

In the Wilderness

Bible Verse

"I'll take you as my people, and I'll be your God." (Exodus 6:7)

Did You Know?

After four hundred years of slavery, the Israelites had been freed. One might reasonably expect that they would have been happy. But as today's story illustrates, change is difficult. Even change for the better is stressful. The Israelites were not used to living in freedom and trusting God to provide for their needs.

God led Moses and the rest of the Israelites out of Egypt and across the Reed Sea. They were a long way from the Promised Land of milk and honey. Instead they found themselves in the wilderness. The wilderness was a precarious place. The people's need for food and water was real since neither was abundant in this desert landscape. Understandably, the people became anxious. They began to complain and wish they had never left Egypt. At least in Egypt there was food to eat and water to drink. How quickly they had forgotten their oppression under Pharaoh's hand.

Just as God had heard their cries and rescued them from slavery in Egypt, God provided for their needs, sending quail in the evening and manna in the morning. It is important to note that God provided just what they needed and no more. Some Israelites did not trust God to continue to provide manna every day so they tried to take matters into their own hands and save some. The excess manna stank and became infested with worms. But fresh manna appeared every day to meet their needs, except on the Sabbath. Resting on the Sabbath was to be observed so no manna appeared on that day. But the day before the Sabbath was the one time extra manna could be stored without rotting.

God provided the Israelites with what they needed. When the manna was distributed equally, everyone had enough. There was no need to hoard or be greedy. There is much for us to learn from this story if we are willing to pay attention.

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Bible Story

Exodus 15:22–17:7

Anchor Point


God cares for all people.


My Plan

- Assemble the Crew
- Collecting Manna
- God Sends Bread
- The Silly Complaint Game
- Make a Sand Picture
- In the Wilderness
- Needs and Wants
- Life in the Desert
- Worship

  Everyone

 Readers

 Nonreaders

 Requires preparation.

Jump In!

The following activities may be done in learning centers as the children arrive or may be done with the entire group.



ASSEMBLE THE CREW

Supplies: Attendance Chart, offering basket, marker, stickers

- Display the Attendance Chart.
- Greet the children as they arrive.
- Allow each child to add a sticker or mark his or her name on the attendance chart.
- Show the children where to place any offerings.
- Play music as the children arrive.

COLLECTING MANNA

Supplies: Reproducible A, crayons

 Photocopy "Collecting Manna" (Reproducible A) for each younger child.

ASK: What was the bread-like substance God provided for the Israelites to eat? (manna)


- Give each younger child a copy of "Collecting Manna."

SAY: Every morning except on the Sabbath God provided manna for the Israelites to collect. The people in this picture need baskets to put their manna in.

- Encourage each child to draw baskets and color the picture.

GOD SENDS BREAD

Supplies: Bibles, Reproducible B, pencils

 Photocopy "God Sends Bread" (Reproducible B) for each older child.

- Give each older child a copy of "God Sends Bread" and a pencil.
- Have the children find the Table of Contents in their Bibles to help them work the puzzle.

SAY: Look at the first word on 10b. Check the Table of Contents in your Bible to recognize which book of the Bible it is.

ASK: Which letter is missing? (T)

- Encourage each child to solve the puzzle.

THE SILLY COMPLAINT GAME

- Have the children sit in a circle.

ASK: What's a complaint? (finding fault and saying something negative)


SAY: It seems like some people complain about everything. We don't usually encourage complaining, but today we are going to play a game to see how many silly complaints we can come up with about this day. I will start by saying, "It's not Thursday!" That's a silly thing to complain about, isn't it? We'll go around the circle. The next person will say, "It's not Thursday and..." and add another silly complaint. Each person will repeat all the previous complaints and add another one. The sillier the better! Let's see how long and silly we can make our list of complaints.

- Play the game with the children.
- If you have a small class, continue around the circle multiple times.

SAY: In the Bible story for today, we will hear some complaining.

