

Exodus 17 - 18

Day 1

Water from the Rock: Read Exodus 17:1-7

1. How are the people's journeys described in 17:1?

- How does the problem at Rephidim (17:1) compare to the one they encountered at Marah? 15:22,23

IT'S HEBREW TO ME: *Stages/from place to place* Strong's 4550 "*massa*: A noun meaning journey, moving on. It means to travel about, to go from place to place with a purpose, especially with the Lord as leader (Ex. 40:36,38). Trumpets gathered Israel for setting out, journeying, breaking camp (Numbers 10:2,6)."
- The Complete Word Study Dictionary Old Testament (636)

2. How did the people respond to the problem? 17:2a Why do you think they didn't connect God's help at Marah (15:23-25) with this situation?

- What did Moses say they were doing? 17:2 (Mark the words "*quarrel, test, Continue to mark "grumble"*")

IT'S HEBREW TO ME: *test* "A verb meaning to test, to try, to prove." - The Complete Word Study Old Testament (736)

Quarreled/contended/strove "This verb is often used in the Prophet to describe a judicial dispute (Micah 6:2). Here it means a *grumpy complaining*. Moses judged this to be a challenge to God's faithful mercy and evidence of unbelief in His promises."
- The Nelson Study Bible (129)

Digging Deeper
For verses about **testing** God see:
Numbers 14:22;
Deuteronomy 6:16;
Matthew 4:7.

3. What did the people accuse Moses of doing? 17:3 (How angry do you think they were?)

- How did Moses react? 17:4 (How would you describe Moses' feelings?)

FYI: *ready to stone me.* "In effect the people were accusing God of covenant breaking and decided judicially to stone His representative. God therefore 'stands before' them (Exodus 17:6) as the accused on the rock, and the rock is then smitten with the rod of judgment—the same rod with which Moses had visited judgment on Egypt (Exodus 17:5)."
- Henry Morris

4. List the instructions that God gave Moses. 17:5,6 (What reminder/meaning would the staff convey?)



GRUMBLED

5. Where was God in this miracle? 17:6 What should the Lord’s response have communicated to them? (See Psalm 78:15,16; 105:41 for a description of the water the Lord provided in the desert.)

6. What underlying doubt did the people still have about the Lord? 17:7 (Considering all the miracles the people had witnessed and the continual presence of the pillar of cloud and fire, what excuse did they have for their unbelief?)

7. In the following, underline the reasons for why the people rebelled and tested the LORD.

When our fathers were in Egypt, they gave no thought to your miracles; they did not remember your many kindnesses, and they rebelled by the sea, the Red Sea...13 But they soon forgot what he had done and did not wait for his counsel. 14 In the desert they gave in to their craving; in the wasteland they put God to the test. Psalm 106:7, 13,14 NIV

8. How had Moses responded to the people’s grumblings in the past?

- Exodus 5:20-22
- Exodus 14:11-14
- Exodus 15:24-25

9. It’s been said that God was “drawing pictures in the sand” (Colossians 2:17) to reveal Himself to the people and prepare them for the coming Messiah. What do the following portray about Christ?

Rock	I Corinthians 10:4	
Striking the rock	Isaiah 53:4	
	Matthew 26:31,37	
Water	Jeremiah 2:13	
	John 4:13,14; 7:37-39	

Applying the Word: *“The Israelites...were meeting difficulties at every step, but each new difficulty was only another opportunity to see more of God’s goodness and power... Had their faith been like Abraham’s, they would have said, ‘Now we shall see some fresh manifestation of our God.’” - Jensen (71)*

In what areas do you struggle to trust the Lord to provide for your needs? Why?

Day 2

Fighting the Amalekites: Read Exodus 17:8-16



10. What was the next problem the people faced at Rephidim? 17:8 (From whom had the Amalekites descended? Genesis 36:1,12)
11. What did Moses ask Joshua to do? What was Moses going to do? 17:9
- How does this compare to the commands in 14:13-16?
12. How did Joshua respond? 17:10 (Although this is the first time Joshua’s name is mentioned, what might Moses have observed or known about him prior to this event?)
- Later, what commission was Joshua given? Deuteronomy 31:23 (See also Joshua 1:1-6)
13. What do you think the following things conveyed in the battle? 17:11,12
- The staff of God in Moses’ hands
 - Moses “lifting up his hands”
 - Aaron and Hur supporting Moses’ hands (*According to the historian Josephus, Hur was the husband of Miriam, Moses’ sister.*)
14. How would you explain how this battle was won? 17:13



Digging Deeper

What responsibilities were Joshua and Hur given later? Exodus 24:13,14

15. How was Moses commanded to preserve this event in the minds of the people? 17:14
Why would this be so important for them to remember?

- What was so wicked about the actions of the Amalek? Deuteronomy 25:17-19?

