

Lesson 6 – Exodus 15:22-18

Text: Exodus 15:22-18

Main Characters: God, Moses, Israelites, Joshua, Jethro (Moses' father-in-law)

Key Passages:

- Exodus 15:24; 16:2-3, 8; 17:2-3 – The people complain to Moses (God) about different things.
- Exodus 15:26 – God foreshadows His covenant with the people; He will protect if they will serve.

Main Storyline:

After the Red Sea, the Israelites travelled three days in the wilderness without finding any water until they came to a place called Marah, which had water. But, the water was bitter, and the Israelites could not drink it. They complained to Moses because they had had no water, who then told God. God showed him a certain tree; when Moses threw the tree into the water, it became sweet and the Israelites were able to drink it. There, God also made a special promise to the Israelites: if they would obey and trust Him, God would protect them from diseases. "I, the Lord, am your healer," he explained.

Less than two months later, the Israelites complained again because they did not have enough food. They remembered back to Egypt where they said they could sit by pots of meat and could eat bread and meat until they were full. They accused Moses of bringing them out to kill them by starvation. Moses told them that they were not really complaining to him, but complaining against God.

God then promised to give the people bread in the morning (the people called it manna, meaning "What is it?") and quail in the evening. They were only supposed to collect a certain amount of bread each day (as much as he would eat in that day), except on the 6th day, they were to gather enough bread to last 2 days, as there would be no bread given on the Sabbath (the seventh day, during which God wanted the people to stay in their homes and not cook any food). When some of the Israelites gathered too much bread, the leftover bread grew worms in it and stank. God told Moses to take a jar of the manna and keep it as a memorial of how God had taken care of the Israelites in the wilderness.

As Israel continued to travel, they once again began to complain because they did not have any water. They accused Moses of bringing them and their children and their animals into the wilderness to kill them with thirst. They even questioned if God was really with them. Moses, frustrated, told God that he was afraid that the people would stone him soon. God told Moses to stand before a certain rock and strike it with his rod, and water would come out of it. Moses did so, and the people received water.

Later, a nation called Amalek came up and attacked Israel. Moses told a man, Joshua, to lead the fight against Amalek while he watched with "the staff of God." Joshua obeyed and fought against the Amalekites. The Israelites were winning the battle as long as Moses had his hands lifted up. Aaron and Hur took a rock and let Moses sit on it while they each supported one of his arms. Thus, Israel defeated Amalek. Moses built an altar there and called it "The Lord is My Banner."

Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, had heard about all that God had done for Israel, and he came to Moses with his wife and two sons (whom he had apparently sent back to Midian, perhaps because of the plagues). When Jethro saw that Moses was acting as a judge for the people all day long, he advised him to appoint some other judges so Moses would only have to settle the major disputes and not get worn out. Moses agreed and obeyed his father-in-law. Jethro then left and went back to his land.

Lessons/Applications:

- 1.) We must learn to depend on the Lord and trust in His power (Matthew 6:24-34).
- 2.) When we complain about our situation, we are really complaining about God.
- 3.) God at times allows us to "go hungry" in order to test and strengthen us (Deuteronomy 8:1-5).