

LESSON 9

GOD SENDS MANNA



OBJECTIVES

1. To understand that even though the Israelites grumbled, God still took care of them.
2. To understand that manna is the special food that God provided.
3. To understand that we need to trust in God during times of crisis, and that He will provide our needs.

MEMORY VERSE

"But I have trusted in Your mercy; my heart shall trust in Your salvation."

(Psalm 13:5)

PRAYER

1. We thank God for guiding us through the week so that we can worship and learn more about His words.
2. Lord, thank You for providing us with our daily needs.
3. Please help us to understand that we have received many blessings from You.
4. May You help us focus on this lesson and apply its teachings to our lives.



Overview

1. God provides for the grumbling Israelites

- The waters of Marah and Elim
- Manna and quail
- The Sabbath day

2. Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs—the Sabbath day

3. Life Application

- Stomach Grumbles!
- James Wants More

4. Activity

- Tree of Blessings
- Grumbling or Not?



Background Knowledge for Teachers

Manna

Manna was the Israelites' chief food during their forty years' sojourn in the wilderness (Ex 16:35). When Israel grumbled at the lack of food in the wilderness of Sin, God gave them "bread from heaven" (Ex 16:4; Ps 78:23-24). Each morning after the dew had gone, there was found on the ground a "small, round thing," like frost, with a honey taste; it could be ground and used in cooking and baking. The people asked, "What is it?" and called it manna (Ex 16:14-15, 31; Num 11:7-9). His provision did not cease until they crossed into Canaan and ate of its food (Prov 5:12).

The Israelites were to collect an omer each for five days and double that amount on the sixth day to last them over the Sabbath, as none would appear on that day. Usually, it did not keep overnight but became maggoty and malodorous if left over. However, the manna to be kept for Sabbath use was preserved by being cooked or baked beforehand (Ex 16:22-23). Aaron preserved an omer at God's command as a witness for future generations (Ex 16:33-34; Heb 9:4).

Manna provided physical sustenance, but God also used it for spiritual instruction. With the lack of other food, He provided manna to let them know that "man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD" (Dt 8:3). God used the provision of manna on six days and not the seventh to teach Israel obedience and convict them of disobedience. Jesus Christ used manna, God-given "bread from heaven" to describe Himself, the true bread of life. He said, "I am the bread of life [...] which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever" (Jn 6:35, 51).



Reaching Out to Your Students

You need to help your students develop and practice reasoning skills. First, ask your students why we often complain. Explain that complaints are normally because of discontent or greedy desires. We often quickly forget how much God has done for us and, consequently, feel dissatisfied or unhappy with our lives and complain to God. You may want to help your students see how much God has done for us by equating God's love with parental love. Help your students understand how they sometimes forget their parents' love and how their parents still love them despite their complaints.

Similarly, our Father in heaven will always love us and provide for us despite our complaints. Ask your students to share how God has provided for them or their family during difficult times. Be sure to guide your students to conclude that God always provides and will always provide if we trust in Him. Again, draw from the experiences shared by students and help them see how they or their family members have trusted in God.

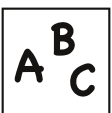


Opener

5 Minutes

[Prepare a poster with the heading "COMPLAINTS". Give the students some blank slips of paper where they can write down things that they often complain about, and then give them tape so that they can post their slips onto the poster. Students are not allowed to repeat what their fellow students have already pinned up. Discuss the results and highlight how easy it is to complain and how trivial some of the complaints may be.]

Has your family ever planned a vacation, but unplanned events happened before it started and the vacation was canceled? What happens when things go wrong? How do you feel? (Disappointed, sad.) We may start saying negative things, such as "This is awful," "This is no fun!" or even start blaming each other. We all tend to grumble when things aren't going well or as expected, don't we? Things weren't going so well for the Israelites after they left Egypt, so let's see what happened.



