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# SG020203

## The Whole Counsel of God – Exodus 13-18

Got questions? Email Pastor Jason at [jasonduff7@gmail.com](mailto:jasonduff7@gmail.com)

(You can download this message as a podcast by searching Jason Duff on iTunes)

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### Introduction & Overview of the Section – Seven Camping Spots

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God is delivering His people. Last week God delivered them out of Egypt by 10 devastating plagues, and now in our section this week, we will see God deliver Egypt out of His people by sending them on a year long camping trip. The trek from Egypt to the promise land should have been a 10 day journey. But God took one whole year to begin to pour into them truths they would need for a lifetime. As we consider this section we will see seven camping spots on their journey, and each stop has much to teach us.

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#### Stop One – Succoth – “Tent Town” – Exodus 12:37-13:19

At this first stop in the journey from Egypt God teaches them that they are pilgrims just passing through on their way to the promise land. This is a great lesson for us, as Peter also calls us strangers and pilgrims, passing through this life, heading toward heaven.

#### Stop Two – Etham – “He is with us” – Exodus 13:20-22

The second stop is at the edge of the wilderness, at the edge of disaster. And here God wants to teach His people that He is with them. It is at Etham that He gives Israel the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night to guide them through the wilderness.

#### Stop Three – The Red Sea – Exodus 14:1-31

The third stop is at the Red Sea. Here God has Israel camp between two mountains at their side, and the Red Sea at their back. It was not a very strategic camping spot, but God allowed His people to be put literally between a rock and a hard place, so that His glory might be known to the Egyptians and the Israelis.

#### Stop Four – Marah – “Bitterness” - Exodus 15:22-26

The fourth stop is at Marah. At Marah there was a great pool of water, the only problem was the water was bitter. The children of Israel complained against Moses and he made the bitter water sweet by adding the tree to the water. There are many implications of why times of bitterness happen in our lives and the role “the tree” (the cross) plays in it.

#### Stop Five – Elim – Exodus 15:27

The fifth stop was at Elim. Elim had many wells of water. After Father God taught the children of Israel important lessons at Marah with the bitter water, He was (as He always is) faithful to provide not only lessons, but blessings.

#### Stop Six – The Wilderness of Sin – Exodus 16:1-36

Stop number six just doesn't sound good, and it wasn't. The people started to complain about having nothing to eat. Instead of getting angry at their complaining, God sent a honey cracker like substance they called “Manna”, to the people so they could eat. And as long as they gathered it in the morning, and gathered it daily – it was all they ever needed.

#### Stop Seven – Rephidim – “Resting Place” - Exodus 17:1-7

The final stop was Rephidim or the “resting place”. But Rephidim had one problem; it had no water, so again the people complained. God had Moses strike the rock and water came out as pure as ever. Later in 1 Cor. 10:4 we are told that Christ was the rock that was stricken. He today still gives out torrents of living water to those who would partake.

## Study Notes (not covered in detail on Wednesday Night Bible study)

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**Exodus 15:1-21** – After God buried the Egyptian army in the Red Sea, Israel breaks out into worship praising God for what He has done. This passage teaches us many things. The first one is how important worship is to our lives. To get our eyes off of ourselves and onto the Lord will produce a joy and a purpose. It creates a throne in our hearts for the Lord to rule over (see verse 2). The other thing this passage teaches us is that our worship is simply a response to what He has done. It is not about what songs we like, or how they are being played. It is not about how we feel or how we are doing with the Lord. We worship Him because He is worthy, and that fact never changes.

**Exodus 17:8-16** – After God defeated the Egyptians, the Amalekites were the next people group Israel had to battle. The Amalekites were descendants from Jacob's brother Esau. As the text tells us, Israel had the victory as long as Moses' hands were raised, but when they began to fall, the Amalekites would prevail. Moses outstretched hands was a confession of total dependence upon God. Joshua needed the intercession of Moses, and Moses needed Aaron and Hur. There are many places in the battle we fight everyday for the Kingdom of God. Some of us are called to fight like Joshua, some of us are called to intercede like Moses, and some are called to assist in whatever way they can to see the kingdom of God advance.

**Exodus 18:1-27** – In our final chapter of the section we see Moses having a grand family reunion with his wife, sons and father-in-law Jethro. We then see Jethro give Moses some advice about delegating leadership. What wisdom there is in not trying to carry every burden yourself. This is also the first time we see the idea of elders showing up in the Bible. If you will notice, Moses (v20) taught the people, showed them the way they were to walk, and then there were leaders over a thousand, leaders over hundreds, leaders over 50 and leaders over ten to lighten Moses' load, and to use the gifts God had given them.

