

God is Provider (5 weeks)



Outcomes:

At the completion of this module students will understand:

- The definition of 'provider'
- The definition of 'faithful'
- That God is a faithful provider
- That we can always depend on him
- That we can trust God because he is faithful

Related topics for Science, Social Studies and Health:

The sea; sea creatures

Link between "God is Provider" and the topics:

God created water on the second day of creation. He created sea creatures on Day 5. The sea provides food and medicines for our use.

Values:

Faith; care for the environment; generosity, thankfulness

God is Provider

Week 1

God is a faithful provider. We can always depend on Him.

Bible references

Exodus 15:22-27 Provision of water in the desert. Bitter water made sweet.

Luke 11:5-13 Ask and keep on asking

Introduction

The Bible tells us that God is faithful.

Does anyone know what that means?

Yes, it means that God will do everything he says he will do. God keeps all his promises.

What are some examples of promises from God?

God tells us that he will love and care for us. He tells us that he will provide food for us.

The Bible also says that God is our 'provider'.

Does anyone know what 'provider' means?

Yes, it means that God will give us the things we need. Sometimes God might not provide the thing we need straight away. We have to have patience and wait for him to provide.

Bible Lesson: Water in the desert

God's people, the Israelites, were travelling through the desert. They had been prisoners in the land of Egypt, under the cruel Pharaoh, but God had chosen Moses to lead them out of Egypt to a new land.

This story begins just three days after God had opened the Red Sea, and the Israelites had crossed the sea on dry land, escaping from Pharaoh's army. Now they were walking through the desert with all their animals. It was hot, dry and sandy and they had been travelling three days with no water. They would have to find water soon or they would die.

Moses prayed to God. They came to a place called Marah. There was water here. The people rushed to get a drink. But when they tasted the water it was too bitter to drink. A bitter taste is not very nice at all. Some plants taste bitter. Many bitter plants are poisonous. The people knew this, and knew they couldn't drink the water. The taste may have come from a poisonous plant growing in the water, and it could make them very sick.

The people were angry with Moses for leading them to this place. "What are we going to drink?" they said.

Moses was thirsty too, but he prayed to the Lord again. He knew that God was leading them and that he would take care of them.

God showed Moses a tree. God said to Moses, "Cut down this tree and throw it into the water."

Moses did exactly as God said. He cut down the tree and threw it into the water. Moses tasted the water. The water was now sweet instead of bitter. He told the people to drink. They drank as much as they wanted.

The Israelites had just learned their first lesson. They must trust God even when things seem very bad. They now understood a little more about God's faithfulness.

The Israelites went on with their journey. They came to a place called Elim and they rested there. There were twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees in Elim. They put up their tents in the shade of the palm trees and they had plenty of water to drink.

Questions

1. Why were the Israelites traveling in the desert?
2. Why did they complain to Moses?
3. What miracle did God do for them?
4. Was God faithful in providing water?
5. Did they have to wait for God to provide the water?
6. Why do you think God didn't provide water for them on the first day? (He wanted them to trust Him.)

Discussion

Sometimes God doesn't answer our prayers straight away, because he wants us to learn to trust him. That is, to believe that he will look after us, even if things are not going well.

Read Luke 11:5-13 Ask and keep on asking

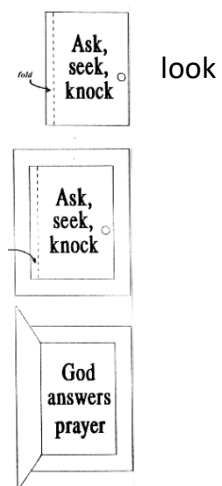
God tells us to:

1. Ask (to pray to him)
2. Seek (Keep looking to God for an answer.)
3. Knock (Don't give up. Keep on asking and believing that God will answer you.)

Activity

Make a card with an opening door.

- a) Make a door from coloured paper.
- b) Attach door to white card along left-hand edge.
- c) Open the door and find a message inside.



God is Provider

Week 2

God is a faithful provider. We can always depend on Him.

Bible references

Exodus 16 Provision of quails and manna.

Job 36:26-31 The greatness of God; His faithfulness in providing through the creation.

