

## *Norwood's Notes: Brief Summaries of Bible Stories*

These "notes" are intended to provide a general overview of the basic stories of the Bible in the hope of building greater biblical knowledge and encouraging Bible reading and study.

For more information, visit [www.UjimaChurch.org](http://www.UjimaChurch.org)

Copyright © 2018 by Dr. J.R. Norwood \* All Rights Reserved

*May be copied in its entirety and distributed for the purpose of Christian Education  
with appropriate citation credit*

### **6. Highlights from Exodus 15 – 24, “Manna, Quail, & Commandments”**

The Lord miraculously delivered the Israelites from bondage in Egypt and from Pharaoh's attempt to recapture them. However, as soon as difficulty and trouble rose, the mighty wonders wrought by God were overlooked by the very people he had rescued. As the Israelites traveled through the wilderness toward the Promised Land, they grumbled, complained, and even rebelled, but the Lord continued to mercifully guide, protect, and provide for them... because God was working His plan.

When, in their thirst, they only found undrinkable bitter water, the people grumbled and complained to Moses. The Lord turned the bitter water sweet so that they had plenty to drink (Ex 15). Later, as they journeyed on and found no water, they quarreled and complained again, saying “Is the Lord among us or not?” But, God told Moses to use his staff to strike a rock on the side of a mountain, and water poured forth from the rock for the people to drink (Ex 17).

The Israelites grumbled and complained that they no longer had bread and meat as they did in Egypt, so the Lord sent a special bread, called “manna,” that appeared on the ground as the dew dried in the morning; and, in the evening, the Lord sent quail so the people would have meat (Ex 16). Manna was like a flakey, sweet, wafer-like bread from heaven that appeared every morning, except on the Sabbath - the day of holy rest. The people were to gather only what they could eat in a day, and twice as much on the day prior to the Sabbath, for no work should be done on that day. But, some disobeyed and tried to gather more than they needed. They found that the manna, when kept overnight, would become spoiled and inedible by the next morning. It was to be a daily provision of bread, gathered in the morning before the heat of the midday sun melted it away. The only exception was that the double portion gathered on the day before the Sabbath would not spoil, but still be good to eat on the day of holy rest. There were still some people who disobeyed and did not gather a double portion of manna on the day before the Sabbath, but they found that manna did not appear on the Sabbath day. So God provided for them, as He worked His plan.

Amalek, a descendant of the patriarch Jacob's brother Esau, led the Amalekites in an attack on the Israelites as they went on their journey.

Moses told his faithful assistant, Joshua, to gather men to fight Amalek. Moses stood upon a hill overlooking the battlefield. So long as Moses' hands were raised, the Israelite warriors would prevail, but when his hands dropped from weariness, the Amalekites would prevail. A man named Hur and Moses' brother, Aaron, sat the weary Moses upon a rock and each of them lifted Moses' arms. With Moses' arms being held up, Joshua led the Israelites to victory over Amalek (Ex 17).

Jethro, the priest of Midian and Moses' father-in-law, heard of all the Lord had done to deliver the Israelites. Jethro came to visit him and brought Moses' wife, Zipporah, and two sons to where the Israelites camped. Jethro, Moses, Aaron, and all the elders of Israel worshiped the Lord together. Concerned that Moses overworked himself, from morning until night, as the people sought a word from the Lord to settle their disputes, Jethro advised that he appoint godly men to assist him in judging the people's cases. Moses heeded Jethro's godly advice and appointed judges over the people (Ex 18).

Three months after departing from Egypt, the people came to the wilderness of Sinai. As the people camped at the foot of the mountain, Moses went up the mountain to speak with God. God told Moses that he had chosen these descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob for a special purpose and that He was going to be with them in a special way and for His own special purpose (Ex 19). For three days the people consecrated themselves and washed their clothes. On the third day, there was thunder and lightning and a thick dark cloud of smoke covered the mountain as the Lord descended on it in fire. The sound of a trumpet was heard and the mountain quaked and the Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain telling to him warn the people to keep their distance.

Then the Lord spoke (Ex 20). He began by affirming that He was the one who brought the people out from bondage. Then the Lord listed the Ten Commandments: 1) You shall have no other gods but Me; 2) You shall not make idols to worship; 3) You shall not disrespect the name of the Lord; 4) You shall honor and respect the Sabbath day, keeping it holy; 5) You shall honor your father and mother, and you will be blessed if you do; 6) You shall not murder; 7) You shall not commit adultery; 8) You shall not steal; 9) You shall not lie to, or about, your neighbor; 10) You shall not covet what belongs to another.

The people were terrified by the voice of God and begged Moses to be the one to whom God spoke instead of them. Moses reassured them that the Lord meant them no harm. He then walked into the thick dark cloud to speak to the Lord alone. After receiving additional laws and instructions from God (Ex 21-23), Moses returned and wrote down the Lord's words. He organized the people by tribe, according to which of the 12 sons of Israel each had descended, and they worshiped the Lord as Moses read the law and the people answered, “All the words that the Lord has spoken we will do” (Ex 24).