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C0620 – May 17, 2006 – Ex 15:22-16:36 – God's Provision In The Wilderness

I. God's Provision in the Wilderness (15:22-18:27)

After celebrating with song, timbrels and dancing on the shores of the Red Sea, the Israelites began their trek to Mt Sinai, a trip which takes just over two months. During this time God tested the faith of His people on several occasions by leading them into times of trouble. On several occasions they responded with grumbling and God graciously provided. So, the central idea is that God is a faithful leader and provider for His people. Tonight, we study how God led Israel to a place where the basic provisions of food and water were lacking to test whether they would trust in His provision.

A. The Provision of Water at Marah (15:22-27)

Exodus 15:22 Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness and found no water.

²³ When they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter; therefore it was named Marah.

²⁴ So the people grumbled at Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?"

²⁵ Then he cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree; and he threw *it* into the waters, and the waters became sweet. There He made for them a statute and regulation, and there He tested them.

²⁶ And He said, "If you will give earnest heed to the voice of the LORD your God, and do what is right in His sight, and give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians; for I, the LORD, am your healer."

²⁷ Then they came to Elim where there *were* twelve springs of water and seventy date palms, and they camped there beside the waters.

Three days after God's deliverance at the Red Sea they **found no water**. After walking a bit farther **they came to Marah**. But the waters there **were bitter** and so they named it **Marah**, which means "bitter" (Numb 33:8; also see Rev 8:10-11). These circumstances precipitated **grumbling** among the people, and they said, "**What shall we drink?**" Moses **cried out to God and the Lord showed him a tree and he threw it into the waters and they became sweet**. So, here is another miracle. Obviously the tree did not make the waters sweet but God made the waters sweet. The point is that God wanted them to walk by faith. Now, how many times does throwing a tree in polluted water make the water drinkable? That's the whole point. God gives some instruction (*torah*) to follow, even some unorthodox thing and when it's obeyed it results in God's provision. So, the faith came before the miracle. They would have to trust God's word and when they did God did a miracle. Now, God is trying to teach them that not only is He there "deliverer" but He is also their "provider".

So, in verse 25 God **made for them a statute and regulation, and there He tested them**. The **statute** was that the Lord would provide for them when they met trouble. God did not provide that they would never have trouble (an important point). In the following chapters they will meet the trouble of no food, the trouble of no water again, the trouble of war, and the trouble of lack of wisdom. In all these cases God provides for them.

In verse 26 God elaborates on the **statute and regulation**, saying, "**If you will give earnest heed to the voice of the LORD your God, and do what is right in His sight, and give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians; for I, the LORD, am your healer.**" So, God's provision is conditional. **If you...then I will**. That's an important structure to recognize in the Bible. And so, this is the beginning of the blessings and cursings on Israel in the OT. What's the condition here for blessing? **If you will give earnest heed to the voice of the Lord your God**. Earnest obedience to God's word. And what's the blessing for obedience? **I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians**. In this context the bitter waters of Marah could potentially cause disease. But no diseases came upon the Israelites from the waters because God healed them, making them sweet. So, the real issue here is that God promised to prevent disease among the Israelites if they were obedient. What's the implication for disobedience? God would put diseases upon them. Disease is one of the cursings listed for disobedience in Lev 26:25 and Dt 28:61. God makes the rules.

Verse 27, after they satisfied themselves with the sweet waters of Marah **they came to Elim where there were twelve springs of water and seventy date palms, and they**

camped there beside the waters (Numb 33:9). So, God was showing them His abundant provision when they relied upon Him.

Now, let's back up and learn some important lessons from this historic event. *First*, who led the Israelites to the bitter waters of Marah? God through Moses, His servant (v 22). God led them to a place of trouble. Now, many Christians struggle with this. They have the idea that all trouble is of the devil or is a result of sin in our lives. Sometimes this is true but not always. We have to remember that God the Spirit led God the Son into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil (Matt 4:1). So, it's false to think that all trouble is from the devil or is a result of sin. That said, why would God lead us into a time of trouble or difficulty, even a time of testing? Now, it certainly is not so that we will fail. God does not set us up to fail. God doesn't cause us to stumble. He tests us to approve us. He wants us to pass the test by faith. So, the tests are meant to challenge us to operate by faith. Faith is the only right answer to the test. Faith in who to do what? Faith in God that He will provide. So, here God was testing the Israelites to see whether they would trust Him for provision. Do you trust God when you get in a place of trouble?

