
in so that she cannot find her way. ⁷ She will chase after her lovers but not catch them; she will look for them but not find them. Then she will say, 'I will go back to my husband as at first, for then I was better off than now.'⁸ She has not acknowledged that I was the one who gave her the grain, the new wine and oil, who lavished on her the silver and gold— which they used for Baal.

Hosea 2:9 "Therefore I will take away my grain when it ripens, and my new wine when it is ready. I will take back my wool and my linen, intended to cover her naked body. ¹⁰ So now I will expose her lewdness before the eyes of her lovers; no one will take her out of my hands. ¹¹ I will stop all her celebrations: her yearly festivals, her New Moons, her Sabbath days—all her appointed festivals. ¹² I will ruin her vines and her fig trees, which she said were her pay from her lovers; I will make them a thicket, and wild animals will devour them.

Hosea 2:13 I will punish her for the days she burned incense to the Baals; **she decked herself with rings and jewelry, and went after her lovers, but me she forgot.** declares the Lord.

Hosea 2:14 "Therefore, **I am now going to allure her;** I will lead her into the **wilderness** (desert) and **speak tenderly to her.**

Hosea 2:15 There I will give her back her vineyards, and will make the Valley of Achor a door of hope. There she will respond ^o as in the days of her youth, as in the day she came up out of Egypt. ¹⁶ "In that day," declares the Lord, "you will call me 'my husband'; you will no longer call me 'my master.'¹⁷ I will remove the names of the Baals from her lips; no longer will their names be invoked. ¹⁸ In that day I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, the birds in the sky and the creatures that move along the ground. Bow and sword and battle I will abolish from the land, so that all may lie down in safety.

¹⁹ I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you in righteousness and justice, in love and compassion. ²⁰ I will betroth you in faithfulness, and you will acknowledge the Lord.

²¹ "In that day I will respond," declares the Lord— "I will respond to the skies, and they will respond to the earth; ²² and the earth will respond to the grain, the new wine and the olive oil, and they will respond to Jezreel. ²³ I will plant her for myself in the land; I will show my love to the one I called 'Not my loved one.' I will say to those called 'Not my people,' 'You are my people'; and they will say, 'You are my God.'"

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Desert

Narrow Road – part 6

February 9, 2025

Matthew 7:13-14

Series review: Narrow Road, beach, forest, mountains.

Desert – 3 metaphors

- (1) **Spiritual warfare**
- (2) **Spiritual deepening, enlivening**
- (3) **Spiritual refining**

Psalm 84:5 Blessed are those whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage. ⁶ As they pass through the Valley of Baka, they make it a place of springs; the autumn rains also cover it with pools.

⁷ They go from strength to strength, till each appears before God in Zion.

1. The desert of temptation

Matthew 4:1 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³ The tempter came to him and said, "**If you are the Son of God**, tell these stones to become bread." ⁴ Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Matthew 4:5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ⁶ "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: "'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'" ⁷ Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Matthew 4:8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹ "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." ¹⁰ Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'" ¹¹ Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

Galatians 6:9 And let us not grow weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart. ¹⁰ So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

2. The desert of battle

*Ephesians 6:10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ **Put on the full armor of God,** so that you can **take your stand** against the devil's schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹³ Therefore **put on the full armor of God,** so that when the day of evil comes, **you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.** ¹⁴ **Stand firm then...***

“Stand” – *histemi*

“Stand your ground” (v. 13a) - *anthistimi*

Ephesians 6:14 Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

¹⁸ And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. ¹⁹ Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

- Belt of truth – I will live now based on God's truths about everything and turn away from Satan's lies.
 - Breastplate of righteousness – How I live matters. Doing what is right today matters.
 - Feet shod with the gospel of peace – I will not turn inward on me. I will continue to turn my attention to lost people. Though under attack, I can be at peace.
 - Shield of faith – I am not trusting my feelings. I am trusting what God says. He is good uses everything redemptively.
 - Helmet of salvation – I AM saved and one day will enjoy it thoroughly (1 John 5:11-13)
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- Sword of the Spirit – With God we shall do valiantly. Ps. 27:1-3
 - “All...prayers” – the weapon of prayer

“Desert” life is a matter of “Soldier on!”

3. The desert that creates godly thirst

There is a thirst for something that no human experience can quench.

"The man who rings the bell at the brothel, unconsciously does so seeking God" - G.K. Chesterton.

1 John 2:15-17 Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in Him. For all that is in the world the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life is not of the Father but of the world. The world passes away and the lust of it but he who does the will of God abides forever.

Psalms 63:1 Oh, God, my God, how I search for you; how I thirst for you as in a dry and parched land where there is no water. How I long to find You. ² I How I wish I could go into your sanctuary to see your strength and your glory. ³ For your love and kindness is better than life itself, how I praise you. ⁴ I will praise you as long as I live, lifting up my hands to you in prayer. ⁵ At last I will be fully satisfied as with the richest of foods; I will praise you with great joy.

*Jeremiah 29:13 You will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me **with all your heart**.*

4. The desert of repentance

*Hosea 2:2 “Rebuke your mother, rebuke her, for she is not my wife, and I am not her husband. Let her remove the adulterous look from her face and the unfaithfulness from between her breasts. ³ Otherwise I will strip her naked and make her as bare as on the day she was born; I will make her like a desert, turn her into a parched land, and **slay her with thirst.***

Hosea 2:4 I will not show my love to her children, because they are the children of adultery. ⁵ Their mother has been unfaithful and has conceived them in disgrace. She said, ‘I will go after my lovers, who give me my food and my water, my wool and my linen, my olive oil and my drink.’

Hosea 2:6 Therefore I will block her path with thornbushes; I will wall her
