

Lesson 24: God Delivered Israel at the Red Sea and Provided Them with Food and Water in the Desert

A. Introduction

Here's something to think about: What is a miracle?

- Have you ever seen a miracle?
- Is it just something to doubt or wonder about?
- Is it just some kind of a strange event?

When God chose to supersede the physical laws He established, He recorded the event in His Word as a miracle. And we're going to see God do a mighty miracle in today's lesson as he parts the Red Sea.

God presents miracles as a part of history—the history of His dealings with the world and its people. And through the record of His miracles, God shows us truths about Himself. Folks, we're talking about the God who created the universe, the galaxies that go on and on and on....Here's a picture of the Andromeda galaxy which in only 2.5 million light years from the earth—that's all. You can get there if you've got 2.5 million years of time to travel that far—and this is just a tiny part of God's creation—and then, we think a miracle is a big deal for God? God is the God of miracles. And He's still doing miracles today.

When I was a young man, I was introduced to Kathryn Kuhlman, one of the great lady evangelists of the 20th Century. At the time, she would have Miracle Services in Los Angeles at the Shrine Auditorium as well as Pittsburgh, Los Angeles and Toronto. Thousands would stand in line for hours to get in and many of those were people who were sick and in wheelchairs and needed a miracle. Medical science had given them no hope, so they would go to Kathryn Kuhlman's meetings looking for a miracle, hoping that God would touch their lives. You can go to YouTube and type in Kathryn Kuhlman in the search bar and there are about 200 videos of Kathryn Kuhlman that you can watch—with people being healed at her miracle services as well as her CBS television program. Check it out. You'll be amazed at the miracles you see God doing on these videos.

Now there are many Christians today who don't believe in miracles and they don't believe that God heals people today, except through doctors. How sad that we limit God. We put Him in a box because of our unbelief. In effect, we make God out to be a liar because we don't believe what He says in His Word.

Read with me some of the gifts of the Spirit that God has given to His children:

1 Corinthians 12:7-11 (GW)

⁷ The evidence of the Spirit's presence is given to each person for the common good of everyone.

⁸ The Spirit gives one person the ability to speak with wisdom. The same Spirit gives another person the ability to speak with knowledge.

⁹ To another person the same Spirit gives {courageous} faith. **To another person the same Spirit gives the ability to heal.**

¹⁰ **Another can work miracles.** Another can speak what God has revealed. Another can tell the difference between spirits. Another can speak in different kinds of languages. Another can interpret languages.

¹¹ There is only one Spirit who does all these things by giving what God wants to give to each person.

Now there are some who believe that these gifts were just for the first century church and not for today. But nowhere in the Bible does it say that these gifts were just temporary. We need all the gifts of the Holy Spirit today, every bit as much as they needed them in the first century. We all have been infected with the disease of unbelief and we are so lacking in faith—myself included. We need to see some miracles. We need to see people healed, and we need to experience a miracle in our lives today.

As the Scripture says, God gives the gift of healing as well as the gift of working miracles to people, and it was so apparent that He had given those gifts to Kathryn Kuhlman. On one of her very first television programs that was taped at CBS studios in Hollywood, her guest was the vice-principal of my high school, Naurine Bennett. Mrs. Bennett was suffering from a skin cancer that was being treated by the doctors at the famous Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN. She was taking over 50 pills a day, and if you touched her arm, the pain would bring tears to her eyes.

I think that this may have been the reason why she was not well-liked by my fellow students. She was strict and somewhat unapproachable, but I later learned that much of this was the result of her disease and the constant pain that she was in.

