

SERMON TITLE: DETOURS**TEXT: EXODUS 13:17-22****INTRODUCTION.**

After 400 years of slavery in Egypt, God rescued his people. He prepared Moses to lead the Israelites back to the Promised Land. Although God displayed his power in many ways, he did not lead Israel on a straight-line path from Egypt to Canaan. Why? The answer to that question is relevant for us today. Referring to the experience of Israel during the Exodus, 1 Corinthians 10 says, “these things occurred as examples to us.” We can learn why God sometimes leads us on a zigzag course, and how we can stay encouraged along the way.

DISCUSSION.

Have you ever experienced a detour or delay that turned out to be a good thing?

EXAMINATION.

vv.17-18 Although the text says “Pharaoh let the people go,” it took ten plagues to convince him. Read Exodus 12:31-33. What was the real motivation for Egypt letting Israel go?

- What reason did God give for taking Israel on a longer path rather than the shorter one?
- Although some translations say Israel left “ready for battle” the word is better rendered as “in orderly ranks.” What is significant about the difference?

v.19 Why would Joseph make the Israelites swear such an oath?

vv.20-22 How would you describe the value that the pillar of cloud and of fire had for Israel?

APPLICATION.

- When you consider why God took Israel on a detour, why might he do the same for his people today?
- According to Romans 8:14, “Those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.” How do we determine that God is leading us? How do we know God’s will?
- There are two ways to stay encouraged when God is taking you on a zigzag course: 1) Hold on to every reminder of God’s promise 2) Expect signs of God’s presence wherever you go. Do you have any examples of either of these two things in your life?

- “God sends us on detours because he knows what’s best for us.” How difficult is it for you to believe this is true?
- Fact: What is the key truth that you understood from this passage?
- React: What did you feel?
- Act: What are you going to do?