Vocabulary

omer: a Hebrew unit of measurement for dry goods



Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching

30-35 Minutes

The Waters of Marah and Elim

Up until this point, God had been guiding the Israelites throughout their journey. He rescued them from a life of bondage in Egypt, and He protected them with many amazing miracles that they witnessed with their own eyes. After escaping the Egyptians, Moses led the Israelites through the Red Sea and into the wilderness to an area called the Desert of Shur. Now, the Israelites had been traveling through the desert without being able to find water for three whole days! And when they finally did find water, imagine their disappointment when they tasted it and found the water too bitter to drink. The place they found the water was named Marah, meaning "bitterness." So, because they had nothing to drink, the people got upset and complained and grumbled to Moses.

Remember, the Israelites had just seen God open up the Red Sea for them to walk through on dry land. Then, they had seen God cover their enemies with water and free them from the Egyptians. They had just sung praises calling Him the Mighty God. **So, why do you think the Israelites didn't trust God to provide food and water for them?** [Let your students think about this question and express their thoughts. They might say that it was because it was not easy to walk through the desert day after day, or because it was not easy for them when they became tired, thirsty, and hungry. They probably reacted just as any of us might react—they complained rather than trusted in God. In the midst of their discomfort, they had forgotten God's promise to take care of them.]

So, once they began to complain, Moses prayed to God for help. God showed him a tree that he could throw into the water. The moment he did so, the water became sweet and delicious! Then, God told Moses and the Israelites that as long as they listened carefully and obeyed His commands, He would keep them safe. So, after saying this, He brought the Israelites to a place called Elim, an oasis with twelve springs of water and seventy date palms.

Manna and Quail

After staying in Elim for some time, the Israelites continued on their journey and found themselves in another desert, called the Desert of Sin. They began to complain and grumble again because of their struggles. All this traveling was proving to be a difficult task for the Israelites. They even started to long for the days in Egypt where they could eat to their heart's content! All of this occurred just days after God had made the bitter water sweet for them. How do you think you would feel in God's place if the Israelites grumbled like this? [Allow students to respond and express their thoughts.]

No matter what God felt, He still listened to their complaints. He told Moses that He would test the Israelites to see if they would follow His instructions. He would provide for their needs each day and give them bread in the morning and meat in the evening. However, each morning they were to collect only enough bread for one day. There was only one exception to this instruction. On the sixth day, the people were to collect twice as much so that on the seventh day, they could rest and observe the Sabbath (Ex 16:22-23).

Just as He promised them, God sent quail in the evening for them to eat. And in the morning, the Israelites woke to find a layer of dew around the camp. When the dew evaporated, thin flakes like frost appeared on desert floor. When the people saw the white flakes, they didn't know what it was, so they called the bread "Manna," which literally meant, "What is it?"

Now, do you remember what God's instructions to the people were regarding the manna? (Collect only enough for one day and on the sixth day, collect twice as much so that they could rest on Sabbath day.) Do you think all of the Israelites listened to Moses? Some of the Israelites did not obey God and actually saved manna for the next day. As a result of their disobedience, the manna that they kept spoiled and bred worms! However, the manna that they picked on the sixth day and kept overnight for Sabbath day remained as fresh as the day they picked it! This was truly a miracle that showed God's presence.

Why do you suppose God provided the manna each morning instead of giving the people a big supply once a week or once a month? Why not let the manna grow on a

tree or a bush so that the people could collect it whenever they needed? God wanted to teach His people to trust in Him for all their needs. They needed to put their faith in God rather than in their own strength. In gathering just enough manna for each day, the Israelites had to have faith that God would provide food for them the next day, as well. God was training them to fully rely on Him.

So, from this event, God commanded Moses to take a jar and put an omerful of manna in it. This jar was to be kept in the ark of the covenant as a testimony throughout all generations that God provided for them and brought them out of the land of Egypt. The manna fell from the heavens for forty years, until they came to the land of Canaan.

Even though the people grumbled and complained, God cared for the needs of His people and He helped them. He took care of them, even though it may not have been the way they wanted. God takes care of us, too. Sometimes, we may complain about our problems. God hears our prayers and answers them. He may not answer in the way that we want, but God will take care of us and provide for our needs.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the many ways the Israelites benefited from the manna and the quail?

