

We Thank and Praise The Lord For His Provisions

Hebrews 3:7-19

May 3, 2015

The application to our lives from this account:

1. Be thankful in all things to the Lord.
2. Do not grumble for what the Lord is providing for you.
3. Look to the circumstances the Lord has placed you in to serve Him.
4. Witness to others the Lord's provisions for your life.
5. Do not be discouraged by challenges the Lord places in front of you.
6. Look toward these challenges as great victories the Lord has stored up for Him to be worked out in you.
7. Always remember, it is the Lord's Will at work in you.

In the third chapter of the New Testament Book of Hebrews, God directed His writer to bring forth, and remind all of us, a great event in the history of the Hebrew people; the event of the Exodus and the Wilderness. This is the history of the relationship between God and the Hebrew people who He had chosen to be His people for a **witness to the whole world**. In this witness history, the Hebrew people had great triumph in life and great defeat. It is accurate to say that without God choosing Abram and his descendents in about 2000 BC to be a witness to all the nations (Gen. 12), the Hebrew people would have been assigned a back page in human history or perhaps no page at all, no remnant, no note, just a people that came and went like so many others from the stage of human history.

But no, God chose to reach out to Abram in the midst of a pagan polytheistic world and speak to Abram about a place He will show him. God has reached out to each and every one of us in the midst of a pagan and polytheistic world. However, Abram had to leave his home land, his heritage, his world and travel to an unknown place surrendering his will to God, responding by faith, and moving his entire family.

Abram was the patriarch of a large family consisting of many people through his sons and daughters. It is acceptable to view Abram as the head of his family tribe. Abram responds to God and pursues by faith to move to the covenant land. Throughout the book of Genesis, God enters into covenant with Abram (**Gen. 12 faith and 17 circumcision**). This covenant was tied to obedience in the recognition that God was the provider of all things and the land, and its possession directly indicated (the) right-standing between God and His people. Possession of the land is only achieved through surrender to God's covenants and obedience to God's commands, which keeps the peace between God and mankind and peace between man and his neighbor.

Moving forward in history to the time of Moses and the Exodus, the Scripture in the book of Hebrews points to the Wilderness events and directly to the up and down spiritual condition of the Hebrew people who had followed God's leader, Moses, to leave Egypt and enter into a vast wilderness where water and food were few. The journey called for complete surrender to God working through His servant Moses. God used the staff of Moses in his calling and many times by directing Moses to perform miracles to Pharaoh, to part the waters of the sea, and to strike a rock to produce water.

Moses' Call

God chose Moses' staff to exhibit and manifest His presence.

Exodus 4:1 Then Moses answered and said, "What if they will not believe me, or listen to what I say? For they may say, 'The LORD has not appeared to you.'"

² And the LORD said to him, "What is that in your hand?" And he said, "A staff."

³ Then He said, "Throw it on the ground." So he threw it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from it.

⁴ But the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand and grasp *it* by its tail "-- so he stretched out his hand and caught it, and it became a staff in his hand--

⁵ "that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you."

From Moses' call to administering the plagues in Egypt, the parting of the sea and providing water, God used Moses' **staff to perform miracles.**

(Exodus chapters
4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14,17)

Reviewing the Biblical sequence in the covenant calling of Moses and application.

Genesis 15:18 ¹⁸ On that day the LORD made a covenant with **Abram**, saying, "To your descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates:

Genesis 17:1 Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless.

² "And I will **establish My covenant** between Me and you, And I will multiply you exceedingly."

³ And Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying,

⁴ "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, And you shall be the father of a multitude of nations.

⁵ "No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I will make you the father of a multitude of nations.

⁶ "And I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come forth from you.

⁷ "And I will **establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants** after you throughout their generations for an **everlasting covenant**, to be God to you and to your descendants after you.

⁸ "And I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

⁹ God said further to Abraham, "Now as for you, **you shall keep My covenant**, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations.

