

# Are You Ready to Leave the Wilderness?

by Andrew Murray

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*The sermon challenges listeners to leave their wilderness life of unbelief and disobedience, and to trust in God's love and power to bring them into a life of fellowship and communion with Him.*

**Scripture:** Joshua 14:8, Psalm 37:5, John 15:5, Romans 8:2, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 5:16, Ephesians 3:20, Philippians 4:13, Hebrews 3:19, 1 Peter 1:5

**Topics:** "Surrender to God", "Faith"

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## Description

Andrew Murray emphasizes the importance of faith in leaving the wilderness of unbelief and entering into a life of victory and communion with God. He points out that Israel's struggles stemmed from their lack of belief in God's promises, leading to disobedience and sin. Murray challenges believers to fully surrender their will to God, trust in His ability to transform their lives, and embrace a life filled with the Holy Spirit. He encourages the congregation to believe in the possibility of living in constant fellowship with God, just as Peter did after his transformation. Ultimately, Murray calls for a commitment to live a life of integrity and dependence on God's power to overcome sin.

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## Transcript

You know the mark of Israel's life in the wilderness-the cause of all their troubles there-was unbelief. They did not believe that God could take them into the promised land. And then followed many sins and failures-lusting, idolatry, murmuring, etc. That has, perhaps, been your life, beloved; you do not believe that God will fulfill His word. You do not believe in the possibility of unbroken fellowship with Him, and unlimited partnership. On account of that, you become disobedient, and did not live like a child doing God's will, because you did not believe that God could give you the victory over sin. Are you willing now to leave that wilderness life? Sometimes you are, perhaps, enjoying fellowship with God, and sometimes you are separated from Him; sometimes you have nearness to Him, and at other times great distance from Him; sometimes you have a willingness to walk closely with Him, but sometimes there is even unwillingness. Are you now going to give up your whole life to Him? Are you going to approach Him and say, "My God, I do not want to do anything that will be displeasing to Thee; I want Thee to keep me from all worldliness, from all self-pleasure; I want Thee, O God, to help me to live like Peter after Pentecost, filled with the Holy Ghost, and not like carnal Peter."

Beloved, are you willing to say this? Are you willing to give up your sins, to walk with God continually, to submit yourself wholly to the will of God, and have no will of your own apart from His will? Are you going to

live a perfect life? I hop you are, for I believe in such a life;-not perhaps in the sense in which you understand "perfection"-entire freedom from wrong-doing and all inclination to it, for while we live in the flesh the flesh will lust against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh; but the perfection spoken of in the Old Testament as practiced by some of God's saints, who are said to have "served the Lord with a perfect heart." What is this perfection? A state in which your hearts will be set on perfect integrity without any reserve, and your will wholly subservient to God's will. Are you willing for such a perfection, with your whole heart turned away from the world and given to God alone? Are you going to say, "No, I do not expect that I will ever give up my self-will."? It is the devil tempting you to think it will be too hard for you. Oh! I would plead with God's children just to look at the will of God, so full of blessing, of holiness, of love; will you not give up your guilty will for that blessed will of God? A man can do it in one moment when he comes to see that God can change his will for him. Then he may say farewell to his old will, as Peter did when he went out and wept bitterly, and when the Holy Spirit filled his soul on the day of Pentecost. Joshua "wholly followed the Lord his God." He failed, indeed, before the enemy at Ai, because he trusted too much to human agency, and not sufficiently to God; and he failed in the same manner when he made a covenant with the Gibeonites; but still, his spirit and power differed very widely from that of the people whose unbelief drove them before their enemies and kept them in the wilderness. Let us be willing wholly to serve the Lord our God, and "make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof." Let us believe in the love and power of God to keep us day by day, and put "no confidence in the flesh."

Then comes the second step:-"I must believe that such a life in the land of Canaan is a possible life." Yes, many a one will say, "Ah! what would I give to get out of the wilderness life! But I cannot believe that it is possible to live in this constant communion with God. You don't know my difficulties-my business cares and perplexities; I have all sorts of people to associate with; have gone out in the morning braced up by communion with God in prayer, but the pressure of business before night has driven out of my heart all that warmth of love that I had, and the world has gotten in and made the heart as cold as before." But we must remember again what it was that kept Israel out of Canaan. When Caleb and Joshua said, "We are able to overcome the enemy," the ten spies, and the six hundred thousand answered, "We cannot do it; they are too strong for us." Take care, dear reader, that we do not repeat their sin, and provoke God as these unbelievers did. He says, it is possible to bring us into the land of rest and peace; and I believe it because He has said so, and because He will do it if I trust Him. Your temper may be terrible; your pride may have bound you a hundred times; your temptations may "compass you about like bees," but there is victory for you if you will but trust the promises of God.

Looking again at Peter. He had failed again and again, and went from bad to worse until he came to denying Christ with oaths. But what a change came over him! Just study the first epistle of Peter, and you will see that the very life of Christ had entered into him. He shows the spirit of true humility, so different from his former self-confidence; and glorying in God's will instead of in his own. He had made a full surrender to Christ, and was trusting entirely in Him. Come therefore to-day and say to God, "Thou didst so change selfish, proud Peter, and Thou canst change me likewise." Yes, God is able to bring you into Canaan, the land of rest. You know the first half of the 8th of Romans. Have you noticed the expressions that are to be found there-"The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death". To walk after the spirit; To be after the spirit; To be in the Spirit; To have the Spirit dwelling in us. Through the Spirit to mortify the deeds of the body; To be led by the Spirit; To be spiritually minded. These are all blessings which come when we bind ourselves wholly to live in the Spirit. If we live after the Spirit we have the very nature of the Spirit in us. If we live in the Spirit, we shall be led by Him every day and every moment. What if you were to open your heart to-day to be filled with the Holy Spirit? Would He

not be able to keep you every moment in the sweet rest of God? and would not His mighty arm give you a complete victory over sin and temptation of every kind, and make you able to live in perpetual fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ? Most certainly! This, then, is the second step; this is the blessed life God has provided for us. First, God brought us out of Egypt; secondly, He brings us into Canaan.

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