

Manna and Mercy: An Elementary Curriculum

WEEK 1 THEME: Manna and Mercy

CORE IDEAS: The Bible is our storybook about God, us, and the universe. Love is best understood through story. God loves us and provides for us no matter what we do. This is manna and mercy.

*Difficult but key words are **highlighted** and may need to be explained repeatedly. Underlined words/phrases are also key and crucial to the connections across lessons.*

PRIMARY RESOURCE:

Manna and Mercy: A Brief History of God's Unfolding Promise to Mend The Entire Universe
by Daniel Erlander

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES: The whole Bible ☺ but primarily Exodus 16

STORY: Introduce the title of this series by referring to the theme page which should be displayed on a clothesline or on the wall. Explain the concepts of manna and mercy. Begin with the story of God having mercy on the Israelites in the wilderness and providing manna and meat (quail) to them regularly. Explain debate about what manna was/is. Explain that it began to be thought of as the food of the angels since it came from the sky. Because of this story, the word "manna" has come to generally represent God's provision, God's gifts. Emphasize the words Manna and Mercy and make sure the children understand what they mean.

Reminder saying (displayed where all can read it):

(all say together) God loves us (hand on heart)

by providing manna (arms out)

and mending us with mercy (hug self)

no matter what we do (head back and forth).

Give them a few quick, common examples of familiar Bible stories (see Resource Section) and ask them if the story tells about manna, mercy, or both. For instance, the story of Hannah who longs for a child would be a manna story because God provides. The story of Peter denying Christ would be a mercy story because Peter is forgiven and becomes a leader of the church.

Next emphasize that we know about these two ways that God loves us by reading from the Bible. But there are many different versions of the Bible. Some short/long, some for children/teens/adults, some in different languages...

Explain that in these lessons we are going to view the Bible through special lenses, our Manna and Mercy glasses (clear lensed glasses provided). The lenses will emphasize how much God loves us by giving us manna and mercy.

LESSON: Bible Notes from God, Finger Puppets, & Circle Statements

Each child finds a Bible from those that are scattered in the room and finds the message from God that has been placed inside. When all of the children have come back from finding their Bible and have read their special message, have some read their messages to the group. The group decides if it is a manna message or a mercy message. Have them notice what word is in all of the messages (Love). Discuss why? Also, have the children show what their Bible is like and then discuss how Bibles can be different, but they all have the same messages of God's manna and mercy.

Explain that manna and mercy stories are throughout the Bible, human history, and even in our everyday lives. Then tell a personal story or two). After your story is shared, ask which kind of story? Manna? or Mercy? or Both?

Introduce finger puppets: Manna and Mercy (prairie dogs)

Explain how these prairie dogs are going to visit the children some Sundays. They are very shy and only whisper in adult leaders ears. Explain some relative facts about prairie dogs (see below). They will help us learn more about Manna and Mercy. Choose how you will have the puppets first interact with or be introduced to the children. Be silly and fun. They might ask for the children's names or comment on their pretty clothes, or comment on the room or church. Manna has the yellow scarf (her favorite color!) and Mercy has the blue scarf (his favorite color!).

Relative Facts about Prairie Dogs:

1. They live deep in the ground to keep away from **predators** like humans.
2. They are very shy but brave.
3. They pop in and out of their holes, carefully watching for predators.
4. They are very social beings who live in community, watching out for one another. They take turns being the **sentinels**, (the watchers).
5. They have amazing ways of **communicating** with each other about **predators** that are nearby. Different barks tell about different types of **predators**.
6. They are reminders that God's family and God's future includes all creation. Isn't it glorious that God's future includes all creation and not just humans!

CLOSING (Worship Area): Manna and Mercy circle: Everyone gets in a circle and is given the Manna and Mercy circle sentences (small squares of paper). If you have a large group of good readers, circles of 4 work well. The leader explains that these are the **themes** (messages) that are repeated over and over in the Bible and how they make a sort of circle. Slowly, while the teacher explains, the children say the sentences one by one around the circle, going faster and faster once explanation is no longer needed. Make it fun!

SWEET TREAT: Explain about the symbolism of Angel Food cake. Manna is considered the food of angels and angel food cake looks somewhat like what manna may have looked like.

End with a quick **prayer** of thanksgiving. Then pass out the cake.

ADAPTATIONS: Children's Bibles would be best for younger children. Young children will need help reading the messages. Using pictures representing the Bible stories would be good visual aids as you tell the Bible stories, particularly for younger children.

For non-readers: This is a lesson using a great deal of print. When teaching non-readers of any age, try these steps: 1. Don't wait for them to try to read. 2. Slowly point to each word while saying each word aloud. 2. Ask the child to repeat the phrase/sentence if they can. Saying it with them will help. 3. Ask the child if s/he knows what the phrase or sentence means. 4. Don't wait long for an answer. If they don't know, tell them what it means. 5. Apply no pressure or expectation for them to be able to read or understand the words. 6. If they seem troubled, state that the words/concepts are hard, but we are all learning together. 7. For all lessons, repeatedly praise them for success and effort.

SUPPLIES:

- Reminder saying on a poster (for story)
- Theme page displayed on a clothesline or wall (for story)
- Bible to refer to (for story)
- M and M glasses, the letter M attached at each temple (if you purchase sunglasses, remove the lens so that the children can see when wearing them)
- One Bible per child, as many children's versions and different varieties as you can
- A note from God in each Bible, (See Resource Section). It would be wonderful if these could be pre-selected for the child with their name on the front of the Bible or in a box/bag and new, but that may not be possible
- 2 prairie dog finger puppets in a decorated box, one with a yellow scarf and one with a blue scarf
- Angel Food Cake, broken into small pieces

RESOURCES:

Notes from God to place in Bibles: *The manna or mercy indication is for the teacher only, not a part of the notes the children find inside the Bibles.*

You can't do anything so bad that I won't love you. I will always **love** you! God (mercy)

I will know when you are afraid and help you feel brave. I **love** you! God (manna)

When you are lost, I will help you find your way. I **love** you! God (manna)

When you are sad, I will help you feel better. I **love** you! God (manna)

No matter where you go, I will be with you, even if it is a scary place. I **love** you! God (manna)

I have created you as my child and made you good. I **love** you! God (manna)

I will always help you with big problems. Just ask. I **love** you! God (manna)

When you don't love me, I will still love you. I always **love** you! God (mercy)

When you are confused, ask me for help. I **love** you! God (manna)

When you mess up, you can always ask me to forgive you. I **love** you! God (mercy)

I know when you feel far from me, but you are not ever really far from me. I **love** you! God
(manna)

No matter what you do, I forgive you. I **love** you! God (mercy)

Even if you do a bad thing, I **love** you and forgive you. God (mercy)

There is no one who **loves** you more than me. God (manna)

