Geography of Salvation
Preaching the Map
By Stan Key
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For information about these or other study materials, contact:

Francis Asbury Society
PO Box 7
Wilmore, KY 40390
859-858-4222
800-530-5673
fas@francisasburysociety.com
www.francisasburysociety.com
To Be a Pilgrim
By John Bunyan

A Song from “The Pilgrim’s Progress”
“Confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth” (Hebrews 11:13).

Who would true valour see,
   Let him come hither;
One here will constant be,
   Come wind, come weather.
There’s no discouragement
   Shall make him once relent
His first avowed intent,
   To be a pilgrim.

Whoso beset him round
   With dismal stories
Do but themselves confound;
   His strength the more is.
No lion can him fright,
   He’ll with a giant fight,
But he will have a right
   To be a pilgrim.

Hobgoblin, nor foul fiend,
   Can daunt his spirit:
He knows, he at the end
   Shall life inherit.
Then fancies fly away,
   He’ll fear not what men say,
He’ll labour night and day
   To be a pilgrim
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I. Metaphors of Salvation.

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

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While many post-moderns and millennials, coming from _____________, find it difficult to connect with metaphors relating to the family, preaching salvation as a _____________ 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.
- *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 ________________ 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” (Ps 1:1).
4. “And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, ‘This is the way, walk in it.’” (Is 30:21).
5. What does the Lord require of you? Do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with God (Mi 6:8).
6. Jesus called his first disciples by simply saying, “Follow me” (Mt 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 Thes 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 ________________ to ________________. To understand the spiritual significance of this journey, one must know some basic ________________. No journey makes sense without a ________________!
1. The map introduces us to the ______________. 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 ______________. 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 ______________.
   a. The writer of Hebrews warned Christians about the danger of spiritual ______________ by preaching the map (Heb 3:7–4:13).
   b. Paul warned the Corinthians about the danger of ______________ 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 ______!
   2. The moment of redemption came when the people crossed the ____________.
3. Mount Sinai, where the law was given, comes ________________ 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 ________________.

5. Egypt is not contiguous with Canaan. A ________________ 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 ________________ of Egypt had enough faith to ________________ 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 ________________.

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

Of all the churches in the New Testament, Corinth was undoubtedly the most ____________ and ____________. 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 ________________ (Greek, tupos), 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 ________________.

A. Salvation is a journey... be ________________.

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 ________________ (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....” (Mt 7:21–23).

C. There are certain dangers that all pilgrims face... be ________________ (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 ________________ ” (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 ________________ (v 13).

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

- I am ________________.
  “No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man....”
- God is ________________.
  “God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability....”
- Victory is ________________.
  “...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]....”

**TABLE TALK**

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,
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)
Before anyone starts on a journey there must first be _______________ to begin. If we are content where we are, why leave to go somewhere else? Unless the reasons for leaving are greater than the reasons for staying we will never even begin the journey.

I. Egypt: My Native Land?
   A. Story of the eagle that was raised on a _______________.
   B. A little history.

When the book of Exodus opens, Israel had been living in Egypt almost _______________ years. For much of this time they were not slaves and life was pleasant. Goshen was a fertile area and Egypt was prosperous, stable and culturally advanced. Yet the Hebrews never _______________ into Egyptian culture. Why? We must look to their original calling to find the answer.

   Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to _______________ that I will show you. 2 And I will make of you a great _______________, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall _______________.” (Genesis 12:1–3)

God's people are different! They are recognizable because of three fundamental realities:

1. Home: Ever since Adam and Eve were expelled from Eden, the people of God have been characterized by homesickness; they are wanderers trying to find their place, their land. _______________

2. Identity: Though the Hebrews lived in Egypt and walked, talked, ate and smelled like Egyptians, they were not Egyptians. _______________

3. Purpose: Israel was called for a purpose: to be a blessing to the nations. _______________

C. Spiritually speaking, Egypt is a picture of “______________.”

   • “When [the two witnesses] have finished their testimony, the beast that rises from the bottomless pit will make war on them and conquer them and kill them, and their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city that symbolically is called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified.” (Rv 11:7–8)
   • “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.” (I Jn 2:15–17)
   • “You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.” (Jas 4:4)
If you are in love with “this world” then you have no reason to respond when Jesus says, “______________.” As the puritan pastor Thomas Brooks (1608–1680) said; “The world and you must part or Christ and you will never meet.”

II. Why leave?

God has a problem: How to ______________ people to leave a place they don’t want to leave? The early chapters of Exodus describe how God orchestrated events so that the people actually wanted to leave where they had lived for 400 years. God used four ingredients to prompt his people to begin their journey toward Canaan.¹

A. ______________ (Exodus 1:6–22).

1. God permits circumstances in Egypt to become worse and worse: a “new king,” cruel taskmasters, babies killed, bricks without straw, etc. No one begins this journey until the pain of ______________ where we are becomes greater than the pain of moving to where God wants us to be!

2. Dr. Paul Brand worked with leprosy patients in India. Leprosy destroys the body’s ability to sense pain. This is not a good thing! “Silencing pain without considering its message is like disconnecting a ringing fire alarm to avoid receiving bad news.” Brand calls pain “______________ nobody wants.”

3. “God whispers to us in our pleasures; speaks in our conscience; but shouts in our pain. It is God’s ______________ to rouse a deaf world.” (C. S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*).

4. The problem with the so-called Prosperity Gospel is that it has no theology of ______________.

5. “And the people of Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help. Their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God. And God ______________ their groaning, and God ______________ his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. God ______________ the people of Israel—and God ______________.” (Ex 2:23–25)

6. “For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful ______________ of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.” (Heb 12:11)

B. A confused ______________ (Exodus 2:1–22).

1. For the people: they live in Egypt but they are not Egyptians. Who are we?

2. For Moses: He is the classic TCK (______________). He has a birth mother who is Jewish and an adoptive mother who is Egyptian. When he is with the Hebrews he feels like a foreigner as he does when he is with the Egyptians. He names his son Gershom (the alien) (2:22); Who am I? (3:11).

3. Moses addresses his inner pain and search for identity by taking matters into his own hands. He murders an Egyptian (2:11–15). This only makes matters worse! We don’t find ourselves by looking for ourselves: we find ourselves when we ______________ and find God (3:1–12)!

¹ Notice that *guilt* is not one of the factors God uses to motivate the Hebrews to begin their journey. Though many evangelicals love to use the law (and the guilt that comes to those who know they have broken God’s law) in an attempt to get people to say yes to Jesus Christ, God has a better way. In Exodus, the law doesn’t even enter the picture until *after* redemption (ch 20).
4. In the musical *Les Miserables*, a stranger is arrested and put on trial because of mistaken identity: he looks like Jean Valjean. Valjean can’t bear the thought of another being condemned falsely so he sings, “Who Am I?”

   *If I speak, I am condemned.*
   *If I stay silent, I am damned!*

   *Who am I?*
   *Can I condemn this man to slavery*
   *Pretend I do not feel his agony*
   *This innocent who bears my face*
   *Who goes to judgement in my place*
   *Who am I?*
   *Can I conceal myself for evermore?*
   *Pretend I’m not the man I was before?*
   *And must my name until I die*
   *Be no more than an alibi?*
   *Must I lie?*
   *How can I ever face my fellow men?*
   *How can I ever face myself again?*
   *My soul belongs to God, I know*
   *I made that bargain long ago*
   *He gave me hope when hope was gone*
   *He gave me strength to journey on*

   *[He appears in front of the court]*

   *Who am I? Who am I?*
   *I am Jean Valjean!*

   *[He unbuttons his shirt to reveal the number tattooed to his chest]*

   *And so Javert, you see it’s true*
   *That man bears no more guilt than you!*
   *Who am I?*
   *24601!*

C. Cultivating new ________________. (Exodus 3:1–9)

   1. God spoke of a land of “milk and honey” (3:8) to people who lived in a land of “leaks, onions and garlic” (Nm 11:4–6). Thus the question becomes which appetite will be stronger? God does not want to destroy our appetites and lusts, he wants to ___________ them! No one starts this journey who is not ravenously hungry for what only God can provide.

   2. The Bible is a ____________ book. Sin entered the world by food (forbidden fruit) and so did salvation (I am the bread of life). It is all about appetite.

   3. “If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for ______________.” (C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*)

   4. But how to cultivate right desires and holy appetites? What if I prefer eating a donut to eating an apple? Manna is a bland food intended to cleanse the palate! Thomas Chalmers preached about “the ____________ of a new affection.”
D. There must be a ________________ from God (Exodus 3:10–12).

1. First the call came to Moses at the burning bush (ch. 3–4) but then the call came to all the people through Moses and the other events of the exodus (Moses' teaching, ten plagues, Passover, pillar of fire, etc.).

