

BECAUSE OF UNBELIEF **Deuteronomy 1:1-3, 19-32**

Deut. 1:1-3, 19-32 1:1-3 points out that Israel's journey to Canaan was an **eleven day** trip. But it took them **40 years!**

Why? Moses' summary: rebellion and unbelief.

UNBELIEF is the basic cause. 1:32 THEY DIDN'T TRUST THE LORD!

From Egypt to the promised land:

- **God's people focus on the obstacles**
- **They grumble against leadership**
- **They refuse to trust God**

God demonstrates His faithfulness, and they repeat the cycle!

The Exodus–Passover Exo. 4-6

The cycle begins--and then God brings them out of Egypt **12:51**

The Red Sea Exo. 14:8-18--cycle repeated, and then God delivers them

Exo. 15:22-27 The bitter water at Marah

Exo. 16:1-7 Food => Manna

Exo. 17:1-7 Water in the rock

Num. 11:4-6, 10-15, 21-23 Manna, when they wanted meat

Num. 14:1-24 Twelve spies

Num. 21:4-9 No food, no water, tired of manna and of the journey

At first God answered the lack of faith by showing His faithfulness and supplying their need. The last two times, God judges. **GOD ONLY TOLERATES LACK OF FAITH AND GRUMBLING FOR JUST SO LONG!**

*Our experience with **GOD'S FAITHFULNESS***

Building permit (November 2 years ago)–What do we do if we don't get a permit? Winter is coming! We can only stay here until May! *What will we do?!!*

Delays in construction–(June-Sept. last year)–Where do we meet if we have no building and we're thrown out on the street? *What will we do?!!*

August–\$300,000 No more sources! *What will we do?!!* (6 weeks God solved it)

Dec.–\$118,000 in two weeks (total \$250,000)–phone call offering \$250,000 from a person who didn't know about the urgent need, nor the total need.

And what about now?

**For Israel, on the desert, it wasn't about food and water!
It was about TRUSTING GOD!**

Two years ago, it wasn't about a building permit
Last June, it wasn't about contractors or a meeting place for a few months.
In August, and again in December, it wasn't about money!

And it's not about money now!!!

It's about whether we can trust God or not!!! – Just like in the wilderness.
It's about the Name of Yahweh—is He God or not? Is He with us or not?

Moses had no contingency plan at Red Sea. "But what if God *doesn't* open the sea?"—either God does it, or they die there!

No contingency plan to feed 2 million in the desert. "What if God *doesn't* provide?" –either God provides food or they die there!

No contingency plan to give them water on the desert. "But what if God *doesn't* provide water?"—either God gives them water, or they die there!

Daniel's three friends had **no contingency plan** at the fiery furnace—they told the king, OUR GOD is able, and if He doesn't do it, then we die right here. There was only one solution: *God had to act or they were through.*

That's the way it has to be with our personal lives, with our families, and with the ministry of this church as well!!

One leader spoke up a year ago, when faced with where we would get money (some were offering to mortgage their homes) to make this building possible:

"What is exciting about what God is leading us to do is that we can't see some human way to buy our way out of this. *We have to trust God to do it because we can't do it!!!*" **AND HE DID IT!!!**"

Have we forgotten? That's what Israel did. **Every time a test of faith came they would get nervous and blame their leaders for getting them into this mess, instead of trusting God, who had shown Himself faithful before.**

Ultimately they died in the wilderness, because they refused to trust God.

Bob Gilliam compared **the seven churches of Asia** with modern churches. God praised the good traits and then told them what they had to correct. He concluded: "*If you don't correct what is lacking, I will take away your candlestick.*" "I'm going to pull the plug." And the light on the hill will go out!

"I have seen it happen over and over again, churches prosper based on things they are doing right, until God says now I want you to . . . , and they say, 'No!'".

When God's people refuse to trust Him and refuse to do what He asks them to do, He pulls the plug and they are through.

You know what's sad about that passage? Every one of those churches is dead! Not one survived. God pulled the plug!

Israel died in the wilderness because they refused to trust God. *Will we?*

I love this church. I love our leaders. I love the members of this body.

I am talking from my heart, because I believe we are sitting at a crossroads.

We can trust God, and watch Him do exciting things that will glorify His Name –so we can say "Can you believe what God did??!!" Or, we can die right here!

Are we going to believe God, or die discouraged and defeated in the wilderness?

