

The Lord's Way in the Wilderness
Walter Beuttler

[Comments: 1) All scriptures are from the KJV except where noted. 2) This message has been transcribed word for word (from Beuttler's own teachings) as accurately as possible (due to the quality of the recording). 3) Beuttler had his own dictionary of favorite words he used throughout his messages, and they have been transcribed and spelled out accordingly. 4) Spelling on certain proper names, airports, hotels, locations, etc. may not be exact. 5) Messages were spoken late 1960's, early 1970's. 6) Beuttler was a Bible teacher at NBI (a.k.a. EBI, Eastern Bible Institute) for 32 years traveling worldwide since early 1950's until a year before he went to be with the Lord in 1974.]

I was deep down in body, but then two things happened. One, the Lord gave me an altogether different message that doesn't permit any diversion into overseas excursions. I feel I must deliver this. So since I've perked up some, I told Brother McIlvaine that if you like, I'll come back this evening and give a general review of what happened this summer, what the Lord's been doing. Anywhere from the mighty moving of the Spirit of God to a church with huge cockroaches for most of the night. I'll share that with you this evening, how the Lord has been leading, and some of the problems that befall one on a 40,000-mile itinerary like that. In the meantime, I want to thank you for your continued contributions. They are much appreciated.

This morning we're starting with Isaiah 43. Actually Brother McIlvaine touched a keynote in his introductory remarks. He said something to the effect about hoping that this morning we learn better the ways of the Lord. That's exactly what I'm speaking on, and in particular, the "*Way of the Lord in the Wilderness.*" The Lord started to give that to me yesterday contrary to my expectations.

"Thus saith the Lord, which maketh a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters; Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert." Isaiah 43:16, 18-19

The keynote here as I suggested is the "*Way of the Lord in the Wilderness.*" This will have to do not only with the Lord's way, but with the Lord's power, with His ability to make a way where there is no way, and a path through mighty waters. I'm giving this the spiritual connotation.

We, in our lives, go through deep waters sometimes, waters of affliction, wilderness where we can't seem to find our way. To tell you the truth, Mrs. Beuttler and I have had a rough time since I've come back. I knew it was coming and all summer long, I did and didn't want to come home. When I was in Southern France, I was talking with the leader's son.

He said, "*Brother, you're going home in a few days, aren't you?*"

I said, *“Yes, I wish I wouldn’t have to, because I knew the problems that I would have to face as soon as I got home. Wife can testify that we’ve had a rough sailing and rough waters since my returning. You don’t understand and I don’t want to give you the details.”*

The Lord dealt with me along this very line about God’s ability to make a way where there is no way, to make a way through mighty waters through the wilderness. When everything seems to run contrary, when you’re simply baffled, dumbfounded, astounded and when you got to act and you don’t know how to act, when you’ve got to move and you don’t know where to move or when you’re back is against the wall - that’s quite a bit to be in. We’re going to look at this a little bit.

“Remember ye not the former things.” You know there is such a thing as turning our back on the former things, putting them out of our mind, turning our back and looking for a new thing from God. I think sometimes we make it rough for God by living too much in the past with our trials, our sufferings and our perplexities and not enough in the future with the life of the promises, the power and ability of God. We get some good advice here, *“Remember ye not the former things.”* Turn your mind off; switch it off the former things. Do not consider what is in the past.

“Behold I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it?” We’re going to know when God’s doing it. Again, *“I will even make a way in the wilderness where there is no way.”* God will find a path, God will make a path. He will make a way in, a way out or a way through. Whatever the need, God makes a way. *“And rivers of water in the desert”* where everything is dead and dry.

Now I want to take you back to Exodus 5:1-2. We are looking here first at the power of God to make a way. I don’t know what your circumstances are. You don’t know what ours are, but we’re looking first at God’s power to do what is absolutely impossible in the natural. Then we’re going to look at the nature of this wilderness experience. When we seem to be walking in circles and getting nowhere, going around and around like Samson when he ground in the prison house. The man was moving all right. He kept going all the time, but he got nowhere. Have you ever noticed in our Christian experience, we can be moving all the time and getting nowhere. We’re coming back to the same spot time and again. Well, we’ll look into that. Then we’ll look into a warning concerning the wilderness for us. Then we’re going to look into the area of what God is doing and making out of our own wilderness experiences.

