

# Story Time with Jesus



## Bible Stories

*-As told by Jesus-*



**Book 3**

# Moses' Mission

## Chapters 25-36



*As told by Jesus*

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- 25-A Palace, a Prince, and Preparation
- 26-The Burning Bush
- 27-Brave Brothers
- 28-Woeful and Wonderful
- 29-A Path to Praise About!
- 30-Wilderness, Water and Wells
- 31-Amazing Food
- 32-Water Out of a Rock
- 33-A Blazing Mountain, a Blasting Trumpet, and Tablets of Stone
- 34-The Mercy and Light of God
- 35-The Cloud of the Lord
- 36-Aaron's Almonds and Moses' Song

## A Palace, a Prince, and Preparation

Ever since the time of famine, when Joseph and Pharaoh invited Jacob (who God also called "Israel") and all his sons and their families to live in Egypt, they had stayed there.

Years passed and now there were many, many people in Egypt. Too many—or so the Egyptians thought! It was getting to be a worry for them. The Egyptians wanted to have full control over the country.

God had promised to Abraham, and to Isaac, and also to Jacob, that if they obeyed Him, their descendants would be many—eventually too many to even count. Now it was coming true.

A new, ungodly Pharaoh, who was in charge after the time of Joseph, wanted to control the people, and to use them to build great things for him. Pharaoh made things pretty tough, and not nice at all for those people living in Egypt, making them work way too hard.

He thought if he made them just work real hard, this would keep them from becoming strong. He didn't want them to start taking control of the country.

Pharaoh didn't want any more people, either. He was afraid of there being more than he could handle. But it was God's plan for more and more people to be born.

It was time for God to send someone to help them and lead them out of Egypt. He wanted and needed someone who was just right for the job.

Can you imagine what kind of things someone would need to know in order to do this special job? What would they need to be like, in order to do a good job of helping to get everyone on the move again—to go to the place that God had promised to their forefathers, that their descendants could live in?

It would be an enormous task to get that many people mobile. It would need to be someone who was one of them, understood them, spoke their language—but yet also knew a lot about Pharaoh and how things worked in Egypt.

They would need to know how to care for people, lots of them, and take good care of them, helping them



to move on—like a shepherd cares for his sheep, and brings them to new pastures.

God would need someone with a lot of patience and faith, because it wasn't going to be a fast job, that from one day to the next everyone would be living happily and peacefully in a new country. God needed someone who loved Him and knew how to pray and hear Him speak.

God needed someone real obedient, who would do whatever He asked them to do, because it was going to take being willing to try out a lot of new ideas to make this big move work, and for the people to have all they needed while travelling.

God isn't in a big hurry when He wants a job done right, and this was a very important job—leading and caring for a huge amount of people, while taking a long journey.

First God chose a good family, one that loved and obeyed Him, and that taught their children about Him too. Then He gave them a child, the one chosen for the job. It was going to take a long time till that child was not only grown up, but had learned many important lessons, making him fit for the task.

Pharaoh's idea to make the large amount of Hebrew people—Jacob's descendants—more manageable, and



not keep increasing, was for people to simply stop having more babies.

That just didn't work, because God's plan was exactly the opposite. But it did make it hard for those who had them to take care of them well. God told one mother—the one He'd given this special child to—to do something unique.

A type of mini boat-basket was made, real good and water-proof, made out of reeds from the river bulrushes and tar. Next, Miriam, the baby's sister, was told to watch over him, while he slept in that little basket bed, floating close to her on the water of the river.

What happened next was part of a wonderful plan. Can you believe it, but none-else but the King's own daughter who came to bathe in the river, found this basket, and the baby in it?!

The baby of course cried seeing a lady he'd never seen before pick him up. But Miriam was there in a flash to offer to



get the princess someone to nurse and care for the baby. — She got their mother!

What an amazing miracle took place that day! The princess loved this baby so much, just after seeing him once that she wished he could live with her. But he needed to get a bit older first.

So she gave her royal permission for the mother to take good care of him, and even gave their family money to do so. Then when he was old enough, he lived in the palace, as a prince. She called his name, "Moses".

Moses grew and lived in the palace, getting to know the Pharaoh, and the Egyptian way of doing things. But God's plan for him wasn't to become the next Pharaoh, and to live the rest of his life with the comforts of life, and riches, and all that he wanted.

God placed him there to learn what he needed to. And when the time was right, there were new lessons in new places for him to experience, making him just the kind of person that was needed for the big job he was yet to be called to do.

## The Burning Bush

When Moses was young he had no idea what the future held for him. As he grew to be an adult, and then became a more mature, older adult, he saw things that upset him very much.

He greatly disliked the way he saw the Egyptians treating the Israelites, or "Children of Israel" as they were also called, making them work so hard, and causing them great difficulty and sorrow. Moses got very upset, and tried in his own way to stop them from acting so roughly.

Although it was a good idea to stop people from harming others, just getting upset and angry about things, and trying to stop one person's wrong actions wasn't the best way for him to do it.

God had a bigger plan and idea. He didn't just want to make the Egyptians behave more nicely; He wanted all the Israelites to not even live there anymore—to get on the move once again.

So the next part of training for Moses began. He left Egypt, the palace, and all that he'd known all his life so far. He began to live far away in a place called



Midian, where a man called Jethro was living and camping out, with his family and flocks.

When something goes wrong or others are doing wrong, we often want to fix things immediately. But doing something quickly, in haste, right then and there, can be like putting a band-aid on the outside of the skin, for an injury that is deep inside.

We may want things to happen right away, but sometimes the best and more long-lasting solutions take time. God likes to make sure to give people enough time to learn, and to experience what they need to on Earth, and to learn to make the right choices themselves.

The next part of Moses' training and preparation took a long 40 years, as he lived a completely different lifestyle, as a shepherd. He also married Jethro's daughter, Zipporah. When the time was right at last, he was ready to be called to do the big job that God had been preparing him for all along.

While caring for the sheep in the mountainous area, Moses saw something that caught his attention.

It seemed to be a bush that was on fire, but the bush wasn't burning up. This indeed was strange. It just kept on glowing and shining. He'd never seen anything like that.

The only way he knew to make light on Earth was using fire. There wasn't electricity back then. So to see a bush filled with a fire-like light, that wasn't burning up, seemed very odd. Moses went to get a closer look at it.

All of a sudden he froze in his tracks as he heard God speaking directly to him. Moses quickly removed his sandals, as God's voice told him to.

Next he found himself having a long conversation with God himself, Who was commissioning Moses to now go back to Egypt, and to speak to Pharaoh, telling him to let all the people leave the country.

That was no easy task! Moses of course felt completely unable to do it, and wondered if people would even believe that it really was God who had sent him.

Often the jobs that God calls people to do, can seem too big and hard, and there's lots of opposition from people who don't understand or see things God's way.



Additionally, Moses felt unable to speak well. He made all the excuses that he could, trying to get out of the job.

It was a very hard one indeed, and would take nothing less than the great power and miracles of God to accomplish it. But if God wants something done, and you're the one He's prepared for it, and who He's called to do it, He can do whatever it takes to help it all happen. With Him helping you, you will be capable and qualified for the job.

After God gave Moses a few examples of some of the types of miracles that He could do, to help Moses convince Pharaoh to let the people go—like turning a stick into a snake, and back into a stick again—Moses was starting to gain faith that with God helping him it would be possible.

He just needed to obey and give this new job a try. It wouldn't be easy, but God would do most of the job anyway. God just needed someone to be there, to speak His words to Pharaoh and to the people, someone to pray, and to lead the people on their long journey.

Moses' brother Aaron was still living in Egypt. God called him too, to come and see Moses and be his helper. Aaron could do the talking for Moses, who would tell Aaron what God had said. Together they would make a good team for the job.

