

THE STORY OF MOSES

Aunt Hattie's Bible Stories

by

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There is a free paraphrase of Scripture passages in use quite frequently throughout this book in the interest of youthful minds.
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CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

MARAH SINAI

“It is easy enough to be pleasant
When life goes along like a song.
But the man worth the while
Is the one who will smile
When everything goes dead wrong.”

The burdens and hardships of Egyptian slavery were passed forever; enemies were destroyed in the waters of the Red Sea. But the notes of the song of deliverance had scarcely passed away when new difficulties arose for the children of Israel.

How could they, with the Lord God Almighty in their midst in the glory cloud, be troubled?

Surely, nothing now would ever make them doubt or be afraid. God; so powerful that He could divide the waters of the sea and pile them up into great walls while His people passed safely through, certainly could be trusted to deliver them from all kinds of trouble. We shall see if they really did believe in Him.

“So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea, and they went into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days' journey and found no water” (Exodus 15:22).

The next time the Israelites moved it was from the shores of the sea into the wilderness.

A wilderness is a land that is uncultivated and uninhabited, a wild waste. Why did God take His people into such a place? In a wilderness there is no food, and water is very scarce; a strange place for a nation called God's first-born son!

But God always has a reason for doing such things. The Israelites were redeemed by the blood of the lamb at the time of the Passover. They were delivered from the land by God's power in the crossing of the Red Sea, but they still had to learn that God was the One who kept them day by day.

Three days they traveled through the hot, dry sand and found no water. The situation was serious. Can you picture them, dusty and weary, children crying and everyone thirsting for a drink of good cold water? There is no human suffering greater than that caused by great thirst and here in this wilderness it must have been terrible.

Finally they came to a spring called Marah. I am sure they hurried to get a drink, but oh, how disappointing, the water was bitter, for that is what Marah means, "*bitter waters*."

In their despair they cried to Moses, "**What shall we drink?**"

Moses must have been as thirsty as anyone, but he knew there was no one to help them but the Lord, to whom he went. God showed him a tree and told him to throw it into the spring. When he did that the waters became sweet and everyone had a good drink.

Then Moses gave the children of Israel a message from God. He said, "**If you will listen to the voice of the Lord, your God, and will do what is right in His sight and will give ear to His commandments and keep all of His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon you which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord that healeth you.**"

What a promise that was!

How it must have encouraged them!

I wonder if they stopped to think what it meant to have God as their Healer. Perhaps, instead, they were thinking, "Here we are, traveling along with God, following Him in the cloud that goes before us. Why do we have trials? We thought our troubles were all over and we would have no more difficulties when we were saved out of Egypt."

Yes, they were following where the Lord led, but they had to learn that even as they walked day by day, God was their only help.

God was giving them another picture of His Son, Jesus Christ. The tree Moses cast into the waters which made them sweet, was an illustration of the cross upon which Jesus would die. Just as the waters were made sweet by the tree, so the tree or cross, was sweet to Jesus because He was doing His Father's will.

When we Christians have bitter trials and sorrows; we may go to Jesus Christ who makes bitter things sweet because we are walking with Him.

“God hath not promised sun without rain,
Joy without sorrow, peace without pain;
But He hath promised strength from above,
Unfailing sympathy, undying love.”

**“And they came to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees;
and they camped there.”**

Wasn't it just like God to give them rest after such a trying experience? He gave them not only one well of water but twelve, and palm trees besides.

But they could stay in that comfortable place only long enough to rest. Then they must go on for they were journeying to their home in Canaan.

~ end of chapter 17 ~

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