



Geography of Salvation

Preaching the Map

A Bible Study with Stan Key

DOING THE WALK

I Corinthians 10:1–13

I. Metaphors of Salvation.

The Bible uses multiple **images** (metaphors) to describe salvation. To grasp only one or two of these images is to have a **partial** or even **distorted** view of the purposes God for us in redemption. Four metaphors seem especially important:

	COURTROOM (Romans, Galatians)	FATHER & CHILDREN (Gospel of John)	MARRIAGE (Gen. 1–2; Ex. 19–24; Eph. 5; Rev. 21–22)	A JOURNEY (Gen. 12; Exodus; “Follow me”)
Who Is God?	Judge	Father	Bridegroom Husband	Lord and King
Who Is Jesus?	Our advocate, lawyer	Our brother	Our Bridegroom Husband	Guide Fellow Traveler “The Way”
Who Am I?	Guilty sinner Condemned	Newborn child Adopted child	Fiancée Wife	Pilgrim Dual citizenship
What Is the Problem?	Sin, guilt I’ve broken God’s law	We are dead, unborn Children of devil	Other lovers Adultery	I’m lost I’m headed in the wrong direction
What Is the Solution?	Forgiveness Pardon Justification	New birth Adoption	Marriage Covenant Renew vows	Repent (turn around) “Follow Me”
How Do I Become a Christian?	Confess Repent Believe	You must be born again	Enter a covenant Turn from other lovers	Make a decision to follow Jesus
How Do I Know I’m a Christian?	<i>There is now no condemnation...</i> (Rom. 8:1)	<i>...the Spirit of adoption...Abba!..</i> (Romans 8:15)	<i>My beloved is mine and I am his...</i> (Song of Sol. 2:16)	All who are led by the Spirit are sons (Rom. 8:14)
How Should We then Live?	<i>If anyone sins, we have an advocate...</i> (1 John 2:1–2)	<i>As obedient children...be holy</i> (1 Peter 1:14–15)	Keep yourself pure (II Cor. 11:2)	Walk worthy Walk humbly (Eph. 4:1; Micah 6:8)

While many post-moderns and millennials, coming from **broken homes**, find it difficult to connect with metaphors relating to the family, preaching salvation as a **journey** tends to resonate with their life experience.

II. Life as a Journey.

A. Many writers, both ancient and contemporary, both secular and Christian, have built their stories around the central theme of a journey:

- *The Odyssey* by Homer.
- *The Wizard of Oz* by Frank Baum.
- *The Lord of the Rings* by J. R. R. Tolkien.
- *Gulliver’s Travels* by Jonathan Swift.
- *The Way of the Pilgrim* by an unknown Russian Orthodox monk.
- *Pilgrim’s Progress* by John Bunyan.