2. Understanding the call of God:
   a. Initiated by ________________ (Jn 15:16).
   b. To a ________________ as much as to a destination.
   c. To a ________________ more than to a task.
   d. To a team, ________________ (Gn 2:18).
   e. Will cost you ________________. Salvation is free, but not cheap.

### TABLE TALK

1. Have you ever felt like an eagle on a turkey farm? Explain.
2. In what way was pain a gift to the Hebrews in Egypt? Has pain ever been a gift to you? Explain.
3. How does one discover his true identity?
4. How does one get to the place where the appetite for “milk and honey” becomes stronger than the appetite for “leaks and onions”?
5. Describe Moses’ call. How did this moment at the burning bush change his life?
6. Have you experienced a call? How did the call come to you? How has it changed your life?
7. Are you ready to start the Journey?

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**This World Is Not My Home**

Jim Reeves

This world is not my home, I'm just a passing through; 
My treasures are laid up, somewhere beyond the blue. 
The angels beckon me from heaven's open door 
And I can't feel at home in this world anymore.

Oh lord you know I have no friend like you, 
If heaven's not my home then lord what will I do. 
The angels beckon me from heaven's open door, 
And I can't feel at home in this world anymore.

Oh lord you know I have no friend like you, 
If heaven's not my home then Lord what will I do; 
The angels beckon me from heaven's open door 
And I can't feel at home in this world anymore.
THE RED SEA
Exodus 5–14

When Moses returns to Egypt from the burning bush and announces that God is ready to deliver his people out of bondage and lead them to the Promised Land, the response is encouraging:

Then Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the people of Israel. Aaron spoke all the words that the LORD had spoken to Moses and did the signs in the sight of the people. And the people bowed their heads and bowed. (Exodus 4:29–31)

OK, let’s go! If we believe and if we worship, isn’t that the point? If we are saved by grace through faith, then aren’t we almost home? Not so fast. Things are going to ______________ before they get better... a lot worse.

I. This is harder than I thought (Exodus 5:1–7:13).

A. Was this a mistake? (Ex 5:1–23).

1. Moses confronts Pharaoh (5:1–2). Thus says the LORD (Yahweh), “Let my people go.” Pharaoh replies: “Who is Yahweh that I should obey his voice? I ______________ Yahweh and I will not let Israel go.”

2. The stage is now set! Pharaoh (chief priest over all the gods of Egypt and himself a god) doesn’t know Yahweh. The rest of the book is Yahweh’s reply: “You want to know me? Let me introduce myself!” (7:17; 8:8–10, 22; 9:14, 29; 10:2; 11:7; 14:4).

3. In anger, Pharaoh makes life ______________ for the Hebrews (vv 4–21):

   O LORD, ______________ have you done evil to this people? ______________ did you ever send me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has done evil to this people, and you have not delivered your people at all (5:22–23).

B. No, this is no mistake: everything is under Yahweh’s control (Ex 6:1–7:13).

1. “Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh...” (Ex 6:1).

2. “I am the Yahweh” (Ex 6:2–8). Abraham knew God as El Shaddai, which is a title, not a personal name. But you know my name, Yahweh (v 7). Salvation is not just about getting out of Egypt. It is about ______________. (Jer 9:23–24; Jn 17:3).

3. The people would not listen to Moses “because of their broken spirit and harsh slavery” (Ex 6:9).

4. Moses is ready ______________ (Ex 6:10–13, 30). The people of Israel won’t listen to me; how then will Pharaoh listen to me?

5. The greatest battle we will ever face on the journey of salvation is this: do we know God well enough to believe his promises even when all hell is breaking lose? “This is the victory that overcomes the world, even __________.” (1 Jn 5:4).
II. The battle of the gods (Exodus 7:14–12:51).
   A. The __________________ are not a divine temper tantrum! They are, rather, a systematic dismantling of the entire Egyptian pantheon (12:12; 15:11; 18:11). “For this purpose I have raised you up (Pharaoh), to show you my power, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth” (9:16).
   B. The battle of the gods (aka “the ten plagues”):
      1. Water turned to ______ (7:14–25). The Nile was source of life in Egypt (Hopi).
      3. Gnats (8:16–19). The magicians can’t duplicate. “This is the ______ of God.”
      5. Livestock die (9:1–7). Apis, the ________________ god of Egypt.
      6. Boils (9:8–12). The magicians have them, too!
      8. Locusts (10:1–20). Osiris is the vegetation god.
      9. Darkness (10:21–29). Ra was the sun god. It is light in Goshen.
     10. Death of the first born (chapters 11–12). The heir to the throne is a deity.
   C. Pharaoh’s hard heart.
      1. At times, his heart is just said to be hard (7:13, 14, 22; 8:19; 9:7, 35).
      2. At times, he hardens his ________________ (8:15, 32; 9:34).
      3. At times, ________________ hardens his heart (4:21; 7:3; 9:12; 10:1, 20, 27; 11:10; 14:4, 8, 17).

III. Redemption through __________________ (Exodus 12–13).
   The real hero of redemption is not Moses... but __________________! The Passover is a perpetual reminder to all those on the journey of salvation that we will never arrive at our destination without the help of the lamb.
   A. The lamb ________________. Neither Israelites nor Egyptians had a clue that a sentence of death was hanging over every house. The lamb teaches us our need for protection from ________________, deliverance from ________________, and spiritual nourishment for the ________________ ahead.
   B. The lamb ________________. The choice in every household is simple: either find a suitable substitute or death will come to this family. The Good News is that God will accept a substitute (Is 53:4–6). He himself will provide a lamb (Gn 22; Jn 1:29).
   C. The lamb ________________. The whole point of the Passover meal was to receive sustenance for the journey ahead (12:11).

IV. Redemption through __________________ (Exodus 13:17–14:31).
   A. Divine guidance (13:17–22). It’s time to leave. The journey is about to begin. But ________________? God does not give them a map. He gives them a Guide. “The LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud and by night in a pillar of fire” (13:21). “Follow me.” Notice: God does not lead them the easy way. He leads them ________________ (13:18).
B. Between the devil and the deep blue sea (14:1–12). The pillar of cloud leads them to where the sea is before them, steep mountains are on both sides, and the Egyptian army is behind them. It appears that God has led them into __________. “It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness” (14:12). Is life more valuable than __________?

C. What does it take to break us out of our bondage and get us started on the journey of salvation? This is what redemption looks like:

1. The __________ is where it begins. He gives a solemn oath: I will bring you out and I will bring you in. “I promise...” (3:15–17).

2. The __________. Redemption is simply impossible without a lamb who dies in our place and who nourishes our soul.

3. __________. The promise and the blood are meaningless without faith. True faith is not just an intellectual acknowledgment of the reality of God (4:31). In the Bible, faith and __________ are virtually synonyms. Faith without works is dead (Jas 2:14–26). Only when we are confronted with an impossible situation do we really discover whether we are believers or not. In such situations God often gives three commands:

   a. __________ (14:13). This doesn’t mean don’t tremble. Rather, don’t be controlled by your fears.

      "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you... For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I give Egypt as your ransom... (Isaiah 43:1–3)."

   b. __________ (14:14). Don’t just do something; stand there!

      "They who __________ for the Lord, shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint. (Isaiah 40:31)."

   c. __________ (14:15). The call to “be still” is not a call to passivity. But how can I wait and march forward at the same time? The key is timing. It was only as they moved forward in faith that the waters began to part.

      "And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your Teacher will not hide himself anymore, but your eyes shall see your Teacher. And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, “This is the way, walk in it”... (Isaiah 30:20–21)."

The way out is the way __________ (14:13–31). The miracle at the Red Sea teaches us that often God does not deliver us __________ our difficulties but through them!
## TABLE TALK

1. Is it possible to really believe in the true God if your false gods haven’t yet been exposed as frauds?
2. How does the miracle at the Red Sea help you to understand how faith and works go together? Is it possible to say you believe if you don’t obey?
3. Has God ever led you into a situation that felt impossible? What was God teaching you? Did you learn the lesson?
4. Think of a time in your life when God told you to wait; Don’t just do something; stand there! What did you learn?
5. Make it personal: Think of a challenge you are currently facing. Does God want to deliver you from it...or through it?

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**Lead On, O King Eternal**  
By Ernest W. Shurtleff (1862–1917)

Lead on, O King eternal,  
the day of march has come;  
therefore in fields of conquest  
your tents will be our home.  
Through days of preparation  
your grace has made us strong;  
and now, O King eternal,  
we lift our battle song.

Lead on, O King eternal,  
till sin’s fierce war shall cease,  
and holiness shall whisper  
the sweet amen of peace.  
For not with swords’ loud clashing  
or roll of stirring drums  
with deeds of love and mercy  
the heavenly kingdom comes.