So Moses at last agreed to do the very big, long, tiring, and difficult task. He and his wife and child then left Midian. On the way in the wilderness they met Aaron and they returned to Egypt, in obedience to God.

The answer to the people's prayers to be free had been answered. They would soon be free of the hard work for Pharaoh and the very difficult times in Egypt.

At last the person He'd prepared for the job was ready, and had agreed to do it. The victory was right around the corner now.



## Brave Brothers

Moses knew it would be a very tough task, to not only convince Pharaoh to let all his workers go—the Israelites who he had now made to be his workmen, whether they wanted to or not, but even getting the people themselves to follow in God's way would also be hard.

Of course they wanted to be free from the sad and difficult situation they were in, but not too many of them really knew God personally. They hadn't learned to talk much to Him as a friend, as a Father, as someone they knew who could and would help them if they called on Him.

It was hard enough being in Egypt at a time like that, when so much work to make bricks was required of the people. Then for a while it looked like things were getting even worse.

Pharaoh was not pleased to hear the new idea that Moses and Aaron presented from God—that of letting the people leave. He had no interest in letting the work on his big buildings and great city stop or even slow down. All he could think about was being great.

Pharaoh was about to find out that things only get worse for those who think their plans are more important than God's.

You can't stand in God's way, trying to slow down what He's doing. You have to either get going following His plan, joining in and gaining the positive results, or things may go bad for you.

God gives people a chance, however, and some time to think things over, and to make up their minds, choosing which side they are going to be on—God's good side, or on the wrong side.

When Moses and Aaron first arrived in Egypt, ready to do what God had asked them to, they first of all gathered the elders, those Israelites who were in positions of responsibility and authority.

They talked to them, and told them the plan, and what God had said. Moses and Aaron even showed the miraculous signs to them that God had showed to Moses when He talked with God at the burning bush. Moses demonstrated to those elders that God was serious, and He was there with them, and ready to do miracles to pull them out of that troublesome place.

Thankfully, that first team of people who heard, believed and gained faith that it wasn't just a nice idea, to be delivered from all the troubles in Egypt at



that time, but it was a reality! Relief from their hardships was soon to come.

However, Pharaoh had quite a different reaction. He completely refused to give permission for anyone to leave—even for a few days.

The original request presented to Pharaoh was for the people to have permission to leave for a short while to have a time of worship and prayer and praise and feasting, and taking time to honour God.

Pharaoh was upset, and totally denied them any such trip. On top of that he ordered that things be made even harder for the workers, telling them to do an impossible amount of work, without sufficient building supplies.



"Make bricks without being given any straw to make them—just try and find something else to make them with—but you must make the same amount as before!" he ordered.

Of course he knew they couldn't really do that, but he was trying to make a point—that not only could no one leave, but that if they even thought about it, he was going to make things more difficult and unbearable. He was just trying to control the people in his own way. However it wasn't going to work, because God is the one in charge, and it would soon be Pharaoh's turn to have things get tough.—God getting tough with him!

So things seemed to be going pretty rough, right from the start. Although God was willing to take them out of that place and relieve the hardship, He also had to wait for people to make decisions in their own hearts and minds.

The people were having a very difficult time believing that this idea could ever even become a reality, after Pharaoh said "no". They had a hard time speaking faith and being supportive of the plan to move, as at first it seemed to make things tougher for them all, since Pharaoh was very unwilling to let them go.

Have you ever been trying to get your own way about something you know is not right, but when someone or something tries to stop you, to help you make a better choice, you don't like it? Rather than changing and doing things the right way, you instead got upset and angry and tried to push your way, and make things difficult for others, making others feel bad?

It would be so much better for someone in that situation to just admit they were going in the wrong direction, and then stop and change. Many people can't do that very easily because it takes something special to be able to do that. Can you guess what it is?

Humility is needed to admit you've been on the wrong track. Being yielded is also needed. That is, being willing to give up what you think you want, in preference for others or for what others know is best.

Unfortunately those two qualities are some of the hardest for humans on Earth to possess. Why? Because of arrogance, pride, feeling you know what is best, wanting to be well-thought of, thinking you are better than others and that you deserve better or more than others.

Having those wrong feelings and traits inside your heart only makes the opposite happen. You lose friends. You lose your sense of joy. Most of all you make God unhappy—because you start to do things

that are unloving and unkind, and you only focus on yourself. You choose to do things that you think will boost you up and show others how great you are, while making others feel they are less important than you.

So Pharaoh had a large dose of the wrong things in his heart, and that's why he couldn't bear to change, to show kindness, to give, to help, to treat others well, to make others happy, or to think of their good above what he wanted to have.

The poor, overworked and hurting people now began to lose hope that good change was possible. They were upset that Moses had even come—as it seemed that he was the one that started the next part of their troubles, with Pharaoh making things even harder for them.

If you were Moses, what would you do now? Well, he learned fast that the best way to succeed is through serious prayer. "What do I do now?" he prayed, almost wishing he hadn't come.



It seemed things might have been easier if he hadn't talked to Pharaoh and told him the words of God, since the immediate results weren't so great.

However, that was just because it was the beginning of great things. Great things, that will truly bring good into your lives and to others, are always tough at the start, but you just need to push through that first barrier and keep at it.

If God ever tells you to do something, don't be surprised if others oppose it and even try to stop you, and make things hard for you. Just do as Moses did and really pray. Pray and ask God if what you are doing is what He wants, and in the way He wants you to be doing it. Then just keep on doing what He shows you to do, and don't give up!

Doing things God's way may seem pretty tough at times, especially when not everyone else wants to join in and do it too. In the end you and others will be so glad at the good results of doing things God's way, regardless of the difficulties.

There's no reward given for doing things only the easy way, or the way many people say it should be done, which is often the wrong way. Doing things God's way, however, will bring enormous rewards and benefits, as well as eternal compensation, from the One Who is really in charge of things.

You'd be glad to know that Moses did not give up, even in the face of great opposition. He had God, he had God's Word, and his brother Aaron to help him also. So together, following God's next instructions, they both went before Pharaoh again—this time to show signs of God's amazing power.

As Aaron's rod became a serpent, the other ungodly men tried to prove their power. But God's special snake-rod took away all the other snakes. "Oops—now we don't have any rods!" Pharaoh's magicians must have been thinking. God's power was stronger than anything they could try to imitate.

Did that make Pharaoh choose the way of humility, and at last say he was wrong, and let the people leave, giving up his own ideas, and saying "yes" to God? Read on and find out.



## Woeful and Wonderful

As Pharaoh walked to the river for his morning wash, he was about to find out that it would be another week before he got to do just that. His heart had hardened and he had told Moses and Aaron, "No!" He had refused to let the Israelites go into the wilderness to make their feast and prayers to the Lord.

"Ah, now for a nice refreshing swim!" Pharaoh might have thought as he neared the river bank. He was surprised to see Moses and Aaron were there to say good morning to him. It wasn't a very nice way to start the day, however.

Have you ever really needed water, and found that nothing came out of the taps? Have you ever been real thirsty and there isn't any good, clean, safe drinking water around?

Or have you been real sticky from summer sweat, and had dirty feet, felt kind of itchy and uncomfortable, but there was no way to wash up? It's very hard to make it without water. It's one of the most important human needs.

Pharaoh usually had all the water he needed and wanted—he had a whole river full of it. No one could

take that away from him. Or could someone? Could God? The morning after he refused to say yes, he found things started to get real difficult for him.

God told Moses and Aaron to stand near the water, in the place Pharaoh was trying to go, and to tell him that because of his refusal to obey God, the water would no longer be as water!

The whole river, the little ponds, the streams, and even the pots and jugs of water that had already been drawn from the river would be changed.