Second, what was the response of the people (v 24)? Grumbling. How long had it been since the Lord saved them from Pharaoh's army at the Red Sea (15:22)? Just a little more than three days. What are the Israelites focused on? Their circumstances. What *should* the Israelites be focused on? The Lord. Is their negative attitude justified? No. When trouble comes what is your response? See, most of us fail miserably at this point. Let me ask you a question: every time we grumble at our troubles/circumstances is it not because of a failure to believe God will provide? Why do we fail to believe God will provide? Is it for lack of miracles? I find it astonishing that the Israelites enjoyed a miracle just three or four days earlier and still they don't believe God will provide.

Third, why didn't the miracles at the Red Sea result in great faith by the Israelites? Because faith does not normally grow through the sense of sight but through the sense of hearing? This is the constant testimony of Scripture (e.g Numb 14:11). Romans 10:17 "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God". Faith grows through the sense of hearing, not through the sense of seeing. This is why I have settled it in my own mind that if I were to lose either sight or hearing I would rather lose sight and I've been driven to this preference by the word of God. So, "This should prove that miracles do not result in great faith. Great faith comes from a settled faith that God is trustworthy."ⁱ And that comes from learning who God is. Can anyone tell me why miracles don't result in great faith? Because miracles come and go or as Martin Luther put it, "when the supply fails, our faith is soon gone."ⁱⁱⁱ Miracles are not in constant supply. They are irregular and so

our faith would rarely grow if dependent on them. We need a constant supply of the word of God. So, on one hand we have the Christian whose faith is unstable because he lives for the spectacular, tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine. On the other hand, we have the Christian whose faith is stable because he accesses the word of God daily, firmly rooted in the faith and being built up in Him and established (Col 2:7). This is why hearing the word of God is so essential to spiritual growth.

Fourth, Moses told the Israelites “**Do what is right in His sight**. This is another hard one for Christians. We often do what is right in someone else’s sight. We’re people pleasers. But we forget that God is the only person we are supposed to try and please. That means that what we do may not be politically correct. It may not please others. They may even get angry! Now, you can’t help that if you did what was right in His sight. Now, before you can do what is right in His sight what do you have to do? You have to know what is right in His sight. You’ve got to know His standards. How are you going to know that? You’ve got to **give ear to His commandments**. You’ve got to discipline yourselves to hear the word of God. You know, pay attention to the word of God. You can’t have the attitude when you walk in here of “What does this have to do with me?” “Why do I have to learn all this stuff about Israel?” “Just tell me something to help me today.” Now, you can’t have that attitude. If you’ve got that attitude it’s all wrong. You’re not going to grow up that way. That’s the attitude of a self-centered brat. Now, it’s not about you. It’s about God. And if we don’t take every line of Scripture seriously then what are we saying about God? We’re saying, “God wasted words.” So, here we’re interested in the whole counsel of God. You can’t build your life around a few favorite verses. God didn’t say, I want you to memorize five scriptures and that will be enough to make it in the Christian life. That’s not what God said. God said, I want you to **give ear to My commandments** and I want you to **keep all of My statutes, ALL**. That requires serious Bible study; steady, prolonged concentration, discipline and mental sweat. And some of you have not disciplined yourself toward godliness (1 Tim 4:7, 8), and some of you once did but no longer and some of you never have because you’re so self-centered you can’t get yourself out of the way for even a moment so God can take center stage in your life. And some of you are in such rebellion that you won’t pay attention when the word of God is taught, you just zone out. How are you ever going to keep His statutes if you don’t give ear to them? The word of God is central. And God says, if you earnestly heed the word of God I’ll bless you. The implication is that if you don’t heed the word of God He won’t bless you but discipline you. So, it all comes back to knowing the word of God and obeying the word of God.

