

TEXT Mark 8:1-9

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to explain that even Jesus gave thanks to His Father, God. As Christians we should follow His example.

MEMORY VERSE He took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks. — Matthew 15:36

Feeding the 4000

MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

HE TOOK — Draw open right hand from right to left (palm facing left) ending in a fist.

THE SEVEN — Hold up seven fingers.

LOAVES — Inside edges of cupped hands touching (palms facing down), move hands apart as though feeling the top of a loaf of bread.

AND THE FISHES — Bending at the wrist, move hand like a fish.

AND GAVE THANKS — Praying-hands position as you look up.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

The loaves and fishes which Jesus used to feed the multitude are the basis for this week's visualization of the memory verse. (See pattern at the end of this lesson.) Cut apart the grouping on the heavy black lines, and reassemble with your group as the memory verse is learned.

BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: Before class time trace onto construction paper the outlines of parents and children who are saying grace at the table (Pattern and instructions provided in Preschool Instructions for Lesson 27a.) Ask your students what these people are doing, and why. Explain that today's lesson is an example of Jesus' doing this very same thing — thanking God for food.

1. Jesus had compassion on the multitude who had been with Him for three days and now had nothing to eat. He did not wish to send them away hungry.

2. The disciples questioned where they would find food, as they had only seven loaves of bread and a few fishes.

3. Jesus had the disciples seat all the people, and He took the food and blessed it.

Climax: The small amount of food fed the entire assembly.

Conclusion: The Lord is of great compassion, and if a miracle is needed to provide for a need, He is well able to perform it.

Response: The students should be able to tell how Jesus fed the multitude, and explain why we, too, should give thanks for the things God provides for us.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This incident took place on the far side of the Sea of Galilee (Mark 7:31) in the area of Decapolis, a group of ten Gentile cities. When Jesus had healed the Gadarene demoniac (Mark 5:1-20), He sent him home to this very area and told him to "go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee." Perhaps this crowd of 4000 was, at least in part, gathered around Jesus because this man had been faithful to his call. Just as Jesus had taught His disciples at the feeding of the Jewish crowd of 5000, so also with this crowd of 4000 Gentiles He explained that they were not to excuse themselves from serving others because of their lack of resources. They were to use what they had and allow God to multiply it. When Jesus took the loaves and fishes to bless and break them He could give thanks that the "bread of God" had come to both Jew and Gentile (see John 6:48-51).

SPECIAL UNIT INSTRUCTION

Give each child a page from their Praying Hands book and have them write their memory verse for this week.

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Tell a story about a family that was giving thanks to God before their meal. Explain why we do this. Some children in the class may have never heard of giving thanks before we eat. Explain about praying before going to bed and praying at the end of each church service.

Bring a blanket and have all your class sit on it. Bring seven small rolls and some fish crackers or sweet gummy fish. On a piece of construction paper draw some faces, or cut out faces from a magazine and paste on. Show the class all the people that came to hear Jesus, but be sure and tell them there were lots more than this picture shows. Tell story and then bring out enough rolls and "fish" for each child.

Copy some graces each child could learn. Examples: "Come dear Jesus be our guest. Bless our needs as Thou knows best. Let everything that hath breath

praise the Lord!" "For food and all these gifts of love, we give Thee thanks and praise. Look down, dear Father, from Above, and bless us all our days." This could be written on a handmade bookmark so that the children would be encouraged to keep it (see Patterns).

Trace a basket onto a piece of construction paper for each of your students (see Patterns). Let your students cut out the basket and glue in fish stickers to go along with the loaves. They may also wish to write the memory verse on the lid of the basket. The basket can be closed by folding the top down on the dotted line.

QUESTIONS

When Jesus saw people with a need, He did something about it. How can we follow His example?

Why did Jesus give thanks for the food?

What happened when Jesus gave thanks for the bread and fish?

How could there have been anything left over when there were only seven loaves and a few fish to begin with?

Do you think Jesus can work the same way today? Explain.

Do you thank Jesus for your food every day? Every meal?

Why should we say grace or pray over our food?

When you bow your head at school, what do the other students think? Are you showing them something about your love for God? Do you ever get a chance to tell the other students about Jesus?

Jesus was our example. Talk about ways we can be an example to others.

PRESCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Prepare a copy of the dot-to-dot fish for each of your children (see Patterns). Give them some crayons and let them connect the dots as you tell how Jesus took just a few fish and made many.