## Going Deeper (think it over or discuss with your family)

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#1 – As you read through the seven places the children of Israel camped at during their march toward Sinai (see other side of the study guide), what lessons do you need to come away with in your walk with the Lord?

#2 – Carefully read both chapters 17 and 18. What do these chapters teach you about could be your role in ministry?

## Exodus 16-18

### “Journey through the Wilderness – part two”

**The Book of Exodus can be divided into 3 sections**

#### #1 - Exodus 1-4 – God Develops His Man

- It is the story of the background and calling of Moses

#### #2 - Exodus 5-24 – God Delivers His people

- By bringing them out of Egypt
- By setting them apart in the wilderness
- By giving to them His law

#### #3 - Exodus 25-40 – God Dwells with His Saints

- The design of the tabernacle
  - The building of the tabernacle
- Just a guess but you might hear that again

**Tonight we are going to finish up Israel’s journey through the wilderness heading toward Mount Sinai**

- Next week we will look at the Law of Moses and an overview of the Ten commandments
  - For an in-depth study we are doing that on Sunday nights – so excited about next week
- But for tonight remember – God sent His people on a year long journey, through the wilderness
  - Having them camp at seven specific spots
  - Why???? – to get Egypt out of them, to teach them to depend on the Lord, and not the world in their lives

#### Camping Spot #1 – Succoth

- tent town
  - the lesson – this world is not your home, you have been made for another place
  - Such an important lesson for us to consider – we are headed to heaven
- Only then does life begin to make sense

#### Camping Spot #2 – Etham

- it was on the edge of the wilderness, the edge of the unknown
  - yet it was here that God taught them – I am with you
  - That was what Etham meant – He is with us
- It was also at Etham that God gave them a pillar of fire by night, a pillar of cloud by day to lead them and guide them
  - As the Lord still does with us when we are on the edge of the unknown

#### Camping Spot #3 – The Red Sea

- God purposely had them camp in a rough spot
  - Between two mountains, the red sea behind them, the Egyptian army bearing down
  - He purposely had them camp there for two reasons
- One, to reveal Himself to the Jews in a new way
  - They were going to know the God that parts the Red Sea by the end of the day

- Secondly, to teach the Egyptians – they needed the last stronghold of their evil worship to be destroyed, their army and so it was
  - God revealed Himself in new ways by the Red Sea

**Well tonight we will move on to camping spot number four**

**Camping Spot #4 – Marah – Exodus 15:22-26**

- The fourth place Israel moves to is place called Marah, and there at Marah was a great pool of water
  - You can imagine the scene in your mind – the people are in the desert, they are thirsty, and then they see the pool of water – they go running, jumping in rejoicing at the goodness of God – and as they take a big swig – yuck – bitter

I remember being in Hungry – and walking all day everywhere – which you can tell I am not used to – and we were so thirsty – well some people told of a fountain that came right out from the ground, and the water was pure, cold refreshing – So we went to this place and there were people all around the fountain. I had a check but decided to drink – and that water was cool, it was pure, it was also natural mineralized. Now when you are expecting Dasani, Ozarka water and you get Perrier – it is quite an experience.

> And this what these people felt

**But instead of just spitting it out and being bummed at the situation, the people turned on Moses – they became bitter at Moses for leading them out of Egypt**

- But again I want you to notice the text is completely clear – that they were being led by the Lord to this place
  - Verse 25 says, “here God was testing them”
  - He was teaching them – what was He teaching them????

**He was teaching them that life is a series of events**

- some joyous, wonderful
  - and some bitter, and hard
- some experiences we think will be so trying, so difficult
  - they turn out so sweet in our lives
- And something we think we will be so wonderful, so grand
  - Turn out to bitter experiences in our lives
  - It is just the way life was

**Marah was not just a lesson about life, it was also a lesson about themselves, their lives**

- you see it was easy to sing to the Lord when everything was great, when the Egyptian army was defeated

**The praise rang from their lips, but now that the situation was bitter they were seeing a picture of what was going on inside their hearts**

