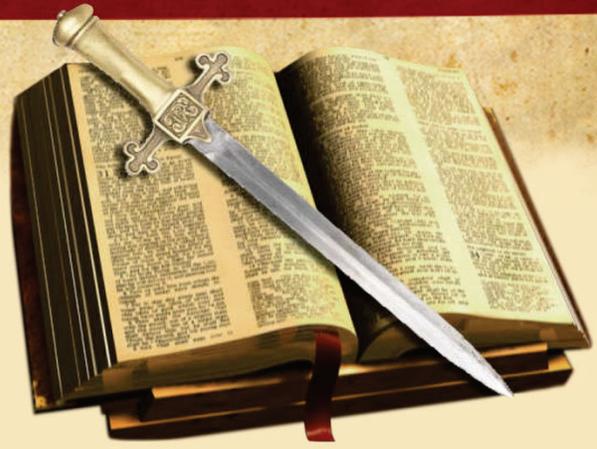


Setting Your Heart

on the

Kingdom



DEUTERONOMY

The Testing of Your Faith

(The Principle of Suffering and Perseverance)

Deuteronomy 8:1-20

The desert sun beat relentlessly upon the weary Israelites. Scorpions, snakes, hunger and thirst taunted them as they endured forty grueling years of wilderness trials. Long forgotten were the miracles of the Red Sea and the water from the rock. Long forgotten were the promises of God and the purpose of their deliverance from Egypt. One by one, their fathers and mothers had died in that barren wasteland without even a glimpse of the land that God had promised. In utter frustration, they complained against both Moses and God, begging to return to Egypt. “Surely,” they grumbled, “A life as a slave in a plentiful land would be better than death in a harsh and lifeless desert.” To God, this was the same as shaking their fists in His face and screaming...“**Forget the Covenant! Forget the promises! Your Kingdom just isn’t worth all this pain and suffering!**”

What would it take for you to give up? How much suffering would you be willing to endure for the cause of God? Would persecutions, sicknesses, broken relationships or inadequate salaries turn you away from your destiny in God? *The Lord doesn’t cause evil to come upon you...but He may allow hardships and humbling experiences to test your heart!* Not every problem is a test, but at times God allows the dramas in your life to play out so the proof of your faith will become evident to all...to God, to those who are watching, and even to yourself!

The Kingdom of God consists of those who have put their hands to the plow and refuse to look back (Luke 9:62). Jesus warns us that in the midst of tribulations, only those “*who endure to the end will be saved*” (Matt. 24:9-13). The Apostle Paul admonishes us that “*through much tribulation you enter the Kingdom of God*” (Acts 14:22). Don’t give up, my friend. Though you are tested, even by fire, God is refining your faith and increasing your endurance (1 Pet. 1:7). *Your perseverance is proof that God’s rule is greater than your sufferings.* And remember this...your troubles are only momentary. The glory of your reward far outweighs all your afflictions (2 Cor. 4:17).

*Next Week: The Kingdom of God in Joshua: Memorial Stones—Landmarks
For Your Children*

