



**RISE ON FIRE MINISTRIES  
TEACHING NOTES**

## **Entering The Wilderness: The Seasons of Suffering in God's People**

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**by PD Vander Westhuizen**

When Israel leaves Egypt, they rejoice in the freedom from Egypt's slavery but soon thereafter encounters something they didn't truly expect: A wilderness. No water, no food, just a desert ready to swallow them. In their minds, they only traded the curse of Egypt for the curse of the wilderness, and they complain and even rebel against God.

Jesus also entered a wilderness. Even though He was free from sin and the world (Egypt), He had to walk through the wilderness. But He took 40 days instead of Israel's 40 years, and He never complained or rebelled. Throughout scripture, we see the reality of the wilderness season every man/woman of God will encounter. It's everywhere. But what are we to do when we enter it?

The bigger picture of the exodus: What are all the small stories contained in the story teaching us in the big picture?

### **Small Stories of Suffering:**

- Red Sea Split
- No Water (rock split)
- No Food (manna)
- Giants (good and bad reports)
- Rebellions of God's people (Korah)
- Plagues (due to sin)

- Reading the scriptures makes us think these events happened right after each other, **but in reality, they were spread out over a person's lifetime (40 YEARS)**
  - E.g. The time between **The Plagues of Egypt** and **Pharaoh chasing after Israel**
- In between these events, things go well, but then things become worse again when they grew comfortable and forgot
  - We see this **even between generations**

#### Why was Israel first landing in The wilderness:

- NOT BECAUSE OF THEIR SIN, BUT **FOR THEIR FREEDOM**
  - So God can take Egypt out of them

#### More examples:

- **Joseph** falling into a well
- **Moses** left with a complaining people
- **Israel chased by Egypt** at the Red Sea
  - All these seem like Curses at first. But it happened not due to their sin, but for the glory of God.

#### Suffering Was A Promise

Even when we prayed all the prayers and try to live righteously, **it does not mean we will have no suffering**

- God never promised Israel when they get to the promised land there will be no suffering!
  - He promised blessing and prosperity for those who obey
- Yeshua & The Disciples promise suffering:

#### [1 Peter 4:12-14](#)

Beloved, **do not be surprised** at the fiery trial when it comes upon you **to test you**, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you **share Christ's sufferings**, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

#### Paul had suffering:

[Col 1:24](#) Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church,  
[Col 1:25](#) of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, **to make the word of God fully known.**

- Christ atonement for us **mean nothing to an unbeliever until it seen, believed and loved**
- A display of Christ's sufferings to bring **full revelation** to His body of His atonement and suffering.

- Missionaries, disciples will face similar suffering to be made more into His image, for through that people come to Christ

In The Exodus - To Test & Humble:

**Deu 8:2** And 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**.

- To **test**, to **humble**, to **see** if you **walk like Yeshua**

**Deu 8:3** 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**.

- **To understand:** You **live** because of God, you have **shelter** because of God, you have **a job** because of God.

**Rejoice in your suffering**

**ROMANS 5:3** Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, **4** and endurance produces character, and character produces hope,**5** and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

**CONCLUSION TO THIS**

- Sometimes the suffering is **because of sin**
- But sometimes, the suffering is just **because God loves you and wants you to be great**

**So Why did Israel spend 40 years in the Exodus for a 12 day journey?**

**Complaining**

- Someone had to ask, "are we ever going to get there? Why is it that it seems we are in this endless cycle?"
  - **Israel complained 14 times**, after the 5th time God starts executing judgement (<https://onelordonebody.com/2014/02/27/how-israel-complaining-14-times-mirrors-your-christian-journey/>)
  - **Complaining keeps you in the wilderness**
    - Yeshua was there 40 days instead of 40 years, because He didn't complain once.

**But how to not complain?**

- We complain when we **don't trust**  
**If we trust He is in control (1) and trust His will for us is good (2), we won't complain.**

**Also: Yeshua had the Spirit**

Just as we now have the Spirit

**When you overcome, it's not your righteousness**

**[Deu 9:5](#)** Not for **thy righteousness**, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land: **but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee**, and that he may perform the word which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

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