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“ ALTHOUGH WE ARE BROKEN PEOPLE IN NEED OF RESTORATION, GOD HAS ALWAYS COME THROUGH. ”

Inspire (for parents)

Losing sight of God's past provision in a time of waiting can be quite easy, especially when the waiting is for something that seems necessary. This is also true for my kids, who so quickly seem to forget the many times when we not only met their needs, but also gave them more than they expected. It can be difficult, however, to choose to disappoint them and to wait for them to come to some sort of acceptance that there is a better path to fulfillment than having all of their “wants” met, not just their needs.

Similarly, I have seen how God has provided for all our basic needs of life, yet the lure to want to find a way to get what I want instead of staying on God's perfect path is a great temptation. While our family of five lived in a small condo, I would often find myself on the computer searching for a bigger home, instead of playing with my kids. Several times I would realize what I was doing and would, somewhat begrudgingly, go play with them. I then realized that my focus was misdirected, and, out of my pain and frustration, I wanted to change

this circumstance God clearly placed our family in. Our family's journey has felt aimless at times, and we haven't always had the best response to it. However, although we are broken people in need of restoration, God has always come through, and our trust continues to build on the path He is directing us toward while meeting our needs and, most times, our wants as well.

by Stephanie Barber

Getting Started

Scripture: Exodus 15:22–17:7
(Life in the Desert)

Main Point: God Knows What We Need

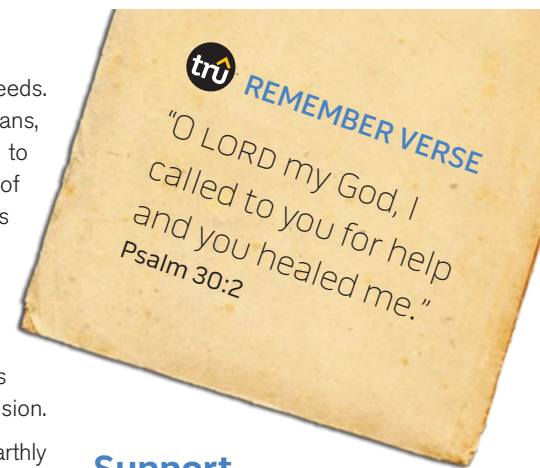
This resource is designed to allow your family to have time in God's Word **before your children attend church**. Because God's plan is for parents to be the primary spiritual nurturers of their children's faith, we know that as you grow spiritually, your children will grow spiritually as well.

Equip (for parents)

In the wilderness, God met the Israelites' needs. He sent down manna (which literally means, “What is it?”) to sustain them. According to the Bible, manna had the sweet taste of honey. The book of Numbers describes how the Israelites ground the manna and pounded it into cake. But, the Israelites were commanded by God to collect only what they needed for that day. This was God's way of challenging His people to be fully dependent on His provision.

Many years later, during Jesus' earthly ministry, He continuously referred to Himself as the “bread of life,” pointing them back to the manna God provided in the wilderness. Jesus said, “I am the bread of life. Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever” (John 6:48–51).

In the desert, God provided for Moses and the Israelites' physical sustenance. He gave them what was needed to live on earth. However, Jesus provides us with something much greater: eternal life. God calls us to be people who are wholly dependant on Him each day. He asks us to be children who trust in Him, believing that He knows what we need.



Support (for parents & kids)

JUST FOR FUN, before you read this part of The Big God Story, place a jar or a clear plastic container filled with bread, cereal, or cookies where everyone in your family can see it. Then read through the biblical account of God's provision in **Exodus 16**. After your reading, ask your children to tell you their favorite part of this passage, and then share with them your favorite part. Talk with them about how they might have felt if they saw food literally rain down from heaven. Ask them about how that might encourage them to trust God. Then point out the container of food, and tell them it is a reminder of the way God met the needs of His people.

When you are finished, share with your children that what they just heard is a part of The Big God Story in the Bible, and they will hear more about God's provision in church this week. Close your time by praying and thanking God that He hears us when we cry out to Him, and He meets our needs.