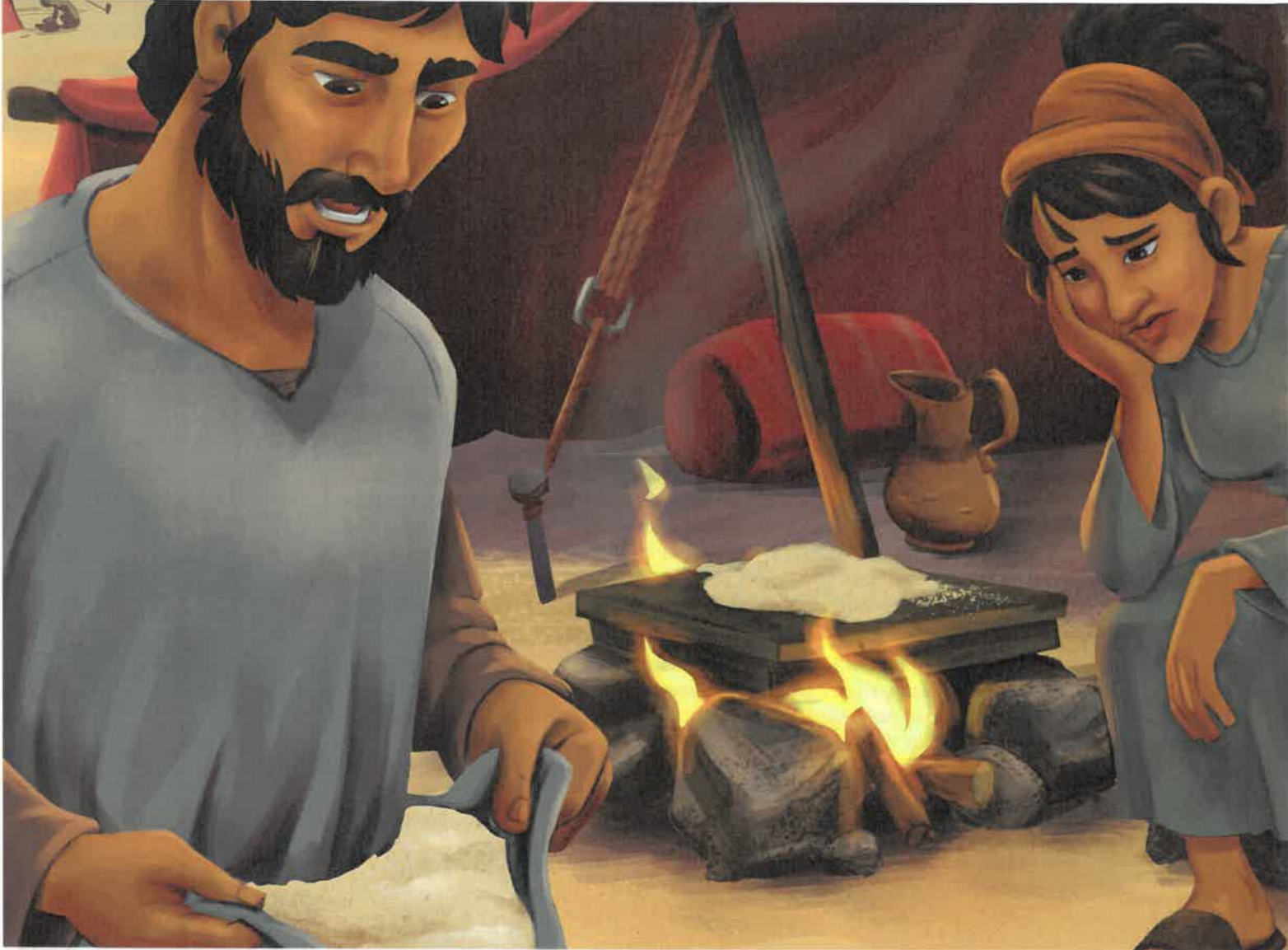


UNIT 6 | SESSION 1

THE PEOPLE GRUMBLED

NUMBERS 11-12

Splash 3/9/23



KEY PASSAGE: Romans 8:28

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why should we obey God? We should obey God because He made us, He loves us, and His plans are good.

CHRIST CONNECTION: The people grumbled because they thought they needed more than God had provided. We also grumble when we wish God would give us more of the things we want. But God has already provided what we need most—His Son, Jesus, who died and rose again so we could be saved.

STORY POINT: God provided for His people, but they grumbled for more.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

The Israelites' grumbling in Numbers 11 and 12 showcases God's graciousness to provide abundantly more than their ungrateful hearts deserved. Though He made His presence visible among them, they did not believe He offered them His best. God's people began to treat God's miraculous provision as though it were mundane.

