

Message-based Study

Video is available online at: visitccc.com

Connection

When you travel do you prefer to take the highway or the scenic route? Why?

Cheer and Challenge

- How did it go living out your "I will..." statement from last week? Share your experience.
- Tell about any experiences you had this week following through on the B.L.E.S.S. challenge.

Content

As we study the Israelite's journey through the wilderness, we will see these truths:

The wilderness was a **TRIAL**, a **TEST**, a **REVELATION**, and a **HIGHWAY**.

This experience was designed to **REFINE** them, **DEFINE** them and **ASSIGN** them.

The desert was a place where **GOD SPOKE**.

Can you think of a trial you experienced in your past that demonstrated one or more of these? What was the trial? How did you experience these truths as you walked through it?

1. **God's pathway sometimes seems illogical.**

Read Exodus 13:17-18. Focus on the first sentence in that verse. What emotions do you think the Israelites would have felt when they realized they were taking the long way?

2. **God's pathway is well thought through.**

Now re-read the second sentence of Exodus 13:17. What was the Lord trying to help His people avoid by taking them this less-direct way?

3. **God's pathway is not always convenient.**

Verse 18 specifies that they were being led "in a round-about way through the wilderness." What unique things would they learn through the wilderness that they couldn't have learned on the more direct route?

4. **God's pathway is often scary.**

Read Exodus 14:5-14. What do the Israelites think will be the outcome in this situation? What does Moses believe the outcome will be?

5. **God's pathway is the way of victory.**

Read Exodus 14:21-31. What supernatural things did God do to give the Israelites total victory?

What was the end result of this experience?

Commitment

Now consider a specific trial you are currently facing. In short, what is this trial? _____
Contemplate what God may be doing in light of the truths we have learned by answering these questions:

- What emotions have you felt as you have realized that you are “taking the long way” through this trial?
- What might the Lord be protecting you from by taking you this way?
- What unique things have you learned in this “wilderness” thus far? What else do you imagine you could learn?
- What does your fear tell you the outcome could be in this situation? What does your faith tell you God can do in this situation?
- What would total victory look like in your wilderness situation? Journal a prayer here, asking God to walk you through this, leading you the rest of the way to victory.

Dear Lord,

_____ Amen.



Begin with prayer. Listen with care. Eat / Engage with another. Serve. Share your story.

Your faith story involves many hills and valleys. Sometimes we hesitate to share with others the areas in our life where we are currently struggling, but that's where faith meets real life. This week, consider **sharing** with someone how you are reaching out to the Lord in your “wilderness situation.” It just might help them realize they can reach out to Him too.