

## Week 7: Five Gifts from Yahweh - Exodus Ch 16-17

### Pre-Work

- The Israelites have a scarcity mindset. I mean, they are crossing a barren wilderness, after all. But God wants them to see things differently. He wants them to trust in Him and His generous provision. Before we study Chapters 16-17, check out this video on the way God wants His people to view both lack and also contentment:

<https://bibleproject.com/videos/generosity/>

- Please read Exodus Chapters 16-17 in the translation of your choice. What stands out to you in these chapters? What questions arise in your mind when you read them?

## Class Notes

**16** Then they set out from Elim, and all the congregation of the sons of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departure from the land of Egypt. <sup>2</sup> But the whole congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. <sup>3</sup> The sons of Israel said to them, “If only 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 until *we were* full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this entire assembly with hunger!”

- 10 plagues on enemies, rescue through the waters, healing of the waters...each time there is a pattern of complaint and a desire to return to oppression with security rather than new life with a need to trust God
- After 14 days (on the 15th day from deliverance) they expressed doubt about Yahweh’s provision for food.

<sup>4</sup> 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, so that I may test them, whether or not they will walk in My instruction.<sup>5</sup> On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily.” <sup>6</sup> So Moses and Aaron said to all the sons of Israel, “At evening you will know that the LORD has brought you out of the land of Egypt; <sup>7</sup> and in the morning you will see the glory of the LORD, for He hears your grumblings against the LORD; and what are we, that you grumble against us?”

<sup>8</sup> And Moses said, “*This will happen* when the LORD gives you meat to eat in the evening, and bread to the full in the morning; for the LORD hears your grumblings which you grumble against Him. And what are we? Your grumblings are not against us but against the LORD.”

<sup>9</sup> Then Moses said to Aaron, “Say to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, ‘Come forward before the LORD, for He has heard your grumblings.’” <sup>10</sup> And it came about, as Aaron spoke to the entire congregation of the sons of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud.<sup>11</sup> And the LORD

spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>12</sup> “I have heard the grumbings of the sons of Israel; speak to them, saying, ‘At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread; and you shall know that I am the LORD your God.’”

- Yahweh responds to their lack of faith with accommodation (grace), just as He did with Moses at the burning bush

<sup>13</sup> So it came about at evening that the quails came up and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp.<sup>14</sup> When the layer of dew evaporated, behold, on the surface of the wilderness there was a fine flake-like thing, fine as the frost on the ground. <sup>15</sup> When the sons of Israel saw *it*, they said to one another, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, “It is the bread which the LORD has given you to eat.

- “Manna” literally “what is it?”
- The provision came in an unexpected form

<sup>16</sup> This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Everyone gather as much as he will eat; you shall take an omer apiece according to the number of people each of you has in his tent.’ <sup>17</sup> The sons of Israel did so, and *some* gathered much and *some* little. <sup>18</sup> When they measured it by the omer, the one who had gathered much did not have too much, and the one who had gathered little did not have too little; everyone gathered as much as he would eat. <sup>19</sup> Moses said to them, “No one is to leave any of it until morning.” <sup>20</sup> But they did not listen to Moses, and some left part of it until morning, and it bred worms and stank; and Moses was angry with them.<sup>21</sup> They gathered it morning by morning, everyone as much as he would eat; but when the sun became hot, it would melt.

- They were not to store food...gather each day each day’s need. Each day they were to rely on Yahweh’s provision, and trust that He would give it to them.

<sup>22</sup> Now on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for each one. When all the leaders of the congregation came and told Moses, <sup>23</sup> then he said to them, “This is what the LORD meant: Tomorrow is a Sabbath observance, a holy Sabbath to the LORD. Bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over put aside to be kept until morning.” <sup>24</sup> So they put it aside until morning, as Moses had ordered, and it did not stink nor was there a maggot in it.<sup>25</sup> Then Moses said, “Eat it today, for today is a Sabbath to the LORD; today you will not find it in the field. <sup>26</sup> Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, *the* Sabbath, there will be none.”

- So that they would have the gift of Sabbath, on day 6 they could gather enough for 2 days and it would keep

<sup>27</sup> Yet it came about on the seventh day that some of the people went out to gather, but they found none. <sup>28</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, “How long do you refuse to keep My commandments and My instructions?” <sup>29</sup> See, the LORD has given you the Sabbath; for that reason He gives you bread for two days on the sixth day. Remain, everyone, in his place; no one is to leave his place on the seventh day.” <sup>30</sup> So the people rested on the seventh day.

