

EXODUS 14-17

Exodus 14:1-4

The Lord gave Moses instructions to have the children of Israel camp by the Red Sea. However, the encampment would hem in Moses and his people between the Red Sea and Pharaoh's armies. Pharaoh had not kept his word in letting the children of Israel go; he followed them in an attempt to get his laborers back. Verse 4 echoes the words that the Lord used prior to and during the plagues in Egypt.

Source

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

Exodus 14:5-9

Pharaoh let the children of Israel leave Egypt so that they could worship God in the desert for a few days (see Exodus 12:31-32). However, he later learned that the Hebrews were trying to escape Egypt completely. He and his servants regretted the decision to let the Hebrews go since they were his laborers. Therefore, Pharaoh's heart was again hardened; he prepared his powerful army of chariots and leaders to pursue the bold Hebrews, who "went out with an high hand." Pharaoh's army overtook them as they camped by the Red Sea.

Source

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

Exodus 14:10–14

Pharaoh's army of chariots overtook the Hebrews at their encampment, where they were penned in. The children of Israel became afraid and began praying to God. They were angry with Moses and said that they should have just stayed in Egypt to serve the Egyptians rather than potentially die in the desert. Moses, in an attempt to assuage their fears, encouraged the people to be calm because the Lord would fight for them. He assured them that the Egyptians who were about to come against them would soon be gone.

Source

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

Exodus 14:15–18

The Lord acknowledged Moses's faith and prayers on behalf of the children of Israel. It was time to put faith into action. The Lord instructed Moses to take his staff, stretch it over the Red Sea, and divide it so that the children of Israel could travel through it on dry ground. Moses would become the Lord's instrument to deliver the Hebrews. However, the hard-hearted Egyptians would follow and chase them. In the end, the Lord would prevail and receive recognition, even from the Egyptians.

Source

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

Exodus 14:19–22

Verse 19 references the "angel of God." In the Old Testament, this phrase usually refers to God Himself (see Exodus 3:2). The cloud also represents the presence of God.

Moses stretched out his hand over the Red Sea. The Lord then caused the waters to divide, allowing the children of Israel to cross through the divide on dry ground. The walls of water on their left and right protected them. God also protected the Hebrews by positioning Himself as a pillar of fire between them and the Egyptians.

Source

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

Exodus 14:23–25

Pharaoh's armies chased the children of Israel through the divided waters. However, the Lord, represented in verse 24 as a "pillar of fire and of the cloud," fought for the Hebrews. The Egyptians recognized that and started to flee.

Source

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

Exodus 14:26–28

Once the Hebrews had crossed, the Lord instructed Moses to stretch out his hand once again to cause the waters of the Red Sea to return and to close the divide. The Egyptian army was caught up in the waters and drowned. None of the army survived.

Source

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

Exodus 14:29–31

The pursuing Egyptians drowned as the waters closed, but the children of Israel survived. The Hebrews saw the Lord's hand fighting for, protecting, and saving them. They no longer needed to fear the Egyptians; they needed to fear the Lord. They also came to believe what the Lord and Moses had been teaching them during the events leading up to and during their deliverance from Egypt.

Source

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

Exodus 15:1–2

The children of Israel had been delivered out of Egypt, so they celebrated with song. Celebration songs are often seen throughout the scriptures as songs of praise to God. They reveal God's character and give details of an event or a conquest.

Moses's song starts out rejoicing the Hebrews' glorious triumph over Egypt and acknowledges God's hand in the people's deliverance. Moses also referenced his forefathers ("my father's God"), linking back

to the Abrahamic covenant. In the covenant of Abraham, God had vowed that the children of Israel would be brought to a promised land. That covenant was being fulfilled.

Source

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

Exodus 15:3–7

Moses’s song recognized the Lord as a fighter (“a man of war”). Thanks to the Lord, Pharaoh’s armies were drowned in the Red Sea and the children of Israel triumphed. Since these verses are in poetic form, we see wonderful imagery describing the event: the enemies were “cast into the sea,” “depths have covered them,” “they sank . . . as a stone,” and they were “consumed as stubble.”

Source

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

Exodus 15:8–10

The song continues to depict how God gathered the waters of the Red Sea after having divided it to let the Hebrews go through: He “didst blow with [His] wind,” with a “blast of [His] nostrils.” While that was happening, the enemy threateningly pursued the Hebrews but then ended up drowning in the gathering waters.

