



SELFIES IN THE DESERT, PART 3: DESERT TRAINING

Have you ever wondered why life feels so dry, empty, or stalled—as if God hit the pause button on your purpose? Desert seasons are confusing and lonely, and they often make us question if God has forgotten us. But what if the desert isn't punishment, but preparation? What if the emptiness you feel is the very place where God is trying to speak the loudest?

Moses spent 40 years in obscurity before he ever heard God's voice from a burning bush. Sometimes the desert feels like wasted time, but it's actually where God is shaping you for what's next.

BIG IDEA: Don't shortcut the desert, because that's the place where God speaks.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Has there ever been a time when you felt shelved? That you were in a desert season of life? What were the circumstances surrounding your experience?
2. Did you get in the desert because of a decision you made, or someone made that affected you?
3. Chris said that the Hebrew word desert is *midbaar*. It comes from the word *dahbaar*, meaning *to speak*. The desert is the place where God speaks to us—where He communicates some of His most important messages to us. Are you in a desert time right now? What do you think God is trying to say to you?
4. *With your Bible or Bible App, [read Deuteronomy 32:10, 12](#).*

He found him in a desert land, in the howling waste of a wilderness. He encircled him, He cared for him, He guarded him as the pupil of His eye.¹² The LORD alone guided him...

[*Deuteronomy 32:10, 12 \(NASB\)*](#)

5. Moses tells us 4 things that God does while we're in a desert. What are these four things? Which of these have you experienced personally? Where do you need to trust God more?
6. What does this verse teach us about God's presence and protection during desert seasons? How have you personally seen God care for you during difficult times?
7. *With your Bible or Bible App, [read Deuteronomy 8:2](#).*

Remember how the Lord your God led you through the wilderness for these forty years, humbling you and testing you to prove your character, and to find out whether or not you would obey His commands.

[*Deuteronomy 8:2 \(NLT\)*](#)

8. According to this verse, why does God lead us through wilderness seasons? What has the desert revealed to you about your own character or obedience?
9. James 1:2-4 has similar themes to Deuteronomy 8:2. What are these similarities and differences between these two verses?

² Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. ³ For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. ⁴ So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.

[*James 1:2-4 \(NLT\)*](#)

10. *With your Bible or Bible App, [read Exodus 3:1](#).*

One day Moses was tending the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro. He led the flock far into the wilderness and came to Sinai, the mountain of God.

[*Exodus 3:1 \(NLT\)*](#)

11. How did obscurity and humility prepare Moses to hear from God? Have you ever experienced a time when being "hidden" or overlooked prepared you for something greater?

12. With your Bible or Bible App, [read Acts 7:29-32](#).

²⁹ *Moses fled Egypt and lived as a foreigner in the land of Midian. There his two sons were born.* ³⁰ *“Forty years later, in the desert near Mount Sinai, an angel appeared to Moses in the flame of a burning bush. ³¹ When Moses saw it, he was amazed at the sight. As he went to take a closer look, the voice of the LORD called out to him, ³² ‘I am the God of your ancestors—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.’ Moses shook with terror and did not dare to look.* [Acts 7:29-32 \(NLT\)](#)

13. Moses spent 40 years in the desert before encountering God in the burning bush. Why is God’s timing often different from ours?
14. Why do you think God waited so long to speak to Moses? What does this say about the importance of paying attention when God finally does speak?
15. How does patience play a role in hearing God’s voice and receiving His direction?
16. Discuss the following quotes. Do you agree or disagree?

“God is anxious that his children get a good education. Every man He has used has had a course in the University of the Desert—a desert training—Joseph, Moses, Elijah, John the Baptist, Paul—even Jesus. These are a few of the distinguished graduates. The fees are large, the courses severely high, the discipline exacting and many don’t keep it up, but drop out. The marked results are broad perspective, steady nerves, keen eyesight and insight, utter dependence on God, utter independence of man, child-like simplicity, warm sympathy, deep humility, and the highest award goes to patience, the rarest trait of all. God has no short cuts in His training program. If you try to shortcut your desert, it will lead you into a cul-de-sac.”
—J. Oswald Sanders

17. What are some ways people try to shortcut or escape their “desert” season? What’s the danger in doing so?
18. With your Bible or Bible App, [read Numbers 12:3](#).

Now Moses was very humble—more humble than any other person on earth. [Numbers 12:3 \(NLT\)](#)

19. Chris said, “God uses humble people full of God, not proud people full of themselves.” How did the desert shape Moses into a humble leader? What situations in your life are shaping your humility right now?

MOVING FORWARD

The desert isn’t a dead end—it’s a proving ground where God prepares us for His purposes. Don’t rush the process. Stay present. Trust that God is speaking, shaping, and preparing you, even if you can’t see it yet. The desert is where God forms nobodies into somebodies—not through striving, but through surrender.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

Now Moses was very humble—more humble than any other person on earth. [Numbers 12:3 \(NLT\)](#)