Preschool–Grade 6

Manna and Quail

Sunday School Lesson for 3rd to 5th Grade, 45–60 minutes

Main point: God provides what we need, so we can trust Him one day at a time, obey what He says, and thank Him instead of complaining.
Bible passage: Exodus 16. Read it before class.
Memory verse: "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." *Philippians 4:19 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each child (or one for every two children), paper and a pencil for each child, a whiteboard or large paper, a marker, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the board.

1. Opening game: Turn It Around (5–10 minutes)

Read a complaint. The first child to turn it into a thank-you gets a point. Examples: "We're having this for dinner again?" ("Thank You, God, that we have dinner.") "My shoes are old." "It's too hot outside." "I have to share my room." Ask: *Which is easier to say, the complaint or the thank-you? Why?* Say: "Today we will meet a whole crowd of people who complained, and see what God did."

2. Bible story: Bread from Heaven (15 minutes)

Kids open their Bibles to Exodus 16. When you reach a **Look up** line, a child finds the verse and reads it out loud. Tell the rest in your own words.

Hungry in the wilderness. God had brought Israel out of Egypt. On the fifteenth day of the second month after they left Egypt, they came to the wilderness of Sin, between Elim and Sinai (Exodus 16:1). *(Sin is just the name of the place.)* The whole congregation **murmured**, which means complained, against Moses and Aaron (16:2). **Look up Exodus 16:3.** They said it would have been better to stay in Egypt by the **flesh pots** (pots of meat), and that Moses and Aaron had brought them out "to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

God's answer. Look up Exodus 16:4. God said He would rain bread from heaven, and the people would gather "a certain rate every day," a day's share each day, so God could **prove** (test) them, to see if they would walk in His law. On the sixth day they would gather twice as much (16:5). Moses and Aaron told the people that their murmuring was really against the LORD (16:8). Then the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud (16:10). God said, "At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread" (16:12).

Quails and manna. At even the **quails**, small birds, came up and covered the camp (16:13). In the morning the dew lay all around the camp. When the dew went up, there on the ground lay a small round thing, as small as the **hoar frost**, frost on the ground (16:13–14). **Look up Exodus 16:15.** The people said, "It is manna," because they **wist not**, did not know, what it was. Moses said it was the bread the LORD had given them to eat.

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Just enough. God commanded each man to gather an **omer** for every person in his tent (16:16). The Bible says an omer is the tenth part of an **ephah**, a bigger measure (16:36). Some gathered more, some less. **Look up Exodus 16:18.** When they measured it, "he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack." Moses said to leave none until morning, but some did not listen. Their leftover manna "bred worms, and stank," and Moses was **wroth**, very angry (16:19–20). They gathered it every morning, and when the sun **waxed hot** (grew hot), it melted (16:21).

The sixth and seventh days. On the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for each man (16:22). Moses said the next day was the **sabbath**, a holy day of rest unto the LORD, so they should bake and boil what they needed and keep the rest until morning (16:23). This time it did not stink or have worms (16:24). **Look up Exodus 16:26.** Six days they gathered, but on the seventh day there was none. Some people went out anyway and found none, and the LORD asked, "How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?" (16:27–28). So the people rested on the seventh day (16:30).

Kept for later. Look up Exodus 16:31. Manna was "like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey." Aaron put an omer of manna in a pot and laid it up before the LORD, so later generations could see the bread God fed them with (16:32–34). **Look up Exodus 16:35.** Israel ate manna for forty years, until they came to the borders of Canaan.

3. Questions to ask (10 minutes)

Thinking questions (no single right answer; let kids talk)

1. The people had seen God bring them out of Egypt, but they still complained when they got hungry. Why do you think it is easy to forget what God has done?
2. God gave manna one day at a time, not a whole month at once (16:4, 16:19–21). Why do you think He did it that way?
3. Some people kept manna overnight, and some went out on the seventh day (16:20, 16:27). What do those choices show about trusting God?
4. God says He will supply all your **need** (Philippians 4:19). What is the difference between a need and a want?
5. What is one thing you complain about that you could thank God for instead?

Recall questions

1. What covered the camp in the evening? *(Quails, Exodus 16:13)*
2. How much manna did each person gather each day? *(An omer, 16:16)*
3. What did the manna taste like? *(Like wafers made with honey, 16:31)*

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4. Memory verse: Erase a Word (5 minutes)

Explain the old words: **supply** means give, **all your need** means everything you truly need, and **riches in glory** means God's great riches that never run out. Read the verse on the board together. Erase two words and read it again. Keep erasing two words at a time until the board is empty and the class can say it alone. Then kids say it to a partner.

5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "God fed His people every day for forty years. He provides for you too. God loves you. The Bible says: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means all of us have done wrong, and none of us is as good as God. Jesus said, 'I am the bread of life' (John 6:35, KJV). Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, which means God came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day (1 Corinthians 15:3–4). How do we obey the gospel? 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means to turn away from sin; our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are **buried with Jesus in baptism**, all the way under the water, in Jesus' name. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we come up to live a new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives the words (Acts 2:4). The Bible calls this being born again (John 3:5)."

Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

This week: catch yourself before you complain, and thank God for one thing instead. Pray each morning for what you need that day.

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6. Activity: Bible Look-Up Race (10–15 minutes)

Kids work in pairs with one Bible. Read a reference and a question. The first pair to find the verse and read the answer out loud wins the point.

1. Exodus 16:1: What was the name of the wilderness? *(The wilderness of Sin)*
2. Exodus 16:3: What did the people say they sat by in Egypt? *(The flesh pots)*
3. Exodus 16:10: Where did the glory of the LORD appear? *(In the cloud)*
4. Exodus 16:14: How small was the round thing on the ground? *(As small as the hoar frost)*
5. Exodus 16:20: What happened to the manna kept until morning? *(It bred worms, and stank)*
6. Exodus 16:21: What happened to the manna when the sun waxed hot? *(It melted)*
7. Exodus 16:22: How much did each man gather on the sixth day? *(Two omers)*
8. Exodus 16:33: Where did Aaron put an omer of manna? *(In a pot)*
   Early finishers can do the manna and quail word search or crossword (vbshq.com/bible-stories/manna).

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for giving us what we need every day. Forgive us for complaining. Help us trust You one day at a time and obey what You say. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks what manna was, or why there is no manna today: answer simply. The Bible tells us what it looked like and tasted like (Exodus 16:14, 16:31), and that God gave it until Israel came to Canaan (16:35). Don't guess past what the Bible says.

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