

SABBATH SCHOOL

Preteen Sabbath Instruction Program — Teacher's Outline

Level 3 • Unit 6 • Week 4

MOSES IN THE WILDERNESS

OBJECTIVE:

The story of Moses and the children of Israel in the wilderness illustrates how God provides for His people. But God wants us to learn to make requests to Him with trust and thankfulness.

ATTENTION GETTER:

Supplies: Clean tablecloth or sheet (can be plastic or cloth)
Box of frosted corn flakes type cereal
Paper cups

Do: Before students arrive, lay cloth on floor and sprinkle cereal on it. Hopefully there will be some who will say “what is this?” or something similar. This will be “manna” for the “children of Israel” to pick up and put in their “pots.” They can then eat their “manna” during the lesson.

Say: As you walked in, I noticed some of you had a surprised look on your face—trying to figure out what this was all about. It was as if you were wondering “what is this?” And that’s just what the children of Israel wondered a long time ago, when they saw some stuff on the ground.

Ask: Does anybody know what that stuff was? [Students respond.]

Say: That’s right! It was manna. I’m going to let you put some of this “manna” into a cup and you can eat it as a snack while you listen.

BIBLE LESSON:

Optional: To tell the story, you can use a flannel board set with Old Testament characters and background. Or you may choose to use a storybook that has pictures. You may also want to have

a picture of a quail.

Ask: Remember last time we talked about how God delivered the children of Israel from slavery in Egypt? Can anyone remember one of the plagues that God brought on Egypt so that the Pharaoh would let them go? [Students respond.]

Say: It took some incredible miracles, but finally because of the death of the firstborn Egyptians, the king of Egypt let them leave. But the story didn't end there, did it? God had to perform another miracle so that the Israelites could really leave Egypt behind.

Ask: Does anyone remember what other miracle was necessary? [Provide hints, if necessary, so that students remember the parting of the Red Sea.]

Say: We certainly learned from our last lesson that God delivers His people. He delivered the children of Israel from the slavery of Egypt, He delivers us from our problems and He delivers us from the slavery of sin.

Today we're going to talk about what happened to Israel after they left the Egyptians, the Pharaoh and the Egyptian army completely behind. The Israelites were happy and thankful. They sang songs and praised God! They knew He had provided a wonderful miracle to deliver them.

But the Israelites still needed God—very much! After the children of Israel left the Red Sea, they went into the Wilderness of Shur. And this wilderness area was a desert!

Ask: Have any of you visited a desert before? What is a desert like? [Students respond.]

Say: A desert is dry.

Ask: Would you expect to find an apple tree growing wild in the desert? [Students respond.] How about wild berries? [Students respond.]

Say: A lot of plants and trees can't grow in the desert because there isn't enough rain. Water is scarce in a desert.

The Israelites traveled for three days in the wilderness and found no water. Finally they came to Marah and there was water! But the water there was so bitter they couldn't drink it! The people began to complain to Moses, "What shall we drink?!" Moses talked with God and asked God to help them. God told him to cut down a tree and put it in the water. Just like that, the water was drinkable—sweet and delicious. Israel had a need and God provided.

A few weeks later, their food started to run out. Again the children of Israel started complaining. "Oh, that we had died in Egypt, when we had plenty to eat! You have brought us out into this wilderness to kill us with hunger!"

Ask: Now do you think they had it easy back in Egypt? [Students respond.]

Say: I don't think so either. Life was horrible and miserable for them as slaves in Egypt. But because they were hungry, they started thinking life was better back there—at least they had food to eat!

Ask: Do you ever complain when you're hungry?

Say: I'm afraid I've complained sometimes.

Ask: What do parents do when a child complains that he or she is hungry? [Students respond.]

Say: They probably give their child something to eat, don't they? They know that children need food to eat and they're happy to provide their child with food.

Ask: But do you think they're happy that their child complained? What do you think they might say? [Students respond.]

Say: They might tell their child to ask nicely, to be polite and say please and thank you. And that's what God wanted the children of Israel to do. He was like a father to them and, of course, He would give them food and water—by miracles! But it made Him unhappy that the Israelites couldn't ask in a trusting, thankful way.

God told Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you." He would provide them with food. Sure enough, that evening flocks of quail suddenly appeared.

Ask: Does anyone know what quail are? [Students respond. Show picture if possible.]

Say: They're a wild bird that's very good to eat. The people were able to catch them, roast them and have a tasty meal.

And the next morning God provided them a delicious breakfast. The people came out from their tents and found a small round substance on the ground. "What is it?" they said to each other.

And Moses told them, "This is the bread which the Lord has given you to eat."

Moses explained to them that they were to gather as much as they could eat in a day and no more. But some were greedy and took a lot more than they needed. They hoarded the manna in their tents, but overnight they were sorry! It became full of worms and smelled bad!

But on the sixth day—the day before the Sabbath—God told the people to collect enough food to last two days. God was providing His people with the Sabbath and He wanted them to be able to rest. So He provided another miracle. This time when the manna was kept

overnight, it didn't stink and turn bad! It was still tasty and delicious! The Bible tells us that its taste was like wafers made with honey.

In the New Testament Jesus talked about the miracles that God performed for the children of Israel in the wilderness. And Jesus explained that He was the bread of life. "He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst" (John 6:35). Not only does God provide physical food to fill our stomachs, but He provides us spiritual food that satisfies our deepest longings and needs.

God wants us to learn the lesson of trusting Him to provide what we need. Let's not complain and gripe like the Israelites. Instead, when we have needs, let's pray and ask God. And when God answers our prayers and provides, let's remember to be thankful to Him.

LESSON APPLICATION:

Supplies: Pieces of cardboard (one per student)
Wallpaper (woven textured, if possible) or gray construction paper
Oatmeal
Stick glue
Scissors

Make a miniature of manna in the camp of Israel. Make small pup tents by cutting pieces of wallpaper (or construction paper) with tabs on the bottom. Then glue tents in place onto the cardboard.

Put glue on the cardboard "ground" and then sprinkle oatmeal "manna" on it.

MUSIC:

Sing the following words to the tune of BINGO. Repeat, dropping the letter *m* when spelling *manna* and substituting a clap instead. Keep repeating, dropping another letter each time until M-A-N-N-A is just clapping.

The Israelites they wanted food
God gave His people manna.
M-A-N-N-A
M-A-N-N-A
M-A-N-N-A
God gave His people manna.

MEMORY VERSE:

Matthew 6:11 "Give us this day our daily bread."

family activity

THE POINT:

The story of Moses and the children of Israel in the wilderness shows how God provides. But God wants us to learn to ask with trust and thankfulness.

FAMILY TOGETHER TIME:

1. Discuss why complaining is not a good way to ask for something.
2. Read one or more of the following stories about Elisha: 2 Kings 4:1-7; 4:38-41; 6:1-7. Talk about how God provides for His people.
3. Talk about the things that God has provided for your family. Make special mention of them in family prayer.

MEMORY VERSE:

Matthew 6:11 "Give us this day our daily bread."