Lead on, O King eternal;  
we follow, not with fears,  
for gladness breaks like morning  
where’er your face appears.  
Your cross is lifted o’er us,  
we journey in its light;  
the crown awaits the conquest;  
lead on, O God of might.
THE UNIVERSITY OF THE DESERT
Exodus 15:22–18:27

I. Why the desert?

A. The eastern shore.

Redemption is now an accomplished _______________! The blood of the Lamb and the waters of baptism have defeated Pharaoh, liberated the slaves, and accomplished salvation. Isn’t that the point? Miriam leads the redeemed in a joyful song of deliverance: The Song of Moses is _______________ (15:1–21). Few spiritual disciplines are better at getting us through the desert than learning to sing.

1. **What** are they doing? _______________.
2. **Who** is doing it? The _______________.
3. **To whom** are they singing? To _______________.
4. **How** are they doing it? With _______________ (tambourines, dancing, etc.).
5. **What** are they singing? They are singing about what the Lord:
   - Has done in _______________ (vv 1–12). He has triumphed gloriously.
   - Is doing in _______________ (vv 13–16). He is guiding our steps.
   - Will do in _______________ (vv 17–18). He will bring us home and reign forever!

B. Not home yet.

Although the people are genuinely saved, they are not home yet. In fact, their journey has only begun. It will take about _______________ to arrive at the border of Canaan. However, first they must cross the desert (Sinai Peninsula).

C. Led out of the frying pan and into the fire.

God was guiding them each step of the way by the pillar of fire (Ex. 13:17–22). He does not lead them by the _______________ road or the _______________ path. No. He leads them into a desolate waste land! Describe some characteristics of this desert:

- _______________.
- _______________.
- _______________.
- _______________.
- _______________.
- _______________.

D. Why, O why would God lead his people into a desert?

*And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might _______________ you, _______________ you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by*
every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord. Your clothing did not wear out on you and your foot did not swell these forty years. Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, the Lord your God ______________ you.

1. God led his people into the desert because they needed an ______________. There are some lessons that can’t be learned in Egypt or Canaan but only in the desert. To be ready to face the giants that are currently camping on their inheritance, they need to take a few courses at University of the Desert.

2. The desert is not a geographical anomaly but a spiritual ______________. All God’s saints have degrees from Desert U. Most of the contemporary evangelical church has no ______________.

II. Five tests in the wilderness (Ex. 15:22–18:27).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Solution</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15:22–27</td>
<td>Marah</td>
<td>No water (bitter)</td>
<td>The Lord showed Moses</td>
<td>I am the Lord who heals you (Jehovah Rapha)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16:1–36</td>
<td>Desert of Sin</td>
<td>No food</td>
<td>Manna... bread from heaven</td>
<td>Give us this day our daily bread: __________</td>
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<tr>
<td>17:1–7</td>
<td>Rephidim</td>
<td>No water (this is a _______________)</td>
<td>Strike the rock</td>
<td>Don’t put the Lord to the test</td>
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<td>17:8–16</td>
<td>Rephidim</td>
<td>Enemy attack</td>
<td>Prayer</td>
<td>Spiritual _______________—the Lord is my banner (Jehovah Nissi)</td>
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<td>18:1–27</td>
<td>Near Mt. Sinai</td>
<td>Administrative stress and</td>
<td>Jethro’s advice: select capable men</td>
<td>Spiritual gifts in the body</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A. God never ______________ his children (Jam. 1:13) but he definitely ______________ them (Ex. 15:25; 16:4; 20:20; Deut. 8:2, 16; 13:3). But why? Why does a teacher give “tests” to her students? Not because she is cruel but rather to ______________.

B. Though these desert experiences may be ______________ and even painful, we are precisely where God wants us to be. We didn’t take a wrong turn. We are not being punished. The pillar of fire is leading each step of the way. Though at first it doesn’t seem so, the desert is actually a ______________ place to be!

C. At U of D, God is teaching us that salvation involves more than getting us out of Egypt. It also involves getting ______________!

III. The Bitter Water Test (Ex. 15:22–27).

A. The context.

On the eastern shore of the Red Sea the people erupt in praise and worship because of the mighty deliverance they have just experienced (Ex. 15:1–21). We’re free! OK, so where’s the milk and honey? For ______________ they are led deeper and deeper into the desert. Each day their thirst grows greater.

B. The problem.

At last, they come to an oasis! But the water is undrinkable! God has led them to ______________. This is only a test! But rather than trusting God the people grumble (v 24). The bitterness on the outside is now matched by the bitterness on the inside.
C. The solution.

God shows Moses a “__________________” (v.25) that turns the bitter water into sweet water. In the New Testament, the cross is sometimes called a tree (Acts 5:30; Gal. 3:13; I Pet. 2:24; etc.). After showing the cure for bitterness, God leads the people to lovely Elim, where they make camp.

D. The lesson.

1. This is stop #1 on the journey of salvation! Apparently learning this lesson is ______________ for the rest of the journey.

2. ______________ is a serious sin! The real battles in life are not what happens to us but how we respond to what happens to us.

3. A bitter experience doesn’t mean that we’ve taken a wrong turn or are being punished. No. God ______________ to such places so we can learn how the cross can heal the bitterness in our life; even make it ______________.

Paul wrote from prison: “I have learned the secret of ______________ in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength” (Phil. 4:12–13).

IV. The Creed of Mara.

I have written what I call the *Creed of Mara* to help fellow pilgrims when they find themselves in a bitter place in their spiritual journey.

*I believe God ______________ here. This is only a test.*

*I believe God will ______________ here.*

*I believe God will ______________ from here.*

*I believe God wants to ______________ in my life to be a blessing and encouragement to others.*

---

**TABLE TALK**

1. Would your friends describe you as a singing Christian? Are you known for your joyful praise? Discuss this.

2. This lesson states: “Most of the contemporary church has no theology of the desert.” Do you agree or disagree? Why?

3. When the Hebrews came to the bitter place they “grumbled against Moses” and Moses “cried to the Lord.” When you are in a bitter place, do you grumble or do you pray?

4. Make it personal: Talk about a time when God led you to a bitter place. What lessons was God teaching you there? Did you pass the test?

5. Think of a bitter reality that you are facing now. What is God saying to you through this passage of Scripture?
Horse and Rider

I will sing unto the LORD,
for he has triumphed gloriously,
the horse and rider thrown into the sea. (2x)
The LORD, my God, my strength and song,
has now become my victory. (2x)
The LORD is God, and (clap) I will praise him,
our covenant God, and I will exalt him. (2x)
I. Introduction

POWs in Hanoi Hilton returned after the Vietnam war with few suffering from PTSD. In fact, the group produced 16 generals, 6 admirals, 2 college presidents, 2 U.S. ambassadors, 2 U.S. senators, 2 U.S. representatives, a state governor, a presidential candidate, and much more. Why? Primarily because of the culture developed in the prison by Jim Stockdale. ¹ Lesson: you can’t choose what happens to you, but you can choose how you ________________!

II. You are what you eat.

A. The bible is a ________________ book.

1. Our original sin was the desire to eat ________________ fruit. “When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate...” (Gn 3:6).

2. Our salvation comes in ________________ the body of Christ. “I am the bread of life... and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh... For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink” (Jn 6:48, 51, 55).

3. Salvation hinges on one simple question: Is my appetite stronger for the meat pots, leaks, onions, garlic, and melons of Egypt (Ex 16:3; Num 11:4–5) or for the ________________ of Canaan (Ex 3:8, 17). Am I hungry for God?

• “O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul ________________ for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.” (Ps 63:1)

• “Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters... Come, buy wine and milk without ________________ and without price... Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.” (Is 55:1–2)

• “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be ________________” (Mt 5:6)

B. Though the Hebrews have gotten out of Egypt, they still have Egyptian _________________. Until this hunger for the food of this world is replaced by the hunger for the food of Canaan, the Hebrews will do laps in the wilderness.

C. But how does one acquire an appetite for the nourishment of God? This may be harder than you think and may take more time than you imagine. God gave manna to help ________________ and develop a hunger for the milk and honey of Canaan.

III. Bread from Heaven

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Problem</th>
<th>God’s Response</th>
<th>Solution Implemented</th>
<th>Instructions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Surface problem: no food  
  • Deeper problems:  
  o Grumbling  
  o Hunger for Egypt  
  vv 1–3 | • I will give bread from heaven  
  • In this way I will test them  
  • Then they will know that I am the LORD  
  vv 4–12 | • Quail  
  • Manna (whatzit)  
  vv 13–15 | • 2 quarts each  
  • Don’t try to keep it for tomorrow  
  • Sabbath observance  
  • Put a jar in the ark  
  vv 16–36 |

Notes on the text:
1. They have been traveling ________________ since they crossed Red Sea.
2. The “wilderness of Sin” (v 1). There is a linguistic connection to “Sinai” though this is not the same location.
3. This was the second “test” at University of the Desert (15:25; 16:4). Marah had taught the redeemed how to deal with bitterness. This test would teach them how to ________________ the Lord for their ________________. (cf. Mt 6:11).
4. The word manna means “What is it?” (v 15). In English we might suggest: ____________.
5. Manna was “like coriander seed, white, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey” (v 31). See Numbers 11:7–8.
6. It is doubtful that as slaves the Hebrews would have been able to observe the ________________ in Egypt. Now, God teaches them how to practice a seven-day week. Sabbath observance was all about ________________ and ________________.

