

In the Wilderness

by Robert Hawker

The sermon encourages believers to meditate on the wilderness of Sin, beholding Jesus in every trial and circumstance, and finding sanctified blessings in their exercises.

Topics: "Faith And Trials", "Gods Faithfulness"

Description

Robert Hawker preaches about the wilderness of Sin, drawing parallels between the experiences of Israel in the Old Testament and our own spiritual journeys. He emphasizes the need for faith to lead us through our wilderness seasons, reminding us of God's faithfulness and love despite our rebellious nature. Hawker encourages believers to see Jesus in every trial, knowing that any circumstance that draws us closer to Him is ultimately a blessing, leading us to a deeper appreciation of His grace and mercy.

Transcript

July 22.

EVENING.

"The wilderness of Sin." Exodus 16:1

My soul! You are still in a wilderness, and have not yet arrived home to your Father's house; and you are frequently exercised with wilderness dispensations. Perhaps, under the Spirit's teaching, an evening's meditation on the wilderness of Sin, where Israel sojourned, will be profitable to you. Let faith lead you there, and see what subjects are there opened before you.

Was there ever anything like the experience like Israel, who was brought out with a high hand, and stretched out arm, from the tyranny of Egypt? Did the sea open a path for them to march through; and that memorable spot, which to them became the way of salvation, become to their enemies that pursued them, the pit of destruction? Did the Lord go before them in a pillar of cloud by day, and cover them from danger by the pillar of fire by night? After such miracles, yea, in the moment of receiving the same continuance of divine favour, while on their way to Canaan, what was there in the people's passing through the wilderness of Sin, that should have perturb their minds, or made them call into question God's faithfulness, and his love? You know, my soul, what the scripture has recorded of the events of the wilderness to Israel. Though their history furnishes a continued series of the Lord's mercies over them, yet, on their part, little else can be found but rebellion, unthankfulness, and sin.

Pause, and let the apostle's question have its full weight upon you. "What then? (Paul says,) Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin." (Rom 3:9) Was there ever an instance of grace like this, my soul, so great, so distinguishing, so abounding, when the Lord found you in the Egypt of your fallen nature, and when he brought you out with a sovereign hand? Did Jesus open to you a new and living way through his blood? And do you not know, that his cross, which is your glory, and your salvation, will be the condemnation of all the enemies who despise it? Is your Lord leading you, going before you, and following you, in grace, and goodness, and mercy, all the days of your life, like the pillar of cloud, and the pillar of fire, to Israel, and bringing you by a "right way, that they might go to a city for a dwelling place?" (Psa 107:7) Are these among the daily manifestations of your Lord? And shall your passage (for you know that it is but a passage) through the wilderness of Sin, make you for a moment lose sight of Jesus?

True, you are exercised; and your exercises appear to you so particularly distressing, as if no one of God's people before had ever been so circumstanced. But in them you should mark the wisdom, as well as the love of him that appoints them. If you would trace Jesus in all, you would find a sanctified blessing in all; and the consequence of your heaviest trials would then bring in an exact proportion of the sweetest comforts. It is because they are particular, that they are suited to you. There are numberless things which occur in the exercises of your brethren, which to you would be no exercises at all. Other Christians feel them, and know their pressure, and the love of Jesus in sending them, and the tenderness of Jesus in helping them under them, and bringing them out of them: all these things you see and know in others, and find cause both to admire and to adore the divine faithfulness in the dispensations. But in the study and improvement of the exercises in your own heart, which, of all others, is the most important, here you fail. And yet you art convinced, in a cool hour, when grace is alive, that if a band of angels were to arrange the circumstances of your state, they could not order them with the wisdom and love that they are now ordered with.

Go then, my soul, go by faith, frequently to the wilderness of Sin. Look at Israel's history, and look up for wisdom to gather suitable instruction. Behold Jesus in every dispensation. Whatever tends to lead you to him, must be blessed. It is impossible that any trial, be it what it may, can be otherwise than blessed, which opens to the view Jesus therein, and endears and makes Jesus precious thereby. And, my soul! while I wish you frequently to go by solemn meditation to the wilderness of Sin, let each renewed visit remind you that you are getting through it. Like children at school, every day brings closer the holiday which will take us home to our Father's house. A few steps more, a few exercises more, and Jesus will send his chariot for us; indeed, he will come himself to fetch us; and we shall take an everlasting farewell both of the wilderness of Sin and this world of sorrow together. "Make haste, my beloved, And be like a gazelle or a young stag on the mountains of spices." (Song 8:14)

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