

God continued to show His love and faithfulness to the Israelites by providing all their needs in the desert. Moses listened to God and followed His instructions. The Israelites praised God at times, but were quick to complain at other times.

Day #1: Songs of Praise

What is the most amazing thing you have ever seen? Maybe it was a puppy being born, maybe an incredible sports play. We have been studying the amazing miracles the Israelites witnessed as God sent plagues on Egypt.

Last week we saw how God saved His people from Pharaoh and his army. God had led the Israelites to a place where they were trapped between the Red Sea and a mighty army. God opened the sea and, by faith, the Israelites walked through it to safety. When the army chased after them, God let the waters rush back and every one of the Egyptian soldiers was destroyed.

† *That day the Lord saved Israel from the hands of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore. And when the Israelites saw the great power the Lord displayed against the Egyptians, **the people feared the Lord and put their trust in Him and in Moses his servant.** - Exodus 14:30-31 (NIV)*

Just as God had foretold to Moses, He gained glory when His people saw His power (Exodus 14:17). The Israelites could not contain their enthusiasm. The Creator of the universe had redirected an ocean to save their lives! Then the Israelites began to sing praises to the Lord. Moses' sister, Miriam began to dance and sing with a tambourine and all the women followed her.

*I will sing to the Lord.
He is greatly honored.
He has thrown Pharaoh's horses and their riders
into the Red Sea.
The Lord gives me strength. I sing about Him.
He has saved me.
He is my God. I will praise Him.
He is my father's God. I will honor Him.
- Exodus 15:1-2*

This would have been a beautiful sight - around three million people, unable to contain their worship, unashamed to sing praises to their Deliverer.

* We often come to God with our needs, but do we take time to **praise** Him when He has shown His power on our behalf? Do we recognize that He is our Deliverer? Do we see His provision so clearly that we cannot contain our praise? Think of specific things for which to praise God. Take the time to sing a praise song to Him.

Day #2: From Bitter to Sweet

Imagine a crack in your driveway. Let's say someone was going to fill that crack with water. Now imagine the Grand Canyon. Let's say it needed to be filled with water. Which one can hold more water? The one with the biggest gap - the Grand Canyon! Each person has gaps, or needs, in his life. The water is like God's grace and provision. The bigger our need, the more grace God will pour into us. And God's provision overflows!

The Israelites traveled in the Desert of Shur for three days. They had been sent out of Egypt quickly, in the middle of the night, so they did not have time to prepare for a long journey. They needed water. When they finally came to a place that had water, the water was bitter and they could not drink it. Having just seen God's amazing power save their lives three days before, what do you think the people's reaction was to the bitter water? Did they say, "If God can split the Sea, He can give us good water"? Unfortunately, no.

† *So the people **grumbled** against Moses, saying, "What are we to drink?" - Exodus 15:24 (NIV)*

They grumbled! Another word for grumble is murmur. That means they complained.

Then Moses cried out to the Lord. The Lord showed him a stick. Moses threw it into the water. The water became sweet. - Exodus 15:25

Moses did the right thing. He asked for God's help and God provided good, drinkable water. The Israelites had just seen God's power when they were helpless at the Red Sea. Remember what Moses told them as the army approached? "The Lord will fight for you. Just be still." (Exodus 14:14) **The bigger our need, the bigger God's provision will be.** The Bible tells us in Ephesians 3:20 that God is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine. The Israelites never imagined that God would split the Red Sea and swallow up their enemies! But God's ways are SO much bigger and better than our ways (Isaiah 55:9). That is why the Bible tells us to be glad when we are weak or in need - because we will see God's power (2 Corinthians 12:10)!


* If you have a need right now, **thank God for it** (Philippians 4:6). Admit to Him that you are weak and unable to come up with a solution on your own. Ask Him to provide for you. Every need we have is an opportunity for God to show His power!

Day #3: Manna & Quail

After the Israelites traveled through the desert for several weeks, they began to grumble against Moses and Aaron. Again they said they were better off in Egypt because they had all the food they wanted there. This was undoubtedly a big exaggeration. They had been treated terribly when they were slaves (Exodus 2:23) and slaves do not get all the food they want!

Day #3 continued:


God heard the grumbling of the people, and once again, He would show He was the great Provider.

