

# With Us in the Wilderness

Regardless of where we go, God's love and promises interlace with our lives.

by LAUREN CHANDLER

**T**HE WILDERNESS is a theme woven throughout the tapestry of Scripture. It's the dark gray thread that makes the other colors pop. Many great stories involve a wilderness. The Lord called Moses while he was tending sheep on the west side of the wilderness. John the Baptist preached repentance in the midst of the wilderness of Judea. Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness before He began His public ministry. Perhaps the most notable account of the wilderness is Israel's journey from slavery in Egypt through the wilderness and into the promised land.

The entire Book of Numbers is set in the midst of Israel's wilderness. In fact, the Hebrew title for this book is translated "In the Wilderness."

If you live long enough, you will endure a wilderness (or several wildernesses) of your own — a season of unfamiliarity, barrenness, and wildness. Over the past year, it seems the whole world has endured a wilderness — a pandemic that has interrupted every semblance of normalcy. The wilderness feels wild. It is wild. But it's not arbitrary.

The Lord ordains the wilderness for His people for a purpose. He lets the discomfort of

the unfamiliar, barren, and wild prepare us for the next season. He reveals the idols in our hearts — the things or people we look to for purpose or meaning besides God. He removes distractions and refocuses our attention to set squarely on Him. Above all, He remains with His children in the wilderness. He never abandoned Israel in the wilderness, and He will never abandon any who have put their faith in Christ. (See Matt. 28:20.)

You might be in the midst of a wilderness season. Familiarity and comfort seem out of reach. The uncertain and wild are your reality. Friend, while

your experience might be unique to you, you are not alone. Many have gone before you. More than that, there is One who is with you who will never forsake you. The Lord is weaving the difficulty of this season into the tapestry of your life, not to do you harm, but for your ultimate good. ☪

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LAUREN CHANDLER is a wife and mother of three. She is passionate about writing, music, and leading worship. Her latest Bible study is *With Us in the Wilderness*, available February 2021 at [LifeWay.com/WithUsInTheWilderness](http://LifeWay.com/WithUsInTheWilderness).

