

Crossing the Red Sea

Passages: Ex 13:1–2, 11–13; 14; 16:4–5, 11–31

Memory Verse

“But He answered and said, ‘It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.” ’ ” (Matthew 4:4)

Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]	Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]	Good Works [Behavior]
1. The Israelites’ journey out of Egypt and into the wilderness teaches us about our own spiritual life. 2. God provided manna for the Israelites until the day they ate the fruits of the promised land.	1. God is mighty in power, merciful, and faithful to His promises. 2. The Lord Jesus is the bread of life.	1. Learn to live a life of thanksgiving and praise. 2. Devote time each day to ‘collecting manna’ and nourishing our spirit with God’s words.

Overview

Events and Spiritual Teachings

- A. Consecration of the Firstborn
- B. Crossing the Red Sea
- C. Manna
- D. Instructions for Collecting Manna

Life Application

- 1. A Life as God’s Firstborn
- 2. Crossing the Red Sea
- 3. Gathering Manna Every Day

Memory Verse

Conclusion: The Israelites’ journey out of Egypt and into the wilderness reflects our own journey of faith towards the heavenly kingdom. Although we were once captives of Satan and sin, now we are free, so we must learn to nourish our spiritual lives with God’s word and Spirit.

Spiritual Teachings

A. Consecration of the Firstborn

The Israelites’ exit from Egypt was marked by two events: the establishment of Passover in preparation of the final plague, and the crossing of the Red Sea. But aside from these, there was one other significant instruction from the Lord: the consecration of their firstborn.

The Importance of the Firstborn

In biblical times, the firstborn was the son who inherited the most from their father. Let’s read Deuteronomy 21:17. “But he shall acknowledge the son of the unloved wife as the firstborn by giving him a double portion of all that he has, for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his.” Unlike their siblings, the inheritance they received was double the portion! Now that we understand the importance of the firstborn, let’s review the Lord’s command in Exodus 13:1–2. Every firstborn belonged to God and was to be set apart. But there were other “firstborns” who belonged to God.

Old Testament Firstborn	<p>Israel, the Lord’s firstborn</p> <p>Before Moses encountered Pharaoh, the Lord had already hinted at the terrible plague that was to come. He told Moses, “Then you shall say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the LORD: “Israel is My son, My firstborn. So I say to you, let My son go that he may serve Me. But if you refuse to let him go, indeed I will kill your son, your firstborn” ’ ” (Ex 4:22–23). Naming Israel as His “firstborn” meant that they were God’s favored children who would receive an inheritance from Him.</p>
New Testament Firstborn	<p>Jesus Christ, the firstborn over all creation</p> <p>Let’s read Colossians 1:15. “[Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.” In this passage, Paul is not referring to Jesus’ physical status, but to His rank and privilege as firstborn. He is the ruler and creator over all things, and no one can surpass Him. He is also the “firstborn from the dead” (Col 1:18), because He is the first who was resurrected.</p>
Firstborn of Today	<p>God’s new firstborn</p> <p>Let’s read Romans 8:28–29. “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to <i>His</i> purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined <i>to be</i> conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.” Jesus Christ, the firstborn over all creation, has called us to be God’s firstborn nation as well! This means that when we are baptized in water and Spirit, we will receive all the same privileges a firstborn child receives.</p> <p>What are these privileges that we have received? God has promised us His protection and His care while we are on this world. But the most important privilege that we have received is God’s deliverance. Jesus Christ delivered us from Satan (Eph 2:1–3), from sin (Rom 7:14–15, 24), and from death (Rom 6:23). In doing so, He has delivered us into God’s kingdom (Col 1:13), of which the Holy Spirit is our guarantee (Eph 1:13–14). With this in mind, we should not look lightly on our status, but always treasure what God has given to us and strive to conform to Christ’s image so that we can receive our inheritance.</p>

Whenever they consecrated their firstborn, generations of Israelites would remember how God spared their own sons from death and freed them from slavery in Egypt. God’s command to redeem their firstborn teaches us of our own consecration and redemption. We have also become His firstborn,

spared by His mercy, unlike the Egyptians. As a result, we owe Him our lives, and we can now look forward to the time Jesus Christ returns and redeems us once and for all.

B. Crossing the Red Sea

Let’s now read Exodus 14. Can you imagine the sight of the sea rising high above your head as walls on either side of you? This miraculous path that the Lord made led the Israelites out of slavery and into freedom. This crossing is more than just a physical journey, however. It also foreshadows the spiritual journey that we take when we are baptized. Let’s read 1 Corinthians 10:1–2. Let’s compare the Israelites’ lives before and after the crossing.