¹⁰ "This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: **every male among you shall be circumcised.**

In the time of Joseph, the Hebrew People moved to Egypt. Over 400 years later, the Hebrew people are still in Egypt in bondage due to oppressive Pharaohs.

Exodus 2:23-25

²³ Now it came about in *the course of* those many days that the king of Egypt died. And the sons of Israel sighed because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry for help **because of their bondage rose up to God.**

²⁴ So God heard their groaning; and **God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.**

²⁵ And God saw the sons of Israel, and God took notice *of them*.

What follows is the account of the Exodus and the Wondering in the Wilderness. These are viewed as one event by many, but God desired only one. The Exodus was a great victory, but the Wondering in the Wilderness could have been avoided. So many people experience great victory in the Lord then grumble about what comes next. After great victory, there is work for the Lord. This is not always easy. Service for the Lord in a fallen world brings great challenges. The book of Hebrews reflects upon **founding faith**. Faith based upon surrender and not greed or temporal relief. Faith based upon anything but surrender to the Lord is short lived and will not endure the test of time in a fallen world. This is what the Scripture in the book of Hebrews reflects. Hardening of heart indicates no real foundation of faith. Many Hebrew people in the Exodus were only aligned with God for his physical deliverance from Egyptian bondage. They did not have *founding faith* that persevered through the wilderness. It was the “*what have you done for me lately*” belief. When the water and food became sparse they grumbled instead of turning to God in prayer and thankfulness for bring them out of bondage. They failed to see The one and only God who delivered them could sustain them.

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⁷ Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, "Today if you hear His voice,

⁸ Do not harden your hearts as when they provoked Me, As in the day of trial in the wilderness,

⁹ Where your fathers tried Me by testing Me, And saw My works for forty years.

¹⁰ "Therefore I was angry with this generation, And said, 'They always go astray in their heart; And they did not know My ways';

¹¹ As I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest.'"

¹² Take care, brethren, lest there should be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart, in falling away from the living God.

¹³ But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is *still* called "Today," lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

¹⁴ For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end;

¹⁵ while it is said, "Today if you hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts, as when they provoked Me."

¹⁶ For who provoked *Him* when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt *led* by Moses?

¹⁷ And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness?

¹⁸ And to whom did He swear that they should not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient?

¹⁹ And so we see that they were not able to enter **because of unbelief**.

Psalm 95:8 Do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, (**quarreling**)
As in the day of Massah (**testing**) in the wilderness;

What & Where is the account of Meribah and Massah?

There are two accounts?

What happened at Kadesh in Numbers 20?

Exodus 17:1-7 Then all the congregation of the sons of Israel journeyed by stages from the wilderness of Sin, according to the command of the LORD, and camped at **Rephidim**, and there was no water for the people to drink.

² Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water that we may drink." And Moses said to them, "**Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?**"

³ But the people thirsted there for water; and they grumbled against Moses and said, "Why, now, have you brought us up from Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?"

⁴ So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, "What shall I do to this people? A little more and they will stone me."

⁵ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Pass before the people and take with you some of the elders of Israel; and take in your hand your staff with which you struck the Nile, and go.

⁶ "Behold, I will stand before you there on the **rock at Horeb**; and you shall **strike the rock**, and **water will come** out of it, that the people may drink." And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

⁷ And he named the place **Massah** and **Meribah** because of the **quarrel** of the sons of Israel, and because they **tested** the LORD, saying, "Is the LORD among us, or not?"

Toward the end of the Wilderness experience, the people continue to grumble against God who directs Moses to speak to the rock, but Moses strikes the rock. This was to be the end of the journey, but the people grumbled and therefore, God had them stay in the wilderness for forty years till all those above the age of twenty, a whole generation, had died off.

Numbers 20:1-13 Then the sons of Israel, the whole congregation, came to the wilderness of Zin in the first month; and the people stayed at **Kadesh**. Now Miriam died there and was buried there.