IV. The Grumpies.

A. The word “grumble” occurs 8 times in this chapter and is a major theme during the entire journey.² Grumbling is a ________________ sin. It poisons health, destroys relationships, quenches the Spirit, extinguishes faith, and keeps one doing laps in the desert forever!

B. I become grumpy when I am ________________. Churches become grumpy places when the sheep hungry. To deal with “the grumpies” one must learn to ________________.

C. Grumbling (murmuring, complaining, griping, belly-aching) is a condition that:
1. Is based in the (false) assumption that my inner happiness is determined by my ____________________.
2. Believes I ________________ than this.
3. May be aimed against leaders, spouses, neighbors, adversaries, etc.. But in reality, all grumbling is against ________________ (v 8).
4. Is ________________. “See to it that...no root of bitterness springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled.” (Heb 12:15)

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² Ex 15:24; 17:3; Nm 11:1; 14:2, 27, 29, 36; 16:11, 41; 17:5, 10; Dt 1:27
D. Grumbling Is ______________... but this may take some time!

1. Paul wrote from prison: “I have ______________ in whatever situation I am to be content...” (Phil 4:11).


Matthew, a pilgrim on the road to the Celestial City, fell ill because he ate some green plums from Beelzebub’s orchard. He was “much pained in his bowels, so that he was with it at times pulled as ‘twere both ends together.” Mr. Skill, a godly physician, examined him and diagnosed the problem: he has ________. Mr. Skill took the body and blood of Christ and made him a laxative (a purge): making it into pills, adding a promise or two, some salt, and a dose of the tears of repentance. Though Matthew feared the medicine would be bitter, he took it and was immediately cured of the gripes.

V. This is Only a Test: There are six important questions on this exam.

God leads us to Desert U to teach us some very important lessons. Though the test may be painful, it has a very good and ______________. God leads us to a place of scarcity and hunger to prepare us for the battles we will face when it comes times to possess our inheritance in Canaan.

My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord... For the Lord disciplines the one he loves... God is treating you as _____________. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline... then you are illegitimate children and not sons... He disciplines us for our good, that we may share his ____________. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline... then you are illegitimate children and not sons... He disciplines us for our good, that we may share his ____________. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but ____________ it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. (Hebrews 12:5–11)

A. Do you suffer from the grumpies? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you answered “yes”, please describe your symptoms. Example: pouting, shouting, bellyaching about your leaders, infecting others with your gripes, etc. Exodus 16 teaches that the cause of the grumpies is some form of ______________.

B. What are you hungry for? ☐ Leaks, onions, garlic ☐ Milk and honey

Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good and delight yourselves in ______________. (Isaiah 55:2)

The real problem is not hunger but that we are hungry for the wrong things! Leaks and onions may keep our bodies alive but send our souls to hell. “The greatest enemy of hunger for God is not poison, but ______________” (John Piper, A Hunger for God, 14). The problem with junk food is not just that it is junk; it ______________ our appetite for healthy food! Describe the spiritual junk food that you have been consuming. Example: worldly entertainment, mindless entertainment, meaningless conversations, etc.

Imagine manna every day (manna casserole, manna burgers, manna soufflé, manna with cheese, manna-coti, etc.). When you are on a journey the point is not culinary delicacies or gastronomical pleasure: but ______________ and sustenance for the rigors of travel. He gives us bread so that we will discover that “man does not live by bread alone” (Dt 8:3). Manna leaves us hungry again. This prepares us for realizing that our real need is for:

• The __________—“...every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord” (Dt 8:3).
•  _________________—“I am the true and living bread” (see Jn 6).

C. Have I learned to feed myself? □ Yes   □ No

In the desert, God provides the bread from heaven but the people have to go out and _________________ for themselves. Babies need to be fed. Adulthood is when we learn to feed ourselves. Churches that complain about not being fed usually are bearing witness to their own perpetual _________________!

_Though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the _________________ of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil._ (Hebrews 5:12–14)

D. When do I eat? □ Daily   □ Weekly   □ Monthly   □ I am already dead

Manna was given _________________; to give strength and nourishment so that travelers could make a days journey. Perhaps one can go a week or even a month without food. But unless one learns to eat good food on a regular basis, at some point the journey ends and the traveler dies. We need time in _________________ every day for the same reason we need to eat a good meal every day.

E. Do I have an eating disorder?
   □ Anorexia (I don’t eat at all, but I keep this a secret)
   □ Bulimia (I binge and purge)
   □ Obesity (I overeat and don’t exercise)
   □ Other

Commons signs of eating disorders include:

• Skipping meals
• Obsessing on how one looks
• Nausea
• Overeating to the point of sickness
• Excessive exercising
• Dieting by day and bingeing by night
• Obsessing over the nutritional value of foods
• Chewing on non-food items

F. In whom is my trust? □ Myself   □ Moses (the government)   □ God

The primary purpose of the manna test is to teach travelers to have _________________ in God… and God _________________. Each morning, when I open the flap of my tent, I look out my door and begin my day trusting that there will be enough provision from God to allow me and my family to make it until _________________. Like a muscle, God strengthens faith by stretching it. A faith that has not been tested is no faith at all.

_So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while. These trials will show that your faith is _________________. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—even your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world._ (1 Peter 1:6–7 NLT)
TABLE TALK

1. Talk about a time when you found yourself in a desert place of great scarcity and want. How did you respond?
2. What does the author mean when he says the Bible is “food-driven” book? Do you agree or disagree?
3. What did you learn from this lesson about “the grumpies”? Do you ever suffer from this malady? Will this Bible study affect the way you handle the grumpies?
4. Do you struggle with any spiritual eating disorders? Which ones?
5. Have you learned to feed yourself? Why is this so important?
6. Homework: Read John 6 and meditate on how Jesus drew for Exodus 16 in his miracle of feeding the 5,000 and then claiming, “I am the true bread.”

All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly
Text by Sylvia B. Dunstan, 1990

All who hunger, gather gladly;
  holy manna is our bread.
Come from wilderness and wandering.
  Here, in truth, we will be fed.
You that yearn for days of fullness,
  all around us is our food.
Taste and see the grace eternal.
  Taste and see that God is good.

All who hunger, never strangers;
  seeker, be a welcome guest.
Come from restlessness and roaming.
  Here, in joy, we keep the feast.
We that once were lost and scattered
  in communion’s love have stood.
Taste and see the grace eternal.
  Taste and see that God is good.

All who hunger, sing together;
  Jesus Christ is living bread.
Come from loneliness and longing.
  Here, in peace, we have been led.
Blest are those who from this table
  live their lives in gratitude.
Taste and see the grace eternal.
  Taste and see that God is good.
I. The tests at University of the Desert (Exodus 15:22–18:27).

A. God redeemed his people and then led them into the desert because they needed an _____________ (Dt 8:2). There, at Desert U, he “_________________” (Hebrew, nacah) them with five different exams:
   3. The lack of _____________ (Ex 17:1–7). Thirst Quenching 102.

B. Although God does not _____________ his people (see Jas 1:13) he certainly tests them (see Gn 22:1; II Chr 32:31; Ps 105:19; Jn 6:6; etc.). These tests are usually _____________. But why would a loving God lead his people to be tested?
   1. To _____________ what is in their hearts (Dt 8:2).
   2. To _____________ them (Dt 8:2,16).
   3. To _____________ them for the battles ahead (Jgs 3:1–2).
   4. To produce _____________ (Jas 1:2–4; Rom 5:3).
   5. To bring about _____________ of character (Heb 12:7–11).
   6. ___________________________________________________________________
   7. ___________________________________________________________________
   8. ___________________________________________________________________

C. At Rephidim (Ex 17:1) God has planned another test for his people but this produces a negative reaction and the students push back. When God tests his people it is a good thing but when the people _____________... not good! The education program at Desert U is becoming filled with conflict and _____________.

II. Nothing to Drink... Again!

A. This is not the first time they’ve had no water (see Ex 15:22–27)! In other words, God is giving them a _____________. When a teacher gives a retest you can be sure that the material is of _____________. This lesson must be mastered! Unless we pass this course on Thirst Quenching, we will never reach our inheritance in Canaan. We will die in the desert.
   1. The test a Rephidim (Massah) is similar enough to the test at Marah that the people should have easily passed this test. Alas, they _____________ again. Question: How should the people have responded?
      ___________________________________________________________________
      ___________________________________________________________________
      ___________________________________________________________________
2. How did the people respond?
   a. They ______________ with Moses and wanted to stone him.
   b. They ______. “Why did you bring us out of Egypt to kill us with thirst?”
   c. They ______________. “Is the Lord with us or not?”

