

Monday  
**Exodus 16**

As the Israelite people traveled through the desert on their way to the Promised Land, they camped in tents for homes along the way, out in the wilderness of the desert. Living in the wilderness was not always easy. Such a large group of people – probably more than 3 million men, women, and children – required a lot of food, and there were no stores in the wilderness! Soon, all the people were grumbling and complaining against God, Moses, and Moses' brother Aaron. They said they always had plenty of meat and bread to eat in Egypt. They had to work really hard as slaves, but at least they always had enough food. Now they wondered why Moses had brought them out into the wilderness if they were only going to die of hunger.

Moses asked the people why they were grumbling against him and against Aaron. "Your grumbling," Moses said, "is not against us but against the Lord." The Lord said to Moses, "I have heard the grumbling of the people of Israel. Say to them, "In the evening you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God."

And it happened just as God promised. In the evening, quail covered the camp. The people were able to catch as many as they needed to cook for meat for their family. In the morning, small drops of dew water lay on the ground all around the camp. When the sun dried up the dew, there on the ground was a fine flake-like bread that tasted like wafers made with honey. The Israelite people called this food "manna." "It is the bread," said Moses, "that the Lord has given you to eat."

Every day, the Israelites gathered just enough food for their needs. If they gathered more than they ate, the left overs would rot the next day. But on the Sabbath day (Saturday), God's day of rest, there was no manna. To provide for the Sabbath, God told people to gather twice as much manna the day before (on Friday). The manna lasted through the Sabbath and wouldn't rot until the day after. Because of this they could rest on the Sabbath and not need to do the work of gathering food. So God cared for the people of Israel and provided them with the food they needed.

God satisfied every need that the Israelites had as they traveled through the desert on their way to the Promised Land. God kept them alive with food even in the wilderness. God satisfies the needs of his people now through his Son, Jesus. Jesus said that he is the Bread of Life. Those who believe in Jesus have eternal life that never ends.

- **When the Israelites complained about their leader, Moses, who were they really complaining about?**
- **What did God do to provide for the needs of the people of Israel in the wilderness?**
- **How has God provided you with what you need?**

**Close with prayer**

Tuesday  
**Exodus 17:1–7**

God provided his chosen people, the Israelites, with quail and also with manna to eat every day. But it was also very difficult to find water in the desert wilderness. As the Israelites traveled, they and all their animals became very thirsty. The people quarreled with Moses. They said, “Why did you bring us up out of Egypt? To let us and our children and our livestock all die of thirst?” Again Moses asked, “Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?”

God heard their complaints. God told Moses that he would stand before Moses on a rock, and that Moses was to speak to the rock, and water would flow from it. God indeed provided water from a rock for his people. But Moses was still frustrated with the people because they were complaining so much. When Moses went to the rock to bring forth water, he didn't do as God said and simply speak to it. He smacked the rock with his staff to show his anger for the people. Because of this, God told Moses that he would not be allowed to enter the Promised Land with the rest of the Israelites. God wanted his people to know that he was loving, caring, and providing. But what Moses showed was anger.

Still, water flowed from a rock, and God cared for the people of Israel and provided them with the water they needed. Jesus said that he is the living water, and Jesus wants us to let everyone know that he is loving, caring, and providing. He is not angry. Our God has provided all our needs now and forever in heaven by giving us his Son as our Savior. May God give you the strength to represent him well and truthfully throughout your life.

- **How do we sometimes, like Moses, lose patience with people and end up misrepresenting God and God's truth?**

Close with prayer

Wednesday

## Exodus 19:1–20:21

God led the Israelites people out of Egypt – the land where they had been slaves – toward the good land he had promised to give them. God provided for all their needs each step of the way, telling them when they should set out and where they should stop and camp.

As they went on their way, God told Moses to stop and camp beneath Mt. Sinai in the desert. God called to Moses from the mountain. God said, “Tell the people of Israel: You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I brought you to myself. Now, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples.”

Moses told the people everything the Lord had told him. The Israelite people were happy to obey the Lord and to keep his covenant. They wanted to be God’s treasured people. Together, they said, “All that the Lord has spoken we will do.”

God told Moses, “Behold, I am coming to you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you.” God said he would do this soon, but first the people must take this day and the next day to get ready. They needed to wash their clothing and prepare for the third day, which would be a very special day – when God would speak to them from the mountain.

On the morning of the third day, the people saw lightening and heard thunder. There was a thick cloud on the mountain, and a trumpet blast so loud that all the people trembled. Moses brought the people out of the camp to the foot of the mountain to meet God. But, as God had told Moses, no one, not even an animal, could touch the mountain.

Mt. Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the Lord had come down on it in fire. The whole mountain trembled. There, God spoke all the words of the Ten Commandments. He said, “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.” When the people saw the lightening and the smoking mountain, and when they heard the thunder and the trumpet, they were afraid, and they asked Moses to go talk with God for them.

