Summary

Benny and Sally don't mind doing their farm chores and caring for their mules, but they absolutely refuse to share. Their mules, Bossy and Stiffy, imitate their owners' selfish ways by stubbornly refusing to let anyone else ride them, and fussing whenever they work together doing farm work.

Dad needs to teach the mules a lesson. He ties them together which forces them to learn to cooperate in order to eat. After much struggling, the mules learn to work together, and teach their owners Benny and Sally that sharing brings happiness.

This delightful story by Carl Sommer shows the importance of cooperation, tolerance and respect.

Main Virtues
Cooperation/Tolerance/Respect

Other Virtues
Appreciation, Caring, Cheerfulness, Compassion, Courtesy, Fairness, Friendship, Humility, Justice, Kindness, Obedience to Parents, and Patience

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Benny and Sally liked growing up on the farm. There were lots of things to do. First they would work, and then they would play. But there was one thing they would not do. Benny and Sally would not share.

Only Benny could play with Benny’s toys...and only Sally could play with Sally’s toys.

Notice as you read this story how many problems occur because Benny and Sally refuse to cooperate and share with one another. Benny and Sally did not follow God’s word about sharing with others.

Romans 12:9-13

Ephesians 4:28
Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.

1 Timothy 6:17-18
Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. [18] Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share.

Titus 3:8
This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.

Hebrews 13:16
But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

Additional verses: Psalm 37:3, Hebrews 6:10

The check is a recommended scripture to teach the particular lesson.
All verses are from the New King James Version.

Being Kind and Compassionate

When Mom heard Benny and Sally yelling and fussing, she would tell them, “Be kind to one another.” How much happier Benny and Sally’s home would have been if they had been kind and compassionate with each other. Instead when they were around, they had constant fussing and complaining.

Luke 6:35
But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil.
1 Corinthians 13:4
   Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up;

Galatians 6:10
   Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

Ephesians 4:31-5:2
   Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. [32] And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you. [5:1] Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. [2] And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

Colossians 3:12
   Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;

Additional verses: 1 Thessalonians 5:15; 1 Peter 3:8-9; 1 Peter 4:8

Sharing Brings Happiness

   Benny and Sally refused to listen to their mom when she said, “Remember, sharing brings happiness.” They thought sharing would make them unhappy. In the Bible, we find that God blesses those who share and are kind to one another.

Proverbs 11:24-25
   There is one who scatters, yet increases more; and there is one who withholds more than is right, but it leads to poverty. [25] The generous soul will be made rich, and he who waters will also be watered himself.

Proverbs 14:21
   He who despises his neighbor sins; but he who has mercy on the poor, happy is he.

Proverbs 28:27
   He who gives to the poor will not lack, but he who hides his eyes will have many curses.

Matthew 5:7
   Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

2 Corinthians 9:6
   But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

Benny and Sally were constantly complaining and arguing with each other because they could not tolerate each other. They could have solved the problem so easily by letting the other mule go first. But they stubbornly refused. What is the end result of this lifestyle of intolerance? They are very unhappy, and they destroy each other with their words.

Proverbs 13:10
By pride comes nothing but strife,
but with the well-advised is wisdom.

1 Corinthians 3:3
For you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?

Galatians 5:15
But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!

Philippians 2:14
Do all things without complaining and disputing.

Hebrews 12:14
Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord.

Additional verses: Proverbs 15:17-18; Romans 12:18; 1 Corinthians 1:10, 10:10; 2 Corinthians 12:20; Colossians 3:5-10; James 5:9; 1 Peter 3:10-11

Listening to Parents

When Benny and Sally saw that the mules had solved their problem by sharing, Benny said, “How simple! They learned to share.”
Then Sally asked, “Why didn’t we think of that?”
The reason they didn’t think of it was because they refused to listen to their parents.

Exodus 20:12
Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.

Proverbs 1:8-9
My son, hear the instruction of your father,
and do not forsake the law of your mother;
[9] for they will be a graceful ornament on your head,
and chains about your neck.

Proverbs 3:1-2
My son, do not forget my law,
but let your heart keep my commands;
[2] for length of days and long life
and peace they will add to you.
Proverbs 13:1
A wise son heeds his father’s instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.

Ephesians 6:1-3
Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. [2] “Honor your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with promise: [3] “that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.”

Colossians 3:20
Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord.

Additional verses: Proverbs 4:1-15; Proverbs 6:20-21; Proverbs 15:5; 1 Timothy 3:4

Respecting and Loving One Another

For though the lesson came from a couple of mules, Benny and Sally never forgot what they learned that day. Being selfish and stubborn makes you sad and gets you...tied up in knots. But sharing brings happiness.

Benny and Sally finally learned to respect and love each other instead of being selfish and stubborn. When they did that, they found their happiness. Try it, and you’ll get the same results.

Matthew 7:12
Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

Mark 12:28-31
Then one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, “Which is the first commandment of all?” [29] Jesus answered him, “The first of all the commandments is: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. [30] And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment. [31] And the second, like it, is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

Galatians 5:14
For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

Philippians 2:3-4
Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. [4] Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

Additional verses: Leviticus 19:18, Romans 13:8-9, James 2:8
How to Live an Unhappy Life

Be selfish and never share your toys with anyone.
Always try to make yourself happy, and never think about making anyone else happy.
Never be kind to anyone, except yourself.
Always argue and complain.
Never listen to your parents or teachers.
Be stubborn by insisting on having things your way.
Never give in, even when you are wrong.
Think of all kinds of excuses of why you should have it your way. (Sally said, “Ladies first.” Benny said, “The oldest should go first.”)
Be selfish instead of obeying the Golden Rule by helping others.
Disobey God’s Word.
Follow these principles and you will live an unhappy life.

