

Reformation Fellowship Notes • October 9, 2016
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Handout #16
Exodus 15:22 to 16:36

I. Introduction

- A. Last week the Israelites crossed the Red Sea.
 - 1. The Israelites were pinned against the Red Sea with no way out.
 - 2. God split the Red Sea.
 - 3. All the Israelites crossed on dry ground.
 - 4. The Pharaoh's army was destroyed.
- B. Then they had a huge celebration.
- C. Now they are heading into the wilderness.

II. What is the redemption in 15:13? What price was paid?

- A. The notion of "redemption" did not originally include a kind of payment.

"Whenever men by their own fault or through some superior power have come under the control of someone else, and have lost their freedom to implement their will and decisions, and when their own resources are inadequate to deal with that other power, they can regain their freedom only by the intervention of a third party." (Colin Brown, Vol. 3, p. 177)

"It seems probable that the words *ga'al* and *padah*, which had a close association with the idea of releasing slaves and of reclaiming persons and things, were taken up into the vocabulary of Israel's writers as the most suitable terms to describe the liberation from slavery of those whom Egypt and Babylon had conquered, and the reclaiming of Yahweh into his rightful ownership of 'the people of his possession.'" (Colin Brown Vol. 3, p. 193)

- B. The association of "redemption" with a "price" appears to have been a development of the intertestamental period.
 - 1. It is stretching the evidence to find this connotation in the OT period.

III. Exodus 15:22-27

- A. It is not known where the desert of Shur is.
 - 1. The first area outside of Egypt.
- B. Moses caused them to go.
 - 1. It is possible that there was reluctance to go.
- C. Three days' travel into desert
 - 1. Probably traveled about 15 miles per day

2. Routes led from water hole to water hole.
 - a) When water holes were too far apart, they had to carry water.
 - b) They probably had not found any water for three days.
 3. Moses and Aaron may have traveled this route.
- D. They arrive at Marah.
1. Where is this?
 - a) Not certain
 - b) Best guess Bir el-Mura
 - (1) *Murr* is Arabic for bitter.
 - (a) *Marah* means “bitter”
 - (2) Water at Bir el-Mura has magnesium sulfate.
 2. The water at Marah was found to be not drinkable.
 3. The people complained to Moses.
 - a) God was leading Moses, but the people complained to Moses.
 - b) What do we drink?
 - c) This is a serious situation.
 - (1) They may not be out of water, but probably will be before they get to next watering hole.
- E. God provided water.
1. Moses cried out to God.
 2. God showed (instructed) Moses a tree to throw into the water.
 - a) The word Torah is a form of this word.
 - b) When Moses did what God told him to do, the water became drinkable.
 - c) There is wood that can do this.
 - (1) In Sri Lanka, they regularly line the walls of wells with the wood from a certain tree to purify the water.
 - (2) *Acacia seyal* could do this—
 - (a) Especially if charred.



- F. This experience constituted a lesson.
1. God gave them a command (to throw the wood into the water).
 2. Moses did as he was told.
 3. The water became sweet.
- G. What the lesson demonstrated:
1. If the people will do what God has commanded, he will not afflict them with the plagues which befell Egypt.
- H. God is a healer.
1. God will heal his people, not destroy them.

- I. Next they came to an oasis (Elim) where there was plenty of water.
 - 1. Elim is thought to be Wadi Gharandel.
 - a) This is still a major stopping place for the Bedouin.
 - 2. God often provides respite after a trial (cf. Elijah).
 - 3. This shows that he does not just torment his people; he is training them.
- J. Their route after Elim:
 - 1. They hug the east shore of the Gulf of Suez.
 - a) They can get fish from Gulf.
 - b) Water can be obtained in many places by digging wells along the shoreline.
 - 2. They would have had to go to the east of Gebel Hammam Pharaon.
 - a) A narrow passage between mountain and Gulf
 - b) Passage is dotted with hot sulfuric water.
 - 3. Then they returned to Gulf shoreline.
 - a) Numbers 33:10 describes the camping site as *yam suph*.

IV. Exodus 16:1-3

- A. Food shortage
 - 1. They have been on the go for six weeks now.
 - a) They have made it to the Wilderness of Sin.
 - b) The food supplies are running out.
 - c) It is possible that they have now turned inland.
 - 2. The people start grumbling against Moses and Aaron.
 - a) Once again, they complain to their human leaders.
 - b) They wish they were back in Egypt.
 - (1) Lots of meat and bread there
 - (a) Probably a romanticization of what it was like
 - (b) However, no indication that they were hungry in Egypt
 - c) People accuse leaders of purposely bringing them into desert to starve them to death.
 - (1) This is an accusation with no basis.
 - (2) This suggests irrational mistrust.

V. Exodus 16:4-7

- A. God speaks to Moses; he has a solution.
 - 1. God will rain bread from heaven.
 - a) Miraculous solution
 - b) Far from typical, therefore easier to see that it is from God
 - 2. People will collect a portion each day.
 - 3. This will be a demonstration to them.

- a) We will see if they will follow my instruction (Torah).
- 4. On the sixth day, they will gather twice the usual amount—
 - a) In anticipation of the commandment about the Sabbath.
- B. Moses relays God's word to the people.
 - 1. Your complaints to Aaron and me were misdirected.
 - a) God, and God alone, brought you out of Egypt.
 - b) He heard your complaints.
 - c) He will respond to your need.
 - (1) In the evening, you will get meat.
 - (2) In the morning, you will get bread.
 - 2. We are God's servants.
 - a) God is the one calling the shots; he is responsible for what is happening.

