

# God's Provision for the Children of Israel

by Chuck Smith

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*God provides for the Israelites' physical needs, but also teaches them lessons about humility and gratitude through His judgment and leadership.*

**Duration:** 25:06

**Scripture:** Exodus 33:11, Exodus 33:20, Numbers 11:31, Numbers 12:7-8, Daniel 2:1-3, Matthew 6:33

**Topics:** "Provision"

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## Description

In this sermon, Pastor Chuck Smith discusses the provision of God for the children of Israel as they journeyed through the wilderness. He begins by highlighting the contrasting realities of the world falling apart and the Lord building his church. Pastor Chuck emphasizes the exciting adventure of being a missionary and shares about the mission conference focused on Jesus building his church. He then transitions to the story of Moses sending twelve spies to explore the land of Canaan and bring back a report. The sermon concludes with a prayer for God's presence and blessings upon the listeners.

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## Transcript

Oh, let the Son of God enfold you With His Spirit and His love Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul  
Oh, let Him have the things that hold you And His Spirit like a dove Will descend upon your life and make you whole  
We turn in our Bibles to Numbers, chapter 11, verse 31. And now, here's Pastor Chuck Smith with today's lesson. So Moses returned to the camp, both he and the elders of Israel.

Now, the second issue, the meat for a month. Now the wind went out from the Lord, and it brought quail from the sea and left them fluttering near the camp about a day's journey on this side and about a day's journey on the other side or all around the camp. About a day's journey, 10-15 miles, there were quail flying about three feet high, two cubits above the surface of the ground, flying in.

Now, interesting enough is that the quail migrate from Europe into Africa during the winter months there in Africa, but they migrate in the spring and summer back up into Europe again. And in their migration pattern, when they've crossed the Mediterranean, it is quite a long flight. And by the time they get across the Mediterranean, they are quite exhausted.

And it is a phenomenon that takes place to the present day in the migration process of the quail as they come across the Mediterranean, exhausted, they're flying just about three feet off the ground. And so it happened. And the guys went out with their bats, their sticks.

They began to... It says the least of them got 10 homers. But it's true. They were flying in two cubits high.

It's about 36 inches. And so they went out and were batting them down. And of course, the families, the little kids grabbing them, wringing their necks and throwing them into the barrels, de-feathering them and throwing them into barrels.

And all day long, the quail were coming in and they were out there batting them. They took torches and all, and all night long as the quail were flying in, they were batting them. All the next day, batting the quail out of the air.

Until he who gathered the least gathered 10 homers. And a homer is 86 gallons. So the families that gathered the least had 860 gallons of quail.

Enough quail to eat for 30 days until it came out of your nostrils. I mean, God says, you want meat? All right, we'll give you meat. But while the meat was still between their teeth before it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was aroused against the people and the Lord struck the people with a very great plague.

It is possible that number one, in their lust, their intense craving for meat, that they tried to swallow it without even chewing it before it was chewed, and that they began to choke to death on the quail. Got lodged in their throat, in the esophagus, and they began to choke to death. It is also possible that having been on the bland diet of manna for over a year, their bodies could not suddenly assimilate all of this meat.

Began to bloat and they died because of the inability of the digestive system to suddenly handle all of the meat, as they just no doubt began to gorge themselves with meat because of their intense lust or intense cravings. Began to gorge themselves and their bodies couldn't assimilate all of that meat at once, having been on the bland diet of manna for so long. Whatever, it was a plague of God that began to smite the people there and many of them died and were buried in that place.

And so they called the name of the place Kibra Tata'ava. The grave of cravings or the graves of lust. For this was the place where God gave to them the lust, their desires of their lust, but he also brought them leanness to their souls.

Now in chapter 12, we find Miriam and Aaron, the brother and sister of Moses beginning to complain and murmur against Moses. Miriam, you remember, was his older sister that watched while his little ark was placed in the Nile River. She saw the Pharaoh's daughter take it out and volunteered Moses' mother to nurse the child and take care of it.

Aaron was Moses' older brother and Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of a marriage that he had to an Ethiopian woman. And so probably they began to complain about a mixed marriage or whatever. They didn't like his wife.

He married an Ethiopian woman. The Bible doesn't tell us much about that. The circumstances, whatever, his other wife could have died.

We don't know. Nothing is said of Jacob, his first wife, but he married this Ethiopian woman and Aaron and Miriam were not happy with it. And they began to speak against Moses and they said, has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Now as the high priest, the Lord spoke through Aaron through the Urim and the Thummim and Miriam was known as a prophetess.

So God had spoken through both of them also. So they were complaining. He said, does the Lord only speak through Moses? Hasn't he spoken through us also? And you know, is Moses the only one to speak to the people? We have just as much right.

God speaks to us and the Lord heard their complaints. Now the man Moses was very humble more than all the men who were on the face of the earth. Moses was not one to promote himself.