Pharaoh was shocked, and very appalled! As Aaron stretched forth his rod and touched the river, it was all transformed into a red, stinky, slimy, and terrible looking, flowing river. There was now nothing clean or nice about it. It looked like blood—yuck! And it stayed that way for the next week, until Pharaoh at last begged for it to be changed back again.



God was merciful, and gave Pharaoh a chance. The water was nice once again. Sweet relief was felt! Good refreshing drinks of water could be enjoyed. Cooking, baths, laundry, dish washing, cleaning houses and so forth finally could happen. Everything had been getting pretty stinky and dirty, and everyone had been feeling extremely thirsty.

Once Pharaoh had his bath, however, and got a good drink of water, he changed his mind as fast as the water had changed back again. Wrong decision!

It was hard not to have water—but there were worse, longer-lasting type of troubles that would come to Pharaoh and his palace, and to all the Egyptians, if he wouldn't let the people go.

He could choose the easy way—though it seemed hard for his pride—and say “yes”. Or he could continue to say no, to have a tough and stubborn heart that resisted, and then find out what hard times really were!

Many things then followed things that caused him and his country hardship, sorrow, pain, lack of food, destruction of farms and goods, and so forth.

All kinds of things happened, like zillions of frogs hopping everywhere in their houses and yards, a hail storm with huge hail stones pelting down, millions of locusts feasting on their crops, painful sores and boils

on the Egyptians' skin, tons of swarms of flies—more than you've ever had bothering you while camping—and on went the troubles.

Each time Pharaoh did as he did before. He begged for mercy and for a positive change, promising to let the people go right afterwards, but then he always changed his mind again, and said, "No," refusing them permission to leave.

One of the last difficult consequences was a darkness that God put over the country—but it was only on the side where Pharaoh and the Egyptians lived. The side where the Israelites were living was as light as day. For three days and nights it was totally and completely dark for Pharaoh and his people!

There was no light at all. No sunlight could be seen, or starlight, or moonlight! Not even torches or candles or fires helped to bring light to Pharaoh's palace.

Imagine trying to cook in pitch darkness, or find your way down a street, or do anything at all! It was like they were all blind all of a sudden, that's how dark it was!

The Israelites now had faith that leaving Egypt was really going to happen—God was going to make sure it did! So while the Egyptians groped their way through pitch blackness, the Israelites could use those days to

pack, to prepare, and to gear up for their big, long journey.

They were looking forward to soon being finally free of the burdens and great hardships they'd had to endure at the hand of Pharaoh over the past while.

After 10 great difficulties and lesson-teaching consequences, Pharaoh looked around at the poor condition of his country, and looked into his sad heart. He heard what his troubled people were saying, and he at last relented. He would let the people go—everyone, and all their animals too. They were to leave right away.



No time was lost—the Israelites, or “children of Israel” as they were also called—knew how quickly Pharaoh could change his mind.

They were up and off as quickly as they could go, without even time to finish baking their bread. The dough was just packed up and cooked later on, when they were safely out of Egypt, and stopped for their first picnic.

There were countless people by this time, oh so many! Plus there were all the animals, bags, food, and some other goodies that they asked some of the Egyptians to give them.

Many Egyptians were happy to help them get on their way, and to treat them well after all that had happened.

They gave the Israelites some golden jewellery and decorations, and treasures to make their feast time special. It was quite a big and excited team that headed off that wonderful day!



## A Path to Praise About!

A few days after all the Israelites had left Egypt, news came to Pharaoh saying the people he'd allowed to leave were continuing to travel further away. They showed no intentions of returning.

It was more than just a "feast in the wilderness." It was a start to a new life. It was good that they had decided to obey God and leave right away when they were told to, as Pharaoh had changed his mind again and wanted the Israelites back in Egypt.



How did they know where to go, and what was the best route to travel? God took care of that. During the day He placed a big cloud ahead of them to lead the way.

The big team followed the cloud. When it stopped, so did they. God was right there helping them and leading them through each part of the journey.

At night God placed a pillar of fire instead of a cloud. It gave light and warmth, and a wonderful sense of God's close, loving care and protection.

Pharaoh and his team, who came to find the Israelites, discovered that God could do even more amazing things than they imagined possible. At first the Egyptians thought they were strong and could have whatever they wanted, but when met with the power of God, their abilities were nothing in comparison.

God told Moses to stretch out his hands and rod over the Red Sea. What would happen this time? A strong wind began to blow, and kept on blowing, and after awhile the sea was no longer in their way!

Instead, there was a dry, large pathway all the way through it to the other side. The water stood upright like walls on either side. It was like one very big, long and wide amazing hallway or corridor!

The travelling team, surprised and delighted by this wonderful solution and way of escape from their

pursuers, got going and walked on and on through to the other side, on the very seabed!

Then Pharaoh's men decided to do the same, but things didn't go so well for them. Have you ever tried to pull a wagon without any wheels? Well, as they were galloping down this amazing new pathway, God slowed them down by simply removing their chariot's wheels.

All the children of Israel made it safely to the other side of the Red Sea. Then it was time to close up God's specially made passage way, and the waters returned to their former place. The Egyptians never reached the other side. They got very, very wet for sure.

Someone looking over the Red Sea then, who didn't see what had just happened, may never have guessed



that there had been dry land there just a while before. It looked just like it always had before—just one big sea.

Moses and all the people burst forth into a jubilant, triumphant song, telling of the power of God and how He had helped them and protected and provided for them. Some of the words of the song said, "The Lord is my strength and song! The Lord shall reign forever and ever!"

Moses' sister, then in her 80's, was still pretty lively, and inspired many to pull out their instruments and sing, dance, and praise the Lord for the amazing miracle that had just transpired.

All the people were in awe at how great the power of God was. If God could do that, He could do anything!

## Wilderness, Water and Wells

Having too much water to get across, like the Red Sea, wasn't the only difficulty this massive team of Israelites encountered on their long trek through the wilderness.

Their trip wasn't just to get from one part of the land to the other. A big part of the reason for the journey was what was going on inside their hearts.

They needed time to learn to follow God, to learn about His new and better way of doing things. They needed to learn faith not only in His power to help, heal, supply, protect and provide for them, but faith to do just what He said to do, and to do it when He said it was the best time to do it.

It was like a travelling training camp. The Israelites had been in Egypt for so long, and were used to being ordered around by earthly men and rulers. Even if they had wanted to do things differently, they couldn't.

That was one of the main reasons for them to now be free—not so they could do things their own way, but so that they'd be free to follow God's plan.

It was going to take a lot of time and training to teach them that they couldn't just do as they pleased, but that they needed to obey God and listen to what He told them to do—if they wanted things to go well.

Speaking of “well,” that's what they needed. They were thirsty and needed water. That was the first and biggest need. After a few days of wearying travel they at last reached some water, but it tasted terrible.

Can you imagine how you'd feel, if after a hot time in the sun you came into the house to drink a nice glass of water, and found that the only water around is a pitcher of terrible tasting water?

The water in the place the Israelites called “Marah” was like that, and it was a grumbling bunch of people that complained to Moses about it.

Good things were about to come their way, and fresh water to drink too, but there was a lesson to be learned first.

Their experiences were all part of the training they needed.

Moses had the right reaction to this



dilemma. He prayed and asked God what to do. He knew that the way to receive what they needed from God was simple: Tell Him of their need, listen to Him, and obey what He said to do.

“Throw that tree into the water!” was God’s instruction to Moses when he asked God about the water problem. No further questions and pausing were necessary. If God wanted a tree in the water, Moses would do just that. As soon as that was done, the water became fresh and drinkable.

While they were all being refreshed, and their animals were getting a good drink also, God explained why He had allowed that to happen. Remember the Egyptian’s first lesson, when they were not obeying God’s instructions to let the people go and Pharaoh had continued to say “no”? They had bad water too.

