

THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL COMPLAIN

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: NUMBERS 11



The STORY

Read the story below taken from Numbers 11.

The people of Israel became ungrateful in their hearts for the manna God gave them each day for their food. They said, "Oh that we had meat to eat! We remember the fish we ate in Egypt that cost nothing, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic. But now our strength is dried up, and there is nothing at all but this manna to look at."

God answered the complaining people and told Moses, "The Lord will give you meat, and you shall eat. You shall not eat just one day, or two days, or five days, or twenty days, but a whole month, until it comes out of your nose and you can't stand it because you have rejected the Lord who is among you and have wept before him, saying, 'Why did we come out of Egypt?'"

The Lord sent quail for the Israelites to eat. There were so many quail that people gathered over 60 large baskets full each. Then the Lord sent a plague while they were still eating and many people died.

***Please note:** The discussion questions in the following sections are written to serve as a guide in teaching our youngest children. Three to six year olds are not going to be able to answer these questions like their older brothers and sisters. Please refer to the God's Story Preschool Curriculum Outline for additional ideas.*

After reading the story, use the following questions to involve the children in a discussion.

- What was Israel's sin in this story? (They complained and rejected the Lord by saying they wanted to go back to Egypt.)
- What is complaining? (Complaining is saying you don't like something.)
- What was Israel's complaint in this story? (They didn't like only eating manna. They wanted meat.)

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CRAFT QUESTIONS

Coloring sheets have been provided that exemplify today's lesson: Israel complaining. Engage the children by asking:

- Can you think of a time when you complained? What did you complain about? (Accept any answer.)
- What was Israel complaining about? (Manna to eat day after day.)
- What do you think the people of Israel should have done instead of complaining? (They should have been grateful for all that God had provided and they should have prayed to God for anything they needed.)

SNACK QUESTIONS

While the children are eating the snack, engage the children by asking:

- Did you ever eat a lot of something and start to not like it? (Accept any answer.)
- Can anyone remember the kind of foods the Israelites wanted from Egypt? (Onions, cucumbers, leeks, and garlic)
- Why was it sinful for Israel to want to go back to Egypt? (Egypt was a place of slavery. To say they wanted Egypt more than God's plan for them was to suggest God's plan was worse than the torture of Egypt.)



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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.

In Colossians Paul tells us that it is God who has rescued us from the dominion of darkness through His son Jesus. We deserved death but instead we received rescue. All people, Old Testament or New, deserved death, but God rescued some by Jesus and His work on the cross

In our story in the book of Numbers, the people of Israel complained within days after leaving the presence of the Lord on Mount Sinai. Once again, in response to their sin, the anger of the Lord burned. God sent fire to the outskirts of the camp, which threatened to burn the camp.

The people cried out to Moses, their mediator between man and God. Moses prayed to God and the fire died down. Again, God was reminded of the coming Christ who would one day stand in the gap for God's people. It was Jesus who, during His crucifixion, cried, "Forgive them for they know not what they do." Through His death we have forgiveness. In Him we have redemption.

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.

