

# God Gives Manna to His People

Overview



## Materials You'll Need

- construction paper
- markers and pencils
- scraps
- glue
- scissors



## Scriptures

Ex 16:1-17:7

## Bible Truth Objective(s)

God always provides what His people need.

## Behavioral Objective(s)

To list ways God provides for us; to thank God for providing everything for us by saying a thank you prayer at the end of the class; to recognize what it means to complain.

## Memory Verse

"Give thanks always for all things to God."  
(Eph 5:20a)



## Bible Knowledge

### Walking in the Wilderness

The Israelites had finally escaped from cruel slavery in Egypt by God's miraculous deliverance. They had seen His power at the Red Sea, and daily they were reminded of His presence by the pillar of cloud during the day and the pillar of fire at night.

The Israelites had taken grain with them from Egypt, but after a month their food supply was gone. Instead of asking God for food and trusting Him to provide, they murmured and complained. They even thought it would have been better to die in Egypt where they had "sat by the flesh pots" (Ex 16:3). Evidently, as slaves, they had been fed from large pots. Now their lack of faith revealed how quickly they had forgotten God's miracles on their behalf.

### Manna and Quail

Manna literally means "What." When God sent manna down, the people asked, "What is it?" because they had never seen this small round sub-

stance. The Bible describes manna like flakes, resembling white coriander seeds and tasting like wafers made with honey. Sometimes the people ground it, or beat it and baked it into cakes (Num 11:8).

Manna appeared every morning with the dew, except on the Sabbath day. No one needed to gather more than one day's worth of food. Otherwise, the extra would spoil by the next morning. On the sixth day, the people would gather two days' worth since they were to rest on the Sabbath. This showed God's amazing grace because it was only on the seventh morning that the extra food would not stink or be filled with worms. God also provided meat for His people in the form of quail. Birds like these came into Egypt in large numbers to feed on ripened wheat. But God sent these birds to the desert as food for His people.

God continued His provision of food for 40 years. In the barren wilderness, God wanted His people to trust that He would provide. In John 6:48-51 Jesus compares Himself to manna. Christ is our daily bread that satisfies our spiritual need.



## Understanding Your Students

Your students may not fully understand the fact that God is a spirit, and therefore, He is able to be everywhere and with us all the time. To develop this understanding more clearly, try to compare God with people. Ask them if a person is praying in the chapel, for example, could that same person be in the kitchen cooking lunch at the same time? You could also try a simple activity to relay this concept. Put up two signs in the room. One will have "Here" written on it. The other will have "There" written on it. Ask for a volunteer to stand at the "Here" spot. Then ask that child to run to the "There" spot. Can they be at two places

at the same time? They could try to run as fast as they could but it would only get them tired. Explain that as humans, we can't be everywhere at the same time.

God, however, is a spirit, and can be at many places at the same time. That's what makes Him special and our almighty God. No one is like Him. He is everywhere because He is watching over everyone and caring for our needs. Although we cannot see Him, we know He's everywhere, just like the wind or the air we breathe. We don't see those things but we know they are there. And even if we can't see God, we can see all the wonderful things He is doing for us. When we see these wonderful things, we should thank Him, because He does things out of love for us.



## Vocabulary

### **Complain**

when you say you are not happy about something

### **Quail**

a small bird

### **Manna**

the special food that God gave the Israelites to eat while they were in the wilderness



## Before You Teach

When the Israelites complained about the lack of food and water a month into their journey, it was only the beginning of their constant griping. From their history, we know that the people of God complained about almost everything when things did not seem to go their way. Even though God had shown them great miracles over and over again, they could not learn to be content with what they had. After all, they had been slaves before the Exodus and did not have a place to call their own. Now they were free and were on their way to the promised land. Yet, contentment still eluded them.

In Philippians 2:14-15, it says, "Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world." We can see from these verses that when we are able to hold back and not complain,

we are actually pleasing God. We are shining forth our light.

Most people find it difficult to not complain. We are tempted to complain when we have to wait in line for a long time or have to deal with unexpected issues that arise. We have all asked, "But why?" or whined when told to do something. But God has told us that when we accept His care for us, even if we can't always see the end result right away, we not only receive peace inside of us, we are also attracting others to Him. When others can see that we are content with what we have or what life has given us, we are showing them that God is truly our Savior. Only our Lord Jesus could give a person such peace.