Lastly, this bit about God's promise not to put **any of these diseases upon** them. This is a favorite verse for prosperity gospel preachers. The idea that God doesn't want anyone to be sick and if a person just has enough faith then God will heal them. This has led to a lot of trauma in people's lives because they can't seem to work up enough faith but I can't see how this verse supports the prosperity gospel. God doesn't say miracles will be the cure of all diseases. It says "if they obey then God will not put diseases on them". In other words, obedience would prevent disease. In this way God was their healer, their *Rapha*. If we look carefully at this passage we notice that God didn't heal any Israelites, He healed the waters. So, it's clear that if they had drunk the bitter waters it could have caused diseases, but God healed the waters so they would not cause disease. From this we gather that God is a preventative Physician, but only if they obeyed the Great Physician's word.

1. *If* they gave ear to God's commandments and obeyed them
2. *Then* God would prevent disease

All this said, the verse cannot mean that these conditional promises are transferable to the Church. Primarily, the commandments and statutes mentioned in verse 26 look forward to the 613 Mosaic Laws they will receive in a few months. Now, it's very interesting that many of the Mosaic Laws were preventative measures so that if followed they would not get diseases (see S.I. McMillan's book *None of these Diseases*). But this verse does not say that if we have enough faith God will heal all our diseases.

B. The Provision of Manna and Quail (16:1-36)

Exodus 16:1 Then they set out from Elim, and all the congregation of the sons of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departure from the land of Egypt.

²The whole congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness.

³The sons of Israel said to them, "Would that we had died by the LORD'S hand in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat, when we ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

⁴Then the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether or not they will walk in My instruction.

⁵ "On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily."

⁶ So Moses and Aaron said to all the sons of Israel, "At evening you will know that the LORD has brought you out of the land of Egypt;

⁷ and in the morning you will see the glory of the LORD, for He hears your grumblings against the LORD; and what are we, that you grumble against us?"

⁸ Moses said, "*This will happen* when the LORD gives you meat to eat in the evening, and bread to the full in the morning; for the LORD hears your grumblings which you grumble against Him. And what are we? Your grumblings are not against us but against the LORD."

⁹ Then Moses said to Aaron, "Say to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, 'Come near before the LORD, for He has heard your grumblings.'"

¹⁰ It came about as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the sons of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud.

¹¹ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

¹² "I have heard the grumblings of the sons of Israel; speak to them, saying, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread; and you shall know that I am the LORD your God.'"

¹³ So it came about at evening that the quails came up and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp.

¹⁴ When the layer of dew evaporated, behold, on the surface of the wilderness there was a fine flake-like thing, fine as the frost on the ground.

¹⁵ When the sons 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 which the LORD has given you to eat.

¹⁶ "This is what the LORD has commanded, 'Gather of it every man as much as he should eat; you shall take an omer apiece according to the number of persons each of you has in his tent.'"

¹⁷ The sons of Israel did so, and *some* gathered much and *some* little.

¹⁸ When they measured it with an omer, he who had gathered much had no excess, and he who had gathered little had no lack; every man gathered as much as he should eat.

¹⁹ Moses said to them, "Let no man leave any of it until morning."

²⁰ But they did not listen to Moses, and some left part of it until morning, and it bred worms and became foul; and Moses was angry with them.

²¹ They gathered it morning by morning, every man as much as he should eat; but when the sun grew hot, it would melt.

²² Now on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for each one. When all the leaders of the congregation came and told Moses,

²³ then he said to them, "This is what the LORD meant: Tomorrow is a sabbath observance, a holy sabbath to the LORD. Bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over put aside to be kept until morning."

²⁴ So they put it aside until morning, as Moses had ordered, and it did not become foul nor was there any worm in it.

²⁵ Moses said, "Eat it today, for today is a sabbath to the LORD; today you will not find it in the field.

²⁶ "Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, *the* sabbath, there will be none."

²⁷ It came about on the seventh day that some of the people went out to gather, but they found none.

²⁸ Then the LORD said to Moses, "How long do you refuse to keep My commandments and My instructions?"

²⁹ "See, the LORD has given you the sabbath; therefore He gives you bread for two days on the sixth day. Remain every man in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day."

³⁰ So the people rested on the seventh day.

³¹ The house of Israel named it manna, and it was like coriander seed, white, and its taste was like wafers with honey.

³² Then Moses said, "This is what the LORD has commanded, 'Let an omerful of it be kept throughout your generations, that they may see the bread that I fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out of the land of Egypt.'"

