

**A**nd I believe that this is kind of what God is wanting to teach the Israelites as they go through the wilderness; teach them to call upon him.

And He's going to answer them, He's going to be with them in trouble, they may face trouble, they may face difficulty. The answer is to cry to the Lord and He will answer.

What the answer is not, is to complain, and to moan, and to rebel, and to fight against Moses and the Lord. And so, you have two possible reactions to the crisis which they're facing: either to complain and to moan, and want to go back to Egypt, or to believe and to go forward and to trust in the Lord. And that's what's going to make the difference. And it's going to be the answer to the question: is the Lord among us or not? Which, I believe, is the key question in this passage.

**W**e've looked at 'is the Lord among us or is he not?' God is going to show the Israelites that He is among them. He's going to answer their need. Whatever their need is, He's going to be with them. And God wants to show us that He is amongst us. He is with us.

**O**ne of the names given to Jesus is '*Emmanuel*', '*with us God*', God with us'. God is with us if we have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. He said: "**I'm with you always, even to the end of the age.**" He said "**I'll never leave or forsake you.**" It says: "**Where two or three gather together in my name, I'm there in the midst.**" So, Jesus says that 'I am with you if you have believed in Him', 'I'm not going to leave you', 'I'm not going to forsake you', 'I'm going to take you to the place which I have promised to take you to'. But, at the same time, He never promises us we're never going to have any trouble. In fact, some passages in the Bible say that '*you will have trouble because you have believed in Jesus*'. And you could look at many people around the world who are persecuted for their faith.

**H**e's not getting them out of trouble, **H**e's actually getting him into trouble. But **H**e's going to be with them in their trouble.

**A** 'disciple' is a person who is learning, a student, a pupil. There are true and half-hearted disciples. A person who really understands the Gospel and what it means will not go back no matter how hard the going gets. A person who has given some intellectual or social assent to it, but has not really experienced a change of heart, may well go back. A person who has come to a true experience of salvation in Jesus will not want to go back. We know that Jesus truly has the words of eternal life. That person won't give up on that if this life (non-eternal / temporal things) gets tough.

**John 6.61** Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, "This is a hard saying; who can understand it?" .... <sup>66</sup> From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. <sup>67</sup> Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" <sup>68</sup> But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. <sup>69</sup> Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Some pray **Psalm 91** – then still get COVID. Do you then give up and say God has let me down and want to go back?

**Psalm 91** You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, Nor of the arrow that flies by day, <sup>6</sup> Nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, Nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday. ... <sup>9</sup> Because you have made the Lord, who is my refuge, Even the Most High, your dwelling place, <sup>10</sup> No evil shall befall you, Nor shall any plague come near your dwelling;

Some say read this **Psalm** and claim that **verse 10** that '*no evil will come near you*'. Yes we can read this **Psalm** and ask the Lord to protect us from the virus and other evils.

But we can't claim **verse 10** and say the virus or something bad will **never** affect us. In reality, bad things do happen to Christians. Faith will protect us from many things, but we can't take it as a guarantee that nothing bad will ever happen to us in this life.

In fact, Christians who do make claims on the basis of certain verses in scripture often end up in depression and doubt when something bad does happen to them. Condemned and feeling they don't have enough faith. But we can't say just claiming **Psalm 91** means nothing bad will come to us. Or that plague / COVID will never affect us. Sometimes it will. In that case, we must claim **Psalm 91 verse 15**.

**He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honour him.**

That is what God is wanting to teach the Israelites as they go through the wilderness. To call upon Him and that He will answer, and be with them in trouble. They face trouble and difficulty and when they cry to the Lord, He will answer. He will show that He is with them / with us. **Is the Lord among us or not? Yes He is.**

**Hebrews 10.33-35.** Partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated; <sup>34</sup> for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven. <sup>35</sup> Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward.

**Knowing you have a better and enduring reward in heaven is a key to enduring in times of trouble.**

Jim Elliot (missionary martyr) '*He's no fool who gives what he can't keep to gain what he can't lose.*' "His journal entry for October 28, 1949, expresses his belief that work dedicated to Jesus was more important than his life (see Luke 9:24. "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.") He wrote, "he is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose." He follows the journal entry with a citation from Luke 16:9 ("that when it shall fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations".) "[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jim\\_Elliot](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jim_Elliot)