Well somehow, she found herself at a Kathryn Kuhlman Miracle Service sitting way in the back of the Shrine Auditorium. If you've ever seen the Grammy Awards or the People's Choice Awards, then you've seen the Shrine Auditorium because that's where they're held. It's a huge place inside. A typical Kathryn Kuhlman service would run about 3-hours or more, starting out with singing songs of worship to the Lord, and Ms. Kuhlman bringing a brief teaching. Then, she would open up the miracle portion of the service and with a Word of Knowledge, which is another gift of the Holy Spirit, that God gives to His people, she would announce that this one up in the balcony was being healed of deafness, and someone else over on the left side of the auditorium was being healed of paralysis. And she would then tell you to stand-up and receive your healing, and then come down front onto the stage so she would interview you and verify that you had truly been healed. If you had been paralyzed, she would ask you to get up out of your wheelchair and being walking, or throw away your crutches. If you were deaf, she would have you stand several feet away and she would say something to see if you could hear what she was saying. And, she always had a team of medical doctors on the platform to verify the healings as well.

On this one Sunday, the first time she had ever been to a Kathryn Kuhlman Miracle Service, Ms. Kuhlman emphatically states that there is someone in the back of the auditorium, over on this side, whom God is healing of cancer. She said, "Stand-up and receive your healing, now." Well, my vice-principal, Mrs. Bennett, felt something like a charge of electricity going through her body, but she was embarrassed and didn't want to stand-up. She lived in Beverly Hills and was wearing a fur stole, and thoughts were running through her head like, "You're not one of these people. You're not down and out. What will people think if you they learn that you've been to a meeting like this?" All these thoughts which you know where they come from—these thoughts are whispered by Satan, the great deceiver—and these thoughts are meant to keep us from being healed, delivered, set free, and even saved.

Fortunately, Mrs. Bennett rejected those thoughts and finally stood up and she said at that moment, it was like a bolt of electricity running through her body from her head to her feet, and her whole body was shaking. Then, Kathryn Kuhlman tells her to come down the aisle, and to run...and get up on the stage, which she did, and to the thousands that we gathered there, and later on, on network television, she testified that God had healed her, and she was no longer in any pain whatsoever.

On the CBS broadcast with Kathryn Kuhlman, Mrs. Bennett had her doctor from the Mayo Clinic on to testify that indeed she had been healed and no longer needed to take any pain medication whatsoever.

I sat in her office in high school as she related this story to me because unfortunately, I had not been at that particular service, but I did see her on TV telling her story of God's miraculous healing of her cancer. Because she had been healed, she was now a changed person. She was more patient, more understanding and most of the kids in my high school grew to like her because she was now a different person—all because Jesus had healed her, and used a lady evangelist named Kathryn Kuhlman to do it.

Here's the postscript to that story. A few months after healing, I was in Mrs. Bennett's office again—not because I had done anything wrong, but just to see how she was doing. She confided in me that many of the teachers and students at school believed that God had done something in her life because she was so different, so changed. She said that saddest thing, which she said, almost broke her heart, was that her Baptist Church in Manhattan Beach, CA., treated her like a leper, an outcast. The minister had told her that he didn't believe that God had healed her and he had basically encouraged the rest of the congregation to treat her like a pariah, and stay clear of her. She said that finally, after a year or more of this kind of treatment—being treated like an outcast, or a crazy person, she and her husband left to attend another church where they believed in miracles and believed that God heals people today.

So that's the story, and God is still in the miracle business, and if you need a miracle in your life, my prayer is that your faith will grow as we go through this lesson today, because the same mighty God who delivered the Israelites at the Red Sea, is still at work today to deliver us from sickness, disease, whatever sin has us trapped—God is in the business of healing and setting people free—and that goes for you as well as me.

Now, let's get into our study today on God's deliverance of Israel at the Red Sea.

The importance of the parting of the Red Sea is that this one event is the final act in God's delivering His people from slavery in Egypt. The exodus from Egypt and the parting of the red sea is the single greatest act of salvation in the Old Testament, and it is continually referenced as representing God's saving power.

The events of the exodus, including the parting and crossing of the Red Sea, are immortalized in the Psalms as Israel brings to remembrance God's saving works in their worship.

Psalm 66:6 (ESV)

⁶ He turned the sea into dry land; they passed through the river on foot. There did we rejoice in him,

Psalm 78:13 (ESV)

¹³ He divided the sea and let them pass through it, and made the waters stand like a heap.

