

Remnant Life Church
August 23, 2015
Encountering Detours
Exodus 13:17-22

Everyone hates detours

- They delay me in getting to where I want to go
- They are not a part of my plans
- They are not the shortest, quickest route (everything today is measured by how fast or how short a time)

Also, detours are completely contrary to the nature of our world's pace,

BUT, within the life of a Christian...

- They are many times absolutely necessary
- They are often within the perfect will of God for our lives
- They will very often save us from ourselves if and when we are willing to follow them

READ – Exodus 13:17-22

1. From 70 to over 600,00 men (2 – 3 million total in the exodus)
2. The Israelites believed that when they left Egypt they would take the most direct, shortest route to the promised land
3. But even though God lead them out they were not ready for the full journey
 - a. God will often allow a situation to develop in your life many times to simply provide an opportunity for you to grow
4. The shortest route would have been -
 - a. Along the southern shore of the Mediterranean
 - b. A well-traveled, known route of about 250 miles
 - # - A known route would not have required that they depend on God for where they were going
 - # - God used the cloud by day and pillar of fire at night
 - c. The journey could have been completed in about 4-5 weeks
 - d. It would have taken them through the middle of the Philistines territory
5. **DEF:** A detour is a temporary indirect route to your destination
 - a. A detour does not cancel your trip
 - b. When God puts up a detour sign how do you respond?
 - Many are going so fast that they crash right through
 - Some see it but go around and through it anyway
 - Some get discouraged and turn back
 - Some will follow the detour but increase their speed to make up for the extra distance or time
 - c. God took the Israelites on a detour for their own good and to ensure their safe arrival

- If they had gone through the land of the Philistines they would have been treated as run-away slaves and, at best, returned to Egypt – at worst, destroyed in war.
 - There were still issues in their lives that needed to be addressed
 - # - idol worship
 - # - Laws and covenants that needed to be put in place and learned regarding becoming a new nation
6. In every way this was a detour directed by God but it was also self-directed by the Israelites themselves- 2 other examples...
- David at the time of war
 - # - **1 Chron 20:1** - *In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war, Joab led out the armed forces. He laid waste the land of the Ammonites and went to Rabbah and besieged it, but David remained in Jerusalem. Joab attacked Rabbah and left it in ruins.*
 - # - David would never have lost his son if he had simply been obedient to the laws God had given
 - Prodigal Son – **Luke 15:11-32** – parable told by Jesus
 - # - the younger son was not forced into his detour he created the path himself
7. Why did God take the Israelites the long way around?
- a. To protect them – from the Philistines and from themselves (**13:17**)
 - b. They were not ready for war; armed and marched as if they were, but were not – (just spent the last 400 years in slavery not preparing for battle)
 - Many Christians believe that they can handle anything of life and don't need to listen to or obey God
 - The Israelites would have been slaughtered
 - # - the Philistines were an experienced, warring people
 - # - tormented Israel for several hundred years until Samson/David
 - c. They did not know God in an intimate way
 - **John 10:27** - *My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me*
8. What should we realize and learn from this account of God's detours?
- a. God's ways are always the best ways
 - **Rev 15:3** - *...Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the nations...*
 - b. He is with us through every part of the journey
 - c. If we walk with Him we will never miss the detours (no fear)
 - He has given us His Word
 - # - **Ex 3:12** - *And God said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you^[b] will worship God on this mountain."*
 - He has given us the Holy Spirit
 - # - **Luke 24:49** - *I am going to send you (the Holy Spirit) what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.*
 - He has a plan for each of us if we are willing to submit our lives to Him

- **Jer 29:11** - *For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*

- He must prepare us as a part of that plan

- **II Tim 2:20-22** - *In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for special purposes and some for common use.*

²¹ *Those who cleanse themselves from the latter will be instruments for special purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work. (since I am prepared)* ²² *Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart*

If I obey God and desire to follow Him with all my heart, in due time, I will reach my destination!