

# GOD HAD MERCY ON ISRAEL

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: EXODUS 33-34



*God forgave Israel's sin.*

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## The STORY

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Pray with children to start class.

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### Teaching Points for Class Discussion:

**God told Israel He will no longer go with them** – The Lord spared Israel from the destruction they deserved for making the golden calf, but he declared He would no longer go with them. The people were very sad and obeyed God's command to take off their ornaments. Though they disobeyed God they realized their foolishness and they repented of their sin.

Moses had been meeting with God in the tent of meeting (the tabernacle) and God would speak to him there. The people could see the presence of the Lord for the pillar of cloud would descend on the entrance of the tent. Because of their sin God told them He would no longer travel with them.

**Moses appealed to God** – Once again we read that Moses appealed to God on behalf of Israel. Moses mediated between God and the people, reminding God of His promise. Moses said that he would rather not go if God will not go with them. He suggested that it is the very presence of God which makes Israel different from every other nation. In response to Moses God agrees. Amazingly God extended mercy and forgiveness.

**God makes a covenant with Moses** – In a dramatic reversal God not only agrees to go with Israel, but to do great wonders never before done in any nation of the world. God promises to drive out the pagan peoples before them if they obey. God warns Moses however, against making a treaty with the peoples of those nations. He commands Moses to break down the pagan altars and to not worship any other God.

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### WHERE IS JESUS?

*Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.*

Moses once again mediated between God and Israel. As a result of Moses speaking on behalf of the people, God agreed to continue with them and have His presence go with them. Moses however was not sinless. As a sinner, his role was limited. He could not take away the sins of Israel; he could only stay God's judgment for a while. If it were not for Jesus, the better mediator of the New Covenant, God's eternal judgment would eventually fall upon every person who has sinned, with no way of escape.

### ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

**Read the following Bible passage from the Old Testament. Use the following questions to help the children understand how this passage points to Christ in the New Testament.**

**Bible Passage: Psalm 16:8-10**

#### **Connecting the passage to Christ:**

This passage is mentioned twice in the book of Acts as a reference to the resurrection of Christ (Acts 2:25-31; Acts 13:35-36). Jesus is the Holy One who did not see decay and who was not abandoned to the grave (Psalm 16:10).

#### **Questions for reflection:**

- How do these verses relate to Christ? (These verses speak to someone God will preserve and not allow to see decay, or death. Jesus was not abandoned to the grave and did not see decay.)
- How does the book of Acts quote this passage? (The book of Acts quotes this as a direct reference to the resurrection of Jesus. Have the children look up the passages in Acts and read them.)

### SWORD BIBLE MEMORY

**BE A DOER OF THE WORD**

*Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.*

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### ACTIVITIES & OBJECT LESSONS

*Use the following activities for practical application and discovery of this lesson. For the younger children, review the preschool questions and use them to help the children relate to the passage. For older children, ask them why they think this passage is in the Bible for us today. How is it supposed to affect our lives?*

#### A FACE COVERING

##### Supplies

a face covering to fit the teacher, such as a small white towel

The face covering is just an item of interest to draw the children into the story.

Tell the story as if you were Moses recalling the story of God's mercy toward his people. The reason Moses placed the veil over his face was because the glory would fade. He did not want the people to see the glory of the Lord fading, see 2 Corinthians 3:7-18.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- What do we learn about God from this passage in Exodus? (We learn attributes of God from the passage in Exodus 34:6-7.)
- How does Moses remind you of Jesus in this story? (Moses is the spokesman for God to man and gives the people of Israel God's word. He also intercedes on their behalf, asking God to forgive their sin. Jesus came to introduce the Father to us, bring His word, and die on the cross so that we might be forgiven. Now Jesus intercedes at the right hand of the Father on our behalf.)



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### YOU DON'T NEED MUCH BAD TO SPOIL GOOD

#### Supplies

- clear pitcher
- cherry powdered drink mix
- cups for the entire class
- chocolate cookie crumbs

Tell the class that you are going to make them a drink. Mix up a batch of powdered drink mix and give it to half the class. Then mix up another batch and just as you are about to finish, remember the secret ingredient, dirt (chocolate cookie crumbs).

Incite the class to object, but say that you only want to put a little dirt into the mix. Ensure them that it won't taste too bad. Put in about a tablespoon full of cookie crumbs. Stir up the mixture and then take a taste.

Read to the class Exodus 34:11-16.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- Why did God command the Israelites not to make a covenant with the other nations? (God knew that if Israel did not destroy the other nations that they would end up worshipping their idols.)
- What did God say Israel should do with the other nation's idols? (Israel should tear down their idols.)

Connect the text to the illustration helping the children realize just as a little dirt would make something unfit to drink, so a little idolatry is sinful against God.



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### BREAKING DOWN THE IDOLS

#### Supplies

- 12 helium balloons with faces drawn on them
- a long pin taped to an end of a dowel rod

Use the balloons as an illustration of the powerlessness of idols.

Tell the class that these balloons are false gods. Tell them that false gods can do nothing since they are made up by man. Command the false gods to do something such as "Give me a pepperoni pizza." When nothing happens, reinforce to the children they are false gods. Read Exodus 34:10-17. Explain to the children that God has just forgiven Israel for making a false god and now He is again reminding them about the dangers of false gods.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- What did God warn Israel would happen if they joined with the people who worshipped false gods? (God warned them that Israel would end up worshipping those same false gods.)
- What did God tell Israel to do with the false gods? (God told Israel to destroy them.)
- What do you think we ought to do with these false balloon gods? (When the children say destroy them or pop them ask for volunteers in the audience. Give them the dowel and watch them pop the false gods.)

## PRAYER

Pick several children to pray based on the day's scripture passages.

## IN CLASS PROJECT

The first and second grade children can use the preschool coloring sheet and questions. Have the older children draw a picture of the stone tablets upon which God wrote the Ten Commandments.

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### FOR OLDER GRADES

Have different children look up the following verses. Take turns having the children read these aloud:

Exodus 34:6-7

Numbers 14:18

Nehemiah 9:17

Psalms 86:15

Psalms 103:8

Psalms 145:8

Joel 2:13

Jonah 4:2

Nahum 1:3

Ask the children to read these verses and explain what we learn about God from them. Have them also explain how God demonstrated His forgiveness of Israel in the story. Explain to them that the only reason God could forgive the sins of Israel is in looking forward to Jesus. Jesus would die for the sins of God's people. God would demonstrate great mercy on behalf of Israel through the death of Jesus. It is because of that future act that God can have compassion on Israel in the midst of their idolatry.

### A LITTLE BIT MORE

**Mercy** - Mercy is the characteristic of God by which He shows His compassion for our sinful state. God feels pity right along side of His judgement and wrath. It is His mercy for us that moves Him to heal the sick, blind, and lame, as well as give up His life for our salvation.

