

5-Day Devotional: Thirst and Encounter

Day 1: The Question We're Afraid to Ask

Reading: Exodus 17:1-7

Devotional: The Israelites' question wasn't faithless—it was honest: "Is the Lord among us or not?" Sometimes our most desperate questions are actually prayers in disguise. When you're in a season where nothing feels familiar, where the landscape seems barren, you might wonder if God has abandoned you. But notice: God doesn't condemn their question. Instead, He answers with presence—water from a rock. Your raw, unpolished questions don't offend God. They invite encounter. Today, bring your hardest question to God. Don't dress it up. Don't make it theological. Just ask. The wilderness is often where we learn that God doesn't need our polished prayers—He wants our honest hearts.

Day 2: Seen in the Shadows

Reading: John 4:5-15

Devotional: The woman came to the well at noon to avoid being seen. She had organized her entire life around invisibility, managing her shame in careful isolation. Yet Jesus sat there waiting—not to condemn, but to see her fully. What parts of your life have you hidden away, scheduled for the "noon hour" when no one else is watching? Jesus offers something radical: the freedom of being completely known and completely loved. Living water isn't just about spiritual satisfaction—it's about never having to manage your thirst alone again. You don't have to hide your story to be worthy of God's presence. Being seen by Jesus isn't a threat; it's the beginning of transformation.

Day 3: Sustained, Not Rescued

Reading: Psalm 23

Devotional: God didn't rescue the Israelites from the wilderness that day—He sustained them in it. This distinction matters. We often pray for removal: take away this struggle, end this season, fix this problem. But sometimes God's answer is presence, not extraction. "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death" doesn't promise the valley will disappear. It promises you won't walk it

alone. The rod and staff, the table prepared, the overflowing cup—these are provisions for the journey, not replacements for it. Today, consider: what if God's plan isn't to lift you out of this hard place immediately, but to meet you so completely within it that the wilderness itself becomes holy ground?

Day 4: From Hiding to Proclaiming

Reading: John 4:27-42

Devotional: The woman who came to the well hiding became the first evangelist in John's Gospel. Her transformation wasn't about her circumstances changing—she still had her complicated history. But her encounter with Jesus changed everything about how she carried that history. She ran back to the very people she'd been avoiding: "Come and see!" Transformation doesn't always look like a changed situation; sometimes it looks like changed eyes, a changed heart, a changed story. What you've been hiding might actually be the testimony someone else needs to hear. Your wilderness, your noon-hour shame, your complicated past—when touched by Jesus, these become the very places from which you can say, "Come and see the one who knows everything about me and loves me still."

Day 5: The God Who Shows Up

Reading: Isaiah 43:1-7

Devotional: "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you." Not if. When. God doesn't promise a life without wilderness, without deep waters, without fire. He promises presence. The Israelites got water from a rock. The woman got living water at a well. You might get a word at the right moment, an unexpected provision, a quiet sense that you're not abandoned. God's presence doesn't always announce itself with drama. Sometimes it's as simple as enough for today—enough strength, enough hope, enough grace. Look back at your own wilderness seasons. Where did water come from rocks? Where did you find sustenance you couldn't have manufactured? God has been showing up all along. Trust that He will continue.