

EXODUS STORIES FROM THE DESERT

Part 3 – “A New Appetite” (Exodus 15-16)

Jay Hohfeler

Exodus 15

²² Then Moses made Israel set out from the Red Sea, and they went into the wilderness of Shur. They went three days in the wilderness and found no water. ²³ When they came to Marah, they could not drink the water of Marah because it was bitter; therefore it was named Marah. ²⁴ And the people grumbled against Moses, saying, “What shall we drink?” ²⁵ And he cried to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a log, and he threw it into the water, and the water became sweet.



There the LORD made for them a statute and a rule, and there he tested them, ²⁶ saying, “If you will diligently listen to the voice of the LORD your God, and do that which is right in his eyes, and give ear to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you that I put on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, your healer.”

²⁷ Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees, and they encamped there by the water.



Elim (Ain Harawah) in present-day Sinai Peninsula

“I am the LORD, your healer” presents a new name for God: “Jehovah Rápha”

Principle:

Our grumbling is rooted in our complaint with God, more than the circumstances.

It’s about how we view His character:

- Quality of His Power, Sovereignty, & Wisdom
- Quality of His Love

Why do the Israelites (and we) have this propensity to experience God’s grace and intervention—and then so soon after—“forget” God?

Principle:

It wasn’t that Israel had “forgotten” what God did with the 10 plagues in Egypt, or the parting of the Red Sea. It wasn’t that they didn’t remember those events. It was that they didn’t matter now.

Heart issue of Grumbling:

Ingratitude for the past -- PLUS – doubting who He is now.

The pressure of what’s happening NOW seems to eclipse accurate memories & God’s attributes.

The Israelites’ pressure of **now**... eclipsed their memories of rescue by God’s hand (“So what?”).

The Israelites’ pressure of **now**... made them doubt God’s attributes (Power, Omniscience, etc...).

When we grumble, we rehearse a bunch of lies about God.

Our view of Him is the driver behind grumbling.

Typical lies we believe that cause us to grumble during a trial:

God’s Not Able Circumstances are more real than God is God has limits Never around when I need Him It’s up to me Full surrender to Him will turn out worse	God Doesn’t Care Not good (at least to me) Not as protected as I thought Feel orphaned Given up on me	God Doesn’t Know He is not in this This is meaningless; a waste Won’t change me He’s not leading me anywhere Better to stay in current circumstances—than a future with God leading
God’s Not Managing this Well Pain/discomfort Time (too long) Wrong direction I know what I need If I can’t understand it, something is wrong	God’s Failure to Love Me Well God’s #1 job = remove pain If not, He’s no use to me If it’s painful, something must be wrong	Forgetting Past Triumphs Current circumstances define everything; it’s all I know Warped memory of my past

Exodus 16

Bread from Heaven

¹They set out from Elim, and all the congregation of the people of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had departed from the land of Egypt. ²And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, ³and the people of Israel said to them, “Would that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

⁴Then the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not.” ⁵On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily.” ⁶So Moses and Aaron said to all the people of Israel, “At evening you shall know that it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, ⁷and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your grumbling against the LORD. For what are we, that you grumble against us?” ⁸And Moses said, “When the LORD gives you in the evening meat to eat and in the morning bread to the full, because the LORD has heard your grumbling that you grumble against him—what are we? Your grumbling is not against us but against the LORD.”

⁹Then Moses said to Aaron, “Say to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, ‘Come near before the LORD, for he has heard your grumbling.’” ¹⁰And as soon as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. ¹¹And the LORD said to Moses, ¹²“I have heard the grumbling of the people of Israel. Say to them, ‘At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God.’”

And the LORD said to Moses, “How long will this people despise me? And how long will they not believe in me, in spite of all the signs that I have done among them?”

