

HE KNOWS YOUR WALKING THROUGH THIS GREAT WILDERNESS



(Deut. 2: 7, 36)

Life on earth is a wilderness filled with surprises at the moment our forefathers sinned. They had it so perfectly, but temptation took the best of them and life became what it is. They were thrown out of the garden, their comfortable and beautiful place to wander through the earth. Life became hard and challenging for them. They conceived the first murderer, who God marked with a sign, which no one knows what that was. Man's blood line turned corrupted and iniquity traveled from generation to generation without end. So life here on earth is uncertain and full of surprises – good and bad. It is fast as a flower, springing in the morning and withering in the evening. In Psalm ninety Moses describes life in a nut shell: The days of our years are three-score years and ten or even, if by

reason of strength, four score years; yet is their pride only labor and sorrow, for it is soon gone and we fly away. So teach us to number our days that we get us a heart of wisdom. Moses' inspired words of psalm ninety express in depth the experience he and his people went through. They were experiences that reflected life in general. Life for a believer is a journey through the wilderness; specifically, the wilderness that leads to heaven. Many have found it to be difficult and have turned around. The weight of their faith did not measure up to what it should be in order to enter the Promised Land. They took another wilderness, the wilderness that will lead them to death; the wilderness of a seemingly easy life, filled with worldly pleasures. Surprise however will arise to them when they will find themselves in a different place besides heaven.

As the Israelites roamed through the desert to their Promised Land, so are we on our journey to our Promised Land, called heaven. Moses, in his last days leading the Israelites reminded them of God's faithfulness throughout the years: (God) led you through the great and terrible wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water out of the flinty rock, Who fed you in the wilderness with manna, which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and test you, to do you good in the end, your closing did not become old upon you nor did your feet swell these forty years (Deut. 8 :15-16, 4). The Israelites witnessed signs and wonders all through their journey of forty years as they went "through the wilderness with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground." Of course, we do not experience the physical wilderness, the fiery serpents, and scorpions, for our struggles through the desert is against the despotisms, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spirit forces of wickedness in the heavenly (Ephesians 6:12). In short, our wrestling is with the devil and his demons. Even though we do not see him, he is working his plan to deviate, to discourage the believer through temptations, as he did Eve in the garden. YAHSHUA told the disciples that they were not of this world, as He was not; reason why the persecutions, the hatred men had and have for all who love Him. He said, If you belonged to the world the world would treat you with affection and world love you as its own. But because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, the world hates you (John 15:19). We however, rest on the comfort of His words: In the world you have tribulation and trials, and distress and frustration; but be of good cheer! For I have overcome the world (John 16:33).

This world is a wilderness for a believer; it is a battle field; It is a place where we groan with pains – spiritual, emotional and physical although, we do experience God's peace, joy and strength to pursue the journey, for He promised to be with us always. And that He is ever aware of our walking through this wilderness, as He was of Israel. God's presence was visible to Israel through a fire in the night for a light and a cloud during the day to keep them from the extreme heat. He is present today through His Holy Spirit, Who He sent from the Father to be with us always. YAHSHUA warned us not to set our hearts on the things of the world, for they are a trap to hold us prisoners, and lose focus of heaven. They are things that rot, that rust and get stolen. Not knowingly to us, they become a god. We can call these the scorpions of the wilderness. They are demons ever so sneakily taking over without our awareness. We stumble and fall as a result. But YAHSHUA warned us concerning the worries of this world by saying, Do not ...gather and heap up and store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust and worm consume and destroy, and where thieves break through and steal... Therefore, I tell you stop being perpetually uneasy about your life... (Matt. 6:19,25a). When God called the Israelites out of Egypt, they were to leave it in a hurry, as He struck all the first males of all Egypt, including the animals.

How easy it is for a believer to get distracted and to lose focus of his spiritual journey and the joy of it mainly, because we keep looking back to the things of the world, just like Israel did when they craved the foods of Egypt. YAHSHUA said that NO one who looks back is fit for the kingdom of God. Acting as if this earth was our permanent home, it will lead us to gather earthly treasures and lose focus of heaven. It will weigh us down, enslaving us to work two to three jobs to pay for them. It is as if we took a break from our journey to focus on the other side of the fence, called the world. Although, I do realize that there are heroes and heroines of the Christian faith all over the world, who are giving their lives to serve and to honor God in faithfulness. They have little, but they are filled with joy because the joy of the Lord is their strength. They walk many miles to hear the gospel, and sometimes taking days to get to the place of worship. They are persecuted and warned against their faith, but they keep looking forward, acknowledging God's awareness of their walking through this earthly wilderness. They are like the heroes and heroines of faith who were controlled and sustained by faith mentioned in the book of Hebrews eleven, verse 13,16a: These people all died controlled and sustained by their faith, but not having received the tangible fulfillment of [God's] promises, only having seen it and greeted it from a great

distance by faith, and all the while acknowledging and confessing that they were strangers and temporary residents and exiles upon the earth... but the truth is that they were yearning for and aspiring to a better and more desirable country, that is, a heavenly [one].

The Christian who does not yearn for heaven is not compelled to pursue it if he has to go through a wilderness. The earthly comfort binds and steals his faith necessary to get there, and like many of the Israelites who perished in the desert, they will perish. Of those Israelites, God said, I was provoked with that generation and said, They always err and are led astray in their hearts, and they have not perceived or recognized My ways and become progressively better and more experimentally and intimately acquainted with them. Accordingly, I swore in My wrath and indignation, They shall not enter into My rest. Brethren, take care, lest there be in any one of you a wicked, unbelieving heart, leading you to turn away and desert or stand aloof from the living God (Heb. 3:10,12). The wilderness is a good place to grow maturely and be sanctified. If we reject that, we are rejecting the essence of God's sovereignty for us, as Paul said, For those whom He foreknew, He also destined from the beginning to be molded into the image of His Son, that He might become the firstborn among many brethren (Rom. 8:29).

Israel's pilgrimage was foretelling of the believers own spiritual pilgrimage. YAHSHUA is the way to heaven, but we must go through the wilderness to get there. And God knows every step we take that will lead us close to our heavenly place. He is aware of every situation we face that will lead us to suffering. Nothing goes unnoticed by Him, for all is part of our sanctification as we travel through the rough earth and its meaningless hopes. YAHSHUA is the source of all that is good. He knows about our pain and sorrows. He has been there and He knows and understands all the root causes of our problems, as One Who "endured from sinners grievous opposition and bitter hostility against Himself... and have resisted and withstood to the point of pouring out His own blood." Thank God for the shed blood of His Son, we have a place to go to as we cross the wilderness of life. How about you my friend, which wilderness are you taking?

THINK ABOUT IT!