- Lack of trust = lack of rest

### ***Matthew 6:11***

*Give us this day our daily bread.*

<sup>31</sup> And the house of Israel named *the bread* manna, and it was like coriander seed, white, and its taste was like wafers with honey. <sup>32</sup> Then Moses said, “This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘A full omer of it is to be kept safe throughout your generations, so that they may see the bread that I fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out of the land of Egypt.’” <sup>33</sup> And Moses said to Aaron, “Take a jar and put a full omer of manna in it, and place it before the LORD to be kept safe throughout your generations.” <sup>34</sup> As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron placed it before the Testimony, to be kept. <sup>35</sup> And the sons of Israel ate the manna for forty years, until they came to an inhabited land; they ate the manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan. <sup>36</sup> (Now an omer is a tenth of an ephah.)

- Future-cast - although the ark had not yet been built nor the tablets of the law written in this spot of the timeline, the Moses team wants the reader to know that the meaning of the daily provision of manna in the wilderness is to be central to the community’s worship.

**17** Then all the congregation of the sons of Israel journeyed by stages from the wilderness of Sin, according to the command of the LORD, and camped at Rephidim, and there was no water for the people to drink. <sup>2</sup> So the people quarreled with Moses and said, “Give us water so that we may drink!” And Moses said to them, “Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?” <sup>3</sup> But the people were thirsty for water there; and they grumbled against Moses and said, “Why is it that you have brought us up from Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?” <sup>4</sup> So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, “What am I to do with this people? A little more and they will stone me!” <sup>5</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, “Pass before the people and take with you some of the elders of Israel; and take in your hand your staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. <sup>6</sup> Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink.” And Moses

did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. <sup>7</sup>Then he named the place Massah and Meribah because of the quarrel of the sons of Israel, and because they tested the LORD, saying, “Is the LORD among us, or not?”

- This time, Yahweh graciously accommodates the faithlessness of the people by providing “water from a rock”
- Is it good to test God?

“...Verse 7 focuses the issue in the question, “Is the Lord among us or not?” The asking of this question in itself is not a testing of God. Testing has to do with “putting God to the proof,” that is, seeking a way in which God can be coerced to act or show himself. It is to set God up, to try to force God’s hand in order thereby to determine concretely whether God is really present or not. Israel’s testing of God consisted in this: if we are to believe that God is really present, then God must show us in a concrete way by making water materialize. It is to make one’s belief in God contingent upon such a demonstration. It is, in essence, an attempt to turn faith into sight.”

~Terence Fretheim, *Exodus*

- The center of the virtual Temple of Psalms

***Psalm 81:10***

*I, the LORD, am your God,*

*Who brought you up from the land of Egypt;*

*Open your mouth wide and I will fill it.*

<sup>8</sup>Then Amalek came and fought against Israel at Rephidim. <sup>9</sup>So Moses said to Joshua, “Choose men for us and go out, fight against Amalek. Tomorrow I will station myself on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand.” <sup>10</sup>Joshua did just as Moses told him, and fought against Amalek; and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. <sup>11</sup>So it came about, when Moses held his hand up, that Israel prevailed; but when he let his hand down, Amalek prevailed. <sup>12</sup>And Moses’ hands were heavy. So they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it; and Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and one on the other. So his hands were steady until the sun set. <sup>13</sup>And Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

- The Amalekites were a desert nomadic people descended from Esau
- Moses took the initiative, Joshua led the battle, Aaron and Hur kept Moses’ hands up. Nowhere yet is Yahweh spoken of as active.

- The battle is not determined by warriors, but by a prophet, a priest, and a fellow from the tribe of Judah (from which would come the King).

<sup>14</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, “Write this in a book as a memorial and recite it to Joshua, that I will utterly wipe out the memory of Amalek from under heaven.” <sup>15</sup> And Moses built an altar and named it The LORD is My Banner; <sup>16</sup> and he said, “Because the LORD has sworn, the LORD will have war against Amalek from generation to generation.”

- This is the first time in the Bible that the writing of the Bible is mentioned.
- The Amalekites do disappear (I Chron 4:43), but in wiping out their memory God accommodates them by *preserving the memory of them* in this and other stories in scripture. “On the day you eat of it you shall surely die” (Gen 3)
- The Lord is my Banner (Yahweh Nissi), namely the altar Moses built...Moses realizes that although humans supposedly won the battle, in reality the banner of strength was Yahweh Himself.
- The five gifts of the wilderness
  - Quail from the sky
  - Bread from heaven
  - Water from the rock
  - Sabbath like Yahweh
  - The written Word

## Reflections