

A Divine Detour

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[0 : 00] We have been in a series in the book of Exodus, which is the second book in the Bible. So if you turn to the very beginning and turn some pages, you'll get to Exodus chapter 13, verses 17 to 22.

Let me pray for the reading and preaching of God's word. Heavenly Father, you are the king.

We are your subjects. You are the Lord. We are your servants. You are our father. We are your children.

You are our shepherd. We are your sheep. We want to serve, follow you, honor you, love you with our whole heart.

We want to be reminded again this morning of your faithfulness, your steadfast love. So speak to us from this passage.

[1 : 05] Teach us more about your character and humble us and glorify your name. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Exodus 13, verses 17 to 22.

When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near.

For God said, lest the people change their minds when they see war and return to Egypt. But God led the people around by the way of the wilderness toward the Red Sea.

And the people of Israel went up out of the land of Egypt equipped for battle. Moses took the bones of Joseph with him. For Joseph had made the sons of Israel solemnly swear, saying, God will surely visit you and you shall carry out my bones with you from here.

And they moved on from Sukkoth and encamped at Etham on the edge of the wilderness. And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night.

[2 : 21] The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people. This is God's holy and authoritative word.

If you drive here in the city, you have more likely than not had the experience of being in a hurry to get somewhere and then to only run into that dreaded detour sign.

And if you are overly reliant on the GPS, like I am, then it probably rerouted you to another point of the construction site, to another detour.

And for some of us, that experience feels like a metaphor for life in general. A closed door in your career advancement. Getting stuck in the friend zone of your romantic interest.

An unexpected setback in your health. Maybe you thought you'd be in full-time ministry by now. Maybe you thought you would have a job by now.

[3 : 27] Maybe you thought you would be a university professor by now. Maybe you thought you'd be living in a different country by now, or state by now. Maybe you thought you'd be married by now.

Maybe you thought you'd have children by now. Maybe you thought you'd have been married by now. But your life seems to have hit a detour. And unexpected delays.

A deferral of your hopes and dreams. Prophet Jeremiah captures this experience well in Jeremiah 10.23. I know, Lord, that the way of man is not in himself.

That it is not in man who walks to direct his steps. On this walk of life, it is not our human prerogative to direct our own steps. Because, as Proverbs 16.9 says, The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps.

Man devises his plans, but God decides what will happen. Man proposes, but God disposes. And if we know the God who is directing our steps, then we can trust him through the detours of life.

[4 : 36] Exodus 13.17-22 takes us on one of Israel's detours, and it teaches us that we can entrust ourselves to God through the detours of life because of his wisdom, faithfulness, and presence.

And we're going to see those three things in turn. Let's first look at God's wisdom in verses 17-18. It says, When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near.

For God said, Lest the people change their minds when they see war and return to Egypt. But God led the people around by the way of the wilderness toward the Red Sea. And the people of Israel went up out of the land of Egypt equipped for battle.

There was a shorter, direct route from Egypt to Canaan known as the Great Trunk Road, which followed the coastline of the Mediterranean Sea. And therefore, it was called in Isaiah 9-1 as the Way of the Sea, or Via Maris in Latin.

This famous trade route was also called, in some ancient times, the Way of the Philistines, because it passed right through the Philistine plain. That's partly why God is avoiding this direct passageway.

[5 : 47] It says God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines. But why? Was God afraid of the military might of the Philistines? Were the Philistine gods too strong for him?

Of course, that's not the case. That's an absurd question for those of us who've seen how God struck Egypt down and its idols down with his strong hand in the preceding chapters. There is no God but the Lord, Yehovah, and we have seen that clearly.

The reason why God chose this detour is for the sake of the Israelites, for his people. Because of their faithlessness, and because of their fearfulness, and because of their fickleness, it says in verse 18, For God said, lest the people change their minds when they see war and return to Egypt.

This is ironic because it says in verse 18 that Israel went out of the land of Egypt equipped for battle. Now, we have seen the repeated use of military terms in the preceding passage that I noted last week.

1236, that the Israelites plundered the Egyptians by asking them for their silver and gold and jewelry. And plunder refers to the spoils of war. In 1237, they said that there were 600,000 men on foot coming out of Egypt.

