

**“STOPPING AT ELIM”
NOVEMBER 2008**

Have you ever heard of Elim? It is one of the little-known places mentioned in the Bible. Of course, everyone has heard of Jerusalem or Bethlehem. Jerusalem is the famous city of David. Bethlehem is the village where Mary gave birth to Jesus. What about Elim? If you look on a map, it is located just east of the Red Sea. Elim caught my attention recently when I was tracing Israel’s journey from Egypt to the Promised Land. After the freed slaves had crossed the Red Sea, Moses led them into the wilderness. Exodus chapter 15 describes the beginning of their difficult journey. The people were disappointed when they failed to find fresh water. Chapter 15 ends, however, on this hopeful note,

*“Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs
of water and seventy palm trees; and they encamped there
by the water.” (Exodus 15:27)*

Elim came at just the right time for Israel. They had fled Pharaoh’s army, crossed the Red Sea, and entered the hot desert. They were ready for a refreshing, life-renewing break. Elim means “large trees.” I’m sure that the Israelites were revived by the fresh water and cool shade.

As we continue on our own faith journey, there are times when we need a break for renewal and reflection. Such an opportunity will be available on Saturday, November 15th at our church retreat. Just as Israel was refreshed by the springs and the shade trees of Elim, so we will take advantage of the assets found on our own campus: Smead Hall, our lake, grassy areas, and large trees. The theme of our retreat will be, “Which Apostle Are You Most Like?” Each apostle was unique and different. As we look at these special followers of Jesus, we can identify some of our own gifts and talents. Like the apostles, each of us follows and serves Jesus in a unique way.

At our upcoming retreat, we look forward to times of quiet reflection, fellowship, prayer, worship, fun, food, singing, and Bible reading. The experience of Elim is waiting for you right here in Seminole. You don’t even have to cross the Red Sea in order to arrive. See you there.

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