The exodus from Egypt, though a real, historical event, prefigures the saving work of Christ for His people. What God did through Moses was to provide physical salvation from physical slavery, God does through Christ is provide spiritual salvation from a spiritual slavery as well as healing and deliverance.

However, our slavery isn't like that of the Israelites in Egypt. The Israelites were slaves in Egypt, but we are all slaves to sin. As Jesus said to the Pharisees, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed" ([John 8:34,36](#)).

We'll get into this in more detail, but first, let's review Lesson 23.

REVIEW questions from Lesson 23.

1. What did Pharaoh say when Moses told him that the Lord God of Israel commanded him to let Israel go? *Pharaoh said, "I don't know the Lord, and I will not let Israel go."*
2. Did the king's answer surprise the Lord? *No, the Lord knew that Pharaoh would not let the Israelites go immediately.*
3. Does anything which a person says, thinks, or does take the Lord by surprise? *No, He knows everything before it ever happens.*
4. How did God plan to use this wicked king? *God planned to use this proud king to show everyone that the God of Israel is the only true and living God and that He is almighty.*
5. How did the Lord show His power? *The Lord sent great and terrible plagues on the Egyptians.*
6. What were those plagues? *The Lord turned the river to blood. He sent frogs, gnats, and flies. He destroyed the Egyptians' horses, cattle, sheep, camels, and donkeys. He also sent boils, hailstorms, locusts, and total darkness.*
7. Why didn't these plagues also come on the Israelites?
 - a. *Because of the Lord's love and grace.*
 - b. *Because God had not forgotten His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that He would make their descendants into a great nation and that He would be their God.*
 - c. *So that the king of Egypt would realize that the God of Israel was the only true and living God in the whole earth and that He does whatever He chooses.*
8. Did the Israelites deserve to be protected like this? *No, they, too, were sinners and deserved God's judgment.*
9. What did Pharaoh do each time the Lord sent a plague? *Pharaoh claimed to have changed his mind and asked Moses to remove the plague.*
10. What did Pharaoh do when the Lord removed the plague? *Pharaoh changed his mind, hardened his heart, and refused to allow Israel to leave.*
11. Was the Lord surprised? *No, He knew what the king would do.*
12. Was the king of Egypt able to win against God? *No.*
13. Can anyone fight against God and win? *No.*
14. What was the last judgment which God sent on the Egyptians?
God sent a plague which killed the firstborn in every Egyptian family and the firstborn of all their livestock.
15. What did God tell the Israelites to do so their firstborn children would not die?
 - a. *They must choose a lamb without blemish.*
 - b. *They must kill the lamb and catch its blood in a basin.*
 - c. *They must place the blood on both doorposts and above the door.*
 - d. *They must stay inside the house on which they had placed the blood.*
 - e. *They must not break any of the lamb's bones.*
16. What would have happened if the Israelites had not done everything exactly as God instructed Moses? *Their firstborn children would also have been killed.*
17. Who is the only one who can tell us how we can come to God and be accepted by Him? *God.*
18. What happened in the Egyptian homes on that night when God said that He would kill the firstborn of every family? *God killed them just as He said He would.*
19. What was God's promise to the Israelites? *God promised them that, when He saw the blood on either side of and above their doors, He would pass over them.*
20. What happened to the Israelites? *All of their children were safe. None of them died.*
21. Why didn't the Israelite children die?

a. Because the Israelites did what God said and placed the blood on their houses.

b. Because God is trustworthy, He kept His promise and passed over their houses.

22. Does God always do what He says? *Yes, when He says He will punish sin, He always does it. When He makes a promise to those who trust in Him, He always keeps it.*

23. What did Pharaoh, the king, tell Moses after the Egyptians' firstborn children died? *Pharaoh told Moses to take all the Israelites out of Egypt.*

B. God led the Israelites by a cloud.

Theme: God is faithful; He never changes.

God delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, and He began to lead them back to the land that He had promised to their forefather, Abraham.

Exodus 13:17-18 (ESV)

¹⁷ When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near. For God said, "Lest the people change their minds when they see war and return to Egypt."