- And trials have a way of doing that to you and me

I think I am doing great growing in the Lord, and then my kids start to cry in unison – the other morning – it was four o'clock and Haley has to go potty, so she gets up and as loud as you can be, she goes through this process – well that wakes Jonathan up and he starts to crying – I go in, kiss, lay him back down, not what he wanted, he starts screaming, and then Haley who I have put back in bed starts crying because I won't turn her Christmas light on (they are dangerous) – so he's screaming, she's screaming, it's four in the morning – and let out this growl and lay back down and then comes the

condemnation – what was that – was that growl, are you are bear – pastor boy – really serving the Lord – the enemy shares

**And though the Lord brings forgiveness – I am aware, I still need work, I still need to grow – I still need to be more like Jesus**

- And it is so interesting to me how God leads Moses to fix the problem of bitterness, and anger in the lives of Israelis
  - The scripture says “He takes a tree, and when the tree was added to the equation – the water produced sweetness”

**Why is that important – I don’t get it, I don’t see it**

- see the imagery –

**I Peter 2:23 says, “when He (speaking of Jesus) was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness”**

- He died for you, for me – what on the tree
  - I still don’t see it, Jason

**Look, life produces bitter things; we become bitter with one another**

- someone sins against you, someone sins against me

**And we think I can never forgive that person, I can never get over what was done to me – I am bitter, the situation is bitter, there is nothing that is going to change that**

- And might be true until you consider adding to the equation – the tree, the tree on which Christ died
  - I still don’t get it

**You see on the cross Jesus died for your sins, and, He died for the sins of that person, the person who wronged you the person who sinned against you**

- the person who wronged me is not a believer
  - **I John 2:2, “And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.”**

**That sin has been paid for**

- The work He did was so powerful, the effectiveness was so potent
  - It takes care of all their sin

**How long has it been since you have taken communion and remembered what the Lord has done in removing not just your sin**

- but the sin of those who have wronged you – “Lord forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who have trespassed against us”
  - because when you add the cross to the waters of bitterness
  - I promise, I promise – they will be made sweet

**Now the Lord adds this little tag at the end of the story in verse 26 saying, “If you follow Me, if you keep My commands, I will lay none of these diseases on you.”**

- what God is saying has really been the point of our Sunday Nights over the past few weeks

**We think His commandments are a burden, God says, they are a blessing**

- I have given them to you, to bless you

- If you follow these commandments there are things you are going to avoid in your life, physical ailments that you won't have to face
- Because you are living in obedience to God

**Now I believe the reason God makes these remarks here is because bitterness can be one of the greatest hindrances to our spiritual health there is**

- we think when we read I will lay none of these diseases on you, if you follow my Word
  - that it means – sexual transmitted diseases or effects of Alcoholism or drug abuse, and it certainly does apply to those things
- But precious men and women, if you carry around bitterness in your heart toward others
  - That will have an equal amount of health issues
  - And that is why – God because He loves you, says, let it go!
- But in order to do that, you need to cast in the tree
  - Important lesson – lets move on, verse 27

### **Camping Spot #5 – Elim – Exodus 15:27**

- and Elim there were many wells of water
  - you see God gave them bitter waters at Marah to teach them, to grow them – why – because He loved them and was teaching them to depend on Him
- and at Elim God gave them fresh water – why – because He loved them – blessings to His kids
  - its all really about God blessing us – its just sometimes a blessing we want – fresh water – thank you Jesus
  - and sometimes it's a blessing we need – bitter waters – okay what are you teaching me

### **Camping Spot #6 – The Wilderness of sin – Exodus 16:1-36**

- Look again at verse one – “The wilderness of sin” – now that does sound good, it wasn't

**The children of Israel, still walking around the wilderness have now had plenty to drink (at least until our next stop) – but now they are hungry**

- and they again begin to complain against Moses
  - they are in the wilderness – and don't think of streams and forest, wilderness here is desert – so they are in the desert of sin, and they are in sin – they are murmuring
- Murmuring, complaining – “Murmur” - isn't that a great word – its how we sound when we do it

**It is very interesting to me, that when they are in sin, they begin to remember Egypt and how life was in Egypt, and they forget the bondage, the death**

- all they remember is “I think we were full”
  - they forget the pain –that they were slaves
  - they forget how they cried out for a deliverer

**And I mention that for this reason**

- we have a tendency when we are being carnal in our lives to think back to before we were committed believers, before we were saved

- and our flesh begins to play tricks on us
- Oh the good ole days – Oh the times we had
- Really – were they really like that?

