

Cindy Cottone

# The Bible Corner



## Bread and water

After the Hebrews had crossed through the Red Sea, they continued to follow the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. This journey took them far into the desert, and soon their supply of both food and water had been exhausted.

"Moses, we must find water soon or the people will die," Aaron said to his brother. "There is a place just ahead of us," Moses advised.

"Yes, I know of this place," Aaron replied. "But it is called Marah because the water found there is so bitter that it is not drinkable."

"The Lord will take care of it," said Moses.

Some of the Hebrews had already seen the town in the distance and rushed ahead. As soon as they had tried the water at Marah, they turned to Moses and grumbled, "Are we to die of thirst?"

Moses replied, "I have prayed to our God, and He has told me to throw some wood into this water and it will become sweet."

After Moses had done as the Lord had instructed, the people were able to drink their fill of the water. He waited patiently for them to finish and then he addressed them: "We have a long journey ahead of us, but we will reach Canaan just as the Lord has promised. All of this constant moaning and complaining is a sign of your lack of faith in His promise. If you trust in God, He will heal all of your ills. But if you are not obedient, then you will suffer the same diseases that the Egyptians did."

After the brief stop at Marah, Moses and Aaron led the people through an area known as the Wilderness of Sin. It was here that the people again murmured against Moses. "We had plenty to eat in Egypt," they cried. "At least we wouldn't die of starvation back there!"

That evening, Moses called a meeting of all of the people and said, "When are you going to realize that it was God's plan to take you out of Egypt? Before we can enter the Promised Land, the Lord is going to test your commitment to Him. So far, you have failed. But the Lord is still faithful to His people and will provide both bread to

eat in the morning and meat for the evening meal."

The next morning, the Hebrews saw that the ground was covered with a thick, flake-like dew that resembled frost. "What is it?" they asked Moses.

"This is the food that you are going to eat every morning," Moses instructed. "It is called manna. Gather just enough each day for the morning meal. In this way, you will be showing God that you trust Him to feed you every day."

The manna was very good; it tasted just like honey bread. Early each morning, the ground was covered with this manna. As soon as the sun was high in the sky, it melted and disappeared. Unfortunately, some of the Hebrews were disobedient and gathered too much manna and hid it overnight. The next day, it was covered with worms and maggots and had a terrible odor.

When Moses discovered their sin, he was very angry. "I am losing my patience! How long will you refuse to obey the Lord?"

Besides the manna, each evening the Lord sent a great number of quail, and the Hebrews had plenty of meat to eat, too. On the sixth day, Moses advised, "Today you are to gather enough manna for two days. Tomorrow is the Sabbath and a holy day of rest given to the Lord. You must stay in your tents and not go out in search of food."

On the Sabbath, some of the people were still stubborn and went out to see if there was any manna on the ground. Moses was very troubled about the offense that had been committed. He prayed that the Lord would not hold this against the Hebrews.

The Hebrews ate manna for all of the 40 years that they traveled through the wilderness to the Promised Land. The Lord told Moses to save some of the manna as a sign for future generations that the Lord had fed His people after He had brought them out Egypt. Aaron placed the manna in a container, and it never spoiled.

**For discussion:**

- 1) The Hebrews traveled through the Wilderness of Sin toward the Promised Land. How does that compare with our own journey that we make through life?
- 2) Why did it take the Hebrews so long to trust God for their needs? Are we the same way sometimes?
- 3) What bread does God give us today to strengthen us for our journey through life?

**For further reading:**

- 1) The story of the water at Marah and the manna is found in Exodus, Chapter 15:22-Chapter 16.
- 2) Read in the New Testament in John, Chapter 6:30-50 about the new bread provided by God through Jesus Christ.

### Bishop establishes fund for Salvadoran quake victims

Bishop Matthew H. Clark recently established a special fund to help the victims of the October 10 earthquake in El Salvador.

The bishop made an initial donation of \$500 to the fund. He is urging all people in the diocese to help in this emergency response to the devastating earthquake.

People in the Rochester diocese who wish to help should make checks payable to Catholic Relief Services, El Salvador Earthquake Fund, and send them in care of the Office of the Propagation of the Faith, 1150 Buffalo

Road, Rochester, New York 14624.

The funds collected locally will be forwarded to the Catholic Relief Services in New York.

CRS is actively working with Archbishop Rivera y Damas by providing temporary housing and food to earthquake victims. The earthquake's hardest hit area is the capital, San Salvador. One hundred and seventy thousand people were left without shelter. A large number of these people are displaced persons as a result of the civil strife in the country. Around 900 are believed to be dead.

CRS officials say the money will be used for the relief and reconstruction phases of the Salvadoran emergency.

### Host families are needed for students in exchange program

Host families are being sought for 25 foreign high school students for the 1987-88 school year in a program sponsored by the American Intercultural Student Exchange (AISE).

The students, ages 15 through 17, will arrive in the United States in August, 1987, attend a local high school, return to their native countries in June, 1988. All fluent in English, the students have been screened by their school representatives in their home countries and have spending money and medical insurance.

Host families may deduct \$50 per month for income tax purposes.

Families interested in hosting a Spanish student, age 15 through 18, during five summer weeks in 1987 are also being sought. The students in this program will be here from the end of June through July, and will not attend school.

AISE is also seeking American high school students, ages 15 through 17, who would like to spend a high school year in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Germany, Switzerland, France, Spain or Australia or participate in a five-week summer host family stay though western Europe.

Families interested in this program should contact Shirley Monnier at (716)637-6494 or call toll free 1-800-SIBLING.

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