

**CALVARY PANDAN BIBLE-
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

[Adapted from Bethel Bible-Presbyterian Church,
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DHW BIBLE CLASS

LESSON 12

EXODUS

CHAPTER 16

INTRODUCTION

The long journey to the Promised Land had just begun. In a great and mighty way, the LORD liberated the children of Israel from the bondage of slavery in Egypt. Under the oppression of slavery, they looked up and cried to the LORD. God delivered them. They had just crossed the Red Sea in a most marvellous and stupendous way, which the LORD wrought before their very eyes. They hurried across the dry ground of the sea-bed, pursued by Pharaoh and his six hundred elite men on chariots. But the enemy was not able to catch up with them nor do them any harm. All the children of Israel were saved to the very last man. When the last person stepped on the other side to safety, the waters returned and drowned the enemies. They were triumphant and jubilant. But that was just the beginning. The journey ahead was not easy. There were many trials and testing, troubles and tribulations, which they had to go through. The LORD put them through these hurdles and hindrances in order to

strengthen and build their character, and to teach them many precious lessons in their relationship with God. Our study and meditation of the account of the Israelites' experiences will certainly benefit us. It will increase our knowledge of God and His will. It will teach us how we ought to daily depend and trust God in our journey of life until we reach Beulah Land. It will be exciting and profoundly instructive if we are seeking God and doing His will.

OUTLINE

- A. THE LORD PROMISED TO BLESS THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL IF THEY OBEYED GOD (15:22-27)**
1. The water in Marah was undrinkable (15:22-23)
 2. The children of Israel murmured against Moses (15:24)
 3. Moses turned to the LORD (15:25a)
 4. The LORD healed the waters (15:25b)
 5. The LORD promised the children of Israel health if they obeyed Him (15:26)
- B. THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL COMPLAINED OF BREAD & MEAT (16:1-9)**
1. The children of Israel journeyed in the wilderness of Sin between Elim and Sinai (15:27-16:1)

2. The children of Israel murmured against Moses (16:2-3)
 - a. They complained against Moses and Aaron (v.2)
 - b. They would rather die by the hand of the LORD in Egypt where they could have meat and bread (v.3)
3. The LORD promised to provide their daily bread and meat to test their faith (16:4-8)
 - a. The LORD revealed to Moses His intention to provide bread to the Israelites on a daily basis to prove their faith in the LORD (vv.4-5)
 - b. Moses informed the children of Israel the LORD's intention (v.6)
 - c. Moses pointed that they were murmuring not against him but against the LORD (vv.7-9).

C. THE GLORY OF THE LORD APPEARED TO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL (16:10-15)

1. The LORD appeared to the children of Israel in the cloud (16:9-10)
2. The LORD heard the complaints of the Israelites and promised to provide bread and meat (16:11-15)
 - a. The LORD promised them food (vv.11-12)
 - b. In the evening, the camp was filled with quails (v.13)

- c. In the morning, the camp was covered with manna (vv.14-15)

D. THE LORD IMPOSED CONDITIONS FOR COLLECTING THE MANNA AND QUAILS (16:16-31)

1. The children of Israel might gather only according to their need each day (16:16-21)
 - a. There were those who obeyed and gathered accordingly (vv. 17-19)
 - b. There were those who disobeyed and their extra manna became worms the next day (16:20-21)
2. The children of Israel might collect twice the quantity on the eve of the Sabbath (16:22-26)
 - a. The children of Israel were instructed to collect twice the amount on the sixth day (v.22)
 - b. The children of Israel must keep the Sabbath holy unto the LORD (vv.23)
 - c. The manna did not turn bad on the Sabbath day (v.24)
 - d. Moses reminded them to keep the Sabbath (vv.25-26)
3. The LORD reprovved those who disobeyed His Word (16:27-31)
 - a. Some disobeyed and went out to collect on the Sabbath day (v.27)

- b. The LORD revealed His displeasure at the disobedience of some of the Israelites (v.28)
- c. The LORD explained the reason for the excess of manna and meat on the sixth day (v.29)
- d. The people rested on the seventh day (v.30)
- e. The children of Israel called the bread from the LORD, "Manna" (v.31)