### **Friends this is important for us to consider**

- For we remember our past in sin longingly – remember High school – so wonderful –
  - no it wasn't – you couldn't wait to get out – but we remember it differently
- Oh when I was a partier – that was great – no it wasn't – the headaches, the vomit

### **We have such a tendency to look back favorable, Israel did - But notice God's response**

- if I was the Lord – this would have been about the last straw – you have complained and complained – I am you were
  - But God doesn't do that

### **The people complained and what did God do, strike them down, no – He gave them bread – Manna – “What is it???”**

- the Jews were told that this bread would form in the morning
  - And as they went out to it, they said, verse 15 ‘what is it’ – that's Manna – what is it???
- God gives them everything they need, but notice verse 4 – God is doing this to again, test them, teach them
  - Teach them what – to obey – to do things God's way

### **You see God sets up this system they would use to gather**

- they were to gather every morning
  - if they were old enough they were to gather for themselves – not mommy or daddy only
- they needed to do it daily – if they tried to keep some over for the next day
  - it bread worms – it began to stink
- Except on the Sabbath
  - God wanted them to rest as we will see more next week as He gives them the 10 commandments
  - But God supernaturally changed what happened to this bread and preserve it on the Sabbath
- He also would not send the bread on the Sabbath, again to teach His kids some lessons
  - What lessons were those

### **First – to trust in the Lord**

- this was a huge operation to feed these people
  - It is a huge undertaking to do those Wednesday Night dinners in the summer or to set up food at thrive
- imagine meal planning for 2 to 3 million
  - The amount of bread we are told one omer per day
  - What is that????
- One biblical scholar I was reading estimated that to be about 9 million pounds of bread a day

- To put that into perspective – 1 train with 300 box cars of bread a day to feed these people
- What an undertaking – and the Lord did this for forty years with them until they were in the promise land
- Imagine – we have trouble trusting God to pay a bill – can you imagine feeding 3 million people every day for 40 years
  - That is the Lord we serve – He is a big God
- This manna taught them to trust the Lord for their daily break
  - But secondly it also taught them to obey and do things the Lord's way

### **God laid out a specific plan to follow**

- And some didn't – they would leave out the bread overnight
  - And go to get a big handful in the morning – only to find worms
- Some didn't listen that God would do a miracle and let the bread stay good over the Sabbath, and they would go out on the Sabbath – to get more, to get ahead – and yet it didn't work

### **Now one more thing before we move on to our last camping spot and that is, in I Corinthians Chapter 10, Paul calls what the children of Israel were eating spiritual food – “all ate the same spiritual food” – I Corinthians 10:3**

- and I mention this because God giving to Israel manna and the way they were to gather their spiritual food is very similar to the way we should partake of our spiritual food
  - what are you saying

### **The Manna was to be gathered daily**

- it wasn't that you gathered all you could get in one day and that would keep you for the week
  - no – if you did that – the bread began to stink
- NO – God gave them daily what they needed daily
  - Friends – it is the same way with our spiritual food
  - I don't know how many times, someone will call for counsel, a situation will arise – and it is the very same subject God was speaking to me in His word about that morning – He is so faithful
  - I don't know how many times a certain temptation is dealt with in the morning – that I will face during the day
- God gives us what we need daily – daily we need to gather it, our spiritual food

### **The manna was to be gathered individually**

- it wasn't about how your wife was gathering our your parents
  - it was about you – you going to get your daily spiritual from the Lord yourself
  - same is true – my wife is doing well – great
- My parents are on fire – that's fine (spiritually)
  - But what about you, what about me

### **It was to be gathered individually unless the kids were young, in that case it was to be gathered for all those in your tent**

- oh don't miss this Dads
  - don't miss this Moms – grandparents
- It is our responsibility to teach our kids the Word



- Sure we need to teach them to do it on their own, and there comes a time for that
- But now – and even then – we are responsible for the spiritual health of our homes
- This idea that until a kid can grapple with spiritual issues they don't need time in the Word is bogus
  - If you wait until the child can have their own spiritual time – the child will be starving for spiritual things
  - With my kids, Haley (10), Jonathan (8) and Aleah (6), they come in our room every morning and the two older read the one year bible, the youngest reads the New Testament
  - And sometimes, we have to say, we are going to get into the word before we play – and I know some would say – well I don't want to force them – well I guess if you are jerk about it, that is not a good idea, but I force my kids to brush their teeth and put on deodorant – and yes my son could probably go 3 months before he noticed something wrong
  - But as a parent it is my job to help them – develop good habits – that as they grow they may love the feeling of a clean mouth and smell good body and a clean mind as they have been trained to be in the Word
- Again, Mom and Dad are doing it too and we talk about what they are learning and I'm amazed what my kids pull out of the scriptures – don't sell them short