¹⁸ But God led the people around by the way of the wilderness toward the Red Sea. And the people of Israel went up out of the land of Egypt equipped for battle.

ON MAP 1, THE NORTHERN END OF THE RED SEA.

Exodus 13:21-22 (ESV)

²¹ And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night.

²² The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people.

The number of Israelites had grown tremendously.

- When the Israelites first went to Egypt, there were only seventy of them.
- Now, 430 years later, there were probably about two and a half million Israelites!

Theme: God is loving, merciful, and gracious.

God directed them where He wanted them to go by a cloud.

- He kept the cloud before them at all times.
- They would have gotten lost, and eventually they would have died in the desert if the Lord had not directed them.

He loved them, and so He took care of them. God was protecting the Israelites so that the great Deliverer would be born into the world.

- The Israelites are the descendants of Abraham.
- The Lord had promised Abraham that one of his descendants would be the Saviour of the world.

Theme: God communicates with man.

The Lord also protected Israel because He was entrusting His Word to them to give to the world.

C. Pharaoh decided to recapture Israel.

Theme: Satan fights against God and His will. Satan is a liar and a deceiver. He hates man.

Pharaoh was guided by Satan. **3**

- He was not going to give up and let the Israelites go.
- He planned to go after them and recapture them.

Exodus 14:5-7 (ESV)

⁵ When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, the mind of Pharaoh and his servants was changed toward the people, and they said, “What is this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us?”

⁶ So he made ready his chariot and took his army with him,

⁷ and took six hundred chosen chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them.

D. The Israelites were afraid, and they blamed Moses.

Theme: Man is a sinner. He needs God and is helpless to save himself.

Exodus 14:10-12 (ESV)

¹⁰ When Pharaoh drew near, the people of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they feared greatly. And the people of Israel cried out to the LORD.

¹¹ They said to Moses, “Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt?”

¹² Is not this what we said to you in Egypt: ‘Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians’? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.”

Even though they had seen all the great and mighty things the Lord had done in Egypt, they still did not trust in the Lord.

Theme: Man must have faith in order to please God and be saved.

Moses, however, trusted in the Lord and told the Israelites to believe God.

Exodus 14:13-14 (ESV)

¹³ And Moses said to the people, “Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again.

¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.”

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Consider:

*Are we any different from the Israelites? Are we willing to believe God’s Word and trust only in Him? **4** Satan does not want us to believe. We may live and work with people who are telling us not to believe. But are we willing to believe God?*

Theme: Man is a sinner. He needs God and is helpless to save himself.

Theme: God is loving, merciful, and gracious.

Even though the Israelites sinned and didn’t trust in the Lord, He was merciful and planned to deliver them. They couldn’t deliver themselves.

- The sea was in front of them, mountains were around them, and their enemies were behind them.

- ONLY GOD COULD SAVE THEM.

- Recall:

When God put Adam and Eve out of the garden, away from Him, there was no way back into the garden, and they could not make things right between them and God. Only God could provide a way so that they could be accepted once again by Him. It was God who provided a way for Abel to be accepted by God. Only God could save Noah and his family from the flood. When Isaac was bound and placed on the altar and his father had the knife raised above him, only God could save him. The parents of the firstborn children of Israel could not save their children from death unless God chose to provide a way. Likewise, Israel could not escape from the Egyptians unless God made a way for them. It is the same with us. We cannot make a way to escape the wrath of God. We cannot make things right between us and God by the things we do. Only God can save us from everlasting punishment.

E. God opened the sea.

Theme: God is all-powerful.

Exodus 14:15-16 (ESV)

¹⁵ The LORD said to Moses, “Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward.

¹⁶ Lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go through the sea on dry ground.

God created the sea, so He has complete control over it.

- Recall:

In the beginning, the whole earth was covered with water. Remember how the Lord caused the water to move back so there was dry ground. The Lord, who in the beginning caused the water to move back, had not changed. He commanded this sea to move back so His people could walk on dry land to the other side.

