

## Wishing for a Desert?

### Scripture Reading — Exodus 16:1-3; Revelation 12:13-14

*If only we had died by the Lord's hand in Egypt! — Exodus 16:3*

Have you ever wished to “get away from it all”—to escape daily pressures and difficult people and relationships, to move far away and try to get your life back together again? Be careful what you wish for.

The monk Alessandro Pronzato counsels, “If you . . . go to the desert to be rid of all the dreadful people and all the -awful problems in your life, you will be wasting your time. You should go to the desert for a total confrontation with yourself.” It appears that “-others” are not the problem.

Safe from Pharaoh's orders in the desert, the people of Israel discover their own rebellious voice. They'd rather die in Egypt, eating the meat of slavery, than live in the desert by the Word of the Lord. Satan is more than ready to fill their minds with ideas that conflict with God's will. It will take more than forty years in the wilderness for them to silence their own voice in favor of -listening to God's commands.

Voicing the desires that are put into our minds by the devil is as natural as not liking our neighbor. Substituting God's Word for our own voice is the painful goal of our way with God.

Jesus showed us how it is done. When tempted by the ancient oppressor, he quoted the Word of God each time, saying, “It is written” (Matthew 4:1-11). Jesus silenced his own voice so that his Father's Word might be heard.

### Prayer

*Heavenly Father, help me to know your Word, that I may speak it whenever I am tempted by the ancient oppressor. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

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