**R796\_Rumination for May. 03, 2020 by K.C. Ung**

The **T**heme: **In the Wilderness** berita-bethel-ung.com

The **T**ext: *Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into* ***the wilderness*** *to be tempted of the devil.* Mt.4:1

The **T**hots:

1. **The Etymology of Wilderness.**
2. Biblical**ly**
3. in the O.T. – *Erēmos* (<G2048>) occurs 50 times = desert, desolate, solitary, wilderness. Strong
4. In the N.T. – *Midbār* (<H4057>) occurs 271 times = …a pasture (i.e. open field,

whither cattle are driven); by implication a desert; also wilderness. Strong

1. Literal**ly**
2. A **D**esert, or **D**eserted uninhabited wasteland. Deut. 32:10

 *He found him in a desert land, and in the* ***W****aste howling* ***W****ilderness;*

1. A **V**ast **V**intage pasture land. Joel 2:22
*Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the* ***W****ilderness do spring,*

 *for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig tree and the* ***V****ine do yield their strength.*

1. Figurative**ly**
2. The Place of **T**rial and **T**esting: Deut. 8:2

 *And 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.*

1. The Place of **T**emptation: Matt. 4:1

 *Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.*

* The Wilderness: a Place for **M**editation and **M**using - *when He had fasted forty days and forty nights…* Matt. 4:2
1. **The Experiences of being in the Wilderness.** The wilderness is a locale for **E**xceptional **E**xperiences:
2. Moses **E**ncountered the **E**ternal I AM at the **B**urning **B**ush *in the Wilderness* Exo. 3:1, HCSB

*Moses was shepherding the flock…the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.*

1. He **B**eheld a **B**urning **B**ush that was not Consumed. Exo. 3:2, 3
2. He met the Holy **G**od on Holy **G**round and Hid his face. 3:5, 6
3. He was **A**nointed to deliver Israel from Egypt and **A**ppointed his **A**ssignment. 3:12-16ff
* In the Wilderness, Moses **R**eceived a **R**evelation of God and an appointment to **R**escue His people
1. Israel felt **D**esolate as in a **D**esert – They **M**urmured against **M**oses….*in the wilderness*… Exo. 16:2
2. They were Hungr**y** Exo. 16:2-3

 *…ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.*

1. They were Thirst**y**. Exo. 17:1-3

 *from the wilderness of Sin…there was no water for the people to drink...the people thirsted…for water*

1. They were Angr**y**: Exo. 16:2

 *The whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness:*

* Israel was in the Wilderness: they felt **M**iserable and **M**urmured against **M**oses and God.
1. **E**lijah fled from **J**ezebel into *the Wilderness* where he **E**ncountered **J**ehovah. I Kgs. 19:1-18

*And when he saw that…he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness.* 19:3, 4

1. There he **R**ested and was **R**efreshed by the Lord: 19:9

*He came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD came to him.*

1. There he heard the **S**till **S**mall Voice of Jehovah and was **R**enewed. 19:12

*And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.*

1. There **E**lijah was **E**ncouraged to Continue on. 19:18

*Yet I have left Me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal.*

* In the Wilderness, **E**lijah was **E**nergised with **F**ood, **E**ncouraged in his **F**aith and **R**enewed for his **F**uture **F**ights!
1. Jesus was **P**repared for His **P**ublic Ministry in the Wilderness. Matt. 4:1

*Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.*

1. He **P**roved His **S**uperiority over **S**atan by quoting the Scriptures - *It is written…* Mt. 4:7, 10
2. He **P**rayed for His Ministry in the Wilderness. Lk. 5:16

 *And He* ***W****ithdrew Himself into the* ***W****ilderness, and prayed.*

* Jesus spent time in the Wilderness **P**reparing and **P**raying for His Ministry.
1. **The Expectations of being in the Wilderness –** The **P**romise of **P**rovision in **P**asture Land
2. *He maketh me to lie down in green* ***P****astures: He leadeth me beside the still waters.* Psa. 23:2
3. *Thou* ***P****reparest a table before me…my cup runneth over.* Psa. 23:5
* We are **W**alking through the **W**ilderness of this **W**orld, the Lord ***P****reparest* a Table for us.

 Let us be there **P**repared to feast at the Table and to **R**emember Him. I Cor. 10:16; 11:26

*I wandered through the wilderness, But God reached out His hand,*

 *And drew me safe to Canaan’s shore I’m in the promised land.* Mrs. C. S. Hoover

**REFLECTIONS FOR THE WEEK R. 796**

The Advisory for the Malaysian Movement Control Order (MCO) in all the four stages has been consistent with the slogan: Stay Home, Stay Safe; Stay Apart, Stay Safe; and Stay Clean, Stay Safe.

1. For some, the Stay Home, Stay Safe advice has been received negatively; hence, the hundreds of “order”-breakers each day and night at the police road blocks. For many, to Stay Home is likened to being kept confined in a very restricted space, without freedom to move around and seeing the same old faces. Ironically, it can also be likened to being *in the wilderness* with the monotony of living, bordering on boredom and the rituals of routine without the prospect of the pleasures of living as assembling in groups, socializing, playing games, etc. for this time under the MCO.

Such negative *wilderness* experience was that of the congregation of Israel when they were on their way from the slavery of Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land (See #B.2). To go there, they must track through the dry wilderness. Hence, they complained and murmured they had…

 …no water to drink: Exo.15:22-25; 17:

*So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water…And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? And he cried unto the LORD; and the LORD shewed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet… and there He proved them,*

…no food to eat: Exo. 16:2-3

*…Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness…Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.*

In both situations, God heard their cries and miraculously gave them daily manna and quails to eat and supplied them with water to drink throughout their wilderness journey.

The lesson for us to learn when we are experiencing such *wilderness* needs is not to murmur but to continue looking up to God to supply our needs in His own time and in His own way that we may least expect. We need to trust Him as He seeks to prove and test us. Let us take the opportunity to do what the following (#2) did when they were in the wilderness. **REFLECT**

1. What can a person do in the *Wilderness* of the home?
* Take time off to **R**est. **R**esort to God, as David did when he sought to get away from people to spend time with God (Psa. 55:6-7): *I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest. Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness*…*O God, Thou art my God; early will I seek Thee: my soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;* (Psa. 63:1)
* Take time off to **R**efresh yourself with His Word. **R**ead it and **R**ecite it to **R**eassure yourself when needed, as Jesus did when He used the Word of God to counter the Devil when He was tempted *in the wilderness*. He was able to say all the time: “*It is written*…” (Matt. 4:4, 6, 7,10)
* Take time off to **R**elax and **R**eflect on what has happened and **R**e-energise yourself for new challenges to come as what happened to Elijah when he fled to *the wilderness*. (See #B.3 above)
* Be **R**eady for God to **R**edirect you to His Ways and for Him to prepare you to do His Will as He prepared Moses and John Baptist (Mt. 3:1-3) when they were *in the Wilderness.* (#B. 1)
* And of course, it is time to **R**ejuvenate yourself to do what you have longed to do but have not:-
* **R**elate to the other members of your family – so near to one another in the **R**esidence and yet so distant in **R**elationships.
* To catch up with all the things you want to do but have had not the time to do –

to **R**enovate the house, to **R**earrange your things, and a thousand and one things for you to do.

* Make use of your *Wilderness* Confinement and use it to your advantage physically, personally, and spiritually. This is the best time to catch up with your purpose in life! **REFLECT**.

**Points To Ponder:**

 *There is Life in the Wilderness: Live it up with God to Live it out in the World Later!*