

A new way of living

Bible Readings

OT

Ex 16:9-26

Epistle

2 Corinthians 8:10-15

Gospel

John 6:25-35

This session creates opportunities for people of all ages to:

- affirm our trust in God to provide for us as individuals, households and as a church.
- recognise the good things God has already given us as individuals and as a church.

Main idea

In Week 2 we thought about how although the Israelites had been set free from slavery they still needed to think and act as free people, to learn to trust God and to learn about his provision and the meaning of obedience. In this story of the manna we read about God's provision for Israel in the desert and the whole new way of living and trusting that this gift of manna involved. We learn that God provides for our needs, just as he provided food for the Israelites in the desert. Our response to an apparent shortage of resources should be trust in the God who is with us.

Background

Following the miraculous escape from Egypt, Exodus 16 finds the people of Israel out in the desert. They have freedom but are hungry and thirsty – and they begin to grumble against Moses and God. They may not look back on Egypt through rose coloured spectacles but at least back there they knew what they knew. Here in the harsh, unforgiving desert they are vulnerable and needy. God's answer is to provide his people with what they need, demonstrating to them who he is and affirming that he is indeed with his people. The people need to learn trust in God's day to day provision. There is no room for hoarding and storing; and in God's provision the poor, the sick the weak do not go hungry.

This story of the manna teaches important lessons about how God meets the needs of his people and wants them to live. We can learn much about how our attitude to handling the blessing of money and possessions needs to be brought into obedience to God and trust in his provision. Our attitudes to our needs and our resources should be shaped by our trust in God's caring presence with us as individuals and as a church.

We are called to:

- remember all God that has done for us in the past
- handle all our possessions and resources in a way that acknowledges they come from him
- live in trust that God will provide for our needs.

Warming Up, Warming Down

Activities for this week include

- Running Out: three short and simple dramatic sketches to set the theme.
- What is It? A game to introduce the idea of manna
- The Ration Basket: an intergenerational activity on needs and wants
- Holding the blessing
- Balloon thanks
- Manna jars: remembering God's goodness to us.