Why were the Israelites so prone to overlook God's mercies? How are we tempted to fall into these same patterns?

The Israelites faulted God—and by default, Moses—for not providing the comforts they desired. They openly grumbled, not holding back their objections. Though God faithfully provided for them, they fixated on only the good parts of the lives they left behind, from the delicious food to the consolation found in knowing what to expect each day. Their view of God's goodness shrank, and their desire for worldly comfort grew with each step they took away from Egypt.

We witness the cycle of unbelief in today's story: the people grumbled, Moses intervened, God relented from destruction, and they began this pattern all over again. They overlooked God's provision for their journey and the guidance Moses provided. This pattern is one we can fall prey to as we neglect to express gratitude for God's provision in our lives. When we, like the Israelites, focus on what we perceive as lacking in our lives, we neglect the undeserved mercy and grace He grants us each day.

Moses was a set-apart leader who interceded for the Israelites and desired that God would redeem them from sin; however, he could not put an end to the pattern of their wayward hearts. But One was coming, a prophet like Moses, who could offer the gift of eternal salvation and forgiveness of sin. The long-awaited Messiah, Jesus, would be the fulfillment of all God's promises. Help kids see that God supplies our every need—most supremely, our need to be made right with Him forever. Pray that they see God's goodness and kindness to them in Christ.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10-15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25-30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- "Manna Maze" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- wooden block sets, 30 per group



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video
- Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- "The People Grumbled" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- "Unit 6, Session 1" Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- "Sub-Saharan African Peoples" missions video
- world map

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- "All Things Work Together (Romans 8:28)" song
- worship song of your choice (optional)
- dice



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- dry erase boards, 2
- dry erase marker and eraser
- coin

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “ Have you ever gotten tired of eating a certain food? Which one? Why? ”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Manna Maze” activity page.

| **SAY** “ We learned a few weeks ago about the manna God provided for His people. Today, we will see how God continued to provide for His people, but they grumbled for more than they needed. ”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: TUMBLING TOWER

Form kids into groups of three or four and provide each group with a set of 30 wooden blocks. Instruct groups to create a tower by laying three blocks as the foundation. Then guide kids to lay three blocks on top of the foundation but going in the opposite direction. Repeat this pattern until all the blocks are stacked.

Direct kids in each group to take turns removing one block at a time by slowly pulling it from the tower, trying to not make the tower fall. Continue until the tower eventually falls. Allow kids to repeat the activity as time allows.

| **SAY** “ What happened as you removed more and more blocks? [Allow responses.] The tower tumbled down. This reminds me of what happens when people want more than what God has given them. The more people want things because they think those things will make them happy, the less steady they become because they aren’t trusting in God. Today, we’ll see how **GOD PROVIDED FOR HIS PEOPLE, BUT THEY GRUMBLED FOR MORE.** ”

OPTION 2: NEED OR WANT?



Invite kids to determine if something you call out is a need or a want. If it is a need, direct kids to cross their arms across their chest. If it is a want, invite kids to hold their hands out in front. Consider asking kids to share why they think it is a need or a want. Use the following example or create your own:

- Water to drink
- Video games to play
- Food to eat
- Clothes to wear
- Art supplies
- Bike to ride
- Forgiveness of sin

| **SAY** “ We all have needs and wants. It’s not always wrong to want something, but it’s sinful if we want something more than we trust God. Today, we’ll see how **GOD PROVIDED FOR HIS PEOPLE, BUT THEY GRUMBLED FOR MORE.** ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)



Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Hi, kids! My name is [your name], and I am excited to share a story with you from the Bible. Today, we will be learning from the book of Numbers. Is Numbers in the Old Testament or the New Testament? [Allow responses.] Numbers is the fourth book of the Old Testament. If you have a Bible with you, will you take it out? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.]



In our Bible story, we'll see how God's people finally left Mount Sinai and traveled through the wilderness. While they were in the wilderness, **GOD PROVIDED FOR HIS PEOPLE, BUT THEY GRUMBLED FOR MORE.** [Display the Story Point Poster.] Let's pray together before we hear our story: 'Dear God, please help us to have hearts that trust You and Your Word. Help us remember that You always provide what we need. Amen.' ”

worship

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

* I thank God
* Trust
* offering



SAY “ Our new big picture question is, Why should we obey God? Why do you think we should obey Him? [Allow responses.] We should obey God because He made us, He loves us, and His plans are good.