Before the Crossing	After the Crossing
Location	
<i>Egypt</i>	<i>The promised land</i>
Although Egypt was once a place of refuge for Jacob’s family, it was not their true homeland that God had promised to Abraham.	The Israelites did not belong in Egypt. Their true homeland was the “land flowing with milk and honey,” an abundant land the Lord promised to Abraham and his descendants.
What this means for us: We live in a world that is under the rule of Satan. In other words, it is not our homeland. Our true home is with God in the heavenly kingdom, which we have received through the gospel of salvation.	
Standing	
<i>Slaves to Pharaoh</i>	<i>Children of God</i>
For 400 long years, their fathers were slaves, and their children would be slaves as well. They had no status, no rights, no dignity, and no hope.	God freed the Israelites and chose them to be His own holy nation, His special treasure with a status unique to them alone.
What this means for us: We were once slaves to sin, but through the blood of Jesus, we have become sons and heirs of God (Gal 4:7). Like the Israelites, God has promised to take care of us. He will cherish, teach, and provide for us.	
Power	
<i>Powerless, oppressed</i>	<i>Victorious, strong</i>
Egypt was a superpower at the time. With a powerful Pharaoh and strong armies, the Israelites were no match for them, so they were unable to free themselves from Egypt’s tight grip.	With the Lord on their side, the Israelites had nothing to fear. As long as they walked in God’s ways, He would give them victory, so that even their enemies would tremble and fear them.
What this means for us: The Holy Spirit gives us the power to overcome our weaknesses, resist worldly temptations, and live a life of holiness. With the Lord on our side, we can defeat whatever trials Satan throws our way. We will no longer be under the bondage of sin, but will achieve victory in Christ.	
Future	
<i>Hopeless</i>	<i>A hope and a future</i>
The slaves had no hope. After a wearisome life full of hardship, only death awaited them.	God gave them the hope of the promised land and the freedom to enter into it.
What this means for us:	

Through the gospel of salvation, our souls which were formerly dead in sin have been resurrected and made alive in Christ. Now, God has given us a hope for eternal life, an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that will never fade away (1 Pet 1:4). He has given us life after death.	
Wages	
<i>No rewards or payment</i>	<i>Rewarded for their labor</i>
As slaves, the Israelites worked endlessly with no reward or pay. In the end, all the work they did belonged to Pharaoh (Ex 1:8–14). They earned nothing for themselves and received no payment for their work.	When the Israelites left, the Lord gave them favor in the Egyptians' sight and instructed His people to ask the Egyptians for their valuables. They plundered their own masters as they left, a rather unlikely event for ex-slaves!
What this means for us: The Lord will richly reward us for all that we do for Him (Mt 10:40–42). While on this earth, we should not focus on material wealth, but store up rewards for ourselves in heaven, which we will receive when we finally see our Lord Jesus.	

In the New Testament, the Lord Jesus has also freed us from slavery and led us through the Red Sea. He has washed away our sins and saved us from death at the hands of Satan. Now, after being baptized in water and Spirit, we have become children of God (Zech 13:1).

C. Manna

When the Lord led the Israelites into the wilderness, He led them on a detour, taking them to Mount Sinai instead of straight to Canaan. As a result, they now faced a real and immediate problem: how do they feed an estimated two million people in a desert? God, of course, was undeterred by this problem. He had a graceful and miraculous solution for them: manna. Let’s review the characteristics of manna and what we can learn from them. First, let’s read Exodus 16:4–5, 11–31.

1. **Bread from heaven (v. 4)**

One of the first descriptions of manna describes it as “bread from heaven” (Ps 78:23–25). The Lord added that it would “fill” the Israelites, and He continued giving them manna to eat until the day they finally entered Canaan and ate the fruit of the land (Josh 5:12). Our “bread from heaven” today is the Lord Jesus (Jn 6:35, 51), who gave us eternal life. Manna also represents God’s word. Just as He gave the Israelites manna to nourish them every day, God’s word satisfies all of our needs.

2. **White like coriander seed (v. 31)**

The Bible says that manna was “a small round substance, as fine as frost on the ground” (Ex 16:14), like “white coriander seed.” Coriander seeds are quite small and rather insignificant. In the same way, the word of God is not regarded very highly, and many despise it. Manna’s color and shape also reflects how God’s word is pure and perfect.

