

Forty Years of Learning!



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Our *primary* need is not the *blessing*, but the personal *relationship* with God—that is what

counts above everything else. If we are going through desert-like conditions, we might be depending on a past experience, instead of trusting God for a supply of spiritual strength that day. Desert places *compel* us to *deal* with God—which always includes a new *knowledge* of Him—knowledge of our Creator that is received in no *other* way.

Maintaining our *trust* on God through desert-like experiences, brings about the death of self in us—leading us to a preparation for eternal life—that is beyond *any* earthly value. It is always *enlightening* and always *inspiring* to read how God dealt with His people in Scripture. 1 Corinthians 10:11 “*All these events happened to [Israel] as examples for us. They were written down to warn us, who live at the time when this [world] is drawing to a close.*”

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The desert places we pass through from time to time, just proves that *God* is greater than any *other* source of supply. God has far *more* than what we give up for His kingdom—and we can be *sure* of being supplied with what we need—including more of His blessings than we had previously.

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God’s promises would be *fulfilled*—if they would be *patient* and *persist* in faith. Deuteronomy 8:7 “For the LORD thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; 8 A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; 9 A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.”

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When we experience a tough trial early in our Christian walk, the devil can use such things to discourage us—he suggests that we do *not* have enough faith; that we will *not* get the victory; or we will *never* see this situation corrected. There are times when we do not *see* any tangible blessings and we may be perplexed—but there are spiritual reasons *why* God allows desert-like conditions.

Our *primary* need is not the *blessing*, but the personal *relationship* with God—that is what

counts above everything else. If we are going through desert-like conditions, we might be depending on a past experience, instead of trusting God for a supply of spiritual strength that day. Desert places *compel* us to *deal* with God—which always includes a new *knowledge* of Him—knowledge of our Creator that is received in no *other* way.

Maintaining our *trust* on God through desert-like experiences, brings about the death of self in us—leading us to a preparation for eternal life—that is beyond *any* earthly value. It is always *enlightening* and always *inspiring* to read how God dealt with His people in Scripture. 1 Corinthians 10:11 “*All these events happened to [Israel] as examples for us. They were written down to warn us, who live at the time when this [world] is drawing to a close.*”

God first allowed the conditions to be unbearable for His people in Egypt. If it had not *been* that way, and if conditions were *ideal* for them, they would have *stayed* in Egypt. The devil was allowed to bring about dreadful working conditions for them—due to Israel depending on human strength and plans. Conditions became intolerable—and they *would* have done *anything* to get free. It was all part of God's plan to keep His *Truth* alive on earth.

God first enabled them to be released from slavery by great signs and wonders—bringing them to the Red Sea. At *this* point, Satan had Pharaoh's army to pursue them—which was all in divine order. Israel desperately wanted to get *away* from Egypt, but now they faced a huge expanse of water. There was no human way of escape, but God promises that 1 Corinthians 10:13 “*With the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*”

God opens a passageway through the sea—enabling them to distance themselves from the Egyptians. Israel did not *know* what awaited them

on the other side, but they were glad to get away from the present danger and from the horrendous conditions in Egypt.

After reaching the other side, the passageway closed up, and they found themselves in a *desert*! This huge number of Israelites—infants, middle-age, and seniors—soon realized that there was no way to *purchase* anything and no fertile ground to *grow* anything—not a loaf of bread or a quart of milk could be had.

God took them to this desert to prove to *them*, and to everyone *after* them, that *He* is all anyone needs. It made no difference *how* difficult the conditions were, because human conditions do *not* count with God. When every human source of *help* or *supply* or *information* is shut off, we are *compelled* to trust only on God. Forty years in a desert *proved* that God was equal to the task.

The desert places we pass through from time to time, just proves that *God* is greater than any *other* source of supply. God has far *more* than what we give up for His kingdom—and we can be *sure* of being supplied with what we need—including more of His blessings than we had previously.

When we trust God for a *new* supply of anything; self *diminishes*, and our knowledge of God *increases*. Israel first lacked water, and instead of going to God, they went in search for three days. They finally came to some brackish water that was unfit to drink—it was a bitter Marah. Dying of thirst would be horrible, but it gave Moses the opportunity to place the matter before God.

The situation quickly changed—revealing how all-sufficient and resourceful God is—even under the most difficult of circumstances. Locating drinkable water seemed impossible, but Jesus says Matthew 19:26 “*With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.*”

When Moses prayed to God Exodus 15:25 “*The LORD shewed him a tree, which when he had cast*

into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them.”

The wood did *not* change the water, but the power of Almighty God changed it! The Lord just used that desert place to reveal *His* power to *His* people. They not only had drinking water, they had *God* as their Physician—spiritual lessons were being learned.

Exodus 15:26 “If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee.” Every trial we go through trusting God, just proves how *merciful* and *powerful* He is.

God said Deuteronomy 8:2 “Thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

3 “And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.” This desert place taught them to depend exclusively on God.

During this environment, God *protected* them, and even *preserved* their clothing. Deuteronomy 8:4 “Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years. 5 Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the LORD thy God chasteneth thee.” It was a teaching opportunity for God—if they would *listen* and *learn*.

God’s promises would be *fulfilled*—if they would be *patient* and *persist* in faith. Deuteronomy 8:7 “For the LORD thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; 8 A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; 9 A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.”

Great blessings and a better knowledge of God result from keeping our faith in Him, and allowing Him to supply our need. We must *not* accept any other deliverance or substitute for God. Jesus told a parable AV Luke 18:1 “That men ought always to pray, and not to faint.” He went on to tell about an unbelieving judge and a persistent widow who needed an answer from him. The judge kept putting her off, as he did *not* fear God and had *no* regard for anyone *else*.

He later says Luke 18:5 “Because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.” Jesus then tells her and us, 6 “Hear what the unjust judge saith. 7 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? 8 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily.” If we will persist in faith, He *could* deliver us in a moment!

The woman of Canaan needed healing for her daughter. The two points in *both* examples are to first *burn* any bridge back to self, and then use Scripture to *claim* our victory. The woman said Matthew 15:22 “Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. 23 But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.”

Even though Jesus replied Matthew 15:24 “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of

Israel,” she would not leave without an answer. 25 “Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.” A second discouraging reply still did *not* change her persistence. 26 “He answered and said, It is not meet to take the children’s bread, and to cast it to dogs.”

He meant that the same relationship exists between the woman and Him, as between a strange man and a stray dog. That is the only basis she *had* for her claim—the right a stray dog has to beg something from a stranger. She says, Matthew 15:27 “Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table.”

The *reply* of the Lord to her *then*, is His reply to us *today*. Matthew 15:28 “O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.” She went home and found her daughter fully delivered. That *faith* and *persistence* in asking, is to be applied by *us* today.

We are to first make an uncompromising *decision* not to seek help from anyone but *God*, and then make our *claim* on the authority of His *Word*. The apostle said Romans 10:8 “The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach.”

If we make a decision to *trust* God in faith, and to base our *claim* on the shed Blood of His Son, the victory *has* to be received—because God’s power *has* to remain unchanged. 2 Corinthians 1:20 “For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.”

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