

Bible background

Exodus 16 and 17

Aim of lesson

To teach not to grumble but to give thanks to God.

Preparation required

You will need a blanket or sheet to make a tent and colouring materials.

Suggested outline of lesson

1. Remind the children about living in tents. You may like to set up the blanket tent again. Ask what they would need if they lived in the desert in a tent. Bring out the need for food and water.
2. Tell them how the Israelites realised they did not have any food. Did they trust God to provide food since he had done so many wonderful miracles to bring them safely out of Egypt? No - they just grumbled. Suggest what the Israelites might have said, 'We haven't any food', 'Why did God bring us out of Egypt? At least we had some food there', 'I don't like it here', 'We are all going to die of hunger'.
3. Tell them that God was sorry they grumbled and did not trust him, but he gave them manna. Tell them what it was like, and what it meant. You could teach the chorus and verse one of the song here, if you wish.
4. Tell the children about the instruction not to keep any for the next day, and of what happened when some did. (The section on quails and the Sabbath is not included in this lesson.)
5. In the same way teach what happened when the people had no water. Sing all the song.
6. Have the class complete the activity sheet.

Alternative activities

1. Use sets of the worksheet cards to play snap, pairs or lotto.
2. If you don't have room to make tents, as suggested in the lesson notes, try making a model of the Israelite camp. Use a large sheet of card, a cloth or a tray as a base. Tents can be made of folded paper or play dough. Animals can be made from play dough or you can use pictures stuck on to cardboard stands or toy animals. People can be made from pipe cleaners, card or play dough or you could use small toy figures. Add some crumpled paper, play dough or pebbles for rocks, plants, made from card or play dough and a pool of water, made from a piece of foil or a small amount of water in a shallow container.
You can also make large pillars of fire and cloud by sticking coloured paper and cotton wool to a couple of cardboard stands.
3. If you have room, make tents as suggested in the lesson notes and extend the activity with dressing up and role play of domestic tasks.

Relevance to the children's lives

Ask the children if they ever grumble and what they grumble about. Encourage them to see how they should be thankful to God in each of the situations they mention.

Prayer

Ask who would like to say sorry for grumbling, and who would like to ask for help to be cheerful and thankful.

Verse

'Do not grumble.' 1 Corinthians 10:10.

Song

Help Me, Lord, Every Day (Tune: Sing Hosanna)

Musical notation for the song 'Help Me, Lord, Every Day' in G major, 4/4 time. The notation is divided into a Chorus and a Verse. The Chorus consists of two lines of music with chords D, D7, G, D, Em, A7, D, D7. The Verse consists of two lines of music with chords G, D, A7, D, D, G, A7, D. The music is written on a single treble clef staff.

Chorus Help me, Lord, every day not to grumble
Help me, Lord, just to say thank you
Help me, Lord, every day not to grumble
But to thank you for the things you do.

v.1 Thanks for food, Lord
Thanks for food, Lord
Thanks for giving us the things we eat.
Thanks for food, Lord
Thanks for food, Lord
Thanks for every thing we eat.

v.2 drink, drink

v.3 clothes, wear

Music: Traditional.