[7 : 07] And that's a technical way to describe infantrymen, soldiers. 1241 told us that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt. The word hosts refers to armies or regiments, divisions.

So, we're seeing again and again these repetition of military terms. But we noted last week that also, that Israel not once gives battle to the Egyptians.

The Lord God has done up to this point all the fighting on their behalf. Israel is winning their war against Egypt simply by trusting in the Lord and in His word.

So, this phrase, verse 18, is intentionally ironic. It's making the same point again. The Israelites went up out of the land of Egypt equipped for battle, in battle formation.

And yet, from God's omniscient perspective, Israel is utterly ill-equipped for battle. Israel may be equipped for battle physically, but they are not equipped for battle spiritually, to trust the Lord.

[8 : 12] A time is coming when the Lord will demand of them to fight, to conquer the promised land. But before that, they must learn to trust in the Lord, lest they forget the Lord and think that their failure or success is entirely dependent on them.

In their current level of faith and maturity, they will change their minds and flee right back to Egypt as soon as they face the Philistine army. The Israelites don't know this, but God knows this.

So, He takes them about a roundabout way through the wilderness toward the Red Sea. I think I have a map where I can show you what this detour looks like. Can you guys see that?

So, the Mediterranean Sea is at the top, and you start here from Goshen. And the direct way to Canaan would have been right along the coast. That would have been two weeks.

But instead, you know how long it takes the Israelites, 40 years. They go all the way around the desert of Sinai. Now, that probably didn't make any sense for the Israelites, who had even the remotest sense of geography.

[9 : 28] Why, when there's a near way, do we need to go the roundabout far way in the wilderness of all places?

Where are we going to get food? Where are we going to get water? We didn't bring enough provisions for our roundabout journey. What if our clothes and sandals wear out?

Do you have any clothes and sandals that have lasted 40 years? I don't think so. The reason why this doesn't make sense to us is because we're finite human beings.

And because of our inherent limitations, we obsess ourselves with efficiency. Walking to places wasn't fast enough, so we built horse-drawn wagons.

And that wasn't fast enough for us, so we built trains. And because that's still not fast enough, Elon Musk is trying to build a hyperloop. Listening to an audiobook at a normal talking speed isn't fast enough, so we dial it up to 1.5 or some of us even two times the speed.

[10 : 38] Getting up from the couch to go and flip on the light switch is too inefficient. So we buy a Google Home and a smart light bulb so that we can tell the machine to turn on the light.

Getting eight hours of sleep isn't efficient enough. So we sleep less and get ourselves addicted to caffeine. Sending postage mail isn't fast enough, so we send emails instead.

Reading a book takes too long, so we read articles instead. And that's still too long, so we read tweets instead. Wanting to talk to someone and meet them is too inefficient, so we call them.

And even that has too many formalities and takes too long, so we text them instead. We don't want to save a little bit of money over a long period of time, so we want to strike get rich.

We get lottery tickets. You invest in risky ventures. We as a society are obsessed with efficiency and maximization.

[11 : 58] Why? Because we are finite human beings and we understand economics. We know that time is finite, that it's scarce. If we spend two hours one morning praying, that's two hours less we have to catch up on our work or to catch up on much-needed sleep.

We know that money is finite, that it's scarce. If we give \$600 to church as a tithe each month, that's \$600 less we could have spent on ourselves, on our eating out at delicious joints or going shopping.

We know that our bodies are finite. If we help someone in the church move one morning, our muscles will probably be too tired and sore to go weightlifting later that afternoon.

If we get married and have children, that's a significant investment of time, money, and physical and emotional energy that we could have spent elsewhere.

As finite human beings, we are always constrained by these limits, and that's why we care about efficiency. We prize efficiency. But God does not work with our standards of productivity and efficiency.

[13 : 07] God does not have the limits that we have because God is infinite. God cannot waste time ever because he has an infinite quantity of time.

He can waste million years and still have infinity left over. God is not subject to scarcity, and therefore, God is not subject to the tyranny of efficiency.

He's never pressed for time. God can't waste time with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years is one day. 2 Peter 3.8. That's why he can afford to take Israel on a 40-year detour.