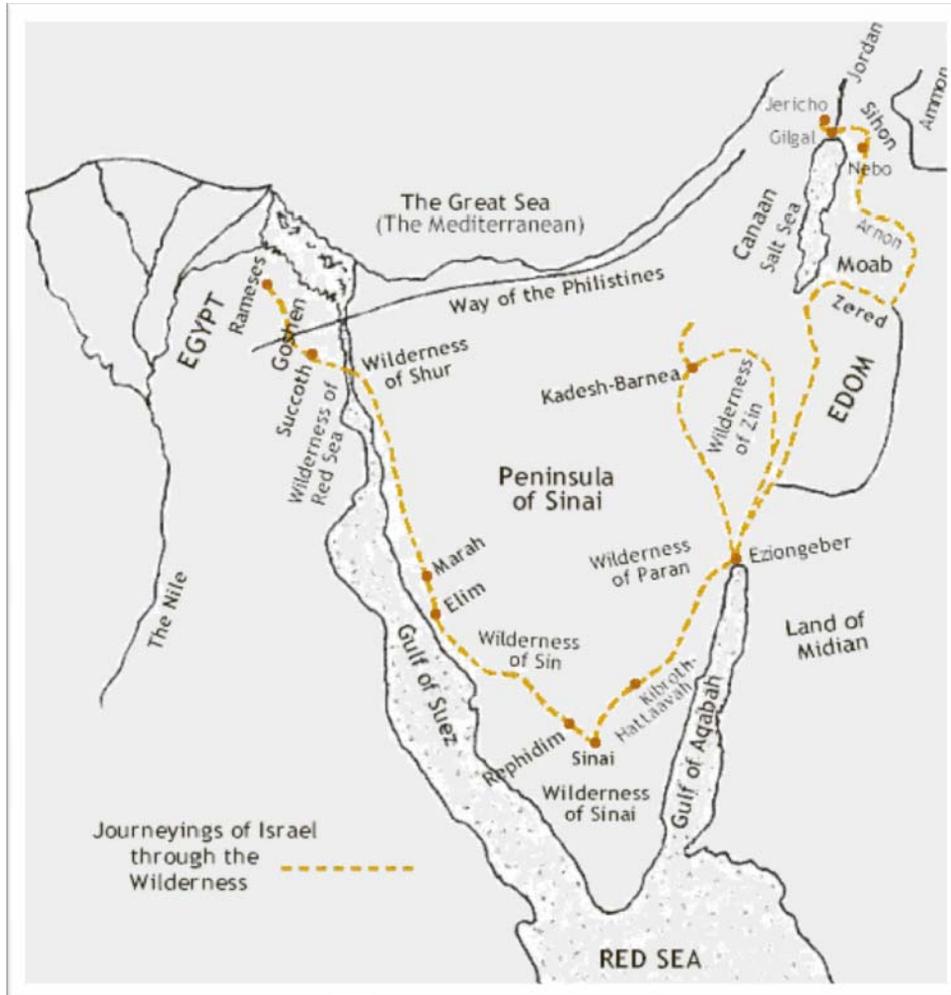
The opening lines of Dante's *The Divine Comedy* capture well the drama of life's journey:

*Midway along the journey of our life
I woke to find myself in a dark wood,
for I had wandered off the straight path....*

Few have spoken with more poetic elegance than Robert Frost in his famous poem, *The Road Not Taken*:

*Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth....
...Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.*

- B. In the Bible, this emphasis on the journey of life is underscored by the recurring theme of **walking** with God:
1. Adam and Eve walked with God in the Garden (Gen. 3:8).
 2. Enoch, Noah, and Abraham walked with God (Gen. 5:22–24; 6:9; 17:1).
 3. “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked” (Psalm 1:1).
 4. “And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, “This is the way, walk in it.” (Isaiah 30:21).
 5. What does the Lord require of you? Do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8).
 6. Jesus called his first disciples by simply saying, “Follow me” (Matt. 4:19).
 7. Paul exhorted believers to walk in love, walk in the Spirit, walk in the light, walk worthy, walk carefully, don't walk as the Gentiles, etc. (Rom. 13:13; 14:15; Gal. 5:16; Eph. 4:1, 17; 5:2, 15; Col. 1:10; 2:6; I Thess. 2:12).
 8. Even in heaven this walk with God will continue forever (Rev. 3:4).
- C. The most prominent illustration of doing the walk in the Bible, however, is seen in the Old Testament in the journey of redemption, when God led his people from **Egypt** to **Canaan**. To understand the spiritual significance of this journey, one must know some basic **geography**. No journey makes sense without a **map**!



1. The map introduces us to the **geography of salvation**. Places on the map are not arbitrary or random. Each one has spiritual significance: Egypt, the Red Sea, Mara, Sinai, Kadesh, the Jordan River, etc.
2. The journey of the Jewish people 3,400 years ago is not just interesting history. It is a picture of the Christian life. It is not just *their* story, it is **my story**. Their journey helps me to better understand mine.
3. At least two writers in the New Testament used the map of the exodus to help Christians understand their own spiritual journey. In other words, they were **preaching the map**.
 - a. The writer of Hebrews warned Christians about the danger of spiritual **arteriosclerosis** by preaching the map (Heb. 3:7–4:13).
 - b. Paul warned the Corinthians about the danger of **falling from grace** by preaching the map (I Cor. 10:1–13).
- D. Some basic observations concerning the map and the geography of salvation:
 1. Though the Hebrews had lived in Egypt 400 years, this was not their **home**!
 2. The moment of redemption came when the people crossed the **Red Sea**.