So if the travelling team wanted to have a good trip, and not to suffer those difficulties like the Egyptians did, and wanted the blessing of good health and healing, they needed to listen to God and do what He said.

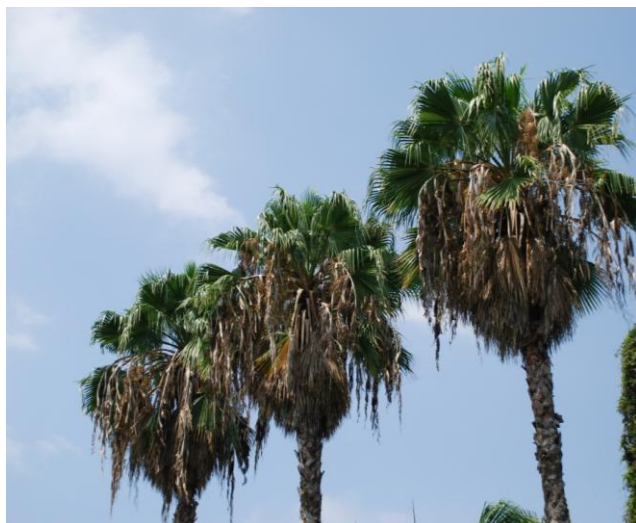
It was a pretty new idea for a lot of them. But the sooner they formed that new habit, the better things would go for them. The next place they went to was a wonderful one, a place with 12 wells of good water, and many palm trees for shade.



After a bit more than a month of travelling their food supplies had run out. Now what could be done? Did they say, "Oh, I know! Let's all stop to praise God for how wonderful He is, and how He can give us all that we need, if we will just ask! Then let's pray for food to be given! We don't see a way for us to get any food at all, but impossible things are never a problem to God. We'll just praise Him and pray, and let Him do the providing. Whatever He says to do then, we'll do!" ?

Well, that's not quite what they said. If they had learned that lesson right away, you can be sure they wouldn't have had to wait so long to get more food. Instead, they waited until they were so very hungry, and then rather than praying for God's provision, expecting His help, they turned to Moses, whining about their needs, almost feeling sure that things would never get better.

The people were acting like Moses was some sort of food shop, with shelves that had run out of supplies.



They grumbled to him to come up with food for them. Complaining to Moses showed a lack of faith in the Lord's care for them.

God heard all that they were saying, and wished they'd just say, "Please can I have some? Thank you!", as children learn to do. Murmuring and getting upset wasn't a fast way to get what they needed.

Moses couldn't do a thing to make food appear out of thin air. Or could he? Well, in a way he could, the same way anyone who loves and is following God can—through prayer, asking the One who can do just that, to provide. The people could have easily done the same, but it was taking them time to form the new habits, and to learn a new way.

After Moses prayed, God told a wonderful thing to all the people. The next morning was to be the first day to receive something very special, that God would give them for many years from then on. God said He would, "rain bread from Heaven."

He'd make a delicious type of food appear all around, to be gathered and eaten. God was providing and caring for them as they learned to let Him be their King and Leader. He knew what was best, they just needed to follow Him, pray, listen to Him and obey His instructions.

## Amazing Food

Since the travelling team couldn't plant crops and wait for them to grow while on the move going to a new country, God sent it to them. It was a lot easier to harvest food now! It was ready made, delicious and edible, right from Heaven. All the people had to do was to gather it off the ground each morning.

It was white, and looked like small seeds, and tasted sweet, like it had honey in it! They called it "manna." This manna could be eaten just like that, or baked, or cooked. They came up with many different ways to prepare this miracle bread from Heaven, and it always tasted great!

Well, there was one time it didn't—if it was left over from the day before. The manna was fresh on the day it was gathered, but the next day it would be smelly, and bad! That was part of their next lesson on obedience.

God was trying to teach them faith—that He would send more food, fresh each day, and they didn't have to worry whether there would be some again the next day. They also needed to learn obedience.

If God said, "Only gather enough manna for today, and don't save any for the next day," they learned that He meant it.

Some people, however, just didn't listen and learn, until they discovered the results through consequences. The easy way is to "believe, remember, and do". The hard way is to go a different way than God is asking you to go, and then you find out why you shouldn't have, by experiencing things that you wish you didn't.

"What's that terrible smell?" some of them awoke saying. Someone had done exactly what Moses had told them, from the Lord, not to do. They'd saved some of the manna from the day before, and put it in their tent. Maybe they liked it so much and wanted to save some just in case God forgot to send down more to them the next day.

Would God forget? No! There was an abundance of fresh new manna, all around the next day! The old stuff that was



saved stank, and had worms in it. It was a very unpleasant way to wake up, and showed that they didn't have faith in God's care. They probably felt rather embarrassed, but they learned through it that it's better to obey what God said to do.

It wasn't, however, just something that always happened with the manna. It didn't always go bad. God specifically let it go bad the next day as His gentle way of trying to get them to listen, believe and obey Him.

Why was it important to learn that? They were soon to start living in a new country, and if they wanted it to be a good one, there was only one way to do that—to do things God's way, as people had been learning ever since the Garden of Eden.

There's the right way, and the wrong way. God knows what is best, what is right, what is fair, what is loving, what is going to bring about good things in people's lives, and what will work out for the best in the end.

God already knows what will happen, right from the start. It pays to do it His way—as these travellers found out, time and again.

The next instruction, regarding this amazing "bread from Heaven", was to collect and save extra for the next day. Yes, you heard that right. They were supposed to get double the amount of manna on the sixth day of the week, so that on the seventh day of

the week, their rest day, they could have a nice day and not have to do that collecting job.

Wasn't that thoughtful? See, the God of Heaven, the God of the whole Earth, wasn't at all like the Pharaoh they'd been forced to work for. God wanted them to save a day each week for rest, just like He set the example of when first creating the world.

His solution to making a country peaceful and to have the people doing what they should was not to make them work harder and harder—like it was in Egypt.

God wanted them to realise that it was very important that they take time daily with Him. He wanted them to take time to stop, to listen, to enjoy, to praise, to pray, and to be refreshed. He also asked them to do something new, to help them form new habits for good health and happiness.

God asked them to take a full day each week to rest and relax. To help make it easier for them, and to help them



remember to do it each week, He allowed them to gather twice as much food the day before their rest day. Then the food would remain fresh and good—but just on that day!

This wasn't just amazing food, it was an amazing God! He knew what each one was doing, when they were doing it, on what day of the week they were doing it, how many people were in their family, how much food each one had, and what they were thinking and saying. He knew it all!

He brought things into their lives day by day, with each new part of their journey, all with the same purpose that He still does things in your life even today: To teach each person about His love, His care, and that following His words and His way is really the best thing to do.

Moses had faith in God's words, and depended on His instructions to get them out of each tight spot. He simply did as God said! When God said to take a portion of the manna—manna that usually went bad after being kept for one day—and told him to save it for years to come, so they'd remember what it looked like many years later, Moses obeyed.

As surprising as it sounds, it didn't go bad. It wasn't the bread that was so amazing, but the God who made it and was giving out the instructions.



## Water Out of a Rock

It might be hard to understand why the people didn't stop to praise and pray and get God's instructions, when yet again there was no water to drink in the next camping place. It was taking them a long time to learn, but do you always ask nicely for everything you want all the time?

Even though you know your parents love you and want to take good care of you, don't you still complain sometimes when you are feeling really hungry, or tired, or thirsty, or sick, or hurting?

It was pretty difficult to be travelling for so long, especially for people who were used to living in one place, and having water available when they needed it. It was hard for them to all of a sudden, from one day to the next, not have a house and to be moving all the time.

