



Since January 7, we've been walking through the book of Exodus. So far, God has freed the Israelites from 400+ years of slavery and led them to cross the Red Sea miraculously. We now get to what is called the wilderness journey. You might find yourself in your own wilderness or desert season today. You'll be there at some point if you're not there now. The wilderness is a place where we feel like we're lacking. We're longing for God, but He seems distant. We find ourselves wanting, disoriented, and unsure of what to do next. Today's study is titled: "God's Provision in the Wilderness of Your Life."

Key Passage: Exodus 15 -17

Discussion Questions:

1. Reflecting on the Israelites' journey from slavery to the wilderness, what parallels can you draw between their experiences and your spiritual journey?
2. In the wilderness of Marah, the Israelites faced bitter circumstances. How do you handle bitterness in your life? Are there situations where you've experienced bitterness turning into sweetness through God's work?

Israel isn't used to the wilderness, camping, or going without water! But, for three days, they journeyed through the desert and found no water! Can you imagine your kids in this scenario? Eventually, they find water at Marah, but the first person who takes a drink spits it out because the water is bitter! Naturally, the people begin to grumble against Moses. They quickly forgot the miracles God had worked on their behalf. Are we any different? It's easy for us to face a difficult season, forget God's past provision, and allow our current circumstances to twist our hearts with bitterness. When we face these kinds of seasons and temptations of the heart, it's important to remember that bitter seasons can make us better people. If we'll surrender the pain and frustration of our circumstances to God. When we surrender to Him, He can use it for good in our lives. We only have to surrender to God during disorienting seasons and trust that God can use it for our good.

3. The wilderness of Sin represents a place of daily provision from God, specifically manna. How does this story challenge your faith in trusting God for your daily needs, especially in times of uncertainty? How does this condition for gathering manna reflect our relationship with God and trust in His provision?

And rains down bread (manna) from Heaven. God continues, saying, "I will cover the ground with quail at night so you can eat meat." However, the manna came with two conditions: They could only gather one day's provision at a time, and on the sixth day, they could gather enough for two days. If they gathered more than they were instructed, worms showed up. For people desperate for food, trusting God was quite a challenge. How often do we try to hold back from God? In uncertainty, we don't do things God's way because we're not sure God will do His part. This plays out in a lot of ways in our lives.

One example is through tithing (giving 10% of your income back to God through your local church). People hold back in uncertainty, unsure that God will do His part to provide for our daily needs. According to the Bible, living on 90% with God's blessing is much safer than 100% without it. Remember Malachi 3:10, "Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of Heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need." Don't miss the blessing of trusting God for your daily provision, whether with your finances or any other area of your life. Will you trust God for His daily provision?

4. Rephidim is where God turns nothing into something, providing water from a rock. Can you share instances where you've witnessed God turning seemingly impossible situations into blessings?

Rephidim is the place where God turns nothing into something. The people had no water, then they had water. There was only a rock, and then water came from the rock. Rephidim is a great place to remind us that God can bring something out of nothing. Some of you need God to take the "nothings" of your life and turn them into "something." Maybe you're facing a hopeless situation in your marriage, for physical healing, or with some trouble at work or school. Remember, God can bring something out of nothing!

5. The Israelites questioned God's presence and provision despite witnessing numerous miracles. In Exodus 17:7, the Israelites tested God by their quarreling, asking, "Is the Lord among us or not?" Have you ever found yourself asking a similar question?
6. How can we cultivate a mindset of gratitude and trust in God's provision, especially when facing wilderness seasons in our lives?

We all tend to be dominated by the tyranny of a moment – especially when they are challenging and last longer than expected. When this happens in our lives, it's easy to forget how God has come through for us in the past. A simple exercise that may be more profound than it seems would be to write down all the significant ways God has come through for us. Whenever we feel we're beginning to doubt God's provision in the present moment, we'll be reminded that He's with us today as He was yesterday, and He'll be there tomorrow, too.

7. What's one personal takeaway from today's study you can focus on this week?