

STUDIES IN THE BIBLE

Lesson 5

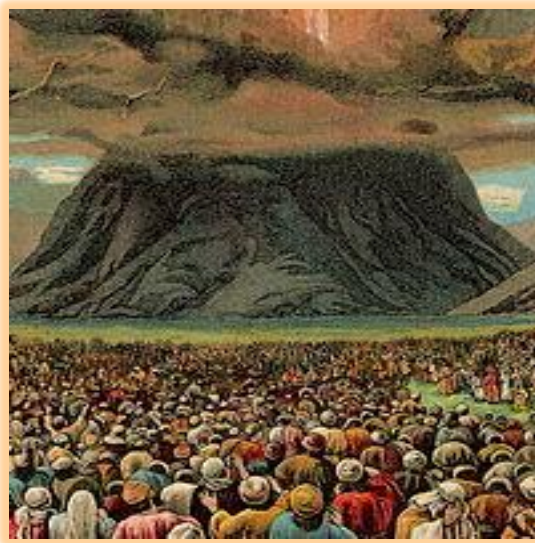
The Wilderness Wanderings

All scripture taken from the Good News Bible

The Flight from Egypt

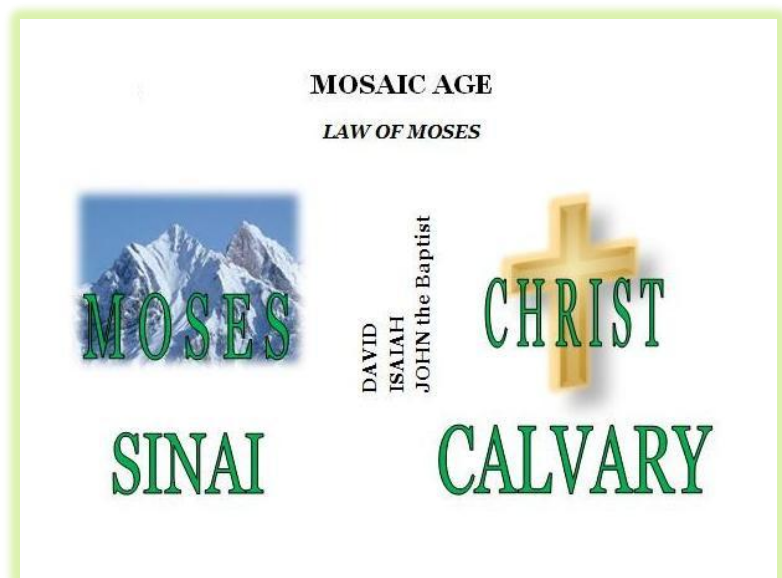
We left the children of Israel in our last lesson about to leave Egypt to begin 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. After the ten plagues, Pharaoh agreed to let them depart. Before leaving, they ate a final feast called the Passover and then began their march out of Egypt, 600,000 men plus families. Coming to the Red Sea, they looked back. To their dismay they saw that Pharaoh had changed his mind and has sent his army to return them to bondage. Seeing their distress, God instructed Moses to stretch forth his hand over the sea. As he did so, the water divided and Israel marched through on dry land with water on both sides. Paul says **“In the cloud and in the sea they were all baptized as followers of Moses.”** (1 Cor. 10:2.)

Their baptism unto Moses was, because of this, a complete immersion in the cloud and in the sea. Therefore it was a type of the baptism commanded by Christ which is an immersion or burial in water. (See Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12.)



Israel Forgets God

The Egyptians tried to follow Israel, but when the Israelites reached the other side, Moses stretched out his hand once more; the sea closed up and destroyed the Egyptians. After 400 years of bondage, the children of Israel were at last free. For several weeks they marched southeast through the desert. During this period they murmured against Moses for want of food and water. In response God gave them quails and a kind of bread called manna to satisfy their hunger. (Exodus 16.) To quench their thirst Moses struck a rock from which water came out. (Exodus 17.) In this we have an example of



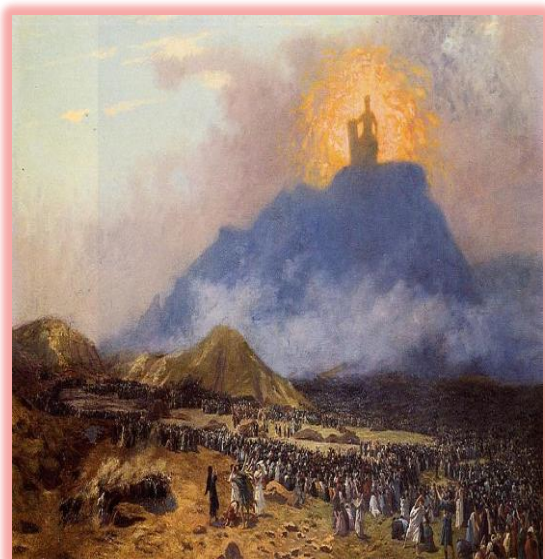
God's foreseeing care and guidance for His children.