Make each of your children a special place mat by writing a table grace in the middle of a rectangle of colored construction paper. You may wish to add a border of rickrack, trim, stickers, or other decorations. Cover the entire mat on both sides with clear plastic contact paper. During class time, help your students learn the table grace you have written on their mats, and explain why it is important that we remember to thank God for our food.

Use the people collage suggested as a visual aid for Lesson 25c to illustrate the large crowd that Jesus fed. Other props might include goldfish crackers (or fish shapes cut from pieces of salami), small loaves cut from bread slices or bits of frozen bread shaped into little loaves. Tiny baskets can be made from brown construction paper (see Patterns).

REVIEW IDEAS

Bring seven small loaves of homemade bread that have been baked in the mini bread pans. Bring seven baskets and ask the department to help you try to divide the bread so that all the baskets are completely full. They will be able to see it is impossible. Explain what a miracle it was and that all things are possible with God. Have a piece of butcher paper covered with faces either cut out of magazines or drawn. Explain how this amount of bread fed more people than this.

Have someone come and give his testimony of how God provided food for his family when they were in need.

Do a puppet skit with two puppets. The setting is at school. Use little dishes and play food for props. Have a big cowbell ring for lunch time. Have two puppets come up talking back and forth like children at school would do. In the midst of the conversation, have the one excuse himself to pray over his food. Have the other puppet asking him why he's doing that. Have the puppet representing a Christian witness to him of how someone invited him to Sunday school and there he learned of some of the miracles of Jesus, such as the feeding of 4000 with seven loaves. Also he learned he should give thanks for his food, and how Jesus died for his sins that he might be saved. Have the other puppet make the appropriate remarks throughout the conversation. Have the skit ending with the puppet's inviting his friend to Sunday school. Then have the bell ring and the puppets leave for class.

COORDINATING SONGS

"Multiplication Song"

"God Can" — The Bill Gaither Trio for Kids — song book

"God Is Great And God Is Good"

"It's a Miracle" — The Bill Gaither Trio for Kids — song book

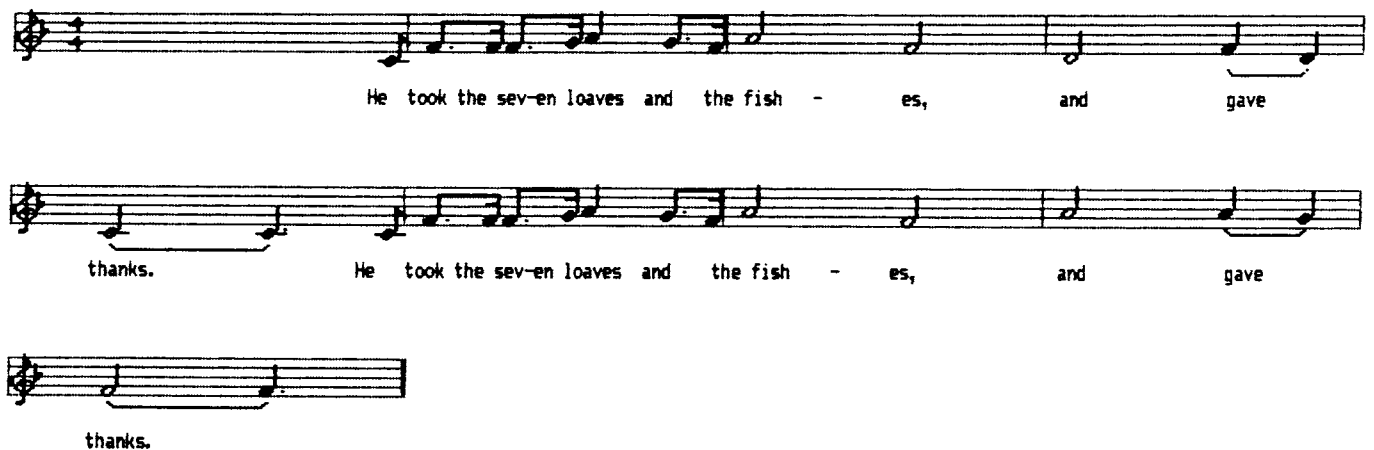
SUPPORT MATERIAL

The Boy Who Gave His Lunch Away — Arch Book, Concordia

Think 'N Check Quizzes — Life of Jesus — 15 quiz games to build and test the player's knowledge of God's Word, Standard Publishing

Miracles of Jesus — Pict-o-graph, Standard Publishing
New Testament Pictures to Color — 8 each of 6 pictures, Standard Publishing

MEMORY VERSE SONG



MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