3. **Sweet like honey (v. 31)**

The Lord did not give the Israelites bland or dry food to eat in the wilderness. He gave them something that tasted of “wafers made of honey” (Ex 16:31), and “pastry prepared with oil” (Num 11:8). A psalmist described God’s word as being “sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb” (Ps 19:10), and another wrote, “How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!” (Ps 119:103).

The Bible also notes that the Israelites were able to prepare manna in many ways, evidence of

its versatility. In much the same way, the Bible can be applied to every situation in life. It gives us guidance, joy, encouragement, and warning.

D. Instructions for Collecting Manna

God specifically instructed the Israelites to collect their portion of manna every morning, except for the Sabbath day, which they collected the day before. He also ordered them to collect only enough for their needs. If they disobeyed and collected more to keep for the next day, it “bred worms and stank” (Ex 16:20). Let’s go over God’s instructions and see what they can teach us.

1. Gather every morning (Ex 16:21)

By the time we go to bed at night, our minds are cluttered and full of the day’s happenings. On the other hand, when we wake up in the morning, we haven’t yet encountered life’s many distractions. We wake up to a clean slate. This makes it the best time to focus on God. Jesus set an example by often going out to pray early in the morning (Mk 1:35).

Why did God command the Israelites to gather every day, and not just once a week? God understands that it is human nature to be lazy. He wants us to live a disciplined life. He doesn’t want us to read many chapters of the Bible in one day, and forget His words for the rest of the week. He wants us to develop a pattern of life where we can devote time to Him daily.

2. Gather according to their needs (Ex 16:18)

Those who gathered more had none leftover, and those who gathered less didn’t lack any. This is all because of God’s perfect provision. He gives us exactly what we need. With a world bent on materialism, it is easy to forget that God’s grace should be sufficient for us. Instead of focusing on getting “more stuff,” we should learn to live a life of contentment and thanksgiving.

In commanding the Israelites to gather only what they needed for the day and not to store any up for the future, the Lord was also teaching them to trust in His provision. It is easy for us to become lost in a sea of anxiety and worry when we consider our future. How will we eat in the future? How will we pay for our loans? Find a place to stay? Instead of being anxious, we must remember and trust that God will provide for our needs (Mt 6:25–27).

3. Gather for everyone in their tent (Ex 16:16)

The Bible isn’t just for edifying and nourishing our own spiritual lives. It is important to share God’s word with others as well. We should use it to help our family members and apply God’s word to stir up good works in the church. God wants us to build up unity, peace, and harmony within our family and the church. This can only be achieved through God’s word.

4. Do not gather on the seventh day (Ex 16:23)

The Lord had to teach the Israelites the concept of the Sabbath day. For one day of the week, they were to set aside their daily tasks and observe a day of rest. Today, with so many things to do at home, at school, and with our friends, we may often be tempted to simply skip a day at church. But as one of the Ten Commandments, observing the Sabbath day is necessary for our spiritual life and a vital part of our relationship with God.

On the sixth day, the Israelites gathered twice as much as they were normally permitted (Ex 16:22). It did not seem to be an act of disbelief, nor did Moses rebuke them for their action. We do not know for certain if this was the Israelites’ action, or if God had doubled the amount they received. We also do not

actually know if this action was explicitly commanded by God, but we do know that when the congregation leaders told Moses about how much had been gathered, God simply replied, "[Lay] up for yourselves all that remains, to be kept until morning" (Ex 16:23), and "See! For the LORD has given you the Sabbath; therefore He gives you on the sixth day bread for two days" (Ex 16:29).

Check for Understanding

- 1. What is the significance of the firstborn?** A firstborn son inherited the most from their father and had greater responsibilities in carrying on their family and business.
- 2. What did the Israelites' crossing through the Red Sea foreshadow?** It foreshadowed the spiritual journey that we take when we are baptized.
- 3. What are three characteristics of manna as described in the Bible? Briefly explain what we can learn from each.**
 - a. Bread from heaven: God's word satisfies all of our physical and spiritual needs.
 - b. White like coriander seed: Although despised by many, just as manna is white and round, God's word is pure and perfect.
 - c. Sweet like honey: God's words are nourishing and sweet, and they can be applied to every situation in life.
- 4. What can we learn from God's command that they gather manna every morning?** In the morning, our minds are freshest, making it the best time to focus on God. He also wants us to live a disciplined life and develop a pattern of life where we can devote time to Him each day.

