship or righteousness before God.

We know that Jesus came preaching the good news of kingdom of heaven. The plan of redemption was to give the kingdom / garden / promise land back to the God's own people, by the price paid on the cross. The cross and resurrection restored righteousness to His people. This is where we begin our study. The Bible speaks of all of God's promises being yes and amen in Christ and that the kingdom has been given to us in Christ; then why aren't we seeing more of it manifested in us?

Hosea 2:14 says, "Therefore, behold I will allure her, will bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfort to her. I will give her her vineyards from there, and the valley of Achor (trouble) as a door of hope; She shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, as in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt. "And it shall be, in that day," says the LORD, "That you will call Me 'My Husband,' and no longer call Me, 'My Master.'" Hosea 2:14-16. This Scripture has significant meaning for me personally, but also it is a scripture which the Spirit is highlighting across the body of Christ, mainly in the western world. As prophets have prophesied, "This is the Laodicean hour in the Church." We say, "We have become rich and prosperous and are in need of nothing." Rev 3:17

(These words are not coming from a hurt heart which is against the church. I deeply and dearly love her as the bride and am honored to be part of her beauty. Jesus Himself spoke these corrections and now the Spirit is proclaiming them to us in this hour.)

This Laodicean Church is in 'Egypt' or the world, and does not even know it. This lack of knowledge comes from her true state, which is, "wretched, miserable, poor,

blind and naked,” Rev 3:17. But God doesn’t condemn her for it, not yet, He still loves her and there for allures her into the wilderness, a place of solitude, dryness and bareness. Hosea 2:14-15.

Why!!!!?? We know that the promise land is a perfect display of God’s nature and character and desire for us. Why not just put us into the promise land and let us see the true nature of God? Why bring us through a dry way where God has to take care of us every give moment? It seems like a lot more work on God’s part and not much fun on our part. But thank God that He doesn’t take short cuts and bypass necessity. He doesn’t do it for us for the same reason that man was taken out of the garden and Israel had to leave Egypt and go through the wilderness to get to the promise land. The answer is this; we can not live in the promise land with an Egypt mentality, the wilderness is the training ground in which the Egypt in us is put to death, and it is in the wilderness that we truly learn how to live in the abundance of the land of promise.

We see in the life of Israel as a nation that even in the promise land there was great temptation to forget God in their abundance. When we forget God in the land of abundance our land of promise turns in to the land of Egypt. God wants us to go through the wilderness so that we can inherit the land of promise and keep it flowing with milk and honey.

First, let me point out that we are not supposed to stay in the wilderness. It is not what God wants for us. He is the Land of Promise. That is where he wants us. Yet, sadly because Christians often won’t learn the lessons from the wilderness they stay in the wilderness and believe that it is God’s best for them; barren, dry and lacking. They form teachings that say that God abundance / the promise land is for the after life only. We are called to be a blessed; spirit soul and body in this life so that we can be a blessing to others. 2 Cor 9:8. They don’t see that it is their mindsets keeping them in the wilderness.

Lesson 1: The wilderness is a place to go through not to stay.

Second, the wilderness brings us to the cross of Christ. We are to walk through the death of Jesus in order that we may partake of the resurrection life / promise land. The cross is made for the old man that came for the world / Egypt. Our old man is our flesh with all of its false mindsets and lusts which corrupt us if followed after. The wilderness brings us to see that we must die to ourselves in Christ and experientially walk through that death to gain His life. It kills off the old man and makes us realize that we don’t have to act like Egypt. We have a Deliverer and we have been delivered and we CAN walk in that deliverance. **Lesson 2: The wilderness takes us to a place to kill off the old man in Christ, so that we can enter into the promise land.**

Third, we see that the wilderness is a place of complete dependence upon God. In Ex 16 we see that the Israelites complained that they had no food and that God brought them out into the wilderness to die. God’s answer was to give them manna, but not in abundance. He gave them only enough for the day. This reality in the wilderness is to bring us into a proper relationship with God: dependence. God IS our Everything, and supplies our every need, every day, without Him we die. I believe that this lesson is the

most important one of all, because it is the model that Jesus gave us when He walked on the earth. The first thing that He did when He was found in the likeness of man was He humbled Himself. Phil 2:8. Humility isn't debasing ourselves or thinking poor of ourselves, it is positioning ourselves before the Eternal God as creatures who are dependant on Him. Jesus did nothing with out seeing the Father doing it and He said nothing with out the Father saying it. He was completely dependant on God. The temptation in the land of promise is to be influence, through our flesh, by our abundance and stop trusting God in everything. If this happens the abundance that God gave us turns into our god called mammon, and God is forgotten. The land of promise then becomes like the world into the land of curses – Egypt. **Lesson 3: The wilderness teaches us our rightful position of moment to moment dependence upon our God, so we will stay in the land of promise.**

Forth, we see that the wilderness is a place of intimacy with God. It is a place to see in faith that God is the God of the land of promises and we become acquainted with Him in a personal way. God loves the personal heart revelation we receive about Him, as we spend time with Him. For the Israelites as well as for us, how we respond to God's interactions with us in the wilderness determines how long we will be in the wilderness. God is eager and zealous for us to come to know Him in an real relationship where it is true interaction between; Father and son, Husband and wife, Friend to friend. We are His inheritance and loved ones. That is what the book of Hosea is all about, God wanting a people who really know Him, and His answer is this, "I will allure her into the wilderness and there speak comfort to her in love and intimacy." **Lesson 4: The wilderness gives us interaction with God in order to bring us into relationship with Him.**

We all want to be in the land of promise, walking fully in the resurrection of Christ, and don't understand why it feels like we are being stripped torn away from all other lovers, in Egypt / world. The death of the cross must be carried in order for us to live in His Life. Are we going to carry our cross or become angry and hard hearted towards God. The first generation of Israelites were saved from Egypt, yet, didn't walk into the land of promise because they failed to respond to God's loving way of purging them from the Egypt in them.

We have comfort in knowing that there are preachers of God's faithfulness who will enter into the promise land and see the kingdom manifested on earth; Caleb and Joshua. Let us not settle for only a few from this generation entering, but let us as a whole generation, young and old, believe the report from those who have been there and "follow their example, who through faith and patience inherit the promises" Heb 6:12. We will press on to inherit the promise land. We will not forget the lessons learned in the wilderness as we live in abundance and blessing by being a blessing to others. This is the safeguard for successful living in the resurrection of Christ and the kingdom of God: continually remembering and realizing that it only came through His death. Not that we stay in His death, in the wilderness, but that we remember the lessons learned and then safely dwell in the resurrection life of Jesus Christ.