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| ***Title:*** | ***Wilderness Wandering*** |
| **Goal/Objective:** | (This has two lessons that can be used individually or combined)  **Lesson 1:** Show the parallels of the Israelites wandering in the wilderness and Jesus’ temptation in the wilderness.  **Lesson 2:** Show how wandering in the wilderness mirrors the immaturity of a Christian remaining the central focus of their salvation. Show the effects of the continued immaturity. |
| **Scripture Passages:** | **Lesson 1:** Exodus 15:22-25; 16:2-4; Numbers 11:4-6, 18-20, 31-34; 14:1-10, and Matthew 4:1-11  **Lesson 2:** Exodus 15:22-25; 16:2-4; Numbers 11:4-6, 18-20, 31-34; 14:1-10, and Hebrews 6:1-9  [**click here for Scriptures**](http://www.cmintl.webspaceforme.net/pages/WildernessWanderingScriptures.htm) |
| **Introduction:** | **Lesson 1:** We will look at the progression of examples of what the Israelites went through while in the wilderness and how Jesus overcame the same temptations while in the wilderness.  **Lesson 2:** We will look at the progression of examples of what the Israelites went through while in the wilderness, their lack of growing in faith, and the result. Then, we will look at Hebrews chapter 6 and see the results of failing to grow as believers in Jesus. |
| **Development Activities:** | **Lesson 1:**  Read each of the Old Testament scriptures and after each, note how each example of Israel’s murmuring becomes worse instead of better. Instead of recognizing that God provided before therefore He can and will again, they become more and more discontent and rebellious. In Numbers chapter 11, the Israelites are now looking for *whoever* will feed them! After reading the passage in chapter 14, point out that the people had now come to the point that they were going to kill their leaders.  Read Matthew 4:1-11  Jesus faces the temptation of hunger, and Satan questions Jesus’ identity (IF you’re the Son of God…) Jesus answers with scripture “Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God”  Jesus faces the temptation of protection and proving Himself. Jesus again answers with scripture “Thou shalt not tempt the Lord Thy God”  Jesus faces the temptation of power and glory and answers “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God alone and him only shalt thy serve”  Jesus does not try to relieve the problems in the wilderness. He refuses to try to fulfill anything in the wilderness. Jesus endures hunger and Satan’s attempts to cause Him to stumble. The Israelites wanted satisfaction in the wilderness but the wilderness was just en route to the Promised Land. The tests in the wilderness were intended to give them a foundation, a relationship with the Lord, but they would not grow, so they could not go, into the Promised Land.  Jesus’ answer in the wilderness was the written Word—Instead of crying out for God to do something for Him, God the Father was the One who was central—everything centered around the Father and what He said. The Israelites wanted God to serve them in the wilderness! Jesus wanted to serve God.  **Lesson 2:**  Read each of the Old Testament scriptures and after each, note how each example of Israel’s murmuring becomes worse instead of better. Instead of recognizing that God provided before therefore He can and will again, they become more and more discontent and rebellious. In Numbers chapter 11, the Israelites are now looking for *whoever* will feed them! After reading the passage in chapter 14, point out that the people had now come to the point that they were going to kill their leaders.  Read Hebrews 6:1-9 Notice that these elementary principles can center upon us until we see them fulfilled in Christ:  *(Our) repentance from dead works*  *(Our) faith toward God*  *Doctrines of washings and laying on of hands (for this life)*  *(Our) resurrection with Christ from among the dead*  *Judgment (that with us central, we would, if we could, avoid)*  So the author wants to press on to maturity. He does not want to remain with these things that, although important, should already be established. And he shows the consequences of continuing in immaturity in verses 4-8. To continue to only see Christianity as it relates to an individual believer is to continue to take from the Lord and yet fail to release that life. It is impossible to receive the life of Christ that would give itself away and continue to live contrary to that. It is like the Israelites wandering in the wilderness. They were God’s chosen people yet they could not see that the purpose for Him choosing them was beyond them. Instead of seeing a greater purpose than their own salvation from Egypt, they constantly related everything to them and their circumstances. In a sense, they were “believers” that believed in God but did not actually believe Him! The consequence of their lack of faith was disobedience, and that disobedience led to their death after 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. Verses 7-8 show the dire effects of receiving to oneself without realizing that we are not the “one for whom it [the land] is worked”. There is a building up of the body of Christ for His expression that an immature believer will fail to see. This one is still receiving from God for himself alone. Since we were never intended to be alone, this has disastrous effects upon us as well as those around us. Far from producing fruit, we will produce “thorns and evil plants”. We will be legalistic and accusatory toward our brothers and sisters—just like the Israelites accused Moses, Aaron and even God!  This is a maturity issue with a believer. It is important to realize that this is not referring to a believer who is caught up in wrong beliefs. They are correct in the elementary doctrines but have simply failed to grow to become Christ centered. |
| **Practice:** | Sing Wilderness Wandering Song. Depending upon the age of the students, the whole song can be sung (and chanted) by all or else the verses can be solos and the chorus sung by all.  For tips for teaching songs to students see the “Tips” page.  [**click here for Song**](http://www.cmintl.webspaceforme.net/pages/WildWanderingSong.html) |
| **Checking for Understanding:** | **Lesson 1:** Ask the students the following questions:  Where were the Israelites wandering? *In the wilderness*  When faced with hunger and thirst, what did the Israelites do? *They whined and grumbled and did not trust God!*  When Jesus faced hunger and temptations, what did He do? *He believed what the scriptures say and trusted God.*  Who was most important to the Israelites? *Themselves and their needs*  Who was most important to Jesus? *God, His Father.*  **Lesson 2:** Ask the students the following questions:  Where were the Israelites wandering? *In the wilderness*  Although God repeatedly provided for their needs of the Israelites, what was their response? *They whined and grumbled and did not trust God.*  What was the result of their continued disobedience and lack of growing in their relationship with God? *Death and wandering in the wilderness for 40 years.*  What is the result if we do not grow to have Christ central rather than our Christianity as central? *Instead of fruit, we will produce thorns and thistles.* Or *We will become legalistic and accusatory rather than a healthy encouragement to the Body of Christ.* |
| **Independent Practice:** | Send home the word scramble fun sheets [**click here for Word Scramble Sheet**](http://www.cmintl.webspaceforme.net/pages/WildernessWanderingScramble.htm) **and** [**click here for Answer Sheet**](http://www.cmintl.webspaceforme.net/pages/WildernessWanderingScrambleAnsSheet.htm) |