And it is interesting to me that those men who are called of God to great leadership are so oftentimes very humble men. I think one of the most outstanding characteristics of Billy Graham, when you know him, on a personal basis is the humility of this man. You think of a man that has been used of God to speak to so many people, has positioned him in an area to speak to so many nations.

You think that that fellow would just, you know, would be almost untouchable. You'd have a hard time conversing with him. You do have a hard time conversing with him because of his humility.

He totally disarms you with his humility. It's just a beautiful characteristic about him. I remember the first time we were to meet him.

And I was really excited about meeting him and we went to the party and he and Ruth were there at the door greeting people as they were coming in. And I introduced myself. I said, Hi Billy, I'm Chuck Smith.

And he stopped and he looked at me and he said, Chuck, he said, I've been so anxious to meet you. He said, of all of the people in the world that I wanted to meet, it was you. Well, I was so totally disarmed I forgot everything I was going to say.

I was wiped out. I must have looked like a fool. Because I was just totally disarmed by the humility of this fellow.

It's just one of the beautiful characteristics of this man's life. Sort of like Moses. Though he has a tremendous place of leadership and authority and power and God speaks through him.

Yet the humility of the man is something beautiful to see. Now with Moses. Though he was the leader, chosen leader of God's people and so much that he could have been puffed up over.

Yet the humility. He was a humble man. In fact, one of the most humble men on the face of the earth.

He's not going to insist on his rights. He'll step aside if such be the case. And so the Lord heard them and suddenly the Lord said to Moses, Aaron and Miriam, OK, come out you three to the tabernacle of meeting.

And the Lord came down in the pillar of cloud and he stood in the door of the tabernacle and he called Aaron and Miriam and they both stepped forward. And he said, now hear my words. If there is a prophet among you, I the Lord make myself known to him in a vision and I speak to him in a dream.

It was the general method of God to speak to prophets through visions and through dreams. A vision is similar to a dream only you're awake when it takes place. But it's pictures before you like a dream is.

It's entering into an episode as you do often in a dream. But you're awake and you see these things. You envision these things.

It's like you're experiencing these things. And usually God spoke to the prophets through these visions or through dreams. They would actually have dreams with spiritual significance.

Sometimes the dreams had to be interpreted to be understood. And so there was oftentimes rather a vagueness about it. But God said not so with my servant Moses.

He is faithful or the most faithful in all my house. And I speak to him face to face clearly directly. Even plainly and not in mysterious things.

In other words you don't have to interpret it. With God speaking to Nebuchadnezzar in dreams, Daniel had to interpret the dream so that Nebuchadnezzar could understand what God was saying. And that often was the case.

It was dark sayings. It was in a riddle. And you had to find the key, the answer, the understanding.

God said not so with Moses. I speak directly to this fellow. I speak plainly to him not in dark sayings.

And he sees the form of the Lord. Why were you not then afraid to speak against my servant Moses? Here's a man I'm obviously using. Here's a man with the anointing of my spirit upon his life.

How is it that you weren't afraid to speak against him? One thing David had was a tremendous respect for the anointing of God. His refusal to touch Saul because God's anointing had been upon his life. God said touch not mine anointed and do my prophet no harm.

We need to be careful how we speak against God's anointed servants. And so God is saying to them how is it that you weren't afraid to speak against him when I so obviously have anointed him and used him and spoken to him directly. So the anger of the Lord was aroused against them and he departed.

That is the cloud was lifted up. And when the cloud departed from above the tabernacle suddenly Miriam became leprous as white as snow. Then Aaron turned toward Miriam and there she was a leper.

And of course he being the priest was the one who was taught to diagnose leprosy. If a person had a scab or a sore they would come to Aaron for a diagnosis to see if it was leprosy or not. And he turned and he saw her white as snow covered with leprosy.

And so Aaron said to Moses the one that they had been saying you know who's Moses we have this much right now. He turned to Moses and he said Moses oh my Lord do not lay this sin on us in which we have done foolishly in which we have sinned. Please do not let her be as one who is dead whose flesh is half consumed when it comes out of its mother's womb.

So Aaron implores Moses for the sister Miriam. So Moses cried out to the Lord saying please heal her. Oh God I pray.

And then the Lord said to Moses look if her father spit in her face she'd have to be unclean for seven days. So at least she should be put out of the camp for seven days and then she can be received again. So Miriam was shut out of the camp for seven days and the people did not journey till Miriam was brought again.

And afterward the people moved from Hazaroth and camped in the wilderness of Paran. So Aaron and Miriam and they're complaining against Moses and God's judgment and dealing with it. Now the Lord said

to Moses send men to spy out the land of Canaan which I'm giving to the children of Israel.

Now someone asked me today do you think that Moses made a mistake in sending the spies in. No definitely not because God told him to. God said send in the spies.

And from each tribe one of the leaders of the tribe was to go in. And so it lists the tribes and those men who went in to represent their tribes. And from the tribe of Judah verse 6 Caleb we are only going to mention two.