We learned a few weeks ago that God gave His people good commands to follow. These commands helped them know how to love Him and others. God's Word has many commands for us to obey. It's important to remember that obeying God's commands doesn't save us. We obey God because we love Him and trust Him. Today, we'll see how the Israelites didn't obey God or show they trusted Him when they grumbled in the wilderness. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ When God called Abraham, He gave Abraham a special promise: God said He would give Abraham a good land, the land of Canaan. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob lived in this land for awhile, but then a famine came and Jacob's family moved to Egypt. Jacob's family grew into the nation of Israel while in Egypt, and eventually, they became slaves in Egypt. Through Moses, God freed His people, parted the Red Sea, and brought them to Mount Sinai. We've learned that at Mount Sinai, God gave His people the Ten Commandments, commanded them to build the tabernacle, and instructed them on how to worship at the tabernacle. Now, God was leading His people to the land He had first promised Abraham. Today, we'll see how God's people grumbled while they traveled in the wilderness to Canaan. ”



LEARN the Bible Story



1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Numbers 11:4-30; 12:1-16. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “The People Grumbled.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

THE PEOPLE GRUMBLED

“As the Israelites traveled in the wilderness to the land God promised Abraham, some of them began to hunger for meat. They said, “Do you remember when we were in Egypt? We ate free fish, cucumbers, melons, and more! All we have to eat is this manna!” Moses heard the people crying about this at the entrance of their tents.

The Lord was very angry; Moses was angry too. He went to God and said, “These people are so much trouble! There is no way that I can provide meat for all of them to eat! I am tired of leading these people.”

God told Moses to bring 70 men from Israel to the tent of meeting. He descended in the cloud and spoke to Moses. Then He took some of the Spirit that was on Moses and placed it on the 70 elders. These leaders would help Moses bear the burden of the people so that Moses would not have to lead them alone.

It wasn't just the people who complained; some of the leaders of the Israelites also grumbled. Moses' sister Miriam and his brother Aaron began to criticize Moses. They said, “Why is Moses so special? Doesn't God also speak through us?”

The Lord heard their words and called Moses, Aaron, and Miriam to the tent of meeting. He said, “I speak to prophets in visions and dreams. But I speak to Moses directly.” God didn't speak to anyone else the same way he spoke to Moses. After God said these things, Miriam's skin became diseased. It looked flaky, like snow. She would have to leave the camp because of her sickness.

Aaron said, “Moses, please don't let her be punished for our foolish sin!” Moses cried out to God to heal Miriam. After seven days, she returned to the camp, and the Israelites set out again.

Christ Connection: The people grumbled because they thought they needed more than God had provided. We also grumble when we wish God would give us more of the things we want. But God has already provided what we need most—His Son, Jesus, who died and rose again so we could be saved.

STORYTELLING TIPS

Active listening: instruct kids to pay attention to how many times the Israelites complain to God. Each time they hear the people complain, tell them to shout, “Cut that out!” Emphasize how even when God provided for them, the people continued to grumble.

Use movement: Walk about the room as you tell the story as if you are traveling in the wilderness.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY



SAY “ God was with His people in the wilderness, and He gave them what they needed. God provided them with food, and they never went hungry. What was the food called that God gave them? [Allow responses.] The people had manna that fell from heaven. But they became ungrateful. They started to grumble about the food God gave them. What did the people wish they had? [Allow responses.] The people began to wish for the food they had in Egypt. **GOD PROVIDED FOR HIS PEOPLE, BUT THEY GRUMBLED FOR MORE.** They grumbled so much, they started crying!

Moses was upset with the people, and God was angry with them too. They didn't show they were thankful for all God had done for them. The people didn't show that they trusted God. Moses didn't know how to lead people who grumbled so much! How did God provide help for Moses? [Allow responses.] God placed His Spirit on 70 men to help Moses lead the people. God provided exactly what Moses needed.

Then Moses' own sister and brother grumbled against him. They were jealous that God spoke through Moses. What did God do because of their grumbling? [Allow responses.] God was angry at their sin, and Miriam's skin became diseased. Moses prayed for his sister to be healed, and after seven days she was healed.

The people grumbled because they thought they needed more than God had provided. We also grumble when we wish God would give us more of the things we want. But God has already provided what we need most—His Son, Jesus, who died and rose again so we could be saved. ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “ When we grumble and complain, we show that we have sinful hearts. Grumbling and complaining points to how we want our way and not God's way. But our sinful ways lead to death. Jesus came to earth and died for our sin so we can have a better way to live. When we trust in Jesus, our sins are forgiven and we want to live according to God's way. We find happiness and eternal life in Jesus. ”



(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)



Show the “Unit 6, Session 1” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. When we sin, do we have to say sorry to the person we sinned against? Why?
2. God provided Jesus to save us from sin. Why is faith in Jesus the only way to be forgiven of sin?



