

Israel's time in the wilderness is of great importance to Christians because of the way Christ fulfilled so many of the themes and promises throughout the narrative. God's chosen people, the Israelites have been set free from their slavery but are now in the wilderness and in the process of learning what it means to be God's people before His plans come to completion. Does that sound a little familiar? For us, it's often representative of the fact that we were all born as slaves to sin but because of Jesus' great love and sacrifice we are free. We, too, are in our own wilderness as we have access to freedom but await the completion of God's promises and plans.

New to daily devotionals? Here are a few tips for this series:

- The Old Testament can sometimes feel distant and confusing. Remember that if we wish to truly understand the message of the New Testament, we must know the message of the Old Testament—this rings especially true for the Israelites' time in the wilderness! When we read the Old Testament, we're crossing into different cultures, worldviews and time periods—that's a lot of differences and yet God is the same! Take each part little by little and ask God, "How would you have me know you more deeply because of this Scripture?"

Monday, March 11th

Read Exodus 25:21-22

²¹ And you shall put the mercy seat on the top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony that I shall give you. ²² There I will meet with you, and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim that are on the ark of the testimony, I will speak with you about all that I will give you in commandment for the people of Israel.

Why might there have been so many specific instructions for the creation of the tabernacle? What significance might the tabernacle have if it took great care to create? In what ways does the construction of the tabernacle show reverence for God?

When have you experienced the presence of God in a particularly powerful way? How has encountering God increased your reverence or awe for Him? How might the tabernacle have provided similar experiences for the Israelites?

Tuesday, March 12th

Read John 1:14, 16-17

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. ...¹⁶ For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

What does it mean that Jesus dwells among us? How might Jesus' dwelling remind the original readers of this passage about the tabernacle?

If Christ has made God known to us, how does that contrast with the Israelite's tradition of the tabernacle? How does Jesus' arrival reveal God's glory in new ways as compared to the tabernacle?

What might this passage say about God's desire to communicate with us today? Spend some time in prayer naming the ways you are grateful for your access to God.

Wednesday, March 13th

Read Hebrews 9:11-12

¹¹ But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) ¹² he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.

Based on this passage, what do we know about the high priest/Jesus? How does Jesus as the high priest differ from what Moses and the Israelites knew about the tabernacle?

What do you think it means to secure an eternal redemption? Do you think you have secured it?

The magnitude of Christ dwelling with us is enormous! How does your understanding of the tabernacle and now Jesus as the high priest change your understanding of God? How might it increase your awe of Jesus as you pursue Him?

Thursday, March 14th

Read Romans 8:37-39

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.³⁸ For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers,³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

What assurance does this passage offer you? How might this assurance change the way you interact with God and others? How might it alter your perspective of creation?

Friday, March 15th

Read Psalm 91

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.

² I will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

³ For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence.

⁴ He will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.

⁵ You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day,

⁶ nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness, nor the destruction that wastes at noonday.

⁷ A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you.

⁸ You will only look with your eyes and see the recompense of the wicked.

⁹ Because you have made the LORD your dwelling place—

the Most High, who is my refuge—

¹⁰ no evil shall be allowed to befall you, no plague come near your tent.

¹¹ For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.

¹² On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.

¹³ You will tread on the lion and the adder; the young lion and the serpent you will trample underfoot.

¹⁴ "Because he holds fast to me in love, I will deliver him; I will protect him, because he knows my name.

¹⁵ When he calls to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him.

¹⁶ With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation."

Spend time observing the psalm, noticing how many statements relate to God being with or dwelling in His creation.

How do you experience God being with you? In what ways do you long to feel that God is with you? How might this psalm offer encouragement in your longing? What hope or assurance does this psalm give you?



Wandering

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