



## Sermon Notes from 4 August

### How to Handle the Wilderness Experiences of Life: Hunger

(Exodus 16:2-5, 27-35) by Rev Guna Raman

After being miraculously delivered from Egypt, God brought the Israelites into the wilderness. Although they found themselves in dreaded death-filled circumstances, they continue to miraculously experience life because God is with them (De 2:7). Any wilderness without God is death. The same faithful God that delivered them would also faithfully provide for them in the wilderness.

#### 3 Things God does for His People in the Wilderness

##### **1) He takes them through it and not out of it**

Ex 16:3 – When you are faced with a life-threatening circumstance, your heart truly shows itself. The harshness of the desert had exposed the ugliness of the Israelites souls; they were miserable, and their language had become harsh. Even though they had been miraculously delivered, their hearts had not changed. God was after their hearts, and it would take the whole wilderness experience to change their hearts. That was why they were in the wilderness (De 8:2).

##### **2) He brings them to Himself**

God had provided manna for His people in the wilderness (a barren land) but not at the Nile Valley (a fertile land). The very best and most favourable circumstances without God are actually places of death; and the worst circumstances with the presence of God can be places of life. We need the presence of God! The manna had given the people sweetness and strength, and God was using it to bring them to Himself.

#### 3 Kinds of Strengths Manna Represented

1. Spiritual Strength – De 8:3 – The manna, that was physical sustenance in the physical desert, was pointing to the spiritual wilderness of our souls. Only every word that God speaks can sustain us in spiritual wilderness. Turn truths into bread! Read and *digest* the word of God! Reflect and meditate on His word daily!

2. Relational Strength – God had only given sufficient manna to His people for

each day. He did so because He did not simply want them to go to Him for their needs; He wanted them to go to Him for Him. Remember God every day and go to Him for the strength to sustain you!

3. Communal Strength – Ex 16:16-19 – When the manna was collected and distributed, there was no lack. Strength in the desert comes when you learn how to do life as a community. Find strength from one another! Bear one another's burdens and draw close to God!

##### **3) He Fathers them**

Ex 16:4 – God gave the manna to His people to *test* them, and they failed (v27). Even though they failed the test, God never disqualified them (v35). God was fathering them. He disciplines them as a father would a son (De 8:3-5). He was after their character and sought to correct them. God was their Father in the wilderness (De 1:31).

#### Triple "O" Lessons from Exodus 16

#1 Never undermine God's presence in the **ordinariness** of your life – When you cannot discern the presence of God in the ordinariness of life, you will not survive the wilderness of your life. God is with you, even in the ordinariness of your life!

#2 **Over-working** is not obedience to God – God rested on the 7th day (sabbath principle), leaving no right at all for anyone to work on that day. Honour the principle of rest and be strengthened by it!

#3 **You will never rise above your circumstances with an orphan mindset** – Jesus Christ lost His Sonship on the cross, just so that we can now be sons and daughters of the Living God. We are no longer orphans! Renounce the orphan mindset! You are an adopted child of the living God!

Joh 6:31-35 – Jesus is the everlasting bread of life! Partake of Him and be assured that He would carry and sustain you through the wilderness!