Source

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

Exodus 15:11–13

Moses wrote that there is no other god like the Lord—He is merciful and glorious and works wonders. Moses’s narrative of the Exodus paints the picture of an amazing wonder: God leading the Hebrews through the Red Sea so that the people of Israel could escape Pharaoh’s armies. The Hebrews were redeemed (rescued or saved) and were led unto God’s “holy habitation,” which in this instance referred to the promised land (see Exodus 15:17). In Deuteronomy 26:15, the phrase “holy habitation” refers to heaven, an ultimate destination for the Hebrews: “Look down from thy holy habitation, from heaven, and bless thy people Israel, and the land which thou hast given us.”

God is also “fearful in praises.” Thanking and praising God can go a long way. When we sincerely praise God, in song or prayer, God is quick to take action. That action can even cause fear among our enemies, as was shown in the events of the Exodus.

Source

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

Exodus 15:14–18

The entire song that Moses wrote refers to the Exodus from beginning to end. In these verses, he focused on the end of the Exodus. His people were looking forward to arriving in the land of Canaan, but they also were anticipating the fear that the surrounding inhabitants might have because of their arrival. God would calm those neighboring people so the Hebrews could pass through peaceably to reside in the mountains, a sanctuary that God had established for His people.

Source

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

Exodus 15:19–21

Verse 19 repeats some of the wording from the beginning of the song. In verse 20, Miriam and other women joined in the singing, accompanied by timbrels and dancing. Timbrels were the primary percussion instrument of the ancient Hebrews. They were similar to modern-day tambourines. Verse 21 is a repeat of the very first verse of the song.

Source

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

Exodus 15:22–26

The children of Israel arrived in the desert after having wandered for three days. With all the people and livestock there, they soon ran out of water. The water in Marah was too bitter to drink (in Hebrew, *marah* means “bitter”). The people began to murmur, even after all the blessings they had received during the Exodus and their release from slavery. The Lord again showed them that He was their God; Moses, as God’s instrument, tossed a tree into the water, and the Lord sweetened the waters of Marah, making it drinkable. In verse 26, Moses encouraged the people to keep the faith and listen to God’s commands. A statute would test them. If they would listen to the Lord, He would protect the children of Israel from the diseases that plagued Egypt.

Source

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

Exodus 15:27–27

After they crossed the Red Sea, the Hebrews camped at Elim (which means “palm trees”). After experiencing bitter water in Marah, the people of Israel found twelve wells of good water and plenty of palm trees.

Source

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

Exodus 16:1–3

The children of Israel left Elim and arrived in the desert of Sin (the name has nothing to do with the moral concept of sin), one of six desert areas that the Hebrews traveled through on their way to Canaan. After leaving Egypt, the Hebrews traveled for about one month before they arrived in this desert. After dealing with a shortage of good water in the wilderness of Shur, the Hebrews dealt with hunger in the desert of Sin. They longed for the time in Egypt when they had had plenty to eat. Even though the Lord had ultimately provided them with good water in Shur and in Elim, the Hebrews continued to forget that the Lord had been providing for them on their journey.

Source

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

Exodus 16:4–8

The Lord heard the murmurings of the children of Israel in the desert. Their murmurings were not so much against Moses and Aaron as against the Lord. The Lord was merciful and provided for them in their hunger. He said He would “rain bread from heaven,” not only to comfort them but also to test them, to see if they would “walk in [His] law.” They had to put some effort into receiving the blessing of bread. They had to go out daily to gather it but could gather only a certain amount each day. This blessing would help them come to know the Lord.

Source

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

Exodus 16:9–10

Moses asked Aaron to instruct the people to gather together and “come near before the Lord.” The people gathered and were able to know for certain that God had heard their murmurings against Him. They witnessed His glory, which appeared to them in a cloud.

Source

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

Exodus 16:11–15

Through Moses, the Lord assured the people of Israel that they would be fed with meat and bread. In the evening they discovered quail as their source of meat, and in the morning they discovered the bread (or *manna*)¹ that the Lord had given them. The Lord’s message to them was, “[You now know that] I am the Lord your God.”