MAKE A SAND PICTURE

Supplies: Reproducible C, card stock, glue, colored sand, glitter glue, plastic containers, spoons, shallow trays or boxes

 Photocopy "Sand Picture" (Reproducible C) onto card stock for each child.

- Pour each color of sand into a separate container.
- Show the children the colored sand.

ASK: Where might you find a lot of sand—in a jungle or a desert? (a desert)

SAY: Today we are going to hear a story about the Israelites spending time in the desert. They probably saw a lot of sand though it wasn't colored like this sand. You are going to use this sand to make a picture.


- Give each child a copy of "Sand Picture."
- Have each child place her or his picture in a shallow tray or box.
- Encourage each child to use glue to outline a few of the letters on the page.
- Let each child use a spoon to sprinkle sand on top of the glue.
- Or they can color the letters with glitter glue.
- Have each child pick up his or her picture and gently shake off the excess sand into the tray or box.
- Invite each child to continue tracing letters, sprinkling sand, and shaking off excess sand until the picture is complete. Children may add extra designs to their pictures.
- Let the pictures dry.



Dive Deeper

IN THE WILDERNESS

Supplies: Reproducibles D and E, Bible Times Map, crayons or pencils

 Photocopy "In the Wilderness" (Reproducible D) and "Bible Times Map" (Reproducible E) for each child.

Display the "Bible Times Map" poster.

- Give each child a copy of the reproducible "Bible Times Map" and a crayon or pencil.

SAY: Last month we heard about God leading the Israelite people out of Egypt where they had been slaves for many years.

- Show children the location of Egypt on the "Bible Times Map".
- Have the children label Egypt on their maps. Younger children may write a letter E.

SAY: The Israelites were heading toward Canaan.

- Show children the location of Canaan on the "Bible Times Map" poster.
- Have the children label Canaan on their maps. Younger children may write a letter C.

SAY: The area between Egypt and Canaan was the Sinai Peninsula.

- Have the children label Sinai on their maps. Younger children may write a letter S.

SAY: If the Israelites had gone straight from Egypt to Canaan they would have had to do battle with people living in that area, so instead God led them into the wilderness or desert area where they wandered for many years. Remember that the Israelites were traveling on foot, and there were a lot of them so they didn't move quickly.

- Show the children on the "Bible Times Map" poster where the Israelites went into the wilderness on the Sinai Peninsula (heading toward the bottom of the map on the Sinai Peninsula instead of going straight across.)
- Read the Bible story "In the Wilderness."

ASK: What were the Israelites complaining about? (not having food and water) How did they get water and food? (God provided it.)

SAY: The Israelites had been slaves for a long time. They weren't used to trusting God to provide the things they needed. God took care of the Israelites in the wilderness.

Grow Stronger

NEEDS AND WANTS

Supplies: mural paper, magazines, scissors, glue, sticker dots

- Cut a large piece of mural paper.

- Look through the magazines and remove any inappropriate pictures or articles.
- Invite the children to look through the magazines and cut out pictures of things.
- Have the children glue the pictures they find onto the mural paper.
- After the paper is full, have the children step back and look at the collage.

SAY: We have a lot of things in our life. Some things that we have are needs and some things are wants.

ASK: What is an example of something we need? (food, clothing, shelter, love) What is an example of something we may want, but don't necessarily need? (toys, cell phones, sports car)

- Give each child some sticker dots.
- Encourage the children to work together to place sticker dots on the items on the collage that are wants and not needs.

ASK: Are most of the things on our collage needs or wants? Is it okay to own things that we don't really need? (Yes. It is not the possessions that are bad but our attitude about them. We must remember to keep focused on God and serving others.)

SAY: God provided the Israelites with what they needed.


LIFE IN THE DESERT

Supplies: long rug, table, chair, basket, pita bread cut in little pieces

Set up an obstacle course around the edge of the room. On wall one, the children will line up shoulder to shoulder. On wall two, place a long rug. On wall three, set up a table children can crawl under. On wall four, place a basket with pita bread cut in little pieces.