- *They didn't have to grow, buy, or carry their food.*
- *They could travel anywhere without worrying about looking for a food source.*
- *Enemy nations were not provided for as they were.*
- *The food was always fresh and sweet.*
- *They never had to worry about going hungry.*

2. The Israelites longed for the days back in Egypt. They remembered sitting around pots of meat and having all the bread they wanted. Do you think this is a true reflection of their life in Egypt?

The Israelites were so unhappy in their current situation that they forgot the true nature of their life in Egypt. They were slaves to the Egyptians, bound by the rules of slavery; they made houses for other people to live in, barely survived on slave rations, had masters/taskmasters who treated them poorly, and could not live as free men. This is why God set up Moses to lead His people to Canaan, the promised land, to save them. The Israelites were deceiving themselves, imagining that their old life was better rather than bitter.

3. Why do you think God wanted to test the Israelites?

To expose the people's level of trust, commitment and obedience. Also to train them to trust God more and more. They were so consumed with meeting their daily

needs that God also trained them to "rest" on the Sabbath day. This event teaches us to live by God's word daily.

4. What did eating manna mean to the Israelites? What does eating manna mean to us today? How can we apply it to our lives?

- For the Israelites, being able to eat manna meant that they would have to depend upon God every day. The Israelites were not allowed to keep the manna until the next morning. This meant that they had to fully trust their tomorrow to the Lord. This event teaches us to live by God's word daily.
- If they did not gather any manna, they could not eat,

even though God provided the manna for them.

- Jesus taught us to pray for our daily bread, not our monthly or weekly bread. Likewise, we need to read the Bible every day in order to grow healthy spiritually.
- We need to depend on God every day through praying, reading the word of God, and exercising our faith.

FOR TEACHERS

Work together with the students on the two Bible Discovery worksheets.



Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs

2-5 Minutes

The Sabbath Day

In today's lesson, God put importance and emphasis on the observance of the Sabbath. He especially commanded that no manna was to be collected on the Sabbath, but a double portion to be collected the day before (Ex 16:23-26).

God made the Sabbath for us and it is important in many ways:

1. God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it (Gen 2:3; Ex 20:8, 11).
2. Those who observe the Sabbath will be blessed by God (Is 58:13-14; 56:2).
3. Those who do not observe the Sabbath will meet with calamities (Jer 17:27; Neh 13:17-18).
4. On the Sabbath day, we should remember God's creation and redemption (Ex 20:8-11; Dt 5:1).



Check for Understanding

5 Minutes

1. The Israelites found water at _____ but could not drink it because it was _____. (Marah, bitter)
2. What did God show Moses and ask him to throw in the water to make it good to drink? A tree branch.
3. When the Israelites came to _____, they found that there were _____ springs of water and _____ palm trees, so they camped there by the water. (Elim, twelve, seventy)
4. The Israelites grumbled for food. How did God help them? God sent quail at night and manna from heaven in the morning.
5. What were the instructions for collecting manna? Each person was to collect as needed every morning, except on the sixth day, when a double portion was to be collected.
6. What happened to the people who went out on the Sabbath day to collect manna? Why? They found none, because God wanted His people to rest on the Sabbath day.
7. What did God command Moses to do with the manna as a testimony of God's providence throughout the generations? He told Moses to take a jar and put an omer of manna in the ark of the covenant.
8. For how long did the Israelites eat manna? The Israelites ate manna for forty years, until they came to the land of Canaan.



Life Application

10 Minutes

[Read the stories with the students and go over the discussion questions as a class.]

1. "Stomach Grumbles!"

Discussion Questions

1. What was Judy complaining about? Have you ever complained the way Judy did?
Judy complained about having to eat her least favorite sandwich.
2. What happened that changed Judy's attitude? What does this teach you about complaining?
Judy saw others who were less fortunate than her and realized that she was complaining about something that was a blessing to others. Judy's story reminds us to have thankful hearts for all the good things God has given us. We can use these good things to help make other people feel better as well! Judy's attitude changed, she started to appreciate the good things in her life.
3. Do you think being happier and more positive will help others see Jesus in you? Why? List some ways you think you can help yourself improve.
Answers may vary.