E. REMEMBRANCE OF THE PROVISION OF GOD IN THE WILDERNESS (16:32-36)

- 1. An omer of manna was collected and kept for posterity (16:32-34)
- 2. The children of Israel ate manna for forty years until they came to the Promised Land (16:35-36)

COMMENTARY

The Testing At Marah

Moses took them south along the western side of the Sinai peninsula into the wilderness of Shur. Soon the children of Israel faced the first vital need — water. They reached Marah but the water there was undrinkable because it was bitter. They now experienced their first bitterness after a blessed time not long ago. The people murmured against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?" (15:24) It is impossible for Moses to give them a good answer. He could not provide them water. Moses

went to the LORD and cried to Him. Moses did the right thing. Go to the LORD for He is the only ONE who can give them water to drink so that they would not die. When Moses cried to the LORD, the LORD showed him a tree which when he cast it into the water would make the water sweet and drinkable (15:25). The LORD taught them that if they would "diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God" and would "do that which is right in his sight," and would "give ear to his commandments, and keep his statutes," the LORD would heal them of all diseases (15:26).

The LORD could have made their journey less troublesome and given them water in the first place. But that was not to be so. The LORD wanted to test them (15:25). Their faith in the LORD was to be tested. The proof or the testing of faith is always in times of difficulties. Here it was at Marah where there was no water to drink. Go on to the next verse. At Elim there was plenty of water — twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees. It was a luxurious oasis. That's not an appropriate place for testing a person's faith. When everything goes well, we can easily say that we have faith. But when things do not happen as we expect as at Marah, can we still say we have faith in God? Can we still testify that we will continue to trust in God, obey Him and do His will? Until we meet our Marah, our faith is yet to be tested.

The next beautiful lesson is the promise that the LORD gave in response to our faith and obedience to Him. The LORD declared that if they obeyed Him and kept His commandments, He would heal them of the diseases that plague the Egyptians (15:26)! The LORD God has revealed to us His character, His desire, and His dealings with us. He is gracious, He wants us to obey Him for our own good, and He blesses us when we honour Him. Why is it that many of us are not trusting God as we should be? Has not God proven Himself to us? Why are so many Christians living below the level of spiritual life which is desired of the LORD? The problem is not with God. The problem lies within us. We are unbelieving. If we say we believe and trust in God, our conduct and actions should be compatible with our belief. The strengthening of our faith in God is therefore fundamental. The spiritual journey of our life starts from faith in the LORD. How this faith is to be exercised will be taught in the next chapter.

Manna From Heaven

They broke camp at Elim. They had a time of rest and plenty. Now they moved on through the wilderness of Sin, that stretch of desert land between Elim and Mount Sinai. Forty-five days had passed since they left Egypt. The scorching heat and biting cold at night had their toll on them. Not long later they murmured. They had so quickly forgotten what God did for them at Marah and the good things they enjoyed at Elim. God had told them that if they

obeyed Him, He would bless them. They forgot that too. The children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron. They would rather enjoy the goodies in Egypt and be slaves for the rest of their lives and die there than to enjoy freedom and the difficulties they had to go through although God had promised that He would be with them. They wanted bread and meat like what they had in Egypt. The divine record states that the LORD heard them. Moses did not have to turn to the LORD. The LORD took the initiative and spoke straightaway to Moses. God promised to provide “bread from heaven” (16:4). They would have to collect it daily. God did not give them a week’s supply or even two days’ supply of bread. It must be collected on a daily basis. The reason: “to prove them whether they will walk in my law, or no” (16:4).

The lesson is simple yet serious and essential. God placed a premium on trusting and obeying Him. There was no other way. If they desire to be blessed, their faith in God must never waver. They must completely trust God and do what God wanted them to do. It is as simple as that and yet it was not a simple matter; it was imperative and important. Moses heard from the LORD. He told the children of Israel. Moses was quick to point out to them that their murmuring was not against him and Aaron, but against the LORD. God would give them meat from quails and bread from heaven.

The lesson of the daily collecting of the bread, which they called Manna (literally, “What is it”) is that each person collected what he could consume for the day. The next day they would do the same. The test is that the children of Israel needed to *daily depend upon* the LORD. It was also a test of their continual faith and trust in God. What happened was that some obeyed but there were some that did not and collected more for the next day. The extra manna turned bad and became worms (16:20)! Some people just won’t learn. How characteristic of many of us even today. No trust and faith in God. What about the Sabbath day? Did they go out and collect the manna?

