

Double Trouble

Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel. They remembered not his hand, nor the day when he delivered them from the enemy.

Psalm 78:41,42

The journey of the Hebrew nation from the bondage of Egypt through the wilderness of Sinai provides both warnings and encouragements for believers. Their experiences as well as their responses to them often illustrate the ups and downs of our Christian life. There were times of obedience and faith as well as times of disobedience and faithlessness. These accounts that happened aforetime are for our learning that we might avoid the same pitfalls in order to move progressively forward to our Promised Land.

Being disciples of Jesus Christ has many joys attached to it, but as our Lord said “in the world ye shall have tribulation.” We can be encouraged because the One we follow has overcome the world, yet there are a couple of recurring problems that plague believers. Unbelief and disobedience are at the root of many of the things hindering our progress in our Christian life. The Hebrews failed to recognize that some of the difficulties they faced, though very real, were opportunities for them to exercise their faith in Jehovah, and would cultivate a *stronger* faith. Often though, they would complain of their situation and forget or refuse to trust God. Their unbelief and disobedience even had them wishing they were back in the bondage of Egypt, where at least they had a supply of food. When Joshua, Caleb, and the other representatives of each of the tribes of Israel brought back their report after exploring the Promised Land, the children of Israel chose to dwell on the negative details. They allowed this to produce a fear that would undermine their trust in God for His protection and victory. Instead of immediately conquering the Promised Land, they would continue wandering in the wilderness for forty years. Once they entered Canaan there were times of faith and obedience and the ensuing blessing, but the double-trouble would resurface. This pattern would continue through the ruling of judges and the reigning of kings.

As children of God, like the Israelites, we are also traveling through the wilderness of this world as we march toward the eternal promised land. The experiences that come our way are designed by God for our edification. We are to believe and trust the Lord through both the highs and lows of life which God has designed for our spiritual growth.

For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. (2Cor. 4:15)

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