Life Application

1. A Life as God's Firstborn

Scenario

Ruth often compared herself to her best friend Nancy, who she thought was pretty, smart, and charismatic. She even tried to imitate her friend, but all she could see in herself were her many flaws. She wondered, often, why God didn't make her more like her friend. During an RE class activity, the teacher asked the class to anonymously write down godly traits that they admired in each classmate. Ruth was a bit apprehensive about what her classmates would say about her. When the teacher gave her a card with their comments, she was amazed at their positive encouragement. She realized that she had been so busy looking at her own flaws, comparing herself with her best friend, and desiring to be someone else, that she missed the traits that God wanted her to pursue. Now, she realized that she didn't need to be anyone else. She just needed to be more like God.

Discussion

- Read Romans 8:29. What do you think it means to "be conformed to the image of His Son"?
- What kind of blessings do you think we can expect as God's firstborn?
- Share with the class the most important blessing that you think you have received as God's firstborn.

2. Crossing the Red Sea

Scenario

After finding the True Jesus Church and attending for a year, Alexa's parents decided to be baptized, but they told Alexa that she could decide for herself. After some thought, Alexa is unsure. Her many RE lessons have taught her about all the different rules and regulations that church members need to abide by, and she isn't so sure that she wants to give up her Saturdays so easily. When she mentions this in RE class, her classmate, Stephen, points out that if she truly wants to be free of sin and enter the heavenly

kingdom, then she needs to be baptized right away. Otherwise, who is to say the second coming won't happen the very next day, and she won't be ready? Besides, being baptized means she can receive eternal life in heaven, making it a joyful event, not restrictive like she is imagining.

Discussion

- What does receiving baptism and salvation mean to you? (Ex: *Deliverance from Satan (Eph 2:1–3); deliverance from sin (Rom 7:14–15, 24); deliverance from death (Rom 6:23); deliverance into God's kingdom (Col 1:13).*)
- If you were to talk to someone like Alexa, what would you say to them to encourage them?

3. Gathering Manna Every Day

Scenario

Peter knows that as a Christian, he should read the Bible. He is reminded of that every week during RE class, and he hears it from his parents at home. But every time he picks it up, Peter finds that he has zero connection with what the Bible is saying. It's simply so boring to read, and he gets nothing out of it. He can think of so many better ways to use his time, such as playing games or going online, instead of reading the Bible.

Discussion

- What are some of the difficulties or obstacles that you face in gathering manna daily?
- Brainstorm some ideas on how you can maintain daily Bible reading.
- Share a time when you experienced God's words in your life. For example, how did God's word help, comfort, or guide you?
- What are some ways you can share or help others with the word of God?

Memory Verse

"But He answered and said, 'It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." ' " (Matthew 4:4)

Context

After fasting in the wilderness for forty days and nights, the Lord Jesus was hungry and weak. It was then that Satan challenged Him to change stones into loaves of bread to prove that He was the Son of God.

Meaning

We need to eat to sustain our physical lives. But more important is our spiritual hunger and thirst. Jesus is the bread of life who came from heaven, who offers to fill this inner hunger and thirst as nothing else can. He is able to do so because of the grace and truth that He offers. It may seem that our desires and longings can be satisfied with the things of the world, such as friends, pleasures, or entertainment. But in the end, they only leave us empty, dissatisfied, and disillusioned. Only by obeying God's commands and following His will are we able to experience true joy, peace, and eventually, eternal life.

Conclusion

The Israelites' journey out of Egypt and into the wilderness reflects our own journey of faith towards the heavenly kingdom. Before, we were captives of Satan and sin. But through baptism, we have become sons and heirs of Christ. And just as the Israelites were sustained by manna in the wilderness, we too must sustain and nourish our spiritual lives with God's word and Spirit, so that we are able to travel through the wilderness into the promised land.

Lesson 12 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. What is the memory verse teaching us about our spiritual hunger and thirst?
It can only be satisfied by the bread of life, Jesus Himself. Only by obeying God's commands and following His will are we able to experience true joy, peace, and eventually, eternal life.
2. "For whom He foreknew, He also _____ to be _____ to the _____ of His _____, that He might be the _____ among many _____." (Romans 8:29)
predestined, conformed, image, Son, firstborn, brethren
3. What privileges do we receive when we become God's firstborn through baptism?
Deliverance from Satan, from sin, and from death into God's heavenly kingdom, of which the Holy Spirit is our guarantee.
4. What did the Red Sea crossing prefigure? Provide a supporting Bible verse.
Our own spiritual journey through baptism. 1 Corinthians 10:1-2.
5. In your own words, explain two teachings that we can learn from manna.
See Spiritual Teachings, Sections C & D.
6. What prevents you from "gathering manna" every day? How can you overcome this obstacle?
Personal answers.