This Bible tells you about our story of love, humans and me. It is for you. I **love** you! God
(manna)

If you hurt someone, I will still **love** you and forgive you. God (mercy)

You can't wander away from me. I will always be with you hoping you will love me like I **love**
you. God (mercy)

Other people in this Bible and in your life will show you and tell you how much I **love** you. God
(manna)

Even if you don't love me for a while, I will always **love** you and forgive you. God
(mercy)

I made you to do good things. When you don't do good things, I still **love** you. God
(mercy)

Examples of Bible Stories representing Manna: (God loves us by providing):

David and Goliath

Good Samaritan

Esther

Hannah

Woman Who Touched Jesus' Robe

Wine at the Wedding

5 loaves and fishes

Examples of Bible Stories representing Mercy: (God loves us by mending):

Joseph and his brothers

Prodigal Son

Year of Jubilee

Peter denying Jesus

Zacheaus

Woman caught in adultery

Paul

Examples of Bible Stories representing both Manna and Mercy:

Noah

Moses

Woman at the Well

Joseph

Manna and Mercy Circle Statements: (duplicate & cut into squares for children to hold)

MANNA & MERCY CIRCLE

1. God provides – MANNA!
2. Humans decide to become BIG DEALS!
3. Humans learn WE NEED GOD!
4. God forgives – MERCY!

Back to # 1

MANNA & MERCY CIRCLE

1. God provides – MANNA!
2. Humans decide to become BIG DEALS!
3. Humans learn WE NEED GOD!
4. God forgives – MERCY!

Back to # 1

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WEEK 8 THEME: The Wilderness School Part 1

CORE IDEAS: After leaving slavery in Egypt, God had a lot to teach the partner people (Israelites). Most of these lessons were taught through God's gift of manna.

*Note: Difficult but key words are **highlighted** and may need to be explained repeatedly. Underlined words/phrases are crucial to the connections across lessons. Note: Sin has been defined as people trying to become BIG DEALS.*

PRIMARY RESOURCE: *Manna and Mercy: A Brief History of God's Unfolding Promise to Mend the Entire Universe* by Daniel Erlander pgs. 7-9

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: primarily Exodus 16

STORY: Reminder saying (displayed where all can read it):
(all say together) God loves us (hand on heart)

by providing manna (arms out)

and mending us with mercy (hug self)

no matter what we do (head back and forth).

Review last week's teachings and theme particularly how God freed the partner people (Israelites) from slavery in Egypt, **parted the sea** for them to cross, and sent them into the **wilderness**. Refer to theme pages on clothesline. Introduce today's theme: **The Wilderness School** and pick up the Bible on the altar table while explaining that the story can be found in the 16th part of the book of Exodus, the 2nd book in the Bible. Remind them that Exodus means exit.

Begin by talking about what it would be like to live in a wilderness. Emphasize that eventually the food and water would run out. It would be uncomfortable and scary. Even after all that God had done, some of the partner people wanted to go back to being slaves in Egypt.

God led the partner people into the wilderness to teach them how to live in partnership with God. The wilderness would become God's classroom, the place where the people would learn lessons about how to live as partners. Then other nations will learn from them and become partners with God.

God, the teacher, waited for **teachable moments** to arrive, perfect moments when God's partners were ready to listen and learn.

The first moment came when God's partners grumbled to Moses, their leader, about not having water. They complained that they should have just stayed in slavery in Egypt. Moses took these complaints to God. So God showed Moses how to get water from a rock and then a piece of wood. Later God gave them manna in the morning and **quail** (bird) at night. But gathering the manna was tricky. Through manna living, they learned a lot more lessons about being in partnership with God.

First they had to learn that the manna was God's to give, not theirs to own. God wanted them to see manna as symbolic of everything in creation, the water, the land, everything. Everything is a gift from God. Remind them that this lesson series is called Manna and Mercy and that Manna means everything that God gives us. **Lesson 1: God gives Manna. We own nothing. All is God's. All is gift. All is manna.**

Next they had to learn that the manna had to be gathered early every morning, well almost every morning – more about that later, in order for everyone to have enough. **Lesson 2: Work is **dignified** (important). Work helps God **distribute** (give out evenly) manna.**

God taught them that everyone needed a fair amount even those who were small and weak. When they gathered more than they needed, the extra would disappear. When little was left for someone, they would gather what was there and then later measure and find that they had more. They learned that large families should gather more than small families. No one should try to be a BIG DEAL and get more than they need because God would give just enough for everyone. **Lesson 3: God gives enough for all to be shared by all.**

Some people hid extra manna away for later so that they could be BIG DEALS and have more. This is called **hoarding**. When they hoarded the manna, it grew **maggots** and smelled nasty! It was embarrassing to fail at this lesson. **Lesson 4: **Hoarding** causes rot. Hoarding stinks!**

Finally, the partner people learned that God wanted them to set aside one day, Saturday, to rest and enjoy their life with God. BUT HOW COULD THEY REST IF THEY HAD TO GATHER MANNA? God showed them by giving them twice as much manna to gather Friday morning. When Friday's manna was set aside, it did not stink! **Lesson 5: Sabbath God gives rest so humans can have extra time to enjoy friendship with God, other humans, and creation.**

God poured out manna day after day for the many years that it took for the partner people to learn these lessons in the wilderness. Even though God had many teachable moments, the partner people were slow to learn manna living/manna way and forgot many of their lessons.

Even we are still learning these lessons. God hopes that someday humans will learn manna living and practice it every day. Then we would have a world where everyone:

receives from God, thanks God, and shares with others,
where there are no BIG DEALS and everyone gets their fair share,
and where humans live in harmony with all of creation.

This kind of life God calls **Shalom**, meaning a whole and healthy world.

LESSON: Floor Map Journey

Outside the door: **All take off shoes!** There will be a clipboard for each teacher. It will have your directions. I suggest you set some ground rules before entering (Ideas given below).

On the floor in each classroom will be a map of Eastern Egypt, the Sinai Peninsula, and the Promised Land. Stations where the group will stop will be labeled by number and key words. Each station will have a bag of props in a grocery bag. You simply have them stand with you, listen, and follow your directions. Because of varying group size, you will decide which kids will do what you direct them to do. Others might just watch. Encourage taking turns. Sometimes you will choose only one, sometimes a pair or small group, sometimes all. I want you to be as silly as possible while keeping their bodies under control (i.e. they must stay with you, no running or jumping, etc.). In the Resource Section find your specific instructions. These will be on a clipboard for you outside your closed classroom door.

These activities will need to be quick, but don't go too quickly. Make sure they understand. Shoot for getting through Station 5. **You have 2 weeks to get through all the stations!** When your time is up the first week, finish a station and then do the Closing. You will begin at the next station next week with a quick overview, pointing to the stations and reviewing what happened.

