

Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2021 4:55 PM
Subject: Last Nite's MOB Study on Exodus 16

"Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst!'" (John 6:35)

Last week we saw that, after wandering in the wilderness of Shur for three days and finding no water, the children of Israel "really lost it"! They had come to Marah, where they finally found water, and their hopes were raised, but the water turned out to be "bitter," and they couldn't drink it! And so, they "grumbled" at Moses (but really grumbled against God)! Moses then cried out to the LORD, Exodus 15:25 says, and the LORD miraculously "sweetened" the water! And the children of Israel learned (and we have learned, and experience!) that God is able to "turn something bitter into something sweet"! Trials in our lives into blessings! Then, verse 26 says, the LORD made a promise to them: "If you will give earnest heed to the voice of the LORD...and do what is right in His sight...and give ear to His commandments...and keep His statutes...I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians"! (But He also reminded them that He was Jehovah Rapha--the "Healer"--suggesting they would need some "healing" in the days to come!) Then they came to Elim, an oasis in the desert, where there were "twelve springs of water and seventy date trees." And they learned that they could trust in the LORD to care for their needs! Right?

Well, that set the scene for last night's lesson on Exodus 16!

Verse 1 says, "Then they set out from Elim...and came to the wilderness of Sin (which doesn't sound like a very good place to be)! It was now 30 days since their "exodus" from Egypt! And verse 2 says, "the whole congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron..." and even accused them of bringing them all out into the wilderness to kill them with hunger! "Would that we had died by the LORD's hand in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat, when we ate bread to the full?" O boy!

Well, the LORD heard it all and how might you think He would respond? Verse 4 says, "Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether or not they will walk in My instruction!' But He added a "wrinkle"! "On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily"--establishing what will become known as a "sabbath observance"--the seventh day--a day "of rest," on which they were not to go out to gather, since it wouldn't be there! A day which would be "holy" to the LORD! (Interestingly, Genesis 2:2-3 says, " By the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made!")

Then Moses (and Aaron) told the people that "at evening" (when the LORD would send in some quail), and "in the morning" when they would "eat bread to the full," they would "see the glory of the LORD," appearing in the cloud, and "know that He is "the LORD your God"! Numbers 11:31 says that "a wind from the LORD brought quail from the sea, and let it fall beside the camp," and when the "layer of dew around the camp evaporated in the morning, there

was a fine flake-like thing, fine as frost on the ground" which came to be called "manna"--the "bread" which, as Moses said, "the LORD has given you to eat"!

Psalm 78:23-28 say that "God commanded the clouds above and opened the doors of heaven; He rained down manna upon them to eat and gave them food from heaven. Man did eat the bread of angels; He sent them food in abundance! He causes the east wind to blow in the heavens and by His power He directed the south wind. When He rained meat upon them like the dust, even winged fowl like the dust of the seas; then He let them fall in the midst of their camp!" So, food in abundance, from a "compassionate and gracious" God!

Deuteronomy 8:2-3 explains it best! "You shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandment or not! He humbled you and let you be hungry and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD!"

But wouldn't you know! Exodus 16:20, 27 says, "But some of (the people) did not listen to Moses...and it came about on the seventh day that some of them went out to gather more manna, but they found none!" And the LORD said to Moses, "How long will (they) refuse to keep My commandments and My instructions?"

And yet the LORD kept His promise, and verse 45 says, "The Sons of Israel ate the manna forty years, until they came...to the border of the land of Canaan (the "Promised Land)" And "the people rested on the seventh day"! Wow!

Lamentations 3:22-23 says, "The LORD's lovingkindness indeed never ceases, for His compassions never fail, they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness!"

The apostle John would, many years later, write about how God would send His Son into the world--coming down from heaven, becoming "flesh, and dwelling among us"--and how we would "see His glory, the glory of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth"! (John 1:9-14).

Jesus would complete the "picture" portrayed in our lesson last nite on Exodus 16, and put it all in perspective, with His words in John 6:32-58, after "feeding the 5,000, on the other side of the Sea of Galilee"! "Truly, truly I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread of heaven, but it is the Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven and gives life to the world...I am the bread of life; he who come after me will not hunger, and He who believes in Me will never thirst!"

And so, God keeps leading His dear children along, one day at a time!

May God be with you (today) and give you "rest" (during these tumultuous times)!

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