God could do this, for He has control over the whole earth. It was not difficult for God to open the sea so that the Israelites could walk through to the other side.

- The Lord is almighty.
- Nothing is too hard for Him.

F. Israel was led by God through the sea.

Theme: God is faithful; He never changes.

Exodus 14:19-22 (ESV)

¹⁹ Then the angel of God who was going before the host of Israel moved and went behind them, and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them,

²⁰ coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel. And there was the cloud and the darkness. And it lit up the night without one coming near the other all night.

²¹ Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.

²² And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

Pix: "THE CROSSING OF THE RED SEA."

The Lord did not forsake His people.

- He promised to lead them safely out of Egypt and into the land He had promised to Abraham.
- The Lord led the Israelites into the path which He had made through the sea.
- The Lord moved the cloud that was leading Israel and placed it between them and the Egyptians.

Behind the Israelites, the cloud was bright and shining like the sun. It gave light so the Israelites could see where they were going.

Before the Egyptians, however, the cloud was black. There was only darkness in front of them. Nevertheless, the Egyptians continued to follow because the Lord planned to destroy them.

Exodus 14:23-25 (ESV)

²³ The Egyptians pursued and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.

²⁴ And in the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and of cloud looked down on the Egyptian forces and threw the Egyptian forces into a panic,

²⁵ clogging their chariot wheels so that they drove heavily. And the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from before Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians."

G. God drowned the Egyptian armies in the sea.

Theme: God is holy and righteous. He demands death as the payment for sin.

Theme: God is supreme and sovereign.

Exodus 14:26-29 (ESV)

²⁶ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen."

²⁷ So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal course when the morning appeared. And as the Egyptians fled into it, the LORD threw the Egyptians into the midst of the sea.

²⁸ The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen; of all the host of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea, not one of them remained.

²⁹ But the people of Israel walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

The Egyptian armies were drowned by God in the sea. No one can fight against God and succeed.

- He punishes all those who fight against Him.
- But He is the merciful Saviour of all those who believe His Word and come to Him in the way He says.

Theme: God is loving, merciful, and gracious.

Theme: God is faithful; He never changes.

Exodus 14:30 (ESV)

³⁰ Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians

dead on the seashore.

The Lord protected all of the Israelites.

- Not one of them was drowned, and the Egyptians did not catch any of them.
- The Lord saved them because of His love for them and because He had promised to save them.

Theme: Man must have faith in order to please God and be saved.

Exodus 14:31 (ESV)

³¹ Israel saw the great power that the LORD used against the Egyptians, so the people feared the LORD, and they believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.

When Israel saw the great things which the Lord did, they believed in Him.

Now this story of the Israelites passing through the Red Sea is not just part of history, but it reveals a present day reality as well.

The passing through the Red Sea represents the believer's identification with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The apostle Paul says, "For I want you to know, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ" ([1 Corinthians 10:1-4](#)).

Paul is giving the exodus from Egypt a Christological reading; he is making the connection between the exodus from Egypt and salvation in Christ. Notice how Paul says "all were baptized into Moses."

Just as the Israelites were "**baptized into Moses,**" so too are Christians baptized into Christ: "We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life" ([Romans 6:4](#)).

Another way of looking at this was that when the Hebrew people, the children of Israel, crossed through the Red Sea, and then the Red Sea closed up, or came crashing down on all of Pharaoh's soldiers, that effectively cut off the Israelites from ever going back to Egypt. They were severed of all ties with Egypt at that point. They were cut-off from their lives as slaves in Egypt. They couldn't go back, even if they wanted to.

And in a similar way, when we are baptized into the Jesus the Messiah, we are cut off from our old man, our old nature, our old life, our old ways. Baptism enables us to be set free from slavery to sin and to be raised to a new life and walk as new creatures in Christ Jesus.

Consider:

Some people say they will only believe if they can see God do some great and wonderful thing. But God has not promised that He will do spectacular miracles so that we will believe. God has given us His Word, and He tells us to believe that and to trust in Him. If we refuse to believe what He has written in His Word, then we will die without God and go to everlasting punishment.