B. Almost 40 years later there will be yet a __________ no-water test (Nm 20:2–13).
   A new generation has arisen and God wants to teach them the Thirst Quenching lesson. But like their parents, they too fail the test. But Moses fails the test too... big time! God tells Moses to take his staff but rather than striking the rock, he tells him to ______________ to the rock.

   Then Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock, and he said to them, “Hear now, you rebels: shall ______ bring water for you out of this rock?” And Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock with his staff ____________, and water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their livestock. And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “Because you did not ____________, to uphold me as _______ in the eyes of the people of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them.” These are the waters of Meribah.... (Numbers 20:10–13)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marah</th>
<th>Massah</th>
<th>Meribah</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Sin</td>
<td>Grumbling, quarreling</td>
<td>Quarreling: “Why have you made us leave Egypt to come to this evil place?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Solution</td>
<td>A tree to throw in the bitter water</td>
<td>Take your staff and speak to the rock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Conclusion</td>
<td>If you listen to God and obey his voice, he will not put on you the diseases he put on the Egyptians.</td>
<td>Do not put the Lord to the test</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

III. Testing the Tester
A. Think back to when you were a student in school. What are some of the ways students tested their teachers?
   ___________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________
   How do you think this made the teacher feel?
   ___________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________

B. Most teaching Exodus 17:1–7 emphasizes how God can provide ____________ in a desert place and how Jesus is the fulfillment of that glorious reality (Jn 4:10–14;
7:37–39; I Cor 10:4). This is true, of course, but the __________ of the text and the context is on how the people are __________ (vv 2, 7). These people have seen God do amazing things (10 plagues, part the Red Sea, send manna, etc.) and yet they continue to doubt his ability to take care of them.

- “You shall not put the Lord your God to the test, as you tested him at Massah.” (Dt 6:16)
- “At Taberah also, and at Massah and at Kibroth-hattaava you __________ the Lord to wrath.” (Dt 9:22)
- “Today, if you hear his voice, do not ______________ as at Meribah, as on the day at Massah in the wilderness, when your fathers put me to the test and put me to the proof, though they had seen my work.” (Ps 95:7–9)
- “The devil took Jesus... and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, ‘If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, “He will command his angels concerning you; on their hands they will bear you up lest you strike your foot against a stone.” Jesus said to him, ‘Again, it is written, “You shall not put the Lord your God to the test”’” (Mt 4:5–7; Jesus is quoting Dt 6:16, which is referring to Ex 17:1–7).

C. Thus we begin to see what it means to test God.

- To ______________ and complain how he is providing for us.
- To demand that God prove himself to us and perform on command.
- To push God and test his ______________.
- To keep failing over and over again the same test that he gives us.
- To become bitter, cynical and full of ______________ in spite of all the evidence of his goodness and faithfulness.
- To forget God’s track record and become controlled by our doubts and fears.
- To not uphold the ______________ of God.

IV. Four Tragic Ways We Can Test God

A. Massah. (Exodus 17:1–7)

There is no water. But rather than trust once again in the One who had provided water only a few weeks earlier, the One who had parted the Red Sea, provided manna, and sent the 10 plagues, they grumble and ask “Is the Lord among us or not?”.

Testing God means: doubting his ______________.

B. Kadesh-Barnea. (Numbers 13–14)

After about two years of travel, the people arrive at the border of Canaan. “Go up and possess your inheritance,” God tells them. “No,” say the people, “there are giants over there!” God is upset and decides to let the whole generation die in the desert. “None of the men who have seen my glory and my signs that I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and yet have put me to the test these ______ times and have not obeyed my voice, shall see the land that I swore to give them” (Nm 14:22–23; see Heb 3:9).

Testing God means: willful ______________ to a clear command.

C. Snakes! (Numbers 21:4–9)

Toward the end of the desert journey, the people become impatient and complain once again. “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this ______________ food
(manna).” (Nm 21:5). In response to their attitude, God sends poisonous snakes among them and many die. Referring to this incident, Paul says, “We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents” (I Cor 10:9).

Testing God means: Complaining about his care and provision and feeling ________!

D. Ananias and Sapphira. (Acts 5:1–11)

When many were giving generous offerings in the early church, Ananias and Sapphira pretended to give all the proceeds from the sale of a piece of land to the apostles. But they had secretly kept back some for themselves. For them it was more important to ______________ holy than to be holy. They were both struck dead as Peter explained: “How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord?” (Acts 5:9).

Testing God means: ______________ to be what I’m not; image is everything.

V. One Good Way to Test God

Though a different Hebrew word is used, the prophet Malachi reminds us that it is possible to test God in a good way... a very good way.

“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. ____________ (Hebrew, bachan) in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it. (Malachi 3:10 NIV)

God is inviting Israel (and us) to take the risk of faith and to give him ______________ to prove how faithful and righteous he really is. If only the rich young ruler had tested Jesus in this way!

**TABLE TALK**

1. Can you remember a situation when you were in school when the students tested a teacher? Describe this.
2. What is the difference between testing God in a good way (Mal 3:10) and testing God in a bad way?
3. In Numbers 20:2–13, why do you think Moses struck the rock rather than speak to it? Why was God’s punishment so severe?
4. Is there an area in your life where you continually fail, a besetting sin, perhaps? Is this an example of God giving you a retest? Will this study change the way you respond in the future?
5. The lesson mentioned four ways that we can be guilty of testing God: doubting his presence, willful disobedience, complaining about his care and provision, and pretending to be what I’m not. With which of these do you struggle most?
6. Is there some specific area where God is inviting you to test him (in a good way), to give him the opportunity to show how faithful he really is?
Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

By William Williams (1745)

Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land.
I am weak, but Thou art mighty;
Hold me with Thy powerful hand.
Bread of Heaven, Bread of Heaven,
Feed me till I want no more;
Feed me till I want no more.

Open now the crystal fountain,
Whence the healing stream doth flow;
Let the fire and cloudy pillar
Lead me all my journey through.
Strong Deliverer, strong Deliverer,
Be Thou still my Strength and Shield;
Be Thou still my Strength and Shield.

Lord, I trust Thy mighty power,
Wondrous are Thy works of old;
Thou deliver'st Thine from thralldom,
Who for naught themselves had sold:
Thou didst conquer, Thou didst conquer,
Sin, and Satan and the grave,
Sin, and Satan and the grave.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,
Bid my anxious fears subside;
Death of deaths, and hell's destruction,
Land me safe on Canaan's side.
Songs of praises, songs of praises,
I will ever give to Thee;
I will ever give to Thee.

Musing on my habitation,
Musing on my heav'ny home,
Fills my soul with holy longings:
Come, my Jesus, quickly come;
Vanity is all I see;
Lord, I long to be with Thee!
Lord, I long to be with Thee!
I. This is war!

A. University of the Desert

1. The first three “tests” at Desert U (Ex 15:25; 16:4) involved basic human needs for survival: water and food. God was teaching his redeemed people to trust him for ________________. Although the word “test” isn’t used in Exodus 17:8–16, the Amalekite attack is clearly yet another test. God is teaching his people to trust him for ________________.

2. The first experience of warfare for Israel was at the Red Sea when they were attacked by the Egyptian army (Ex 14). In that battle, God’s people were told; “The Lord will fight for you; you need only to ________________” (Ex 14:14 NIV). But at Rephidim when the Amalekites attack, God instructs his people to ________________—and ________________!

3. This fourth course at U of D could be called ________________. When they reach Canaan, the people will discover that enemies of God live there! Unless they learn how to fight while enrolled at Desert U, they will never be able to possess their inheritance.

Now these are the nations that the LORD left, to ________________ Israel by them, that is, all in Israel who had not experienced all the wars in Canaan. It was only in order that the generations of the people of Israel might know war, to teach ________________ to those who had not known it before. (Judges 3:1–2)

B. Spiritual formation... but for what?

1. Some people envision the Christian life as a kind of ___________ filled with joy and excitement. Others envision a cloistered ___________ filled with prayer, meditation and worship. Still others envision a center for ___________ where we are equipped to meet the needs of others. But one of the dominant metaphors in the Bible to define the Christian life is that of a ___________. The goal of spiritual formation, therefore, is to teach us to be ________________, ready for battle.

