

BAPTIST FEATURES

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Children's Page
August 11, 1955

PETER POCKET HAS A PLAN By May Justus

Peter Pocket liked to go to mill with Granny Messer. Down on Deer Creek was Uncle Tobe Turner's mill where all the corn on Pine Mountain was made into meal.

Peter Pocket liked to listen to the sound of the corn grinding in the big hopper. He liked Uncle Tobe's cherry talk when he and Granny went to mill.

"Nothing better than corn pone," Uncle Tobe would say with a chuckle. "I used to have good corn pone before my wife died. I never learned to bake good bread," he would add with a sigh which always made the boy feel very sorry for him.

"Granny," said Peter Pocket one day while they were shelling corn to take to the mill, "couldn't we take Uncle Tobe a piece of the corn pone which was left from dinner?"

"To be sure," replied Granny Messer. "Take some of it if you like."

And so it happened that Peter Pocket went to the mill carrying something besides the sack on his shoulder.

"Guess what I have in my pocket, Uncle Tobe!"

Uncle Tobe slapped his roly-poly sides with his hands, screwed his face to one side, cast his right eye up toward the top of the mill, and said to himself:

"I'll bet a pretty it's something!"

"Oh, yes, indeed, Uncle Tobe," said the boy, continuing to pat his bulging pocket. "It really is something, and something very nice--something for your supper."

"Is it an apple?" asked Uncle Tobe. "Oh, yes, I suppose it will be a nice red apple."

"No, it is not an apple," answered Peter Pocket. "Did you want a red apple very much, Uncle Tobe?"

"Nope! Never thought of an apple till this minute, till this very minute," said Uncle Tobe. "And if it is not a red apple, why, then, most likely it's some fine dried chestnuts."

"No, it's not chestnuts," replied Peter Pocket. "Were you wishing particularly for some chestnuts, Uncle Tobe?"

"Never a thought about chestnuts," said Uncle Tobe with a vigorous shake of his gray head. "But I'll make one more guess. Is it a molasses cake, then?"

"No," cried Peter Pocket, "it is not a molasses cake. We eat all the molasses on our porridge. There is not enough to spare for making a molasses cake, I think."

"Come, come, Peter, and show the miller what you have brought him," said Granny Messer.

"Corn pone!" cried Uncle Tobe as Peter pulled from his pocket a big, thick piece of bread and laid it in the miller's hand.

"Yes, and now you can have it for your supper," said the little boy, looking happily at the old man.

"Of course, I'll have it with a bowlful of Honey's milk," the miller assured him. "I usually have a bit of gruel or grits, but tonight I shall have milk and bread as I used to have every night for my supper."

"Bread and milk must be very nice," said Peter Pocket, a bit longingly. Granny Messer had no cow, and so Peter Pocket had no milk, but only molasses to eat on his porridge or his bread, as it happened to be.

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"We must get our corn ground and get back home," said Granny hurriedly. She was afraid Peter Pocket would tell the miller too much about how bare their cupboard was, just like poor old Mother Hubbard's.

The miller hurried to pour the corn into the hopper, where it disappeared. Then it came out below, fine, sweet meal. Peter sniffed the smell in the air. It almost made him hungry to do that.

"Are you wondering how the corn becomes meal?" asked the miller, with a smile, noticing the serious expression on the little boy's face.

"No, sir," said Peter Pocket. "I was wondering how much milk and corn pone I could eat if I had it."

"We must be getting back home," said Granny quickly. She did not want Peter Pocket to talk so much about eating.

By this time the meal was all ground, and the miller had put it into one big sack and one little sack. But, as he was tying the little sack, he had a sudden thought, and he untied both sacks and poured all the meal into the big one.

"Never mind about carrying the meal home," he said. "I am coming up your way a little later, and I might as well bring the meal along as I come. It is not a hard load for me."

"That is too much trouble for you," said Granny Messer.

"It is no trouble at all," the old man replied, "and I like to do a neighborly turn once in a while."

So Granny Messer and Peter Pocket went back up the creek to their cabin and kindled a fresh fire on the hearth. It was burning beautifully when there came a knock at the door. Granny Messer hurried to open it. There was the miller with the bag of meal and a big pail of milk.

Peter Pocket was so overjoyed at the prospect of having all the bread and milk he could eat for his supper that he was well nigh speechless for a few minutes, and could only caper around the hearth so recklessly that Uncle Tobe pulled him back for fear that he would turn into a real flame and go right up the chimney.

The fire was now a bed of glowing coals, and Peter Pocket ran to get the oven and lid for baking the bread. With the shovel he raked out a nice little heap of coals and set the three-legged oven on it.

"We shall need to bake more bread," he explained to Granny Messer, "for Uncle Tobe is going to stay for supper."

"Oh!" said Granny Messer in surprise.

"No!" said the miller, as much surprised as she was.

"Oh, yes!" cried Peter Pocket. "For then you may eat some of our fresh bread, and we shall eat some of your fresh milk, and we shall be happy together."

After supper, the miller thanked Granny Messer and rose to go. At the door he turned around to her and said: "If you'll agree to bake bread for me, I'll divide Honey's milk with you."

"That is very kind of you," said Granny Messer, "but--"

"Oh, yes!" cried Peter Pocket. "It is very kind, and it's so nice to have all the bread and milk one can eat, isn't it?"

"Yes," said the miller. "That is just what I think, too."

"Well, if you think it a fair bargain," agreed Granny Messer. It was understood that every day after this Peter Pocket should bring the miller a fresh corn pone in exchange for a pail of nice new milk. And you may be sure that Peter thought this a very fine bargain.

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CHILDREN'S PAGE
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THE FUNNY FIDDLER BY: Gladys Cleone Carpenter

River banks and low sandy spots along streams in Southern states are often dotted with small round holes.

If one stays very quiet, he will soon see tiny heads poke out from the holes. But any quick movement on our part, and the little creatures disappear at once as though directed by a leader.

However, in unison, they come out again to see if all is well. This time if they are not suspicious of danger, they will come from their homes and one sees that they are the queer little fiddler crabs.

If one stands back a little, he is not seen because the fiddler is near-sighted.

Their bodies vary in size from those of about a quarter to others as small as a dime. Their shell backs are like beautiful mosaics of white, purple, red and yellow. Their feet and legs are mud color.

The female has two small claws. But the male has one small and one large claw. He uses the small one in feeding on vegetable matter.

The large claw he waves about in a very comical manner. He appears to be fiddling. This is how he obtained his very queer name of "Fiddler."

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WHAT CAN I GIVE?

By: Ila Lewis Funderburgh

God gives us sunshine, birds and flowers,
The rainbow that comes after showers,
The autumn leaves that burn and glow,
The drifts of white and feathery snow.

What can I give to Him that He
Would like from a small child like me?
My love, my prayers, my thoughts, my deeds,
These are the things His kingdom needs.

How glad I am that, though I'm small,
I can serve Him, the Lord of all!

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A RIDDLE

BY: Elsie Simon

Here is a little riddle
That you may want to guess--
What is so strong that it will last
Though put to any test?

It's found in far off places
But always is home-grown,
Of course, you guessed, it's "mother love,"
A gift from God alone.