

Unit 5: Into the Wilderness

Unit Description: Through a series of miracles, God had delivered His people from bondage in Egypt. The Israelites headed into the wilderness on their way to the land of promise. Their journey, however, was not just to move them from one place to another; it was also to be a time when their hearts were to be moved in worship for their God, their true Rescuer.

Big Picture Question: What is worship? Worship is celebrating the greatness of God.



SESSION 1: God Provided Manna

Exodus 16–17



SESSION 2: God Gave the Ten Commandments

Exodus 19–20



SESSION 3: The People Worshipped a Golden Calf

Exodus 32–34



SESSION 4: The People Built the Tabernacle

Exodus 35–40



SESSION 5: God Deserves Our Worship

Leviticus 1–4



UNIT 5 | SESSION 1

GOD PROVIDED MANNA

EXODUS 16–17

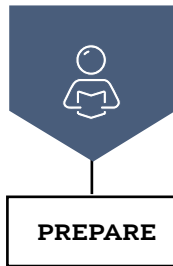
KEY PASSAGE: **Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker; for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care. Psalm 95:6-7 NIV**

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What is worship? Worship is celebrating the greatness of God.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

God provided water and manna for His people's physical hunger. Later, He provided His Son, Jesus, for our spiritual hunger. Jesus said, "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35). The Israelites needed bread to live for a little while, but whoever has Jesus will live forever.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

The Israelites had personally experienced God's faithfulness as He directed them out of Egypt, fought for them as He parted the Red Sea, and then delivered them into the wilderness with the promise of a land of their own. What happened next is retold as a cautionary tale in both the Psalms and Book of Hebrews.

The Israelites tasted freedom for the first time in 400 years, but their stomachs still rumbled. Maybe the Israelites had expected to go straight to Canaan. Instead, they were in a dry wilderness without water or food. They began to think of Egypt in a warmer light. Maybe slavery hadn't been that bad.

Isn't that the lie that causes us to doubt God's goodness? God saves us from slavery to sin; is following Jesus worth it? We know the answer is a resounding, "Yes!" But when life is hard and sanctification is trying, we—like the Israelites—sometimes stop trusting God. We grumble and complain.

God, the faithful keeper of promises, did not bring His people out of Egypt to let them die in the wilderness, nor does He abandon His children today. God sent His own Son, who gave up His life to free us from sin. He promises us a new home with Him forever.

If you had been among the Israelites, how do you think you would have responded? Can

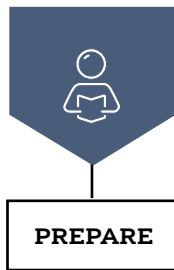
you think of a time your own circumstances had you questioning God's goodness? Let the truth of Psalm 95:7 comfort you: "For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, the sheep under his care."

Israel's history is given to us in the Bible because it reflects the Christian experience. We are to learn from it. (See 1 Cor. 10:1-11.) God cares for His people. He is faithful and keeps His promises. Our journey toward our new home of eternity will be challenging and trying, but we can rely on God—trusting His leading and provision.

The Lord is worthy of our trust and worship. The Israelites needed this reminder, and so do we. Trust Him and obey Him because His way is better than any plan you can conceive. He is a providing shepherd who will lead us.

TERMS TO KNOW

Massah and Meribah: names meaning "testing" and "quarreling" that Moses named the place where God provided in Exodus 17. The new names expressed behavior to avoid.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- ☐ "What's for Dinner?" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- ☐ gift bag
- ☐ random household objects

Session Starter (Option 2)

- ☐ various small containers, 3 per group
- ☐ pitchers of water, 1 per group
- ☐ measuring cups, 2 per group
- ☐ towels (for cleanup)



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- ☐ countdown video

Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- ☐ Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- ☐ "God Provided Manna" video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- ☐ "Unit 5, Session 1" questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- ☐ "All About New Orleans" missions video
- ☐ United States map

Key Passage Activity

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ "Come, Let's Worship (Psalm 95:6-7)" song
- ☐ worship song of your choice (optional)



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set
- ☐ world map

Activity Choice (Option 1)

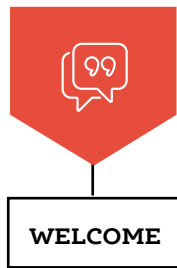
- ☐ Printable: "Fun Facts About New Orleans"

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- ☐ Printable: "Flying Quail Craft"
- ☐ drinking straws, 1 per kid
- ☐ masking tape
- ☐ construction paper or index cards
- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Journal and Prayer

- ☐ Journal Page
- ☐ "Gifts from Above" activity page



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “Can you think of a time you really needed something but didn’t have what you needed—like a pencil to complete a school assignment? What did you do?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “What’s for Dinner?” on the activity page.

