Who’s in Charge?

Key References: Exodus 16; Patriarchs and Prophets, chap. 26, pp. 291-302; The Bible Story (1994), vol. 2, pp. 139-145; Our Beliefs nos. 7, 22, 14
“So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, ‘In the evening you will know that it was the Lord who brought you out of Egypt, and in the morning you will see the glory of the Lord, because he has heard your grumbling against him. Who are we, that you should grumble against us?’” (Exodus 16:6, 7).

Moses looked out over the entire Israelite community camped on the edge of the Desert of Sin. Just days ago they had been enjoying a beautiful oasis with springs, palm trees, and all the water everyone could drink. They had been thirsty; God had provided water. The water had been bitter; God had showed Moses how to make it sweet. But now they were facing the unknown again.

Moses could hear their grumbling.

“Who are we? You are not grumbling against us, but against the Lord,” Moses said. “Come before the Lord, for he has heard your grumbling” (Exodus 16:8, 9).

Then Moses repeated to the Israelites the words of the Lord, “At twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God” (verse 12).

At twilight, just as God had told Moses, a large migrating flock of quail covered the camp, and the Israelites, once again temporarily happy, stuffed themselves and forgot their fretting and frustrations.

In the morning, one by one, heads popped out of tent openings to observe a white, seedlike frost covering the ground outside. “What is it? What is it?” each person questioned another. Soon Moses answered their questions.

“It is the bread the Lord has given you to eat” (verse 15). God would provide this bread one day at a time, and the Israelites were to show their gratitude by carefully following God’s simple instructions: “Everyone is to gather as much as they need. Take an omer [about two quarts (or two liters)] for each person you have in your tent” (verse 16). The people obeyed the first part of the instructions.

Then Moses proclaimed the next step of the instructions, “No one is to keep any of it until morning” (verse 19). God wanted to give them...
what they needed every day. He wanted them to trust that He would provide for tomorrow. They only had to do each day what He had asked them to do.

Again the people returned to their dwellings. In each tent they were busy boiling or grinding and baking their “What Is It?” bread. It tasted good, like honey. In spite of God’s instructions through Moses, some of the people were worried that there would not
be any tomorrow, and they put some aside.

In the morning the “What Is It?” bread that had been saved from the night before stank and was full of bugs, just as Moses had said. And just as God had promised, there was plenty more on the ground for that day’s needs. The people had to get out of bed and gather it before the sun got too hot and melted it.

This splendid arrangement went on day after day until it was the morning of the sixth day. Moses called the people together again. God had another step in His instructions. The Israelites were to gather twice as much “What Is It?” bread
as they had on other days. This time it wouldn’t spoil. God wanted them to be resting and spending time with Him on the Sabbath day.

“Tomorrow,” Moses began, “is to be a day of sabbath rest, a holy sabbath to the Lord. So bake what you want to bake and boil what you want to boil. Save whatever is left and keep it until morning” (verse 23).

Again the people went out to gather their day’s food. As usual, some people followed the instructions God sent through Moses, and others did not. When Sabbath morning dawned, some people had food, and others went out to gather it. But, of course, there was none—just as God had said.

Moses looked at the disappointed people walking back to their tents. When would they learn that they were to quiet their hearts in prayer when they had needs and problems? They were to obey God’s simple instructions and praise Him for His miraculous provisions.
**Instructions:** The first letter of the words hidden in the grid is given. Find and circle the complete word in the puzzle grid. It can read up, down, or diagonally. Words with a hyphen are found as a single word. All of the words are from Exodus 16:6, 7, NIV. Letters in the vertical column spell out the first part of the hidden verse and the rest of the verse is made of the uncircled letters in the puzzle grid.

Hidden Verse: “The Israelites ate

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UBROUGHTNT
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SVTHEWTYRW
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