Finally, the people reached Mt. Sinai at the southern tip of the Sinai Peninsula. Moses climbed the mountain to receive from God the law which was to guide the Israelites until the death of Christ. God gave Moses two tables of stone upon which He wrote with His own hand the Ten Commandments.

Forty days after Moses had ascended the mountain he returned to discover his brother Aaron had, at the insistence

of the people, made a golden calf for them to worship! How short our memories sometimes are! Here were people who turned to idolatry only a few weeks after their God had delivered them from slavery. Moses was so angry that he broke the tables of stone and forced the people to drink the water into which he cast the ground-up powder of the golden calf. Three thousand of the Israelites were slain that day for their idolatry.

Once more Moses climbed Mt. Sinai to commune (talk) with Jehovah for



another 40 days. The tables of stone were renewed and further portions of God's law for Israel were revealed to

Moses. Moses in turn, communicated to the people this law which we know as **The Law of Moses**.

The Law of Moses

The Law of Moses was to govern Israel for 1500 years from its proclamation to the death of Jesus Christ. This period of time is known as the **Mosaic Age**, (sometimes Jewish Age), taking its name from the great lawgiver. The age before Moses is the **Patriarchal Age**; that after the death of Christ is the **Christian**

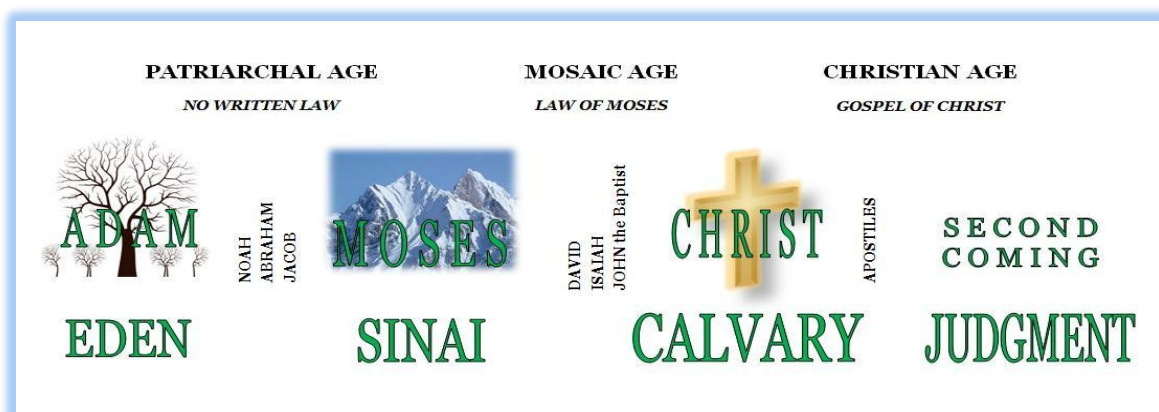
Age. All of man's history falls into one of these three periods.

The law, which is recorded in portions of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, covered virtually every phase of the life of the Israelites. It had civil, criminal, and legal regulations. It governed the religious activities of the priests and the people, and set the moral standards by which they were to live.

Underlying the entire Law of Moses were the **Ten Commandments**. These moral laws dealt with (1) man's duties to God and (2) man's duties to his fellowmen. All of them, except for the fourth commandment ("Observe the Sabbath and keep it holy. ") are repeated in some form in the teachings of Christ and His apostles. We are to keep those nine that have been repeated, not because they were a part of Moses' law, but because they have been made part of Christ's. The Law of Moses as such has been done away by the death of Christ (see Col. 2:14) and we are not obliged to keep it today. The command to keep the Sabbath or seventh day (Saturday) has not been repeated in the New Testament. Instead, we are to worship on the Lord's Day or first day (Sunday). (See Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2; Rev. 1:10.)

