

**6.26.11/Joshua 5:10-12****Materials Needed**

Crayons and Paper

Read Joshua 5:10-12

While the people of Israel were encamped at Gilgal, they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month in the evening on the plains of Jericho. And the day after the Passover, on that very day, they ate of the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. And the manna ceased the day after they ate of the produce of the land. And there was no longer manna for the people of Israel, but they ate of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

Activity:

Ask each child to draw a picture of him or herself when they were a baby. Next to that picture, have them draw a portrait of themselves reflecting what they look like today. Talk about the differences in the baby versions of themselves and the “today” version. *They’re taller, they can walk, they can talk, etc.* Talk about what things happen when we grow physically (such as the new abilities and strengths we develop).

Discussion:

Do you remember your first day of kindergarten / pre-school, etc.? It was your first day of school and you had a classroom to go to, a new teacher, a cubby or a desk and some brand new responsibilities. What were some of the new things you got to do there? *Answers will vary but can include learning to write words, practicing spelling, learning numbers, learning colors, learning to play together and share, etc.* As we get older, we move to new phases of our lives and new things are expected of us. Our classrooms, teachers and even our homework change as we move to new grades but as our situations change, we learn and grow smarter. In today’s passage, we see how God changes the circumstances of the Israelites and how this helps them learn and grow closer to Him.

Questions:

1. When the Israelites were travelling in the desert, God provided nourishment for them by providing manna, miraculously scattered on the ground every morning. In verse 12 we see that “the manna ceased” as they reached the land of Canaan. Why do you think God stopped providing the miracle of manna for his people? *It was no longer necessary. God brought the Israelites to a new land where produce and grain were plenty and they were able to survive off the harvest of the land. God was providing for His people in a new way.*
2. The manna, in the eyes of most people, was a “miracle” food. It appeared from nowhere and it appeared faithfully for forty years to keep the Israelite people nourished. As they took over the capital Jericho and settled into Canaan, their needs were met in a more “ordinary” way, by the produce of the land. Why do you think God changes His methods for how He works in our lives? *We as humans tend to get comfortable with things we know or have always done. When God approaches us from a new direction, ever faithful and ever present, we are forced to ask ourselves if we really trust that He will continue to provide for us in this new way. Change can be scary but it also helps us to review who we are now, and it challenges us to learn and trust more. Just as moving up a grade in school can be a new and sometimes scary thing, we know that it is for our benefit to learn and grow more as people. When things change all around us, there is One who does not change: God!*
3. Just as the produce of Canaan was an “ordinary” way of providing for the Israelite people, we see time and again how God chooses to use common, ordinary methods to meet the needs of His people. When the Jewish people were awaiting the messiah, they were expecting a mighty warrior king who would free them from foreign domination. However, God chose to



send His son Jesus to be born as an infant, in a dirty animal stable, and to live with a poor family. Some may say that God chose a much less “spectacular” way to save the souls of humanity. Why do you think God chose to send Jesus in this way? *Jesus lived a life of humility and servant hood to be the example of what our lives should look like. While He performed miracles and was at all times capable of the supernatural signs many people were looking for, He came to live in complete submission to the Father’s will, to love others and regard them higher than Himself and to lay down His life for our sins. One sign of spiritual growth and maturity is that we are less and less dependent on the spectacular.*

4. What do you sometimes put your hope in that’s ultimately not going to provide for you? What is the only thing we need to trust? *Answers will vary, but may include toys, food, fun, getting to do what I want, etc. The only One we should trust is the only One who is trustworthy: God! God came to us in the form of Jesus and lived a perfect life that we could never live. He died and came back to life to destroy our sin, and He gives us His Spirit when we trust Him so that we are NEVER apart from God!*

Final Discussion

The Passover that they celebrated had a very special meaning. It was a way to remember how God had saved the Israelites from being prisoners in Egypt. When His people there put the blood of an unblemished lamb on their doorposts, the firstborn in each household was passed over and allowed to live. In today’s passage, they were remembering what God had done for them! Even though this happened a long time before Jesus came to earth, it was foretelling His story as well, that one day God Himself, perfect like an unblemished lamb, would allow Himself to be killed and resurrected to destroy sin, and every person who is marked by God’s blood (who is saved by Jesus), will be passed over and allowed to live forever with God!

Reflection/Prayer

Take some time this week to think about your favorite part of nature. Think about the wonder and beauty of the trees, or how big and powerful the ocean is. Notice the colors of a butterfly or the beautiful song the birds sing. Remember that just because God may not drop a new toy out of the sky for you, He is no less mighty or majestic. Pray together as a group that you would learn to trust God more and more in the “normal” parts of your lives. Pray that every simple blessing that you take for granted (the food you eat, the clothes you wear, the roof over your head) would be seen as a blessing from God. He HAS always and WILL always provide for you, even if we don’t understand why He provides the way He does, because His love is perfect and He never fails.

Pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to transform your mind and renew your heart, helping you to become more like Christ, growing and deepening your relationship with God. Just as you move from grade to grade in school, God will continue to shape your circumstances to help draw you closer to Him. Pray that you will recognize His provision and be thankful for His many blessings.

If hearing about Jesus Christ in this way is new to you, and you’d like to know more about what it means to trust Him, be sure to ask your parents.