

Exodus Study and Discussion Questions

Lesson Three: Lessons between the Red Sea and Sinai – Exodus 15:22-Exodus 18

Read Exodus 15:22-27.

- 1) Following an outstanding victory, the Israelites experienced dashed expectations. Read the Biblical commentaries in Proverbs 13:12 and 1 Corinthians 10:1-12 and record any life lessons you learn from the Israelites’ experience. **Soon after their victorious escape, the Israelites fell into a spirit of grumbling. Following victories, we must be especially diligent about avoiding temptation (1 Corinthians 10:12). Victory can numb us to our need for constant dependence on the Lord. Secondly, after Moses prayed, the Lord made the bitter waters sweet. Since God works all things for our good (Romans 8:28), He can reveal “sweetness” within our disappointments, even enabling us view that sweetness as the primary impact of an otherwise embittering situation. Finally, Israel’s hope for good water at Marah was deferred. God is behind deferred hopes, as well as fulfilled longings; both experiences develop character and build faith. For Israel, the deferred hope was a test, but it was also a principle to live by (a “rule” [15:25]): that for as long as they put their trust in God, they could count on Him to provide.**
- 2) In Exodus 15:25b-26, God issued “a decree and a law,” which also served as a “test.” Summarize the principle for living (“decree” or “law”) in verse 26 (see also Exodus 16:4, 28 and Deuteronomy 8:2). What does this law reveal about God’s intended work in the Israelites’ lives prior to their arrival in Canaan? **The principle (law) in Exodus 15:26 is, “If you listen carefully to the voice of 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.” The decree indicates that before God’s people reached Canaan, He intended to teach them to listen to Him and obey. He wanted to heal them from the lingering, harmful effects of bondage and lead them into new, wholesome, and free life. Their obedience would result in this blessing.**
- 3) On a separate piece of paper (or in your Bible), begin a travel log with the names of each site along Israel’s journey. Include Scripture references, a word or phrase that reminds you what happened in that location, and any time frame given. Begin with the locations in the Desert of Shur (15:22-27), or reference Exodus 12:37, 40; 13:20; 14:2 to begin with the earliest locations (included in the previous lesson). Try to maintain your log throughout the *Exodus* study. For this week, be prepared to share about the sites from the chapters in this lesson (keep in mind that some of these ancient locations cannot be positively identified today).

LOCATION	REFERENCE/TIME FRAME	EVENTS
Ramses to Succoth (Egypt)	Ex 12:37, 40 (430 years to the day, from when Israel first arrived in Egypt)	
In Egypt: Succoth to Etham	Ex 13:20	
In Egypt: Etham to Pi Hahiroth (between Migdol and the Red Sea)	Ex 14:2	Crossing of Red Sea
Red Sea to Desert of Shur	Ex 15:22	Three days without water
Marah (in Desert of Shur)	Ex 15:23	Bitter water turned sweet
Elim (in Desert of Shur?)	Ex 15:27	Place of many springs and palms
Elim to Desert of Sin (between Elim and Sinai)	Ex 16:1 (15 th day of 2 nd month after leaving Egypt)	Manna and quail given

“Place to place” in Desert of Sin; finally, Rephidim	Ex 17:1	Moses struck the rock; Amalekites attacked/ Moses’ hands upheld
Rephidim to Desert of Sinai	Exodus 19:1 (in 3 rd month after leaving Egypt; remained at Sinai nearly a year [Numbers 10:11-12])	Giving of the Law

Read Exodus 16:1-17:7.

- 4) What bad habit (first mentioned at the end of Exodus 15) took root in chapter 16, where it is named seven times? **Grumbling (Exodus 15:24 with 16:2, 7, 8, 9, 12)**
- 5) Re-read Exodus 16:3. From Lessons One and Two, what was the full truth about the Israelites’ past lives in Egypt? What lesson can you learn about glorifying the past? **The full truth was that while the Israelites may have had plenty of food in Egypt, they were enslaved, groaning, miserable, and crying out for deliverance (Exodus 2:24; 3:7). At least in part, the human tendency to glorify the past results from the sin of ingratitude. At times, our present suffering overwhelms us, so that we cannot imagine that anything was ever worse. In truth, almost every part of our lives contains the good and the bad. Jesus warned, “In this world you will have trouble” (John 16:33), but in every circumstance Christians should also experience the joy of our hope (Philippians 4:4).**
- 6) Compare Exodus 16:13-15 and 17:3-6 with Deuteronomy 8:3; John 6:30-35, 51-58; and 1 Corinthians 10:3-4. What were Moses’ contemporaries supposed to learn from the manna and from the water that came out of the rock, and teach to the next generation? **The manna and water were to teach that generation (and every succeeding one) to humbly depend on the Lord for every need. “The word of the Lord” is the ultimate source of all provisions (even the manna). Christ (the living Word) is the author and source of life.**
- 7) If you are able, give an example of a time when a physical need increased your awareness for humble dependence on the Lord in every area. **Personal sharing**

Exodus 16:1-17:7

- 8) According to Exodus 16:8 and 17:2, how were the Israelites’ complaints misdirected? **The Israelites kept complaining to Moses, but, as he pointed out, their real problem was with God.**
- 9) Exodus 17:1-7 describes a second occasion on which the Israelites were tested by their need for water. Would an objective biography written about your life reveal evidence that, in order to grasp particular lessons, the Lord needed to repeat them to you at different times and in different forms? If so, what is the nature of the lesson(s) He has been teaching you? **Personal sharing**

Read Exodus 17:8-15.

- 10) What character is mentioned for the first time in these verses and what do you learn about him? **Joshua is mentioned for the first time. The passage portrays him as someone Moses depended on and as a trained military leader.**
- 11) From Exodus 17:10-13, briefly describe the situation involving Moses’ hands. What do you understand to be the significance of this? **As long as Aaron and Hur held up Moses’ hands, Israel was winning the battle with the Amalekites. With the help of these men, Moses kept his hands raised until the Lord accomplished the victory. His raised hands remind us of the importance of prayer and dependence on the Lord for every victory. Aaron and Hur’s assistance reminds us of our need for brothers and sisters in Christ, who enable us to remain steadfast in work and in prayer.**
- 12) Who is the Lord asking you to assist in their work for Him as they seek to “remain steady”? **Personal sharing**

Read Exodus 18.

- 13) From Exodus 18:1-12, what preceded and resulted in the feasting that occurred in verse 12? **Moses testified to Jethro of God's faithfulness and mighty works.**
- 14) Summarize the problem and solution described in Exodus 18:13-27. **The problem was that Moses' work in overseeing all of Israel was too great for him to handle alone. His father-in-law Jethro suggested that he delegate some of it to wise men, whom Moses would oversee.**
- 15) Each Christian should pass on the things they learn (Psalm 145:4; Proverbs 22:6; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 18:24-26; Romans 15:14; Ephesians 6:4). Who are you training by allowing them to assist you in various responsibilities? Is there someone the Lord is bringing to mind that you need to begin training or be more intentional about training? **Personal sharing**