THE WILDERNESS

Exodus 16-17

- Lets recap: In the beginning of the book of Exodus we see the National of Israel flourishing in the land of Egypt. However a new king arises in Egypt and he doesn't like how much they are prospering because he's afraid that they'll become too strong.
  - So he orders that all of the Hebrew people be put into slavery. However, that doesn't work because they still continue to grow strong and God continues to bless them.
  - So to manage their growth, Pharaoh orders the mass murder of all Hebrew infant boys.
  - One Hebrew boy that survived this genocide was a boy named Moses who was saved by Pharaohs own daughter and ironically he ends up spending the first 40 years of his life living in the palace.
- That is until one day his heart starts to go out to his native Hebrew people as he sees their oppression —but he takes things too far by killing an Egyptian guard.
  - He fears for his life, so he runs away to the Midian where he spends the next 40 years of his life.
- But one day as he is out working in the fields, God speaks to Moses through a burning bush and tells him that He wants Moses to go back to Egypt and tell Pharaoh to release His people from slavery.
  - After a little back and forth, Moses eventually goes and finds himself back in the palace and tells pharaoh to let God's people go.
- Pharaoh of course refuses and God ensues to send 10 plagues upon Egypt, in which each one was a direct shot at either a pagan god directly or a pagan religious practice—signifying that there was only One True God, and He was the God of Israel.

- After the 10th plague, Pharaoh finally relents and Moses leads the people out of Egypt.
- As they approach the red sea, however, Pharaoh changes his mind and sends an army to recapture the Israelites— but God miraculously parted the Red Sea, led the nation across the sea on dry land to safety. And that is where pastor Mark left off last week.

- So now, there is a lot of excitement among the people of Israel when it comes to their new-found freedom and they are looking forward to going to the promised land that God has waiting for them.
- And in chapter 15 Moses writes a song all about it. However it doesn't take long before the excitement where's off and the grumblings begin.
  - In the final section of chapter 15, God leads the people away from the Red Sea through the wilderness of Shur. After traveling for 3 days—they aren't able to find any water and when they finally do find some water, it's too bitter to drink! So verse 24 says:

- ***"And the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?" And he cried to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a log, and he threw it into the water, and the water became sweet. There the Lord made for them a statute and a rule, and there He tested them, saying, "If you will diligently listen to the voice of the Lord your God, and do that which is right in His eyes, and give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you that I put on the Egyptians, for I am the Lord, your healer." Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees, and they encamped there by the water."-Exodus 15:24-27 (ESV)***
- Beach side property! So God shows His Power and Faithfulness by setting them free from slavery in Egypt, He shows His Power and Faithfulness by providing them the resources

they need, and then He shows His Power, Faithfulness, and grace by letting them rest on waterfront real estate!

- Here they are comfortable, here they are happy….but pretty soon its time to get uncomfortable again…

- Now let's keep something in mind as we walk through this next chapter and a half…Pauls says, ***"For whatever was written in the past was written for our instruction, so that we may have hope through endurance and through encouragement from the scriptures." -Romans 15:4 (CSB)***

- These accounts have been passed down to us, to teach us, instruct us, to encourage us, and to give us HOPE

  - That's so important to remember, because its so easy for us to look at this roller coaster of a people, and think that they're just ridiculous!

  - Who would ever be that forgetful, and that quick to complain, with everything that God has done for them??

- *But what we fail to realize is that whenever we read the book of Exodus and see the people of Israel, we're actually looking in a mirror.*

  - *We act the same way, we do the same things… And we need to learn the things that they needed to learn*

- We saw in chapter 15 a moment ago that God said He "tested them," and we'll that phrase come up again in chapter 16— God isn't shy about letting us know that He was testing them.

  - However, what we have to understand is that God is testing them as a Father, not as a Professor.

  - When a true loving Father tests His child, He does so, not to see if they will pass or fail, but rather so that they will learn and grow.