Bible Lesson: God provides quails and manna in the desert

The people of Israel had seen God provide for them by a miracle. They were travelling through the desert to a new land, but had run out of water. God did a miracle for them and turned bitter water to sweet water that they could drink. God showed his faithfulness again six weeks later. This time the people were desperately hungry. They forgot about God's faithfulness in providing water just six weeks before. They forgot to trust in God. They started complaining. Instead of telling God they were hungry and asking him to help them, they complained to Moses.

"Why did you bring us here?" they said. "We wish we had stayed in Egypt. At least we had food there."

Moses prayed to God. God spoke to Moses. God said, "I will send meat in the evening, and in the morning I will send you bread from heaven."

Then Moses talked to the people. "God will take care of you," he said. "Tomorrow He will send you bread from heaven."

That evening birds like small chickens, called quails, came in large numbers to the camp. The people were able to catch them and eat them. That night God sent a layer of dew over the camp site. When the layer of dew evaporated in the sun, the ground was covered with fine white flakes.

The next morning the people hurried out of their tents to see the bread which God had promised. They saw the small round flakes all over the ground. The people shouted, "Manna, manna?" In their language it meant "What is it, what is it?" Because they didn't know what it was the people called the food 'manna', but Moses said, "This is the bread that the Lord has given you."

The people gathered the manna in baskets. It tasted sweet. Every day manna came from heaven, and every day the people ate it.

Each person was instructed to gather as much as they needed for that day. God wanted them to trust Him each day for their daily food. Some were greedy and disobedient and wanted to

gather extra, "just in case God didn't provide tomorrow," they thought. But the next day they found that the extra bread they had gathered had worms in it.

On the sixth day they were allowed to gather twice as much and save it for the next day, because the seventh day was a day of rest. When they ate the manna on the seventh day there were no worms in it.

Some people did not listen to Moses and did not gather extra food on the sixth day. These people had nothing to eat on the seventh day.

God kept providing for his people in this way for forty years. He kept providing in this way until they reached the new land where there was plenty of food.

God has promised to provide for the whole of His creation. Read Job 36:26-31 (Good News Bible.)

Some people in certain parts of the world have too much food, while in other places people have too little. God expects people with too much to share with those who have too little. That is another way God provides...through people!

God is Provider

Week 3

God is a faithful provider. He provides everything we need.

Bible reference

Matthew 6:25 - 37

Introduction

Ask the children if they know what it means to worry.

Worrying is when we keep thinking about our problems instead of trusting God to provide for all of our needs.

We learned last week how the Israelites kept worrying about water and food instead of trusting that God would take care of them.

What are some of the things that we worry about?

What should we do?

Bible Lesson: God cares for the birds

Read Matthew 6:25-34

God does not want us to worry about what we eat, drink or anything else. God will take care of our needs. Let's think about birds. They do not worry about what they are going to eat at all, but every day when they wake up they are about to find the insects that they need to eat. God does not let them go hungry. Since we are God's most precious treasure then He will not let us go hungry either. Worrying will not add any time to our lives, but will only take away from the time that we could spend serving God.

Matthew 6:28-30

God takes care of the flowers of the Earth just like He takes care of the birds. Flowers do not have to do anything to make themselves bloom, they just do. God makes sure that they get enough sunlight and rain to grow. He cares about them and takes care of them. God also cares about us and takes care of us. We do not need to worry about the clothes we wear because God will provide for our needs.

Read Matthew 6:31-32

Here the Bible is telling us that the Lord knows what we need. How amazing is that? God knows exactly what we need before we even ask for it.

Read Matthew 6:33-34

God wants us to seek His kingdom and when we do we will learn more about Him and will follow His will for our lives. When we are seeking God, He will make sure that we have everything that we need. He loves us and will provide for our needs.

God provides for us through His creation, but there are times when God can do a miracle, even though we are not living in the Bible days.

Art/Craft

Make a 'God is Provider' group collage. Children can draw birds, flowers, animals and people. They can cut them out and stick them on the collage, with the Bible verse Matthew 6:26.

God is Provider

Week 4

God is a faithful provider. He wants us to trust Him.

Bible references

Exodus 17 Water from a rock.