³³ Moses said to Aaron, "Take a jar and put an omerful of manna in it, and place it before the LORD to be kept throughout your generations."

³⁴ As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron placed it before the Testimony, to be kept.

³⁵ The sons of Israel ate the manna forty years, until they came to an inhabited land; they ate the manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan.

³⁶ (Now an omer is a tenth of an ephah.)

Alright, so, **they set out from Elim** into another **wilderness** somewhere between **Elim and Sinai** and they entered this **wilderness** on the 15th of Iyar. They had **departed from Egypt** on the 15th of Abib. So, it had been exactly one month since the Exodus (Chart).

And here we go again in verse 2, **the whole congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness**. Again, it's only been a few days since God miraculously provided water for them at Marah and here they are already

failing to trust that God will provide for them. You might marvel at this but it's so true of all of us. When we first became believers I know most of us did not walk by faith. We walked by sight and that's what **the sons of Israel** are doing. Look what they say in verse 3, "**Would that we had died by the LORD'S hand in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat, when we ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.**" "In other words, they saw themselves as no better off than the Egyptians who died "by the hand of the Lord" when he brought Israel up out of their land."ⁱⁱⁱ Further, they accuse Moses and Aaron of taking them **out into the wilderness to kill them...with hunger**. In other words, God would not lead us into this trouble. So, they have a poor doctrine of God. Now, this is the second time the Israelites have accused Moses of taking them out in the wilderness to kill them. In Exod 14:11-12 they said, "why have you taken us out here to die by the sword at the hand of the Egyptians." Now they say, "why have you taken us out here to die by hunger."

Then, in verse 4 **the Lord** promised daily provision, **bread from heaven**. They will have to go out and **gather a day's portion every day**. This is a **test**. What point is God testing them on? **whether or not they will walk in My instruction, torah**. Are they going to faithfully obey His *torah* or not. Further stipulations are given in verse 5. "**On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily.**" So, on the sixth day they are supposed to gather **twice as much** apparently so they can rest on the seventh day which is the Sabbath. Verse 6 **So Moses and Aaron said to all the sons of Israel, "At evening you will know that the LORD has brought you out of the land of Egypt**. They still think it is Moses and Aaron that brought them out of Egypt, even after all the miracles. So, they say **at evening you will know that** it was **the Lord**. Now, what is going to happen at evening so they will know it was the Lord? A miraculous provision of meat; the Lord is going to provide quail (v 8). And then in verse 7 **in the morning you will see the glory of the Lord**. A miraculous provision of **bread**. Somehow the **bread** is associated with **the glory of the Lord**. So, both these miraculous provisions are going to demonstrate the fact that the Lord led them out of Egypt, not Moses and Aaron, and therefore their **grumbling is against the Lord**, not Moses and Aaron. I think it's great what Moses and Aaron say in verses 7 and 8, "**what are we that you grumble against us?**" In other words, you really think we're so great as to deliver 2 million people from Egypt and part the Red Sea and provide water at Marah? Are you guys, idiots? Think this through. Let's locate the responsible party here. ⁹ **Then Moses said to Aaron, "Say to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, 'Come near before the LORD, for He has heard your grumbings.'**" ¹⁰ **It came about as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the sons of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness,**

and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. So, the **cloud** was already there and to confirm Aaron’s message **the glory of the Lord appeared** in the midst of the **cloud**. So, this seems to mean that the splendor of the pre-incarnate Christ flashed forth out of **the cloud** to authenticate Aaron’s message. ¹¹ **And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,** ¹² **"I have heard the grumblings of the sons of Israel; speak to them, saying, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread; and you shall know that I am the LORD your God.'"** ¹³ **So it came about at evening that the quails came up and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp.** Now, the quail is given very little attention in this chapter and the rest of the Bible. It has been reported that the migratory route of quail from Africa covers the location of the Israelites travels and that by the time the quail reach the wilderness deserts they are so tired you can catch them by hand. But it seems this is more than natural phenomena here. They will actually **cover the camp**. So, I’m not sure if this is a hunter’s dream or not, not much sport to it, just walk over and pick up a bird. Additionally, a **layer of dew** was **around the camp** and when it **evaporated, behold, on the surface of the wilderness there was a fine flake-like thing, fine as the frost on the ground.** Verse 35 calls it **manna**, which comes from the Greek word *manna* which means “a grain” and hence we get “bread” but the Hebrew text word and description give more information. The word **manna** in the Hebrew is an interrogative particle that means “What?” as verse 15 indicates, **When the sons of Israel saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was.** So, they called this food the “what? food”. Further, the **manna** is described several ways.