- That distinction is important because if you fail enough tests of a professor, you're disqualified. You're out. You do not get to participate anymore.
  - However, whenever God tests you and you fail, He uses those failures to help you learn, grow, and become strong— IF you allow Him to.
    - IF you listen to His voice, IF you Follow His Ways.
  - Failure will never disqualify you to Him. In fact, it can draw you closer to Him than ever before.
- *What He's taking the children of Israel through, I want to call* **WILDERNESS TRAINING***, and We need Wilderness Training ourselves.*
- This time that the Israelites spent in the wilderness is an example of our lives post-salvation.
  - For those of us who have put our faith and trust in Jesus, the deliverance from Egypt we read about in Exodus is a picture of our salvation, when we came into a relationship with Christ who is leading us to the promised land, which for us will one-day be Heaven
  - However, until we get there, we are still in the wilderness— Now some parts will be dryer and more difficult than others, but this life is a wilderness nonetheless
  - And we see so many similarities between us and the Israelites and what they needed and what we need now.
- Moses expounds on this in Deuteronomy 8: ***"And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that He might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. -Deuteronomy 8:2 (ESV)***
- Why did they need testing? Why did they need humbling?

- Well, we see exactly why in verse 2 of Exodus 16 when it says, just 2 and a half months after seeing God miraculously deliver them out of slavery—which, in that time, they saw Him part the Red Sea, miraculously give them water in the wilderness, then let them stay on the beach for a while,—still it says:

- ***"And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, and the people of Israel said to them, "Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger. Then the Lord said to Moses, "Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not. On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily." So Moses and Aaron said to all the people of Israel, "At evening you shall know that it was the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, and in the morning you shall see the glory of the Lord, because he has heard your grumbling against the Lord. For what are we, that you grumble against us?" -Exodus 16:2-7 (ESV)***

- *Dr. Tim Keller points out that this is the language of addiction— because these Israelites had lived their entire lives accustomed to a certain lifestyle*

  - *And even though they cried out for deliverance from that life, they for some reason still look back on that time fondly.*

  - *If you have ever spent time around someone who has battled addiction, you will see them cry out for deliverance in the midst of it— but as soon as you pull them away from their addiction, all they want to do is go back to it.*

- *And it's so mind-boggling to those who do not have the same struggles because it seems so plain to see the damage and the destruction and you know that they recognize it, they've told you themselves, but yet they want to go back to it*

- And these Israelites, aren't thinking about how they were slaves, they aren't thinking about their forced labor, the lashings the beatings, they're not even thinking about the the mass genocide of their baby boys!
  - All they're thinking is, *"We used to eat sooooo good."* And they would willing to go back to it, wishing that they had never left.
- For us, before coming to a relationship with Jesus, we have spent an entire life addicted to sin. And even though we have been freed from the bondage of sin, even though we know that we have been freely forgiven and we have eternal life, even though we know that what He has for us is better than anything this world could offer…we still find ourselves wanting to go back
- The desire is still there for those things that were self-fulfilling, yet soul crushing
- Tell me that you have never thought back on your life before following Christ fondly from time to time…
  - *"Man, I used to be able to sleep with whoever I wanted and it not be a big deal…"*
  - *"I used to be able to play and manipulate people so badly and make so much money doing it…"*
  - *"Man, we used to have so much fun, and yea at the end of the day we would feel completely empty, directionless, less-than-human, and depressed, but MAN we had some good times!"*
- You see you can be taken out of slavery in an instant, but deliverance is a process.
  - So many people are so confused by Christianity because we think that once we

come to Jesus things are supposed to get better and easier. Everything is instantly supposed to make more sense.

- But what we fail to realize is that we are addicts that need rehabilitation, we need detox, and the wilderness is actually for our good.

- We need that Wilderness Training
  - If you remember Deuteronomy 8 we read a little bit ago, Moses told the people to remember the wilderness, and how God led them there.
- Yes, the dry, difficult, disastrous circumstance that they were in, God led them through it.
  - Why? Because He was leading them to a place of total dependance on Him
  - *You will never know that God is all you need, until God is all that you have.*
  - *That's why Jesus told us that we needed to Die to Ourselves*
  - *That's why the goal of the Gospel is to bring you to the end of yourself so that you can be totally dependent on Him*
- Now the question will arise in your mind, when you think about tragedy that has happened in your life and you will ask, "Did God make that happen?"
- Now, the word we see here for wilderness is probably more accurately translated for us—Desert
  - The word literally means *"Uninhabited-plain country,"* OR "*Sterile-Sandy Country"*
  - This is a portion of land that is lifeless and completely destitute
- And this is important to note—that we see no such, place in the original creation
  - In the original creation we see nothing but fruitfulness, life, and flourishing land. However, when sin entered into the world, it not only affected humanity but all of creation as well.

