

Amazed by His Glory—sample story

# Snail Manna

Nancy Sheppard with Pastor Emmanuel Kollie

***After joining Baptist Mid-Missions in 1982, Nancy and her husband, Mark, served in Liberia for one term. When Liberia's bloody civil war erupted and they could not stay, the Sheppards moved to the neighboring country of Côte d'Ivoire, where they ministered to those who had fled the conflict. After 11 years, the Sheppards were able to return to Liberia, where they currently work.***

Like the Israelites, one Liberian family experienced the thrill of seeing God provide in a most unusual way. After three months of being forced to harvest all 10 acres of his rice field under the guns of soldiers, Pastor Emmanuel Kollie understood the soldiers' intentions clearly. They would leave nothing for his family. Nothing—not even one kernel of rice.

The Liberian Civil War in West Africa was leaving its mark on yet another innocent family. What would happen to them? Weren't the beatings and the looting enough? Nine children to feed and not a kernel of rice for the year. How could they live without rice—the staple of their diet? The palm cabbage (inner edible part of the palm tree) would not last forever.

Desperate, Pastor Kollie made plans to close down the Bible school he directed and to leave the area. After all, they had to eat. However, after calling the students together to break the news to them, he just couldn't do it. He felt God would have him stay and trust Him to provide sustenance. And so he, his family, and the students prayed for God's supply.

And then the snails came—big ones, sometimes with shells four or five inches across. Of course, there had always been some snails, but never in such profusion. There were snails everywhere. The mission property was literally crawling with them. The family went out to gather, and each step would yield a snail. All they had to do was reach out and pick it up.

The French call snails escargot and consider them a delicacy. Pastor Kollie and his family likened the snails to manna from heaven.

And what did they do with all those snails? Well, the same thing the Israelites did with their manna. They thought of every possible way to prepare it. Snail with cassava leaf. Boiled snails. Snail with whatever else was available. There was such an abundance of snails that there was sufficient to sell or trade for other things. Things like rice. Things like clothes. And so, they carried bags of snails on their heads to market and came home with provisions.

When the Israelites entered the Promised Land, the manna stopped just as suddenly as it had started 40 years earlier. The need was no longer there. So it was with Pastor Kollie and his family. When the next year's rice harvest was safely stored, the snails were gone. And now when he sees a lone snail crawling across the mission, Pastor Kollie is reminded of God's provision in their year of great need.

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