² And there was no water for the congregation; and they assembled themselves against Moses and Aaron.

³ The people thus **contended with Moses** and spoke, saying, "If only we had perished when our brothers perished before the LORD!

⁴ "Why then have you brought the LORD's assembly into this wilderness, for us and our beasts to die here?"

⁵ "And why have you made us come up from Egypt, to bring us in to this wretched place? It is not a place of grain or figs or vines or pomegranates, nor is there water to drink."

⁶ Then Moses and Aaron came in from the presence of the assembly to the doorway of the tent of meeting, and fell on their faces. Then the glory of the LORD appeared to them;

⁷ and the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

⁸ "**Take the rod**; and you and your brother Aaron assemble the congregation and **speak to the rock** before their eyes, that it may yield its water. You shall thus bring forth water for them out of the rock and let the congregation and their beasts drink."

⁹ So Moses took the rod from before the LORD, just as He had commanded him;

¹⁰ and Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly before the rock. And he said to them, "Listen now, you rebels; shall we bring forth water for you out of this rock?"

¹¹ Then Moses lifted up his hand and **struck the rock twice** with his rod; and water came forth abundantly, and the congregation and their beasts drank.

¹² **But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you have not believed Me, to treat Me as holy in the sight of the sons of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them."**

¹³ Those *were* the waters of Meribah, because the sons of Israel contended with the LORD, and He proved Himself holy among them.

Due to the Grumbling, who did God allow to enter the Promised Land?

Numbers 14:26-37

²⁶ And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying,

²⁷ "How long *shall I bear* with this evil congregation who are grumbling against Me? I have heard the complaints of the sons of Israel, which they are making against Me.

²⁸ "Say to them, 'As I live,' says the LORD, 'just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will surely do to you;

²⁹ your corpses shall fall in this wilderness, even all your numbered men, according to your complete number from twenty years old and upward, who have grumbled against Me.

³⁰ 'Surely you shall not come into the land in which I swore to settle you, **except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun.**

³¹ 'Your children, however, whom you said would become a prey-- I will bring them in, and they shall know the land which you have rejected.

³² 'But as for you, your corpses shall fall in this wilderness.

³³ 'And your sons shall be shepherds for forty years in the wilderness, and they shall suffer *for* your unfaithfulness, until your corpses lie in the wilderness.

³⁴ 'According to the number of days which you spied out the land, forty days, for every day you shall bear your guilt a year, *even* forty years, and you shall know My opposition.

³⁵ 'I, the LORD, have spoken, surely this I will do to all this evil congregation who are gathered together against Me. In this wilderness they shall be destroyed, and there they shall die.'"

³⁶ As for the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land and who returned and made all the congregation grumble against him by bringing out a bad report concerning the land,

³⁷ even those men who brought out the very bad report of the land died by a plague before the LORD.

Now ~ Back to Hebrews three, and we see the full impact of the text as God intended. After reviewing the Old Testament passages we can see the importance of the Hebrews three passage. Lack of faith in the wilderness brought physical death upon the people of the leadership, those above the age of twenty. The parallel to Christ is that the lack of faith in Christ will bring death to a person. First there is spiritual death and then there is physical death. However, in the physical death, for those who lack faith, they will find that their eternal existence will be *in death*; in that they will be separated from God and His Heavenly Kingdom forever. Being *in Christ* will provide a new existence, a resurrection to life and not death to the believer.

HCSB **John 5:29** and come out-- those who have done good things, to the resurrection of life, but those who have done wicked things, to the resurrection of judgment.

HCSB **John 11:25** Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in Me, even if he dies, will live.

HCSB **Hebrews 11:35** Women received their dead-- they were raised to life again. Some men were tortured, not accepting release, so that they might gain a better resurrection,

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(Phil. 2:12-14 NAS)

¹² So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling;

¹³ for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure.

¹⁴ Do all things without grumbling or disputing;