SAY “Every creature requires certain things to live. In today’s Bible story, we will see how God provided everything the Israelites needed as they wandered in the wilderness. God also provides for our need to be saved from sin by sending Jesus.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: WHAT IS IT?



Choose a volunteer to sit in a chair at the front of the room. Instruct him to close his eyes. Stand behind the volunteer and show the rest of the kids a random household object.

Put the object into a gift bag and guide the volunteer to reach inside and feel the object. Ask, “What is it?” and invite the volunteer to guess what object is in the bag. Then let him look at the object to see if he is correct. Play additional rounds with new volunteers. Each time, ask “What is it?”

SAY “To identify something new, you might feel it or smell it. You could listen to it or look at it. In today’s Bible story, the Israelites encountered something they had never seen before. They asked, ‘What is it?’ and then they tasted it! We’ll find out what it was.”

☐ OPTION 2: JUST ENOUGH

Before meeting together, place three different sized containers, two measuring cups, and one pitcher of water on each table.

Form kids into groups of four or five kids and direct them to sit around a table. Challenge them to look at each container and estimate the amount of water it will take to fill each one without it overflowing.

Direct kids to use their measuring cups to check if their estimates were correct.

SAY “Was it difficult to guess the amount of water needed to perfectly fill each container? In today’s Bible story, we will see how God perfectly provided for His people’s physical and spiritual needs.”





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (2 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “Welcome, everyone! I’m [your name], and I am so glad you are here! If you brought your Bible today, hold it up. [Provide Bibles for kids who need one.] Can anyone tell me what the Bible is about? [Allow kids to respond.] The Bible is God’s Word. It tells us the wonderful story of God’s plan to rescue sinners.

Each time we meet together, we study God’s Word. [Hold up your Bible.] The stories recorded in the Bible really happened. Every story we study during this time is true, and the people we hear about were real people. I’m looking forward to sharing a story with you as we learn about how God cared for His people long ago and how He still cares for His people today.”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “Over the next few weeks, we will think about a big picture question. This question helps us focus on important truths as we study God’s Word.

Our big picture question is, **What is worship?** Have you ever heard the word worship at church? Sometimes churches even call the time they meet together “worship services.” What do you think worship means? [Allow kids to share.] **Worship is celebrating the greatness of God.** That’s the answer to our big picture question. Let’s say our big picture question and answer together: **What is worship? Worship is celebrating the greatness of God.** As we get to know God, we’ll discover that we have a lot to celebrate!”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (2 minutes)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “Let’s think about how we got to today’s story. In the beginning, God created the world. After sin entered the world through Adam and Eve’s disobedience, God promised to provide the solution for the problem of sin. He promised to bring the Rescuer through Abraham’s family.

The descendants of Abraham’s grandson Jacob—who were called Israelites—were slaves in Egypt. Moses delivered them out of Egypt and led them toward the promised land. But all their problems didn’t go away immediately. To get to the promised land, the Israelites had to travel through the wilderness. It wasn’t long before the people got hungry.

Our story today is called ‘God Provided Manna.’ What’s that? Let’s find out.”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Exodus 16–17. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “God Provided Manna.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

GOD PROVIDED MANNA

“Moses led God’s people from the Red Sea to the wilderness. They were hungry, so they complained to Moses. **“We wish we had died in Egypt! At least there was food to eat,”** they said. **“You brought us out here to starve!”** But Moses had not brought them out there to die. God was in control.

God’s glory appeared in a cloud and **God said to Moses, “I’ve heard the Israelites’ complaints. Tell them: In the evening you will eat meat, and in the morning you will eat bread** until you are full. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God.”