### **It was to be gathered daily**

- It was to be individually for most
  - Gathered by parents for the young

### **Finally – it was to be gathered in the morning before the sun melted it away**

- oh here we go, your going to lay some legalist trip on me about reading the Bible in the morning
  - listen it is not a legalistic trip – its wisdom
- There is something about the morning
  - What did David says 14 times just in the book of Psalms – Lord in the morning, early I will seek you
  - You see once the day gets going, my ability to hear and discern seems to melt away
  - Its not that God can't speak to you at 3 in the afternoon, but we are normally at our best in the morning
- Now that may mean you have to get to bed on time, to turn off Jay Leno, or whoever is taking over for him
  - It may be you need to use wisdom
  - But I was listening to our Pastor Jon Courson the other day and he said something that just resonated in my heart, he challenged his congregation that before they ate any physical food to eat spiritual food
  - That until they get at a bagel, get in the book
  - Before an omelet – crack open the scripture
  - To discipline yourself to not eat physically until they are eaten spiritually
- But I don't have time – okay, then don't eat
  - Well I can't – you see its really about choices of what I do with my time

- And something that is so vital, so life changing, such a privilege should have our attention

### **Camping Spot # 7 – Rephidim – Exodus 17:1-7**

- it means “resting place”
  - however when they come to the rest stop there is one serious problem
  - It doesn’t work – there is no water

### **Now if this sounds familiar, it is – at Marah we had the same problem**

- bitter water
  - now we have no water
- But you think after the Red Sea, after Marah, after the wilderness of sin and God feeding them daily you would think they would trust the Lord
  - But they are little too much like you and me – huh?

### **We go through trials – oh Lord**

- and God gets us through, teaches us about Him
  - and then comes another one – oh Lord

### **Sometimes repetition is good**

- and what God is getting Israel to see through repetition is very literally that He is everything they need
  - and I point this out to us because I believe in my heart the same is true today

### **Peter in his second letter, chapter 1, He writes the Jesus is all we need for life and for godliness**

- He is everything we need for life, real life issues
  - He is everything we need for godliness, for walking in the way He is called us to
  - Do you believe that – because like the children of Israel – I seem to need to be taught that over and over again
- He is everything you need to deal with that sin
  - He is everything you need to deal with your marriage

### **He is everything you need to deal with whatever you are going through and facing this day**

- I would not say that if it wasn’t so clear in scripture
  - And how that works out practically is seen in the spiritual application of our final camping spot

### **The Manna speaks of the incarnation of Jesus – the word made flesh**

- Rephidim speaks of the cross – Jesus stricken – Paul makes this clear in (I Cor 10:4) – when he says - “that Rock was Christ”
  - but after the rock was struck – water came out, water gushed forth
- You see they had feasted on Him, but right around the corner is a battle against Ameleck (always speaks of the flesh)
  - You will be destroyed if you try to fight it in your flesh – The Word of God says in how we deal with life and godliness, “not my might, not my power, but by my spirit says the Lord” – Zech 4:6
  - And it is that which the water speaks of

### **Jesus said in John 7:37....**

**“If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” But**

**this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”**

- The scene was amazing drama
  - On that great day of the feast, the Priest would come to the pool of Siloam (“sent one”), and they would pour out an empty pitcher of water – why would they do that
- To commemorate when they entered the promise land when they would no longer have to have their thirst met from a rock

**But also to look forward to the time when the Messiah would come and pour His spirit upon the people**

**The priest would read Isaiah 44:3, “I will pour water on him who is thirsty and floods on the dry ground, I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, and blessing on your offspring”**

- A passage looking forward to what the Messiah would bring to them

**And after the priest would read, the people would pray in silence for a time asking God to send the Messiah**

- And it was radical, it was during that moment that Jesus cried out “**If any man thirsts...**”

**He was speaking about the pouring out of His Spirit**

- on the cross – His blood cleanses us
  - and then His spirit empowers us for what lies ahead
  - and Ameleck is around the corner
- God knowing this brings us to Rephidim – that we might thirst for more of Him
  - Because more of Him is exactly what we need to walk in victory

**Jesus – nothing more, nothing less, nothing else**

- Lord pour out your Spirit upon us
  - Sometimes all we have left is you
  - And praise God for that – for He is all we need
- “Not my might, not by power, but by my Spirit says the Lord”