The Law of Moses provided for three annual feasts. They were (1) **Feast of Passover or Unleavened Bread** which came at the beginning of the grain harvest, about April – a memorial of Israel's deliverance from Egypt; (2) **Feast of Weeks or Pentecost**, kept on the 50th day after the Passover at the end of the grain harvest; (3) **Feast of Tabernacles or Ingathering** which came in the fall at the final harvest and which lasted seven

days during which the Israelites lived in booths made of tree limbs in memory of their wilderness wandering.



God commanded the erection of a tabernacle, a small portable tent, to be used as a place of worship during the wanderings. It had two parts – the holy place and the most holy place or holy of holies. Into the former only the priests might enter and into the latter only the high priest on the Day Of Atonement to offer a sacrifice on behalf of his own sins and those of the people.

Priests were selected from the tribe of Levi and their duties were prescribed. These included the offering of animal sacrifices for the people's sins. Chief of these were (1) burnt offerings, symbolic of entire dedication to God; (2) peace offerings, an expression of thanks – giving to God; (3) sin offerings, an acknowledgement of man's defilement by sin.

Forty years Of Wandering

After the institution of the law, Moses sent twelve spies into the land of Canaan. This was the former home of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and the land which God had promised to their seed. The twelve reported that it was a land

“rich and fertile”, but that the inhabitants wore so strong that it was

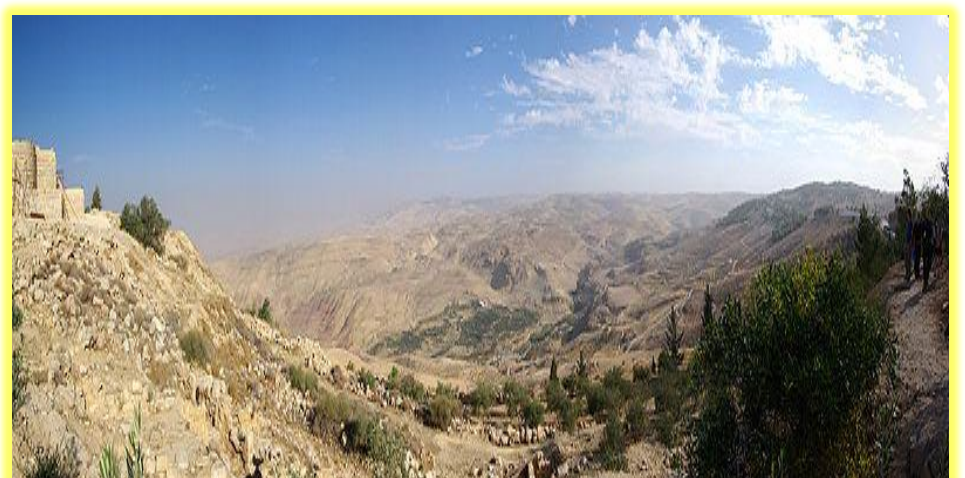


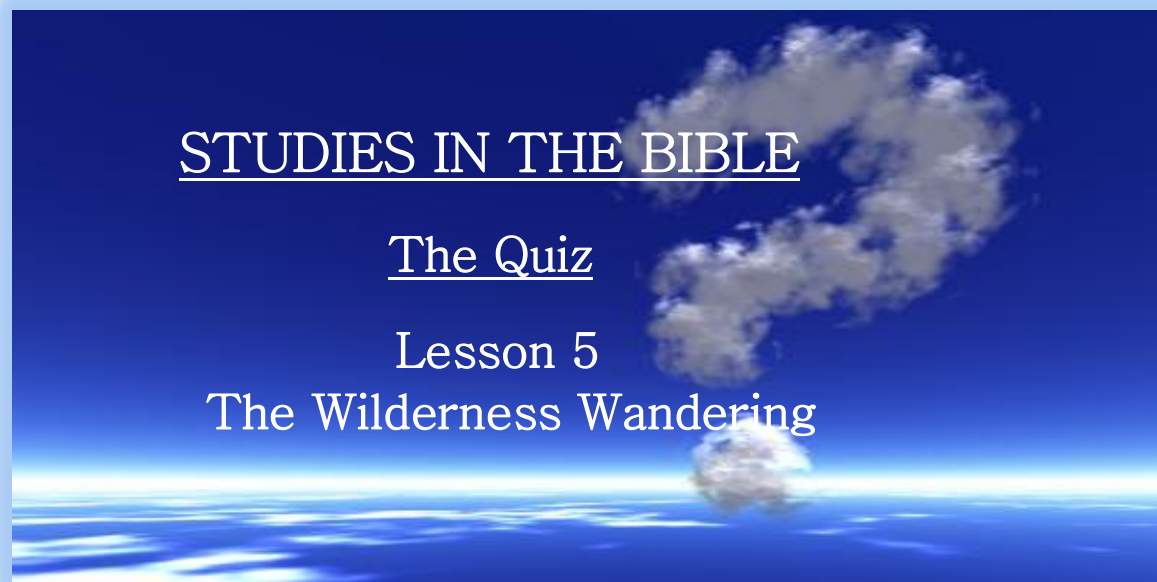
unwise to try to conquer it. Only Caleb and Joshua filed a minority report, urging the people to believe that with God's help they could conquer the land. But the majority prevailed and for its disbelief God compelled Israel to wander for 40 years in the wilderness. Of all the men who left Egypt, only