Sure enough, **quail came into the camp in the evening. In the morning, fine flakes like frost were on the ground. “What is it?”** the Israelites asked.

Moses said, “It is the bread the LORD has given you to eat.”

The Israelites called the bread manna, which means “what is it?” God told the people to collect just enough to eat for the day. If they collected too much, the leftovers went bad. He told them to collect twice as much on the sixth day, because the seventh day was the Sabbath—a day to rest.

The Israelites did not always follow God’s instructions. Sometimes they collected too much manna, and sometimes they tried to collect manna on the Sabbath day. **God provided for His people, and He wanted them to trust Him and obey Him. The Israelites ate manna for 40 years—the whole time they were in the wilderness.**

The Israelites moved about the wilderness as God told them to do. One day, they came to a camp with no water. “Give us something to drink,” they told Moses.

“Why are you complaining to me?” Moses asked.

The Israelites had forgotten that God was with them and had a plan for them. “You brought us out here to die,” they said again.

“Lord, what should I do?” Moses cried out. God showed Moses a rock and instructed him to hit it with his staff. Water came out of it, and the people drank. It was a sign that the Lord was with them.

Christ Connection: God provided water and manna for His people’s physical hunger. Later, He provided His Son, Jesus, for our spiritual hunger. Jesus said, “I am the bread of life” (John 6:35). The Israelites needed bread to live for a little while, but whoever has Jesus will live forever. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Call for active listening:

As you tell the story, direct the kids to listen for times the people of Israel complained. Each time they hear a complaint, instruct them to give you a thumbs down.

Vary your voice: Use a dramatic voice as you tell the story. Try to use different voices as you say what the people of Israel said and what Moses said.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ God’s people had experienced many incredible things—from being led out of Egypt, walking through the middle of the Red Sea on dry land, and now being led by the Lord in the wilderness. When the people faced challenges, did they move forward in confidence, believing that God would help them? [Allow kids to respond.] No! They were quick to forget all that God had done and how He provided for them. They complained. They assumed the worst. Look at Exodus 16:2-3. [Choose a volunteer to read Ex. 16:2-3 aloud.]

The people thought Moses had brought them out into the wilderness to die. Of course, we can see the bigger picture of what was happening because we have the whole Bible to read. We know that God had a plan.

How did God provide for His people when they were hungry in the desert? [Allow kids to respond.] God provided for the physical needs of His people by sending quail and manna, and He gave them special instructions. Look at Exodus 16:4. [Choose a volunteer to read Ex. 16:4.] God wanted the people to trust that He would provide for them each day.

As God met His people’s physical needs by providing manna, quail, and water, they were reminded that God was always with them. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ When we trust Jesus for salvation, He is with us too and provides for our greatest needs. God provided manna for His people’s physical hunger. Later, He provided His Son, Jesus, for our spiritual hunger. We cannot save ourselves from sin, but God provided His Son, Jesus, to be the payment for our sins. The Israelites needed bread to live for a little while, but whoever has Jesus will live forever. In Him, we can be saved from the punishment we deserve and have eternal life. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 5, Session 1” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Why did God’s people want to go back to Egypt where they were slaves?
2. Do you ever forget all God has done for you? How can you remember?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

SAY “ God provided manna and water for the Israelites in the wilderness. People in New Orleans don’t eat manna, but they do eat beignets (bin YAYs), which are like doughnuts. New Orleans is a city in Louisiana, near the Gulf of Mexico. [Point to New Orleans on a map.]

You may have heard of New Orleans because of hurricanes that have hit there or because they



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

have a professional football team, the Saints. New Orleans is a unique city, but just like all cities, it's a place filled with people who need Jesus. ”

Play the missions video. Then ask a volunteer to pray for missionaries in New Orleans.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Before the session, write each word of the key passage plus the reference on separate pieces of construction paper. If your group is large, form smaller groups and prepare several sets.

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Psalm 95:6-7 together.