2. "James Wants More"

Discussion Questions

1. What did James do wrong?
James complained about not having more! He was not grateful for what he had. James was so wound up about his own desires that he hadn't realized he was talking like a spoiled child and behaving very rudely to his parents.

Have you ever complained like James?
Answers may vary.
2. If you were James, what would you do next? And what can you do to remind yourself not to complain like James in the future?
Allow students to express their thoughts and solutions. It's easy to get used to our blessings. After enjoying them for a while, we begin to think that we deserve them. Then, instead of being thankful, we complain. It's a process that occurs so slowly, we don't even realize it's happening.

BIBLE DISCOVERY WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY

Bread from Heaven

1. Manna means, "What is It?" Manna is the food that, according to the Bible, God gave to the Israelites during their travels in the desert, until they reached Canaan (Josh 5:12).
2. Manna was described as appearing each morning after the dew had gone. It tasted like wafers that had been made with honey.
3. Eat only the manna gathered each day.
Do not store leftovers.
Gather twice the amount of manna on the sixth day.
No manna would fall on the seventh day.
4. 40
5. seventh, Sabbath
6. morning, noon
7. omer
8. worms, stink, sixth, sixth, seventh
9. wafers, honey, heaven, angels

Manna in the Bible

- Joshua 5:12
The Israelites were given manna for forty years in the wilderness, until they entered the land of Canaan.
- Nehemiah 9:20
God provided for the Israelites daily needs in the wilderness. He also taught them the importance of keeping the Sabbath day.
- Hebrews 9:4
A pot of manna was put in the ark of the covenant.
- Deuteronomy 8:3
God taught the Israelites to rely on Him for manna every day. Likewise, Jesus teaches us to pray for our daily bread as well. We need to read the Bible every day in order to grow spiritually.

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. Answers may vary.
2. bitter water, no good food
3. Answers may vary.
4. merciful, caring, kind
5. Answers may vary.



Activity

1. Tree of Blessings / 2. Grumbling or Not?

10-15 Minutes

1. Tree of Blessings

Objective: To remind students to be thankful for all the blessings they have received.

Instead of grumbling, we need to be content and thank God for our blessings. We should be thankful for the people who love and care for us. We should be thankful for God and the things He has given to us.

Preparations

1. Using poster paper, make a big tree trunk with branches and attach it to a classroom wall.
2. Using the provided heart template, copy and cut out one heart per student.

Materials

- Green, orange, yellow, and brown construction paper
- Scissors
- Glue
- Markers or crayons

Instructions

1. Distribute the heart shapes. Have students trace them onto the construction paper, and then cut them out.
2. On each construction paper "leaf," draw a picture or write the name of something for which you are thankful. It can be a person, a thing, or a feeling.
3. Stick the leaves all over the tree.
4. If permissible, the tree can stay on the classroom wall for the term. This will help remind them every week of the things for which they can be thankful.
5. Students can continue to add to the leaves every week in their free time. [Note: Extra heart-shaped leaves can be left in a box for students to add to the tree whenever they like.]

2. Grumbling or Not?

Look at the following difficult situations. What can you do to change?

1. Write down your worst habit. _____

If you do this again, what can you do to overcome it rather than grumble?

- a. Pray to God to help me think of ways to change this
- b. Ask my parents to give me advice
- c. Look at my other good qualities and improve them
- d. Other