5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes) *optional video*

| **SAY** “ Everyone, everywhere needs to know about Jesus. One area that has a great need for people



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

to hear about Jesus is Sub-Saharan Africa. [Point to Sub-Saharan Africa on a world map.] More than 1,600 people groups who need to hear the good news about Jesus live scattered across Sub-Saharan Africa. Of these people groups, 466 of them do not have missionaries sharing the gospel or don't have plans in place to start new churches. Most of the people living in Sub-Saharan Africa are very young, and more than half the total number of people are under the age of 25. ”

Play the missions video. Pray, asking God to send more missionaries to the area so more people can hear the good news about Jesus. Pray for God to call teachers and pastors to lead in the African churches.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Romans 8:28 together.

SAY ” God cares for us and is working for the good of those who trust and obey Him. God always wants what is best for us, and we can trust Him. ”

Direct kids to form a circle and count off kids from one to six, repeating the numbers if necessary. Tell kids that you will roll a dice, and if the dice lands on their number, they must stand up and say the key passage aloud. Invite kids to look at the Key Passage Poster if they need help or guide kids to use their Bibles. For non-readers, point to the words on the Key Passage Poster and say them along with the kid. Repeat as time allows, making sure kids all get a turn by allowing any kid whose number was not rolled to say the key passage aloud.

Lead kids to sing “All Things Work Together (Romans 8:28).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY ” Dear God, please help us remember that You love us and can be trusted. Help us to not grumble but instead be thankful for all the ways You care for us, especially by sending Jesus to die for our sin. In Jesus' name, amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Numbers 11. Remind kids that Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible, including Numbers. Tell kids that the book of Numbers tells us about Israel's journey in the wilderness after they left Mount Sinai. Explain that we'll see the people complain again and again, even though God continued to provide and care for them.

Consider pointing out the Sinai Peninsula (H9) on the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Numbers 11:5-6 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

SAY 🗨️ Has there been a time when you were ungrateful for something that was given to you? [Allow responses.] Of course! We have all experienced times when we focused more on what we wanted rather than on what we had. **GOD PROVIDED FOR HIS PEOPLE, BUT THEY GRUMBLED FOR MORE.**

Grumbling is a sin against God because He is the One who provides for us. When we grumble, it's like saying we don't like what God has given us, and we think we know what is best. But God does know what is best! We can trust Him even when we don't understand or wish things were different. We can be thankful and ask Him to help us not grumble. 🗨️

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

| **SAY** 🗨️ When do you sometimes grumble or complain? 🗨️

Answers will vary. Remind kids that we are all sinners who will grumble from time to time. Tell kids that God can help us be thankful. Share how faith in Jesus gives believers hearts that want to turn away from grumbling and turn toward being thankful because they recognize how much God has done to save them from sin.

| **SAY** 🗨️ Is God good? Why? 🗨️

Tell kids that God is good, and He alone is perfectly good. Discuss how God created a world that reflected His goodness, and He always does good. Point out how God was good to rescue Israel from Egypt, provide for His people in the wilderness, and promise to be their God who guided them.

| **SAY** 🗨️ What do all people need most? 🗨️

Prompt kids to remember that all people sin and that sin leads to death. Remind kids that all people need to be saved from their sin. Encourage kids to tell you how people are saved from sin. Invite kids to articulate the gospel in their own words or use The Gospel: God's Plan for Me prompts.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: GOD PROVIDED...



Provide each kid with a piece of paper and markers. Prompt kids to think about three things God has provided for them. Then invite kids to draw a picture of those three things on their papers. Invite kids to share their completed drawings with the group and explain why they are thankful God provided them. Close in prayer, thanking God for all the ways He provides, including sending Jesus to die for our sin and rise back to life.

SAY “God is so good! He knows exactly what we need. He provides for us and knows what is best. Even if we don’t always get everything we want, we can trust God to do what is best for our lives. Most of all, we can know that God provided what we need most: Jesus, who died and rose again so we could be saved.”

OPTION 2: STORY POINT TIC-TAC-TOE

On two individual dry erase boards, create a tic-tac-toe grid. Write a word or two from the story point on each square of the grid. Form the kids into two teams.

Invite kids to say the story point together. Flip a coin to see which team plays first. Invite a kid from team one to erase one word from a square and replace it with an X. Direct kids to say the story point aloud. Then a kid from team two will erase a phrase, replace it with an O, and say the story point aloud. Continue until one team wins or there is a tie. Repeat the game as time allows. (Optional: The game could be repeated with the Key Passage or the Big Picture Question as well.)

SAY “Today, we learned that **GOD PROVIDED FOR HIS PEOPLE, BUT THEY GRUMBLED FOR MORE.** We are all tempted to grumble when we don’t get what we want. But we can choose a better way! If we have trusted in Jesus, God’s Spirit lives in us to help us be thankful and trust God even when we don’t get what we want. God is good to provide what we need.”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.