H. Israel complained.

Theme: Man is a sinner. He needs God and is helpless to save himself.

Exodus 16:1-3 (ESV)

¹ They 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.

² And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness,

³ and 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.”

Even though the Lord had delivered the Israelites from the Egyptians by opening the Red Sea and leading them safely through, they had not learned trust in Him.

- They murmured and grumbled and blamed Moses and Aaron.
- Instead of complaining, they should have trusted in the Lord to give them food.

They could not get food anywhere.

- Moses couldn't provide food for them.
- Not only were there no “supermarkets;” neither was anything growing there.
- It was a barren desert.

God wanted the Israelites to know that He alone could help them in this situation.

In the same way, God wants each sinner to realize that God alone can save him from the punishment for sin.

I. God promised them food.

Theme: God is all-powerful.

Exodus 16:11-12 (ESV)

¹¹ And 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.’”

Although the Israelites and Moses couldn't provide food, the Lord could; nothing is impossible to God.

Theme: God is loving, merciful, and gracious.

They didn't deserve anything from the Lord, but in His grace, He promised to give them food.

- No one deserves God's grace and mercy.
- We all deserve everlasting punishment.

J. God gave them food.

Theme: God is loving, merciful, and gracious.

Exodus 16:13-15 (ESV)

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.

Pix: "MANNA IN THE WILDERNESS"

God helps the helpless; He delivers those who have no way of escape.

- Recall:

When Adam and Eve sinned against God and were therefore separated from Him, God promised to send a Savior to deliver them. They tried to make clothing from leaves, but God provided

Theme: God is faithful; He never changes.

Exodus 16:35 (ESV)

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.

The Lord faithfully provided manna for the Israelites from this time forward and throughout the time they were in the wilderness.

- He never failed them.
- God is faithful.
- He can be trusted to do everything He has said in His Word.

K. Israel murmured once again.

Theme: Man is a sinner. He needs God and is helpless to save himself.

Although the Israelites were thankful for the Lord's provision of food, they soon forgot about His great power, and they began to complain again.

- (Does that sound familiar to you?)
- Listen to what happened this time.

Exodus 17:1-4 (ESV)

¹ All the congregation of the people of Israel moved on from the wilderness of Sin by stages, according to the commandment of the LORD, and camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink.

² Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?"

³ But the people thirsted there for water, and the people grumbled against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?"

⁴ So Moses cried to the LORD, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me."

- Consider:

How long can a man live without water? Only a few days. The Israelites were afraid they were all going to die there in the desert. Can you imagine the burden Moses felt? He had no way of supplying water for these people. Only God could help them.

We know that God can do all things. But where could God get water in that dry, barren place? There was no oasis just ahead. Why should God provide for these people? The people did not deserve God's help.⁶

L. God told Moses what to do.

Theme: God is loving, merciful, and gracious.

God didn't let the Israelites die of thirst.

He gave them water because He is loving, merciful, and gracious.

Theme: God communicates with man.

Exodus 17:5-6 (ESV)

⁵ And the LORD said to Moses, "Pass on before the people, taking with you some of the elders of Israel, and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go.

⁶ Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people will drink." And Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel.

Pix: "MOSES STRIKES THE ROCK FOR WATER"

God told Moses to strike the rock with his rod.

God promised that He would give water out of the rock.

- Consider:

How much more sense it would have made to us if God had told them to dig a hole in the sand or make a well. Then we could have "explained" how He provided the water. But this was a true miracle of God. God and only God can bring water out of a rock in the middle of the desert. He wanted the Israelites (and us) to know that only God was able to save them from death.

Theme: Man can come to God only according to God's will and plan.

Moses had to do it God's way. Every time they had an impossible situation, God told them exactly what they must do.

- Compare:

God is the same today. He does not leave it up to us to work out a way to escape from our sin, Satan's power, and everlasting punishment. God is the Saviour of all those who will turn from trusting in themselves and trust only in Him. He alone makes a way for sinners to escape.