   • “Put on the whole ________________ of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil...” (Eph 6:10–20)
   • “Share in suffering as a good ___________ of Christ Jesus....” (II Tm 2: 3–4)
   • “I have fought the good ________________, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” (II Tm 4:7)

2. Describe how it impacts our understanding of spirituality when we envision the Christian life as a battlefield and our role as that of a soldier:

   • It’s ________________ to follow Christ.
   • The Christian life can be chaotic and ________________.
   • I must understand my ________________ (both offensive and defensive).
   • The need for military ________________ (enemy tactics and strategy).
Who are my fellow soldiers? Can I _______ them?

What’s the _______________ of this battle?

_________________________________.

_________________________________.

C. For a classic illustration of spiritual warfare, see the account of Christian and the dragon Apollyon as told by John Bunyan in Pilgrim’s Progress (see addendum).

II. The Battle with Amalek (Exodus 17:8–16).

A. The enemy.

1. The Amalekites were descendants of Esau (Gn 36:12) and thus distant cousins of the Hebrews. They lived in the Negeb (Nm 13:29) and saw the arrival of Israel as a threat. They employed an early form of __________ against the Hebrews, attacking when the people were “faint and weary” and killing those who were “lagging behind.” Amalek “did not fear God” (see Dt 25:18).

2. In spiritual warfare it is crucial that we recognize who the enemy is. This story teaches us that the enemy is anyone or anything that seeks to cause us to __________ in our journey; that __________ us from doing the will of God. When Peter tried to dissuade Jesus from going to the cross, he became an enemy: “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me.” (Mt 16:23). Ultimately, our enemy is not “flesh and blood” but “__________ of evil in the heavenly places” (Eph 6:12).

B. Battle strategy and weapons.

Joshua was to go down into the valley and fight with the _______________. Moses was to go up on the mountain and pray with the _______________.¹ To fight God’s battles we must use the right weapons! “For the weapons of our warfare are not _______________ but have divine power to destroy strongholds.” (II Cor 10:4).

We must fight and pray; better, we must fight _______________ prayer. The real battle is not in the valley with Amalek, but on the mountain with _______________.

1. The battle of _______________. Why do I want to win this battle? For selfish gain? Because I hate the enemy? If my motives are impure the battle is lost before it begins.

2. The battle of _______________. Can I trust that God? Is he really good? Why is this happening? Can I say with Job, “Though he (God) slay me, yet will I trust in him” (Jb 13:15 KJV)?

3. The battle of the _______________. I know what I want in this conflict but do I know what God wants? The hardest prayer we will ever pray is this: “Not my will but your will be done.” (Mk 14:36).

Our battles are first won or lost in the secret places of our will in God’s presence, never in full view of the world. The Spirit of God seizes me and I am compelled to get alone with God and fight the battle before him. Until I do this, I will lose every time. The battle may take one minute or one year, but that will depend on me, not God... Nothing has any power over someone who has fought the battle before God and won there... The reason the battle is not won is because I try to win it in the external

¹ The “rod of God” plays a crucial role in the journey of salvation. See for example, Ex 4:2–4, 17, 20; 7:9–20; 8:5, 16–17; 9:23; 10:13; 14:16; 17:5, 9; Nm 17:1–10; 20:8–11).
world first. Get alone with God, fight it out before him, settle the matter there once and for all. (Oswald Chambers, My Utmost for His Highest, December 27).

C. The results of the battle.
   1. Amalek is defeated and his future destiny is announced when God says, “I will utterly _____________ the memory of Amalek from under heaven” (v 14).
   2. Moses builds an altar and names it “The Lord is my _____________” (Yahweh Nissi). A “banner” is a battle standard, a flag, or a signal. Moses explains the name by saying: “A hand upon the _____________ of the Lord”² (v 16 ESV). This could perhaps be a reference to Amalek (those who touch God’s throne in defiance will be destroyed) or it could be a reference to the effective prayer of a righteous man (Moses changes history because he touches God’s throne in prayer).

III. Four great principles of intercession.

Though many will find it easier to identify with Joshua in the valley with his sword, let’s focus where the text puts the emphasis: on the mountain where Moses is standing _____________ for the people. Do not conceive of intercession as only when our head is bowed and eyes closed. The ministry of intercession is a _____________ that involves the following principles.

A. _____________.

We cannot pray with _____________ and intercede effectively. On the mountain, Moses identifies with what is happening in the battle below, he is personally affected. He is no detached spectator. His fate is _____________ with those who are fighting. See an even greater example when he prayed after the sin with the golden calf, “Lord, please forgive their sin—but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written” (Ex 32:32). Jesus was the ultimate intercessor. He became one of us; he became sin, for our salvation (II Cor 5:21). “Intercessory prayer is only another name for _____________” (Fenelon).

B. _____________.

Moses is not alone: Aaron and Hur are with him to help, to encourage, to say “Amen” and _____________ with his prayers. Jesus said, “If two of you agree (Greek, sumphoneo) on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where _____________ are gathered in my name, there am I among them” (Mt 18:19–20).

C. _____________.

Holding his arms up in prayer (with the staff) was painful! To intercede is to enter in to the heart of God and experience the ache that God experiences when he sees what is happening in our world. Paul said; “I fill up in my flesh what is still _____________ in regard to Christ’s afflictions” (Col 1:24). He also wrote:

   For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with _____________ too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. (Romans 8:26–27)

² Some manuscripts indicate “a hand upon the banner of the Lord.”
There is a sense in which true intercessory prayer is God, through his Spirit groaning in us, talking ________________!

D. ________________.

Though we don’t know the words Moses, Aaron and Hur used when they prayed, we can be certain it wasn’t something like this: “Sovereign Lord, give us grace to ________________ these trying circumstances and submit to the control of these Amalakites that you have permitted to stand in our path.” No! Moses prayed with authority because he knew ________________ was for the people to arrive at their inheritance in Canaan. To intercede effectively we must learn to pray with authority; to pray in the Name of Jesus; like Jacob, to wrestle with God until we “win.”

**TABLE TALK**

1. Which metaphor of the Christian life best describes your own perspective: amusement part, monastery, social service center or battlefield?
2. When it comes to spiritual warfare, are you more “comfortable” with fighting or praying? Discuss this.
3. Do you think of prayer as a battle? Why or why not? When prayer is viewed as a battle, where does the conflict lie? In the motive? In faith? In the will?
4. What is the most important thing you learned in this lesson about the ministry of intercession?
5. The author mentioned four principles of intercession: identification, unity, agony and authority. Which one of these is most missing in your own effort to pray for others? Discuss this.
**Christian vs Apollyon**

While visiting House Beautiful, Christian was given armor to prepare him for what lay ahead when he would pass through the valley of Humiliation. Upon entering the valley a disgusting fiend named Apollyon approached, blocking the path forward. He was a hideous monster having scales like a fish, wings like a dragon, feet like a bear, and a mouth like a lion. Fire and smoke came out of his belly. Christian was terrified and would have turned around to run but he realized he had not been given armor to cover his back! Apollyon first employed lies, bribes, threats and accusations but when none of these caused Christian to budge, he attacked.

Then Apollyon broke out into a rage, saying, “I’m an enemy of this prince! I hate his person, his laws, and his people. I’ve come here to oppose you!” “Beware of what you do, Apollyon,” said Christian, “for I’m in the King’s Highway, the Way of Holiness. Therefore, take heed to yourself.”

Then Apollyon straddled over the whole breadth of the path, and said, “I’m void of fear in this matter. Prepare yourself to die, for I swear by my infernal abode that you will go no farther.” And with that, he shot a flaming arrow at Christian’s chest! But Christian had the shield in his hand, and with it he intercepted the arrow and averted its danger. Then Christian drew his sword. And just as quickly, Apollyon charged him, shooting arrows as thick as hail.

Despite all that Christian could do to avoid it, Apollyon wounded him with arrows in his head, his hand, and his foot. This caused Christian to fall back a little. Apollyon, therefore, followed with another sudden and forceful attack. Christian took courage again and resisted as bravely as he could. This severe combat lasted for over half a day, even until Christian was almost worn out; for you must realize that Christian had to have grown weaker and weaker because of his wounds.

Then, seeing his opportunity, Apollyon began to draw close to Christian and, wrestling with him, gave him a dreadful fall. With that, Christian’s sword flew out of his hand. Then Apollyon exclaimed, “I have you beaten now!” With that, he almost crushed him to death, and Christian began to despair of life.

But, as God would have it, while Apollyon was preparing for his last blow, which he would use to bring an end to this good man, Christian skillfully reached out his hand for his sword and grasped it, saying, “Do not gloat over me, my enemy! Though I have fallen, I will rise.” Then Christian gave him a deadly thrust, which made Apollyon back away as if he had received a mortal wound. Recognizing it, Christian attacked him again, saying, “No, in all these things ‘we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.’” With that, Apollyon spread out his dragon’s wings and quickly sped away, so that Christian saw him no more.