SAY: The Israelites walked in the wilderness for forty years before they were allowed to enter the Promised Land.

ASK: Do you think it was easy to walk in the desert? What did they see every day in the desert? (sand, cloud, fire, manna, desert plants) Where did they get their food and water? (God provided the food and water.)

 **SAY:** Let's take turns going through the Life in the Desert obstacle course and experience a little of what the Israelites did for forty years.

- Everyone line up on wall one shoulder to shoulder and begin walking in place. Continue walking in place until everyone has made it through the obstacle course.
- On wall two, hop on one foot across the rug to show how hot the sand was in the desert. You can change the foot your hopping on as needed.
- On wall three, crawl under the table to get some shelter from the hot sun.
- On wall four, pick up a piece of manna (pita bread) from the basket. Sit in the chair and rest while you eat the bread.


- Take your place at the end of the line on wall one and continue walking in place.
- Allow the children to go through the course one at a time until everyone has had a turn.

ASK: How did the Israelites survive forty years in the desert? (God took care of them and provided their needs.)

Worship

PRAISE AND PRAYER

Supplies: Exodus 6:7 Bible Verse Poster, Exodus 6:7 Sign Language Poster, Reproducible F

 Learn the signs from the Sign Language Poster so you can teach them to the children.

Display the Exodus 6:7 Bible Verse Poster and Sign Language Poster in your worship area.

- Play familiar worship music and encourage children to sing and move along with the music.

SAY: God was with the Israelites when they were in the wilderness. God is with us every step of our journey, too.

- Show the children the Bible Verse Poster. Encourage readers to read the verse with you.

SAY: This was God's promise to the Israelites, and it is God's promise to us.

- Teach children the Sign Language for the Bible verse. Encourage all children to sign and say the Bible verse with you.

SAY: Earlier we played a game of silly complaints. It was a fun game, but sometimes it is easier to focus on complaining like the Israelites did instead of remembering the good things in our lives. Let's spend some time thanking God instead of complaining.

ASK: What blessings do you want to thank God for today? What are the good things happening in your life? What joys do you want to share?

- Invite children to share their joys and blessings.

SAY: Life is full of joys, but it also has challenges. It is good to bring our concerns to God and pray about them, too.

ASK: What concerns, sadness, or worries do you want to share with God for our prayer time today?

- Invite children to share prayer concerns, reminding them sharing is always optional.

PRAY: God, we lift up our joys and concerns to you. We give thanks for our many

blessings. We turn our concerns over to you. Thank you for being our God and being with us always. Amen.

- Give each child a copy of the "Talk About" page (Reproducible F) to take home.

SAY: Share the "Talk About" page with your parents when you go home. It has some information about today's lesson that you and your parents can share and discuss.

Answers

REPRODUCIBLE B GOD SENDS BREAD



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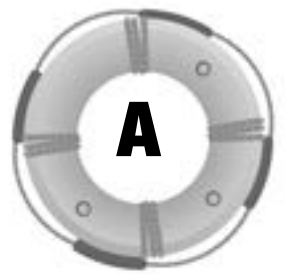
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WHAT IS IT?

Collecting Manna

What did the Israelites use to collect the food God provided for them daily?

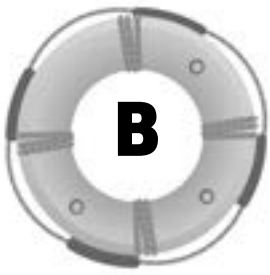


For Nonreaders

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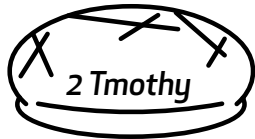
**DEEP
BLUE**

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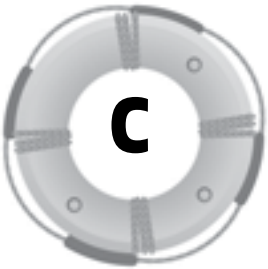


God Sends Bread

While the Israelites were wandering in the wilderness, God sent manna for them to eat. Manna was described as bread that would melt away. Was it like a cracker or more like a marshmallow? No one knows exactly what manna was. The Israelites had never seen anything like manna before. Each book of the Bible below is missing a letter. Write the missing letter on the line provided. When you are finished, read from bottom to top to discover the meaning of the Hebrew word *manna*.



Sand Picture

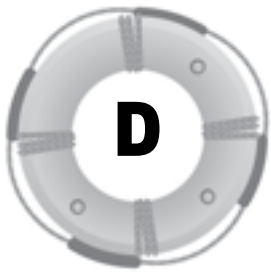


For Everyone

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In the Wilderness

After the Israelites crossed the Red Sea to escape from Pharaoh's army, Moses led them into the desert. They traveled for three days in the desert and found no water. When they finally came to a place with water, they couldn't drink it because it was too bitter.

The people complained, "What will we drink?"

When Moses told God the Israelites' complaint, God showed Moses a tree. When Moses threw a branch from the tree into the water, the water became sweet and they were able to drink it.

As the Israelites continued to travel in the wilderness, they became hungry but there was no food. The people complained, "What are we to eat? We wish we were back in Egypt. At least there was food to eat there!"

God told Moses, "I'm going to make bread come down from the sky for you. And I will provide meat for you in the evenings."

God provided for the Israelites as promised. Each evening quail flew in and covered the camp so there was meat for the people to eat. And in the mornings, manna—bread from heaven—covered the ground.

God instructed the people to collect one omer of manna each morning and that would provide the food needed for the day. When the people went out to collect manna, some collected more and some collected less. But when they measured it out, every person had one omer—just what they needed. Some people tried to collect extra manna and store it, but the extra manna spoiled and became infested with worms.

On the sixth day, the people each collected two omers of manna because this is what God instructed. This was so they didn't have to collect manna on the Sabbath. No manna appeared on the Sabbath because God wanted the people to rest.

God provided for the Israelites making sure they had what they needed.

(Based on Exodus 15:22–17:7)



