Preschool–Grade 6

Manna and Quail

Sunday School Lesson for Preteens (Ages 11–12), 45–60 minutes

Main point: God provides what we need one day at a time. Trusting Him means obeying what He says and giving thanks instead of complaining.
Bible passage: Exodus 16. Students read Exodus 16:1–21 and 16:22–35 out loud themselves.
Memory verse: "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." *Philippians 4:19 (KJV)* and "Give us this day our daily bread." *Matthew 6:11 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each student, paper or a notebook and a pen for each student, a whiteboard and a marker, and one take-home sheet for each student.
Before class: read Exodus 16 and John 6:31–35. Write both memory verses on the board. Decide who reads which verses, or go around the room a few verses each.

1. Opening game: Save It or Trust It? (5–10 minutes)

Name one side of the room "save it" and the other side "trust it." Read each situation. Students walk to the side that shows what they would really do, then explain. 1) You get money for your birthday: spend some, or keep every dollar in case? 2) A friend says, "I'll pick you up tomorrow." Do you make a backup plan? 3) Your parents say dinner is coming, but you're hungry now. Do you grab a snack anyway? Ask: *Why is it hard to trust someone for tomorrow when you can't see it yet?* Say: "God taught a whole nation to trust Him for tomorrow, one morning at a time."

2. Bible story: Students Read It (15 minutes)

Read out loud: Exodus 16:1–21. Students take turns, a few verses each. Old words in this passage:

- **the wilderness of Sin** (16:1): the name of a place, not the word for wrongdoing
- **murmured** (16:2): complained, grumbled
- **flesh pots** (16:3): pots of meat; **to the full**: as much as they wanted
- **a certain rate every day** (16:4): a day's share each day; **prove**: test
- **at even** (16:6, 16:13): in the evening; **flesh** (16:12): meat
- **quails** (16:13): small birds; **the host**: the whole camp
- **hoar frost** (16:14): frost on the ground; **wist not** (16:15): did not know
- **omer** (16:16): a measure, the tenth part of an ephah (16:36); **mete** (16:18): measure
- **had nothing over … had no lack** (16:18): no extra, and nothing missing
- **wroth** (16:20): very angry; **waxed hot** (16:21): grew hot

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Read out loud: Exodus 16:22–35. Old words in this passage:

- **rulers of the congregation** (16:22): the leaders of the people
- **sabbath** (16:23): a holy day of rest unto the LORD; **seethe**: boil
- **remaineth over** (16:23): is left over; **lay up**: keep
- **bade** (16:24): told; **abide** (16:29): stay
- **coriander seed** (16:31): a small round seed used in cooking; **wafers**: thin cakes
- **for your generations** (16:32): for the people who come after you
- **before the Testimony** (16:34): before God. The testimony is what God would later give Moses to put in the ark (Exodus 25:16), and Hebrews 9:4 says the ark held "the golden pot that had manna."
- **a land inhabited** (16:35): a land where people lived

3. Questions to ask (15 minutes)

1. Israel had just seen God bring them out of Egypt, yet they complained, "ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger" (16:3). Moses said their murmuring was really against the LORD (16:8). Why is complaining about our situation really a trust problem with God?
2. God said the daily gathering would "prove" His people, whether they would walk in His law (16:4). What was God testing? How does He test our trust today?
3. "He that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack" (16:18). What does that teach about enough? Where do you feel like you never have enough?
4. Some kept manna overnight (16:20) and some went out on the seventh day (16:27). Both were the same problem in two directions. What was it?
5. Jesus taught us to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread" (Matthew 6:11). Why does Jesus have us ask for today, not for a whole year?
6. In John 6:31–35, the people bring up the manna, and Jesus says, "I am the bread of life." What do you think He meant?

4. Memory verse (5 minutes)

Old words in Philippians 4:19: **supply** means give; **all your need** means everything you truly need (not everything you want); **his riches in glory** means God's riches that never run out; **by Christ Jesus** means through Jesus. Read both verses together. Then students cover one phrase at a time and quiz a partner. Say Philippians 4:19 this week; keep working on Matthew 6:11 next week too.

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5. What this means for us (5–10 minutes)

Say: "When the people brought up the manna, Jesus said, 'I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst' (John 6:35, KJV). Manna fed their bodies for a day. Jesus gives eternal life. God loves you, and 'all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, God who came as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures' (1 Corinthians 15:3–4, KJV). We obey the gospel the way Peter preached it: '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) We **repent**, turning from sin, and our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are buried with Jesus by baptism in His name, all the way under the water. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we rise to walk in newness of life, a brand-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 utterance, which means as He gives the words (Acts 2:4). Jesus called this being born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5)."
Pray with the students, 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.

6. Activity: Journal (10 minutes)

Each student writes privately. No one has to share. Write these three prompts on the board:

1. What do I complain about most? What could I thank God for in that same place?
2. What am I worried about for tomorrow that I need to trust God with today?
3. Write a short prayer asking God for your daily bread, and thanking Him for what He has already given. If there is time, invite a few volunteers to share one sentence.

This week: for one day, every time you start to complain, stop and thank God for something instead. Pray Matthew 6:11 each morning.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for giving us our daily bread. Forgive us for complaining. Teach us to trust You for today and for tomorrow, and to obey what You say. Thank You for Jesus, the bread of life. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a student asks what manna was: the Bible tells us what it looked like and tasted like (Exodus 16:14, 16:31), that it melted when the sun grew hot (16:21), and that God gave it for forty years, until Israel came to Canaan (16:35). Stay with what the Bible says.

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