CLOSING WEEK 1: Stay at the station you just completed. Close with a prayer, thanking God for these stories and asking forgiveness because we are still having to learn these lessons of how to rely on God.

Stations:

1: Where are we?

2. Slavery in Egypt

Rod of Aaron, 10 Plagues

Passover, Commandment to Remember

Objects to use or find:

Globe

pyramid, bricks

stick, plastic snake, plastic frogs

cut ribbons

3. Back to Goshen	Home Sweet Home sign, bag of plastic food, tent, Promised Land This Way sign, water bottle, cotton cloud on a stick, electric lantern
4: Sea is parted	comb
Celebrating and Entering the Wilderness	tambourines
5. Out of water	whiner sign, rock
6. God gives manna	whiner sign, Angel Food cake, birds, lessons 1-4 in envelopes each bag of hoarded manna (ammonia on cotton balls in an open baggie)
7. Mt. Sinai (2 chairs with a sign)	lightning bolt, 2 sets tablets (painted & cut Styrofoam – 1 flimsy to break easily), Golden calf (spray painted toy), lesson 5 in an envelope
8. Kadesh Barnea	5 pairs of M and M sunglasses
9. Back into the wilderness	

ADAPTATIONS: Use your judgment to vary your words and the rate of movement through the lesson activities based on their understanding and attention. Note that much of the manna way is like the culture of an early elementary classroom i.e. sharing – not hoarding, following the rules (law) etc. This will help younger children understand manna living throughout the curriculum.

SUPPLIES:

- Reminder saying on a poster (for story)
- Theme page displayed on a clothesline or wall (for story)
- Bible to refer to (for story)
- Clipboard with instructions outside each lesson room
- Floor map, made with colored butcher paper and painter's tape
- Labels, index cards taped on the butcher paper
- Paper grocery bags with station labels on them to hold the props
- (See **Objects to Use or Find** above) Note the tablets are used in weeks 14 & 15.

RESOURCES:

Instructions for the Teacher to the Israelites (children) while in the Wilderness school:

For role-playing, you decide who is who depending on the circumstances: # of children, # of props, & their behavior. Don't worry about gender. Roles may be swapped, shared, and changed as you see fit. They can take turns carrying things. Try to pretend as much as possible emphasizing the experience of the Israelites. Be dramatic. Have fun being silly while teaching. Keep in mind some know these stories and some have never heard them. Keep them in control, huddled in a group. Tell them:

- stay in a tight group or they might get lost in the wilderness 😊
- pick-up items or open bags only when told to do so, it might be dangerous since it's the wilderness 😊

ACT = all or those you choose get in character & act out what you are describing.

bold = stations and props.

Green statements are said aloud dramatically.

Green text lists what you transport.

Station 1: Where are we? Gather the kids around the **globe**.

1. Explain the modern day globe, names may be different from long ago
2. Find and show your home then drag your finger to Egypt and the Sinai Peninsula.
3. Explain that a peninsula is a piece of land that sticks out into water, refer to floor map
4. Have them look at the floor map, point to places on the globe, name them, and find them on the map. Searching for station 2, Egypt. Go to station 2.

Station 2: Slavery in Egypt Gather kids around this station. Point out

1. **pyramid** & describe (square bottom, 4 triangle sides)
2. Israelites were slaves & were forced to build the pyramids
3. had to make the bricks by stomping straw into mud with their bare feet **ACT**
4. **ACT** moving the **bricks** from one place to another. Talk about how their hands, feet and whole bodies must have hurt. Cry out, **"Help us! Lord have mercy!"**
5. **Rod of Aaron (long stick)**. God gave this to Aaron, Moses brother, to use in front of Pharaoh to show God's power. Choose an Aaron.
6. One time he threw the stick down and it turned into a **snake**. Then he picked it back up again and it was a rod. **ACT**
7. Explain the 10 plagues briefly. One plague was that the Nile River water turned to blood. Aaron began this change by placing the stick in the Nile. **ACT**

8. Another plague was that many frogs came. Scatter the **frogs** and talk about how horrible it would be to have frogs everywhere. **ACT**
9. Passover: Israelites suffered through plagues too except for the 10th, the last plague. It was the worst. The first born son of Egyptian families died during the night, but this plague “passed over” the Israelites. They called it the Passover.
10. Commandment to Remember: When pharaoh said they could leave Egypt, God told Moses to tell them to remember Passover every year. At the last supper, Jesus was having the Passover meal. Jews still celebrate Passover. One of the ways people remember things is to tie a string around their finger. Tie **ribbons** around a finger of one or more kids. Prompt them that later you will ask the kids what the string is for.

Take with you: **STICK**

Station 3: Back to Goshen When Israelites first settled in Egypt, they lived in Goshen.

1. Point out **signs: Home Sweet Home, This Way to the Promised Land, & Promised Land** Goshen was near the land God had promised them. It was the land that God gave to Father Abraham and Mother Sarah so long ago. (Point to it.) But God knew they weren’t ready to go there yet. They had to take the long way. They went into the wilderness to learn some of God’s important lessons at God’s wilderness school.
2. Gather their things (**tent, bag of food, water bottle**). Talk about how the Israelites had to take everything they could carry.
3. Direction? The Lord went in front of them in a cloud by day and a fire by night. From here on, have a kid lead the group from station to station, holding up high either the **cotton cloud** or the **lantern – turn it on first**. Give different kids a chance to lead. **ACT**

Take with you: **STICK, TENT, BAG OF FOOD, WATER BOTTLE, CLOUD, and LANTERN**

CLOUD OR LANTERN LEADS

Station 4: Sea is parted At the Red Sea, they stopped and panicked.

1. They were being chased too! Choose a Moses. Moses asked God what to do. God told Moses to stretch out the rod of Aaron over the water and God’s breath parted the Red Sea. Explain what the word *parted* means and show them the joke (**big comb** that can part the sea). Did God really use a big comb? No! Moses **ACT**.
2. To protect them, God moved between the Israelites and Pharaoh’s soldiers (in the cloud at day and in the fire at night). Have those two kids go to the back holding their objects up high.
3. Have all of them cross the sea looking from side to side at the amazing walls of water **ACT**. Tell them of the soldiers’ fate (When they crossed the sea the waters came down and drowned them.).

4. **Celebrating and Entering the Wilderness** Once safe and settled, Miriam, Moses' sister, led them in celebrating and dancing with **tambourines**. Choose a Miriam. Have her say the line **"The Lord has triumphed!"** while dancing and all repeat and dance too. **ACT**

Take with you: **STICK, TENT, BAG OF FOOD, WATER BOTTLE, CLOUD, and LANTERN**

CLOUD OR LANTERN LEADS

Station 5: Out of water

1. Say you're thirsty and ask the child holding the water bottle for water. There is none. Then you place a **whiner sign** on one of the kids and s/he whines loudly, **"Oh no! We're out of water. We're going to die! It was better in Egypt!"**
2. God heard their cry and told Moses to touch the stick to the **rock** and the water poured out. **ACT** Moses and kid with the water bottle pretend to fill it up.