- So God did not have the wilderness in His original design, but in His power and Goodness He still uses the wilderness to work something wonderful in the lives of His people

- And the same goes for you and me— there will be times in our lives when tragedy strikes or when we find ourselves in wilderness seasons with trials and sufferings.
  - And God is not the creator of such circumstances, sin, and the brokenness of this world is…however, God can and wants to use those circumstances to show us more of Himself and grow us closer to Him.
- You see, in times of great trouble, we will never stay the same— we will either get BITTER and BROKEN or we will get BETTER and let God BUILD us up if we let Him lead us through them.
- Paul says it this way, ***"For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison" -2 Corinthians 4:17 (ESV)***
- Paul, who had been severely beaten, imprisoned, shipwrecked, and had a whole laundry list of afflictions, and he's writing to people who are experiencing severe persecution and some who are losing loved ones and being killed for their faith, battling horrible diseases…but yet he says that these afflictions are just momentary and small compared to what God is doing in the grand scheme of eternity.
  - Not to minimize the heaviness and the feelings of those horrible circumstances, but whenever we compare them to the glory of what God is doing in and through us IN SPITE of those troubles, and what He has waiting for us on the other side— THAT is where we gain the strength to move forward and to grow throughout those circumstances.

- And here in Exodus, God is using the wilderness to get His people back focused on the big picture.
  - This is evident whenever the people are complaining against Moses and Aaron, but they have to clarify to the people that it's not Moses and Aaron that they're grumbling against, it's really GOD they're complaining about.
- *<u>These people needed to stop focusing on what was in front of them and start focusing on what or WHO was Above them.</u>*
  - This is why we need our wilderness training — to break out of our self focus, our entitlement, our propensity to not focus on what we need to focus on:
- God said to Moses, "I have heard the Israelites' complaints. You can tell them, 'In the evening they will have meat to eat, and in the morning they will have all the bread they want. And they will know that I am the Lord their God.'"
- Then in verse 13, is says, ***"In the evening quail came up and covered the camp, and in the morning dew lay around the camp. And when the dew had gone up, there was on the face of the wilderness a fine, flake-like thing, fine as frost on the ground. When the people of Israel saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, "It is the bread that the Lord has given you to eat. This is what the Lord has commanded: 'Gather of it, each one of you, as much as he can eat. You shall each take an omer, according to the number of the persons that each of you has in his tent.'" -Exodus 16:13-16 (ESV)***
- And this is why this is important for us— 0because in Deuteronomy Moses clarifies that this about more than just food. In verse 3 of Deuteronomy 8, he says, ***"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." -Deuteronomy 8:3 (ESV)

- If you recall this is the passage that Jesus quotes to Satan when being tempted in the wilderness.
- What this shows me is that we need to **CHANGE THE WAY WE FEED**
- *In same way that the Israelites had to gather the manna, we need to be gathering the Word of God in our lives.*
- *When the Israelites were spoiled with the excess of all of the food they could want and desire in Egypt—God was narrowing their focus on what they really needed*
  - And the first step in changing the way that we feed is that:
- **WE FEED INTENTIONALLY**
- We read a moment ago that the Lord commanded them to go out and gather the food
- We have to go get it, We can't afford to just sit around and wait for the food to come to us.
  - I think God was intentional about this, because the Egyptians would just leave pots of meat right on their doorstep, or on the job site for them to eat all that they wanted.
  - They were not just enslaved physically but also provisionally and emotionally
- But now God is going to bring the food into the vicinity, but tells them that they need to take action and be active participants.
  - He's providing the food, but they have to go get it, they have to gather it, they have to cook it…God is not just going to automatically fill them with it
- Before we came to know Christ, we would just feed on whatever was put in front of us. Whatever the media said, whatever we were

told in social circles, whatever we felt like in the moment, or whatever was put right in front of us —*that* was what we allowed to feed us and fill us and shape our world view

- But now that we have been saved— now that we have been brought through our exodus, we have to change the way that we feed.
- And we have to be able to go past all of that other stuff and go and intentionally gather the Food that Comes from the mouth of God and allow THAT to fill us, sustain us, and shape the way that we see the world and the people in it.

