

2021.02.07 Sunday Sermon <Why Does God Let Us Bypass?>

Psalm 145:18

The Lord is near to all those who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth.

Deuteronomy 8:2-10

² You shall remember all the way which the Lord your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. ³ He humbled you and let you suffer 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 proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord. ⁴ Your clothing did not wear out on you, nor did your feet swell these forty years. ⁵ You must also consider in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, so the Lord your God disciplines you. ⁶ Therefore you must keep the commandments of the Lord your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him. ⁷ For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs that flow out of valleys and hills, ⁸ a land of wheat, barley, vines, fig trees, and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey, ⁹ a land where you may eat bread without scarcity, in which you will not lack anything, a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you may dig copper. ¹⁰ When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land which He has given you.



Sometimes we are faced with a detour sign while driving. This means we cannot use the road we typically use. I feel as though we are all currently in this state...we cannot take the road we typically get on. Not just due to the pandemic but with all the issues we are faced with now. Israelites were also faced with many detours as they were reaching the promise land.

Let's look at the route Moses and Israelites took (refer to the green arrows). From Etham, they could have taken an easier route which could have taken them one week (refer to the red arrows). Instead, they were told to take a major detour that took forty years to reach the promise land.

Today's scripture is about Moses looking back at the forty years. Through Moses, the Lord told the Israelites the reason for the detour.



1. To Humble

The first reason for the detour was to humble the Israelites. When Egypt was going through series of plagues, the Israelites were not impacted. They started to believe they were selected and special, and the Lord wanted to humble them.

Deuteronomy 8:2A

² *You shall remember all the way which the Lord your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.*

The Lord wanted them to live only by His grace. Even with all the detours they took in forty years, they didn't get hungry or lack clothing.

Deuteronomy 8:3

He humbled you and let you suffer 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 proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord.

Deuteronomy 8:4

Your clothing did not wear out on you, nor did your feet swell these forty years.

The Lord's message that was released to Moses is the message He is giving to us. These detours we are taking right now are giving to make us humble and to make us live only by His grace.

Similar to Moses, the Lord allowed David to look back at his days. He was a shepherd who later became a king.

2 Samuel 7:8-9

⁸ *Now therefore, you will say to My servant David: Thus says the Lord of Hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following after the sheep, to be ruler over My people Israel. ⁹ I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all of your enemies before you. I will make your name great, like the great ones across the land.*

2 Samuel 24:10

¹⁰ *Now the heart of David struck him after he had counted the people. David said to the Lord, "I have sinned greatly by what I have done. Now may the Lord take away the iniquity of your servant, for I have behaved very foolishly."*

While being a ruler, David start to make decisions, judgments, and leading by using numbers. He later realizes that that is not the right way of leading his people and he humbled himself.

Story of Ronald Reagan's Speech at Mexico

Reagan was giving a speech in front of many famous people in Mexico. Since they didn't understand English, they didn't clap or respond well to his speech. After his speech was complete, one of the officials in Mexico started to give a speech in Spanish. The audience was clapping and responding positively. Reagan started to feel ashamed about his own speech and to hide his shame he clapped harder and longer. One of the officials sitting right next to him leaned over and said, "If I were you I would not clap. The current speech is translation of your own speech."

2. To Test

There are times while driving we are faced with detour signs. When this sign appears, there are drivers who will take a u-turn to find a different short cut and there are drivers who will follow the detour sign all the way till the end. Remember that the Lord is watching all of us and is testing us whether we follow His sign or not.

Deuteronomy 8:2B

² *You shall remember all the way which the Lord your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.*

Deuteronomy 8:5 -6

⁵ *You must also consider in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, so the Lord your God disciplines you.* ⁶ *Therefore you must keep the commandments of the Lord your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him.*

Remember when Abraham was tested by God? What did Abraham do when he was asked to sacrifice his son? He listened and followed God's direction.

Genesis 22:1 & 12

¹ *After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!"*

And he said, "Here I am."

¹² *Then He said, "Do not lay your hands on the boy or do anything to him, because now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your only son from Me."*

Story of Recruitment Examination

A Korean company was going through a new recruitment process. For the recruitment examination, they released a message asking everyone to arrive at 4AM in-front of the lobby. Many arrived in time but the entry door was closed. They waited until 9AM for the door to be opened. Many started to complain, got angry, and some even left before the door opened. Few minutes after 9AM, the examination started and many were shocked how easy the exam was. Questions such as, what is the capital of South Korea or asking about total count for fingers were asked. Few days later the company announced the names that were accepted. The announcement said following:

Congratulation! You have been accepted to join our company for following reasons. First, you were punctual. We have watched you arriving at 4 a.m. sharp. Second, you were patient. We checked that you waited for 5 hours patiently. And we were able to confirm that you are also well-rounded in personality by answering questions that are normal and possibly annoying. Therefore, we have decided to hire you at our headquarters because you have passed all three criteria: 1) punctuality 2) patience 3) well-rounded character.

Through Moses, God told the Israelites...*I am testing your patience.* Let us remember to be patient even when we are faced with a detour sign.

3. To Be Good

Instead of the route that could have been one week, the Israelites took forty years to get to the promise land. We see in following verses the description of this promise land.

Deuteronomy 8:7 & 10

⁷ *For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs that flow out of valleys and hills,*

¹⁰ *When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land which He has given you*

As we read through today's scripture, we can see that the Lord has a bigger plan for all of us. He fed and took care of the Israelites in the wilderness to humble and test them. So that in the end, He proved to do good for them.

Deuteronomy 8:16

¹⁶ *who fed you in the wilderness with manna, which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might prove you, to do good for you in the end.*

We all know the famous basketball player Michael Jordan. He has won many championships and is still a role model for many basketball players. Following is his famous quote:

"I've missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. Twenty-six times I've been trusted to take the game-winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed."

My brothers and sisters, when we are faced with a detour sign, remember that it will humble and test us to be stronger and the Lord will do good for us in the end.

In Summary - Why take the detour?

1. *To Humble*
2. *To Test*
3. *To Be Good*

Story of 7-year old boy

A prayer request came to a mother with 7-year old boy. This request was from an atheist and the mother did not feel needed to prayer. However, her son said "Mom, please pray for the person. When I was in the hospital and many people came to pray for me. While they were praying I saw the angels and Jesus Chris come to heal me."

Just like this young boy, I pray that we can have his pure heart to meet the Lord after the end of our detour.