

MANNA IN THE WILDERNESS

On the fifteenth day of the second month after the Israelites had escaped from Egypt, they left Elim and started through the western edge of the Sinai Desert in the direction of Mount Sinai. There in the desert, they started complaining to Moses and Aaron, "We wish we had died in Egypt. When we lived there, we could at least sit down and eat all the bread and meat we wanted. But you have brought us out here into this desert, where we are going to starve."

God told Moses, "I will send bread down from heaven like rain. Each day the people can go out and gather only enough for that day. That's how I will see if they obey me. But on the sixth day of each week they must gather and cook twice as much."

Moses and Aaron told the people, "This evening you will know that God was the one who rescued you from Egypt and in the morning you will see God's glorious power, because God has heard your complaints. Why should you grumble to us? Who are we?" Then Moses continued, "You will know it is God when there is meat each evening and more than enough bread each morning. God is really the one you are complaining about, not us—we are nobodies—but God has heard your laments."

Later... everyone looked out toward the desert and saw the bright glory of God in a cloud. God said to Moses, "I have heard my people complain. Now tell them that each evening they will have meat and each morning they will have more than enough bread. Then they will know that I am the Lord their God."

Later... everyone looked out toward the desert and saw the bright glory of God in a cloud. God said to Moses, "I have heard my people complain. Now tell them that each evening they will have meat and each morning they will have more than enough bread. Then they will know that I am the Lord their God."

That evening a lot of quail came and landed everywhere in the camp, and the next morning dew covered the ground. After the dew had gone, the desert was covered with thin flakes that looked like frost. The people had never seen anything like this, and they started asking each other, "What is it?"

Moses answered, "This is the bread that the Lord has given you to eat. God wants you to gather about two quarts for each person in your family—that should be more than enough." They did as they were told. Some gathered more and some gathered less, according to their needs, and none was left over. Moses told them not to keep any overnight. Some of them disobeyed, but the next morning what they kept was stinking and full of worms, and Moses was angry. Each morning everyone gathered as much as they needed, and in the heat of the day the rest melted.

On the sixth day of the week, everyone gathered enough to have four quarts, instead of two. When the leaders reported this to Moses, he told them that God had said, "Tomorrow is the Sabbath, a sacred day of rest in honor of me. So gather all you want to bake or boil, and make sure you save enough for tomorrow."

The people obeyed, and the next morning the food smelled fine and had no worms. "You may eat the food," Moses said. "Today is the Sabbath in honor of God, and there won't be any of this food on the ground today. You will find it there for the first six days of the week, but not on the Sabbath." A few of the Israelites did go out to look for some, but there was none. Then God said, "Moses, how long will you people keep disobeying my laws and teachings? Remember that I was the one who gave you the Sabbath. That's why on the sixth day I provide enough bread for two days. Everyone is to stay home and rest on the Sabbath." And so they rested on the Sabbath. The Israelites called the bread manna.



MOVIE NIGHT

Want to share the story of Moses and the People of Israel? Set up a movie night in your home to watch Dreamworks Studio's *The Prince of Egypt*. This movie is suitable for most elementary school aged children eight years and older.