- very fine flakes
- it melted in hot sun
- coriander seed
- white in color like bdellium stone (Numb 11:7-9)
- tastes like wafers with honey

So, it was probably a very light, flaky pastry. In time the Israelites learned how to cook different dishes with the **manna** as described in Numbers 11:7-9. Some of the manna was placed in a jar and preserved either in the ark of the testimony or beside the ark along with Aaron’s rod.

Manna	Christ
<i>type</i>	<i>antitype</i>
Provided by God (Exod 16:15)	Provided by God (John 6:33)
Provided temporal life (John 6:49,	Provides eternal life (John 6:33)

58)	
From heaven (Ps 78:24)	From heaven (John 6:33, 41)

The NT identifies manna as a type of Christ in John 6:33, 41-42, 48-52, 58). God provided the manna and God provided Christ. The manna provided temporal life but Christ provides eternal life. Both proceeded from heaven. The point is that God is our provider in both body and spirit.

When the people said, "What is it?"...Moses said to them, "It is the bread which the LORD has given you to eat." Now, here come the Lord's commands in verse 16. "This is what the LORD has commanded, 'Gather of it every man as much as he should eat; you shall take an omer apiece (that's 3.64 liters, a little over 6 pints) according to the number of persons each of you has in his tent.'" ¹⁷ The sons of Israel did so, and *some gathered much and some little*. In other words, their calculations were not exactly right. However, ¹⁸ When they measured it with an omer, he who had gathered much had no excess, and he who had gathered little had no lack; every man gathered as much as he should eat. So, the calculations were worked out perfectly by the miraculous hand of God. ¹⁹ Moses said to them, "Let no man leave any of it until morning." ²⁰ But they did not listen to Moses, and some left part of it until morning, and it bred worms and became foul; and Moses was angry with them. Note the disobedience. There are two lessons here that we'll look at in a moment. ²¹ They gathered it morning by morning, every man as much as he should eat; but when the sun grew hot, it would melt. So, it was only available in the morning and if you slept in you didn't get to eat. So, the teenagers didn't get to 'sleep in' back in Moses' day. ²² Now on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for each one. From this it is very clear that it was a miraculous provision because if you tried to keep some overnight on any other day of the week it would turn into maggots but on this day it would keep overnight. Now, the people did not know why they were doing this on the sixth day and so all the leaders of the congregation came and told Moses, ²³ then he said to them, "This is what the LORD meant: Tomorrow is a sabbath observance, a holy sabbath to the LORD. Bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over put aside to be kept until morning." So, the seven day was a Sabbath, *Shabbat*, a day of rest. So, they should stay home and not go out and gather manna. This is the first mention of the Sabbath in the Bible. ²⁴ So they put it aside until morning, as Moses had ordered, and it did not become foul nor was there any worm in it. ²⁵ Moses said, "Eat it today, for today is a sabbath to the LORD; today you will not find it in the field. ²⁶ "Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, *the sabbath*, there will be none." ²⁷ It came about on the seventh day that some of the people went out to

