
THE STORY – SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY

Chapter 6 ~ Wandering

INTRODUCTION

In his parting sermon to the people of Israel before they are actually about to enter the land of Canaan, Moses says, “This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the Lord is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob” (Deuteronomy 30:19-20)

We contribute nothing to saving ourselves. God does all the work in raising us from spiritual death to spiritual life. But Moses wasn't preaching to a nation of unbelievers. He is speaking to people who have been made spiritually alive by the Word and work of God! He speaks to people who have the spiritual life and ability to make godly choices. The question is: will they?

I thank God that he has raised you up as spiritually living beings by bringing you to faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior. As people who have been given the gift of spiritual life, Moses' question to the Israelites also applies to us: Will we choose blessings or curses? Will you pursue life with God in doing life God's way? Or will you do life on your own terms, falling into destruction and death by rebelling against God's ways?

Let's explore Chapter 6 of The Story with this question on our minds!

DISCUSSION

1. The Israelites had pleaded with God to deliver them *from slavery for freedom*. Why were they so hungry for freedom when they were slaves?
2. When God answers the Israelites cry for freedom and delivers them into the wilderness, how do they respond? Why do they respond this way?
3. In delivering them from slavery and giving them freedom, how was God expecting them to respond? Why should God expect them to respond this way?
4. There is much we can learn from the Israelites, not to imitate, but to avoid. Let's explore places where their reaction was opposite of what God expected, focusing especially on what prompted the difference. Our goal is to learn from their mistakes so that we can pursue ways of responding to life's situations that honor God rather than provoke him.
 - a. Life in the wilderness is very different than living as slaves. Yet in a striking way the Israelites illustrate how people cling to the familiar, however damaging and unhealthy, over freedom from that bondage. What types of situations bring this out in the Israelites? What insight does

this give you into yourself and your own challenges to face changes, especially when it comes to following through on making changes that God is calling you to make?

- b. Life in the wilderness wasn't easy, yet how was it better than life in Egypt? How did the Israelites deprive themselves of appreciating and enjoying the blessings of God in the wilderness? What can we learn from this for our own lives and walk with God as we journey with him through the wilderness of this life?
 - c. There was a fatal flaw in the focus of the Israelites' faith. In what direction is faith designed to look? And yet what direction did the Israelites continually want to focus? What can we learn so that we don't make that same mistake?
5. The Israelites ended up on a 40-year detour. Was this a waste of time or time well spent? Why? How is this helpful for us as we find ourselves at times in life feeling like we're on an unexpected and unwelcome detour?

CHAPTER REVIEW

- The Israelites are heading to the fertile land of _____
- The people decide not to move forward out of _____
- They dragged their _____ into this mess as well.
- They have a fresh opportunity to _____ God.
- We would be _____ not to follow God's GPS.

UP NEXT

We are pausing The Story to observe Holy Week and Easter. A couple people have asked whether we could pause our journey through The Story until we can gather back together again in person. I'll include that question as part of the weekly survey that CTK is taking of members and friends of the congregation this coming week. I'd like to get a pulse on whether it would be helpful to continue this journey through *The Story* even while we're in this "stay home, stay safe" period, or if you'd find it more beneficial to do so after we're able to gather in person once again!