3. Mount Sinai, where the law was given, comes **after** redemption, not before. Sinai is *not* in Egypt! In other words, one does not obey God's law in order to be saved but because one already is!
4. Canaan is where Israel's inheritance lies: a place of fruitfulness and where battles are to be fought and won. The moment of entering Canaan came when the people crossed the **Jordan River**.
5. Egypt is not contiguous with Canaan. A **desert** lies between! Passing through this desert is inevitable. It is a good thing, willed by God himself.
6. Not everyone who had enough faith to **get out** of Egypt had enough faith to **get in** to Canaan. For 38 years they did laps in the desert. *This* desert is not inevitable. It is the result of sin and illustrates a wasted life.
7. Salvation is a **journey**.

III. The Map Sermon—I Corinthians 10:1–13

Of all the churches in the New Testament, Corinth was undoubtedly the most **immature** and **carnal**. The church had problems with divisions, sexual immorality, charismania, false doctrines, etc. Paul chose to address these issues by preaching the map and teaching these Greeks about the geography of salvation. The journey from Egypt to Canaan is no longer an ancient story about other people. It becomes my story, today. "Now these things happened to them as an **example** (Greek, *typos*), but they were written down for our instruction" (v. 6, 10).

Paul's sermon has four applications for the believers in Corinth and for us today; we could call them **mapplications**.

A. *Salvation is a journey...* be **informed**.

Salvation is not a ticket to heaven or a get-out-jail-free card. It is a walk... from one place to another. Jesus said, "Follow me." How can you call yourself a Christ-follower if you are not following Christ?

B. *Not all who start the journey finish....* be **wise** (vv. 1–5).

Spiritual blessings do not guarantee spiritual success or maturity. "Not everyone who says to me 'Lord, Lord' will enter the kingdom of heaven but only he who does the will of my Father...." (Matt. 7:21–23).

C. There are certain dangers that all pilgrims face... be **alert** (vv. 6–12).

Paul does not mention every temptation that the Hebrews faced during the exodus but he zeroes in on four because he knows how often followers of Christ trip up at these very points:

- Idolatry (v. 7)—the golden calf (Ex. 32).
- Sexual immorality (v. 8)—the Moabite women (Num. 25).
- Putting the Lord to the test (v. 9)—many examples.
- Grumbling (v. 10)—many examples.

"Therefore, let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed **lest he fall**" (v. 12).

Thinking we are immune from moral failure is perhaps the surest way to allow it to happen (cf. I Cor. 9:24–27). "Those who don't know history are destined to repeat it" (Edmund Burke).

D. God is faithful... be **encouraged** (v. 13).

This wonderful verse tells me that if I am struggling with temptations and trials in my spiritual journey:

- I am **normal**. “No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man....”
- God is **faithful**. “God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability....”
- Victory is **promised**. “...but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.” As God’s promise is stated in Deuteronomy 6:23: “He brought us out from there [Egypt] that he might bring us in [to Canaan]....”

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What did you learn from our discussion of the metaphors of salvation? Which metaphor (courtroom, child, marriage, journey) best describes the Gospel of your salvation experience?
2. When you think of salvation as a journey (doing the walk), describe how this impacts the way you think about: the purpose of salvation... assurance... conversion... perseverance... sanctification....evangelism....
3. How does “preaching the map” address the issue of spiritual immaturity and carnality?
4. What has this lesson taught you about the place of “the desert” in our spiritual journey?
5. Do you know Christians who have enough faith to *get out* of Egypt but not enough faith to *get in* to Canaan? Explain. What happens to people like this when they die?
6. Where are you on the map?

We're Marching to Zion

By Isaac Watts

*Come, we that love the Lord,
And let our joys be known;
Join in a song with sweet accord, (2x)
And thus surround the throne. (2x)*

*Refrain:
We're marching to Zion,
Beautiful, beautiful Zion;
We're marching upward to Zion,
The beautiful city of God.*

*The sorrows of the mind
Be banished from the place;
Religion never was designed (2x)
To make our pleasures less. (2x)*

*Let those refuse to sing,
Who never knew our God;
But children of the heav'nly King (2x)
May speak their joys abroad. (2x)*

*The men of grace have found
Glory begun below;
Celestial fruits on earthly ground (2x)
From faith and hope may grow. (2x)*

*The hill of Zion yields
A thousand sacred sweets
Before we reach the heav'nly fields, (2x)
Or walk the golden streets. (2x)*

*Then let our songs abound,
And every tear be dry;
We're marching through Immanuel's ground (2x)
To fairer worlds on high. (2x)*