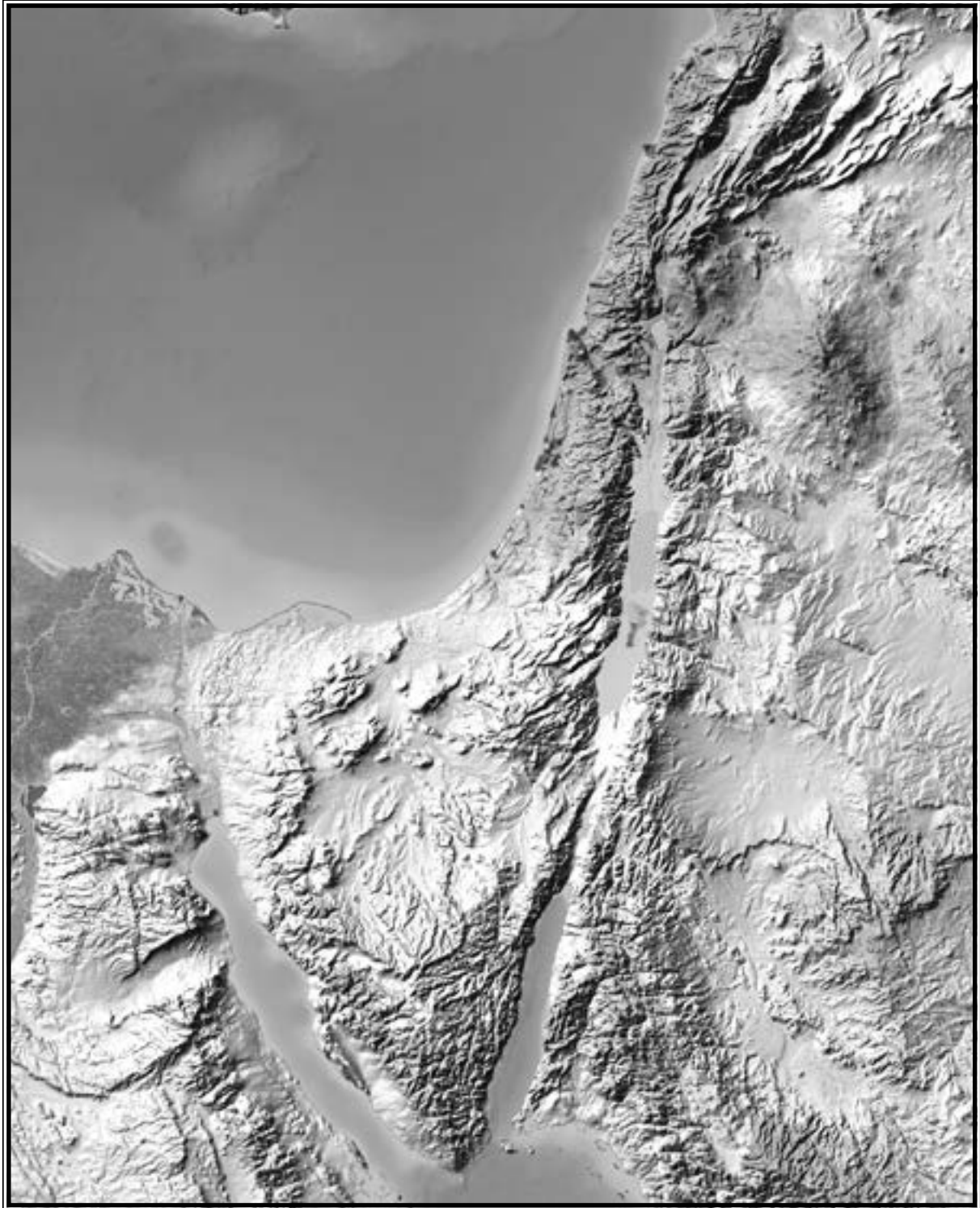
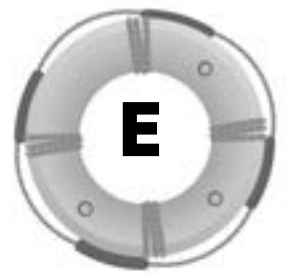
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Bible Times Map



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Talk About In the Wilderness

Bible Story

Exodus 15:22-17:7

Anchor Point

God cares for all people.



Say the Bible verse together:

"I'll take you as my people, and I'll be your God." (Exodus 6:7)

Talk about today's Bible story at home:

God performed many powerful acts to free the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. At first the people praised God for the things God had done. It didn't take long for the people to start complaining again. It was as though they'd already forgotten the many things God had done for them. Why do you think people find it easy to complain about things?

The thing about complaining is that it is easy to get caught up in the process of whining and forget about the good things that are happening. Make a list of the good things happening in your life. Sometimes we call this counting our blessings.

Say a prayer of thanks for the blessings in your life.

Pray:

Thank you, God, for caring for us and giving us wonderful blessings. Amen.

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Attendance Chart

Week

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

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CANAAN

**SINAI
PENINSULA**

EGYPT



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**“I’ll take you as my people,
and I’ll be your God.”**

Exodus 6:7



"I'll take you as my people, and I'll be your God."

Exodus 6:7



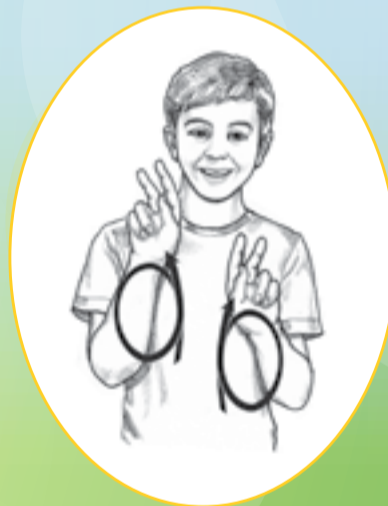
**I'll
(God)**



**take
(care of)**



you



people



**I'll
(God)**