

## HEAVENLY FOOD

*Exodus 16*

### SUMMARY...

God uses the desert to grow us in how we relate with Him. That is to say, God uses 'hard things' to help us see Him, depend upon Him and trust Him. This is why it was time for the Israelites to travel further into the desert after enjoying nearly a month and half at the Oasis of Elim. Unfortunately, the rhythm and routine that the Israelites had established was one of complaint. And, as we see in Exodus 16, their complaint towards God revealed what was happening in their hearts – DISCONTENTMENT.

Once again, God is gracious to meet their complaints (their discontentment) with His generous provision of food from heaven. God's abundant of provision for His people was simply so that His people would see His glory and so that His people would be truly content and satisfied in God alone.

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER...

1. Why is it that we often learn best while in the desert? Maybe share a time with your GROUP when you were "in the desert" and how you grew during that season?
2. Complaining was the default 'rhythm and routine' for the people of God. That is to say, when things got hard or they did not like what was happening, complaining is just what they did. (Recall the groans of the Israelites, from when they were in brutal slavery, to complaints against Moses, to complaints about the wilderness.) What is your default 'rhythm and routine' when things get hard? And if it is to complain, whether to others or just to yourself, why is that?
3. In Exodus 16:3, the Israelites in essence said 'God we wish you had never bothered to save us... we're better off in bondage in Egypt.' Their complaining actually led them to believe that life was better in bondage in Egypt than with God in the wilderness. Why do we often fall prey to the same sin... thinking that life would be so much easier and/or better without God?
4. Moses recognizes that the people's complaints are not towards him, but rather towards God (Exodus 16: 7-9, 12). Complaining often reveals the heart, specifically one's heart towards God. If someone were to listen to your complaints, what conclusions would they come to regarding what you believe about God?
5. A discontent person is not someone who does not have anything, it is someone who is just not content with what they have. Where do you see discontentment in your life and what impact is it having on your relationship with God?

6. We see that God does not punish the people of Israel for complaining, rather, He once again generously and graciously provides for them. He feeds them mana, i.e., 'heavenly food' or the 'food of angels.' God also provides them with meat to eat. What do we learn about God and His character in His provision for His people?
7. In Exodus 16:7, Moses makes clear that when the people of God see the provision of God they would see the 'glory of God.' In what ways do we see the glory of God today? How does His glory manifest itself in your life on a daily basis?
8. God used the desert once again to help His people see that He alone was enough. Just like the Israelites, God will do whatever it takes in our lives to grow us until we are convinced that we have everything we need in God alone. Are you convinced of this truth yet? What would it take for you to see and know that if you have a relationship with God through faith in Jesus you have everything you'll ever need?

### **BIBLICAL TEXTS CITED...**

*"After leaving Marah, the Israelites traveled on to the oasis of Elim, where they found twelve springs and seventy palm trees. They camped there beside the water."*

*Exodus 15:27 (NLT)*

*Then the whole community of Israel set out from Elim and journeyed into the wilderness of Sin, between Elim and Mount Sinai. They arrived there on the fifteenth day of the second month, one month after leaving the land of Egypt.*

*Exodus 16:1 (NLT)*

*There, too, the whole community of Israel complained about Moses and Aaron. "If only the Lord had killed us back in Egypt," they moaned. "There we sat around pots filled with meat and ate all the bread we wanted. But now you have brought us into this wilderness to starve us all to death."*

*Exodus 16:2-3 (NLT)*

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