All right now, we’re watching God. This should give us faith in God. It should shed light on God’s ways. It should help us not to be overcome, defeated in the wilderness, and help us to look forward as to what God is able to make out of our own wilderness.

In Exodus 5:1-2, observe the plight of the Israelites. They are here in Egypt under the strong hand of Pharaoh. The people were restive. They wanted to leave. God wanted them to leave, but Pharaoh was a mighty man of power and there was absolutely no

chance for Israel to escape in the natural apart from divine intervention. You know this story, but that's what the Lord gave me.

“Afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness. And Pharaoh said, Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go.” Exodus 5:1-2

Afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh. Let's look at this a minute. This is an awkward arrangement. This awkward arrangement was the result of Moses' timidity. I don't know if all of you realize why Moses and Aaron went in before Pharaoh. God had called Moses to be His spokesman to go to Pharaoh and talk to him.

Moses said, *“Lord, I I I am a m m man of a slow tongue, I'm n n not a fluent speaker. I I I have a b b brother who has a good m m mouth. He had a good mouth all right. Too good! Lord, he'd be the right m m man to do the speaking.”*

God got angry with Moses, and God said, *“Who made man's mouth? Who made the deaf, the dumb and the blind? Have not I, the Lord? Go there and I'll be with your mouth.”*

Moses said, *“Oh Lord, b b but I'm not a good speaker. I haven't gone to school. I haven't studied homiletics, public speaking or psychology. Lord, I've got a brother. He knows all about it.”*

So God said, *“All right then. I'll speak to you and you speak to your brother what I say to you, and your brother speaks to Pharaoh.”*

I don't know what Pharaoh thought. He must have thought, *“What an arrangement!”*

So Moses and Aaron went before Pharaoh. God spoke to Moses, and Moses told his brother what to say, and then his brother spoke to Pharaoh. You know because of our timidity and failure to respond to God, God is often crippled and has to go through a rather cumbersome arrangement because of our reluctance to obey God. So that's what you have here. God spoke to Moses, Moses spoke to Aaron and Aaron spoke to Pharaoh. I wonder whether Pharaoh thought, *“What is this? Why doesn't Moses speak to me directly?”* That's the arrangement. There are times when God acquiesces to man's reluctance and lack of response, and then He does the best He can under the circumstances.

The word that Aaron spoke to Pharaoh after Moses spoke to Aaron was, *“Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.”* Then in Exodus 7:16, we have the same words. They go right down the line, *“Thou shalt say unto him, The Lord God of the Hebrews hath sent me unto thee, saying, Let my people go, but Pharaoh wouldn't.”* In Exodus 8:1, *“Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go, and Pharaoh wouldn't.”* In Exodus 8:20, *“The Lord said unto Moses, Rise up early*

in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh...Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go, but he wouldn't." In Exodus 9:1, *"Then the Lord said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh, and tell him, Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, and he wouldn't."* Then in 9:13, *"The Lord said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, and he wouldn't."* Then in 10:3, *"Moses and Aaron came in unto Pharaoh, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord God, How long wilt thou refuse...let my people go, and he wouldn't."* My he was a stubborn man, wasn't he?

"And it came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead." Exodus 12:29-30

Can you imagine the power of God to put pressure on this great powerful Pharaoh? What encourages me here is this: God knows how to put pressure on people in this case, to let them go. If people ever stand between you and God, and hinder you, and restrain you, and restrict you - that's how the Lord spoke to my heart - God has the power to put pressure on people, on mighty people, people with authority and power. We've got a big God here. He said, *"Let my people go."*

Pharaoh said, *"Nope."*

God said, *"Let my people go."*

Pharaoh said, *"Nope."*

Demonstrates thumbscrews on Pharaoh's hand, *"Let my people go."*

"Nope."

"Let my people go."

In agony, *"Nope."*

"Let my people go"

Stubborn agony, *"Nope."*

"Let my people go."

