



Chapter & verse – Francis Brinen (page 24)

Read Exodus 16, followed by Francis Brinen’s article.

1. Francis starts by mentioning the many film depictions of events from Exodus. Have you seen any that stick in your mind? What do you think the appeal of these stories is to filmmakers?
2. ‘It is not easy to feel God near when material needs are not met,’ says Francis, describing the Israelites’ complaints after their second month in the desert. When have you been in this situation yourself? How did you feel? What can we do for others in a similar position?
3. In the Bible passage, Moses instructs Aaron to tell the Israelites: ‘Draw near to the Lord, for he has heard your complaining.’ How do you feel about complaining to God – is it a necessity for honest relationship or a regrettable human failing? What complaints, if any, do you bring to God? And does God respond?
4. Francis says that God cares and provides for the Israelites through manna and quails, noting that ‘both can be found naturally in the desert’. What ‘ordinary gifts of creation’ remind you of God’s care and provision? What actions can Christians take to remind themselves that God cares and provides?
5. God’s instruction to gather just enough food for one day at a time was a test for the Israelites. Have there been times in your life where you have felt tested by God? What can be learnt from testing times?
6. The Bible says that on the sixth day, God gave the people enough for two days, instructing rest on the seventh day. Francis describes the rest day as ‘a profound sign that the people’s days of slavery, of constant work and non-rest, are past’. How good are we at resting today? Do you keep a day aside to rest? Why (not)?

For further reflection: ‘... “I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. ... I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”’ John 6:30-51



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NEWS COMMENT INSPIRATION DEBATE

Prayer: Father, when we are in the wilderness, when we feel in need, when we feel tested, when we feel lost, you are with us. Help us to learn and grow through testing times and to see your loving provision. Amen

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Francis Brienen Chapter & verse
God is present in mountain top experiences,
and in the simple, everyday things



... In the morning, quickly I was up and dressed the things and in the evening I was not a day of labor...

Francis

The book of Isaiah has provided rich insights for the Christian church for many centuries. It is a book of prophecy, but it is also a book of wisdom and encouragement. It is a book that speaks to the heart of the human condition and to the heart of the Christian faith. It is a book that speaks to the heart of the human condition and to the heart of the Christian faith. It is a book that speaks to the heart of the human condition and to the heart of the Christian faith.



Mountains and valleys are ordinary gifts of creation

For the people of Israel, the mountain tops were not just places of worship and prayer. They were also places of encounter with God. It was on the mountain tops that God spoke to his people and that his people encountered his glory. The mountain tops were places of encounter with God and of encounter with his glory. The mountain tops were places of encounter with God and of encounter with his glory.

Francis Brienen is a Dutch theologian and author. He is the author of the book 'The Mountain and the Valley'.