During this fight, no one can imagine (unless he had seen and heard as I did) what yelling and hideous roaring Apollyon made all the time of the fight; for he spoke as a dragon. And on the other side, what sighing and groaning burst from Christian’s heart. All the while, I never saw him give as much as one pleasant look until he perceived he had wounded Apollyon with his double-edged sword. Then, yes, he did smile and look upward. But it was the most dreadful fight I ever saw. (The Pilgrim’s Progress in Modern English, Bridge-Logos, 81–82)

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3 Greek, meaning destroyer. Apollyon is the name given to the dragon from the bottomless pit (Rv 9:11).
Soldiers of Christ, Arise
Charles Wesley

Soldiers of Christ, arise,
And put your armor on,
Strong in the strength which God supplies,
Through His eternal Son;
Strong in the Lord of Hosts,
And in His mighty pow'r,
Who in the strength of Jesus trusts
Is more than conqueror.

Stand then in His great might,
With all His strength endued;
And take, to arm you for the fight,
The panoply of God,
That, having all things done,
And all your conflicts past,
Ye may o'ercome through Christ alone,
And stand complete at last.

Leave no unguarded place,
No weakness of the soul,
Take every virtue, every grace,
And fortify the whole.
To keep your armor bright
Attend with constant care,
Still walking in your Captain's sight
And watching unto prayer.

Pray, without ceasing pray,
Your Captain gives the word;
His summons cheerfully obey,
And call upon the Lord:
To God your every want
In instant prayer display;
Pray always; pray, and never faint;
Pray, without ceasing pray.

From strength to strength go on;
Wrestle, and fight, and pray;
Tread all the powers of darkness down,
And win the well-fought day:
Still let the Spirit cry
In all His soldiers, "Come!"
Till Christ the Lord descend from high,
And take the conquerors home.
THE STRESS TEST
Exodus 18:1–27

I. The Burden of Leadership

A. Things aren’t always what they seem

   From the outside, the life of a leader may appear enviable (big salary, big office, in the spotlight, perks and privileges, etc.). But from the inside, leadership is a ______________ burden and responsibility. This is especially true for leadership in ministry. Describe some of the things that make ministry leadership so heavy:

   1. Caring for peoples’ ______________.
   2. Giving an account to ______________.
   3. Few ______________.
   4. You have to be so ______________ all the time.
   5. Long ______________.
   6. Your work is ______________.
   7. So many ______________.
   8. ______________ __________________________.
   9. ______________ __________________________.
   10. ______________ __________________________.

B. Window into the soul of a leader.

   The Bible gives a surprising amount of detail into the inner world of Moses, one of the greatest leaders who ever lived. Those he led ______________ constantly about his leadership and blamed him for their hardships (Ex 15:24; 16:2; 17:3; Nm 11:1, 14:2; 16:41; 17:5; 20:3; etc.). Little wonder that Moses was often discouraged, frustrated, depressed and angry.

   • When Moses “saw the calf and the dancing, his ______________ burned hot and he threw the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain” (Ex 32:19).
   • “Where am I to get meat?... I am not able to carry all this people alone; the burden is too heavy for me. If you will treat me like this, ______________ at once...” (Nm 11:13–15).
   • On numerous occasions Moses falls ______________ before the Lord in desperation (Nm 14:5; 16:4; 20:6).
   • “Hear now, you rebels; shall we bring water for you out of this rock?” And Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock with his staff ______________...” (Nm 20:10–13).

C. Warning to all ministry leaders.

   Moses’ level of frustration in leadership eventually led him to sin in such a way that he was denied entrance into the Promised Land (Nm 20:1–13). Warning: leaders who fail to find grace to handle the burden of ministry risk undermining their ministry effectiveness and ______________ poorly.
D. Symptoms of burnout.

“Burnout” is a secular term (dating to the 1970s) used to describe a state of emotional __________ from mental __________. The classic symptoms include the following:

1. Anger, irritability, quick _________________.
2. Feelings of loneliness.
3. Depression, mood swings.
4. Fatigue, exhaustion, lack of enthusiasm, little _________________.
5. Difficulty in making decisions, inability to concentrate.
6. Health issues (headaches, blood pressure, over-eating, insomnia, etc.).
7. Cynicism and _________________.
8. Wasting time in mindless pursuits (video games, solitaire, etc.).

E. Finding a cure.

Secular approaches to dealing with burnout tend to rely on secular solutions: exercise, diet, sleep, laughter, vacation, time management, etc. While such responses certainly have their value, the Bible sees “burnout” in ________________ terms and therefore proposes a solution that goes much deeper:

1. Knowing ________________ face to face and experiencing the rest he alone can give. “My presence [face] will go with you, and I will give you rest” (Ex 33:14).
2. Entering Canaan (your inheritance). Though there are battles to fight, cities to build and crops to plant, it is described as a place of ________________ (Jos 1:13; Heb 4:1, 9–11).
3. Ultimately, Jesus is the only one who can give us rest. But this is no passive inactivity. There is work to do! But his yoke is ________________ and his burden is ________________ (Mt 11:28–30).
4. In other words, the cure for burnout is ________________!

Finding the cure for burnout is just as essential to completing our journey as is learning the other lessons God has for us at Desert U (bitterness, hunger, thirst, enemy attacks). Until we learn how to deal with ________________, ________________, and ________________, we will continue doing laps in the desert.

II. Exodus 18:13–23.

A. After being reunited with his wife (Zipporah) and two sons (Gershom and Eliezer), Moses describes to his father-in-law everything the Lord had done in redeeming his people (see Ex 18:1–12). Jethro responds: “Now I know that the LORD is greater than all gods” (Ex 18:11). John Oswalt points out that “Jethro is the first person in the history of the world who got converted because of somebody else’s __________.”

B. After reading Exodus 18:13–23, answer the following questions:

1. What is the problem? (Read Ex 18:13–16).

One pastor for two million people is simply unworkable. To say that the “church” was ________________ is a gross understatement. The organizational ________________ was simply making it impossible to move forward effectively.

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2. What are the results of the problem? (Read Ex 18:14–18).
   
   a. Describe the results for Moses:
      
      • Tired, fatigued.
      • Frustrated.
      • Feeling crushed by the load.
      • ____________________________.
      • ____________________________.
      • ____________________________.

   b. Describe the results for the people:
      
      • Frustrated because their needs are unmet.
      • Weary, tired.
      • ____________________________.
      • ____________________________.
      • ____________________________.

   c. What is the solution? (Read Ex 18:19–23).
      
      1) ______________ authority to qualified persons.

         Notice that competency relates primarily to ________________
         (fear God, trustworthy, hate a bribe) and not to gifts and talents.
         This process involves selection, organization, training, holding
         accountable, etc. Break the congregation down into manageable
         groups: thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens.

      2) Moses should concentrate on doing what he ________________.

         For Moses to spend time on trivial disputes is a “waste” of time for
         the greatest lawgiver in the human history! Now he can concentrate
         on teaching God’s law.

   d. What are the results of the solution?
      
      1) For Moses:

         • He won’t burn out; he will be able to _____ and go the distance.
         • He will be able to do what he is called and gifted to do.
         • ____________________________.
         • ____________________________.
         • ____________________________.

      2) For the people:

         • They will have their ________________ and thus be satisfied.
         • Other leaders will be able to exercise their gifts and callings.
         • ____________________________.
         • ____________________________.
         • ____________________________.
III. Lessons Learned

This is the fifth “test” at Desert U. Though this test is quite different than the previous four, it is just as important. Failure of the stress test could potentially keep God’s redeemed people doing laps in the wilderness forever.

A. Overwork and burnout are __________________ issues.
   Just as deadly as lack of water and food or of being killed by the enemy, failing to __________________ time and resources can render us ineffective and unfruitful.

B. It takes more than __________________ to get us out of the desert.
   The previous four tests required divine intervention. A miracle was needed to make bitter water sweet and to provide bread and water. And it took intercessory prayer to enable Joshua to defeat the Amalakite army. But here in Exodus 18, wise human counsel encourages structural reorganization and revision of job descriptions. __________________ is more important than you think. Remember that “leadership” is a gift of the Spirit (Rom 12:8).

C. Beware the __________________ complex.
   Many people in ministry begin to assume that they are indispensable and that they alone know how to do the work. Perhaps they are over-conscientious. Perhaps they are over-anxious. Perhaps they are ambitious. Regardless of the motivation, when one person tries to __________________... the results are not good.

D. Sometimes “pagans” have __________________ for those who follow Jesus Christ.
   Moses had learned how to “__________ the Egyptians” (Ex 3:21–22; 11:2–3; 12:35–36). Egyptian gold is still gold! Moses was humble enough to listen and learn even from a pagan priest.

E. In leadership, Godly __________________ is more important than competence.
   In I Timothy 3:1–7, Paul sets forth 15 qualifications for those who serve as an elder. Thirteen relate to character; two relate to talents and abilities. Talents and skills can often be learned but character is a gift of God! (See Acts 6:1–3).

