

The Back Side of the Desert — 05/03/20

TEXT- Exo 3:1 *Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb.*

INTRO – Is your soul parched? Has your ministry drained you dry? Don't give up--God doesn't forsake you when you're in the desert. Ever ministered so long and hard that you find yourself completely exhausted? Slumped down in your favorite chair, nothing is left in you but a past, distant memory of God's presence.

Your bread from God has been devoured by others. The Spirit's water in your well has gone dry. As you look ahead at ministry's endless landscape, all you see for miles ahead is desert.

Heb 11:23-29 *By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. 24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; 25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; 26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. 27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. 28 Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them. 29 By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.*

When we are faced with disappointment, we must probe for a deeper reason for our predicament. Leaders may find themselves camping in a place of loneliness, barrenness and weariness, which we might call the "back side of the desert." Here we may find ourselves questioning God, ourselves and others about our calling and ministry.

Horeb was an important place of God meeting men.

Deu 1:6 *The LORD our God spake unto us in Horeb, saying, Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount:*

Exo 17:6 *Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.*

Deu 1:19 *And when we departed from Horeb, we went through all that great and terrible wilderness, which ye saw by the way of the mountain of the Amorites, as the LORD our God commanded us; and we came to Kadeshbarnea.*

Deu 5:2 *The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb.*

I. God Speaks to Men In The Wilderness

- Paul in Arabia

Gal 1:17-18 *Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. 18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.*

- Elijah by the brook Cherith
- Elijah flees to Horeb

1 Ki 19:6-9 *And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. 7 And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. 8 And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God. 9 And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?*

- John the Baptist in the Judean wilderness
- Moses was called by God in the wilderness

There in the stillness, in the most illogical place, a miracle happened for Moses. It was not in the pharaoh's house but on the back side of the desert that Moses met God. It was there that God revealed Moses' personal assignment.

II. Lessons Are Learned In The Wilderness

A. It is in the desert you get to know God

Knowing God happens in the desert. Moses' assignment did not end when the Israelites started their trek to the Promised Land. His leadership had to remain constant, strong and endure heartbreak and disappointment as he witnessed the weak faith and wavering hearts of the people whom he was leading.

B. Learned the importance of being in the will of God - *What doest thou here, Elijah?*

C. Learned the importance of meekness

D. Learned the importance of little things

E. Through pestilence and hardship, Moses never wavered from what God had told him.

F. Learned the value of faithfulness

III. Preparation From The Wilderness

A. God humbles us in the wilderness

B. It makes us stronger

C. We can learn to not be influenced by the crowd

IV. Leaving The Wilderness

A. The wilderness is for preparation not our purpose

Where was it Moses was leading the people? "in the desert" (In the desert--not the promised land--Moses and Israel would know God.

B. Listen to the call of God

Exo 3:3-4 *And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. 4 And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I.*

C. Follow the will of God

Moses received his assignment to go to pharaoh with God's word of liberation. He was called to proclaim God's word--not to rely only on his own talent, ability to communicate, strategy or logic. God's word was all that was needed to bring hope and life back to God's people.

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