It wasn't easy to have to carry all their things around and lead the animals onward, and not always having even the most basic things they thought they needed. They no longer had gardens to grow their vegetables in, or plenty of water around to drink. It wasn't easy.

In so many other ways it was better than what they were enduring through all the hard times in Egypt. However, when you feel you really need something, it can be rather hard to start thinking of all the good things that you do have. It's human nature to focus on just that one thing that is hard, or the one thing that you don't have right then.

Learning to react to difficulties with faith, with words of thankfulness on your lips, and with a prayer, is a good way to bring wonderful things in your life. People don't always think of doing it, because they often don't feel like doing it at the time.

You can start to see things in a warped way. Your thoughts can lead you to believe that things were better for you before, or that others must have things much better than you do, or to think that "everything is going wrong." That's not how to bring fast, good results your way.

When dealing with the people's negative reactions when being faced once again with the need for water, rather than giving up, Moses took the situation to the only one who could, and would, make things better for them. He brought it to God in prayer.

King David, who lived many years later, wrote in Psalm 23, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." That is what happened on that day in the wilderness.

God told Moses to take the rod of Aaron, and to go with the elders of the people, to a certain rock.

Moses was instructed to hit the rock. God said His spirit would be right there on the rock, making water come out of it for the people to drink.

That's how it happened! Water came gushing from the rock, giving them all that they needed. Everyone knew how real and close God was to

them, providing for them what was needed, even in a seemingly impossible situation.

There were other times when the need for water became a cause for complaint. One time, the lack of trust in God's care caused unkind words to be said again to Moses and Aaron about the need for water. Moses didn't take it very patiently.

It was hard for him to hear all the harsh words of others. His sister also had recently passed away, so things were extra difficult for Moses.

God wanted to do an amazing miracle, to prove to the people how real and powerful He was, and to help



encourage everyone. He wanted them to think more about Him and all the great things He could do, rather than getting too down and discouraged about their problems. He told Moses the plan.

Rather than hitting the rock, like God told him to do the first time, Moses was to just speak to the rock, and the water would come out of it.

That would look pretty impressive, don't you think? Someone just speaks, and water gushes out of a rock with great force, pouring and rushing down like a stream until it forms a big pool!

As Moses stood before the rock he saw and heard all the upset people, grumbling and blaming him for every problem they were facing.

He got his mind on them rather than God and His tremendous love and great care, and the marvellous way He was going to answer their need for water. Moses then went ahead, in a spirit of angry impatience—which was rare for him—and he hit the rock twice, speaking to the people angrily.

God was kind and still made water come out, and plenty of it! Everyone got all the water they needed, and were glad. However, God wasn't too pleased with Moses' and Aaron's disobedience to His plan, and how they showed a poor example. It wasn't the right way to react.

God told them that as a result, when at last they did reach the land that was promised to them, that neither Moses nor Aaron would be allowed to go in. God needed to let the people know that it is wrong to not follow His instructions, and that reacting in an angry way isn't right either.

Everyone makes mistakes; even great leaders do at times. Only God is perfect. You can follow others' good examples, if they are following God's way, while you continue to look to God most of all for the right example.

How do you do that? Study the Bible, and receive My Words to you while praying and getting quiet, taking your problems and needs to Me—Jesus.



You'll be amazed with the solutions I can give, and how I can work things out—without you getting all impatient and forcing the situation in your own way. Trust Me to take care of things, and listen to My thoughts.

Later on, when the Israelites needed water again, the people remembered that the right way to get things from God was to hear from Him, obey His Words, and praise Him! God instructed Moses to gather the people together, as He was going to give them more miracle water.

God told Moses where to direct the princes and noble men to just dig into the ground with their staves. Then the people sang! Yes! They sang a song, a song of prayer and praise, for the water to spring up.

Even if you are in the middle of the wilderness and have nothing but dry ground and a stick, if you are talking to God in faith, and hearing what He wants you to do, and singing and praising Him, He can make a spring of water come up right out of the ground if you need it. With faith, prayer and praise anything can happen, if God is helping you out!

## A Blazing Mountain, a Blasting Trumpet, and Tablets of Stone

One day God made a very special announcement to Moses and all the people. He was going to come for a visit! Well, God isn't seen in the way we see people, at least not now. God is quite a bit bigger and contains lots of power and light.

He was going to visit them in a visible way, but in a different form—not as a man. The cloud of His presence and the wonder of His power were going to come very close to them on a certain mountain.

God wanted them to honour Him and demonstrate how they respected Him by getting ready. The people all prepared, as God told them to, for this special event. They washed their clothes, took a bath and got all clean. Then the awaited-for time arrived.

The people were curious and wanted to see what God was like and to be able to get as close as possible, so God gave Moses some instructions. Have you ever seen a worksite where construction is going on, and there



are fences around it, and signs for pedestrians to keep away, as it is dangerous?

Well, God's Heavenly power, His Spirit's energy was so strong, that He knew humans, those He created and made out of the clay of the Earth, couldn't handle being so physically close to the way He chose to visit them. Everyone was forbidden—people and animals too—from even touching the mountain, but they could all stand near and watch what was to happen. It was an amazing show!

All of a sudden there were bright flashes of lightning and powerful thunder, and a thick cloud on the mountain. Then there was a very loud sound of a trumpet announcing God's visit. The trumpet sound was so loud that everyone in the area could hear it booming, like they'd never heard a trumpet blasting before!

Moses called the people to come to meet God at the foot of the mountain. God was to be their guide, their king, their ruler. They needed to know how real He was, and how He was to be respected, followed, and listened to.

When God began to show His presence in a visible way, the mountain looked like one large-sized "burning bush"—like Moses had seen years before. There was a big fire on the mountain, and tons of billowing smoke.

The whole mountain shook like a big earthquake was happening—that's just how the mountain reacted when just a little of the power of God was on it. It was a good thing the people stayed off of it! It was very dramatic!

The loud trumpet blast continued to blow, and grew yet louder and louder! Moses talked with God, and God answered him. Moses knew God. He loved and followed Him, and would do whatever God asked. Moses wasn't afraid to be near to Him, but knew he must always obey.

God wasn't there to cause harm, just to show a powerful display! Like when fireworks are set off on New Year's Eve or other special events. They are powerful and filled with light and wonder, but you better not get close when the fireworks are making a display of light with a blast! So God was doing a show, and it just wasn't safe for people to get too close.

God then called to Moses, telling him to come up to the top of the mountain! He had permission to go, and he did. God spoke with him for awhile, then told him to go down quickly again, to talk with the people, as some



of them might try to copy him and climb up the mountain too, just to get a closer look.

Moses obeyed and came and told the people what God had said to him. These were instructions that Moses would write down for them later on, rules that have been known as “the 10 Commandments”, as well as other words of counsel and rules for them.

God said that since the people had seen Him visit them, they knew how real He was, and they were to worship Him only.

While Moses told them these and other words from God, the mountain continued to be ablaze. Smoke rose from it, the loud trumpet blasted, and the ground shook.

The people were glad that it was just Moses talking with them face to face then. God’s display of power on the mountain made them realise how strong God was, and they felt humble and weak in His presence.

God called Moses close again and gave more instructions, which he came and told everyone. Later he wrote down all the instructions from God—His guidelines, rules and guidance for the people to follow. God made the rules easy to understand.