2. Write down one thing you don't enjoy doing whenever your parents ask you to do so. _____

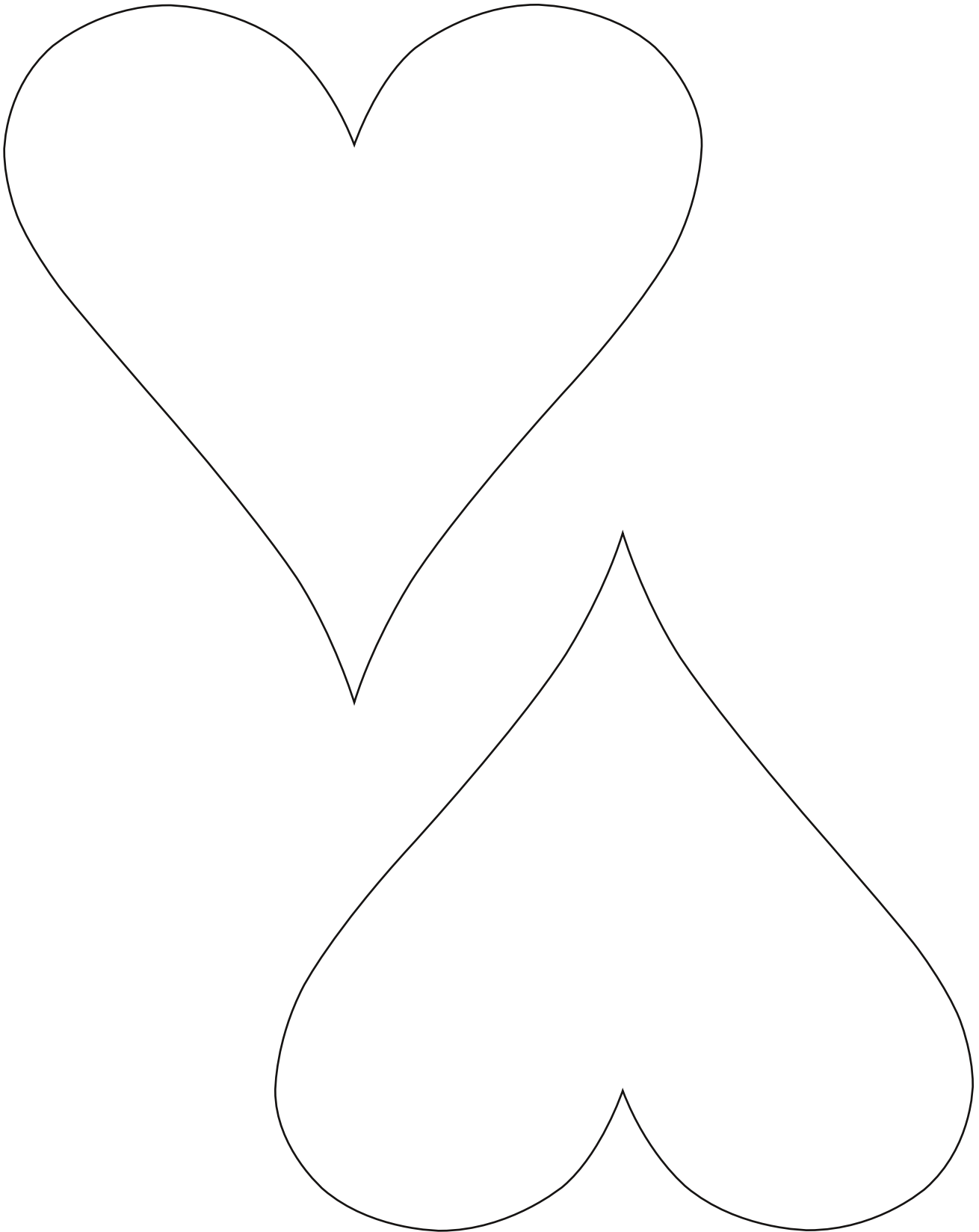
If your parents ask you to do this again, what should you do instead of grumble?

- a. Try my best to do it with a willing heart
- b. Pray to God to give me strength
- c. Be patient and thank God for letting me do this
- d. Other

3. Write down one thing you really like, but don't have the money to buy. _____

If you see that item again and your parents do not have the money to buy it, what should you do instead of grumble?

- a. Stop thinking about it because I should be content with what I have
- b. Start to save up all my money for it
- c. Pray to God to take away my greediness
- d. Other



Bread from Heaven

Answer the following questions.

1. What is the meaning of manna? What was it?
2. How was manna described? What did it taste like? (Ex 16:14, 31)
3. What were God's instructions for eating and collecting manna? List 4 points.



Fill in the blanks.