"Just get rid of them!"

The power of God to put pressure on people. That's my God! That's your God! God smote the firstborn in the court of Egypt right down to the prison dungeon. Wherever there were people, the firstborn was smitten to death. God knows how to put the thumbscrews on.

I don't know if any of you were ever in the Tower of London. Some of you might have visited the old prison there. They have medieval instruments of warfare. They have those thumbscrews. In fact, they have screws for all the fingers. When they wanted the prisoner to confess, they put the screws on the nails, and the fingers go into something. They just keep turning the screw until the blood spurts out. Sooner or later, the prisoner will confess anything. Now I don't liken God to a torturer, but to a mighty God who is able to put enough pressure on the greatest sovereign to achieve His purpose. We're looking here at the power of God.

"He called Moses and Aaron by night." Ha, ha. Pharaoh had become weary of Moses and said, *"Moses, get out of my presence. The next time you see me, you're going to be a dead man."* Now Pharaoh gets up in the middle of the night and calls Moses for Moses to intervene with God. He said, *"Now you better go. You people go and serve your God and get out of this mess."* God knows how to make a way.

"And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near, for God said, (presumably to Himself) Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt." Exodus 13:17

Notice something here about the ways of the Lord. Actually the Israelites had a short route to the Promised Land through the land of the Philistines, but God did not send them the short way. God sent them the long, round-about way through the wilderness. God's reason was: If He would send them the short way; the Philistines would put up a military resistance. The people might turn back to Egypt being afraid to fight a war, so God took the precaution and led them a longer way through the wilderness. Now that shows us something, namely, that God does not always lead us in the shortest route for our own protection, for our own sake. God sometimes has to lead us to a destination the longer way because the shorter way would jeopardize us, would present dangers, which we might not be willing to face up to, or be able to face up to. So God, at times, takes the long route.

That's one reason we feel like saying, *"How long will this last? How long till the answer comes? How long till the situation changes? How long till the fog clears?"* Sometimes God has to take us the long way.

"And God led the people about through the way of the wilderness." Now the people here had not yet sinned through unbelief. That came later. But God led the people through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. Notice that there are times when God seeks to lead us into a new experience with Him, and the way does not lead by 747 jet. The way

does not lead by way of a picnic. The way may lead through the wilderness. God sent them through the wilderness to get to the Promised Land.

So often we want more of God, “*Lord, do this. Lord, use me. Lord, give me more. Lord, reveal Yourself. Lord, make Yourself known to me.*” And God says to Himself, “*Umha.*” And we expect a great feast, a great ado, and a great time in God. Instead of that we’re going into the wilderness, and we wonder what’s wrong, when God is actually answering our prayers to do a new thing for us. To do it, He has to lead us through the wilderness to get there. The wilderness is where so often we lose the way.

The fact is, the Lord led the Israelites into the land through the wilderness right in front of the Red Sea. The Israelites had their backs up against the wall, so to speak. The wilderness was now behind them. They had crossed the wilderness. In front of them was the Red Sea. There were no ferryboats. There were no bridges. Have you ever been there? They had their backs up against the wall. In front was the Sea, behind was the wilderness. On top of that Pharaoh’s troops kept coming from behind.

They said, “*Ah, they’re entangled in the wilderness. They’re shut in. Now they’re up against us. We’ve got them!*” Here come Pharaoh’s troops. In front of them was the Red Sea, and all appeared to be lost. What an experience to go through. They couldn’t turn back. They couldn’t go forward. It would take a divine intervention, but what a triumph they had over those people.

There are times when God wants to make a way for us in the wilderness doing a new thing. Do you ever ask the Lord to do a new thing? And the Lord begins to answer to do the new thing by leading us into situations we have never anticipated, and would have never wished for.

Many years ago, I had prayed, “*Lord, do a new thing for me. I want a new thing.*” I didn’t know what the new thing would be, but I wanted something new from God.