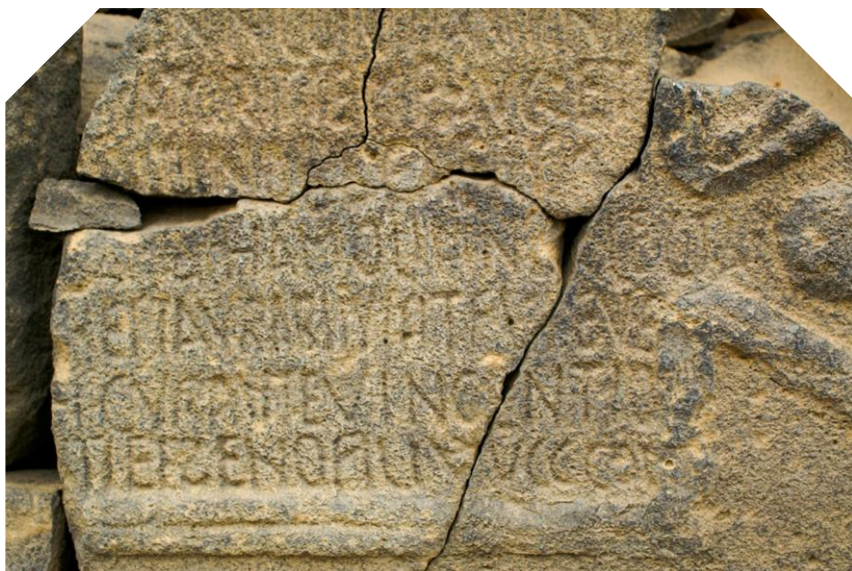
These rules gave specific examples for them to know how to be kind, what was a loving reaction to problems that came up, how to treat others well, what to do

when problems occurred, and what was God's way of doing things—for that time in history, for the Israelites.

A special ceremony was held to commemorate their obedience to God's words. Moses read aloud to everyone the many rules that God told him to write down. Everyone promised to obey.

Then one day they all saw the glory and light of God in a bright, fiery cloud that came on to that special mountain for a whole week!

On the seventh day Moses was once again called up to talk with God. Some others were permitted to come a bit closer and they got an amazing and beautiful glimpse of a part of God! Wow! They were amazed and in awe. And Moses was called to go right into the cloud



and up the mountain.

Since the people had some of God's words and instructions written down by then, which they promised to obey, God left other people in charge of them for a while, because Moses was to take a special "vacation". It wasn't really a holiday, but it was a rest and a break from his usual very big and tiring job each day of counselling and leading the people.

God let Moses be with Him there on the mountain, just hearing His words and speaking with him for 40 days and nights. As amazing as it sounds, just being there with God was enough for him at that time. He needed no food or water—just the nourishment of God's words. It was a wonderful time.

The main purpose for that time was that God said He had a special gift to give to Moses, for the people. With God's own finger He wrote on tablets of stone 10 of the most important and main rules that they were to all obey.

It would be easy to understand just what they were to do. Nowadays you might hear that expression "written in stone" meaning something that is a sure and solid rule that is meant to be obeyed. It probably comes from this event, with Moses and the people of Israel.

## The Mercy and Light of God

After such a wonderful time alone with God, hearing from Him and getting His plans, it was startling and troubling for Moses to be suddenly faced once again with the trouble in the camp. God told Moses to go down and check on everyone, that they were up to no good.

Moses could not believe it! Everything that God had told them to do, and not to do—things that they had all promised to obey—had so quickly been forgotten. Many had turned back to their old ways, their bad ways, doing the things that greatly displeased God.

It was easy to say, “Yes, I’ll obey God’s rules,” when God was showing His power to them on the mountain, and there was thunder and lightning and fire, and they felt afraid to do their own bad ideas. But when Moses was gone for such a long time, and had seemingly disappeared into the cloud, and they didn’t hear from him for so long, they might have thought they were now on their own, with Moses long gone.

There was no one telling them what to do. They forgot that the whole point wasn’t to just do what was

good and right because there was a person right there with them watching them and making them do it.

God's whole lesson that He was trying to tell them when He visited them in that special way on the mountain was for them to know that He is there with them all the time. God wanted them to love and follow in His ways. He knew about each and every one of them, and it mattered to God what each person decided to do on Earth.

When Moses came down from the mountain and saw what was going on, he had one of his few angry reactions. He was usually so calm, so patient, day after day, year after year, but this time he felt it was just too much. In a moment of anger, sadly, Moses threw down those precious tablets of stone that he was carrying down from the mountain.

Those were the ones that God had just made for them. Now they were broken. Oh, dear! Moses regretted that he had gotten so upset to the point that it made him feel like giving up trying to help the people, thinking that even these rules on stone wouldn't help to change the people from doing wrong.

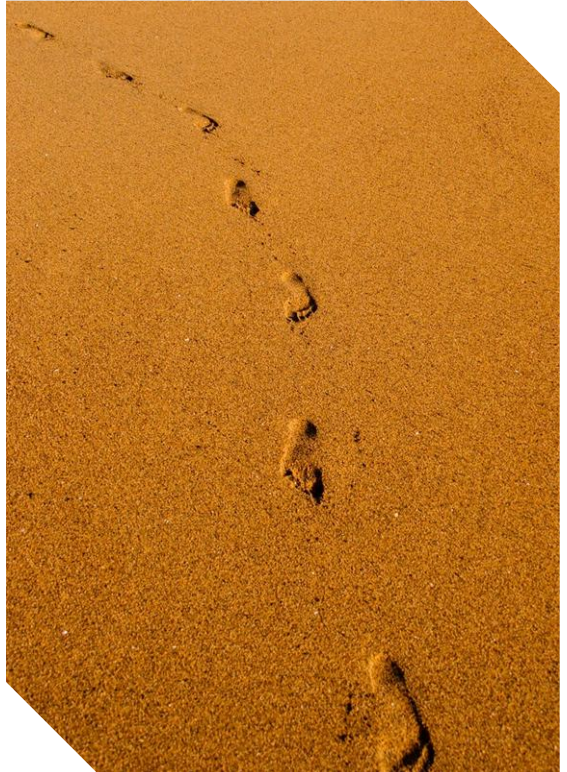
He had thought they had made good progress in their lessons, and were ready to do things God's way. Moses had been so glad for that step of progress in



their training. But not everyone had changed—at least not in their hearts.

You have to do more than just say that you will do what God knows is best. You have to choose to do it no matter what—even if others tell you to do something differently than what God, in love, has asked you to do or not do. You have to choose to obey whether or not there are people leading you, helping you, and instructing you in the right way.

God was upset too. He was so upset that He didn't even want to continue allowing these people to be part of the promise He'd made to Abraham, and then to Isaac, and yet again to Jacob. If they weren't going to willingly obey and follow in His way, He'd have to start again, from the beginning, with another child, and let them grow and have children, and on and on till there were again many descendants choosing to follow in His way.



It was a very difficult time, and a hard but good lesson was learned. People had to choose that day whose side they were on—God's side, or following in their old, ungodly ways. Moses prayed with all his heart. He begged for God to give them another chance to do better, and God said yes. He is so merciful, kind and forgiving.

So those that really wanted to be a part of this team and wanted to follow in God's way were allowed to be there. Anyone who wanted to continue doing things in their bad, ungodly way would not be allowed to be part of the special team anymore.

It sobered the people, when Moses explained that God was so unhappy with their repeated disobediences, that He nearly took away their place as being part of this special chosen team. They were very sorry, and took off any fancy jewellery and decorations. They showed in their sombre actions and words on that day that they wanted to belong to God, and have Him bless them and care for them.

God gave those ones who chose the right way a second chance—and gave Moses a second chance to make a new set of stone tablets. Thankfully, that time, when Moses was called up on the mountain for another 40 days alone with God, the people tried their best to do things as God wanted them to, while Moses was gone. They knew that no matter what, God was still

there with them, watching and listening to all that was going on.

God told Moses to cut out the next stones for the new "Ten Commandments" tablets, as well as to make a wooden box or "ark" to keep them in, once they were finished. Moses went up to the mountain early in the morning, taking the new stone slabs with him. He was ready for God to write the words on them, once again.