God can take his people through a wilderness where there is no food. Why? Because he can rain manna and quail down from heaven for them to eat. That makes no sense from a human efficiency standpoint.

God can take them to a desert where there is no water. Why? Because he can make water flow from a rock. God can take his people on a long, arduous journey through the wilderness because he can stop their sandals and clothes from wearing out for 40 years, as it says in Deuteronomy 29, verse 5.

[14 : 23] This is why God can command us to do or lead us to do things that seem illogical and or inefficient to us.

This is why God can promise a childless Abraham who is way past the age of childbearing age, Genesis 15, 5. Look toward heaven and number the stars.

If you are able to number them, so shall your offspring be. We plan for the next year or the next five years or for the next decade or for our lifetime, but God has a thousand generations and eternity beyond in view.

This is why God can command us to give cheerfully and generously and even sacrificially to meet the needs of our Christian brothers and sisters. From a human standpoint, that's inefficient and illogical because money I use for other people is money I don't have for myself and my family.

But as 2 Corinthians 9, 6-9 says, whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. God is able to make all grace abound to you. So having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.

[15 : 33] Because God's the one who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. This is why God can command us to pray without ceasing. Prayer is so inefficient from a strictly human standpoint.

Time spent praying is time spent literally getting nothing done. Is it not? Prayer is the slender nerve that moves the muscle of omnipotence.

God is not confined by our limitations. His thoughts really are not our thoughts. His ways really are not our ways. This is why God can leave the near way by the wayside and leave the Israelites by the far way.

Do you live your life tyrannized by urgency? By your striving for perfect efficiency? I'm not telling you to be lazy.

I'm not telling you to not make any plans. Far from it. But we should not be enslaved to time and money and health like our entire lives are about managing those finite assets.

[16 : 57] It's okay to be delayed 10 minutes by a long-winded co-worker. Maybe you'll get to share the gospel with them. It's okay that you missed your highway exit because you got boxed out by another driver.

It's okay that you didn't get a job before inflation and the tightening of the market. It's okay that you didn't get married by the time you are 30.

I can assure you that God is not biting his nails and pacing around in heaven because he's worried about running out of time to accomplish his purposes in your life. God's course is charted far ahead of ours and his plans operate on a far higher plane than ours.

There's something that he is doing that we do not see. And he will surely lead all of his people to the promised land, the kingdom of God.

And for that reason, because of God's wisdom, we can entrust ourselves to God through the detours of life. God knows things about us and our circumstances that we do not know because God sees the past, the present, and the future that we do not see.

[18 : 13] For God said, lest the people change their minds when they see war and return to Egypt. Think about it for a minute. Coming out triumphantly after the 10 plagues of Egypt and coming out in battle formation with 60,000 infantrymen, do you think the Israelites thought to themselves, well, if we run into the Philistines, we're just going to flee right back to our Egyptian overlords.

Do you think they thought that? Probably not. But God knew that. That's exactly what would happen. We do not know ourselves as well as we think we do.

And this is why I sometimes pray to God, Father, please don't let the growth and success of Trinity Cambridge Church outstrip the growth of my character.

Because I don't want to experience success and be tempted with things that I cannot handle and sin against God in pride and cause some scandal.

How do you know, brothers and sisters, that if you founded a successful startup and you became a billionaire straight out of college and made the Forbes 30 under 30 list, that you would not think too highly of yourself and grow ever more egotistical and self-reliant and forget about God?

[19 : 40] How do you know, brothers and sisters, that if you are genetically predisposed to be more attractive to your peers by our society's standards, that you would not be seduced by someone into sexual immorality or wooed by a highly persuasive and a handsome unbeliever into an unequally yoked marriage where you are led gradually down the path of indifference and unbelief toward God?

How do you know? You don't know. We don't know all the countless counterfactuals that are out there.

What could have happened but did not happen by God's gracious providence. But God completely knows all things and He has sovereignly ordained all things.

God is wise and He's compassionate. He knows our weaknesses, our temptations, our shortcomings. And He will not lead us to destruction. If God had led the Israelites by the direct, efficient route, not only would they have turned back to Egypt when Philistines opposed them, they would have also never witnessed God's powerful deliverance in the parting of the Red Sea.