Source

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

Exodus 16:16–21

Moses gave instructions to his people that the Lord had commanded be given to them. The people were to go out every morning and gather the manna that the Lord provided. They were to gather only one *omer*² per person, but enough for every person in a household. There was to be no hoarding. They were to consume the full amount each day and not leave any left over. However, many of the people did leave some for the next morning, and it rotted. This angered Moses because those people did not follow God’s instructions; in addition, it was a waste of precious food.

Source

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1 The word *manna* derives from the Hebrew expression for “What is it?” (*man-hu*). In verse 15 the people said, “It is manna: for they wist not what it was.” Notice that Moses told the people, “This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat.” His words foreshadowed the Bread of Life. In John 6:41 we read of Jesus saying, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.”

2 An *omer* was an ancient Hebrew unit of volume for measuring grains and other dry goods. It was equivalent to a tenth part of a bushel, or just over three pounds.

Exodus 16:22–26

The Hebrews gathered the manna as instructed. On the sixth day, they gathered two *omers* per person so they could rest on the Sabbath day. On the sixth day they were to bake or seethe (boil) what was needed for the day; the rest of the double batch could be laid up for the next day. That portion did not rot overnight as it did on the other days of the week, showing once again that God was in control. Even if the people wanted to gather the manna on the Sabbath day, there would not be any available. This particular teaching about when to work and when to rest was a precursor to the later revelation of the fourth commandment in Exodus, chapter 20.

Source

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

Exodus 16:27–31

Although the people of Israel were commanded not to gather manna, or otherwise work, on the Sabbath day, some went contrary to that command and tried to collect manna, but the area was empty of manna. Moses had to repeat his instructions to the people concerning the Sabbath day. After that, the people rested as they had been taught.

Source

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Exodus 16:32–36

Moses received a commandment from the Lord: the people were to fill a pot with one *omer* of the manna to pass down to future generations so that they could see the bread that sustained the children of Israel through the desert on their way to Canaan. It took the children of Israel forty years before they reached Canaan, but they were provided manna during that entire time.

Note: The “testimony” refers to the two tablets of the Ten Commandments that would be placed in the ark of the covenant. See Exodus 25:16: “And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee.” Hebrews 9:4 also points out the contents of the ark: “The ark of the covenant . . . wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron’s rod . . . and the tables [tablets] of the covenant.”

Source

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

Exodus 17:1–3

The children of Israel traveled from the wilderness of Sin to a place called Rephidim, where they pitched their tents. There they found no drinking water. Once again, the people complained against Moses because of the lack of water for them and their animals. They also attempted to prove the Lord to see if He would still provide for them, something the Lord had been doing all along on the Hebrew's journey.

Source

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

Exodus 17:4–7

Moses was frustrated because of the complaints. The Lord was frustrated as well, so He had Moses take his staff and go to a rock located in Horeb. Moses was to smite the rock, which caused drinking water to flow from it. He did that in the presence of some elders of Israel. Verse 7 explains the place-names Massah and Meribah, respectively meaning “testing” and “complaining.” These names would serve as a reminder to the people of their murmurings.

Here again we see symbols pointing to Christ: Christ is often referred to as the rock of our salvation, He was smitten at Calvary, and we frequently speak of Him as being our Living Water.

Source

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Exodus 17:8–11

While camped at Rephidim, the people of Amalek fought with the Hebrews. (Amalek is considered to be a grandson of Esau, the older of Isaac and Rebekah's twin sons). Amalek founded a clan named after him near northern Sinai. The Amalekites were a staunch enemy of the Hebrews. Joshua, who was Moses's companion, and Aaron and Hur fought the Amalekites. They did so with the “rod of God in [Moses's] hand.” When Moses held up his hand, Israel triumphed in the battle; when Moses let down his hand, the people of Amalek triumphed. The rod, or staff, signified God's presence. He was in control of this battle.

Source

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Exodus 17:12–16

Moses's arms eventually tired from keeping his hand raised. So Aaron and Hur each supported one of Moses's hands. Because of this, the Hebrews triumphed in the battle, Joshua defeating Amalek. Moses, who acknowledged God's hand in the victory, built an altar and called it *Jehovah-nissi*, which means "Jehovah is my source of victory."

The Lord instructed Moses to keep a memorial in a book to remember how the Hebrews were supported by God against the Amalekites. Joshua, who eventually succeeded Moses in leading the children of Israel into Canaan, especially needed to remember the event. The Lord warned that there would be other battles with the Amalekites in the future (see 1 Samuel 15).

Source

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

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