

Key Verse Luke 9:23

If God had supplied Israel's needs before they knew they had a need, they would never know He could supply their need. Thus, for their faith to grow, they needed to experience extreme needs. And so it is with us!

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

Luke 9:23



Types or Pictures

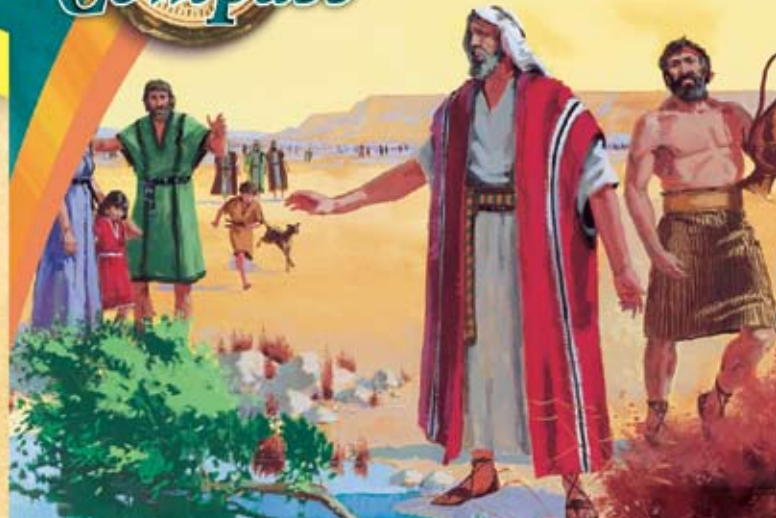
We've learned that

1. Israel's bondage pictures a person's **bondage** to **sin** before he is saved.
2. Crossing the Red sea pictures a person's **salvation** from the bondage of sin.
3. The pillar of cloud guiding Israel pictures the **Holy Spirit guiding** believers in their Christian walk.

Scriptures to read before next Sunday

Exodus 16:1-26
John 6:31-33, 51

Moses I Egypt to Sinai Compass



Marah's Bitter Water

Bitter water turns sweet

Marah's Bitter Water

All Israel was thirsty for water, but when they found water, it was **bitter** (Marah). They complained and blamed Moses. God told Moses to cast a certain **tree** in the **water**, and the bitter water became **sweet**.

That tree reminds us of

Calvary's Tree

Almost 2,000 years ago, a tree was cut down to become a rugged **cross** on a hill called Calvary. There, Jesus Christ was crucified and experienced the **bitter**, eternal punishment of hell for man's sin. Thus, when one trusts Christ as Savior, the cross changes the bitterest thing—**hell**, into the **sweet** assurance of **heaven**.

Jesus' Cross

Jesus' cross was the **bitter** suffering at Calvary. And He said, "*If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up **his cross**, and follow me*"

—Matthew 16:24.

Our Cross

What is the Christian's **cross**? It is whatever comes our way that we don't like. Do you have anything that crosses you? Yet, you know it's God's will for you. Then, that is your "cross." A **cross** is something you could escape. Jesus could have said, "I won't go to Calvary. I won't do it." But He said to the Father, "not my will, but thy will be done."

Our "cross" is anything in God's will for our lives that we find **bitter**. It could be—a severe illness, family financial losses, an afflicted family member to care for, an alcoholic or drug-addicted family member, etc. A "cross" can also be something we can't help, such as an affliction, a crippling accident, or a situation that we have no control over, as a family divorce, etc.

We cannot always control situations, but we can control our response to them. A bitter response says, "Why did this happen? I don't see why I deserve this. I'm not going to take it or adjust to it!, etc."

When God allows a bitter experience to come into a Christian's life, and the Christian applies the "cross" to that experience, then the **bitter** becomes bearable and even **sweet**.