 *The Lord said to Moses, "I have heard the people of Israel talking about how unhappy they are. Tell them, 'When the sun goes down, you will eat meat. In the morning, you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God.' "*

That evening quail came and covered the camp. In the morning, the ground around the camp was covered with dew. When the dew was gone, thin flakes appeared on the desert floor. They looked like frost on the ground. The people of Israel saw the flakes. They asked each other, "What's that?" They didn't know what it was. Moses said to them, "It's the bread the Lord has given you to eat." - Exodus 16:11-15

God provided meat by sending quail. Quail are birds, similar to chickens, which people still eat today. The Israelites called the bread flakes "manna" which means, "What is it?" because no one had ever seen anything like it before (Deuteronomy 8:3). It was white and tasted like wafers made with honey (Exodus 16:31). God told Moses each person should gather as much of the bread as they needed for one day and they were not to keep any of it for the next day. God said He was testing the people to see if they would obey Him (Exodus 16:4). **Some people did not trust that God would provide for them the next day**, so they kept some manna over night. The next day it was full of maggots and it stunk. Yuck!

Each morning God provided this bread, and each day the Israelites gathered what they needed for that day. On the sixth day, God told Moses the people should gather twice as much as usual and save some of it for the next day. The seventh day of the week was to be a day of rest. The Lord would not send any manna, so the people could not collect any manna. This day of rest was called the Sabbath. It was special day set aside for the Lord. This was the first time God instructed His people to observe a Sabbath day. On the Sabbath, the manna did not spoil. God even provided a day of rest for His people.

 Even after all the miracles the Israelites saw with their own eyes, some of them still doubted that God would provide food for them every day. Do you **trust** that God will provide for your needs? God promises to provide everything you need. And God ALWAYS keeps His promises!

My God will meet all your needs. He will meet them in keeping with his wonderful riches that come to you because you belong to Christ Jesus. - Philippians 4:19


(Additional verses: 1 Peter 5:7; Matthew 6:25-26; Matthew 10:29-31; Psalm 23:1-3)

Day #4: Remember the Lord

God was going to lead the Israelites to the land that He promised to Abraham. God had promised to make them a great nation of people and had promised to bless them (Genesis 12:2). God knew they would start to think it was because of their own abilities that their lives were so good. God warned them not to become proud when they lived in the Promised Land.

Then your hearts will become proud. And you will forget the Lord


Day #4 continued:

 *your God. The Lord brought you out of Egypt. That's the land where you were slaves... He gave you manna to eat in the desert. - Deuteronomy 8:14, 16b*

God wanted the people to remember the time when they were in the desert with no food. God did not want His people to forget His provision. God gave Moses specific instructions so that the Israelite people would always remember that God is the One who provides all that we need.

Moses said, "Here is what the Lord has commanded. He has said, 'Get two quarts of manna. Keep it for all time to come. Then those who live after you will see the bread I gave you to eat in the desert. I gave it to you when I brought you out of Egypt.' " - Exodus 16:32


Aaron did exactly as God had instructed Moses. The Israelite people carried the manna with them wherever they went.

 Just like the Israelites, we tend to forget the wondrous things God does for us. One way for you to **remember** the things God has done for you is to keep a journal. In it, you can write down the times you have prayed for God's help and write down how God answered. Another way is to keep a memory box. This box holds special things that help you remember God's answers to prayers. Remember, **God provides for us at all times**. Discuss some things that you could list in a prayer journal or put in a memory box.


Day #5: Bread from Heaven

When God's people needed food for their stomachs, God provided manna. James 1:17 says, "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights." What we need even more than food for our stomach is food for our spirit.

In the New Testament, Jesus compared Himself to the manna that God supplied. Some Jewish people were trying to understand who Jesus was. They asked Him to show them a miracle like the miracle of the manna in the desert (John 6:30-31).

 *Jesus said to them, "What I'm about to tell you is true. It is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven. It is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. The bread of God is the One who comes down from heaven. He gives life to the world... My Father wants all who look to the Son and believe in Him to have eternal life." - John 6:32-33, 40*

Jesus called Himself the Bread of Life (John 6:48). Our physical needs, such as eating, drinking, and having clothes to wear, are important. But our spiritual needs - knowing God and putting our trust in Him - are even more important (Deuteronomy 8:3). We each have a spiritual need - the need to be forgiven of our sins so we can be made right with our perfect God (Romans 3:23). Jesus came to be our substitution, our Passover Lamb (Isaiah 53:5). Jesus is God's Provision for our greatest need. When we believe in Jesus, we are given eternal life (John 3:36).

 Because we know God has provided the way for all people to gain eternal life through faith in Jesus, we have a job to do. God has **entrusted** us with His truth. What will we do with it? The Bible tells us to **share it** with our friends, neighbors, and people all around the world (Acts 1:8).