

Ever been asked to look at a glass half-way filled with water? Then ask the question: It is half-full or half-empty? We know it is a proverbial phrase, a litmus test to determine an individual's worldview, a pessimism (half empty), optimism (half-full). Often we're given only two extremes. An either/or. The wilderness journey helps you see another option: a both/and- a third option. The cup can be on its way to being overflowing or emptying. Both needed on the wilderness journey- to be emptied leads to overflowing.

Read: Numbers 20:1-13, Deut. 32:48-52, Deut. 34

The wilderness will reveal what is in your true heart. We know that when our lives are steady and calm, we rest, relax. That's when the wilderness comes. A testing ground, emptying, filling. During hard times, the pressures of life squeeze us so we can discover what is truly inside. Erma Bombeck said, "When life gives you lemons, make lemonade." To make lemonade, you have to squeeze them to reveal what's inside.

The wilderness is a testing ground to reveal our true nature: the condition of our heart, character, and faith. What we are hiding from (both the positive and negative). Those hard places, bringing self-awareness. When life becomes difficult, our response reveals what is inside.

As we study Moses' life, a man who saw God face to face, we see a person of great faith who succumb to the squeeze of the wilderness.

Imagine Moses standing on Mt Nebo, able to see the promised land, and yet not allowed to go in. Even at his age, Moses was of good health, able to make the short journey. It was not that he couldn't. God would not allow it.

What can we learn from Moses about the wilderness?

What keeps us from entering the promised land?

What keeps you from coming out of the wilderness?

The gift of the wilderness is awareness. Surfacing the things that hold us back and discovering your strengths and weaknesses as you come out of the darkness.

Rob Renfroe's book, *A Way Through the Wilderness*, makes this comment: "The wilderness is not your enemy, it's your friend. It is telling you exactly what you need to know about yourself where you're strong, where you are weak, and where you need to grow so that you can become more like Jesus." P129.

How can you make friends with the wilderness?

What have you learned about yourself in the wilderness? Your voice? Your knowing? Your passion?

How has the wilderness changed you?

What gift have you discovered in the wilderness that you can share with others?

How can you help others who you see are in the wilderness?

How has this bible study prepared you for a wilderness journey?