

Character Study: Moses

Part 7 – Moses Deals with Complaining and Idolatry

Exodus 15:22-32:35

What's happening?

- Following the crossing of the Red Sea, the people continued their journey home. After traveling three days without finding water, the people began to complain. They complained again when they were short of food. Each time God met their needs. God provided manna to be their food (note 16:31), and God even had water come out of a rock that God had Moses strike. (15:22-17:7)
- God made a covenant with the Israelites promising they would be a special treasure to Him above all people if they would obey Him. (19:1-8)
- A few days later, the Lord descended onto Mt. Sinai in a thick cloud with thunder and lightning and the sound of a trumpet. This manifestation caused the people to tremble. The Lord called Moses up the mountain, where He gave him the Ten Commandments, various other laws, and instructions for building the Tabernacle. (19:9-31:18)
- Moses had been on the mountain for forty days (note 24:18). Being impatient, the people convinced Aaron to make them a golden calf that they could worship. God became angry, but Moses pleaded on their behalf. When Moses returned and saw the people's idolatry for himself, he became angry, but pleaded again on behalf of the people. (32:1-35)

What's God doing?

> God was testing the Israelites to teach them obedience (Deut. 8:2-3, 16). Yet their stubbornness prevented them from seeing what God was doing (compare Ex. 16:4, 20:20 with 17:7). Also, God's holiness was revealed on Mt. Sinai, demonstrating why He is worthy to be feared.

What's to learn?

- When you complain about something, do you realize that your complaint is ultimately a complaint against God (note 16:8)?
- When God provides for us, it is more than just meeting our needs. He wants us to better understand how good, faithful and trustworthy He is!
- Do difficult times bring out the worst in you? Or do you allow God to accomplish His purpose through the testing? God is always teaching you something, do not miss it!