4. The manna appeared every morning on the dew for _____ years.
5. There would not be any manna on the _____ day, the _____.
6. They would have to gather the manna each day from _____ until about _____.
7. Each person was to gather an _____ per person.
8. If they tried to gather enough manna for two or more days, the manna would breed _____ and _____, except on the _____ day, when they could gather enough for both the _____ and _____ days.
9. The manna tasted like _____ made with _____. Manna was the bread of _____, it was the food of the _____ (Ps 78:22-25).

Manna

Manna in the Bible

Instructions: Look up each of the following Bible passages that refer to manna. Please list one fact about manna or something you learned from today's lesson for each verse.

Joshua 5:12

"Then the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten the produce of the land; and the children of Israel no longer had manna, but they ate the food of the land of Canaan that year."

What I learned:

Nehemiah 9:20

"You also gave Your good Spirit to instruct them, and did not withhold Your manna from their mouth, and gave them water for their thirst."

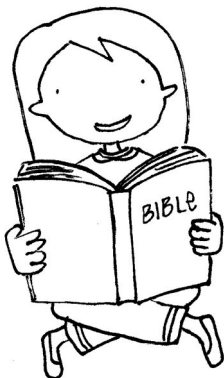
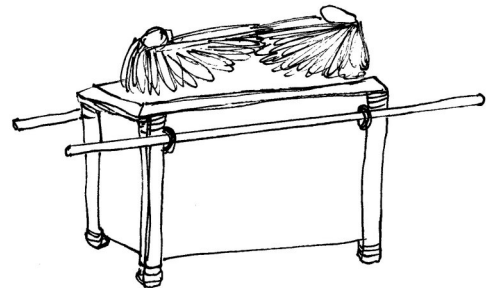
What I learned:



Hebrews 9:4

"Which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant."

What I learned:



Deuteronomy 8:3

"So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD."

What I learned:

"Stomach Grumbles!"

Instructions: Read the story below and answer the discussion questions that follow.

In school at lunchtime, Judy took out her lunch bag filled with goodies in it. Judy thought to herself, "I wonder what Mom prepared for me today."

In the morning, Mrs. Karington had prepared a croissant turkey sandwich with lettuce and two slices of tomato in it. Besides the croissant sandwich, there was apple juice and a fruit roll-up. "Great lunch!" Judy thought to herself.

The next day, because Mrs. Karington didn't have enough time to think about what kind of lunch to prepare for Judy, she made a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, peeled an orange, and put grape juice into Judy's lunch bag.

Usually, lunchtime was Judy's favorite time in school because she could talk to her friends, eat her lunch, and play games with her classmates. Today, Judy opened her lunch bag, took out the peanut butter and jelly sandwich, and said, "Peanut butter and jelly sandwich again! Mom should know that I'm tired of eating this kind of sandwich. How could she forget?" Clearly, Judy was mad that her mom hadn't remembered that her least favorite sandwich was peanut butter and jelly.

"Stop grumbling, Judy," Mrs. Johnson said. "You should be happy and satisfied with what you already have. Some students have less or no lunch to eat!" Judy looked around and saw Shelly sitting at a lunch table chewing happily on her only piece of bread; besides the bread, Shelly had a bottle of water. She had neither fruits nor snacks.

At another table, Judy saw Frankie sitting and watching others eat their lunches. Judy felt bad complaining about her food, because there were others who had less or nothing to eat for lunch. For a few minutes, Judy sat at her table thinking. Then she got up and walked over to Frankie's table and sat down across from him, saying, "Hey, Frankie, do you want to help me eat this peanut butter and jelly sandwich? I can't finish it all by myself."



With a surprised look on his face, Frankie asked, "Are you sure? Maybe a bite is enough. I don't want to eat all of your lunch."

Judy broke her sandwich in half and handed one half to Frankie saying, "Look, I still have my orange and my grape juice. In fact, why don't you have my grape juice, too, because I'm not thirsty at all."

"Wow, thanks, Judy!" Frankie said with a grateful smile. "I was going to buy lunch, but I lost my lunch money on my way to school."