David, hiding in a cave, told God, "When this is over, I'm going to stand in the sanctuary and acknowledge what You've done!" I want to acknowledge what God has done. And I don't believe God wants to be robbed of His glory!

When Moses was leading God's people in the wilderness Jethro came and told him, "*You can't bear this load alone.*" Moses had already told the Lord that.

This week a godly man that I have learned to love deeply took me to lunch and said, "*You can't bear this load by yourself.*" I had already told the Lord that.

Moses couldn't bear the load alone, and neither can I.

- God gave Aaron and Hur to hold his arms when he tired of holding the rod.
- God gave Joshua and Caleb who trusted God and stood with him.

I have spoken to various leaders saying I need some to stand with me, to trust God with me. Usually I join those who say "I believe God *can* do it, but I don't know if He *will*." That's not good enough this time!

I believe that either God directs us and meets our needs, or we die right here.

I don't believe God brought us out on this hillside to "die in the desert."

I believe that in the next year God is going to give us some reasons to say: "Wow, can you believe what God has done!"

I'm willing to take a risk and put God's Name on the line.

If He doesn't provide, He and His people are going to be embarrassed; I just don't see any time in Scripture when God ever let that happen.

If I'm wrong, call this "Porter's folly" and run me out of here!

But I believe *God has promised to meet all our needs when we delight in Him above all else and allow Him to direct our path.*

I believe we're here, against all odds, because we took that attitude. And I believe God wants us to take the next step in faith, trusting Him to lead us and to move on to reach this valley for Christ and glorify Him.

When we fall on our knees in faith and obedience, I don't find any biblical examples of people who walk away disappointed because they trusted Him too much, and He failed them. It just doesn't happen.

- He doesn't always do it on our schedule.
- He doesn't always do it the way we thought He would.
- But "*those who trust in the Lord, are never ashamed or disappointed!*"
Rom. 5:5; 9:33; 10:11

HOWEVER, Scripture is filled with times when the "people of God" focus on the obstacles, refuse to trust God, blame leaders, and refuse to do what God told them. Those people "die in the desert."

I repeat my plea. I can't carry this one alone.

I need an Aaron and a Hur, a Joshua and a Caleb—who will trust God with me. Who will say, "God has been faithful in the past, we can trust Him now! I don't know how, but I believe He is going to do it!"

I'm not asking you to give a cent. If God tells you to give something that's between you and Him. I don't want anything to do with that. I just want

people who will trust God to move people and to accomplish whatever He tells us to do.

"BUT THEY had: the pillar of fire, God's voice, face-to-face conversation with God!"

Didn't make it any easier to trust Him, did it?

We have the Spirit of God living *WITHIN* us—guiding godly men!

Still isn't easy to trust Him, is it?

Imagine their business meetings! *2 million people* to sustain

—no sewers —no water —no food

That's lousy planning! We can't even have a picnic without restrooms!

But it wasn't about sewage—water—food!

It was about the NAME OF YAHWEH! It was about the GLORY OF GOD!

IT STILL IS!!!

It's not about building permits, contractors schedules, or funds!

It's about the Name of Yahweh and the Glory of God.

- **Satan wants us to focus on the obstacles.**
- **God wants us to focus on HIM!!!**

THIS ISN'T ABOUT ACCEPTING MY PLAN FOR MY CHURCH!

This is about coming to God by faith—asking Him what He wants us to do in the next year *—in the next five years*

—Then trusting Him to supply all we need to do it—in a way that will glorify Him

"God's work done God's way will never lack God's supply!"

- If you believe our goals aren't in tune with God's, then let's agree to seek His goals.
- I don't *believe* it's His goal for us to retreat.
- *I KNOW* that it's *NEVER* His goal for us to focus on the obstacles! He wants us to focus on Him—Jehovah-Jireh, the God who provides.

Is there a Caleb in the house? A Joshua? Anyone willing to stand and trust Him?

Moses wrote the words Isaac Watts incorporated into one of the great old hymns of the faith: **Oh God, Our Help in Ages Past** #370

[As we sing this morning, I want to give you a chance to take a stand. Is anyone willing to stand with me? This isn't an "I'm on Ralph's side" statement. It's a statement of faith in God. Do you believe that God is going to provide all we need to move ahead with God's plan for us? I DO! I'm willing to stake my reputation on it! Anyone else willing to become a fool for God with me?

=> **Thou Art Worthy**