Take with you: **STICK, CLOUD, LANTERN, TENT, BAG OF FOOD, WATER BOTTLE, AND WHINER SIGN ON CHILD**

CLOUD OR LANTERN LEADS What are the ribbons for? (To remember the Passover)

Station 6: God gives manna

1. Pretend to eat the food but put it in the station bag. Choose who will wear 2nd whiner sign; **ACT** **"Oh no! We're out of food. We're going to die! It was better in Egypt!"**
2. God heard their cries and gave them bread from heaven each morning. They found it on the ground (Manna = **Angel Food cake crumbs**) and **birds** (quail) at night for meat.
3. Then God taught them their first lesson about how God gives manna. Open **Lesson One envelope** and read to them. Discuss.
4. In order for them to be fed, they had to work for it. They would gather the manna in the morning and at night kill, clean, and cook quail to eat. They did this every morning and night but Saturday. Direct them to pick up and/or eat all of the angel food cake crumbs. God's second lesson was about how important work is. Open **Lesson 2 envelope**. Read. Discuss.
5. Is all cake gone? If not, direct them to get it all, everyone together. The Israelites had to gather all of the manna that was given because there was just the right amount for everyone. This was God's third lesson. Open the **Lesson 3 envelope**. Read. Discuss.
6. Some Israelites wanted to be **BIG DEALS** and wanted more food for themselves and their families. So they hid it away to be eaten later. This is **hoarding**. But God showed them! Manna that had been hoarded would quickly rot and stink. **Bag of hoarded manna**. Have them smell the manna (ammonia). Don't have them look at it. God's fourth lesson

was about stinky manna. Open the **Lesson 4 envelope**. Discuss. Take with you: STICK, CLOUD, LANTERN, TENT, BAG OF FOOD, WATER BOTTLE, WHINER SIGNS on 2 kids

CLOUD OR LANTERN LEADS

Ask what the ribbon is for. Have whiners do some whining because they are soooo tired!

Station 7: Mt. Sinai They reached large Mount Sinai. God told them to camp there.

1. God showed might by creating a lightning storm, blowing harsh winds, and making trumpet sounds. All **ACT**. Pick up a **lightning bolt**, shake it, lean in the wind, and make trumpet sounds.
2. God asked Moses and Joshua, a young leader, to come to the top of the mountain **ACT** (stand on the chairs) while the people waited. God gave Moses the law written on **tablets of stone** (give the flimsy set only to Moses), written with the finger of God.
3. The Israelites below became impatient and whined. Choose an Aaron. 2 whiners to say to him, "It's taking too long! We need another God. Aaron, make us a golden cow to worship." And Aaron melted their jewelry **ACT** and made a **golden cow** for them to worship, an **idol** that was not the one true God. Talk briefly about idols, defining them and giving examples.
4. Moses and Joshua came down from the mountain carrying the tablets, Moses got so angry about the idol that he threw the tablets and they shattered **ACT may need to break them over knee**. Then he threw the golden cow and jewelry into a fire **ACT**. Next he went back up the mountain to ask the Lord to forgive the people **ACT**.
5. The Lord agreed. The Lord created **another set of tablets** with the law written on it. Give 2nd set to Moses. These tablets then traveled with them wherever they went. Have someone carry them.
6. An important part of God's law was the 10 Commandments. One of these commandments was God's 5th lesson. It is all about the importance of Sabbath. Open **Lesson 5 envelope**, read, and discuss.

Take with you: STICK, CLOUD, LANTERN, TENT, BAG OF FOOD, WATER BOTTLE, WHINER SIGNS ON 2 KIDS, and 1 SET OF TABLETS

CLOUD OR LANTERN LEADS Ribbons for? Whining!

8: Kadesh Barnea

After many months of traveling, God led them close to The Promised Land to a place called Kadesh Barnea. They decided to check out The Promised Land before trying to enter so they sent 12 spies to check out the land and the people while everyone else waited for the spies.

ACT 5 kids put on **sunglasses** and sneak over.

1. Spies returned, but only Joshua and Caleb, his friend, wanted to go into The Promised Land. They believed God would protect them. The other spies were too scared. Have all but 2 kids say: "No way should we go into the Promised Land. There are giants!". Then have Joshua & Caleb say, "God will protect us even if there are giants." Let them continue the argument for a moment then vote.
2. The cowards won the argument so they refused to go into The Promised Land so God led them back out into the wilderness. It was obvious to God that the Israelites had not learned to trust God. The lessons on manna living had to continue so they wandered in the wilderness for more 40 years!

Take with you: **STICK, CLOUD, LANTERN, TENT, BAG OF FOOD, WATER BOTTLE, WHINER SIGNS ON 2 KIDS, and SET OF TABLETS**

CLOUD OR LANTERN LEADS

Station 9: Back into the wilderness Have them all sit and begin the closing. If little time simply do a thanksgiving prayer.

CLOSING Week 2: Stay at Station 9 and have the children sit. Talk about a time when they felt lost and tired and discouraged. What helped them? Tie these comments into what the Israelites must have felt and then had to do to survive in the wilderness (i.e. rely on God, family, friends & survival skills that God gives, maps, don't panic, learn to solve problems, rest and try again...). Point out that one of our maps is scripture and then explain how it guides us.

End with a prayer that connects their comments to the Israelites.

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WEEK 18 THEME: The People Want a King

CORE IDEAS: The early days of Israel were mostly days of equality for all, but a debate arose as to whether the Partner People should have a king. Eventually a king was chosen and as the lineage of royalty began, equality lessened so that the power structure in Israel began to resemble Pharaoh's Egypt.

Note: Difficult but key words are **highlighted** and may need to be defined repeatedly. Underlined words/phrases are crucial to the connections across lessons. Note: Sin has been defined as being when people try to become BIG DEALS.

PRIMARY RESOURCE: *Manna and Mercy: A Brief History of God's Unfolding Promise to Mend the Entire Universe* by Daniel Erlander p. 21-22

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES: Deuteronomy 17: 14-20; 1st Samuel 7, 8, 10: 17-27, 15, 16: 1-13;
2nd Samuel 11:1-12:15, 1 Kings 10:14-11:13; 1 Chronicles 18: 14

Because of the content, the lesson is done first and the story is told last.

