



2025 Q3 Lesson 7

The Bread and Water of Life

by Russell Atkins

SABBATH

And the Lord said to Moses, 'How long do you refuse to keep My commandments and My laws? See! For the Lord has given you the Sabbath; therefore He gives you on the sixth day bread for two days. Let every man remain in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.' So the people rested on the seventh day. (Exodus 16:28–30, NKJV).

From the Lesson:

After leaving Egypt, Israel was on an unknown journey to the Promised Land. The people faced a demanding and long trek, and they needed to learn a multitude of new lessons. The Lord would lead and care for them; and, yes, He desired to help them grow, but they must learn discipline, self-control, sacrifice, unselfishness, trust in the Lord, and **especially obedience**. Moses was a visible [ed: human] leader, and the people had to follow him and his leadership if they were to triumph. It was crucial for them to stay together, to cooperate as a community, and to assist each other. There were many hindrances and challenges ahead. So much of their spiritual growth would depend on how they met those challenges and how they responded to Moses, especially when the challenges became great. (Adult SS Lesson, 3Q 2025 Exodus, pg 85. emphasis mine)

Why "especially obedience"?

What **kind** of obedience?

"There are two grand forces at work in the salvation of the human soul. It requires the cooperation of man with the divine agencies—divine influences, and a strong, living, working faith. It is in this way only that the human agent can become a laborer together with God. **The Lord does not sanction in any one of us a blind, stupid credulity.** He does not dishonor the human understanding, but, far from this, He calls for the human will to be brought into connection with the divine will. He calls for the ingenuity of the human mind, the tact, the skill, to be strenuously exercised in searching out the truth as it is in Jesus.... Ye are labourers together with God. (Our High Calling, pg 310. emphasis mine)

The "Angel of the Lord" in the pillar of cloud was their "visible leader" 24/7/365. Moses was a type of Christ [fully human following the direction of God], and he was not visible to everyone in the camp at all times.

From the Red Sea the hosts of Israel again set forth on their journey, **under the guidance of the pillar of cloud**. The scene around them was most dreary—bare, desolate-looking mountains, barren plains, and the sea stretching far away, its shores strewn with the bodies of their enemies; yet they were full of joy in the consciousness of freedom, and every thought of discontent was hushed.

In their horror and despair they reproached Moses for having led them in such a way, not remembering that the divine presence in that mysterious cloud had been leading him as well as them. In his grief at their distress Moses did what they had forgotten to do; he cried earnestly to God for help. (Patriarchs & Propjets, pg 291. emphasis mine)

SUNDAY

Bitter Waters

But for three days, as they journeyed, they could find no water. The supply which they had taken with them was exhausted. There was nothing to quench their burning thirst as they dragged wearily over the sun-burnt plains. Moses, who was familiar with this region, knew what the others did not, that at Marah, the nearest station where springs were to be found, the water was unfit for use. With intense anxiety he watched the guiding cloud. With a sinking heart he heard the glad shout. “Water! water!” echoed along the line. Men, women, and children in joyous haste crowded to the fountain, when, lo, a cry of anguish burst forth from the host—the water was bitter.

In their horror and despair they reproached Moses for having led them in such a way, not remembering that the divine presence in that mysterious cloud had been leading him as well as them. In his grief at their distress Moses did what they had forgotten to do; he cried earnestly to God for help. “And the Lord showed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet.” Here the promise was given to Israel through Moses, **“If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee.”** (Patriarchs & Prophets, pg 291. emphasis mine)

Did God bring disease on the Egyptians, or did the Egyptians live out of harmony with the Laws of Health?

It was, of course, God who sweetened the water, not the tree, but might there be some other lessons for why God chose a tree to make the water drinkable and not sand, or coins, or a human sacrifice??

Consider the following:

If a man has committed a sin deserving of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance; for he who is hanged is accursed of God. Deut. 21: 22, 23.

Many Christians connect this passage with foreshadowing the Crucifixion, believing that Christ was "cursed of God" and God exercised His power in killing his Son on "a tree". This passage was instructive to the children of Israel for the purpose of dealing with someone who was put to death by hanging or displayed in a tree [?? as a lesson to others?]. It was the Jews who demanded Christ be crucified on a cross. They could have demanded he be run through with a spear, beheaded, thrown to the lions, or any other number of possible deaths, but they insisted on crucifixion. Why? I suspect it was, likely, as a demonstration that He was "accursed of God."

