



CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS

MAY 09 2015

Scripture Story: Exodus 15:22-27; 16-18.

Commentary: *Patriarchs and Prophets* (or *Beginning of the End*), chapter 26.

unhappy campers



Photo by Audrey Górfóth

flashlight

“The Lord permitted difficulties to surround them, and their supply of food to be cut short, that their hearts might turn to Him who had hitherto been their Deliverer. If in their want they would call upon Him, He would still grant them manifest tokens of His love and care. He had promised that if they would obey His commandments, no disease should come upon them, and it was sinful unbelief on their part to anticipate that they or their children might die of hunger” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 292).

keytext

“If you listen carefully to the LORD your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you.”

(Exodus 15:26, NIV)

what do you think?

Fill in the following blanks; compare your answers with those of a friend and explain why you gave the answers you did.

In my opinion . . .

the most trustworthy leader in history was _____.

the most trustworthy profession is _____.

the most trustworthy person I know is _____.

Write a working definition of trust. Trust is _____.

did you know?

The word “*manna*” comes from the word *manhu*, meaning “What is it?” Bible scholars speculate that the name “*manna*” may have come from the question. It is described as “thin flakes like frost” (Exodus 16:14, NIV). Each person was to take an omer, or roughly two liters or two quarts.

In the Mediterranean region there is a species of tamarisk that exudes a liquid that forms tiny white grains. People boil it down and use it like honey. It melts in the sun, but it can be stored for a considerable amount of time in a cool, dry place. It is similar to the description we have of *manna*; however, the Bible makes it clear that the *manna* was not a natural phenomenon but a special provision from God.

INTO THE STORY

“In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The Israelites said to them, ‘If only we had died by the LORD’s hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death.’

“Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day.’”

“That evening quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor. When the Israelites saw it, they said to each other, ‘What is it?’ For they did not know what it was.

“Moses said to them, ‘It is the bread the LORD has given you to eat. This is what the LORD has commanded: “Everyone is to gather as much as they need. Take an omer for each person you have in your tent.”’”

“The whole Israelite community set out from the Desert of Sin, traveling from place to place as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. So they quarreled with Moses and said, ‘Give us water to drink.’

“Moses replied, ‘Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you put the LORD to the test?’

“But the people were thirsty for water there, and they grumbled against Moses. They said, ‘Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?’

“Then Moses cried out to the LORD, ‘What am I to do with these people? They are almost ready to stone me.’

“The LORD answered Moses, . . . ‘I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink.’ So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel.”

“Moses’ father-in-law replied, ‘What you are doing is not good. You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. . . . Select capable men from all the people . . . and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens.’ . . . Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said.”

(Exodus 16:2-4, 13-16; 17:1-6; 18:17, 18, 21, 24, NIV)

OUT OF THE STORY

Underline places in the story that suggest a spirit of discontentment among the Israelites.

How do you suppose God felt about the Israelites during all of this drama? What picture of God is revealed in this story?

The text records that the Israelites “tested the Lord” (Exodus 17:7, NIV). Is this a good thing or a bad thing? Compare this passage to Malachi 3:10 when God tells the Israelites, “Test me” (NIV).

The Israelites got very irritable when they were hungry and thirsty. When are you most susceptible to a grumbling spirit? Grade Moses on how he handled the situation as a leader. Do you think he could have done a better job dealing with it? If so, how? What leadership principle did Moses learn from his father-in-law?

What’s the one big idea that emerges from this story?

punch lines

“I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which anyone may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world” (**John 6:48-51, NIV**).

“So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened” (**Luke 11:9, 10, NIV**).

“But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that” (**1 Timothy 6:8, NIV**).

“See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God” (**Hebrews 3:12, NIV**).

“And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus” (**Philippians 4:19, NIV**).

further insight

“The humblest and poorest of the disciples of Jesus can be a blessing to others. . . . They are not required to weary themselves with anxiety about success. They have only to go forward quietly, doing faithfully the work that God’s providence assigns, and their life will not be in vain.”

—Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 83.

connectingtolife

Sabbath

Read Proverbs 3:5-6.

In the *What Do You Think?* section of this lesson you are asked to think about the idea of trust. Consider some of the following definitions for trust from *The American Heritage Dictionary*

- Firm reliance on the integrity, ability, or character of a person or thing.
- Custody; care.
- Something committed into the care of another; charge.
- One in which confidence is placed.
- Reliance on something in the future; hope.
- Reliance on the intention and ability of a purchaser to pay in the future; credit.

How do the nuances of each definition relate to the story of the Israelites in the wilderness? When God called upon them to trust Him, which definition do you think He had in mind? Why? From today's reading list seven practical ways that you can trust in the Lord with all your heart.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Sunday

Read Exodus 15-18.

What part of the story do you relate to the most? Why? Imagine yourself as one of the Israelites who went through this ordeal in the wilderness. In recounting the story for your friends, what would you tell them that God wanted to teach His children through this experience?

Monday

Read Exodus 15:26.

Commit the *Key Text* to memory. Reflect on a time in your past when this text would

have been particularly relevant to you. Write the text on a card and place it in a prominent place so that in the future you can apply it. Think about these questions:

- What does it mean to "listen carefully to the voice of the Lord" if you cannot actually hear Him speak?
- What kinds of "diseases" might God protect me from if I "pay attention to his commands"?
- In what way does God long to heal you?

Tuesday

Read Luke 11:9, 10.

Ellen White offers this commentary on the story of the Israelites in the wilderness: "The Lord permitted difficulties to surround them, and their supply of food to be cut short, that their hearts might turn to Him." Now apply this insight to your life. What is the hardest difficulty you have faced in your life? Did the experience draw you closer to God or away from Him? What spiritual lessons might you learn in hardship that you won't be able to learn any other way?

Wednesday

Write a modern paraphrase of the texts in the *Punch Lines* section of the lesson. Personalize each one so that it reads as a personal note from God to you.

_____ (Hebrews 3:12).

_____ (John 6:48-51).

_____ (Luke 11:9, 10).

_____ (1 Timothy 6:8).

_____ (Philippians 4:19).

Thursday

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

It's easy to be like the children of Israel and cave in to a grumbling spirit. Today, try to speak only words that are positive and energizing. Before going to bed, reflect on how the day was different (assuming that it was).

Friday

Read 1 Timothy 6:8; Philippians 4:19.

What does this lesson teach you about contentment? Do you think that trusting God is the antidote for discontentment? If so, in what way? If not, why not?

Texts credited to NIV are from the *Holy Bible, New International Version*®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc®. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

this week's reading*

Patriarchs and Prophets, (or Beginning of the End), chapter 26.

**Beginning of the End* is a special adaptation of *Patriarchs and Prophets*, created for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press. Get more information about it at www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#.URlhF1rBO9s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages series each year.