

Into
the
wilderness



Into the Wilderness

Understanding & Embracing the Dark Times of Your Life

Words translated as “wilderness” occur nearly 300 times in the Bible. Wilderness seasons are brutal, but God is powerfully at work in the wilderness seasons of our lives. The only question is, do we have eyes to see it? In order for God to give us the choice whether or not to trust him, He must present us with a moment of crisis, and, since he wants us to seek help from Him, he brings us through the wilderness to remove all other help first. When we’re in a wilderness season, it’s easy to lose sight of God’s protection, provision, and preparation. We might even wonder, “How can I trust God’s goodness when I’m in this desolate place?” But remember Jesus! He went through the ultimate wilderness—the desolation and humiliation of dying under the curse of God. If that is the measure of God’s love and commitment to us, we can trust him in our own wilderness seasons. Let’s journey together!

Wilderness: You Will Need to Fight!

/ Peter 4:1-2; Exodus 17:8-16

Into the Wilderness: Time to Fight!

1. **Opposition is Real** → Though Esau himself was full of bitter hatred, and Ishmael is described as a wild man, Amalek seems to have been the worst of the Edomite-related peoples. The Bible records that even God has a special enmity for Amalek, saying in Exodus 17:16, "Because the LORD has sworn: the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation." What is it about the Amalekites that turns God against them? The Amalekites were the descendants of Esau and thus Israel's sworn enemies. They were a nomadic people who roamed the country in southern Palestine. These ancient enemies of Israel dealt subtlety with the Hebrews by striking them from the rear. See Deut. 25:17-19.
2. **Provision by God** → In response to this unprovoked attack against His people, God directed Moses to put Joshua in command of the army, and for Moses to stand on the top of the hill, lifting his staff toward heaven. This was the same staff Moses used to deliver the Hebrews from Egypt. It was a sign of God's power and presence, and so it would be lifted up before the people as a reminder that God would fight for them against their enemies. The lifted rod served to bolster the faith and encourage the fearful hearts of Israel as they warred against the Amalekites. When we know that God is with us, that it is by His power we are saved, our faith is strengthened and the battle goes our way. Moses' task to lift up the rod was not merely an encouragement to the Israelites of God's presence, but it was, in essence, intercessory prayer to God. And so we learn from this that those who go out into the fields to wage war against our enemies need those who are committed to prayer to intercede on their behalf.

Into the Wilderness: Recovering Your Will to be a Warrior!

1. **Mission** → Write it down! A man must have a battle to fight, a great mission for his life that involves but also transcends home and family. Read Letter from Sullivan Ballou, written before the First Battle of Bull Run. You need a battle to fight!
2. **Great Battle** → Engage! God has given you a place in the Great Battle, and your initiation journey will take you there. A man must have a cause to which he is devoted even unto death. YOU DO! God created you—to be his intimate ally, to join him in the Great Battle. You have a specific place in the line, a mission God made your for. Quote by Churchill. See Isaiah 61:1-3.
3. **Warrior** → How do you see yourself? You must have vision and cunning. You need a place for the Warrior in you to come alive and be honed, trained, and seasoned. Quote by Robert Bly. See Judges 6:11-15.

Mission

Winston Churchill was called upon to lead the British through the desperate hours of WWII.

He said, “I felt as if I were walking with destiny, and that all my past life had been but a preparation for this hour and for this trial.”

Into the Wilderness: Who are YOU?

1. **No Battle** → Some men have no battle. They are like mercenaries who are hired to fight, guys who have no stake in the battle at hand except a paycheck. Men who are fighting the wrong battle or for the wrong reason, or, both.
2. **Wrong Battle** → Men who are busy fighting, but fighting the wrong battle (Saul before Damascus road or King Saul trying to kill Jesus).
3. **Know Your Battle** → Men who know they are fighting the right battle.
 1. What are you fighting for?
 2. What is your greatest enemy?
 3. Do you see your calling to the battle?
 4. How desperately do you need God to show up for any chance of victory?
 5. If you win the battles you are currently fighting, what will be the result?

ACTION: Journal this!

1. What are you are fighter, a warrior?
2. What battle are you fighting today?
3. Who do you know that is in the wilderness NOW?