LESSON: Decorating crowns (for younger groups) **and Mock King Debate** (for older groups)

Decorating crowns (younger group): Begin by reminding them in simple terms how the Partner People argued about whether or not they should have a king. Explain some of the reasons on both sides (see arguments in resource section below). Then explain that the side of choosing a king won the debate. God wanted them to have a godly or good king, not a BIG DEAL king that would be sinful so the children are going to decorate crowns that would encourage a godly and good king.

Give the children each a white crown. In the middle of the table put the collection of words and tape (don't put the art supplies yet). Some words will be godly characteristics and some will be characteristic of BIG DEALS or sin (see word list in resource section). Read the words aloud to them, explain the concepts in concrete terms (i.e. "A king who was like this would...") and help them decide if that is a godly/good characteristic that they would want their king to have or if it is a BIG DEAL/sinful characteristic. All godly/good words are then taped to the inside of their crown so that when the king wears the crown, those good characteristics can influence him (seep into his brain 😊). Once the words are chosen and taped inside, then put out the art supplies for decorating the crown.

Refer to the directions for the closing described below but put in simple terms for the young children.

King Debate (older groups): You will find 2 lecterns/podiums in the room. Each will have a sign representing either wanting a king (pro-king: a crown) or not wanting a king (no-king: a crown with a line through it). The teacher sits to the side apart from the children. On either side of the teacher on the floor will be containers each with the pro-king or no-king symbols. Each container will have folded sentence strips arguing that position. The teacher begins by reminding them that the Partner People argued for years about whether or not to have a king. Emphasize God's desires in this process (the story above & the arguments listed in the resource section will help you summarize).

Explain the concept of a debate (i.e. a verbal contest, 2 groups on opposite sides of an issue, trying to convince people of their position through good verbal reasoning and passionate speaking). You might mention the movie "The Great Debaters," a movie about African American college debates. In debates, what the speaker really believes is less important than being able to communicate their side of the argument. So the children may have to argue something that goes against what they really believe.

The teacher explains that the kids will be engaging in a staged debate, a mock debate. They will pick a folded strip of paper, alternating from one container to another. They will show the strip of paper to the teacher, and then read the statement from the correct lectern/podium. Each strip will contain an argument (see sentence strips in resource section). Their job is to speak clearly, dramatically and passionately. The teacher will need to explain and demonstrate how they might do this (raised voice, use of hands, etc.). They show the sentence to the teacher to make sure they can read it. Whisper while you explain words. The teacher then prompts them to go to the correct podium and act dramatically, passionately and speak clearly. Be silly with this. Over-dramatize. If they don't dramatize well, encourage them to try it again.

There are more arguments in favor of a king so if you get through all of the arguments, you will run out of the No-king arguments first. When all arguments are read, stop the debate and explain that those who wanted a king won the argument and King Saul was selected and **anointed** by Samuel. This word would have been defined earlier in the story but explain it again.

CLOSING (Worship Area if time allows): Gather the children at the worship center in your room (small table). Talk about God's role in this debate. This aspect will have been emphasized in the story. Have them list characteristics that they would want in a king (wise, fair, godly...) and characteristics that they would not want in a king (proud, mean, arrogant...). Then remind them that we do not have a king in the USA but we do have a president. Talk about how a president is different from a king. When we have a presidential election, talk about how the candidate's characteristics might be important for choosing a president. If time allows, mention the role of God in this process for you.

STORY: Review last week's teachings and over all theme particularly that Israel/the Partner People are in the Promised Land sometimes living as God would have them and sometimes not, but God would always show mercy and guide them back to manna living. Pick up a Bible and explain that the story today is from Deuteronomy, 1st Samuel, 2nd Samuel, 1 Kings, and Chronicles, all books in the Old Testament.

You just had a mock debate. You argued whether the Partner People should have a king or not. I'm Samuel and I'm here to tell you that the Partner People did eventually decide to have a king. I was a big part of that story. I'm also going to tell you about the 3 most famous kings that the Partner People had: Saul, David, and Solomon.

Introduce yourself as Samuel:

- My mother, Hannah, asked for a baby and promised me to God
- grew up living with the priests and serving with them at the tabernacle (where we worship God)
- last of the judges who helped Israel/the Partner people understand how they could please God
- first of the prophets who warned Israel/the Partner people when they were not pleasing God
- most remember me for anointing the first two kings
- explain about the king debate (see arguments in resource section emphasizing God's desire that there were no rich and poor, powerful and powerless)
- the primary reason for the debate was because people from the nations nearby were stealing, attacking and influencing Israel/the Partner People especially about how and who they should worship - The people were afraid and wanted to be like other nations
- I believed that God did not want us to have a king because it didn't seem to fit with manna living, we should rely on God, not a human leader and a king would encourage some people to become BIG DEALS which is sinful
- The Pro-king people argued so well and for so long that that I finally gave in
- a new possibility – God will help me choose the right man to be king, a man who is faithful and committed to righteousness and mercy
- God and I hoped it would work

1st King: Saul

- God helped me choose a man named Saul
- Saul was handsome, the tallest man I have ever seen, and a dutiful son
- I anointed him king, that means I poured perfumed oil over his head symbolizing God's spirit being put on him (Call up a tall child. Pick up bottle of oil. Have child kneel.

Pretend to pour the oil on their head by draping your fingers along their scalp. It will feel like oil.)

- Saul did not become too powerful
- Israel/The Partner People did not become a divided society of rich and poor
- BUT Saul had a lot of problems being king and did not please God so another king was to be found

2nd King, most famous king, David

- God told me to find a new king in the house of Jesse, but it was to be a secret.
- Jesse had 8 sons and lived in Bethlehem. Have you heard of that town before? Yes, that's where Jesus is born. The king that God led me to choose would be an ancestor of Jesus. (If time allows: Do you remember hearing about Rahab, the woman who lived in Jericho who helped Joshua and the Partner People bring the wall down? She joined the Partner people and Jesse was one of her descendants. Rahab - Ruth – they hear about later – Jesse – Mary – Jesus)
- Back to Jesse's sons. Call up 8 children of different sizes. He had many grown sons, but when I saw all his sons, God told me to anoint the youngest, smallest son. Pretend to anoint like before.
- David served King Saul for many years. He became a best friend to King Saul's son, Jonathan.
- David became a great military leader which was great training for a king!
- Eventually David became a great king. God loved him and he loved God. Even when he sinned, he cried for God's mercy. This is a difficult thing for kings to do. God granted him mercy – as God always does, and helped David be a great king all his life.

3rd King, Solomon

- I did not anoint King Solomon; he was King David's son. I was dead by then.
- Though Solomon was known for being very wise, he turned from the manna way
- He gathered riches and made his friends rich with land and money, he had 700 wives and many more hundreds of servants, built a huge temple (contrast with the tabernacle – a tent where they worshiped God). He tried to be a BIG DEAL. That is sinful!
- God was disappointed for Israel/the Partner People had become like Egypt with a king like a pharaoh, a few with most of the wealth, and many who were poor and living like slaves.