- And this takes *time and training* to do because we're so used to being fed the other way
- *And as a result, a lot of Christians in the church today look like this:*
  - *Imagine we go to the Golden Corral. And we sit at the table, with the food all around us, seeing other people eating, but we just sit there at the table waiting for someone to bring us some food.*
  - *Is anyone going to bring us any food?? No! That's not the way it works!*
  - *And instead of taking action and going to get some food for ourselves, we just complain to the manager saying we're not being fed or served the way we think we should be served.*
- God has provided us the food of His word, and He says that this is enough to sustain us throughout this wilderness that we call life, but He's not automatically going to fill us with it.
- Moses told the people , **"**These are the Lord's instructions: Each household should gather as much as it needs. Pick up two quarts for each person in your tent…" ***"And Moses said to them, "Let no one leave any of it over till the morning." But they did not listen to Moses. Some left part of it till the morning, and it bred worms and stank. And Moses was angry with them. Morning by morning they***

gathered it, each as much as he could eat; but when the sun grew hot, it melted."
-Exodus 16:19-21 (ESV)

- So we have to be intentionally feeding…and:

- **WE FEED DAILY**

- If you remember, in our opening passage they were told to gather a "day's portion."

- They were told to gather every day, enough for that day— however on the 6th day they would gather twice as much and they would have a day of rest on the 7th.
  - This is the first time that the Sabbath is introduced, however we don't have time to break that down today, but we will later.

- But here, the point was: They couldn't go get a bunch of food and then try and store it up for multiple days. Some might have been thinking, "Oh, I'll just go and get a bunch that will last me the whole week, then I don't have to go out and gather *every* day…"
  - But it wasn't going to work that way, whatever they gathered for today wasn't going to be able to fill them tomorrow as well

- <u>This brings some clarity to the way Jesus taught us to pray whenever He said, "Give us this day our daily bread."</u>
  - We need to be feeding on the word of God every day of our lives.

- A common complaint you hear in the church today is, "Oh I'm just not being fed enough there." …but church is the only place they're feeding!

- If church is our only avenue of being fed, or our primary place of being fed, we will be very spiritually malnourished.
  - You could be in the most biblically sound and theologically deep church in the entire world, but if that is the only thing that you are relying on for your spiritual food, it will never be enough to sustain you.

- That's like trying to gather one day's worth of food and trying to make it last the entire week, it's not going to last!
- WE NEED OUR DAILY BREAD
- And here's another important thing to remember, *we don't get to pick what's on the menu.*
  - He provided Quail in the Evening and Manna in the morning, He didn't go around from tent to tent getting all of their individual orders like some sort of divine waiter. He said this is the food that you get, because this the food that you need.
  - Now there are a lot of spiritually hungry people walking around this world or hopping from church to church, because we don't exactly like the menu.
- It's very easy, especially in this day age, to try and find places and churches that will just tell us what we want to hear rather than simply what God's Word says.
  - And if we don't like what's on the menu there, we'll just try somewhere else…or try to create our own….
- Please, listen to me—please don't fall into the habit of having a bible study, where you all pick a passage and just talk about "What it means to you, or how it makes you feel"
  - Because it really doesn't matter what we *think*, or what we want it to mean, it only matters God's Word says.
- *Do you understand the difference?*
  - *Whenever I read the Bible through the lens of what it me means to me, I am making myself the centerpiece of it and I will be much more prone to manipulate what it's actually saying.*
  - *But at the end of the day it doesn't matter what my take, my opinion, or my feelings on a particular passage—it only matters what it says directly, and what it says about God, and how I need to respond to it.*