Might there be a better metaphor for the healing of the waters with a "tree"?

Water is symbolic of peoples / populations in Scripture, and the water at Marah was bitter / unfit for providing or sustaining life, symbolizing humanity in its natural state since Adam's fall. If not for Christ's "hanging from a tree", humanity would remain unfit for Life. When humanity is reconnected with Christ [His Life, Death, and Resurrection], we become fit for Life and have endless springs of Life welling up from within us [See the Woman at the Well -- John 4: 1-26].

I want to add these are my thoughts only that came to me as I was preparing for class. I have not read any other inspired writings suggesting this connection, however. Any additional thoughts from the class??

“Believe, believe, believe in Jesus,” is the soothing fallacy that is lulling many to sleep in the cradle of carnal security, and we need to be alarmed. When you bring Jesus into your daily life and character, you will not talk of your feelings, but of what God hath said. When Christ is in the soul, then we will work for those around us who are in darkness. There will not be heard from any man, “Give me Christ, but away with the commandments of God, I do not want to hear anything about them.” We must know that our feet are upon the eternal Rock. It is not for us to bring the word of God to our feelings and ideas, but to bring these to the word of God. “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” We are in the perils of the last days, and Christ has said that false teachers shall arise in the world, and deceive many with their pernicious doctrines. Then how shall we know the true from the false?—“Ye shall know them by their fruits.” Do they teach obedience to the law of God, or do they teach men to break his commandments? We are living in a world of false doctrines, and we must know what is truth. We do not inquire, What is for my convenience? but, What is God's word? If Christ had studied his convenience, he would never have left heaven to come to our world to die, to hang upon the accursed tree for us. Jesus has

died for you, and now what will you do for Jesus? He says, “Love one another, as I have loved you.” And if you love Jesus, you will have your feet planted in the blood-stained foot-prints of the Man of Calvary, and at last those who have gained the victory will enter in through the gates into the city, and have a right to the tree of life. God has given us reasoning faculties, and he wants us to use them. He has given us a chart which marks out for us the only right way to reach eternal life. Study the Scriptures for yourselves. Hear what the voice of the true Shepherd says to you, and then walk in the path of humble obedience, and at last the gift of eternal life will be granted to you. We cannot afford to lose eternal life. May God grant that we may meet this dear people around the great white throne, and with them sing the song of redemption in the kingdom of glory. (Review & Herald, 10 June 1890)

MONDAY

Quail and Manna

From the lesson:

It is important to notice that temptations in the Bible are often related to food. In the Garden of Eden, the Fall was related to eating from the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:16, 17; Gen. 3:1–6). In Jesus’ wilderness temptations, Satan’s first shot at Him was through food (Matt. 4:3). Esau lost his firstborn rights because of his undisciplined appetite (Gen. 25:29–34). How often was Israel’s disobedience connected to food and drink! No wonder Moses reminded later generations:

“ ‘Man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord’ ” (Deut. 8:3, ESV).

Manna, of course, was a heavenly bread that God supplied the Israelites with during their 40 years of sojourning in the wilderness. Through this gift, He taught them that He is the Creator and the Provider of everything. Also, God used His supernatural provision of manna to show them how to keep the seventh-day Sabbath.

Each week four miracles happened: (1) for six days, God gave a daily allotment of manna; (2) on Fridays, a double portion of manna was given; (3) the manna did not spoil from Friday to Sabbath; and (4) no manna fell on Sabbath. God was constantly performing these miracles so the people would remember the Sabbath day and celebrate God’s goodness on that day. God said: “ ‘Bear in mind that the Lord has given you the Sabbath.’ ” (Adult SS Lesson, 3Q 2025 Exodus, pg 87)

Manna was both literal and symbolic, meeting the physical needs of the Israelites and symbolizing Christ [Bread of Heaven] meeting their / our spiritual needs. A jar of manna was the second thing put in the ark of the covenant later on in history. What were the other two things in the ark and what do they symbolically represent?