ADAPTATIONS: Younger children will be doing a different activity as described above.

Conversation should be at their level. Abstract terms should be used, but their concepts should be communicated in concrete terms as much as possible. Because of the many abstract terms

in the Manna and Mercy series, it helps if teachers explain what an abstract term looks like, noting that much of the manna way is like the culture of an early elementary classroom i.e. sharing – not hoarding, following the rules (law) etc.

For the older children, it is important to keep in mind that some of them will still be concrete thinkers so relating abstract terms to behavior is still very important.

SUPPLIES:

- Reminder saying on a poster (for story)
- Theme page displayed on a clothesline or wall (for story)
- Bible to refer to (for story)
- bottle of oil (for story)
- Samuel costume (for storyteller - optional)

The younger groups will have set aside the following supplies:

- multiple copies of words that are positive and negative characteristics of a king
- clear tape dispensers
- white crowns
- sticker jewels
- crayons

The older groups will have

- two lecterns/podiums with a sign on each indicating one position of the king argument
- labeled containers with the folded sentence strips inside on both sides of the teacher's chair

RESOURCES: Sentence Strips & King Characteristic Words

King Characteristic Words:

Godly words:

Loving

Kind

Fair

Forgiving

Merciful

BIG DEAL Words:

Proud

Selfish

Mean

Hateful

Pushy

Generous

Rich

Humble

Powerful

Devout

Arrogant

Sentence Strips

Pro-king Arguments: (total of 12)

A king will represent us when other nations want to relate to us or trade with us.

A king will have an army who will keep us safe from neighbors who want to hurt us. He will protect us!

A king will be our link to God. He will be the one who can help us understand how to worship God rightly and be a godly people.

A king will settle fights among us. He will be wise and know God's ways.

Our king will be the best partner with God. He will lead us in the ways of God. He will not hurt us.

A king will be a leader like Abraham and Moses and give honor to God.

We will not be afraid of our king. He will be a wise and godly king who loves us.

Our king will be a godly king who is one of us and loves God and manna living!

A king will be like God in human form that we can understand and follow.

A king will teach his sons the right ways to lead us in the future so that all of our generations of children will be led by a godly king.

A strong and wise king will increase our power and influence in all the land. Other nations will admire us.

A handsome, strong, and godly king will be a grand symbol of our people and our nation.

No king Arguments: (total of 8)

God should be our only king!

If we feel unsafe, then we should cry out to God for help and leadership, not a king!

Kings are too powerful. They can change the way we worship God. They will ask us to bow down to them.

God wants us to live as equals. No one should be a BIG DEAL. That is sinful!

A king will become rich and have more land and surround himself with others who he will make rich and give land to. We will no longer all be equal.

A king will charge taxes to pay for his castle and rich ways. We will become poor!

Other nations have kings. God wants us to be a nation different from other nations and show them how to be a nation of equal people.

We will be become like Egypt. A king is just another name for Pharaoh! We will become slaves again, doing labor for the king.

Manna and Mercy: An Elementary Curriculum

Week 28 Theme: A Wild Preacher and Jesus at Wilderness School

CORE IDEA: John the Baptist was the expected prophet that would introduce Jesus as the Messiah. John was honored to baptize Jesus. Afterwards, Jesus spent time in the wilderness learning and discerning his mission like John and the Partner People had before him.

*Note: Difficult but key words are **highlighted** and may need to be explained repeatedly. Underlined words/phrases are crucial to the connections across lessons. Note: Sin has been defined as people trying to become BIG DEALS.*

PRIMARY RESOURCE: *Manna and Mercy: A Brief History of God's Unfolding Promise to Mend the Entire Universe* by Daniel Erlander, pgs. 41-42

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES: Isaiah 40:3; Matthew 3:1; Luke 1:76, 2:52, 3:4,10-14, 22, 4: 1-13

STORY: Say reminder saying: (Displayed where all can read it.)

(All say together) God loves us (hand on heart)

by providing manna (arms out)

and mending us with mercy (hug self)

no matter what we do (head back and forth).

Review overall theme (Manna and Mercy) and last week's teachings particularly Jesus' birth and the hope that he was the messiah despite his being a poor outsider. Refer to the theme pages. Introduce today's theme: **A Wild Preacher and Jesus at Wilderness School**. Pick up a Bible and explain that today's story is mainly found in Matthew and Luke, 2 of the gospels. We are now in the New Testament of the Bible.

*During the course of the story you will choose one child to be John the Baptist and one to be Jesus. To help all the children connect these men to the lesson afterwards, you will **ask John to stand to the audience's left. This side corresponds to John's side on the clothespin board used in the lesson.** Further directions about where the 2 volunteers and you stand are provided below. The movement will increase attention and the orientation will be parallel to the lesson activity.*

Use the term wilderness school because it connects with earlier lessons in which the Partner People in the Wilderness School in the Sinai and Babylon.

Many of these bulleted points are key concepts for the game played during the lesson so make sure you cover those points which are listed in the Resource section.

John the Baptist: (choose a volunteer to be John, stand to the left, give John name to hold)

- Born to Elizabeth and Zachariah, aunt and uncle to Jesus. John was Jesus' cousin.
- Mary visited them when she was pregnant with Jesus.
- The **prophet** Isaiah foretold that someone in the wilderness would **proclaim** that the **Messiah** (their savior) was coming.
- John lived in the wilderness school like the Partner People before him, eating locusts (grasshoppers) and honey, a sort of wild man, learning about what he was to do for God and Jesus, the **messiah**.
- Preached, "**Repent** (change your bad ways) and be **baptized**! (Explain baptism according to your tradition remembering they were at the Jordan.) The kingdom of God is coming."
- Proclaimed Jesus as the **Messiah** and told the Jews to prepare for him.
- When they asked what they should do, John told them to stop hoarding food and clothes. They should share with those who don't have enough. This is Manna Living that God had already taught them many times in the Wilderness School.
- To soldiers and tax collectors he said to be happy with the money you have. Don't keep more than you are owed.
- **Baptized** Jesus and many others at the Jordan River in Israel

Jesus: (move to middle, choose a Jesus, give Jesus name to hold, leave John behind)

- Born a few months after John to Mary and Joseph
- The **Messiah** the Jews had been waiting for.
- **Prophets** told the Jews to expect the **Messiah** to save them

(ask John to join you and Jesus in the middle)

- **Baptized** by John at the Jordan River
- The **Holy Spirit** (God come to Earth) in dove form announced at Jesus' baptism, "This is my son. I am well pleased with him."