M. God provided them with water.

Theme: God is all-powerful.

.Exodus 17:6 (ESV)

⁶ Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people will drink.” And Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel.

In obedience to the Lord, Moses struck the rock. Immediately, a great stream of water flowed out. There was sufficient for all of the Israelites and their animals.

- Consider:

We do not know the exact number of Israelites at this time—only the men over twenty were counted in the census recorded in the Bible—but we can estimate from this census that there were perhaps two and a half million people. There was enough water for all of them and their animals! Psalm 105:41 says, “He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out; they ran in the dry places like a river.”

Only Almighty God could give water from a rock in the wilderness—enough water for this vast community of people. Remember, God made everything; He spoke and it was created. Nothing is too hard for God.

Theme: God is loving, merciful, and gracious.

God gave the Israelites food and water even though they didn’t deserve anything from God.

- They didn’t work for this food and water.
- God didn’t ask for anything in return.
- He gave them food and water because He is loving and merciful.

No person merits God’s love and mercy.

- We cannot gain acceptance with God by the things that we do.
- God’s forgiveness to sinners is a gift.

Theme: God is faithful; He never changes.

God faithfully protected the Israelites and provided all they needed.

- God had promised that He would bless Abraham’s descendants.
- God always does whatever He says.

N. Conclusion

The story of God’s provision for the Israelites is retold many times in the Old Testament and referred to in the New Testament.

These are historical events. Yes, they are miracles, and they are **God’s** miracles.

- They show us His faithfulness to keep His promises
- They show us His great love for His people.
- They show us His sovereign power over all creation.

God is beyond our understanding—so are His miracles. But we can believe that these things really happened, because God said so in His Word.

QUESTIONS:

1. How did the Lord show the Israelites where to go? *God led them by a cloud during the day, and the cloud became a pillar of fire at night.*
2. To which land were the Israelites heading? *To Canaan, the land God gave to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.*
3. Why did God protect Israel?
 - a. *Because He is loving and merciful.*
 - b. *Because one of their descendants was to be the great Deliverer of sinners.*
 - c. *Because of His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.*
 - d. *Because He was giving His Word to Israel to give to the world.*
4. What did the Israelites do when they saw Pharaoh's armies coming behind them? *They blamed Moses and said he should have left them in Egypt.*
5. Was there any way the Israelites could save themselves? *No.*
6. What should they have done? *They should have called on the Lord and trusted Him to rescue them.*
7. Why wasn't it difficult for God to open up the sea?
 - a. *Because He created the sea.*
 - b. *Because in the beginning, God had power over the water and the whole earth. He had not changed. He commanded this sea to move back so His people could walk to the other side on dry land.*
 - c. *Because God is almighty. Nothing is too hard for Him.*
8. What did God do to protect the Israelites from the Egyptians when they were walking through the sea? *God placed the cloud behind the Israelites so it was between them and the Egyptians. The cloud shone brightly to show the way to the Israelites, but it was a dark, black cloud in front of the Egyptians.*
9. Why couldn't the Egyptians escape from God? *Because the Lord is greater than all. No one can fight against Him and win. He is almighty.*
10. Can anyone make a way to deliver himself from God's punishment for his sins and make himself acceptable to God? *No.*
11. What new problem did the Israelites face as they began their journey through the wilderness? *They didn't have any food.*
12. Did they remember all the great things God had done, and did they trust in Him? *No, they complained and blamed Moses and Aaron.*
13. Did Israel deserve to be given food by God? *No.*
14. Is there any person who merits God's love or deserves to be rescued from everlasting punishment? *No, we all deserve to be punished by God.*
15. What was the food which the Lord gave to the Israelites? *The Lord first gave them quail, and then He provided manna every morning.*
16. Why couldn't the Israelites get water? *Because they were in the wilderness.*
17. What did God tell Moses that he must do to provide water? *He had to hit the rock with his rod.*
18. When God delivered the Israelites, did He allow them to do things the way they wanted to do them? *No, it had to be done God's way.*

Lesson 25: Preparation for the Giving of the Ten Commandments