- There's a lot of preachers out there today that spend most of their time expounding on their opinions and takes, and it makes a lot of people feel good, but all that it is doing, (whether intentionally or not) is changing the menu.
  - And the only way that we can recognize it whenever that is happening —is if we are intentionally feeding on a daily basis.
- <u>But we don't need to do it all by ourselves!</u>
- Look at the way that God set up this process: ***"And the people of Israel did so. They gathered, some more, some less. But when they measured it with an omer, whoever gathered much had nothing left over, and whoever gathered little had no lack. Each of them gathered as much as he could eat." -Exodus 16: 17-18 (ESV)***
  - What this tells me is that we, we feed intentionally, we feed daily, and:
- **WE FEED IN COMMUNITY**
- So here's what was happening— When the manna landed, every person would go out and gather together.
  - Now you had different people in different seasons of life that came in all shapes and sizes. But everyone brought what they gathered together.
  - Some brought more and some brought less, but whenever they measured out the two quarts (or an omer) for each person in each household, everyone was taken care of.
- *<u>Beautiful biblical community looks like a group of individuals who are all feeding themselves daily. Gathering as much of the word as they can, and then they come together and share it with one another.</u>*
  - *<u>And we all bring something different to the table.</u>*
- I'm around people all of the time that have a much bigger learning capacity than I do— and they're going to see some things that I don't,

and I'm going to see some things that they don't.

- God is going to be working something out differently in all of our lives but we all get to share what God is teaching us in different ways and we can all be encouraged, uplifted, and held accountable together.
  - Whenever we do that we can be more apt to help each other whenever we're *not* gathering intentionally, or if we're *not* gathering daily, or if we're spending too much time working out our opinions rather than God's actual Word.
- We need this communal, daily, and intentional feeding of the word of God because its only matter of time before we move into a new part of the wilderness and begin to face a new problem
  - And we are prone to forget what He's done in the past and go back to complaining.
- *Have you ever noticed how often we forget what we should remember and remember what we should forget??*
- We see this same forgetful condition in Jesus' time with His Disciples. In Mark chapter 6, Jesus is teaching 5,000 people and it was getting late so He tells the disciples to go get them something to eat.
  - One of the disciples response, *"Whoa Jesus, that's gonna be expensive!"*…Then Jesus tells them to see what they have, which was 5 loaves of bread and two pieces fish. So Jesus blesses the food that they have, distributes it among 12 baskets, and as the disciples divvy it out, the food just kept coming and coming, and everyone was fed.
  - THEN 2 CHAPTERS LATER, there was AGAIN a large crowd, about 4,000 this time and AGAIN they had nothing to eat. Jesus points out the situation and the disciples response is this, *"Where can anyone get*

enough bread here in this desolate place to feed these people??"

- Really?? So AGAIN, Jesus says what do you have? 7 loaves and a few fish this time, and AGAIN, Jesus blessed it and distributed it and AGAIN everyone was fed.
  - You think they got it? Nope. Just a few verse later the disciples are in the boat and they realize that someone forgot to pack the food, and their freaking out discussing among themselves what they're going to do because they only have 1 loaf of bread between them!
  - *This time Jesus literally says, "Do you not understand yet??"*
- But how often whenever we're faced with a new trial, and new difficult circumstance, how quick are we to forget what God has done in the past because the problem seems so big in the present?
  - Dr. Tony Evans says, ***"Don't overlook how God worked in your life yesterday; you'll need that knowledge for the trials you'll face tomorrow." -Dr. Tony Evans***
- When we get to chapter 17, we see that God moved the people of Israel on from this wilderness to a new place— and this time food wasn't the problem because chapter 16 tells us that God continued to provide the food everyday until they entered the promised land.
- But now they are in a place where once again they don't have water, just like in chapter 15.
  - And instead of walking into it with the confidence in what God had done in the past — they panic
- *Because they're still focused on what's in front of them instead of WHO is above them.*
  - *Just like Pastor Mark said last week, the quickest way for your faith to falter is by looking horizontally rather than vertically*
- ***"Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel***

with me? Why do you test the Lord?" But the people thirsted there for water, and the people grumbled against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?" -Exodus 17: 2-3 (ESV)

- Here we see this go beyond a complaint. The word we see here is ***Quarrel***
- And this word literally means: ***To Contend, To Conduct a Case or Legal Suit***
  - After all they have seen, after all they have been through, after God has come through time and time again, they had literally been in this situation before and God gave them water!…But even so, these people are wanting to put Moses on trial
- Moses doesn't know what to do! ***"So Moses cried to the Lord, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me." And the Lord said to Moses, "Pass on before the people, taking with you some of the elders of Israel, and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people will drink." And Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel." -Exodus 17:4-6 (ESV)***
- This is one of the most dramatic scenes we'll see in the entire book of Exodus.
- God says, if they want a trial, we'll give them a trial
- He tells Moses to get two things: The Staff, and The Elders
- The Staff was a sign of Judicial Authority.
  - *In ancient times, in some cultures, the way that legal proceedings would take place is by the judge entering the courts with a group of elders that would serve as a jury.*
  - *And he would have in his hand a staff or a rod, that on one side there would be a sort of*

axe. And the person accused of the crime would stand before the judge and the elders and would be tried. If found guilty, the judge would smite the criminal with the staff on the spot enacting the justice and punishment.