Psalms 119:86 All God's commands can be trusted.

Matthew 6:25-27 Look at the birds

Revision

- How did God miraculously provide for the people of Israel as they travelled through the desert?
- What did the people learn about God as a result of these miracles?
- Would you expect the people to have trusted God the next time they found themselves with no food or water?
- Do people always trust God even though they know He is faithful?
- What does God say about these things in Matthew 6:25-27?

Activity: Trust exercise

Prepare a selection of foods in glass containers.

EXAMPLE

1st glass: lemon juice

2nd glass: breakfast cereal

3rd glass: milk

4th glass: spicy sauce

5th glass: salt water

Establish which foods are liked/disliked. Ask one child to volunteer to be the taster. The taster must wear a blind-fold, and TRUST someone to give him a sample of a pleasant tasting food.

After the exercise, ask the taster whether he/she found it easy to trust.

Why is trusting not always easy?

Can we trust God?

Bible Lesson: Water from a rock

God's people, the Israelites were travelling from Egypt to a special land which God had promised to them. Much of the country over which they travelled was desert. Occasionally they would come across some water. They would drink as much as they needed, and then replenish the supply of fresh water in their skin bags. This time, however, they had run out of water, and there was no water in sight. The people were thirsty. They were also afraid of dying there in the desert. They had forgotten about the time God had provided water for them just three days after crossing the Red Sea. They had forgotten about the bitter water that God had made sweet to drink. They started complaining to Moses.

"Have we come out here in the desert to die?" they asked.

Moses prayed to God. God spoke back to Moses:

"Take your stick and go to the big rock at Mount Sinai. Hit the rock with a stick and water will come out of it. Then the people and the animals will be able to drink."

Moses did as God had said. Water gushed out of the rock and all the people drank as much as they needed.

When we trust God He always gives us what we need. He never lets us down. God is faithful.

Activity

Fill in the missing word:

1. God always gives us the things we need. He is our _____ .
2. Water came out of the _____.
3. Moses hit the rock with a _____.
4. The Israelites found it difficult to _____ God, even though they had seen Him do great miracles before.
5. Jesus said, "Do not worry about food or _____."

God is Provider

Week 4

God is a faithful provider. He wants us to trust in Him.

Bible references

Psalm 56:3 I put my trust in You.

Psalm 20:7 We trust in the power of the Lord our God. (GNB)

Matthew 17:24 – 27 Money from a fish

Bible Lesson: Money from a Fish

The twelve disciples travelled around the country with Jesus. They watched Him heal people. They listened to Him tell stories about God's kingdom. Jesus and the disciples needed many things, but Jesus always provided.

The disciples could have worried about food and clothes. After all, they didn't work as fishermen or tax-collectors any more. They didn't go to work each day to earn money. But Jesus told them not to worry. "Your Heavenly Father knows what you need," he said.

Jesus always made sure the disciples had the things they needed. He even provided money to pay their taxes. This was the money everyone had to pay to the king.

One day, a tax-collector came to Peter. The tax-collector said, "Does Jesus pay taxes?"

Peter answered, "Yes, Jesus pays taxes."

Peter went to Jesus to ask about the tax money, but Jesus already knew what Peter was going to ask.

"Go down to the lake," said Jesus, "and do some fishing. Open the mouth of the first fish you catch. Inside the mouth of the fish you will find a coin. Take that coin and give it to the tax-collector. That will be enough to pay taxes for all of us."

Peter did as Jesus said, and sure enough, Peter pulled up a fish with a coin in its mouth. God had once again provided the money that they needed.

Brainstorm

When we find it difficult to trust God, we can remember how faithful He has been in the past. Think of as many Bible stories as possible which remind us of God's faithfulness. Think of times when God has been faithful to you or your family in the past.

Activity

Fill in the missing words:

1. Jesus said, "Pull up the _____ fish you catch and open its mouth."
2. The tax-collector asked _____ whether Jesus paid taxes.

3. Peter pulled up a fish with a _____ in its mouth.
4. This story shows us that God always _____ for His children.

Art

Draw a large fish with its mouth open. Make a coin rubbing, cut it out and stick it in the mouth of the fish.