How to Live a Happy Life

Share your toys with others.
Think of ways to make others happy.
Be kind to others.
Don’t argue and complain.
Listen to your parents and teachers.
Learn to listen to others. Sometimes others are right.
Admit it when you are wrong.
Don’t be stubborn by always insisting on doing things your way.
Be unselfish by following the Golden Rule by helping others.
Obey God’s Word.
Follow these principles and you’ll live a happy life.

Questions

1. What was the first thing Benny and Sally would do on the farm?
   *The first thing Benny and Sally did was work.*

2. What did Benny and Sally do after they worked?
   *Benny and Sally played.*

3. What was one thing that Benny and Sally would not do?
   *Benny and Sally would not share.*
   Notice in this story how many problems occur because Benny and Sally refuse to share. Benny and Sally did not follow God’s Word about sharing with others. God’s Word says, “Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share” (1 Timothy 6:18).

4. Who could play with Benny’s toys?
   *Only Benny could play with Benny’s toys.*

5. Who could play with Sally’s toys?
   *Only Sally could play with Sally’s toys.*
6. What would Sally cry out if Benny asked to ride on her mule?  
*Sally would cry out, “No! That’s my mule! I’m not sharing!”*

7. What would Benny do and say when Sally had one of his toys?  
*Benny would grab the toy and yell, “Give it to me! That’s not your toy!”*

8. What did Benny and Sally’s mom tell them when she heard them yelling and fussing?  
*Benny and Sally’s mom told them, “Be kind to one another. Remember, sharing brings happiness.”*  

The Lord wants us to be kind and compassionate. The Bible says, “And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you” (Ephesians 4:32). The Lord also wants us to share with others. God’s Word says, “The generous soul will be made rich, and he who waters will also be watered himself” (Proverbs 11:25). Notice that God blesses the generous person.

9. When Benny and Sally heard their mother say, “Sharing brings happiness,”  
A. What did Benny and Sally do?  
*Benny and Sally would not listen.*  
B. What did Benny and Sally think that sharing would do to them?  
*Benny and Sally thought that sharing would make them unhappy.*

10. How did the mules Bossy and Stiffy begin to act compared to their owners?  
*Bossy and Stiffy had become just like their owners—not very friendly, and not very kind.*  

The mules began to imitate their owners. Your action influences others.

11. How did the mules act when Dad tried to use them?  
*The mules acted just like Benny and Sally—they would only fuss and fight.*

12. Why did the mules fuss and fight?  
*The mules fussed and fought because they did not want to work together and share the load.*

13. What did Dad say when Mom asked, “Haven’t those mules learned yet that sharing brings happiness”?  
*Dad said, “I guess not. But I think it’s time to teach them.”*

14. What did Dad do with the ropes?  
*Dad quietly tied the ends of the ropes together around the sleeping mules.*

15. What happened to the knots on the rope as the mules pulled harder and harder to get their food?  
*The knots got tighter and tighter.*

16. Why could Benny not untie the knots?  
*Benny could not untie the knots because they were too tight.*

17. What did Benny say when Sally said, “Get Bossy to come to the middle so Stiffy can eat”?  
*Benny said, “Why should your mule eat first?”*

18. What did Sally say when Benny asked, “Why should your mule eat first”?  
*Sally said, “Ladies first!”*
19. What did Benny say when Sally said, “Ladies first”?

_Benny said, “But my mule is older. The oldest should eat first!”_

Benny and Sally are constantly complaining and arguing with each other. They could have solved the problem so easily by letting the other mule go first. But they stubbornly refused. What is the end result of this lifestyle? They are miserable and very unhappy—they are destroying each other with their words. The Bible says, “But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another” (Galatians 5:15). Also they are constantly complaining and arguing. In Philippians 2:14 it says, “Do all things without complaining and disputing.” God doesn’t want His people to be arguing and complaining.

20. What did Benny get from the barn?

_Benny got cutters from the barn._

21. What were Bossy and Stiffy doing when Sally yelled, “Look”?

_Bossy and Stiffy were tied up in knots and eating._

22. What did Sally ask when Benny said, “How simple! They learned to share”?

_Sally asked, “Why didn’t we think of that?”_

The reason Benny and Sally didn’t think of that was because they didn’t listen to their mother. If Benny and Sally had listened, they would have learned that sharing brings happiness. The Bible says, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ‘Honor your father and mother,’ which is the first commandment with promise: ‘that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth’” (Ephesians 6:1-3). Wise are those children who obey.

23. What did Sally remember her mom had said?

_Sally remembered her mom saying, “Sharing does bring happiness.”_

24. What did Benny and Sally share when the two mules were untied?

_Benny and Sally shared a swing._

25. What lesson did Benny and Sally learn that day?

_Benny and Sally learned that being selfish and stubborn makes you sad and gets you...tied up in knots. But sharing brings happiness._

This is how the Bible says we should treat others. “Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 7:12). “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Mark 12:31). Aim to make others happy, and you’ll discover it will make you happy.