The Israelites were the chosen people. They had God on their side, yet they often complained. It is hard to convince someone that we have peace and God in our lives when we constantly gripe about things. God has promised to take care of us, even when things don't always seem convenient or even make sense to us. Let us hold on to that promise with faith.



## Bible Story

### **The Israelites Complain About Food**

Imagine you are an Israelite. You've just crossed the Red Sea on dry land! What a miracle! Now you must travel for many miles through the hot desert. At first it is exciting. You are very happy that God saved you and your family. You have enough water, food, and energy. Some people even sing as they walk! Six hours later, though, you are dragging your feet. You are tired and hungry but all you have to eat is old bread! Children, if you were the Israelites, what would you do now?

Today's story is about what the Israelites did when they felt like this. They would learn how much God really loves and takes care of everyone.

The Israelites were very hungry after many, many days in the desert. When they left Egypt, they had left quickly and didn't have the time to take a lot of food. All that they did take with them had been finished. Now their empty stomachs grumbled and growled. The Israelites began to complain.

"In Egypt," they said, "we sat around pots of meat. Even though we were slaves, we still had all the good bread we could eat. Now Moses has brought us out of Egypt only for us to die in the desert."

This was terrible. The Israelites had already forgotten God's power! They had forgotten how God sent the plague of frogs to fill the houses. They had forgotten the way Moses raised his hand in prayer and God answered it by parting the Red Sea. Children, do you remember what other miracles God performed for the Israelites that the Israelites forgot? (Let children answer the question, interacting with them to help them review last week's lesson.)

The worst thing is, the Israelites forgot to be thankful and why they left Egypt. God brought them out so they could worship Him. God also promised to give the Israelites good land to live in. They did not remember God's promise. Instead of trusting and praising God, the Israelites complained.

How do you think Moses felt when the Israelites complained to him? Yes, Moses felt very sad. Moses was sad because the Israelites were forgetting to worship and praise God.

### **God Sends Quail and Manna**

God still loved and cared for His people even when they complained against Him. So God said to Moses, "At night you will eat meat. In the morning I will rain down bread for you to eat. Every day except for Sabbath the people will go out and gather bread to eat. On the sixth day of the week they will gather two times as much food. That way they can rest on the Sabbath and eat the bread that is left."

The night after God spoke, quail came and covered the whole camp. The Israelites caught so many quail that everyone was full on meat. The next morning the Israelites found thin flakes covering the ground. They said to each other, "What is it?" They had never seen it before! Can you guess what it was? Yes, it was manna, the special food from God!

The white flake was thin and tasted like wafers made from honey. Each Israelite got only as much as they needed to eat that day. God did not want them to gather anything extra. God wanted the people to know that there would always be new manna every morning. And when the sun got hot, the manna that was not picked up melted away. On Sabbath, the Israelites rested and worshiped God so they did not pick up manna. Instead they ate what was left over from the day before. Even if they went out to look for manna on Sabbath, there would not be any.

For many years in the desert, God sent them manna to eat. They did not have to farm or find food. Instead, the Israelites just woke up in the morning to pick manna off the ground!

### **The Israelites Complain About Water**

However, the Israelites still didn't learn to be thankful to God. They forgot God's miracles and power again. Even though God gave them enough food so they wouldn't go hungry, they forgot all that. This time the Israelites were very thirsty and there was no water to drink. They complained to God and were very mean to Moses.

They said to him, "Did you bring us into the desert so that we could die of thirst?"

Moses knew that he had to ask God to help the people. Moses prayed to God. God told Moses to hit a rock with the rod. Even though this didn't really make sense, Moses obeyed God.

"Whack!" went the rod against the rock.

Whoosh! Water came out of the rock! This was really amazing. The people drank the water and were happy. This is how God gave the Israelites food and water in the hot desert.

### **We Need to Be Thankful**

God is all-powerful. He uses His power to take care of us like He took care of the Israelites. No one but God can send bread from heaven or make water come out of a rock. Today, God gives us parents, teachers, and pastors to keep us safe. When we need help, we can also pray to God and He will listen to us.

God loves us a lot. He wants us to be content with what He has given us. We need to always thank God and be glad for what we have.

Our parents love us too. They take care of us every day. We need to always thank our parents for all the wonderful ways they help us. Let's think about how we can thank God and our parents. (Allow students to brainstorm.) We can listen to what they say. We can help by cleaning up after ourselves. We can pray and sing songs. We can give our parents a big hug and say, "I love you."