Jesus in the Wilderness School (move Jesus to the right side, leave John in the middle)

- Like the Jews in the Sinai Peninsula and Babylon, Jesus went in the Wilderness School for 40 days, was tempted by **Satan** (the source of evil), but did not give in to Satan's temptations
- Learned in the Wilderness School what kind of messiah he was to be

Ministries of John the Baptist and Jesus (move to the middle & join John)

- Jesus came out of the wilderness school ready to do God's work
- Both men suffered because of their messages

- Both men preached about mercy for all
- Jesus healed many with just a touch
- Both preached at the same time in different places with different followers
- Their messages supported one another
- Some thought John was the messiah but they were wrong. It was Jesus.

John the Baptist: (take John back to the left side, leave Jesus in the middle)

- Was arrested and then killed by King Herod's son who was a ruler

Jesus's death and resurrection (Jesus is already in the middle)

- **Crucified** on a cross because of his preaching and teaching
- **Resurrected** (lived again) after 3 days in the tomb
- Said, "I am with you always."

LESSON: JB & JC Clothespin Board

This week's lesson involves having the children attach 30 clothespins with words/phrases on them to the correct place on a foam board. The foam board will have 2 cartoon figures: John the Baptist (JB) on the left and Jesus (JC) on the right. Their figures are tilted so that there is obvious space in the middle for those characteristics that apply to both (i.e. the clothespin that says "cousin"). There are 3 places to put clothespins: left by John the Baptist, right by Jesus, and the middle.

You decide how you want the activity to be played depending your children's typical behavior and level of understanding. The clothespin board can be held by 1 child easily. Where will the clothespins be? You decide given the options. You may need a tray or opaque container for the clothespins and/or a timer depending on how you play. For some methods of play, the clothespins will be carefully arranged beforehand. Here are some possibilities:

EASY: You offer the clothespins in chronological order according to the story or in order of complexity, explain the concept, and then have the whole group decide where it should go. Have the children take turns placing the clothespin. OR

HARDER: Divide into 2 teams and have each team take turns deciding together where to put clothespins one at a time. Decide where you want the clothespins (scattered on a table or arranged on a tray or pulled out of a container) OR

MORE CHAOTIC BUT FUN: Have teams take turns or race placing all of the clothespins at once. You could deduct points for each mistake. If you do this, you would need to go over all the correct answers first or have one team wait outside so that the second team doesn't have an

unfair advantage. If they race, you will need a timer to keep track of how long each team takes. Having 2 boards in each room would mean no need for a preview, timer, or sending a group out. Repeating rounds for maximum learning would be best. OR

HARDER: You can put all the clothespins scattered on the table with their words shown. Have the kids pass the foam board around and choose a clothespin to place by themselves. You have the entire group then decide if they are correct. This will start out easy but get harder. OR

HARDEST: Play as above, but the clothespins are pulled out of an opaque container without being viewed.

CLOSING: (Worship area) Talk about how important Jesus and John were to each other and how sad and afraid Jesus must have been when John was killed. Then talk about important friendships that we have our whole lives especially when they are family members. Consider how these relationships please God.

Pray with gratitude for these two men and important, life-long friendships that we all have.

ADAPTATIONS: The teacher will design how the lesson happens. Several options are given above. Also, for younger children, conversation should be at their level. Abstract terms should be used, but their concepts should be communicated in concrete terms as much as possible. You may choose to leave out some of the historical details and abstract concepts for younger children.

For the older children, it is important to keep in mind that some of them will still be concrete thinkers so relating abstract terms to behavior is still very important, but encourage abstract thinking. Give examples when applicable to help with understanding. Many difficult terms are highlighted and defined in the story section.

Encourage other children and provide answers or allow the children to do so when you think a child needs help.

SUPPLIES:

- Reminder saying on a poster (for story)
- Theme page displayed on a clothesline or wall (for story)
- Bible to refer to (for story)
- 2 Signs for volunteers to hold saying: "John the Baptist" & "Jesus the Christ" (for story)
- 1 Wide piece of foam board with 2 cartoon figures on it - figures found in resource book on pgs. 41 & 47
- 30 clothespins with phrases attached (see list of phrases below)

- Tray for clothespins (optional depending on how game is played)
- Opaque container to pull out single clothespins (optional depending on how game is played)
- Timer (optional depending on how game is played)

RESOURCES: Contact Hanna Schock at hannaschock@bellsouth.net to request photos of materials.

Phrases/words to be attached to clothespins and where they should be placed on the board:

<u>John the Baptist (JB):</u>	<u>Both:</u>	<u>Jesus Christ (JC):</u>
Dipped people into a river	Cousin	Born in Bethlehem
Prophet	Outsider	Poor
Lived in the wilderness	Preacher	In the wilderness for 40 days
Proclaimed Jesus as Messiah	Jew	Holy Spirit said to him, "I am well pleased."
Baptized Jesus		Savior of the world
Preached, "Repent!"		Said, "I am with you always."
A sort of wild man		Parents: Mary and Joseph
Ate locusts (grasshoppers) and honey		Was tempted by Satan in the wilderness
Killed by King Herod's son		Did not give in to Satan's temptations
Parents: Elizabeth & Zachariah		Crucified on a cross
Some thought wrongly that he was the messiah		Preached about mercy for all
		Left the wilderness ready to be the messiah
		Healed many with just a touch
	Preached about mercy for all	
	Preached about manna living	

Week 43

Theme: Fruit of the Spirit

CORE IDEA: Like the partner people before them, the early Christians struggled to live the manna way as Jesus and God had taught them. Paul gave them a new way to think of manna living – the fruit of the Spirit.

*Note: Difficult but key words are **highlighted** and may need to be explained repeatedly. Underlined words/phrases are crucial to the connections across lessons. Note: Sin has been defined as people trying to become BIG DEALS.*

PRIMARY RESOURCE: *Manna and Mercy: A Brief History of God's Unfolding Promise to Mend the Entire Universe* by Daniel Erlander, pg.67 (Paul is mentioned) & pg. 70 (indirectly relates to the fruit of the Spirit)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES: Galatians 1:11-24, 5:22

STORY: Say reminder saying: (Displayed where all can read it.)

(All say together) God loves us (hand on heart)

by providing manna (arms out)

and mending us with mercy (hug self)

no matter what we do (head back and forth).

Review last week's teachings and overall theme (see squares on clothesline) particularly what was learned about the early Christians (a peculiar people who were sometimes killed because of their belief in Jesus Christ). Refer to the Bible and say that today's story is found in the book of Galatians. Introduce today's theme: **Fruit of the Spirit**.