From the tribe of Ephraim verse 8 was Hoshea. And then as we get to verse 16 these are the names of the men who Moses sent in to spy out the land and Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun Joshua. The word Hoshea or Joshua means Jehovah is our salvation.

Yah actually in Hebrew the J has a Y pronunciation Yahshua. The name Jesus is the Greek form for the Hebrew name Yahshua. So the name Jesus is the Greek for the Hebrew Yahshua which is Jehovah is our salvation.

When God told Joseph to call his name Jesus he said for he shall save his people from their sins. So Moses changed his name from Hoshea to Joshua or Yahshua or Yahshua. And Moses sent them in to spy out the land of Canaan.

And he said see what the land is like. Whether the people who dwell in it are strong or weak. Whether there are a few people or many people.

Tell us about the land whether it is good or bad. Are there cities like camps or are they like strongholds. Do they have walls fortified cities or are they just sort of you know camps.

And whether the land is rich or poor. And whether there are forests there or not. Be of good courage.

Bring us some of the fruit of the land. For this was the time of the first ripe grape. So it was probably the August.

There in the land. And so these 12 spies were to go in and look over the land and bring a people a report of the land that God had promised to them. And probably the idea was the encouragement of the people.

As they've come now to the border of the land to go in and to possess it. So they went up and they spied out the land from the wilderness of Zin as far as Rehob. To the entrance of Hamath.

And they went up through the south they came to Hebron. To Ahaman. To Shishai.

To Taumai. The descendants of Anak were there. Giants.

It was a sort of a. Was it the Watusi tribe that are so tall. And so it's sort of a tribe of people like the Watusi's tall guys. Now Hebron was built seven years before Zon in Egypt.

Hebron of course is where Abraham had lived for so long. So they came to the valley of Eshkol. And they cut down there a branch of grapes one cluster.

That they carry between the two of them. On a pole. And they also brought some of the pomegranates and figs.

And the place it was called the valley of Eshkol because of the cluster and Eshkol means cluster. The cluster of grapes which the men of Israel cut down there. And they returned from spying out the land after 40 days.

So they departed and came back to Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the children of Israel in the wilderness of Paran. At Kadesh. Actually they come to the wilderness of Paran.

Kadesh is really sort of the borders of the promised land. And then they told him and said we went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey and this is its fruit.

It was you know look at this cluster of grapes. It does flow with milk and honey. Nevertheless the people who dwell in the land are strong.

The cities are fortified and they're very large. And we did see a few giants around there. And the Amalekites dwell in the land of the south.

The Hittites and Jebusites and the Amorites dwell in the mountains. That would be the mountains of Israel. The place around Jerusalem.

The mountains of Jerusalem actually. And the area of Jerusalem and in that mountainous area. The Hittites, the Jebusites and the Amorites from Hebron on up into the area of Ephraim which would be Bethel and on up into Nablus and Shechem and in that area Samaria.

And the Canaanites dwell along the coast and then they dwell around the Jordan. So they live in the plains of the coast in Jordan. Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses and he said let us go up at once and take possession for we are well able to overcome.

The cities are strong. They're fortified. They're pretty big.

Some pretty tall guys there. But let's go. We're well able to take it.

We'll return next time with more valuable lessons from our study of numbers as we continue with more on The Investigation of the Promised Land. And we do hope you'll make plans to join us. But right now I'd like to remind you that if you missed any part of today's message or perhaps you'd like to order a copy for that special friend or loved one, you can do so by simply contacting one of our customer service representatives and they'd be more than happy to assist you with the ordering details.

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And be sure to join us again next time as Pastor Chuck Smith continues his verse by verse study through the book of Numbers. That's right here on the next edition of the word for today. And now once again

here's Pastor Chuck Smith.

May the Lord be with you now and watch over you this week. May he fill you with his spirit. May the love of Jesus Christ just abound in all things towards you.

And may you be blessed of God as you walk in fellowship with him. May God by his spirit increase your faith. And may you grow up in all things in Christ come into a real maturity in your walk with him.

Beginning to experience the fullness of God's power love and blessing upon your life as you live in fellowship with him. In Jesus name. As we look around the world we see two things happening at the same time.

The world is falling apart and the Lord is building his church. What an exciting adventure for a missionary. And so it is with great enthusiasm that the word for today would like to make available this year's mission conference based on the theme of Jesus building his church.

Once again the Lord has assembled a great group of men and women who will share the word and their own life and ministry experiences. Such as Jed and Renee Gourley serving in Kyrgyzstan. Steve Jones pastoring in New Zealand.

Brian McDaniel ministering in Haiti. And John Dawson president of YWAM Youth with a Mission hosted by Pastor Brian Broderson of Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa. Join us and see how you can equip and encourage those called to labor with the Lord in building his church in these last days.

To order a copy of this year's mission conference on DVD with a bonus mp3 call the word for today at 800-272-9673 or visit us online at the [wordfortoday.org](http://wordfortoday.org) This program has been sponsored by the word for today in Costa Mesa California.

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