

When we consider the exodus story, the Israelites had to pass through the wilderness to get to the promised land, and had some hard times during the journey. So, we will have tough periods of wilderness experience as we travel to our 'Promised Land'.

I read this scripture recently:

“And he said, which way shall we go up? And he answered, By the way of the wilderness of Edom.” 2Kings 3:8.



The words **'by the way of the wilderness'** jumped off the page at me, and this set me thinking about our wilderness journey through the Covid pandemic.

And so to reflect on our spiritual journey; it may have a number of varied 'wilderness' experiences that could include:

- ◆ The marshy ground of slow progress;
- ◆ The grim weather of bitterness;
- ◆ Weeping from disappointment;
- ◆ The joy of fulfilment and achievement;
- ◆ A mountainous climb concluding in peace with God;
- ◆ The finding an oasis of refreshment.



At times we have hard lessons to learn, but let us remember that wilderness experiences are meant to lead us to a place of healing, growth and hope.

The first reaction to a wilderness experience is often to withdraw within ourselves – especially those like: the loss of a loved one; losing a job; failing God, and thinking there's no way back – but He understands, and will bring comfort if we let Him.

Consider Moses:

- ◆ well educated;
- ◆ killed Egyptian;
- ◆ fled Egypt;
- ◆ separated from his people;
- ◆ lost his way in life;
- ◆ 40 years old



... but God had a plan that took him 40 years of training to fulfil, and this started with meeting God at 'the burning bush', and later the experiences given in [Ex 17:5-6](#)

"The LORD answered Moses, "Walk on ahead of the people. Take with you some of the elders of Israel and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink." So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel."

However, a similar situation occurred later in [Numbers 20:6-12](#), but this time Moses was told 'to speak to the rock', not strike it, and this disobedience cost him dearly – please read, and let us learn. His father-in-law, a Bedouin named Jethro taught him much through his wisdom and hospitality.

Lastly, the word 'rest' in [Matt 11:29](#) and [Matt 12:43](#), does not mean rest from work, but in work – not the rest of inactivity, but of using all our faculties. So that we are at rest, and at one, with Jesus and others whilst the difficulties are still there as we continue the journey.

Out of these experiences please think about the following questions:

- ◆ Consider your life through your wilderness experiences, and ask, how am I doing so far?
- ◆ What legacy are you leaving?
- ◆ Are you finding the 'Rest' that Jesus offers?

LIVING FOR GOD BEGINS
WITH RESTING IN HIM.