

The Wilderness Test

When you ask God for something great, you also ask Him for great testing. The unspoken part of your prayer is, "Train me for it."

Make sure you understand that God will prepare you for the answer to that for which you are praying. He wants to qualify you, and the qualifications may be so rough that you tell Him to forget it.

In the Old Testament, the Israelites left Mount Sinai and walked a large circle in the wilderness before reaching Kadesh Barnea, where they sent out a spying party into the promised land. Ten of the 12 spies weren't ready for entry, and they came back with a bad report (see Num. 13:31).

Because of the influence of these 10 unprepared spies, it took the Israelites 40 years to finally cross over the Jordan. The 10 spies—and everyone they influenced—had to die in the wilderness before their children could enter the promised land.

The Bible says the Israelites kept failing the class. They couldn't graduate, so God kept taking them back to the same lessons.

Some of us have experienced that. We take a shortcut through the training and end up marching in circles with a hope of God but living in rebellious defeat.

We all try to avoid some trials. But God won't allow us into His promised land without learning the lessons that trials are meant to teach.

TESTS PREPARE YOU FOR CANAAN God isn't going to take you to Canaan (freedom) until He's satisfied that you've learned the

lessons in Sinai. So you must learn your lessons.

It is in the wilderness that God provides for you so you can develop your ability to respond in freedom. There is a heavy burden in freedom for which you must be conditioned before God will pass you on your test. God will bless you during this season even though you are playing around and acting immature, but the blessing isn't permanent.

When you reach the Jordan River, some changes will have to take place. God will want a new response from you. He will demand responsibility. In essence, the purpose for the wilderness is to condition you for Canaan.

If you die in the wilderness, you'll never experience what He had planned for you. You will make it into heaven, but life on Earth will be thirsty, dry and miserable.

The principle is: Transformation is more important to God than relocation. Mental freedom is more important than physical freedom.

You don't have to die; you can surrender to the dealings of God and allow Him to change you. Let us learn our lessons in the wilderness so we can handle the freedom and responsibility of Canaan!