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GOD PROVIDES IN THE DESERT

Theme : God has control over his world to provide for the needs of his people

AIM:

To understand that though believers may go through difficult situations, God is in control.

TEACHER PREPERATION:

Background :

The Israelites were slaves in Egypt for many years. God called Moses to lead His people out of Egypt. Pharaoh refused to let them go at first. God sent 10 plagues and Pharaoh finally relented and let them leave. Pharaoh later sends his army after the Israelites. With the Red Sea before them, God parts the Red Sea and saves the Israelites from the Egyptian hands. God delivered His people from slavery through Moses and the Israelites are enroute to the promised land through the desert. This is the background from which the lesson begins.

INTRODUCTION ACTIVITY

1. Consider bringing in a shallow aluminum tray filled with sand (or a picture of a desert). Have them imagine walking in it for one day and then 40 years. Ask them to describe the environment and the people's mood. How would this compare to their life in Egypt?
2. Ask students to visualize a desert. Imagine walking through the desert without anything else to do. How long would they be able to handle to it?

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Exodus 16:1–16

AIM:

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The whole Israelite community set out from Elim and came to the Desert of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had come out of Egypt. ² In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. ³ The Israelites said to them, “If only we had died by the LORD’s hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death.” ⁴ Then the LORD said to Moses, “I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions. ⁵ On the sixth day they are to prepare what they bring in, and that is to be twice as much as they gather on the other days.” ⁶ So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, “In the evening you will know that it was the LORD who brought you out of Egypt, ⁷ and in the morning you will see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your grumbling against him. Who are we, that you should grumble against us?” ⁸ Moses also said, “You will know that it was the LORD when he gives you meat to eat in the evening and all the

bread you want in the morning, because he has heard your grumbling against him. Who are we? You are not grumbling against us, but against the LORD.”

⁹ Then Moses told Aaron, “Say to the entire Israelite community, ‘Come before the LORD, for he has heard your grumbling.’”

¹⁰ While Aaron was speaking to the whole Israelite community, they looked toward the desert, and there was the glory of the LORD appearing in the cloud.

¹¹ The LORD said to Moses, ¹² “I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them, ‘At twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God.’”

¹³ That evening quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. ¹⁴ When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor.

¹⁵ When the Israelites saw it, they said to each other, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, “It is the bread the LORD has given you to eat. ¹⁶ This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Everyone is to gather as much as they need. Take an omer (about 3.6 liters) for each person you have in your tent.’”



Introduction

Many of us have not experienced true hunger. If we are hungry, we wait til the next meal time or just ask our parents. In other parts of the world, hunger is a true problem. Many have hard time trying to find food. We take for granted how blessed we are that we do not have to struggle for our basic needs. Yet we may find ourselves arguing with our parents over the clothes they choose for us or the food that is on our plates. In today's lesson, we find the Israelites in a similar situation.

Bible Exploration

The Israelites had been delivered from the clutches of Pharaoh and were wandering in the wilderness. It wasn't too long before the people forgot what the Lord had done for them and began to complain. Instead of remembering the great things God had done to free them from slavery, they complained about their hunger. The Israelites focused on their current troubles yet forgot what God had just done in the recent past for encouragement. Was it God's intention to deliver His people out of Egypt so that they could die in the wilderness?

God told Moses he would "rain bread from heaven". God provided specific instructions on gathering the manna. The Israelites were to gather enough food for that day. No more, no less. Each day God would give them that day's food. They were to trust him each day for the very food they ate. On the sixth day, He would provide two day's worth of food because they were supposed to rest on the next day due to the rules

of the Sabbath. If one of them was mistrustful, and tried to stock up, the food would melt or rot away.

There are two lessons that we learn from this Bible passage. The first is that the Israelites never spoke to God directly. They complained to Moses and Aaron. They did not have a relationship with God. Secondly, we see the Israelites soon forgetting how God delivered them from Egypt and instead complaining about not having food. They focused on their immediate need but forgot about God.

The Lord heard their grumbling yet provided food for them: quail at night and manna in the morning for the next forty years. We see a compassionate God who took care of His people. His wonderful world yielded to his power and provided food for his chosen people.

Did you know?

