

SERIES	EXODUS
BIBLE	Exodus 16
TITLE/TOPIC	The God who Provides
OVERVIEW	In a nation as affluent as ours, few of us are faced with questions about our next daily provision of food, water or clothing. It is easy to live believing each next meal will be there - in the fridge, at the store, or at the restaurant. Though most of us would not be classified as rich, God wants us to know that He has made us all wealthy with His daily provision. Exodus teaches us that God is provider and we are called to depend upon Him.
SCRIPTURE BREAKDOWN	<p>Background: God who hears, calls, reigns, delivers....</p> <p>Now this mass of people - 2-3 million - is marching out of 430 years of slavery in Egypt into a new life of freedom following YHWH. Marching away from shelter, from daily provisions of food, from an identity that, however terrible to be a "slave", was what they had become accustomed to. This portion of the story of Exodus shows how God's people are confronted with their need to trust God for the stuff of life and walk in dependence upon Him every single day.</p> <p>God provides fresh water (2x). Exodus 15:22-27; Exodus 17:1-7</p> <p>3 days after singing God's praises for the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea and the destruction of Egyptian army who was pursuing them... the Israelites grumbled against Moses because they found a spring that had bitter, undrinkable water. Moses cried out to God (remember the God who hears...) and was directed to throw a piece of wood into the water. Moses obeyed, the waters were made sweet, and God issued this way of dealing with His people. IF you listen carefully, pay attention and obey the LORD, He will not bring on you the diseases and plagues He brought on Egypt - HE IS YHWH who HEALS.</p> <p>17:1-17 Again because of having no water, the Israelites now quarreled and grumbled with Moses about it. This time God instructed Moses to publicly, with the elders in the sight of all, strike a rock with the staff of God. Moses obeyed and out of the rock in the desert came fresh water to satisfy all 3 million people.</p> <p>God provides meat and daily bread (manna). Exodus 16:1-20</p> <p>One month after leaving Egypt, the Israelites again grumbled against Moses and Aaron. They claimed that life was better back in Egypt and accused their leaders of bringing them into the desert to starve to death!</p> <p>God heard... and promised provision of quail (birds) in the evening and the beginning of miraculous bread from heaven the next morning. The people</p>

had their fill of meat and then of manna. Manna means "what is it?". God would provide manna for the next 40 years as He sustained His people in the wilderness.

*Application - God provides His people more than they deserve and exactly what they need. Jesus affirmed this principle of dependence continues into the New Covenant. As member of His Kingdom, we are called to pray "Give us today our daily bread" Matthew 6:11

God provides the life-giving rhythm of weekly work and rest. Exodus 16: 21-35

WORK: Notice that the LORD gives the raw material of provision (birds and manna), but the Israelites must physically do work to kill the birds, prepare them for eating, collect the manna and prepare it for eating.

Daily and Weekly WORK: The Israelites were to collect manna each morning for the first six days of the week. This was daily work for daily bread. They were to collect the appropriate amount for each day for each member of their household. They were not to store up as the old manna would be spoiled the next morning. As they obeyed, no one had too much, no one had too little - every need was provided for.

**Application - God's provision never contradicts His principles in creation. Working with God's provision, in the Garden of Eden, was a blessing established before sin entered the world. Being provided for by God includes working hard for God. (II Thes 3:10 taken from time of manna - the one who does not work does not eat)

REST Notice that the LORD commanded the Israelites to collect manna the first 6 days and rest on the Sabbath. This is before the law was given. This command reflects the Creation week principle of Sabbath. God rested on the 7th day and established this principle of stopping work, resting in dependence on Him, for the good of all humanity.

(God provides victory over our enemies. Exodus 17: 8-15)

God provides wise leadership and structure for the health and prospering of our community. Exodus 18:1-27

Moses was God's appointed leader, responsible to speak God's truth and lead God's people. But Moses was attempting to do too much by himself, in his own limited power and wisdom. Through his father in law Jethro, God helped Moses appoint qualified elders who would share the load of settling disputes and leading God's people. This wisdom and structure gave Moses the health he needed to continue to hear from God and lead the people.

GOSPEL

How does this sermon bring people to the Gospel?

The Israelites in the desert were totally unable to provide for themselves the essentials of life. No matter how hard they might work to find water, to plant crops, to build permanent shelters - it was impossible for 3 million people to live in the desert. Left to themselves, they would surely die.

But just as the LORD intervened, heard the cries of desperation, spoke life through Moses and provided miraculous provision through His obedience - JESUS CHRIST has come into the world with words of life and obedience that brings our salvation. In Christ, we can escape the death penalty we deserve because of our sin. IN Christ, we can live in the miraculous grace of God that brings forgiveness, wholeness, purpose and joy forever.

NEXTSTEPS

Begin | Connect | Engage | Grow | Disciple

GROW Develop a heart of dependence on God - He is the source of our daily life provision, victory over enemies, our wisdom.