

**God Will Lead You Through:
"To Complete Obedience"
Exodus 16:16 – 31**

Big Idea – Obedience to God brings God's blessing; disobedience brings disappointment and discipline.

God is not the author of confusion (1 Cor. 14:33), whenever He starts something new, He always gives the instructions necessary to make the venture successful. If we obey His instructions, He will bless, but if we disobey, there will be disappointment and discipline. The principle is still, "Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14:40).

Gathering the manna (vv. 18, 21).

To begin with, the Jews were instructed to gather their manna daily, but only as much as each person in the family could eat (v. 16). An omer was a Hebrew dry measure equivalent to about two quarts. The manna was especially nutritious because eating it sustained an adult for a day's march in the wilderness. It appears that the members of each family pooled their supply each day and never lacked for sufficient food. Since the Jews marched and camped by tribes (Num. 1-2), no doubt each clan and family pooled the manna they'd gathered and saw to it that everybody was adequately fed.

important that the Jews got up early to gather the manna, because the hot desert sun would melt it (Ex. 16:21). There was no place in the camp of Israel for the sluggard who stayed in bed while others gathered his food. There's a lesson here for believers today: we must start the day with the Lord, gathering spiritual food from the Word, because if we wait too long to meet God, the day will become cluttered, we'll get distracted, and we'll suffer from spiritual malnutrition. The "early risers" of the Bible include Abraham (Gen. 19:27; 21:14; 22:3), Jacob (28:18), Moses (Ex. 8:20; 9:13; 24:4), Joshua (Josh. 3:1, 6), Samuel (1 Sam. 15:12), Job (Job 1:5), David (Pss. 57:8; 108:2), and our Lord Jesus Christ (Mark 1:35).

Keeping the manna (vv. 19-21).

Lazy Israelites might plan to save some manna so they could sleep in the next morning, but Moses warned them not to do so. Some of the Jews did it anyway, and their manna soured, smelled, bred maggots, and had to be thrown away. Not only were these people disobedient to God's instructions, but they were living contrary to God's own practice, for the Lord arranged for the sun to melt the manna that still lay on the ground. It doesn't pay to rebel against what God says in His Word and the example He sets in His creation.

Again, there's a personal warning here for God's people today: We can't hoard His Word and try to live on yesterday's spiritual nourishment.

It's good to hear the Bible preached and taught on the Lord's Day, but we need fresh manna each day if we want to be healthy Christians.

There's no substitute for a daily time alone with God, gathering fresh nourishment from His Word.

The importance of Sabbath – vs. 23

Vs. 23 the Sabbath is mentioned by name for the first time in Scripture. It's called "the seventh day" in Genesis 2:1-3 and commemorated the Lord's rest after six days of creation. It seems obvious that the Jews were taught to observe the Sabbath even before God gave Moses the Ten Commandments.

While many sincere people call Sunday the Sabbath, this isn't biblical, for the Sabbath is the seventh day and Sunday is the first day of the week. The Sabbath was a day given especially by the Lord to the Jewish people as a reminder of His covenant with them

Exodus 20:8 "Remember to observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.

9 You have six days each week for your ordinary work,

10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath day of rest dedicated to the LORD your God. On that day no one in your household may do any work. This includes you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, your livestock, and any foreigners living among you.

11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and

everything in them; but on the seventh day he rested. That is why the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart as holy.”

Exodus 31:13 "Tell the Israelites, 'Above all, keep my Sabbaths, the sign between me and you, generation after generation, to keep the knowledge alive that I am the GOD who makes you holy.

14 Keep the Sabbath; it's holy to you. Whoever profanes it will most certainly be put to death. Whoever works on it will be excommunicated from the people.

15 There are six days for work but the seventh day is Sabbath, pure rest, holy to GOD. Anyone who works on the Sabbath will most certainly be put to death.

16 The Israelites will keep the Sabbath, observe Sabbath-keeping down through the generations, as a standing covenant.

Nehemiah 9:12 You led our ancestors by a pillar of cloud during the day and a pillar of fire at night so that they could find their way.

13 "You came down at Mount Sinai and spoke to them from heaven. You gave them regulations and instructions that were just, and decrees and commands that were good.

14 You instructed them concerning your holy Sabbath. And you commanded them, through Moses your servant, to obey all your commands, decrees, and instructions.

15 "You gave them bread from heaven when they were hungry and water from the rock when they were thirsty. You commanded them to go and take possession of the land you had sworn to give them.

16 "But our ancestors were proud and stubborn, and they paid no attention to your commands.

The word "sabbath" in Hebrew means "to cease working, to rest" and is related to the Hebrew word for "seven."

(So, in a brief parenthesis, why do we as Christ's followers worship on Sunday?)

John 20:19 "When it was evening on the first day of the week, the followers were together. The doors were locked, because they were afraid of the Jews. Then Jesus came and stood right in the middle of them and said, "Peace be with you."

Acts 20:7 "Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight."

Revelation 1:10 "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet,"

So they didn't have to work on the Sabbath, the Jews were supposed to prepare their meals in advance, and this included the gathering of the manna. They were permitted on the sixth day to gather twice as much manna, and whatever they saved up would not become rancid. Not only was the giving of the manna a miracle six days a week, but the preserving of the manna for the seventh day was an additional miracle.

There are always some people who don't really get the memo! Some of the Jews went out on the Sabbath, looking for manna, and they found none. They didn't obey Moses' instructions!

Remember, the gathering of the manna was a test from God to see if His people would obey the Law He was about to give them (Ex. 16:4).

If they wouldn't obey a simple thing like gathering manna six days a week, how would they ever obey the statutes and laws that Moses would bring down from Mount Sinai! It was a privilege to eat "the bread of angels," sent from heaven; and it was an insult to the Lord to disobey the instructions He had given.

Remember the lessons God teaches you (Ex. 16:32-36)

The instructions in verses 33-34 anticipate the giving of the law (or "testimony"; 31:18; 32:15) and the making of the ark of testimony (25:16, 22; 26:33) and the construction of the tabernacle.

The information in 16:35 was added years later to complete the account. At that time, Moses wouldn't have known how many years Israel would march in the wilderness.

The ark of the testimony was the throne of God in the camp. It stood in the holy of holies in the tabernacle, where the glory of God dwelt; and within the

ark were the two tablets of the law, Aaron's rod, and the golden jar of manna (Heb. 9:4). Only the high priest could enter the holy of holies, and that only once a year, but the Jewish people knew what was in the ark and taught this truth to their children. Each of these items reminded the nation of an important truth: that He is King and Lawgiver; that He established the priesthood; and that He fed His people because He cared for them.

God gave the law to Israel because He loved His people. They needed a light to guide them, and God's law is a lamp and a light; and obeying the law means life (Prov. 6:23). When the people disobeyed, they needed a priest to help them be forgiven and reconciled to God. They also needed to be reminded that it was God who provided food for them, and that they didn't live by bread alone but by the Word of God (Deut. 8:1-3).

Most people are prone to forget the way God has dealt with them, and they have to learn again the lessons they've forgotten.

keep a journal and review it regularly, while others keep a "spiritual diary" in the margins of their Bible, noting special verses and experiences related to them. A photograph that may mean little to us conveys treasures of spiritual truth to the owner who knows why the photo is on the shelf.

However we do it, we need to "nail down" the important lessons of life and permit them to influence us to walk with God and obey Him.

When by faith we walk with the Lord, then life is a school; and the successful pilgrim/students pray with Moses: "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Ps. 90:12).

Are you among them?