Paul and the Galatians: *(Use big popsicle sticks for the lesson to show the fruits of the Spirit. The concept of "temptation" is emphasized because it is an important aspect of the game the children will play during the lesson.)*

- Remind the children about Paul and the letter he sent to the Galatians from an earlier story.
- This letter's purpose was to remind them that God wanted to guide Christians by giving the Holy Spirit to help Christians live the manna way, not the Roman way.
- The Holy Spirit is God inside us urging us to live the manna way, the way God has been trying to teach people to live all along, the way Jesus lived.
- Paul warns the Galatians about being fake/part-time Christians who act like Christians when they are around other Christians. When alone though, they don't do the right things (pray & serve others) or feel the right way (compassion & love).

- These behaviors & feelings help you grow in the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is teaching you so that you can become more like Jesus and live the manna way.
- Paul calls this living by the Spirit so that we can be guided by the Spirit.
- When we do let the Holy Spirit guide us there are results. Paul calls these results fruit of the Spirit. *Pull out the large popsicle sticks and list them, defining the concepts they might not know.*
- Paul calls them fruit because like a fruit tree we can give the world wonderful gifts like our kindness or joy. *Hold up these 2 sticks.*
- The fruit from fruit trees are a delight. *Ask about some of their favorite fruits.* It is also delightful when we experience gentleness & love & peace. *Hold up these 3 sticks.*
- A tree has to have water, sunshine, good soil, good weather, & fertilizer to give fruit.
- The fruit of the Spirit help us live the manna way, the way that God has been trying to teach the Partner People all along and the way that Jesus lived.
- There are things we must do in order to grow as Christians such as
 - truly worshiping God, not just going through the motions
 - praying in a way that is real & heartfelt, not just for show
 - singing to God when we worship
 - sincerely confessing our sins during communion and then knowing that our sins are wiped away
 - having Christian friends and Christian community to teach us
- All these help us grow in the Spirit to be more like Jesus. Then we will also have the fruit of the Spirit and notice when others have the fruit of the Spirit.
- In the wilderness school, God taught the Partner People not to hoard the manna that they were given to eat. But this was hard. It required them to have self-control. *Show the self-control stick.* Sometimes they were tempted to get more manna than they needed even if this would mean that someone else would not have enough to eat. When they were tempted, they lost their self-control and they suffered for it with stinky, rotten manna. If they had shown self-control, they would not have suffered so.
- The early Christians struggled with temptation just like we do. Sometimes they didn't want to live the manna way, but the Holy Spirit urges us to do more than just what we want to do. The Holy Spirit urges us to avoid temptation, have self-control so that we can experience the delight of the fruit of the Spirit in ourselves and in others.
- Then the Spirit grows inside us and we have lots of fruit of the spirit that others can see in us all the time.

LESSON: Fruit of the Spirit Stick Drop

Demonstration and Materials: Give each child a handout and demonstrate the game (See Game Directions below). Then give each child 2 sets of popsicle sticks: design sticks & word sticks. The set of 4 design sticks have either dots & stripes on both sides or they will be blank on 1 side. The other set of 9 word sticks will each have a fruit of the spirit on them. The design sticks should be placed on the table at the top of everyone's handout. The word sticks should be laid to the right of the handout in the order shown on the handout. The handout is like their individual game board. It visually shows the combination of sticks that represent each fruit of the Spirit. For instance, love is represented by 3 sticks with dots on them and 1 stick that is blank.

Game Directions:

1. Grab all design sticks in one hand and hold them in the air upright, away from the handout. Release them so that the sticks fall in a combination of designs.
2. Straighten and group the sticks so that pairs or triplets of designs (i.e. 2 sticks with dots or 3 sticks that are blank) are placed to the left. Add the sticks to the right that have no match. This will help you find the matching design combination on your handout.
3. Once you find the matching design combination, place that word stick on your sheet in the place provided. If this word stick has already been placed, toss the sticks again.
4. If you get the design combination for TEMPTATION, then you lose your SELF-CONTROL stick if you have already placed it. Take that stick off the handout and try for it again. If you haven't placed the SELF-CONTROL stick yet, drop the sticks again.
5. When all 9 sticks are on the handout, you are finished and can help another who is having difficulty by using your own set of sticks.

Discussion: As the children play, especially once they catch on, engage them in conversation about what the words mean. Some of the concepts they know, but others are more obscure such as "faithfulness". Focus on the more obscure concepts. Talk about what it looks like when you have a particular fruit of the spirit. Whenever a child gets a TEMPTATION combination, make the connection between TEMPTATION and SELF-CONTROL. Explain why that stick has to be taken away. You could say something like "Maybe you were tempted by some candy, lost your self-control, and ate so much candy you got a stomach ache." Then explain that because of God's mercy, we always have the chance to try again and gain more self-control.

CLOSING: (Worship Area) Discuss which fruits of the Spirit are easiest and hardest for them at school, home, and church. Ask about when they are tempted the most. Share your own struggles with these issues.

Close with prayer, being thankful for the Holy Spirit in us, the fruit of the Spirit, and the grace we receive after we have been tempted.

SWEET TREAT: (Optional) Pass out fruit candy such as Runtts, sugar fruit slices, or fruit chews either during the closing or as children exit.

ADAPTATIONS:

For younger children, play the game in the same way but as a group. Divide the children into groups of 5 or so and have each group gather around a table that has posters lying on it that are larger versions of the design combinations on the handout. Play the game slowly with explanation and conversation about the concepts. Allow the children to help by dropping the sticks, grouping the sticks, and placing the sticks. Use larger popsicle sticks for the word sticks. These are the same word sticks used during the story.

If there is a child or a pair of children who seem to understand and want to play on their own, allow this by giving them their own handout and sets of sticks.

SUPPLIES:

- Reminder saying on a poster (for story)
- Theme page displayed on a clothesline or wall (for story)
- Bible to refer to (for story)
- Handout with design combinations and places for the 9 sticks, 1 per older child and a few for younger children
- 1 Set of 9 Large popsicle sticks with a fruit of the spirit labeled on each (for story & lesson), wrapped in a rubber band, 1 set per large version of the handout
- 1 Set of 9 regular-sized popsicle word sticks, a fruit of the spirit labeled on each, wrapped in a rubber band, 1 set per older child
- 1 Set of 4 regular sized popsicle design sticks, designs on them - dots, stripes, or blank, wrapped in a rubber band, 1 set per older child, a few for younger children (See Resource Section for details)
- Larger versions of the handouts, glue the design sticks on posters with a place for a larger popsicle stick below each combination
- Fruit candy (optional)

RESOURCES: Contact Hanna Schock at hannaschock@bellsouth.net to request information, photos, or scanned copies of materials.

List of Fruit of the Spirit to use for Labels

love	joy	peace	patience	kindness
goodness	faithfulness	gentleness	self-control	

Details for Set of 4 Design Sticks

	<u>Side 1</u>	<u>Side 2</u>
Stick 1	dots	blank
Stick 2	dots	blank
Stick 3	stripes	blank
Stick 4	dots	stripes