SAY “ Over the next few weeks, we’ll work on memorizing Psalm 95:6-7. These verses remind us that God is worthy of all worship. **What is worship? Worship is celebrating the greatness of God.** ”

Mix up the prepared verse pages and display the words in front of the group. Challenge the kids to work together to arrange the words in the correct order. Then lead kids to sing “Come, Let’s Worship (Psalm 95:6-7).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

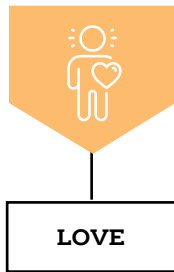
7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning from **LEARN** to **LOVE**.

SAY “ Lord, thank You for being our Provider. You care for all our needs, including our greatest need—to be rescued from sin. Thank You for providing everlasting life to everyone who believes in Jesus. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Exodus 16. Explain that in today's story, the Israelites were in the wilderness (H9).

Consider comparing the Old Testament Mediterranean Map to a modern-day map to help kids understand where these stories took place. (Tip: Locate the areas in and around northeastern Egypt.) Choose a volunteer to read aloud Exodus 16:6-8.

| SAY “In our Bible story today, God provided food for the Israelites when they were hungry. Later, God provided Jesus to meet our greatest need—to be saved from our sins. God cares for us and always does what is right. When we trust Him to meet our spiritual needs, He is faithful and will provide life with Him forever through His Son, Jesus.”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

| SAY “Why do you think the Israelites complained?”

Prompt kids to think about the challenges the people faced, including slavery in Egypt. Explain that our beliefs about God affect our actions and attitudes. Especially in hard times, we must remind ourselves that God is faithful, caring, and present.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Heb. 13:5.)

| SAY “What is spiritual hunger?”

Help kids compare spiritual hunger to physical hunger. In times of physical hunger, people long for food. In the same way, people can be hungry in their spirits. It is a feeling of emptiness or a longing that all humans experience. Many times, people try to fill this emptiness with other things, but that only causes more emptiness and longing. Only God can meet our spiritual needs.

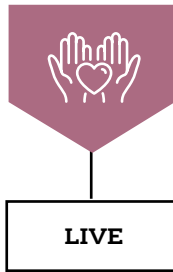
(Option: Choose a volunteer to read John 6:35.)

| SAY “How can you trust God to meet your needs? What does trusting Him look like?”

Encourage kids to think about who God is. In the story today, we saw how God continued to provide for His people as they traveled in the desert, even when they complained. God is faithful; He always does what He says He will do. Remind kids that as they study God's Word and see how God always provides for the needs of His people, they can begin to develop that trusting relationship with Him in their lives.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Phil. 4:19.)





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: FUN FACTS



Before the session, cut apart the “Fun Facts” and hide them around the room.

SAY “God provided for His people’s hunger and thirst in the wilderness. Through Jesus, He provided for our spiritual hunger and thirst. Some missionaries work in New Orleans and teach people about Jesus and how only He can satisfy spiritual hunger and thirst. Many people in New Orleans don’t know Jesus.”

Let the kids search the room for fun facts. When they have found them all, direct them to sit in a circle. Invite the kids who found the cards to read them aloud.

SAY “What’s your favorite fact about New Orleans? We’ll see in the weeks to come that the missionaries who live in New Orleans are really creative to reach people with the gospel.”

☐ OPTION 2: FLYING QUAIL CRAFT

Provide each kid with scissors, tape, one drinking straw, and one quail craft printable.

Instruct kids to cut out the quail and lead them to follow the instructions. Then invite kids to stand at one side of the room and blow through their straws to let their quails fly. Kids may compete to see whose quail flies farthest.

SAY “God provided for the needs of His people in the desert. God met His people’s physical needs, and He meets our greatest need. God provides salvation from sin and eternal life through His Son, Jesus. We can respond to God’s provision with worship. **What is worship? Worship is celebrating the greatness of God.**”

2 JOURNAL AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page. As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas.

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God’s glory and my good?
- Are there promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

Review the gospel and encourage kids to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions. Then pray, thanking God for providing everything needed for salvation and eternal life through Jesus and praise Him for His faithfulness to His children. As time allows, lead kids to complete “Gifts from Above” on the activity page.



JOURNAL PAGE

1. What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
2. What does this story teach me about myself?
3. Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
4. Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
5. How does this story help me to live on mission better?