Let's say a prayer of thanks to God and to our parents now. Let's think about one thing we want to thank God for and one thing we want to thank our parents for. When it is your turn, say, "I thank God for \_\_\_\_\_ and I thank my parents for \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you God for everything. Amen."



### Check For Understanding

1. **What did the people do when they ran out of food to eat?** (They complained to Moses.)
2. **What did Moses do?** (He prayed to God.)
3. **What did God send His people to eat in the evening?** (Quails came from everywhere. Now the people had meat to eat.)
4. **What did God send in the morning?** (God sent manna, or bread from heaven.)
5. **Why did God want the people to only pick the manna they needed for that day?**

(God promised to send manna every morning, except on Sabbath, when the people would eat the leftovers from the sixth day. God wanted the people to trust Him.)

6. **What did the Israelites do when they became thirsty?** (They complained again to Moses.)
7. **What did God tell Moses to do?** (God told Moses to hit a rock and water would come out.)
8. **God always took care of the Israelites. How does God take care of us?** (Allow students to answer.)



### Life Application Story

#### **It's Not Fair!**

Lisa Lim had looked forward to going to the amusement park with her family all week. She had wanted to get on all the fun rides and eat cotton candy, lots of it! But on the morning of the trip, Lisa couldn't believe her eyes when she woke up. It

was raining outside. And it wasn't a small, light shower. It was pouring. She had heard some rumbling the night before but she was so tired, she didn't really pay attention to it.

"Mom," yelled Lisa as she ran into the kitchen. "What is going to happen to the trip?"

"Well," answered Mrs. Lim as she looked out the window, "I just discussed with Daddy and we have decided that we will have to wait for another day to go."

*"But Mom, I have been waiting for this all week. It's just not fair!" yelled Lisa.*

*Mrs. Lim turned to Lisa.*

*"I am sorry that it is raining. I can't control what happens to the weather. All I can tell you is that we can go another day."*

*"Well, it just isn't fair. I won't be having any fun today," pouted Lisa. She ran out of the kitchen and sat on the sofa in the family room.*

*In a few minutes, Mrs. Lim called everyone to eat breakfast. All the kids came and sat down at the table. Lisa looked at her breakfast.*

*"Why are we having pancakes again? Didn't we just have it yesterday?" complained Lisa.*

*"Well, I had some extra batter and I wanted to finish it," explained Mrs. Lim.*

*Nicole, Benjamin and Susie began to eat their food.*

*"Well, could I at least have some orange juice?" asked Lisa.*

*"I am sorry," said Mrs. Lim. "We are all out of juice this morning. I can pick some up later."*

*Lisa shoved her plate of food away and yelled loudly, "Nothing is going right this morning. Why don't I ever get what I want?"*

*Everyone was startled by Lisa's outburst. They hadn't seen her this upset before.*

*"Lisa," said Mrs. Lim calmly, "I want you to come with me to the family room now."*

*Lisa got up and mumbled some things under her breath as she shuffled her feet over to the other room.*

*"Lisa, I know you are upset because the rain caused us to cancel the trip. But that doesn't mean you get to complain and whine all morning about everything," said Mrs. Lim.*

*"But I really wanted to go on this trip. It's just not fair."*

*"When you say things like 'It's just not fair' you are complaining. Do you understand?" asked Mrs. Lim.*

*"Yeah, I know. But I feel angry and sad inside all at the same time. Those are the words that want to come out of my mouth," said Lisa.*

*"I know that when things don't happen the way we want it to, sometimes we want to complain. But God doesn't want us to do that. God wants us to be happy, even if things don't go our way. That is how we tell others that God is in our*

*lives. God knows what we need and He will give us what we need. We need to learn to be happy with what we have."*

*"I know that God doesn't like it when I complain. But it's so hard. Why did it have to rain?" asked Lisa.*

*"Rain is a part of nature. Plants and trees need it to grow. It fills our lakes, rivers and oceans. It happens for a reason. But it's no reason to get upset. We can still go to the park another day," explained Mrs. Lim.*

*By now, Nicole had finished her breakfast. She came into the room.*

*"I am not doing anything this morning, Lisa. Maybe I can take you to the library to take your mind off the trip," offered Nicole.*

*"That sounds like a good idea," Mrs. Lim said.*

*"Well, okay. I guess it's better than just sitting here and complaining. I don't want to complain anymore. I am tired of being upset."*

*"I think you are going to be okay," said Mrs. Lim. "God will be happy that you aren't mad because it's raining. He will be happy that you understand it's okay to go another day."*

### **Questions to Think About**

- 1. What was Lisa excited about?** (She wanted to go on a trip to the amusement park with her family.)
- 2. Why was the trip canceled?** (It was raining.)
- 3. What did Lisa do?** (She complained all morning.)
- 4. What does it mean to complain?** (Let students answer. Give some concrete examples.)
- 5. Does God like it when we complain?** (No. It doesn't please Him when we complain.)
- 6. When something happens to us that we don't like, what can we do instead of complaining?** (Let students answer.)