I don't think it's any mystery that many of the health issues we see today are related to undisciplined appetites, but does the unrestrained appetite only affect individual health or are there societal issues related to it as well??

TUESDAY

Water From the Rock.

There are some obvious symbols / metaphors in this account.

- Rock -- Christ
- Water -- Life
- Struck -- Injured ONCE.
- Moses -- Type of Christ. Christ voluntarily "struck" Himself on Calvary in order to provide Life for humanity.

Any others??

Moses named the place Massah and Meribah, according to the lesson meaning "testing" and "quarreling", respectively. The lesson also stresses the need for obedience.

In Hebrew, "Meribah" (מריבה) translates to "strife," "contention," or "quarreling." It is a noun derived from the verb "rib," meaning "to quarrel" or "to strive". The name "Meribah" is given to a place in the Bible where the Israelites quarreled with Moses and tested the Lord. **Per A.I. search**

Water is a symbol of life because without water there is no life. Every cell in our body needs water. We are 60 percent water ourselves. Even our bones are composed partly of water. Thus, providing water in the wilderness for them was a sign for the Israelites that God cared for their needs and that they could trust Him. But, again, **they had to obey**. (Adult SS Lesson, 3Q 2025 Exodus, pg 88, emphasis mine)

Again, why do we need "to obey"??

WEDNESDAY

Jethro

From the lesson:

At the same time that Jethro learned about the true God, he himself had something to offer God's people: wise and beneficial advice. (Adult SS Lesson, 3Q 2025 Exodus, pg 89)

From Scripture:

Now Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel His people, how the Lord had brought Israel out of Egypt. (Exodus. 18:1 NKJV).

Was Jethro a priest of the Creator God [like Melkezedek], or "of Midian"?

Moses was humble enough to listen to wise counsel, no matter where it came from. I like Jethro's take on his own advice.

If you do this thing, and God so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all this people will also go to their place in peace.” (Exodus. 18:23 NKJV).

Jethro is still leaving things in God's hands / wisdom.

Any thoughts on whether or not this kind of hierarchy [rulers over thousands, hundreds, fifties, tens] is a pattern from heaven or was it simply what was necessary to deal with the unruly mob of recently enslaved Israelites?

THURSDAY

The Bread and Water of Life

From the lesson:

Paul explains that all the things that happened to the Israelites are examples and warnings for Christ's followers and will help them avoid the same troubles; that is, they will learn from these examples. This is pertinent instruction for us, we who live at “the end of the ages” (ESV). God gives His people the Holy Spirit to strengthen the believers with “power, love and self-discipline” (2 Tim. 1:7, NIV) so they can make correct decisions and follow His teaching. Jesus Christ is the Source of new life (John 14:6), and only He can turn us into “a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. . . . Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Rom. 12:1, 2, ESV). (Adult SS Lesson, 3Q 2025 Exodus, pg 90)

This is an excellent passage and summary of the metaphor[s] of the Bread and Water of Life.

Jesus pointed to Himself as both the Water of Life [John 4:1-26] and the Bread of Life [John 6: 31-51]. Which ceremony commemorates this now?

FRIDAY

Further Thought

Not long after the incident with the water, the nation faced a new danger (see Exod. 17:8–16)—a fierce and warlike tribe, the Amalekites, attacked them.

The Amalekites were not ignorant of God's character or of His sovereignty, but instead of fearing before Him, they had set themselves to defy His power. The wonders wrought by Moses before the Egyptians were made a subject of mockery by the people of Amalek, and the fears of surrounding nations were ridiculed. They had taken oath by their gods that they would destroy the Hebrews, so that not one should escape, and they boasted that Israel's God would be powerless to resist them. They had not been injured or threatened by the Israelites. Their assault was wholly unprovoked. It was to manifest their hatred and defiance of God that they sought to destroy His people. The Amalekites had long been high-handed sinners, and their crimes had cried to God for vengeance, yet His mercy had still called them to repentance; but when the men of Amalek fell upon the wearied and defenseless ranks of Israel, they sealed their nation's doom. (Patriarchs and Prophets, pg 300)