FYI: "The Amalekites, whoever they were, continued in existence until well into the period of Israel's kings, possibly even to the time of Hezekiah (I Chronicles 4:43). Eventually they vanished, so completely that none today can even be certain who they were."
- Henry Morris

16. What does 17:14 tell you about the time of the writing of this scripture? See also 24:4; Deuteronomy 31:9

17. What did Moses recognize about the Lord and the battle? 17:15,16



FYI: "Naming an altar gave it special significance by marking out a characteristic of God that was associated with worship there; the name memorialized the idea."
- The Nelson Study Bible (131)

THE-LORD-IS-MY-BANNER "In ancient and modern warfare, banners and flags symbolize unity and strength of purpose."
- The Womans' Study Bible (127)

"The Lord has sworn/hands were lifted up to the throne of the LORD" (NIV) (17:16) "The Hebrew is somewhat obscure... the Creator of the universes is pictured as seated on His throne while raising His hand in a solemn oath. It is a fearful thing for the wicked to fall into the hands of the just and righteous Judge of the universe."
- The Nelson Study Bible (131)

Applying the Word: Do you have someone in your life that regularly supports you in prayer? What does that mean to you?

Day 3

Jethro reunites with Moses: Read Exodus 18:1-27

18. Where had news about the Exodus spread? 18:1

- What might have caused Moses to send his family back to Midian earlier? 18:2

19. What insight do the names of Moses' sons give you into Moses' situation and feelings during his time in Midian? 18:3,4

20. What happened when Moses and his father-in-law met? 18:7-8 (What impression does this give you of their relationship?)

21. How did Jethro respond to what had happened? 18:9,10

- What did he acknowledge about God? 18:11

22. What did Jethro do and how was he treated? 18:12

Jethro's Advice

23. What did Jethro question about Moses' work? 18:13,14

24. What reasons did Moses give for judging the people alone? 18:15,16

- Why was Jethro concerned about that? 18:17,18 (Why do you think Moses wasn't appointing anyone else?)

FYI: 18:16 statutes of God. The verse further confirms the existence of known statutes and laws of God prior to the giving of Israel's laws by God on Mount Sinai (see also Genesis 26:5; Job 23:12)." - Henry

25. List the advice Jethro gave Moses:

- 18:19
- 18:20 (What would this instruction do early on to some disputes?)
- 18:21
- 18:22

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Digging Deeper
Compare the situation and selection of men in Acts 6:2-4.

(See Paul's qualifications for leaders in 1 Timothy 3:1-10.)

26. How would the levels of authority effect accountability? 18:21b,22a

27. What would be the benefits of following Jethro’s counsel? 18:22b,23

28. How did Moses respond to Jethro’s advice? 18:24-26 (What does this indicate about Moses? What does this say about the importance of teachableness in a leader?)

Digging Deeper
 What else do you learn from Moses’ recounting of this event in Deuteronomy 1:15-18?

Applying the Word: Consider the responsibilities you have. Do you see any areas where you are taking on too much? How could you lighten the load and still have important needs met? How might you and others benefit from this? Or when have you shared the load of leadership with others. What was the outcome for you? For others?

Day 4

God’s Authority

29. Mark the word “God” in 18:15-23. What do these phrases say about the role of God in the judging process: knowing truth and discerning right and wrong?

“inquire of God” 18:15	<i>God is the ultimate authority on right and wrong</i>
“make known the statutes of God and His laws” 18:16	<i>God’s ways are the plumb line of truth; the best path for living</i>
“may God be with you.” 18:19	
“bring the disputes to God” 18:19	
“able men who fear God, men of truth” 18:21	
“and [if] God so commands” 18:23	

God's truth

30. In the following statements, underline where truth/wisdom is found.

- Psalm 111:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. NIV
 Psalm 119:160 The sum of Your word is truth, And every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting. NASU
- Proverbs 2:6 For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding. NASU
- Proverbs 9:10 "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. NIV
- John 1:17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ NIV
- John 16:13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. NIV
- John 17:17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. NIV
- Ephesians 1:13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. NIV

31. What truth claims did Jesus make?

- John 8:31-32
- John 8:40
- John 14:6
- John 18:37

32. What can happen to our sense of right and wrong when people don't trust God?

- Isaiah 5:20-21
- Romans 1:21b,25
- Ephesians 4:17-19

33. Underline things that help us discern right from wrong:

- Romans 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. NASU
- Philippians 1:9-11 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, 10 so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; 11 having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. NASU
- 2 Timothy 3:15-17 and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. NASU

Applying the Word: People often want to define and follow their own moral code. What makes it hard to answer the question “why” for any moral standard apart from God’s “divine revelation of morality?”

OR:

What characteristics of Godly leadership do you consider most important? Who has been a model of this to you?

Questions and Discoveries: