

“Bitter Waters Made Sweet”

Study: Exodus 15:22-27

Reading: James 1:1-12, Matthew 6:25-34

Memory: Proverbs 3:20

Exodus



My wife and I had the privilege of traveling to Turkey to see the biblical sights of the New Testament. We were able to stay in some pretty nice hotels on this tour, but one of the most unique was one near the ancient city of Hieropolis. There were several hot mineral springs near this hotel and the hotel used one of these springs to feed the pool. The water felt great and it was supposed to be good for you because of all the minerals in the water. The only drawback to it was if you got some water on your lips, the taste of the mineral was quite bad. Though the spring was great to soak in, we certainly didn't want to drink from it.

Today, we are going to read how the Israelites came across water that they thought would be great to drink, but soon found out that it was very bitter which led to great discouragement.

What Does the Bible Say?

The Israelites had just experienced a tremendous spiritual and emotional high point in their lives through the whole events of crossing the Red Sea. After that crossing, they headed into the “wilderness,” which was a desert type of area, and they traveled for three days without finding any water. They finally came to a place called “Marah” which was called that because the water there was bitter. (Places were often named after an experience had in that location.) For whatever reason, it was not good drinking water and this caused great frustration for the Israelites. They had gone without water and were very thirsty. When they finally found water and hopes arose, it was an even greater emotional low to find out the water was undrinkable. It was then that the people began to grumble to Moses and about Moses because of this difficult situation. Moses went to the Lord with the problem and difficulty He was facing, and God directed him to a log that was near this water. He told Moses to throw it in the water. When Moses did, the water that was bitter (most likely salty or full of mineral deposits) became drinkable (vs 22-25a).

We are told that this time without drinking water was a test for the Israelites. This test was not necessarily for God to find out how the Israelites would act because He knew that already, but it was given to reveal to them who they were and who God was. The difficulty showed them their lack of trust in God when difficulties came. It also revealed to the people that they could trust God to provide for their needs, though His provision might not always come in their time and their way. After this testing, God made a covenant with the people, telling them that if they would listen to His commandments and walk in His ways He would not punish them as He did the Egyptians. Instead, He would be their healer who would deliver them from the many afflictions that came upon men. God would always keep His side of the covenant, but when the Israelites chose not to diligently devote themselves to God, they would not have His hand of protection and provision on them (vs 25b-26).

After God made the covenant with the Israelites, he led them to a place called Elim that had twelve springs, seventy palm trees and provided them a wonderful place to be out of the heat of the desert. It appears that God did this right after the trial at Marah to help the people see that there might be difficulties, but on the other end of those trials were blessings (vs 27).

How Does this Apply to Me?

How do you respond when trials and difficulties come your way? Do you complain, grumble and gripe, or do you trust in God and His plan? In once sense, it is very hard to blame the Israelites for complaining after going three days with no place to get water. They must have wondered how they were going to survive. They did not know the land nor where the next water source was. They had no idea how this predicament would end. Imagine the great let down you would feel if you found water when you were thirsty and the water was undrinkable. How would you respond? God was doing this for Israel not to make them miserable, but to help them understand that they could trust Him. This is the lesson that God wants you to know and realize today and each day. He is trustworthy and will fight on your side. Though the covenant God made here was for Israel, the same principle applies to you today. If you diligently seek after Him, you have nothing to fear or worry about.

Suggestions for Prayer

** Thank God because He is a God that you can trust.*

What had Israel just experienced (vs 22)?

Where did they travel to (vs 22)?

****There is great debate about the actual route of the Exodus and where the Israelites crossed the Red Sea. Different maps place the route and the names mentioned in the Bible at different places.*

What could they not find for three days (vs 22)?

How do you think you would have felt if you were one of the Israelites?

What happened when they reached the water at Marah (vs 23)?

What does Marah mean?

****The Hebrew word meant bitter, trouble, angry, chafed, discontented*

Do you think the place was named before or after this event? Explain.

What did the people do against Moses (vs 24)?

Do you think you would have grumbled? Explain.

How did Moses respond (vs 25)?

What happened when Moses threw the log into the water (vs 25)?

What do you think it means that the Lord “tested them” (vs 25)?

What statute did God give the Israelites (vs 26)?

How did God describe Himself (vs 26)?

Where did God lead them next (vs 27)?

How was this in great contrast to Marah?

Why do you think God led them to Elim?

“Grumbling”

Study: Exodus 16:1-8

Reading: Philippians 2:1-19

Memory: Proverbs 3:20

Have you ever taken time to think about different words we use in the English language? Have you ever wondered where some of those words came from and who created them? The origin of some words make perfect sense because they sound like the meaning they represent. For instance when you hear a “pop” you are simply pronouncing the noise that is made. The same applies to the words “grumble” that we will be looking at today. The word comes from the noises we often make when things don’t go our way.

Today, we are going to see how the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron.

What Does the Bible Say?

From Marah, the Israelites were led by God to the wilderness of Sin. Most likely it was not called this before the Israelites traveled there but was given that name because of the sin of the people and referred to it by that name afterwards. Some of the main sin of the people during this time was that of discontentment. They began to grumble and complain when things didn’t go their way. It is interesting to note that during this time they were being led by the fire and cloud which God provided. I am sure when the fire and cloud first appeared the people were amazed, but after a while the fire and cloud must have become common to them and they soon forgot it was God who was leading them. Instead of trusting in God’s leading, now they were complaining because of where Moses and Aaron led them. They completely forgot how hard it was living in Egypt as slaves and started to embellish thoughts of how wonderful it had been when they were in Egypt. They described how they sat by pots of meat and bread and ate until they were full, but now that they followed God into the desert, they were hungry and thirsty. They thought they were going to die of starvation while out in the desert (vs 1-3).

God loved His people and was not going to allow them to starve, but He wanted to teach them some more valuable lessons about trust. He also

wanted to reveal His great power to them. He told Moses that He was going to provide food for them and give them enough of what they needed to survive each day. He instructed Moses to have the people gather what they needed to eat each day and enough on the sixth day to provide for them on the seventh day (vs 4-5).

Moses and Aaron told the people that God heard their grumbling and though they grumbled against them as leaders, it was God who led them out there and it was God who would provide for them. That night and the next morning they would see the glory of God and they would realize that when they grumbled against Moses and Aaron they were actually grumbling against God (vs 6-8).

How Does this Apply to Me?

What have you complained and grumbled about in this past week? Most likely it was about the situation you were in or the people you had to deal with. Do you realize when you complain about situations or even people you are complaining about God’s plan for you? God wanted to remind the Israelites that He was the One who was in control of all of the affairs of their lives. The things that were happening to them were not going unnoticed by God and God was going to take care of them. God wasn’t just providing because they grumbled but was providing for them because He loved them. Yes, when you grumble and complain you often think you are getting things accomplished, but I wonder how many greater blessings you may miss out on when you complain rather than trust. It is easy to take your frustration out on people and things and forget that the One who is leading you is your God. Think about your attitude today in light of this passage and let God reveal to you areas in your life that need to be changed.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for the good and bad things in your life.*
- * *Ask God to help you trust that He has your best in His mind.*

Thought for the day

Where did they travel from Elim (vs 1)?

How long had they been out of Egypt when this took place (vs 1)?

****They left Egypt on the 15th day of the first month so they now had been traveling for around 30 days.*

What did all the people do (vs 2)?

Why do you think they complained against Moses though it was God who was leading them?

What did the Israelites say about the “land of Egypt” (vs 3)?

Were their memories correct? Explain.

Describe a time where you found yourself looking back at the past through faulty lenses.

What did the people say Moses and Aaron had done to them (vs 3)?

What did God say He was going to provide (vs 4)?

How was this going to be a test (vs 4)?

What were they instructed about this provision of food (vs 4-5)?

What did God want the people to realize (vs 6)?

What did Moses and Aaron want them to realize about their grumbling (vs 7-8)?

Why do you think the anger was often directed at Moses and Aaron?

Why is it important to realize that when you complain about a person or situation, you are often complaining about God?

What do you think you can do to help yourself avoid grumbling or complaining?

“What Is It”

Study: Exodus 16:9-21

Reading: James 4:13-27, I Kings 17:1-6

Memory: Proverbs 3:20



Egyptian art depicting the catching of Quail - from <https://cowofgold.wikispaces.com/Quail>

What Does the Bible Say?

Moses instructed Aaron to speak to the congregation and gather them together so they could see the glory of the Lord. He wanted the people to know that God heard their grumbling and was going to answer their complaints by giving them meat and bread. We are told that they saw the “glory of the Lord” in the cloud. What exactly this was is not clear. We know they had been led by a pillar of cloud in the day time, but there must have been something special that took place to reveal to them that God had heard their grumbling. God was not rewarding them for their attitude, but rather revealing Himself to them and letting them know they could trust Him. Though God is a God of judgment, as we will see many times in Scripture, He is also a God of patient love who is longsuffering when we sin. He often does things to encourage us to look to Him without complaining (vs 9-12).

That evening, quail came through the whole camp allowing the Israelites to catch and eat these birds. There are ancient Egyptian

paintings which show Egyptians catching quails by throwing nets over them. These are migratory birds that would fall to the ground when tired from their migrating. Catching and eating quail could have been something that the Israelites had seen or experienced in Egypt (vs 13).

The next morning, they experienced something they had never seen. When the dew started to dry from the ground, there were fine flakes of something that appeared all over the ground and looked like frost. The people wondered what it was and gave it the name “Manna” which means, “What is it?” We don’t know today what it was because it wasn’t a natural substance. It was a supernatural provision for the Israelites. They would be able to use it similarly to the way they would use grain and make bread with it. They were told by Moses that they were each allowed to take one omer of manna from the ground which would have been slightly more than two quarts. This would be their food for the day and there would be enough for everyone, whether they took a lot or a little. They were not to take more than they needed for that day. Those who did take more than needed found out that God meant what He said because the next morning, the leftover manna had rotted and was filled with worms. It was important that they picked the manna in the morning because the sun would rise and start melting the manna and it would be gone. God wanted to be their daily Provider and would give them what they needed each day (vs 14-21).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Do you trust God to provide for your daily needs? In Matthew 6:34, after Jesus had just finished describing how God would provide all that His children needed, He said, “Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.” (ESV) When Jesus gave us a sample prayer to follow, He included the phrase, “give us this day our daily bread.” God was teaching the Israelites that He would be their daily Provider. This is the same lesson that you can learn today. God wants you to trust Him for your daily needs. When you start to worry about tomorrow, it often creates anxiety or panic in your mind as you begin to wonder how God will provide or worry that He will not provide. This doesn’t mean that God is against saving for the future. There are other places in the Bible where we are given biblical principles about saving. It does reveal that you need to trust God for your daily needs and not to worry about what might happen tomorrow. You plan and prepare for the future, but you are trusting God to direct your steps each step of the way.

What did God say He had heard (vs 9)?

Do you think this was a reward from God as a result of their complaining? Explain.

What do you think the difference is between grumbling and asking God to provide for your needs?

What did the people see once Aaron started speaking to them (vs 10)?

What was God going to provide for them (vs 12)?

How did God provide for the Israelites (vs 13)?

How was their morning provision described (vs 14)?

What did the people say about this provision (vs 15)?

How does this reveal that it was a supernatural food?

What did Moses say it was (vs 15)?

What instructions were given about the gathering of manna (vs 16)?

What are we told happened when the Israelites picked up the manna (vs 17-18)?

Why do you think God caused this to happen?

What were they not to do (vs 19)?

What did some people choose to do (vs 20)?

What happened to the manna that was saved for the next day (vs 20)?

What did the Israelites do each day (vs 21)?

Why do you think God provided the manna in this way?

“Daily Provision God’s Way”

Study: Exodus 16:22-36

Reading: Philippians 4:10-20

Memory: Proverbs 3:20

Several years ago as I was studying through this passage, I found out that my status as a seller on Ebay was downgraded. Ebay had changed their seller rating system and because of the type of business I had I could not sustain a “Top Rated” seller status which was no fault of my own. What this meant to me was that I couldn’t get a discount on my fees and that I might lose some sales. This was a little discouraging to me since I counted on that business for much of my income. Yet, as I read through this passage in Exodus, God reminded me not to fear His future provision because He would sustain me. I look back at that time now and realize that God was faithful, just as He said He would be.

Today, we are going to see how God consistently provided for the needs of the Israelites. We will be reminded that He wants to provide for you, yet He also wants you to obey the instructions that He gives you.

What Does the Bible Say?

On the sixth day, many of the Israelites did as they were told and each gathered two omers of manna. This did concern many of them because they were afraid the manna would stink and be filled with worms like it was on the other days when they gathered too much and left it for the second day. The leaders of Israel went to Moses with this concern, but Moses told them it would be okay because they were being obedient to the Lord. Though many were nervous and scared, they found that the manna had no problems on the Sabbath day. God had established the Sabbath to be set apart for Him and to do no work on that day. As they chose to follow God’s command, God revealed that He would take care of them (vs 22-26).

There were a handful of people who chose not to believe what Moses said and did not collect enough on the sixth day. This was most likely out of fear that the manna would go bad. They went out on the seventh day to gather manna and found that there was none to be gathered. This was a great lesson for those who chose not to listen to God’s commands given

through Moses. They went hungry that day and realized that God meant what He said and that they needed to obey Him rather than trust in their own feelings or instincts. It is important to realize that this defied human reason so it took faith to believe God would do the miraculous. We are not told why they didn’t pick double on the sixth day, but it seems pretty obvious that they assumed there would be manna on the ground just like there was the previous days before. Though Moses had given specific instruction, those instructions were ignored(vs 27-30).

As mentioned before, the food they received each morning was called “manna” which meant “what is it?” The description given says it was white like a coriander seed and tasted like wafers with honey. Because what we eat today is so different than the food they would have eaten, it is difficult for us to know exactly what it was like. The point is that this was a supernatural provision sent down by God on a daily basis. The Israelites were instructed to keep an omer of manna with them (God would preserve it) for generations to come so they would know what it was like and it would remind them of the provision of God. Moses and Aaron took a jar of it and kept it. It was eventually placed in the Ark of the Covenant which was kept in the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle and the temple. This food was given by God and originally intended to sustain them while in the desert until they reached the promised land, but they ended up eating it for forty years because of the sins which we will read about soon (vs 31-36).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Are you trusting God to meet your needs? Are you being obedient to Him? Do you fear that God will not meet your needs and act on that fear? The Israelites were being taught lessons to help them realize that they could trust God. When God told them the manna would be okay until the second day, it was. He was providing for them each day and they were simply instructed to do as He said. We also know that this provision lasted for 40 years and it was something that the Israelites could count on each day. No, it was not God’s intention that they eat it for 40 years since His desire was that they move into the promised land where they would have abundant food to eat. Yet, even when they had to be punished and had to wander for 40 years in the wilderness, God still took care of their daily needs. As you live for God and do what He says, He will provide for your needs.

What did the people do on the sixth day (vs 22)?

Why did they do this?

What were the leaders concerned about (vs 22)?

What did Moses instruct them to do (vs 23)?

What did not happen to the manna on the 7th day (vs 24)?

Why was this a miracle?

What were they not going to find on the Sabbath (vs 25)?

What was emphasized about the Sabbath (vs 26)?

What happened on the seventh day (vs 27)?

What did God mention to Moses (vs 28)?

What does this reveal about the attitude of the people (vs 28)?

What do verses 28-30 emphasize?

How is manna described (vs 31)?

What did God want done with an omer of manna (vs 32-33)?

****The general understanding is that an omer would equal a little over 2 liters in our measurements today.*

How did Moses obey (vs 34)?

Why would this have taken faith?

How long was manna a part of the Israelite diet (vs 35)?

What does this reveal about God's provision?

“Testing and Quarreling”

Study: Exodus 17:1-7

Reading: I Thessalonians 5:12-24

Memory: Proverbs 3:20

When our family stepped out in faith and moved from Wisconsin to Michigan to start a new ministry, God did some miraculous things to provide for our needs. We clearly knew that He was leading us and we were attempting to walk in faith, but this walk was not always easy. When things started going wrong, I found myself questioning God and forgetting the great things He had done to provide for us. Instead, I focused on what I didn't have, and my outlook on the future started to become quite dismal. Though God had done so much, the situation I was in clouded my mind, not allowing me to fully see what He desired me to see. God was using that time to grow me and strengthen my faith in Him though I didn't know what was fully happening at the time.

Today, we are going to see how the Israelites could have seen God working all around them, but instead, they chose to have their vision clouded by their current need. What they were going through was not easy, but God did not abandon them. We will see that God does not abandon us but wants to use difficulties in our lives to make us more like Him.

What Does the Bible Say?

God was now providing food for the Israelites and God began to move them through the desert. They came to a place called Rephidim, but once again, there was no water for them to drink. Finding water for a few people may not have been that hard, but finding water for a few million people in a desert area was not easy. The people once again began to complain to Moses, demanding that he somehow give them water to drink. Moses encouraged them not to complain or be demanding with him, and he also reminded them that as they started complaining they were on the verge of sinning against God. This did not stop their complaining, but it increased and once again they started to blame Moses for leading them out of Egypt just so they could die in the desert. All they could see was what was right in front of them and they were acting on their emotions. Little

by little the people became more angry and upset and Moses. Eventually Moses started to fear for his life. He believed that the Israelites were getting ready to stone him and he cried out to the Lord for help (vs 1-4).

God knew the situation of the Israelites and it was under His control the whole time. He told Moses to take some of the elders of Israel with him and pass by the congregation of people with staff in hand. Then he was to go to the “rock at Horeb,” which was most likely some type of large rock that stuck out in the landscape, and hit the rock with his stick. Moses did as God commanded and water came out of the rock. All the Israelite leaders saw this with their own eyes and knew this was a miracle from God (vs 5-6).

Moses named place “Massah and Meribah” which meant testing and quarreling. He named the place those names to remind the people how they tested God and quarreled with Moses, yet God revealed Himself patient and mighty to them. They had begun to question if God really cared about them and if God was watching over them (keep in mind, they were being led by a cloud and fire and had food provided every day). This was to be another lesson to them to help them trust in God as they were preparing to enter the land that God has promised to them (vs 7).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Do you find yourself questioning God? Do you complain or gripe about the situations that happen in your life? Do you realize how loving, patient and longsuffering your God is? God was there in evident ways and was taking care of His children by leading them and giving them food, yet those things became ordinary to the Israelites, causing them to think God had forsaken them when they went without water. They started to take their frustrations out on Moses though Moses was only doing what God had commanded him to do. It is easy to focus your attention on what you don’t have and question the love of God rather than look at what He has given you and trust in His timing and provision. Be careful that you don’t look down on the Israelites, but realize you probably act like they did more than you realize. Also, choose to be thankful to God for His patience and longsuffering. He didn’t strike the Israelites dead for their griping but patiently gave them what they needed without chastising them for their sin. He was giving them a chance to learn and grow from seeing what had taken place. You should learn a lesson that many of the Israelites did not and choose to trust God, even when things seem to be going all wrong.

Why did the Israelites move (vs 1)?

Where did they camp (vs 1)?

What issue did they come across?

Why do you think this was a very big issue?

****This is very difficult for many of us to understand because most of us have never lacked a good water source. They were traveling through desert areas which receive very little rain. On top of this the temperatures would have been quite warm.*

What do you think it means that the people “quarreled with Moses” (vs 2 - ESV)?

What did the people demand (vs 2)?

How was this a demand that Moses could not fill?

How have you seen this type of attitude between followers and leaders?

Why did Moses accuse them of testing the Lord (vs 2)?

What did the people continually focus on (vs 3)?

What did the people accuse Moses of (vs 3)?

Was this at all the fault of Moses? What can you learn about leadership from this?

How did Moses deal with the situation (vs 4)?

What did God tell Moses to do (vs 5-6)?

What did Moses call the place where this happened (vs 7)? Why?

How did God miraculously provide for His people (vs 6-7)?

“God Is Our Banner”

Study: Exodus 17:8-16

Reading: I Samuel 15:1-9, Esther 7:1-8:17

Memory: Proverbs 3:20

Many parades that take place around the country on the 4th of July start off with the color guard leading the way. The color guard is normally made up of veterans who carry the flag of the United States of America. When they pass by, out of respect, most people will stand and cheer. Why? Because they are carrying the banner of our country. A country which most Americans love and cherish and a country which many Americans have sacrificed to preserve. There is something special in the heart of many Americans when they see the flag of the United States flying.

Today, we are going to see how Moses declared that God was their banner. He was their source of strength and power and He was the One they would fight for.

What Does the Bible Say?

While the Israelites were camped at Rephadim, a nomadic tribe who lived in the desert came to fight against Israel. Amalek was a descendant of Esau and his descendants chose to claim the desert as their home. They didn't want the Israelites taking over their food or water sources so they decided to try to fight against Israel. The people of Israel were not warriors because they had been slaves, but it was now time to start up an army so they could defend themselves. We are introduced to Joshua here in this passage as Moses asked him to find men to fight for Israel. Moses told Joshua to find soldiers to fight and that He would stand at the top of the hill watching the battle with the staff of God in his hand. He was basically telling Joshua that God would be with Israel and give them the victory. Joshua did as Moses said and went out to fight the Amalekites. Moses stood on the hill, watching the battle, and when Moses had his hands raised up in the air, the Israelites would have the advantage. When he lowered his hands, the Amalekites would start winning. This was difficult for Moses because his arms were tired, but Aaron and Hur noticed this and came to the rescue by holding up the hands of Moses. Through God's power, Joshua was able to lead the Israelite army into victory and

they defeated the Amalekites (vs 8-13).

As a future punishment for the Amalekite nation, God told Moses to write down a command for Joshua to one day destroy the Amalekite people and not to allow them to live. This was because they chose to attack a defenseless Israel when Israel was only trying to pass through the land. Joshua and his army didn't fully fulfill this command, nor did Saul when he was told to do so. It was even an Amalekite descendant, Agag, who tried to kill all the Jews in Esther's day (vs 14).

After their victory, Moses built an altar and named it Jehovah-Nissi which meant, "The Lord is My Banner." A banner was very important in those days since it declared what nation soldiers were fighting for and where the army received its supplies. Each city/nation would have a banner (flag) that would be used to unite the people. It was God who was the source of power and strength for Israel and He was the One who would give them victory just as He gave them a victory over the Amalekites (vs 15-16).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Do you realize that God is on your side in the battles that you fight? No, most of you will never physically fight in a battle, but we are all in a spiritual battle. The power of the enemy appears strong and sometimes it has a deep hold on people, but the power of God is stronger. He can give you the personal victory over any temptation or trial, and He can break the power of sin and death. When you choose to place yourself under the Lord's banner and to "fight" on His side, you will be victorious. The battle today and many of the battles you will read about that the Israelites fought had one constant theme. If God is on your side, you can't lose. Again, this does not call believers to pick up their weapons and go to physical battle, but it does challenge you to step into the ring to do spiritual battle for your Lord.

Thought for the day

Who decided to fight against Israel (vs 8)?

Why do you think God allowed the Israelites to suffer thirst and face armies before they reached the promised land?

Who are we introduced to in verse 9?

What does this reveal about Joshua before God gave him the responsibility of leading the people?

What was Joshua to do (vs 9)?

How did Joshua respond (vs 10)?

What happened when Moses held his hands up (vs 11)?

What happened when his hands were lowered (vs 11)?

Why do you think God chose to work this way?

What did Aaron and Hur do (vs 12)?

What did God do for His people (vs 13)?

What did God tell Moses to do (vs 14)?

Why do you think He told him this?

What do you think you can learn from this?

What did Moses build (vs 15)?

What did he call it (vs 15)?

Why did he call it this (vs 15-16)?

What can you learn about God from this?

Memorization

(review this week's memory verse)

Proverbs 3:1 My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments, 2 for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you. 3 Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. 4 So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man. 5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. 6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. 7 Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil. 8 It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones. 9 Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce; 10 then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine. 11 My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline or be weary of his reproof, 12 for the LORD reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights. 13 Blessed is the one who finds wisdom, and the one who gets understanding, 14 for the gain from her is better than gain from silver and her profit better than gold. 15 She is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her. 16 Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. 17 Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. 18 She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her; those who hold her fast are called blessed. 19 The LORD by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding he established the heavens; 20 by his knowledge the deeps broke open, and the clouds drop down the dew.