



Hello again from quarantine..... It's going to be a rainy Wednesday in Lancaster. How are you?

I remember hearing the statement growing up "the bumps are what we grow on". And essentially that is the heart of today's devotion. Monday's devotion was titled "Full of Trouble", and was just a reminder that life has it's issues.

Our devotion today talks about the 40 years that Israel spent in the wilderness. This was a difficult time for the nation of Israel. Many questioned God and Moses's leadership in the midst of their wilderness journey. The people didn't full understand all that was going on, and their lack of understanding also lead to a lack of faith.

God spells out His reasons..... "thy God led thee to humble thee, and to prove thee". Israel could only see the trial. It's important to realize at this moment in history that God's plan for the redemption of man was already in action. We all know now that Israel was a huge part of that plan. They didn't know it did they? All of the murmuring and complaining in the wilderness they had no idea the plans that God had for them. God led them into the wilderness with the purpose of humbling His people, and to find out where their hearts were.

".....and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me." Trusting God isn't always easy. We can't see the future, we are fragile, and certainly we are an emotional people. We struggle with fear, anxiety, and a whole slew of emotions that have to be brought into check. So we sit in our wilderness experiences at times, not knowing the future..... but in our present, we have the God that does know. The God that says, I haven't given you the Spirit of Fear right? The trials often will serve a purpose in our lives. For Israel, God found out what they were made of, and so did they. ".....whether thou wouldest keep my commandments".

Saying we have Faith is easy walking in faith isn't always like that. Faith when were on the mountain, is like low hanging fruit on a tree, it's easy to reach and it doesn't take a lot of effort. But

what about when we are in the middle of a trial? When the light seems so distant and dim in the distant? When our need seems overwhelmingly out of reach? When we are having to climb the tree of our faith to obtain the fruit of trust? That's when we find out what we are really made of.

There are scriptures in the OT that tell us to consider the ant. (Proverbs 6:6-8)- essentially it's about making preparations. Israel, as a nation had been in captivity for 400 years. There was just too much of Egypt in them, and God had to root some of those things out. He needed them to Trust Him..... and they needed to Trust Him. That faith would be required because they were facing much bigger trials than the wilderness. God used the time in the wilderness to prepare them for those "bigger trials".

"Thou in faithfulness has afflicted me". Faith is the key to many things in our lives. In a life full of trouble, where we can barely see the present clearly, It's important to learn to trust on the God who can see yesterday and tomorrow.....along with the present equally clear. Trusting that there is a purpose in the wilderness, a purpose in the valley, and that God is getting us ready for a greater purpose down the road. Israel was a part of the redemption plan for man. What plan is God working in your life? We don't always know..... but like the ant we can make preparations, spiritual preparations. Gathering spiritually, growing in Christ, and in all of that building our faith, our trust in the God of the Universethe one that said "I will be your God and you will be My people".

Be encouraged. God knows His plans for us and they are Good and not Evil. All things work to good for those that Love the Lord. Do you love Him? If so don't worry..... don't doubt, climb the branches of faith. There is fruit to be enjoyed from the trials, fruit that can't always be enjoyed from the top of the mountain, but requires a journey through the valley.

Sometimes The bumps ARE what we grow on.....

God bless -- Pastor Paul

April 29

Consider how great things He hath done for you.

Thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no. Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the LORD thy God chasteneth thee.

I know, O LORD, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me. It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes. Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word. - The LORD hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death. - He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. He knoweth our frame; he remem-bereth that we are dust.

I SAM. 12:24. Deut. 8:2,5. Psa. 119:75,71,67. -Psa. 118:18. -Psa. 103:10,11,14.