

February 2012

Welcome to all who have stopped at this website.

Beginning with this month and continuing through 2012 there will be a monthly writing dealing with one topic. I will emphasize one particular negative attitude / action that the children of Israel openly displayed to others as they wandered in the wilderness on their way to the Promised Land. Comparisons will be made.

### **"Problems in the Wilderness that Hinder the Trip to the Promised Land"**

It might be in the summer for many of you that the family packs up and takes off on their annual vacation. Time is taken from work and all have been looking for this get away for quite some time. There have been times in which it was this get away that made it easier to get through the hard times of a work week. Max Lucado speaks of the "joy of the journey" and many of us can understand how the preparation is exciting and the journey is even more fulfilling. In my travels I have encountered a few problems along the way. I had a check engine light come on and I was not far from Bismarck, North Dakota. It was in the evening and it was time for eating as well as rest. I pulled off the interstate and there was one of our favorite restaurants and motels nearby. I thought this is great. We knew where we were spending the evening as well as eating but what about the car. Information was given at the restaurant and the motel about getting to a dealership for the car. The dealership was not far away. It was all taken care of the next morning and no big problem that would hinder our travels. That was wonderful. Recently I was traveling not far from my home and came upon a lot of red lights. This is scary for me and an accident had occurred on the other side of the interstate. Traffic naturally slowed. The other side of the interstate was at a standstill. We have all had these kinds of things occur when we are traveling. We just pass this off as good fortune. I once found myself in a passing lane on the interstate with a large tri-axle truck in front of me. As I was beginning to pass the truck came into my lane. I was in his way and he did not know. I was pleased to see that people behind me had anticipated something and were backing off. This gave me the room to slow down and avoid what could easily have been devastating for me. In a two vehicle confrontation, a car cannot win against a large dump truck. This was most definitely good fortune for me but was that all it was? Most recently in my life I have had a change of attitude regarding these types of situations. I now realize the simple idea that God has protected me from the harm that could have been and with that protection I have a responsibility to acknowledge Him. Now, I take the time to say "thank you God". I take time to acknowledge His role in the events of my life.

There are many occasions like the ones I have described but more traumatic for the people involved. I have even heard a few people interviewed and they also acknowledge God for getting them through the traumatic event. It might have been a horrific plane crash or the one that did not crash and was safely put on a body of water and all escaped unharmed. It might have been a medical situation in which many had lost hope until you heard those comforting words of the doctor. "The cancer is not there or the surgery was successful." As many that do proclaim God's hand in the event, most do not. Most will not acknowledge the hand of God in their lives. Some might even say that to not

recognize God's saving hand in these events is normal for people. This kind of normal behavior for people can be traced back throughout history. I would like to refer to this type of behavior as unbelief, the refusing to acknowledge the obvious hand of God in any event.

We would also like to think that all of the people who are close to God would be a little different from normal. We would "like to think" but that is not always the case. Let me take you back to a time over fourteen hundred years before Christ. The children of Israel had been in Egyptian bondage for 430 years. Bondage, slavery, living a life against your own will. Life was so bad that even God recognized the people's misery.

***The LORD said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them."*** (Exodus 3:7-9, NIV)

You are quite familiar with this biblical event. You can find the complete account in Exodus and you are quite familiar with Moses' role in working to secure the release of the children of Israel from the hands of the Pharaoh. Nothing was easy for Moses or the people. Overcoming difficulties are never easy even if it is something as simple as avoiding a car accident. That is not simple when it is you, is it? Moses and his work was not a simple task. The difficult events in our life are never simple to deal with but God had a plan, God has a plan and His plan works. But...when unbelief sets in.....

***They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? Didn't we say to you in Egypt, 'Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians'? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!"*** (Exodus 14:11-12, NIV)

or...

***So the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What are we to drink?"*** (Exodus 15:24, NIV)

So we travel from over fourteen hundred years ago to the present.

I am reminded,  
***"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."*** (Hebrews 13:8, NIV)

I want to change normal. We either trust in God based on the circumstances we find ourselves involved with or we trust in God based on his sovereignty. Our choice. Do not accept normal.

Richard Hurt, Retired Classroom Teacher