

**TITLE AND NUMBER:** 196. God's patience, God's provision



**REFERENCE AND KEY VERSE(S):** Exodus 16:11-15

The Lord said to Moses, '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."' That evening quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor. 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.'

**LOOKING FURTHER:** Exodus 34:6; Philippians 4:6; Ephesians 3:20

### What does this Bible passage tell us?

This incident took place quite early in the Israelites' journey from Egypt to the Promised Land. God had just caused the Red Sea to part so they could escape from the Egyptian army and then he had miraculously made bitter water sweet so they could drink it. But already, they seem to have forgotten all God has done for them. They even wish they could go back to being slaves in Egypt because at least there they had plenty of food. They grumble about God and claim they are going to starve.

God must have felt very frustrated with His chosen people. After all, we read that they had left Egypt with their flocks and herds, so they were not without sources of food and milk. But, because the journey was a bit difficult, they looked at the past through rose-tinted spectacles, remembering it as much better than it had been. They demanded that God should sort their troubles out for them.

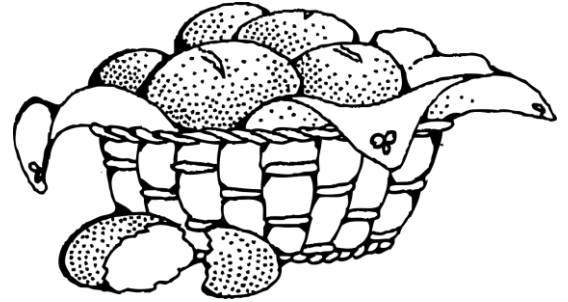
I am sure you and I would have been very annoyed with the people. However, the Bible tells us that God is 'slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness' (Exodus 34:6). He did not get angry but was patient with the people and responded to their cries. On top of everything He had already done to free them from slavery, He gave them even more – fresh food every day. What was their first response? Not to give thanks but to demand, 'What is this stuff?'

God is patient with His people and generous in His provision for us. Paul writes that 'in every situation' we should 'with thanksgiving, present our requests to God' (Philippians 4:6) and that God is 'able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine' (Ephesians 3:20). That is as true for us today as it was for the Israelites in their journey through the wilderness.

### Reflections:

- Think about how you can pray 'with thanksgiving.' This might be thanking God for the way He has answered previous prayers or thanking Him in faith that He is going to answer your next one - even if it does not always happen in the way you want it to.
- Why not keep a diary of answered prayers that you can use to help you pray with thanksgiving?
- Have you been grumbling at God? Thank Him for His patience with you.

Write or draw something you read in this Bible Study that stood out to you.



Do you have any questions about this week's Bible Study?



How does this week's message apply to your life?



What can we learn about God from this week's passage?



What would you like to ask God this week?



Has God responded to your prayers this week in the way you had hoped for? It's okay to talk to God about this.

