

WILDERNESS LESSONS #1

August 9, 2015

I. Background

Playing to win the prize

1 Co 9:24-27 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. 25 Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. 26 Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; 27 but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.

The contest

1. Running in a race
2. Competing in a game
3. Boxing in a match

The rules

1. Follow the rules or be disqualified
2. Discipline
Exercises self-control in all things
Make your body and your slave

The goal (purpose, aim, focus)

1. Winning
2. The prize, wreath
Do it with - not without aim, not beating the air

Israel our example

1 Co 10:1-13 For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; 2 and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; 3 and all ate the same spiritual food; 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ. 5 Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness. 6 Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved. 7 Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, "THE PEOPLE SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK, AND STOOD UP TO PLAY." 8 Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day. 9 Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. 10 Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. 11 Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. 12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall. 13 No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.

(v 11) ... these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction The sense is, not that these things took place simply and solely to be examples, or admonitions, but that their occurrence illustrated great principles of human nature and of the divine government; they showed the weakness of men, and their liability to fall into sin, and their need of the divine protection, and they might thus be used for the admonition of succeeding generations. (from Barnes' Notes)

II. Lessons and applications from Israel's journey

A. 40 Camping Places (Num 33)

These verses stand parallel to the account of the journey given in Ex 12:37 - 19:2.

B. 42 places "journeyed from," 41 places where they "camped;"

The first place the journey from is Rameses, in Egypt.

The final place they journey to is - by the Jordan, opposite Jericho. This final place was their destination in the wilderness, when leaving Egypt.

There are 40 places (of trials) they needed to pass through to get to their destination. These are places where they "camped."

C. Key words: Journeyed & Camped, both used 42 times.

D. These 40 places are named; they have meaning or interpretation and have significance to our life. We will examine each place and try to learn life lessons on our own journey.

Many have sought spiritual significance by comparing the groups of seven. The thrust of the list, however, is to remind Israel that God directed each step of the journey, and had brought them to the camp they now occupied, ready to conquer Canaan.

I will give a definition of each place that I have derived from studying 3 sources (Exhaustive Dictionary of Bible Names, by S Smith, & J Cornwall; Cruden's Concordance; Strong's Concordance).

III. The journey (40 places)

Nu 33:1-4 These are the journeys of the sons of Israel, by which they came out from the land of Egypt by their armies, under the leadership of Moses and Aaron. 2 Moses recorded their starting places according to their journeys by the command of the LORD, and these are their journeys according to their starting places. 3 They journeyed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the next day after the Passover the sons of Israel started out boldly in the sight of all the Egyptians, 4 while the Egyptians were burying all their firstborn whom the LORD had struck down among them. The LORD had also executed judgments on their gods.

Leaving Egypt - The beginning place - "journeyed from **Rameses**"
(Num 33:1-4; Ex 12:37-41; 13:17-20)

Rameses = Evil is the standard bearer.

History Notes:

In the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the next day after the Passover

Israel started out boldly in the sight of all the Egyptians, while the Egyptians were burying all their firstborn.

The LORD had also executed judgments on their gods

1. journeyed from Rameses and camped in **Succoth**. (Num 33:5)

Succoth = Booths; tents, tabernacles

The first 3 camping places (Succoth, Etham, and Pi Hahiroth) were west of the Red Sea and before they cross. The rest of the sites were in the Sinai Desert

History Notes:

Succoth is where Jacob meets Esau on his return home (Gen 33:15-17).

Here they bake the dough into cakes of unleavened bread (Ex 12:37-39); and receive instruction about the Passover & consecration of the firstborn (Ex 12:40-13:20)

Succoth was part of the Kingdom of Sihon (Jos 13:27)

Gideon (w/ 300 men) comes here after he wins battle; they refuse to help him. (Jdg 8:5-13)

Succoth was the place where Solomon casts the bronze for the temple furniture (1Ki 7:40-47; 2Chron 4:11-18)

God has spoken in His holiness: "I will exult, I will portion out Shechem and measure out the valley of Succoth. (Ps 60:6; 108:7)

2. journeyed from Succoth and camped in **Etham**, (Num 33:6-8; Ex 13:20)

Etham = Boundary; their strength

3. journeyed from Etham and camped before **Hahiroth, or (Pi-hahiroth)**. (Num 33:7; Ex 14:1-20)

Hahiroth, or Pi-hahiroth = The mouth of wrath; the opening of liberty

Hahiroth, was by or near **Baal-zephon & Migdol**

Baal-zephon = [Lord; master; / intense expectation, longing]

Migdo = [a lofty tower, place]

Migdol is mentioned 5 other times (2 Sa 22:51; Jer 44:1-2; 46:13-14; Ezk 29:10; 30:6)

Ex 14:1-9 here they wait for Pharaoh & Egypt to pursue them;

Ex 14:10-20 God separates them from Pharaoh, with pillar of fire.

References used in this study:

The Bible Reader's Companion
The King James Version study Bible
The Apologetics Study Bible
The Summarized Bible
Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Commentary
Old Testament Survey Series
The New Topical Textbook