Numbers 14:11

Exodus 16 (continued)

¹³ In the evening quail came up and covered the camp, and in the morning dew lay around the camp.¹⁴ And when the dew had gone up, there was on the face of the wilderness a fine, flake-like thing, fine as frost on the ground. ¹⁵ When the people 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 that the LORD has given you to eat. ¹⁶ This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Gather of it, each one of you, as much as he can eat. You shall each take an omer, according to the number of the persons that each of you has in his tent.’” ¹⁷ And the people of Israel did so. They gathered, some more, some less. ¹⁸ But when they measured it with an omer, whoever gathered much had nothing left over, and whoever gathered little had no lack. Each of them gathered as much as he could eat. ¹⁹ And Moses said to them, “Let no one leave any of it over till the morning.” ²⁰ But they did not listen to Moses. Some left part of it till the morning, and it bred worms and stank. And Moses was angry with them. ²¹ Morning by morning they gathered it, each as much as he could eat; but when the sun grew hot, it melted.

²² On the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers each. And when all the leaders of the congregation came and told Moses, ²³ he said to them, “This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Tomorrow is a day of solemn rest, a holy Sabbath to the LORD; bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over lay aside to be kept till the morning.’” ²⁴ So they laid it aside till the morning, as Moses commanded them, and it did not stink, and there were no worms in it. ²⁵ Moses said, “Eat it today, for today is a Sabbath to the LORD; today you will not find it in the field. ²⁶ Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, which is a Sabbath, there will be none.”

²⁷ On the seventh day some of the people went out to gather, but they found none. ²⁸ And the LORD said to Moses, “How long will you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws? ²⁹ See! The LORD has given you the Sabbath; therefore on the sixth day he gives you bread for two days. Remain each of you in his place; let no one go out of his place on the seventh day.” ³⁰ So the people rested on the seventh day.

³¹ Now the house of Israel called its name manna. It was like coriander seed, white, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey. ³² Moses said, “This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Let an omer of it be kept throughout your generations, so that they may see the bread with which I fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out of the land of Egypt.’” ³³ And Moses said to Aaron, “Take a jar, and put an omer of manna in it, and place it before the LORD to be kept throughout your generations.” ³⁴ As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron placed it before the testimony to be kept. ³⁵ The people of Israel ate the manna forty years, till they came to a habitable land. They ate the manna till they came to the border of the land of Canaan. ³⁶ (An omer is the tenth part of an ephah.)

Manna

Physical Qualities • Unrecognized; Means: “what is it?” • Flakes, like frost • White • Tasted like wafers made w/ honey • Tasted like something made w/ olive oil • Looked like bdellium; resin; sticky; translucent	How Prepared? • Ground in a hand mill • Crushed in a mortar • Cooked in a pot • Made into cakes • Boiled
How Distributed? • Appeared after dew was gone • On desert floor • Everyone could gather as much as they wanted (no rationing was necessary) • Double quantity on 6th day • Zero quantity on the 7th • Leftovers spoiled overnight • Provided for 40 years (until they crossed over the Jordan River to the Promised Land)	Spiritual Implications • From God’s hand alone (no other natural explanation) • Unknown to people (then & today) • Periodic surge & slump each week; cannot be a natural phenomenon • Ample supply wherever Hebrews traveled throughout the desert • Kept sample in ark for generations (unspoiled & unique) • Reminder that He was God • Designed to build day-to-day dependence (God is serious about trust) • Met individual physical needs (God cares)

Deuteronomy 8:2-5

² And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. ³ And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. ⁴ Your clothing did not wear out on you and your foot did not swell these forty years. ⁵ Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, the LORD your God disciplines you.

Old Appetite:

- Living your life on bread alone
- Feeding your souls on the things of this world

New Appetite:

- For God
- This hardship created a new appetite for God, Himself
- God alone, instead of God plus other things
- Living your life on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord

John 6:47-51

⁴⁷ Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. ⁴⁸ I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹ Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. ⁵⁰ This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

Jesus, as the Bread of Life, would come down from heaven and not just fill our stomachs—but save us for eternal life.