- So no doubt the people of Israel become still as statues when they see Moses, the staff, and the elders walking towards them after they demanded a trial.
  - They know what that staff symbolizes and they have seen what that staff can do in the past.
  - They had seen that staff carry out justice on Pharaoh and the people of Egypt when they refused to listen to God.
- But God tells Moses to pass on by the people —and the people stand in silence as Moses and his staff, accompanied by the elders, pass on right in front of them as they make their way to the rock.
- <u>And this is where it gets really mind boggling….God says “I will stand before you”</u>
  - This is a position of inferiority.
  - When one would enter the palace, they would say that they Stood Before the King
  - When a criminal was tried, they would Stand before the Judge
- So the people wanted to be the judge and jury, and they wanted to try Moses…But God sets up Moses as the Judge, the Elders as the jury…and the people because of their sins and wrongdoings, THEY should be the ones on trial.
  - But God says that they will be spectators and just watch —as He stands before the judge, and allows Himself to be put on trial.
- God tells Moses to take the Rod of Justice and Strike Him on the Rock and from that the people will drink.
- Pauls tells us that we drink the same way when he refers to this scene from Exodus 17 and says, ***“For they drank from the spiritual***

Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ." -1 Corinthians 10:4b (ESV)

- Jesus Himself said, ***"I am the bread of life; whoever comes to Me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in Me shall <u>never thirst</u>." -John 6:35 (ESV)***
- … Then He explains what this whole account that we've been studying today was pointing towards whenever He says,
- ***"Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I Am the Living Bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this Bread, he will live forever. And the Bread that I will give for the life of the world is My flesh." -John 6:49-51 (ESV)***
- And as He hung on the cross that was rightfully ours, and one of the last things He said in John 19:28 was, ***"Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), <u>"I thirst."</u> -John 19:28 (ESV)***
- And as the Rock was struck in the desert, He allowed the Rod of justice to strike Him on the cross, so that from His thirst, from His sacrifice, we could drink of the Living Water that only He could provide.
- That's why Jesus said in John 7, ***"If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink." -John 7:37 (ESV)…***
  - **"<u>*Drink*</u>"** means**: <u>*To receive into the soul what seems to refresh, strengthen, and nourish unto life eternal.*</u>**
- So as we wander through this wilderness of life, no matter how dry and destitute things become— we reorient our focus onto Jesus and we rejoice, taste and reflect on the punishment that Jesus took for us.
  - And when we drink from that Rock in the desert, it will only make us better people, more confident people, and stronger people.

- Because He is the Rock that supports, He is the Water that Satisfies, and He is the Bread that Sustains.

- *There was an old play, that was based around the German people whenever they found out exactly what their government was doing during the Holocaust with the Concentration Camps*
- *And they wanted to clarify that they couldn't be to blame, they had to blame the leadership! The government! But then they took it a step further, and said "No, we should blame God! If God was good He wouldn't have allowed such evil to take place. So we should put God on trial."*
- *So that's what they did, and they found God guilty, and said that He should be sentenced to become a man, and experience what it's like to struggle in this life. He should experience hunger, homelessness, what it's like to lose a child, and experience injustice first hand.*
- And little did they know, that's exactly what God has already done.
  - Even whenever we attempt to manufacture a truth of our own and enact justice according to our standards, He didn't make Himself judge and enact His Holy Justice on us when deserved!
- John 3:17 says that "God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through Him."
  - So God did become a Man, in the person of Jesus Christ. From His first days, His parents were living on the run in order to keep Him alive. Yet, He still grew up and lived a life without sin, even though He went through seasons of homelessness, and hunger, and was tempted just as we are.
  - Still, He endured, and His reward was to be falsely accused, and He stood trial before Pilot for crimes of which He was innocent, and yet He was still unjustly sentenced to death.