One day I was in a meeting when someone gave an utterance in tongues, and the interpretation was, “*Thou has asked for a new thing. A new thing would I do for thee, but it will call for suffering, it will call for humiliation,*” and a whole list of things. When I heard that, I drew back and it took many years before I started over again for a new thing. When our hearts go out after God, and we want God to do a new thing for us, whatever that might be. It doesn’t need to be defined. He knows better. We should not be surprised if we get into situations that are baffling, confounding, that appear to be the very negation of His promises, all is dark and cloudy and hopeless and helpless.

You say, “*God, what meaneth this?*” Here I’ve asked the Lord. Here I’ve prayed. Here I’ve sought the Lord. My heart wants nothing but Him. I want more of Him and look what I’m getting. That’s the way of the wilderness to the Promised Land. You know we think the Lord will send a stagecoach and carry us right in, but that isn’t His way. So there is where we need to watch that we do not get overthrown.

Now I want to touch on the wilderness a little bit. I don't know who of you is in the wilderness, but Wife and I sure have got a wilderness since I've been back, believe you me. It's beginning to clear, but what a time we've had.

“When we departed from Horeb, we went through all that great and terrible wilderness, which ye saw by the way of the mountain of the Amorites, as the Lord our God commanded us.” Deuteronomy 1:19

God takes us through great, terrible wilderness experiences. Just the other day a lady called me fairly early in the morning crying at the other end of the phone, *“Brother Beuttler, what am I going to do?”* I felt sorry for the soul, but God is still God. God is still God!

“Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint. Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end.” Deuteronomy 8:15-16

I don't know who of you is in the wilderness, but anyhow. *“Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness.”* You know, we think God should lead us around through the garden of roses. That's what we think, but not necessarily. In fact, the roses come later. God makes the wilderness and the desert into a place of roses, but that comes after we're through it. He doesn't say he led them through the garden of roses, but through that great and terrible wilderness.

“Wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions.” You know some of these fiery serpents even walk in Pentecostal robes. I'm persuaded there are Pentecostal scorpions. How do you know? I got stung! (Laughter) When you get stung by a scorpion, you don't question anymore.

“And drought.” Does it ever get dry for you? The more you pray, the dryer you get, and you wonder what on earth is the matter with you. You're dry! You get nothing out of the Bible, get nothing from the Lord, there's no song, nothing, everything's nothing. What's the matter? God said, *“Who led thee through the great and terrible wilderness.”* It's still in the desert where we need to believe in the leading of God in spite of the facts.

I speak from experience. *“Where there was no water.”* You seem to get nowhere, you get nothing. *“Who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint.”* This is a hard spot where God performs a miracle for us.

“Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee.” How humiliating! *“And that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end.”* I've said in this place already, *“God always has in view our latter end.”* God works toward the end, toward eternity, toward our perfection there. What God does allow or permits now is related to His objective for us throughout all eternity.

“For the Lord’s portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.” Deuteronomy 32:9-13

When fears and doubts and questions and wonderments assail us, does God care? Is this God? Can that be? That’s the howling of the wind in the wilderness. Then God found him in the wilderness. In Deuteronomy 8:2, it says, *“That he might prove thee, that He might see what’s in thine heart.”* The wilderness experience brings out of us what’s in us. God listens. *“To prove thee, to see what’s in your heart.”* That’s when our talk exposes what we are. When we go through the wilderness with the howling winds of fears and doubts and questions, God is watching to see what is in our heart.

“Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh.” Out come the grumblings, murmurings, complainings, questionings, the doubts about God. That comes out. One reason of the wilderness experience is for God to find out what’s in us, and to make us see what’s in us. *“To see what is in thine heart.”* What’s in the heart will be expressed in words. The words disclose the reality or unreality of our faith and experience.

The wilderness becomes a testing ground as to what we really are in God. You know what Job said, *“Though he slay me, yet will I trust him.”* God has to listen to us say, *“Now where is the Lord? How do you explain this? Now if God loves me? God passed me by.”* He listens.

Or whether we say, *“I don’t get it, but one thing I know, God is still God. I don’t understand this. It’s baffling me, but one thing I know, God is still God. Now I can’t understand, but I’m not going to question the integrity of God.”* That’s what God wants to hear, a demonstration of our confidence in God in spite of what He does or doesn’t do. The wilderness brings it into manifestation. *“That he might prove thee, that he might see what is in thine heart.”* The wilderness will bring it out.

“Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness.” I Corinthians 10:1-5

We can go on in God and then comes the wilderness where every thing seems to negate the love of God, the care of God, the existence of God, the power of God, the word of God. That’s where people’s faith gets overthrown, *“What’s the use? I might as well call it quits. I feel nothing, see nothing, get nothing, have nothing, I am nothing.”* They call it quits.

We are to learn from these Israelites that God uses the wilderness as a school and as a way. He wants to turn that wilderness into a garden of roses, but that comes after the experience and not before.

“Neither let us tempt Christ, (that is to say provoke Him by unbelief) as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” I Corinthians 10:9-12

Fortunately Pentecostal people never murmur, but there are other groups who do. What is murmuring? Speaking complaining in an undertone. (Under his breath) *“I don’t know what’s the matter with the Lord. Everything’s going wrong. I can’t understand why God lets this. I don’t know what to believe any more.”*

“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” We can go on seemingly very well in God and grow in God and cry out to God for more, *“Lord, I want more. I want all You have.”* Well He has a lot of things and among them is the wilderness. So God begins to act and lead us through the wilderness and then we say, *“That isn’t what I meant. I was looking for the power.”* The power, the power, Gives victory over sin... Instead of that, *“I have nothing. I looked for light and there is only darkness.”* That’s part of the way.

The idea this morning is to have confidence in the power of God, have confidence in the ways of the Lord in the wilderness. God is still leading and caring in our lives. *“Who kept thee in the wilderness, who kept thee as the apple of his eye.”*

“I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine, and the box tree together. That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.” Isaiah 41:18-20

If God does not first lead us through the wilderness experience, and let us experience the howling of the winds of fears, doubts and perplexities, and experience the dryness and the desert of the place, and then give God the opportunity to change it, how will we be able ever to see, to know, to consider and to understand that it is God who is able to perform by His mighty power? How can we know what it is to be led out of the wilderness if we don’t know what it is to be led into it? How can we expect to be led out of it if we’re overthrown in the middle of it through unbelief? How can we expect it? In Isaiah 35:1-8 reading in portions:

“The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing....Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.”

But first comes the desert, then comes the rejoicing. First comes the desert experience and God will turn that into a place of roses. A rose garden comes after the wilderness and not before. How can we experience the power of God changing our wilderness in our course of life into a garden of roses, if we first do not permit Him to deal with us and lead us into and through the wilderness? Now in the wilderness there is the groan, and the moan, and the sighing and what have you, but in time there will be joy, there will be singing.

“Strengthen ye the weak hands.” That’s what I’ve been trying to do this morning. I don’t know who it’s for, but that’s what the Lord gave me. Through this little informal chatting about the wilderness, God seeks to strengthen some weak hands and to confirm the weak knees.

“Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.” Isaiah 35:4-5

There is blindness that is not physical you know. In other words, those who can’t see anything anymore in His word, those who don’t hear anymore from God - seemingly, their eyes shall be opened. They’ll see again the revelation of the truth of God’s word. The ears will hear again from God. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened. Any blind here this morning? You can’t see anything. You don’t hear anything. Well, the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Hallelujah!

“Then shall the lame man leap as an hart.” “Lord, I can’t carry on anymore. I just don’t even want to try anymore. I think the devil has me down. I don’t know what to do.” We can all sympathize, but sympathy won’t do it. *“Then shall the lame man leap as an hart.”* Hallelujah!

“And the tongue of the dumb sing.” “Lord, no more sorrow in my heart.” The Father will restore their glory. *“For in the wilderness shall waters break out.”* In the wilderness! *“And streams in the desert.”*

“And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water...And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness.”

These are just a few fragments of the *“Way of the Lord in the Wilderness.”* What shall we do with it? Just go on and still believe in God and know that God is the God who has the power to deliver us from our enemies, every one, and take us through the wilderness to see what’s in us, to put steel into our faith. At the end of the experience, God will turn

that wilderness into a garden of roses. We have a new thing. We shall sing a new song, even the song of the Way of the Lord in the Wilderness.