

Exodus 16-17

June 26, 2011

Introduction:

*The children of Israel have escaped from their slavery in Egypt. They have seen all of the miracles that God performed to break Pharaoh and to bring them out. They walked through the Red Sea on dry ground and then saw the Egyptian army drown when it returned to its natural condition. Once they were out of danger, they came to a place where the water was bitter. God told Moses to throw a particular tree into the water and the water became sweet. Today we begin in **chapter 16**.*

16:1-15: What happens in verses 1 to 3?

- A month and a half after leaving Egypt, the people begin to grumble against Moses and Aaron. They complain about their present conditions. They claim that they wish they could have just died in Egypt and thought that they were going to now starve in the wilderness. They reminisced about the good old days in Egypt where there was plenty to eat.

Does God “save” us to kill us? Or to give us life?

- They assumed that God had delivered them from Egypt so that He could let them starve to death in the wilderness. The truth is that God brought them out of Egypt in order to bring them into the land of promise. God could have let them die in Egypt; He did not save them to kill them.

What did they think and what do we think today?

- See **John 10:10**. ¹⁰ The thief’s purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life. **NLT**, The enemy convinces many that he is the “giver” and God is the “taker”. These people think that if they follow Christ, they will somehow lose. They think that God can save them, but after that He cannot or will not do much for them. They think that God can be trusted to save us from sin and get us to heaven, but that He cannot be trusted with the matters of this life. See **John 8:44**.

What are some areas of this life that people fail to trust God in?

- We lower our standards for friends, dates, and mates because we think trusting God means “losing” and being alone. We put our security in people, things, and money rather than in God. See **Isaiah 46:3-5**.
³ “Listen to me, descendants of Jacob, all you who remain in Israel. I have cared for you since you were born. Yes, I carried you before you were born. ⁴ I will be your God throughout your lifetime, until your hair is white with age. I made you, and I will care for you. I will carry you along and save you. ⁵ “To whom will you compare me? Who is my equal? **NLT**
We fail to trust God to take care of us if we give as He tells us to give.

What do you think about their memory of life in Egypt?

- They were slaves! All of their baby boys were being killed! Here they are talking about Egypt as if their lives were wonderful there.

Is memory reproductive or reconstructive?

- Science has proven that memory is **reconstructive**. We don’t remember what actually happened; we remember what we thought happened.

Do you see life (past, present, and future) through “rose-colored glasses” or realistically? Explain.

- Some people “awfulize” the past and live in fear of the future. Many have forgotten the difficulties of the past and have a fantasy memory of the way things were. Some fantasize when they consider the future. A few see things realistically, either awfulizing or fantasizing.

16:4-21: What occurs in verses 4 to 8?

- God tells Moses how He will provide for the people. He will send “bread” every morning of the week except for the Sabbath (Saturday) for the people to eat. They are not to keep any of the “bread” overnight. If they do, it will spoil. They may keep the “bread” overnight on Fridays; it will not spoil so that they may have “bread” on the Sabbath. God will also “rain” quail (meat) on them during that evening. The people fail to believe and trust God, so some try to keep the manna overnight and it spoils as God said that it would.

16: 7, 8: When we grumble against those who God has placed over us (16:2), do we grumble against them or the Lord? Explain your answer.

- We grumble against the Lord. We grumble “at” the people over us, but our real problem is with God who put them over us. “Your grumblings are not against us but against the Lord.” We are not trusting God to work through them. *See Proverbs 21:1. ¹The king’s heart is like a stream of water directed by the Lord; he guides it wherever he pleases. NLT*

16:15: “Manna” (16:31) is the Hebrew word for “What is it?”

- Bread, ¹⁴ When the dew evaporated, a flaky substance as fine as frost blanketed the ground.

16:22-30: What takes place in verses 22 to 30?

- The people fail to believe God and trust that the Friday manna will last through the Sabbath. On the seventh day some of them go out to see if there was any new manna available on the Sabbath.

Why do you think that it is so difficult for us to trust God and to believe that what He says is true?

- We are spiritually broken. Our “truster” is broken: we trust those we shouldn’t and we fail to trust those we should. The enemy (Satan) is an experienced liar.

16:31-36 Here we learn that they preserved some manna. It will later end up in the Ark of the Covenant (Hebrews 9:3-4). We also learn that they ate the manna for 40 years (until they entered the Promised Land).

Do you think that the manna tasted good? Why or why not?

- It was probably really good: God made it. *See Psalm 34:18. ¹⁸The Lord is close to the brokenhearted; he rescues those whose spirits are crushed. NLT*

The people did tire of it over time, but it likely was very tasting and was perfect for their health.

17:1-7 What happens in chapter 17 verses 1 to 7?

- The people travel on and are again in a dry place and needing water. They complain to Moses who cries out to God. God tells Moses that he will strike a rock and water will come from that rock...enough to feed the nation (at least 2.5 million people).

How did they get to this dry place?

- God led them to this dry place.

Does God bring us into difficulty? And if so...why?

- **Yes** He does so that He could again demonstrate to them that He was God and that He could do anything and that He provides for His people. God likely was going to have Moses bring water from the rock there anyway, but the people complained before God provided.

What do you think about what Israel said in **verse 7?**

- That is the way we tend to be. We think that God is with us if He is blessing us...which means giving us what we want. But we assume that He is *not* with us when we are tested or when we aren't getting what we want when we want it. When our lives get difficult, we assume that God does not care, that He is not near, and that He cannot help us. We are wrong on all three counts.

Turn with me to 1 Kings 9:3.³ *The Lord said to him, "I have heard your prayer and your petition. I have set this Temple apart to be holy, this place you have built where my name will be honored forever. I will always watch over it, for it is dear to my heart. NLT*

Notice here that three things would be in God's Temple:

- His *name* represents His power.
- His *eyes* remind us that God always sees and knows.
- His *heart* reminds us that God always cares.

17:8-16 What occurs in **verses 8 to 16?**

- Israel has a battle with Amalek (AM-uh-leck). When Moses has his staff raised in the air, Israel prevails. When he lowers it Amalek prevails. Moses sits on a rock and Aaron and Hur hold up his hands (that hold the staff) until Israel conquers Amalek.

What might we learn from what takes place here?

- We need others to accomplish God's will and His best in our lives. Israel needed Moses to raise the staff; Moses needed Aaron and Hur to hold up his arms. All of the "players" are important to what God does (the soldiers, Moses, Aaron, and Hur).