Moses took time to hear from God on the mountain. Once again God's rules were written on the new tablets of stone. When he came down from the mountain he placed the new stone tablets in the wooden box for safe keeping, as God had told him to do. This new set was taken care of very well, and even many years later people still had them.

Moses had some wonderful times with God while on the mountain, seeing a bit more of God than he'd ever gotten to see before. Moses gave all his time and focus to just sitting there, praying and listening to God's words.



That is a very important thing for anyone who wants to lead others in the right way and accomplish positive goals with their lives. Maybe you can't all have 40 whole days alone, doing nothing else but praying or reading God's Word, but how about 40 minutes today?

Can you spend that time alone to hear from Me, to tell Me you love Me, and to get your instructions for your day? You can pause to listen and to hear My solutions to your problems! You can take the time to read some of My Word to give you faith and courage for whatever you have to do today.

When Moses came down from the mountain after his time alone with God, he didn't feel anything real different had happened to him, physically. However, because of his time spent in the light of God, Moses' face was shining—so brightly that people couldn't even look at it. He had to put a covering over his face! That was an example to them that time spent with God—the Father of Light—can make you filled with God's light too.

Your eyes, your smile, your face and your reactions will show My love and light, peace and joy, if you take time, like Moses did, to talk with and hear from Me. If you listen to My words it will make a wonderful difference in your life and in your reactions with others.

## The Cloud of the Lord

God wanted to keep showing the people that He was there with them—showing Himself in more ways than you usually see nowadays—as they were all just starting to get to know Him and what He was like.

God let a bright cloud appear in the day time, and at night it changed into a fiery pillar. It was God's way of saying that He was there.

This cloud displaying God's presence was with them right from the start, as they left Egypt. It was not only God's way of showing He was there with them, but also how He chose to lead and guide them.

It showed them when to go and where, as they travelled through the wilderness. Wherever it stopped, they stayed for as long as it stayed still there—whether it was for a day, or a week, a month, or even years!

The cloud would come nearby Moses too at times, when he would go into his special prayer tent to talk with God. All the people could see that Moses was there taking time with God and hearing Him speak.

Moses talked with God as close as friends talk—with God's voice speaking to Moses in his heart and mind and ears—and the cloud was the part of God that was visible.

One of the things God had instructed them to do was to make a large, fancy, special prayer tent, called the "Tabernacle". Everyone got very excited to help build it. People gave all kinds of things to Moses and those helping to make it—cloth of all kinds, gold, jewels and so forth.

A wise and diligent man named Bezaleel helped to make the "Ark of the Covenant"—a very special box for holding special things, and he built and made many other things too that God asked Moses to have made.

He was good at making things out of wood, carving things, stone work, making things out of gold, silver and brass, and making all sorts of things. He was very careful to do each thing in just the way God told Moses to have it done.

The special cloud would then rest on this tabernacle, showing God's presence was there, telling the big team of travellers where to stop and camp, and when it was time to move on.

There was no TV telling news of what was going on in the surrounding areas, nor the internet to look up camp sites, or phone services to find out the information

needed to make the trip a safe and good one. But God knew everything! And He made it simple by just telling and showing them where and when to go, using this bright cloud of light and fire.

Finally, after quite some time of not just travelling, but learning all kinds of lessons, with God helping them all to know and follow Him, He led them to the place of their destination. At long last they were right nearby the land they were to live in, build houses, raise their families, grow crops, and so forth.

Men were chosen from each of the main 12 families or “tribes” as they were called, the descendents of the 12 sons of Jacob. These men had a very exciting mission: to be the first ones to go into the new land, the place that had been promised would be theirs. These men were to check things out, to see what it was like, discover who lived there, and come back and tell everyone what they had found out.

Joshua (who was also called Oshea, and was a descendant of Joseph) and another God-following man called Caleb, were filled with faith and courage. When they saw the place, they thought it was just terrific!

Crops grew well—and some of the large grapes and fruits of the land were brought back to demonstrate this to the people. The animals would have plenty of grass and shrubs to graze on. There was water and all



that was needed for the people to make the new country their home.

However, not everyone came back with a good report. There is always a good side to each situation; even things that seem difficult can work out good, if you see things in God's way. Joshua and Caleb believed God would work it out for them, and make it all a great place, but the others had noticed something that seemed way too hard.

There were some people that lived there that were very, very tall! Giant, in fact! They worried that those giant men would make things too hard for them, and not allow them all to move in.

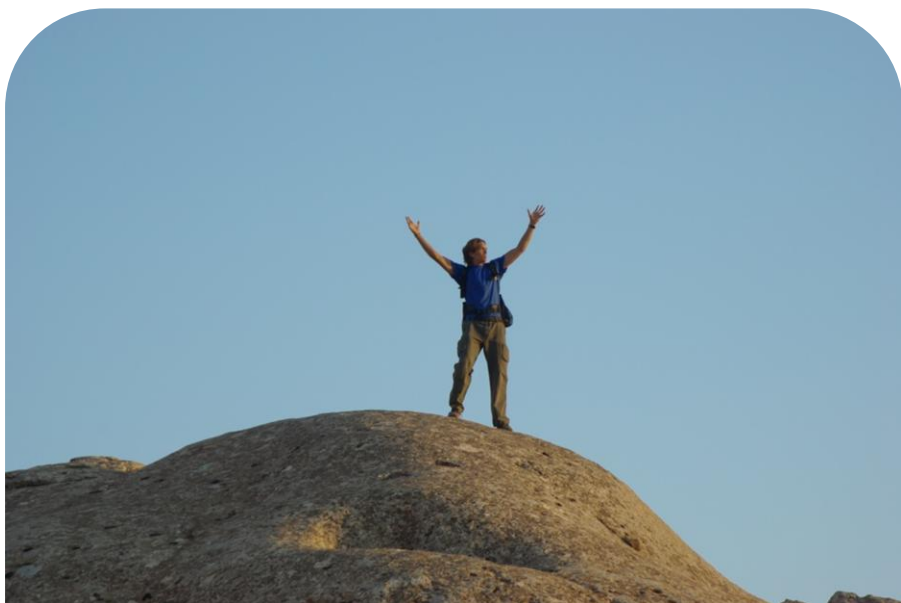
Problems can seem big to you, or they can seem small, according to how big and powerful you think that God is. If you realise that God and His power and ability to help are bigger than the universe, then something like a tall person on Earth is so very small in comparison. It wouldn't even trouble you. You'd know that God could make that person not bother you.



However, if you think that a giant person or giant problem is even bigger than what God can do, then you feel there is no way a solution can be found. You just feel like giving up. And that's what some of those pioneers and explorers felt like—and not just felt like it, but they expressed those discouraging, despairing, doubtful words to all the people, convincing them all that what they'd hoped for all this time was impossible, and would never happen. So sad!

Joshua and Caleb tried to tell the people the truth, and explain how God could do anything, that there was nothing too hard for Him, that He would work it out, and they'd all enjoy living there.

They knew that with faith in their all-powerful God He would make it all right and a good place for them to



live. The people however gave place to fear and worry and despair. They chose to listen to the negative words, rather than the positive, so no one wanted to go and enter the new land. It was a sad day.

What a pity to not feel that God would complete His plan, finish what He had begun, and come through with His promises. It was a shame they felt that God wasn't able to make all things work out well.

They didn't believe that He was strong enough and capable of doing whatever needed to be done to help them. And so began the next long and tiresome part of the journey.

Since they didn't have the confidence in God to go ahead into the new land and take on the challenges it presented to them, they had to go back into the wilderness, live there, and travel around for the next 40 years.

Do you think when their next chance to enter the promised land came after all those years, that they were finally ready to give God a chance? You bet! Those who had been children at the time were now adults, and were eager and full of faith that God would help them.

