



## **Message One: The Wilderness Test**

***Pastor Mike Chapman***

What a journey we have been on over the past six years. In the next three messages, I want to share with you where we have been and what we have learned and who we have become.

In today's message we will reflect on the Israelites forty year journey through the wilderness. We will discover that this is not merely a historical event, but it was the next part of God's story. As such it is our story and filled with lessons for our own lives and journeys. Note what Paul said about this ...

*1 Corinthians 10:6, 11, These things happened as examples for us, so that we will not crave evil things as they did...These things happened to them as examples and were written for our instruction. NET*

### **THE WILDERNESS JOURNEY IS ABOUT GOD'S PRIORITIES**

*Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 16-17, Remember how the LORD led you through the wilderness for forty years, humbling you and testing you to prove your character, and to find out whether or not you would really obey his commands. Yes, he humbled you by letting you go hungry and then feeding you with manna...He did it to teach you that people need more than bread for their life. Real life comes by feeding on every word of the LORD...He did this to humble you and test you for your own good. He did it so that*

*you would never think it was your own strength and energy that made you wealthy.* NLT

God took them the long way to Canaan.

The wilderness journey teaches us that **God is not in a hurry.**

We are naturally focused on the **place** and the **pace** of our lives.

God is focused on **process.**

God knew that the place the Israelites were going was not nearly as important as who they were becoming.

God's priority was that they would be the **right kind of people** people when they got there.

## THE WILDERNESS JOURNEY TEACHES US ABOUT GOD'S PROVISION

*Exodus 13-19, That evening quail came and covered the camp and in the morning...when the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor, when the Israelites saw it, that said to each other, 'What is it?' The LORD said, 'It's the bread the LORD will give you to each of you to eat...No one is to keep any of it until morning.'*

Again, it's a **test** and it's about **character.**

The question is "**Will we trust God to provide what we need?**"

## THE WILDERNESS JOURNEY TEACHES US THAT IT IS GOD'S PRESENCE OVER EVERYTHING ELSE

Exodus 33:14-15, *The LORD replied, 'My presence will go with you and I will give your rest.'* Moses said to him, *'If your presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here.'*

It is in the wilderness that we cry, **'Lord, you are all we need.'**

If going to the Promised Land means leaving you, we stay right here.