That day, Judy went home feeling very happy and satisfied for helping a friend out. "How was school today, dear?" Mrs. Karington asked Judy as she stepped in the house. With a big smile on her face, Judy walked over to her mom, gave her a tight hug, and said, "I had a very good day at school today. By the way, thanks for making lunch for me every day, Mom."

Discussion Questions

1. What was Judy complaining about? Have you ever complained the way Judy did?

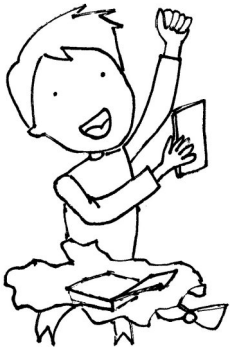
2. What happened that changed Judy's attitude? What does this teach you about complaining?

3. Do you think being happier and more positive will help others see Jesus in you? Why? List some ways you think you can help yourself improve.



"James Wants More"

Instructions: Read the story below and answer the discussion questions that follow.



James tore the wrapping paper off. He was exploding with excitement because he already knew what gift his parents had bought him for his birthday. It was the brand new iPod that he had been asking and nagging his parents for. Finally, he could load all his favorite music and take it with him wherever he wanted! James couldn't stop grinning; he clutched his iPod in one hand and raced up the stairs so fast that he almost fell.

"THANKS, MOM! THANKS, DAD!" he yelled as he reached the top of the stairs. Molly, his sister, was sitting at the computer surfing the Internet.

She looked up and said, "Do you like your birthday gift, James?"

"Totally!" James replied, "Now I need to set it up so that I can take it to school tomorrow and show all my friends! Move over Molls!"

Molly was about to protest for being kicked off the computer but decided to let her brother have his way just this night because he was so excited.

That night, James spent hours gazing upon his new iPod and loading all his music. He researched the different apps and cases he wanted to buy for his iPod and guarded it like a pet. For the first several weeks, James was completely consumed with his iPod, making sure it was always cleaned and protected from damage. He loved showing it to his friends, and it was constantly by his side.

Ever so gradually, James began to become accustomed to the iPod. It was no longer shiny and new anymore; in fact, there were a few scratches on it already from where it had been dropped. James had grown tired of loading new songs onto it and the iPod started to live on the bedside table more than it did in James' pocket.

One day at a friend's birthday party, James noticed his friends crowding around Eric, his best friend. James walked over to see what everybody was so excited about. He looked over some shoulders and saw Eric playing some games on an iPad!

"That's so cool!!!" said one student.

"I wish I could have one!" said another.

James was equally impressed and sat down next to Eric to ask if he could have a turn. That whole day at the party, they talked about all the different apps and things the iPad could do.

That night at the dining table, the whole family sat down to enjoy their dinner and talk about their day.

"Dad! Guess what Eric got?!" James almost shouted.

"What, son?" Dad replied.

"An iPad! It's SOOOO cool! You should see it, Dad. There are so many apps you can buy, and the games on it are awesome!"

"He's a lucky boy!" Mom said.

"Can I get an iPad, Mom?! Please?!" pleaded James.

"James! We just bought you an iPod for your birthday! Speaking of which, I haven't seen it lately. Where is it?" Mom said.

"But MOM, the iPad is so much better! It does so many more things than my iPod, and if we got one, I wouldn't have to share the computer with Molly anymore. My iPod doesn't do the same things; it's not the same! I need an iPad! You don't understand! I wish you had bought me the iPad instead!" complained James.

Mom looked sternly at James from across the table. She said, "Complaining is like bad breath, James. You notice it from somebody else's mouth, but not your own. Can you even hear yourself? It was only a few months ago that we got you the new iPod you had been asking for. Now, you're complaining that you need something more, something better! Have you stopped to think about how hard Mom and Dad have had to work to save up to buy you that gift? Have you thought about your friends who don't have an iPod? Have you thought about other children in the world who don't even have a home to go to, much less an iPod to play with?"



Discussion Questions

1. What did James do wrong?
2. If you were James, what would you do next? What can you do to remind yourself not to complain like James in the future?

