

Beshalah Exodus - Shemoth (13:17-17:16)

After God sent ten terrible plagues upon the Egypt, including the death of all the Egyptian firstborn, Pharaoh demanded the Hebrews leave and they rushed out, putting their kneaded dough on their backs. As the left, Moses shouted, "Remember this moment every year with a seven day Passover Festival of Unleavened Bread. Make a Ceremonial Feast for God for all times for it was on this night God passed over our homes and delivered us."

Now God led the Hebrews out of Egypt by way of the wilderness. God went before them in a cloud by day and by fire at night so they could travel day and night. God said, "Moses, camp by the Sea of Reeds. Then when I harden Pharaoh's heart again and he comes after you, I shall show My might and everyone will know that I am the Lord." And so it happened that Pharaoh came after the Hebrews with 600 army chariots. "Do not be afraid," Moses said to the Hebrews. "Stand firm and see the salvation of God."

Then God had Moses stretch out his rod to the sea and God split the waters so the Hebrews could journey on dry land. Reaching the other side, the Hebrews watched as again Moses held out his rod and God closed the waters over Pharaoh's army. Thus did God save Israel on that day. Everyone believed in God and trusted God's servant Moses. Moses and the Hebrews sang, "I will sing to God for God's great victory. God threw horse and rider into the sea. Who is like You Lord among all the gods who are worshipped? Who is like You working wonders! The Lord will rule for ever and ever." To celebrate Miriam, the prophetess, picked up her drum and led the women in dancing.

Free and in the wilderness, the Hebrews cried for there was no food and only bitter waters, until God had Moses add certain tree branches that made it sweet. As God commanded, Moses and Aaron said to the Israelites, "In the evening God will give you meat and in the morning bread and you will know God's glory. Each person is to gather only enough to be nourished." And quail came in the evening and the morning was manna flakes of bread. Hoarders saw their food came alive with worms. At the end of the 6th day, Moses said, "Tonight begins the Sabbath of the Lord. Collect a double portion today because there will be no manna on the Sabbath." And no manna came. Then, at the next camp, there was no water. The people were mad at Moses, who said to them, "Why do you test God?" Then God told Moses to speak to a certain rock, but Moses angrily hit the rock and water gushed out.

Then the Amalek tribe attacked. Moses sent Joshua with an army. In the war whenever Moses held up the staff of God, the Israelites would win. Whenever he let it down, they lost. Moses arms grew so heavy that Aaron and Hur held them up until the battle was won.

Questions: 1) When do you feel like singing the praise to God? 2) Would you rather help or be helped? 3) Why do people test God? **Illustration Ideas:** Cloud and Fire...Red Sea parting...The Hebrews freed...in Wilderness and mad...God giving food...Moses holding the rod during the battle...