Look again at verse 18. But God led the people around by the way of the wilderness toward the Red Sea. There are two additional details here that reveal more of God's wisdom.

[21 : 07] First, it's precisely because God takes them wandering around the wilderness that Pharaoh is emboldened and prompted to come out and pursue them. He says in chapter 14, 3-4, Pharaoh will say of the people of Israel, they are wandering in the land.

The wilderness has shut them in. And God says, I will harden Pharaoh's heart and he will pursue them. And I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his hosts. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord.

Look at how majestic and mighty our God is. Pharaoh thinks that he has Israel cornered in the wilderness. And so he'll come out in hot pursuit of the Israelites.

But it's exactly the Israelites wandering in the wilderness that lures the cobra out of its den so that its head can be crushed. What is God's intention in strengthening Pharaoh's sinful, prideful resolve to recapture Israel?

He says, I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his hosts. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord. Do you know, Christian brothers and sisters, that God will get glory through all the detours of your life.

[22 : 17] He will get glory in your life. If wandering in the wilderness is the price we pay, that's a small price to pay to glorify the name of the Lord.

The second way that this verse reveals God's wisdom is this. God leads them toward the Red Sea. 60,000 men on foot.

That's not counting the children and the women. They're carrying their luggages with them. Remember, they plundered the Egyptians. And here's the Red Sea.

That's the last place you want to take that kind of group to. How are you going to cross that? So God's not only taking them on a detour, he's also taking them to a dead end.

Again, we ask why. The Lord also wants to teach his people that it is he who fights for them in the parting of the Red Sea and the routing of the Egyptians. The Lord tells Moses in chapter 14, verses 16 to 18, lift up your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it that the people of Israel may go through the sea on dry ground.

[23 : 35] And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them. And I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his hosts, his chariots and his horsemen. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots and his horsemen.

Again, do you hear the same themes? God will get glory for his name. Brothers and sisters, isn't that what we live for?

For God's glory. To see him exalted. To see him famous. Made known among all the nations. To see every tongue confess his name.

To see every knee bow down before him. Isn't that why we live? If that's the case, then you can be assured, no matter what kind of detour you are in, no matter what kind of suffering you are enduring, no matter where you are in your place in life, how far you've come or how far you have not come, God will be glorified in your life.

He will get glory. And because God's wisdom far exceeds ours, we can entrust ourselves to him through the detours of life.

[24 : 54] And we can also entrust ourselves to him because of his faithfulness. He says in verse 19, Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for Joseph had made the sons of Israel solemnly swear, saying, God will surely visit you and you shall carry up my bones with you from here.

This is a reference to Genesis 50, 24 to 25, where shortly before his death, Joseph instructs his brothers to take his bones with them when they finally leave Egypt because he knew, he believed in God's promises that their destiny is in the promised land in Canaan, so he knew God would visit them and take them out of Egypt.

So although he knew that, he assures him God will visit you and even though he won't be alive to see it, he wants at least his bones to partake of the promised land and to be buried with his forefathers.

So it seems for however many hundreds of years, the 430 years that they spent in Egypt, they kept remembrance of where Joseph's, also where he was, or where he was mummified, whatever the process the Egyptians took to bury him, and they carry his bones out on their journey to Canaan.

Joseph's bones seemingly, it's of little consequence to us, is mentioned here as a testament to the faithfulness of God. Note that this didn't take place quickly over one generation.

[26 : 30] We know that they spent 430 years in Egypt. Our country is not even 300 years old. Yet much has happened over the last 245 years, hasn't it?

Likewise, much had happened to Israel over 430 years in Egypt. Much had changed over 430 years. But one thing decidedly had not changed, and that's the faithfulness of God.

That's the character of God who said, I will bring you to the promised land. And God had not forgotten his people, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He promised them, in Genesis 15, know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for 400 years.

But I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions. God's word was fulfilled exactly as he has said.

If he has called you to something, if he has promised you something, he will fulfill it. If I told you that I would do something, and I haven't done it yet, I'm sorry to admit, but it's quite possible that I just forgot.

[27 : 52] But that is never the case with God. The memory of the Lord is long, and his promises fail not.

If you feel forgotten by God, behold God's deliverance of Israel from Egypt. See how God remembers even the bones of Joseph. You think he'll forget about you.

All the promises of God find their yes in Christ. That's why it is through him that we utter our amen to God for his glory. Amen. We can entrust ourselves to God through the detours of life because of his wisdom, his faithfulness, and finally his presence.

Please follow along with me as I read verses 20 to 22. And they moved on from Sukkoth and encamped at Etham on the edge of the wilderness. And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night.

The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people. There are a couple misconceptions about the pillar of cloud and pillar of fire that we need to clear up in order to understand what's actually happening in this passage.

[29 : 19] First, even though verse 21 makes it sound like there are two different pillars, we know from other verses in Exodus that they both refer to the same pillar, a single pillar.

Later in Exodus 14, verses 19 to 20, it says, Then the angel of God, who was going before the host of Israel, moved and went behind them, and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them, coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel.

And there was the cloud and the darkness and it, the same cloud, the pillar of cloud, and it lit up the night without one coming near the other all night.

So this pillar of cloud that separated the Egyptians and the Israelites by day is the same pillar that at night is lighting up the skies. It's the same pillar of fire. During the day, the pillar consists of cloud, but during the night, it consists of fire.

It's possible that the pillar actually changes in that transition, but it's also possible that the pillar is simply a pillar of smoking fire. During the day, what's most visible is smoke, cloud, and at night, what's most visible is the fire.

[30 : 36] And it's not wrong to describe the pillar of smoke as a pillar of cloud, because after all, clouds are nothing but evaporated water vapors, condensing onto tiny bits of matter like dust and ash.

The exact same phenomenon is happening in a smoking fire. What evaporates is the water particles, but it attaches to the ash, which is why you see so much smoke.

That's exactly how clouds form. The interpretation is also confirmed by Exodus 14.24, which says, in the morning watch, the Lord, in the pillar of fire and of cloud, looked down on the Egyptian forces and threw the Egyptian forces into a panic.

Single pillar of cloud and fire. The Lord looks down on the Egyptians from it. The second misconception about the pillar of fire and cloud is this.

These are not simply manifestations of God's power. They are manifestations of God's very presence. Look again with me at Exodus 13.21. It says, the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light.

[31 : 50] The Lord himself is in the pillar of cloud and fire. Exodus 14.24 that I just cited earlier is even more explicit. It says, in the morning watch, the Lord in the pillar of fire and of cloud looked down on the Egyptian forces and threw them into a panic.

The Lord is literally in the pillar of fire and cloud. So then, the pillar of smoking fire is a theophany, the appearance of God himself in a way that humans can perceive.

It does not exhaust who God is or reveal the fullness of who God is, but it is, nevertheless, a real manifestation of Yahweh. So then, the presence of the pillar tells us of the Lord's constant presence with his people.

He does not send Israel into the unknown on their own. He says he goes before them. And not only at specific times during the day, hey Israel, make an appointment with me here at 3 p.m.

you can come and then I'll go with you then. No. By day and by night. Meaning all day. No bathroom breaks. No nap times.

[33 : 02] Constantly. There isn't a second in the day when the Lord God is not with his people Israel in the wilderness. He says, the pillar of cloud and fire did not depart from the people.

The Lord never left his people alone in the wilderness. He never departed. Remember this, brothers and sisters, when the Lord sends you, whatever wilderness you might be in, he has gone there before you and he never departs from his people.

There is no such thing as a God forsaken wilderness for us because we are his people. No matter how desolate or lonely it might seem.

The presence of the Lord is frequently marked by fire and smoke. Recall from Exodus 3, 2-3 when God appeared in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. In Exodus 19, 18, it says that Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the Lord had descended on it in fire.

The smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln and the whole mountain trembled greatly. Fire and smoke are very appropriate representations of God because they are immaterial or incorporeal, at least to us, to our naked eye, like the Lord who is spirit and not flesh.

[34 : 22] And because of God's consuming power, right, in describing God's fiery jealousy over his people and his righteous judgment of the wicked, scripture repeatedly calls the Lord a consuming fire.

Fire cooks food, but it kills bacteria. Fire refines gold, but it burns up the dross. It's a fitting representation of the way the Lord sanctifies his people but consumes and judges his enemies.

Fire and smoke are also significant for guidance. Light illuminates and smoke too is often used for signaling, even in scripture. The pillar of cloud and fire serve to guide the Israelites here. But the most significant background is not these passages that I mentioned.

The pillar of smoking fire is connected to Genesis 15, 17 to 21, where the Lord appears to Abraham in the form of a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch.

That's the same passage that I cited from earlier where the Lord foretells Israel's 400 years slavery in Egypt and their eventual deliverance in Exodus. In that passage, God makes a covenant with Abraham.

[35 : 38] A covenant is a legally binding relationship confirmed with an oath. And in ancient Near Eastern culture, a more powerful king, the suzerain, and a weaker king, the vassal, would form a covenant with one another.

And the more powerful king would make certain promises to protect and to provide for this weaker king. And the weaker king would pledge allegiance to the suzerain king. And those were called suzerain-vassal treaties or covenants.

And one of the covenant ratifying rituals that were used in the ancient Near East were to cut up some animals, often sacrificial animals, and then to spread out the part of the animals and make parallel lines with these cut up pieces of animal carcass.

And then to have the vassal king, the weaker king who is pledging allegiance to the suzerain, the powerful king, walk through the two pieces of the animals. And he was to invoke a curse upon himself.

If I break my covenant with you, if I'm disloyal to you, I shall be like these cut up animals. We see an example of that in Jeremiah 34, 18, and we see it literally happening in Genesis 15, 17 to 21.

[36 : 51] And so you can imagine the scene for a minute. If you're Abram, it's at night, and you see these cut up pieces of animals. That's rated R. That's a gory sight.

He has to walk through this, and he's about to invoke a very serious curse upon himself. But what happens is surprising because God does not tell Abram to walk through the pieces of the animals.

God appears in the smoking fire and the flaming torch, and he himself goes through the path of the animal carcass. That's a powerful illustration of how God graciously guarantees the fulfillment of his covenant promises.

God's committing himself to his people unreservedly saying, should you fail to keep the requirements of the covenant, should you break your covenant with me and be disloyal to me, I will bear that curse myself so that I can keep you and save you as my people.

That's the length through which God was committed to the covenant that he made with his people, and the pillar of smoking fire is a daily, constant reminder to Israelites, remember that promise.

[38 : 22] Remember what God did. He said, he will keep you. He said, I will keep my promise. He said, I will deliver you and bring you into the promised land as I said. And in Jesus, we see the embodiment of the pillar of cloud and fire.

Jesus is the one who baptizes us with the Holy Spirit and fire. When Jesus, his glory was unveiled for a time at the transfiguration, just like how in the Old Testament when the tabernacle was completed or when the temple was completed, the cloud of God descended upon it and filled the temple with his presence.

When Jesus' glory is unveiled at the transfiguration, he says, a cloud came and overshadowed him. And when Jesus was resurrected and ascended to the heavens, he sends his Holy Spirit to empower his people.

What people see at Pentecost, divided tongues as of fire, appeared to them and rested on each one of them. The God who accompanied Israel in the wilderness, in the pillar of cloud and fire, now indwells us personally to remind us every day, constantly, I am with you and I will never forsake you.

And it was in Jesus that God ultimately kept that promise, made good on that promise to bear the curse of the covenant himself. When he walked between the torn pieces of animals ages ago, the cross and the grave should have been our fate.

[39 : 59] But Jesus bore the burden that was too heavy for us to carry and he was slain and his blood was poured out to bear our terrible curse and satisfy the just wrath of God.

And can it be that I should gain an interest in the Savior's blood? Die he for me who caused his pain for me who him to death pursued.

Amazing love, how can it be that thou, my God, should die for me? Let's pray. God, we have no words for such amazing love.

How could it be that you would grace us with your very spirit? God, we thank you.

We worship you. God, we worship you. Help us to trust you and follow you through all the ups and downs of life, all the detours, knowing that you are completely trustworthy and that you have demonstrated it to us in Jesus.

[41 : 33] It's in his precious name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.