

“Bread from Heaven” Sunday School Lesson from John 6:24-35

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This free Bible lesson is based on John 6:24-35 when Jesus shares with His followers about the true bread of life. It is designed for children’s church or Sunday School. Please modify as best fits your ministry. If your church follows the [Revised Common Lectionary](#), this teaching plan would correspond to Year B – 10th Sunday after Pentecost, Gospel Reading – John 6:24-35.

Opening Activity – Bread from Heaven – Gathering Manna

Supplies – cotton balls

Explain to the children what manna was to the Israelites fleeing Egypt, and how it fell each morning so they could gather enough for their family for the day.

Instruct the children to pick up enough manna to feed their family for the day. Have them pick up three cotton balls per person living in their home (one for each meal).

Have the children close their eyes and quickly scatter cotton balls throughout the room. Then say go and give the children 30 seconds to gather their manna.

Lesson – Bread from Heaven

Supplies – cotton balls, fake insects

Raise your hand if you had ever heard of manna before. Does anyone know what “manna” means? The word “manna” actually means “what is it?”. What is it?!?!? Manna was so strange to them that they named it “what is it?”.

So really, what is it? When the Israelites fled Egypt they wandered a desert for forty years. Forty years! That’s a really long time! And all forty years they had very little to eat. Deserts are usually very empty, so you wouldn’t be able to pick berries or dig up potatoes. And when you are constantly traveling, you can’t exactly grow a garden or raise chickens.

The Israelites got so hungry they began to complain and got very angry. They thought they were all going to starve! They went to Moses to beg for food, so Moses asked God to feed them. And God did.

The next morning manna fell from heaven, and when the Israelites woke up, they were surrounded by little white fluffy mounds. Since they had never seen anything like it before they called it manna, or “what is it?”.

God instructed them to gather just enough for their family to eat that day. They weren’t allowed to pick up any extra. But the people were so hungry, many of them gathered all they could find, and hid the extra away in their tents.

Let’s take a quick break from our lesson to see how you all did with gathering food for your family. You were supposed to have three pieces of manna for each person living at your house. One for breakfast, one for lunch, and one for dinner.

If you picked up exactly the right number of cotton balls, raise your hand. Great job! Let’s give them a round of applause! You gathered just enough manna for your family today, just as God asked the Israelites to do.

If you didn’t pick up enough cotton balls, raise your hand. Good news is, there will be more manna tomorrow, so you won’t be hungry for long. And I bet if the Israelites didn’t get enough manna on the first day they were able to figure out quickly how many they would need so they wouldn’t have that problem again.

Now, if you picked up too many cotton balls, raise your hand. Good news for you is, you won't be hungry today. You have plenty to eat and you don't have to worry about trying to sleep with an empty belly. But there is also some bad news. I need you to stand up in the front, close your eyes, and stick out your hand. (Lightly place a fake bug in each hand).

Open your eyes. Gross, right?!?!

All the extra manna turned into worms over night, so many of the Israelites woke up to worms in their tents, their pockets, their bowls, everywhere!

Manna was a bread sent from heaven to keep the Israelites alive, but the manna didn't last.

Even if they ate all they could they would still be hungry the following day. And if they tried to store some up for later it went bad and turned into worms.

But manna isn't the only bread God sent from heaven. Anyone know what the other bread was?

This might sound a little strange, but Jesus is the bread. Just like the manna was sent to keep the Israelites alive, Jesus was sent to keep us alive. And unlike the manna, Jesus doesn't run out or go bad. Jesus was sent from heaven to save us and keep us alive for all time.

In the Bible Jesus said, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

Once we have Jesus we are full. We have all we need. We don't need to keep searching for something else to save us. Jesus is it. He is all we need, and with Jesus we will live forever.

Activity A – Bread from Heaven– Bible Verse Challenge

Supplies – Bibles

Verse – John 6:35

Pass out Bibles to students. Bibles should be closed and sitting on the table face up in front of each child. When you say go, have the kids look up this week's Bible verse. As each child finds the verse, have them stick one finger on the verse and quietly raise their other hand. The first one to find the verse gets to read it to the rest of the class.

Help younger kids and new kids find the verse by following these steps.

Look in the Table of Contents for the book you are looking for. Make an effort to show them if it is found in the Old Testament or New Testament to help them in the future. Then open the Bible to the page number listed in the Table of Contents.

Show them the large numbers in the text, known as the chapters. Flip through pages until you find the large chapter number you are looking for.

Then scan through the text with them pointing out the smaller verse numbers until the correct number is found.

Activity B – Bread from Heaven – Manna Bags

Supplies – gallon size zip top bags, construction paper, writing/coloring utensils, church information/homeless ministry info, fill items (see below)

*If your church/ministry has the budget, provide the class with the items needed to fill their bags. If not, send each child home with an empty bag and shopping list to fill them with their family. If packed frugally, each bag can be packed for less than \$5.

Manna bags are bags filled with non-perishable food items and basic hygiene items that can be given to homeless and people in need. Manna bags are a great way to address the physical and spiritual needs as they spread the love of Christ.

Give each child construction paper and writing utensils and have them write a note to the recipient. It can be as simple “Jesus loves you”, or a note saying you are praying for them.

If you are filling bags together line up each type of item in an assembly line fashion. Then have each child go down the line choosing one of each item to fill their bag.

If you are send children home with an empty, enclose instructions and a suggested fill item list(see below).

Once complete, instruct kids place the bag in the family car, and pass it on to someone in need.

Suggested Fill Items

- bottled water/juice/sports drink
- cracker sandwich packs
- pre-pack nuts or sunflower seeds
- tuna packets
- beef jerky
- fruit cups
- granola bars
- raisins
- toothbrush
- toothpaste
- soap
- hotel toiletries
- wash cloth
- socks

Closing Prayer – Bread from Heaven

Ask for a volunteer to pray for the class before leaving, and encourage them to thank God for sending Jesus to save us.

