

## **Walking On In The Wilderness**

### **Introduction**

*We all have times when we feel as if we're in the spiritual wilderness. When the journey seems dry or dull, when the end seems so far away, when the odds against us seem too overwhelming.*

*The sense of being in the wilderness is the sense of uncertainty, frustration, dryness, and being seemingly lost. But what we've seen in the Bible is that the time spent in the wilderness isn't without its purpose. In fact, it is God who leads the people into the wilderness. It's a place of testing and learning. It's a place where at the end your faith and trust in God has increased and you are ready to face the battles ahead.*

*This week's study looks at some of the challenges of being in the wilderness and how to move forward even in wilderness times.*

## Walking On In The Wilderness

### Warming Up

1. Have you ever had an outdoors wilderness adventure? (Camping, Lost in the forest, etc.) What was it like?
2. What do you do to pass the time on a long car journey?

### Into the Passage

*Read Exodus 13:17- 14:14*

3. Why did God lead his people into the desert?
4. What was the Israelites' complaint? Why did they say those things? How were they feeling?
5. What was God's response? What was the lesson God was teaching the Israelites?

*Read Exodus 16:1-4*

6. What was the Israelites' complaint? Why did they say those things?
7. Read Exodus 1:11-14 - How good was the Israelite's memory? :P
8. How did God respond? Why did God choose to do it this way? What was the lesson God was teaching the Israelites?
9. Why do the Israelites keep complaining against God whilst in the wilderness?

## Moving Forward

10. The wilderness is often a place of spiritual frustration, dryness, and feeling lost. Have you ever felt that way spiritually or emotionally? What is the thing you want the most in those situations?
11. Why doesn't God just take people out of the wilderness right away?
12. What are the reasons for being in the spiritual wilderness?
13. Have you been in (or currently are in) a spiritual wilderness? What makes it difficult? What is God teaching you at the moment?

## Life Together

14. Pray for one another and those you know are going through a spiritual wilderness.

*The wilderness is not your final destination, it's part of a process. Testing, growth, learning, training all takes time. Learn to obey, increase your faith, strengthen your endurance, and see that God is leading you through the wilderness.*

*"Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us." -Romans 5:3-5*

## **Walking On In The Wilderness - Some Leader's Notes**

*These notes are primarily for the Into the Passage portion, and are to be used just as guidelines or commentary notes. Most of them are my own thoughts, so take that with a grain of salt. Let the Word of God lead you to truth, not these notes. Don't place too much focus on them, and let the Bible study discussion lead primarily from the passage itself.*

### **Into the Passage**

*Read Exodus 13:17- 14:14*

#### **3. Why did God lead his people into the desert?**

*Because he knew the Israelites weren't ready for battle so he took them the long way around to the promised land. And he wanted to test and show them his power and authority. To develop a relationship with his people.*

#### **4. What was the Israelites' complaint? Why did they say those things? How were they feeling?**

*They were upset that they were surrounded by all sides. Egyptians to kill them on one side, and an immovable body of water on the other. They were feeling hopeless, frustrated, angry, lost.*

#### **5. What was God's response? What was the lesson God was teaching the Israelites?**

*God parted the Red Sea. God's plan was for them to see that nothing is impossible with Him. To teach them not to be afraid, but to see that God brings salvation.*

*Read Exodus 16:1-4*

#### **6. What was the Israelites' complaint? Why did they say those things?**

*We have no food. We're going to die. We had lots of food in Israel, but now we have nothing.*

#### **7. Read Exodus 1:11-14 - How good was the Israelite's memory? :P**

*Not very good.*

#### **8. How did God respond? Why did God choose to do it this way? What was the lesson God was teaching the Israelites?**

*God rained bread from heaven, and then later sent quail. God is teaching them to depend and trust in Him. And he's testing to see whether they obey, or if they're going to take more than they need. It's like a lesson in responsibility.*

#### **9. Why do the Israelites keep complaining against God whilst in the wilderness?**

*They don't trust him. They don't have enough faith that he will be there. They are faced with situations which seem impossible to overcome. They are tired and hungry.*