Unit 5 • Session 1

GOD PROVIDED MANNA

Exodus 16-17

WHAT IS WORSHIP? WORSHIP IS CELEBRATING THE GREATNESS OF GOD.

Moses led God's people to the wilderness. They were hungry, so they complained to Moses. "We wish we had died in Egypt! You brought us out here to starve!"

God said to Moses, "I've heard the Israelites' complaints. Tell them: In the evening you will eat meat, and in the morning you will eat bread."

Quail came into the camp in the evening. In the morning, fine flakes like frost were on the ground. "What is it?" the Israelites asked.

Moses said, "It is the bread the Lord has given you to eat."

The Israelites called the bread manna. God told the people to collect just enough to eat for the day. He told them to collect twice as much on the sixth day, because the seventh day was the Sabbath.

The Israelites did not always follow God's instructions. God provided for His people, and He wanted them to trust Him and obey Him. The Israelites ate manna for 40 years.

The Israelites came to a camp with no water. "Give us something to drink," they told Moses.

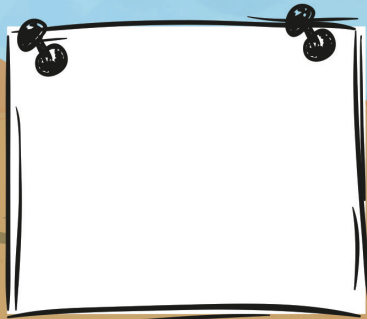
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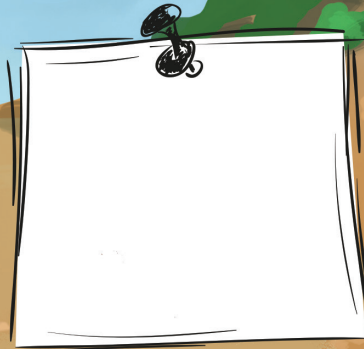
God showed Moses a rock and instructed him to hit it with his staff. Water came out of it, and the people drank.

Christ Connection: God provided water and manna for His people's physical hunger. Later, He provided His Son, Jesus, for our spiritual hunger. Jesus said, "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35). The Israelites needed bread to live for a little while, but whoever has Jesus will live forever.

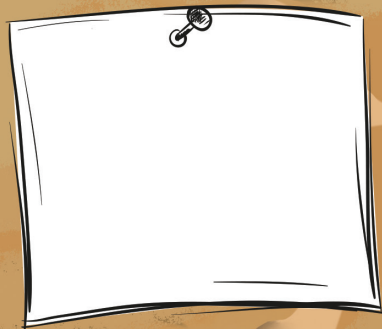
What's for Dinner? | Draw a dinner for each animal. Then draw your favorite food to eat.



COW



SQUIRREL



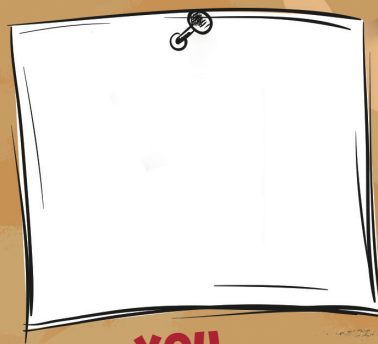
BAT



PIGEON



CHAMELEON



YOU

D	X	N	R	Y
C	I	S	E	G
B	L	T	O	A
A	W	D	V	P
	1	2	3	4



Gifts from Above | Use the coordinate key to decode the message.

(A4)	(D3)	(B3)	(A3)	(C1)	(A2)	(C3)	(C2)
(B4)	(B1)	(B1)		(A1)	(C3)		
(D2)	(C3)	(C3)	(A2)				

NAME: _____



the **GOSPEL** PROJECT

God Provided Manna

BIBLE STORY SUMMARY:

- God's people were hungry and thirsty in the wilderness.
- They accused God of leading them to the wilderness to die.
- God provided them with food and water.
- God gave special instructions for how to gather Manna.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

God provided water and manna for His people's physical hunger. Later, He provided His Son, Jesus, for our spiritual hunger. Jesus said, "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35). The Israelites needed bread to live for a little while, but whoever has Jesus will live forever.

KEY PASSAGE: Psalm 95:6-7

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What is worship? Worship is celebrating the greatness of God.