F. __________________ the saints for ministry.
   We will never make it through the desert and into the Promised Land unless everyone discovers and uses his/her spiritual gift(s). Everyone is needed. The __________________ of leadership in the church is to ensure that the members are equipped for service. “And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to ____________, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph 4:11–13).
TABLE TALK

1. Think of a time when you were (or are presently) under stress and overloaded with work. How did you handle the situation? What did you learn?
2. Think of a time in your church when you saw someone on the point of burnout from too much ministry responsibilities. How did they handle it?
3. What is the main lesson you learned today?
4. Does your church equip the saints for service? If yes, how do they do it? If no, why not?
5. Have you learned how to “plunder the Egyptians”?
6. Name an area in your life where you need organization and administration. How is this hindering your journey? What is God asking you to do?

I’m Pressing on the Upward Way
By Johnson Oatman, Jr., 1898 (1856–1922)

I’m pressing on the upward way,
New heights I’m gaining every day;
Still praying as I onward bound,
“Lord, plant my feet on higher ground.”

Refrain:
Lord, lift me up, and let me stand
By faith on Canaan’s tableland;
A higher plane than I have found,
Lord, plant my feet on higher ground.

My heart has no desire to stay
Where doubts arise and fears dismay;
Though some may dwell where these abound,
My prayer, my aim, is higher ground.

I want to live above the world,
Though Satan’s darts at me are hurled;
For faith has caught the joyful sound,
The song of saints on higher ground.

I want to scale the utmost height
And catch a gleam of glory bright;
But still I’ll pray till rest I’ve found,
“Lord, lead me on to higher ground.”
**Geography of Salvation**

*Preaching the Map*

A Bible Study with Stan Key

**ANSWERS**

**Doing the Walk**

I. images; partial; distorted; [column: a Journey] Pilgrim, dual citizenship; I’m lost, headed in the wrong direction; Repent (turn around), “Follow Me”; broken homes; journey

II. (B) walking; (C) Egypt; Canaan; geography; map; (C1) geography of salvation; (C2) my story; (C3) preaching the map; (C3a) arteriosclerosis; (C3b) falling from grace; (D1) home; (D2) Red Sea; (D3) after; (D4) Jordan River; (D5) desert; (D6) get out; get in; (D7) journey

III. immature; carnal; example; mapplications; (A) informed; (B) wise; (C) alert; lest he fall; (D) encouraged; normal; faithful; promised

**Egypt: To Leave or Not to Leave, That Is the Question**

I. a reason; (A) turkey farm; (B) 400; assimilated; the land; nation; be blessed; (B1) Where do I belong?; (B2) Who am I?; (B3) Why am I here?; (C) this world; Follow me

II. motivate; (A) Pain; (A1) staying; (A2) the gift; (A3) megaphone; (A4) suffering; (A5) heard; remembered; saw; knew; (A6) fruit; (B) identity; (B2) third culture kid; (B3) lose ourselves; (C) appetites/desires; (C1) purify; (C2) food-driven; (C3) another world; (C4) expulsive power; (D) call; (D2a) God; (D2b) journey; (D2c) relationship; (D2d) community; (D2e) everything

**The Red Sea**

Believed; worshiped; get worse

I. (A1) do not know; (A3) more miserable; why; Why; (B2) knowing God; (B4) to quit; (B5) our faith

II. (A) ten plagues; (B1) blood; (B3) finger; (B5) bull; (B7) shelter; (C3) God

III. blood; a lamb; (A) shows me my need; wrath; slavery; journey; (B) dies in my place; (C) bids me follow

IV. water; (A) which way do I go?; into the desert; (B) a trap; freedom; (C1) promise of God; (C2) blood of the Lamb; (C3) Faith; obedience; (C3a) Fear not; (C3b) Be still; wait; (C3c) March forward; through; from

**The University of the Desert**

I. (A) fact; Worship 101; (A1) Singing; (A2) redeemed; (A3) the Lord; (A4) joy (A5) the past; the present; the future; (B) two years; (C) easy; quick; No water, food; No shelter from the extremes of temperature (hot and cold); Barren; nothing grows; Snakes, scorpions and Amalekites; Silence; The land of in-between; the gap that exists between God’s promise and its fulfillment, between what I am and what God wants me to be; (D) humble; testing; disciplines; (D1) education; (D2) necessity; theology of the desert

II. [column: Problem] retest; overload; [column: Solution] a tree; [column: Lesson] trust; warfare; (A) tempts; tests; reveal what they know and don’t know; (B) frightening; good; (C) Egypt out of us
III. (A) three days; (B) a bitter place; (C) tree; (D1) crucial; (D2) Grumbling; (D3) leads us; sweet; being content

IV. led me; provide for me; lead me away; use this experience

**Wonder Bread**

I. respond

II. (A) food-driven; (A1) forbidden; (A2) eating; (A3) milk and honey; thirsts; money; satisfied; (B) appetites; (C) cleanse the palate

III. (1) one month; (3) trust; daily bread; (4) Whatzit; (6) Sabbath; rest; worship

IV. (A) deadly; (B) hungry; eat properly; (C1) outward circumstances; (C2) deserve better; (C3) the LORD; (C4) contagious; (D) curable; (D1) learned; (D2) the gripes

V. loving purpose; sons; holiness; later; (A) eating disorder; (B) rich food; apple pie; ruins; nutrition; Bible; Jesus; (C) gather it; immaturity; basic principles; (D) daily; God’s Word; (F) faith; alone; sundown; genuine

**Testing God**

I. (A) education; tested; (A1) water; (A2) food; (A3) water; (A4) enemy attack; (A5) burnout; (B) tempt; painful; (B1) reveal; (B2) humble; (B3) equip; (B4) endurance; (B5) holiness; (C) test God; bad attitudes

II. (A) retest; vital importance; (A1) failed; (A2a) quarreled; (A2b) grumbled; (A2c) tested the Lord; (B) third; speak; we; twice; believe in me; holy

III. (B) water; primary focus; testing God; provoked; harden your hearts; (C) whine; patience; unbelief; holiness

IV. (A) presence; (B) ten; disobedience; (C) worthless; I deserve better than this; (D) appear; pretending

V. Test me; the opportunity

**Spiritual Warfare**

I. (A1) provision; protection; (A2) be still; fight; pray; (A3) Spiritual Warfare 101; test; war; (B1) amusement park; monastery; social services; battlefield; soldiers; armor; soldier; fight; (B2) dangerous; messy; weapons; intelligence; trust; objective

II. (A1) terrorism; (A2) turn back; hinders; spiritual forces; (B) sword; staff; of the flesh; by; God; (B1) motives; (B2) faith; (B3) will; (C1) blot out; (C2) banner; throne

III. in the gap; lifestyle; (A) Identification; emotional detachment; intertwined; love; (B) Unity; agree; two or three; (C) Agony; lacking; groanings; to himself; (D) Authority; accept; God’s will

**The Stress Test**

I. (A) heavy; (A1) souls; (A2) God; (A3) resources; (A4) nice; (A5) hours; (A6) never done; (A7) interruptions; (B) grumbled; anger; kill me; facedown; twice; (C) finishing the race;
(D) exhaustion; stress; (D1) temper; (D4) motivation; (D7) doubt; (E) spiritual; (E1) God; (E2) rest; (E3) easy; light; (E4) entire sanctification; overwork; fatigue; stress

II. (A) testimony; (B1) understaffed; structure; (B2c1) Delegate; character; (B2c2) does best; (B2d1) endure; (B2d2) needs met

III. (A) serious; manage; (B) miracles; Administration; (C) messiah; do it all; (D) wise counsel; plunder; (E) character; (F) Equip; primary job; mature manhood
The Gap
By Stan Key

I’d almost given up all hope
Of finding ways to help me cope
With this great chasm, broad and deep,
That breaks my heart and makes me weep;
This gap that’s there for all to see
Between what is… and ought to be.

On one side, Lord, I see Your power,
That gives me grace for every hour:
Your blood that cleanses from all sin,
Your Spirit giving strength within,
Your Word that guides me in the way,
And feeds my soul for each new day.

But here on this side, Lord, I see
An opposite reality.
For when I try to do what’s right
I find the will… but not the might.
This inner turmoil makes me sore,
I am a walking civil war!

Is this gap forever there?
Mocking me with empty air?
If Your Gospel, Lord, is true,
Is this all that grace can do?
Humbly now, I must confess;
Though I’m Yours, I’m still a mess!

Then You turned to me and said,
“Victory comes when you are dead.
You will never be set free
Till you’re crucified with Me.
Then My power you’ll understand,
And this cursed gap be spanned.”

The gap today is still a part
Of truths that often break my heart;
But now its breadth is not so wide,
And crossing to the other side,
Is simpler; for I’ve found the key:
“More of Him and less of me.”