Moses journeyed to the Promised Land with an estimated total of 2-3 million people.

About 40 years ago, members of the Mar Thoma Church started migrating to North America and Europe from India.

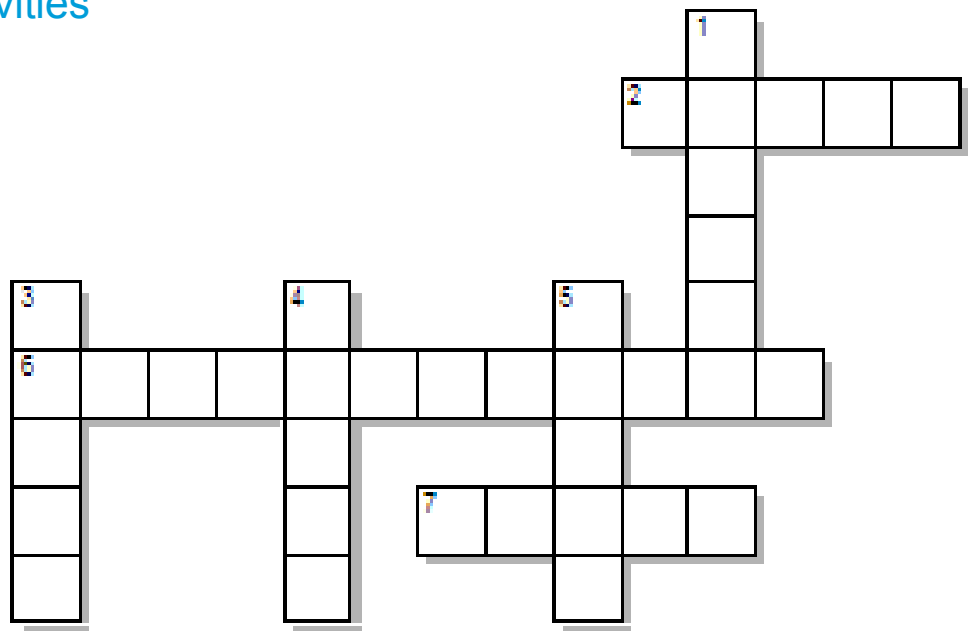
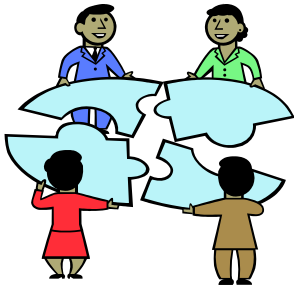
Today, there are over 66 parishes, 13 congregations, and 70 clergy in the North America and Europe Diocese.

What an amazing story!

How long is 40 Years?

Identify something that is about 40 years old. How about something that happened 40 years ago?

Activities



DOWN

- 1, What was the name of the Promised Land?
3. Israelites were allowed to gather Manna twice as much on the _____ day
4. God said to Moses "I will rain down _____ from heaven
5. 'Desert of Sin' is between Elim and _____

ACROSS

2. The Israelites complained to _____ and Moses.
6. God tested Israelites to see whether they will follows His _____
7. God provided _____ in the evening.

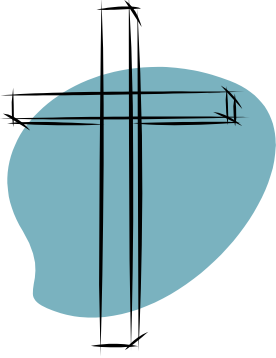
Let's Review



1. Why did the Israelites grumble and complain?
2. How did God test the Israelites through the directions He provided them when gathering manna?
3. What two lessons do we learn from the Israelites?



Values For Life



- Let us not complain but rather be thankful for the blessings that God showered upon us.
- Let us seek to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ rather than hearing about that relationship from others.

Faith In Action

- Do we thank God for all the blessings He has provided us with?
- Do you have a relationship with Jesus Christ?



Memory Verse

While Aaron was speaking to the whole Israelite community, they looked toward the desert, and there was the glory of the LORD appearing in the cloud.

Exodus 16:10



Closing Prayer

- Let us thank God, the great provider, for all His blessings in our life
- Pray for those who are less fortunate than we are, who are hungry and without basic needs