## Aaron's Almonds and Moses' Song

It's good if you can believe what I say by faith, but if I choose to do a little something extra to encourage your faith, it can be real special. Sometimes it is just what is needed to help you to keep going in the right direction.

Many of the travelling Israelites were often having a hard time trusting and believing that God was leading Moses and Aaron and showing them what to do. They thought that because things weren't always so easy, it was because things weren't right. They often complained and grumbled to Moses and Aaron, saying they weren't doing things right.

This was very difficult for Moses and Aaron, and made God upset too, as He was the one actually leading the people by telling Moses and Aaron what to do, and they were trying their best to follow God and lead the people in His way.

God wanted to show a sign to the people that Moses and Aaron were indeed the right men for the job, and were the God-appointed leaders for that time. God gave the instruction for one prince to represent each of the 12 tribes of Israel. Each of those 12 princes was to bring their rod or walking stick.

The princes were to write their name on their stick. Both Moses and Aaron were from the tribe Levi. Aaron's rod with his name on it was one of the 12 rods collected, as God had said. These rods were placed in the special tabernacle over night; they were put where Moses usually prayed and talked with God.

God said that He would make the rod that belonged to the person that He wanted to lead the people bud with blossoms!

The next morning the most unusual thing happened. When Moses went into the tabernacle to check on the rods, he saw that the rod representing him and Aaron had buds on it, had grown blossoms and yielded almonds! -All this growing out of a very old stick that they'd used for many years!

It was of course something only the one who created the world could do, the one who could make a plant grow over-night without any roots or nourishment.

It was God's gift to Moses and Aaron, given as a sign of encouragement to everyone that they were his chosen leaders. They could all rest with assurance that even if not everything was easy, things would work out and God was really the one in charge of this whole big team anyway.

Have you ever heard a song and found it was hard to forget its catchy lyrics? The words would just keep

repeating in your mind and it was hard to get it to stop? If it's a good tune and song, then it serves as a great reminder of a helpful message. If it's not a good song, then it can be a real problem.

It's real important to guard the tank of your mind, so that it's only filled up with things that will make your life's motor and the things you do to be powered in the right way, going in the best direction. If you've got a strong diesel engine in your truck, you don't fill it with sea water. Not only would it not make it drive to where you are trying to go, but it would cause all kinds of trouble in the engine, right?

Your mind and heart are like motors that are constantly on the go, learning, doing, experimenting, thinking, feeling, imagining, remembering and guessing. You need fuel—and not just food for your belly. You also need to feed your mind and heart with something.

What you choose to fill it with will make a difference, giving you either success or failure; gladness and joy, or despair and despondency; light and Godliness or darkness and bad things; hate and anger in your heart, or love and inspiration brightening your life.

God could read the thoughts of each one of the Israelites, and each one on Earth. He knew that on their own, without His loving and wise guidance, they

wouldn't have the wisdom and the determination to always do things His way, and to shun the evil that would surround them in their new country from all the other people that knew nothing of God's love and ways.

Moses had talked with them. He taught them everything God told him to. They had the rules written down on scrolls, as well as on the tablets of stone, and God had one more thing to give to them.

There was one new idea that God had for Moses to try, in an effort to help the Israelites remember to follow God when Moses had passed away and they were in their new country. Shortly before it was Moses' time to leave, God told him to write a song, and teach it to the people. So he did, in just one day! It was a long song too!

It was to be a reminder song for them, a song that God and Moses hoped would stick in their minds, to help keep them going God's good way—or to convict their hearts when they were off doing their own wrong things and seeing that it was bringing nothing good their way.





Moses had lived a long life, obediently doing as God had asked of him. By the time they reached the new land they were to move into, Moses moved up to His new place—with God—to rest and be rewarded for faithfully doing his job, day by day, year after year, decade after decade. Aaron had also been taken to Heaven some time before, when God called him up onto a mountain, from where he too went on to his Heavenly reward.

Before Moses left, he got to see the view from the mountain of the land all the people were moving to shortly. It was time then to give the job of leading the very big team of Israelites to someone else, and God had just the right person in mind. He chose a man with lots of faith, and who had helped Moses for many years.

Joshua was the new leader that God chose who was filled with His spirit and ability to do the job. Most of all, he was very eager to listen to God's voice and to obey whatever He said to do. Joshua knew that this was the only way to succeed with such a big responsibility. God said to him, "As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." (Joshua 1:5)

The travelling team of Israelites had learned many lessons through their experiences. They'd had difficulties, loss, sickness and trouble as a result of

wrong decisions. They knew what God said was true, and they saw that whatever He promised would happen. They had seen marvellous signs of God's power working among them, and had seen Him doing all kinds of amazing things to prove His reality, His presence and His ability to do anything for them. God had fed them day after day, year after year, miraculously, with "bread from Heaven."

However, even with all that training and all those years of learning lessons of all kinds, and having God's instructions written down to remember and to teach others His way, still God knew that "people are people."

In their own power and strength they wouldn't be able to always make the right decisions and to keep doing things His way. They would need many more reminders and instructions, and yes, even hard times, to keep them going God's happy way.

The song was one more gift of God's love and words to them, to help them have a good time in their new country. But God knew that the song, together with all the other things He'd done for them would not be enough to keep them always living according to His way, and obeying Him. God knew things would be difficult for them again, one day, as they would stray away from what He'd said to do.

When I was with My disciples on Earth I told them a

secret, a key or a tip to make it easier to follow in My way. I said, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." (John 14:21)

Did you notice the secret in these words? It's all about love. If you really love someone you'll want to do things that please them. You think about them, you try to make things nice for them, you want to do things together, you enjoy each other's friendship, and you trust each other.

If there's someone you love, and who you know loves you, and they tell you to do something good that would make things better and nicer for you, you want to do what they say, right? God gave the laws and the rules to the Israelites, but that wasn't enough to make them want to do it. He tried everything He possibly could to try to get them to believe and follow Him with their heart, for His sake and for their own sake, to make things better for them all.

However, for it to really work each one needed to love God with all their heart and soul, because this would help them to follow Him and obey Him. Love makes you remember things that ordinarily you might forget, as it changes from being a fact or rule or detail in your mind, to being something you are motivated to want to do from your heart.

I love each one on Earth so much, and am doing all I can to help each one to get to know Me and to embrace the right and loving ways to be. But each one needs to save a large place in their heart for Me. They need to take the time to get to know Me, and to see how very much I love them.

Then they need to take the next step to try to do the things I tell them to, because I know so much better than they do, what will truly be good and work out well for them and their loved ones, as well as for everyone else on Earth. So love is the key. If you don't feel that big feeling in your heart that you love or like Me better than some other people or some other things you like doing, well, don't give up trying to spend time getting to know Me.

Once you get even just a glimpse of how much I truly care about you, your welfare and each one on Earth, it may start to open your heart up to want to know more and more about Me and My love. You'll be so glad to be My friend. Don't you want to be a friend with the guy who can do anything at all that you wish for, if it's good for you; the guy who owns the universe, who can hold the sun in His hands if that's what is needed?

As you take the little steps of faith towards Me and do what you can to obey what I show you and what My Word tells you to do, you'll start to see wonderful things beginning to happen.

Not everything will go just the way you want it to. In fact lots of things in life will seem to be going wrong for you and others—because life is just one big learning challenge with endless new opportunities!

But with Me on your side, the guy who can blow away clouds and storms with the breath of My voice, you'll know you are in safe hands, and you'll get to experience a joy in your heart, happiness of soul that many others could only dream possible.

When it all comes down to it, people just want to be happy, and to feel they are important and loved by someone. When you are with Me, loving and obeying Me, I provide all these things for you, and so much more. If you have let Me into your life, and have received My gift of salvation, and are trying to talk to Me and do what I say, you will be a very special friend to Me, and I will take good care of you.



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