



...going deeper

a guide for your own study during the week

Bread of Heaven (Exodus 16:1-36)

to think about

What would you prefer - freedom and basic food in the desert, or a home and home food as a slave? Freedom is very precious, but at the price of discomfort?

Read Exodus 16:1-36

What was it that the Israelites were complaining about? (1-3)

What did God do about their complaint? (4 - 12)

Why did they have to collect only enough for each day? (13 - 20, cf v. 4,5)

In what way was the Sabbath different? (21 - 30)

[There have been various attempts to explain the miraculous provision of food for a large number of people in the desert. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manna> gives a good overview of studies to do with manna, and makes clear that the Bible indicates that it was God who provided it.]

taking it further

Many Christians have experienced times which have felt like the desert, or wasteland. For the Israelites they were in an inhospitable place, but they had all sorts of ways in which they knew God was with them and that he was caring for them. Have you had an experience like that? What was difficult about it? What was good about it?

When we are away from our normal environment and in a desert place, there are less other voices and distractions. For the Israelites, God's plan was for them to learn to obey him and to grow in trusting him. In what ways do you feel challenged to obey God and to grow in trusting him in your own life?

[There are many books about desert experiences. One I have found helpful recently is 'Wasteland? Encountering God in the Desert' by Mike Pilavachi]