Sanctify the Sabbath

The Sabbath is a holy rest unto the LORD. It is a day which the LORD commanded the children of Israel to set apart, to separate (sanctify) from the rest of the days to be given to worship the LORD. So on the sixth day they were allowed to collect the Sabbath’s portion of manna. On the Sabbath day, they need not go out to collect manna because there would be no manna. And the extra portion for the Sabbath would not turn bad. Yet some went out on the Sabbath day. The LORD asked, “How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?” (16:28). Unbelief is the cause of disobedience. We disobey because we do not believe. Doubts about God and His promises hinder our trust and obedience to Him.

Sabbath day is the Lord’s Day (the first day of the week, i.e. Sunday). It is a day the LORD desires that His children congregate and worship Him corporately. The reading of His Word; the preaching, teaching and hearing of His Word; the singing of hymns of praise, adoration and thanksgiving; and the giving of our substance as the LORD blesses.¹ Therefore it is not pleasing in the sight of God if a Christian does not attend church worship services on Sunday. The only exception, if any, is if one is involved in works of mercy and necessity.²

A Remembrance

The LORD commanded Moses to fill an omer of the manna and keep it for posterity that they might see the bread which the LORD fed the children of Israel in the wilderness, when He brought them out of Egypt (16:32). The divine commentary on this memorial is given by Moses later in Deuteronomy: “*And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; **that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live**” (8:3). God’s intended teaching is clear. Although we need physical food to sustain our body,*

¹ Deuteronomy 16:10 And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the LORD thy God with a tribute of a freewill offering of thine hand, which thou shalt give *unto the LORD thy God*, according as the LORD thy God hath blessed thee:

² Matthew 12:1-13 expounds the principles of keeping the sabbath holy unto the LORD.

more importantly, we need spiritual food, the Word of God, the manna from heaven, for our spiritual growth. Many of us are still spiritual babes because we have not fed our spirit and soul just as regularly and well as we feed our bodies! Because of our spiritual immaturity we are unable to discern the will of God; we really do not know the LORD God whom we worship; and we open ourselves to false ideas of God and His will for others and ourselves.

The lessons in these passages are precious. Our faith in the LORD and His Word must never be compromised. There must not be a trace of doubt. An unbelieving heart breeds discontentment and disobedience. Disobedience robs us of the blessings of God. Daily dependence on God is imperative. How often we trust in ourselves and not in God. Daily feeding on the Word of God is as important, if not more so, than feeding on bread and butter. Keeping the Sabbath, the Lord's Day, pleases the LORD. If we love Him, we will sanctify that day unto the LORD. We will not allow anyone or anything to hinder us from congregating with other Christians to worship the LORD. As we are prone to forgetfulness, we must remind ourselves how good and merciful is the LORD our God.

**DAILY READINGS & DISCUSSION
QUESTIONS**

Daily Readings

MONDAY: Exodus 15:22-27; James 1:2-4; 5:7-12

TUESDAY: Exodus 16:1-9; Proverbs 19:1-3; Philippians 2:12-16

WEDNESDAY: Exodus 16:10-21; 1 Kings 17:1-16; Matthew 6:26-34

THURSDAY: Exodus 16:22-31; Isaiah 58:13-14; Matthew 12:1-13

FRIDAY: Exodus 16:32-36; Deuteronomy 6:10-12; Ecclesiastes 12:1

Discussion Questions

1. The water at Marah was undrinkable because it was bitter. Why did God lead them there first?

2. God promised great blessings to the children of Israel if they would obey Him. How would Israel know what was right in God's eyes in order to do it?

3. What did God want the children of Israel to learn most?

4. What did the people complain about?

5. What lessons can be learned from the murmuring of the Israelites?

6. How did God provide for the people in the wilderness?

7. What was unusual about the collecting of the manna? Why?

8. How did the children of Israel do in accordance to the commandments of God?

9. What was unusual about the collecting of the manna on the sixth day?

10. What lessons did God intend Israel to learn from the collecting of manna on weekdays and on the sixth day?

11. What do we learn about the LORD our God from His instruction to Moses to keep an omer of manna?

12. Can you share how God has dealt with you so far in your faith and trust in Him?