## Activity 1

### **Quail, Manna, and Water**

Look at the pictures. What did God give His people? Write the word down under each picture. (Quail, manna, water)



## Activity 2

### **Let's Give Thanks**

The girl in the picture is bowing her head and giving thanks to God for the food on the table. Color in the picture. In the space below, draw something you are thankful for.



## Activity 3

### **Thank You Cards**

#### Materials:

1. construction paper
2. markers and pencils
3. glue
4. scraps
5. scissors

#### Directions:

1. In this activity, the students will be making "thank you" cards for God or their parents.
2. Provide each student with a piece of construction paper.
3. If it is a note written to God, then the student can use the entire piece of paper. If it is a card for their parents, they can fold it in half to resemble a card.
4. Help the students brainstorm things they can put on their cards (e.g. "Thank you God for..." or "Thank you, Mom and Dad for ...").
5. Once the students have their ideas, help them write their words on the paper.
6. If there are scraps, allow the students to decorate their cards once they have written their message.
7. If the card was meant for God, the paper can be posted in the room. If it was meant for the par-

ents, the students can bring the card home. Be sure to talk about why it is important to thank God and our parents for everything.

Activity 8:1

### Quail, Manna, and Water

Look at the pictures. What did God give His people? Write the word down under each picture.



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**Quail**  
**Manna**  
**Water**

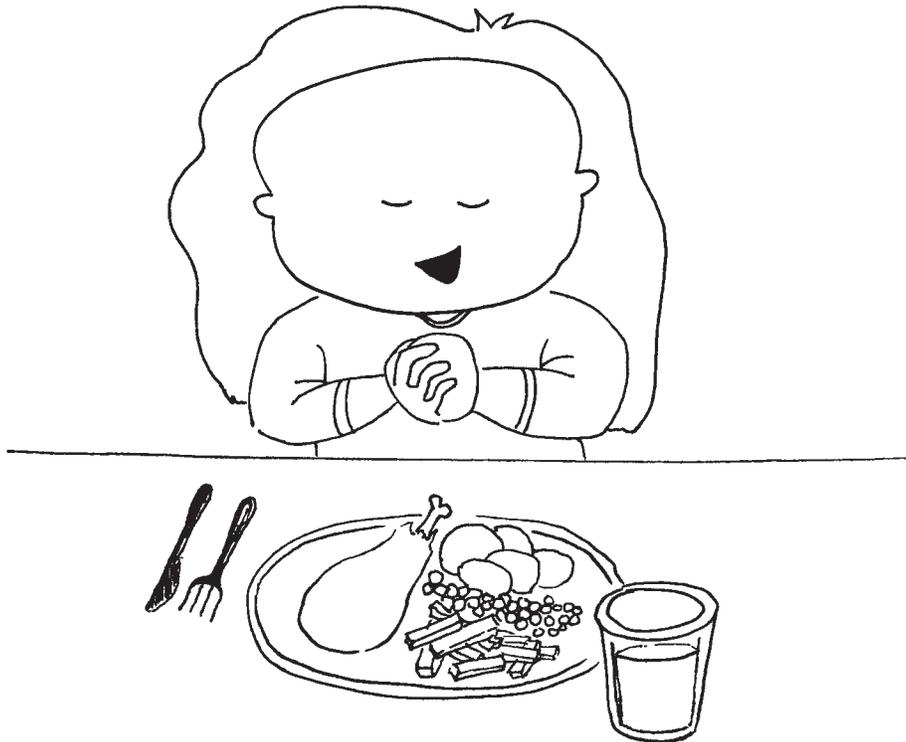


Activity 8:2

**Let's Give Thanks!**

The girl in the picture is bowing her head and giving thanks to God for the food on the table. Color in the picture.

In the space below, draw something you are thankful for.



I am thankful for \_\_\_\_\_.