



God Sends Manna

Exodus 16:1-36

Cody leaned hard against the ship rail and stared down into the Caribbean Sea. "Man, living on a boat is rough!" he thought to himself. "No cable TV, no place to skateboard, and all we ever eat is fish! I'd give anything for a grande burrito with hot sauce!"

Just then, Matey stepped out of the Captain's cabin and looked around the deck. He spied Cody and called out, "Ahoy there, Cody!"

"How's it going, Dude?" Cody asked half-heartedly.

"I'm fine, sir, but, you're in a bit of trouble," Matey answered, "Cap'n Billy told you to wash all the dishes, pots and pans, but the sink is still full of dishes!"

Cody scrunched up his nose in disgust. "Oh man, I don't feel like doing dishes. That kitchen always smells like fish!"

"That's because we had fish pancakes for breakfast!" Matey explained.

"I know! I'm sick of eating fish. Dude, why don't we ever have Taco Bell?!"

"You should never grumble about what you eat, sir. You should be grateful to God for the food He sends to you." Matey lectured.

Cody was confused. "What? God didn't send me that fish. I saw Simeon catch a whole mess of flounder just yesterday." He said as he pointed toward the spot of the boat where they kept the fishing poles and nets.

"Well, he caught them but God provided them. God always sends us what we need. I'll show ya in the Traysure map!" Matey opened the Treasure Chest and removed Captain Billy's black Bible. "Remember how God saved the Israelites?" he asked Cody who had plopped down cross-legged on the deck.

"Yeah dude, God parted the Red Sea!" Cody remembered proudly.

"That's Red Sea, sir." Matey corrected as he sat down next to Cody.

"Right!" Cody agreed. "And the Israelites crossed over to the other side and they were, like, totally safe!"

"They were safe and free but they also found themselves in the middle of a hot sandy desert without food." Matey explained.

"But they were just happy to be free and not have to be Pharaoh's slaves anymore, right?" Cody asked.

Matey shook his head as he turned to Exodus 16 in the Bible. "Actually they were miserable. The Bible says: They grumbled and complained against Moses and said, 'Why did you bring us out of Egypt? Now we're going to starve to death in the desert!'"

"Wow, they should have been happy that God had saved them!" Cody said.

"That's what Moses thought, but God always takes care of His people, even if they grumble!" Matey looked back down at the Bible and read, "Then the Lord said to Moses, 'I will rain down bread from heaven for you'"

"Cool! What did God do, drop loaves of Wonder Bread from the sky?" Cody asked, picturing bags of bread pouring out of the sky like big drops of rain.

"That would make Him the God of Wonder Bread!" Matey laughed. "But, no He didn't send loaves. He sent manna! It's a kind of bread. The Bible says thin flakes of bread like frost appeared on the ground."

"God sent Frosted Flakes?! They're GREEAAAT!" Cody exclaimed, punching his fist into the air. "Did He pour milk down from heaven, too?"

"No! It wasn't cereal. It was manna, bread!" Matey clarified.

"Banana bread?!" Cody asked.

"Not Banana bread! Manna, manna!" Matey repeated loudly.

"Man alive, that's cool." Cody joked. "Did they taste like nachos?"

Matey explained, "They tasted like wafers made with honey."

"Sounds delicious! Did the Israelites fill their tents with manna?"

"No, they were only allowed to keep as much as they could eat for one day."

"Dude, I'd be stuffin' my pockets with those heavenly nachos!" said Cody.

"If you did that, the next day your pockets would stink and be filled with maggots." Matey stated matter-of-factly.

Cody coughed in disgust. "Ewww! Dude, that's totally gross!"

Matey continued. "That's what the Bible says would happen, sir. You see, God didn't want them to store up food. He wanted them to depend on Him every day. However, on the day before the Sabbath, God would send twice as much. That way they wouldn't have to collect manna on the day of rest."

"But wouldn't it get stinky?" Cody asked.

"Nope, that was the only time that the manna bread would last two days." Matey explained.

"Oh, it's like the Lord's prayer, 'Give us this day our daily bread!'

"That's right. And the night before God first sent the manna, He sent quail." Matey said.

Cody let go a yell, "A whale! No way, dude."

"Not a whale! How could there be a whale in the middle of the desert?" Matey replied. "No, this was quail; small birds that taste like chicken!"

"Cool, did they have to drive to Kentucky Fried Quail?" Cody's mouth watered.

"No! They didn't have Kentucky Fried Quail back then!" Matey said.

Cody thought for a moment, "Then where'd they get the buckets of quail?"

"It didn't come in buckets. God just sent it." Matey explained. Matey stood up and placed the Bible back into the Treasure Chest. "God always sends us just what we need! In fact, He sent them manna every day for forty years! He wouldn't let His children go hungry." Matey looked at his watch and announced, "Oh speaking of hunger, I've got to start dinner!"

"What are we having, fish again?" Cody asked with a laugh.

"Nope, quesadillas." Matey said.

Cody jumped up, excitedly clapping his hands. "Quesadillas! No way! Can I help?"

Matey gave him a sideways glance. "Sure, after you do the dishes."

"You got it, dude!" Cody announced as he bounded towards the galley and the stack of waiting dishes. He felt ready to face the fish smell now that he knew that God knows what we need and provides it. At least he would not have to eat fish for 40 years!