Caleb and Joshua reached the Promised Land.

We do not know much about the rest of this forty-year period. Israel wandered nomadically from place to place in the Sinai Peninsula. It is during this period that we have such stories as the rebellion of Aaron and Miriam (Moses' sister) against Moses, and the leprosy of Miriam as a result (Numbers 12); the biting of the people by serpents and their healing when they looked upon the brazen serpent (Numbers 21.); and the account of the effort of King Balak of the Moabites to get the prophet Balam to curse Israel. (Numbers 22–24.)

During the wilderness wandering Moses committed his great sin – smiting the rock instead of speaking to it as commanded by God, and in so doing, assuming personal credit for the miracle of water which poured forth. For this he was not allowed to enter the Promised Land. Shortly before Israel crossed the Jordan River to enter Canaan, Moses climbed Mt. Nebo to look into the promise land. His mission completed, he died at the age of 120 and was buried by the Lord. The entire story of the wilderness wanderings may be found starting with Exodus 13 and concluding with the book of Deuteronomy.





Seek And You Shall Find

- Fill In The Blanks

1. When the Israelites murmured for food, God gave them _____ and _____ to eat.
2. Moses went up on Mt. _____ to receive the Law Of God.
3. When he returned after 40 days he found the people worshipping a golden _____.
4. The period from the giving of the Law of Moses to the death of Christ is known as the _____ Age.
5. The three annual feasts which Israel was to observe were
(1) _____, (2) _____,
,and (3) _____.
6. The two parts of the tabernacle were the _____ and the _____.

- Commandment Verses

Read Exodus 20: 1–17 (the Ten Commandments). After each of these commandments write the verse in which it is found.

Note: All scripture is done by the Good News Bible.

1. The 1st commandment – **“Worship no god but me.”**

Verse _____ .

2. The 4th commandment – **“Observe the Sabbath and keep it holy.”**

Verse _____ .

3. The 8th commandment – **“Do not steal.”**

Verse _____ .

4. The 9th commandment – **“Do not accuse anyone falsely.”**

Verse _____ .

5. The 6th commandment – **“Do not commit murder.”**

Verse _____ .

- Read Exodus 14. Write True or False after each statement:

1. Moses said to the people, **“Don't be afraid! Stand your ground, and you will see what the LORD will do to save you today...”** _____

2. Pharaoh's army caught and destroyed many Israelites. _____

3. The children of Israel passed through the sea with water on both sides. _____

4. The Egyptians did not try to follow Israel into the sea. _____

5. When Israel was across, the sea closed up again. _____

- Read Exodus 32. Write True or False after each statement:

1. The people asked Aaron to make them gods to worship. _____

2. As Moses came down from the mountain he was carrying five tables of stone.

3. Aaron tried to place the blame for the idol on the people. _____

4. When Moses asked those on the Lord's side to stand by him, the sons of Levi took their place by him. _____

5. The Levites killed 10,000 men that day. _____

- Read Numbers 13. Write True or False after each statement:

1. One man was selected as a spy from each tribe of Israel. _____

2. They brought back peaches, apples and corn. _____

3. They told Moses, "We explored the land and found it to be **“rich and fertile.”**

4. Geuel was the man who said, **“We should attack now and take the land.”**

5. The majority said, **“And we even saw giants there, the descendants of Anak. We felt as small as bumblebees.”** _____

You have now completed the quiz; continue onto the next page to view the answers

THE ANSWERS

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- Fill In The Blanks

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Verse 3.

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- Read Exodus 32. Write True or False after each statement:

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False

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True

4. Geuel was the man who said, **“We should attack now and take the land.”**
False

5. The majority said, **“And we even saw giants there, the descendants of Anak. We felt as small as bumblebees.”** False

Congratulations, you have now completed the lesson. If you have any questions about this lesson, please send us an email with your name and email address and we'll get back to you.