gather, but they found none. Again, they refused to obey and we'll look at the application of this in a moment. ²⁸ **Then the LORD said to Moses, "How long do you refuse to keep My commandments and My instructions?"** ²⁹ **"See, the LORD has given you the sabbath; therefore He gives you bread for two days on the sixth day. Remain every man in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day."** ³⁰ **So the people rested on the seventh day.** They are learning their lesson here about how important it is to be very sensitive to the word of God. They need to give ear to the voice of the Lord and obey all His torah. ³¹ **The house of Israel named it manna,** because they said "What is it?" **and it was like coriander seed, white, and its taste was like wafers with honey.** A delicious, fine, flaky, sweet, pastry. Psalm 78:24 calls it "the food of angels" and in 1 Cor 10:3 it is called "spiritual food". ³² **Then Moses said, "This is what the LORD has commanded, 'Let an omerful of it be kept throughout your generations, that they may see the bread that I fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out of the land of Egypt.'"** ³³ **Moses said to Aaron, "Take a jar and put an omerful of manna in it, and place it before the LORD to be kept throughout your generations."** ³⁴ **As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron placed it before the Testimony, to be kept.** So, one omer (~ 6 pints) was kept in a jar" but no quail and this was because the **manna** was somehow associated with the glory of the Lord but the quail wasn't. ³⁵ **The sons of Israel ate the manna forty years, until they came to an inhabited land; they ate the manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan.** So, we're catapulted forward in time to see the daily provision of the Lord lasted for forty years. Forty years spent wandering in the wilderness because when the 12 spies went into the land the people believed the bad report of the ten spies and not the good report of Joshua and Caleb. So, God would not let a disobedient people enter the Promised Land. Once that generation died and they crossed the Jordan they didn't eat manna anymore.

Joshua 5:12 The manna ceased on the day after they had eaten some of the produce of the land, so that the sons of Israel no longer had manna, but they ate some of the yield of the land of Canaan during that year.

³⁶ **(Now an omer is a tenth of an ephah.)** This is a technical designation of an **omer** which was about 3.64 liters or a little over 6 pints.

SUMMARY & LESSONS TO LEARN

First, why did the people grumble at Moses and Aaron for the lack of food in verse 2? Because they had a poor doctrine of God. They had the idea that God always leads by the

path of least resistance. So, God would never lead us into trouble. Now, that's just flat wrong. Often God leads us into troubles. Why? So that we will learn to trust Him. Now, there's more to this than first meets the eye. It bears on the question of how we know what God's will is for our lives.

Second, if we run into trouble does that mean God doesn't want us to go that way? Is that God closing the door? See, this concept of deciphering God's will is what I call 'open door' theology. So, we pray that God will 'open doors' and what this means is that we're looking for the path of least resistance—"Lord, take me down the easy path." Now, that's not always the way God works. Anyone see what's wrong with the 'open door' theology? Well, it contradicts Scripture.

James 1:2-4 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. ⁴ And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

So, it contradicts the growth principle. The path of least resistance doesn't result in growth but shallow Christians, Christians with no backbone, Christians, according to this verse, who lack many things. So, we have to go through resistance in order to grow. There are verses all over the Bible about this (Jam 1:12; 5:11; et. al.) and it's hard to believe so many Christians are still operating on the 'open door' theology. So, sometimes the door is going to get slammed in your face and you have to keep trusting the Lord and pushing onward, being obedient to Him. Ok, well, if 'open door' theology is not valid what is? How are you going to know the will of the Lord? You're going to know His word; the OT law revealed the will of God for Israel and the NT law of Christ reveals the will of God for the Church. So, how are you going to stay in the will of God? You're going to obey the NT laws of Christ under the filling of the Spirit. It's that simple. We can conclude by saying that God led the Israelites into this trouble. Therefore, "the easy way is not necessarily God's way."

Third, the Israelites tried to keep some manna overnight and it grew maggots. Then they tried to go out on the seventh day and gather. In both cases they were being disobedient to the *torah* of God. What does this tell us about how sensitive we should be to the commands of God? How sensitive are we supposed to be to the details? There's no room for deviation. And there's a whole emerging church that is against studying the details of Scripture. Slight deviations from the word of God are disobedience, sin! The whole point of this is to obey the commandments of God exactly as they are. You should see from this

how important it is to listen to the word of God. God wanted them to learn that they would have to depend on His provision daily.

Fourth, every day (except Sabbath) they had to go gather the manna. God wanted them to learn to depend on Him daily. They would have to trust in His daily provision. Is it any different with us? God wants us to learn to depend on Him to provide daily. This means you may not have the money today to pay the bills due next week. God wants us to trust in His provision.

So, I think we have seen how sensitive we are supposed to be to the word of God and how faithful obedience to the word of God results in God's provision. Disobedience results in discipline.

ⁱ Tom Constable, <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/exodus.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Martin Luther quoted by Keil and Delitzsch, 358.

ⁱⁱⁱ Sailhammer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 273.

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