God wanted his treasured people to learn the Ten Commandments and to know them well. However, God knew that his people would not be able to keep his commands. He wanted them to look to him for mercy and help. God promised to send a Savior, his Son, Jesus, to keep the commandments for us and to take the punishment we deserve for not keeping them.

- **What are the Ten Commandments? List them and discuss what they mean.**

Close with prayer

Thursday

## Exodus 25–30; 35–40

Long ago, God led the Israelites from Egypt through the desert to the Promised Land. God loved them very much and wanted to have a relationship and presence with them as if to live among them. So God gave Moses instructions about building a tabernacle – a large tent for worshipping God – so that he could have a dwelling place in the midst of his people. God told Moses that he must be careful to make the tabernacle and everything in it exactly the way God said it should be.

To make the beautiful furnishings, the Israelites brought gifts of wood, gold, animal hides, and linen cloth. Once they were made, God wanted them to be set apart, to be used only in a specific way, for the worship of God. So God told Moses to anoint them with a special oil, to show that they had been set apart by God to be holy and to serve him in a very unique way.

Moses told the people how God wanted them to set up the tabernacle. In one room – called the Most Holy Place – was a golden chest called the ark of the covenant. Inside the chest were treasures, including the stone tablets on which God had written the Ten Commandments. Carved on the top of the ark were two golden angels, called cherubim. An ornate curtain, or veil, divided the Most Holy Place from the next room.

A golden lampstand was placed in the other room of the tabernacle. Each day, morning and evening, the priests were to trim the wicks and make sure there was plenty of oil for the lamps. There was also a golden altar on which sweet-smelling incense was to be burned.

On the outside of the tabernacle tent was a large area – a courtyard that was fenced around with walls of fabric. In the courtyard was a basin that held water that the priests would use for washing. At the entrance to the tabernacle was an altar for sacrifices of grain and burnt offerings.

When everything had been done exactly as God had commanded, the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. God's cloud covered the tent of meeting and could be seen throughout the entire area where God's people were camped. During all their travels, the cloud of the Lord was on the tabernacle by day, and fire was in it by night.

God dwells with his people today through the gift of the Holy Spirit living in each one of his children. God is with us when we come together to worship him, too. And God gives us ways to know him and his grace – through his Word, prayer, baptism, and the Lord's Supper. Through these gifts, God shows how much he loves his people. He forgives our sins for Jesus' sake and promises to take us to our new home in heaven.

- **Look up more details about the tabernacle and describe it.**

Close with prayer.

Friday

## Joshua 1:10–11; 3–4

The Israelites had been waiting and wandering in the desert for a long time. At last God wanted them to go into the new land he had promised them. Now, Moses wasn't allowed to enter the Promised Land, because he had gotten angry at the people when God wanted to comfort them by providing water from the rock. God told Joshua, their new leader, to tell the people to get ready to go into the Promised Land. Joshua and the leaders of Israel went through the camp and told the people, "As soon as you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God you shall set out and follow it," wherever the Lord would lead them.

So the people followed the ark and walked to the Jordan River, where they camped for three days. There God told the people to prepare themselves for the wonders he was going to do among them. God would lead the Israelites through the deep and wide Jordan River to the other side.

Then the Lord God told Joshua that he should tell the priests to carry the ark of the covenant into the Jordan River with strong poles. As soon as their feet touched the edge of the river, God said that the priests should stop and stand still. Immediately, God would make the waters of the Jordan River stop flowing and rise up in a heap, very far away – and the people could walk across the river on dry land! (This was to remind them of how God rescued them from Egypt through the Red Sea and how he had continued to take care of them as he now fulfilled his promise to them.)

The priests did exactly what God said. As soon as their feet touched the river's edge, God dried up the water. Then all the people with all their belongings and animals walked across on dry ground.

When everyone reached the other side, God told Joshua to have one man from each of the 12 tribes of Israel pick up a large stone from the river. They carried the stones to the place where they had set up their tents, and there they laid down their stones. Then Joshua set up the 12 stones as a memorial forever, as a reminder of God's love and mercy.

Many years later, when the Israelites walked by the memorial, God wanted them to tell their children how God had kept all his promises – how he had brought them across the Jordan River and given them the beautiful Promised Land.

God did many wonders for his people long ago in Israel. And God does many wonders for us too. The greatest wonder of all is that God sent Jesus to be the Savior of the world. He forgives the sins of all who trust in him. Jesus is a much greater leader than Joshua could ever be, because Jesus leads his people into the very presence of God. He saves us from our sins and promises to give us a new home in heaven forever with him.

- **What happened when the priests carrying the ark of the covenant stepped into the Jordan River?**
- **What was the reason for the pile of stones the Israelites built after they had crossed the river?**
- **What wonders has God done in your life to bring you into his Promised Land?**

Close with prayer