VI. Exodus 16:8-12

- A. God will give you meat in the evenings; lots of bread in morning.
 - 1. Your complaints are actually against God himself.
 - a) They shouldn't really be against us.
- B. Moses told Aaron to gather all the people together.
 - 1. When Aaron spoke to them, the cloud showed God's glory—
 - a) A very gracious sign to reassure the people that God will act.
- C. God spoke to Moses.
 - 1. God heard the grumblings of the people.
 - a) He chose to ignore the attitude with which the people spoke.
 - 2. You will know that I am God.
 - a) In the evening, you will eat meat.
 - b) In the morning, you will eat bread.

VII. Exodus 16:13-21

- A. In the evening, there were quail on the ground, easily caught.
 - 1. Quail, blown across the sea, land exhausted.
- B. In the morning, there was manna.
 - 1. There is a similar naturally occurring phenomenon.
 - 2. Unknown to the Israelites
 - a) What is it?
 - 3. Gather one omer per person.
 - a) Everyone had just what they needed to be full.
 - b) God's provision was just the right amount (no more, no less).
 - 4. It was to be eaten the day it was gathered.

- a) Any left-over manna spoiled.
- b) What was not gathered melted in the sun.

VIII. Exodus 16:22-30

A. Commandment about the Sabbath

1. Anticipated by verses 4-5
2. On Friday, they gathered twice the usual amount.
3. Moses gathered them all together.
 - a) Tomorrow is a holy Sabbath to the Lord.
 - b) Prepare manna on Friday however you want to prepare it.
 - c) It kept until the next day.
 - (1) It didn't spoil when kept for the Sabbath.
 - d) Eat the extra on the Sabbath.
 - (1) There will be none on the ground.
 - (2) Some went out, but they found no manna.
4. God said to Moses, "How long will you disobey?"
5. Sabbath as a day of rest

IX. Exodus 16:31-36

A. Saving a sample for the future

1. Moses ordered one omer-full to be saved as a memorial—
 - a) So other generations could see what God provided.
 - b) Aaron was charged with this task.
 - c) It was placed by the Testimony in the Tabernacle.
 - d) They ate it for forty years—
 - (1) Until they entered the promised land.
2. This appears to have happened at a later date—
 - a) After the Tabernacle was built.

X. Conclusion

A. From the time God leads Israel out of Egypt, he begins to train the Israelites.

1. They had been in Egypt for 400 years.
 - a) Their way of thought and cultural habits were Egyptian.
2. God wants to make for himself his own people.
 - a) Very different values and modes of thought and conduct

B. Where we find pleasure is, to some extent, culturally determined.

1. Pleasure is, to some extent, learned.
 - a) Wine, movies, fashion, music
2. What we take pleasure in is closely related to what we value.
3. What we value is, to a certain extent, learned or absorbed from our culture.

- C. God wants to establish in the Israelites a different culture.
1. God begins by showing his power and trustworthiness.
 - a) He displays his power in plagues and exodus.
 - (1) God does all the work, all the fighting.
 - (a) “The Lord will fight for you while you keep silent.”
 - b) God displays trustworthiness.
 - (1) Spares the Israelites the plagues
 - (2) Accompanies them with the cloud and pillar of fire
 - (3) Provides for the Israelites miraculously (overtly)
 - c) But allows them to experience want
 - (1) Their life is not comfortable and carefree.
 - (a) This is not what God has made life to be about.
 - (2) Requires Israelites to keep things in perspective
 - (a) God has shown his power and love for Israel many times in many ways.
 - (b) But if one focuses on the moment, it is easy to think that God is not there.
 - (c) Faith is the ability to reflect on the bigger picture, such that one can endure short-term hardship without despair.
 2. God begins to describe how he wants the Israelites to live.
 - a) Establishes national holidays
 - (1) Passover, Feast of Unleavened Bread, Feast of the First Fruits
 - b) A set of shared experiences
 - (1) Plagues
 - (2) Crossing of the Red Sea
 - c) A big part of the process includes instruction (Torah) and issuing commandments.
 - (1) Begins with the Sabbath
 - (2) Later the law (chapter 20 ff.)
 - d) If God is who he claims to be, obedience is the only reasonable course of action.
 3. Exodus is an account of this process of God’s creating his own people.
 - a) Righteous Living 101 (boot camp)
- D. Manna as a pedagogical tool
1. Little is said about the quail; much said about the manna.
 - a) The manna is a very instructive form of provision.
 - (1) It has qualities that inculcated certain habits and habits of thought that did not have to be imposed by Moses or anyone else.
 2. It is on the ground every morning.
 - a) It must be gathered (requires work).
 3. Goes bad quickly

- a) They could not stockpile it.
 - b) They can't achieve security by their efforts.
 - (1) They can only gain security by trusting that God will keep providing it.
4. Everyone gets their allotment, whether they collect much or little.
 - a) One's well-being was not closely tied to the amount of work they did.
 - (1) Teaches the value of trust rather than the value of hard work.
 5. Manna did not develop on Sabbath.
 - a) No one could find it even if they tried.
 - b) Manna collected on Friday did not spoil on Sabbath.
 6. God provided the manna every day for forty years.
- E. God is ever the creator.
1. God is creating for himself a people.
 - a) He wants them to know who he is and what he values.
 - b) He does this, in part, by creating a new culture.
 - c) For this to happen, God needs to be relatively simple and consistent.
 - (1) And, for the most part, he is.
 2. God does the unexpected.
 - a) Examples from the narrative
 - (1) Not even Moses knows
 - (2) Israelites were told to change course.
 - b) We will never fully understand the transcendent Creator.
 - (1) Ellul speculates that even in eternity we will be surprised by him.
 - (2) He is not a tame lion.

