

we are not yet ready to handle properly. God did not lead the ~~people~~ people the direct way, but he lead them around through the wilderness because it was part of His wonderful purpose to carry out the training as it should be and when they went into the promised land and had to conquer these people they were ready for it, they were prepared for it. This is - - we are looking here at the background of the wilderness journey; and of course we are not spending so much time on this, most of us are past that point in our own ^{experience} ~~experience~~ but we will have to deal with others in Christian work and so I think it is particularly good that we have this in mind -- avoidance of premature dangers or temptations, Number 4.

Now in this same chapter, we read in vs. ~~21~~-21-22 "And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light to go by day and night. He took not away the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night ^{before} from the people."

5. Divine Guidance, vs. 21-22. The Christian who has started on his wilderness journey has a right to expect that if he keeps his eyes on the Lord that the Lord will guide him. Now, in the past one time I gave a series of talks on divine guidance. Perhaps 6 or 7 long chapel messages on various aspects of this. It is a very important matter for the Christian to understand . . . But the most vital thing in it is making sure that we are putting the Lord first in everything. If we are truly putting him first and not looking for excuses to go our own way, He may not put up a pillar of ^{cloud} ~~cloud~~ or a pillar of fire that we will see before us and the Israelites did. But He will guide us very definitely in the ~~the~~ way He wants us to go. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and we can be sure if our eyes are truly on Him that He will lead us through our lives. And we look back and say, O why ~~didn't~~ ^{did} I move that way, Why didn't I go that way? How much better it would have been to have gone that way. Well if our eyes are on the Lord, if we are truly following Him, when we get further