

WHINING AND COMPLAINING, YUCK! A Preschool Lesson from Exodus 16

Opening Activities:

1. Beforehand, gather a bunch of mini-marshmallows and mason jars. Place the mason jars on the table and have the kids stand on a chair above them. They need to try to drop the marshmallows into the jars. When the kids have had enough of this activity, say: **You made those marshmallows RAIN down into the jars! Today we are going to talk about a time when God RAINED down food for the Israelites!**
2. **Today we are talking about how the Israelites kept whining and complaining. God doesn't like it when we whine and complain! Do you ever whine and complain? What does it sound like when you whine?** Have the kids whine in their whiniest voices! If possible, record their whining. You will use this recording during the lesson.
3. Play a fun game where the kids practice whining and stopping the whine! Play some music. While the music is playing, the kids should whine as loudly as they can. But as soon as the music stops, you should yell "STOP the whining" and the kids should be as quiet as they possibly can (and not move a muscle). See how long they can stay in that position until you start the music again. When you finish, say: **Sometimes we whine a lot, don't we? But guess what? We can all STOP whining if we really wanted to. Just like you stopped whining during this game, we can stop whining in our lives. Be a person who Praises God and DOES NOT WHINE!**

The Lesson:

Beforehand, gather a bunch of pictures of different types of food. Make sure some of them are food most kids would like and some of them are foods most kids would not. Then hold the pictures up one at a time. If this a picture the kids like, tell them to say "Yummy!". If these are pictures the kids don't like, tell them to say "Yucky!" (in the whiniest voice they can).

After you get through all the pictures, say: **Wow! You guys really know what food you like and what food you don't like! Do you ever whine like you just did when your mom or dad gives you something to eat? How do you think that makes your mom and dad feel?**

Today, we are going to talk about a time when the Israelites whined. A LOT! (play recording of kids whining or have the kids whine).

They had just left Egypt where they had been slaves. They were on their way to freedom. God had done some pretty amazing things for them. Yet, they were HUNGRY! And so they whined. (Play recording or have the kids whine).

God knew they were hungry, and he was ready to take care of them! Do you know what he did? He made FOOD fall from the sky! This food was special flakes . . . almost like it was snowing! When the food landed, the people were able to eat it. They called this food, "Manna", which means "What is it?" because they really didn't know what it was!

"Drop" croutons, soft pieces of rolled up bread, or oyster crackers at the kids. Have them say, "What is it? What is it?" and then let them eat the crackers. When they are done, say:

The Manna had everything the people needed to stay healthy! We don't really know what it tasted like, but we do know they made little cakes out of it. They had enough every single day they were in the wilderness!

Yet, do you think they were happy? Guess what they did! They WHINED. (play recording of the whining or have the kids whine). (say the following in a whiny voice: **"We want meat!" they said, "We're tired of this MANNA stuff. It doesn't taste good anymore. It's YUCKY!"** (play the recording or have the kids whine)

Do you know what God did next? He sent them meat! He sent a type of bird called Quail. There were lots and lots and lots of quail. They came into the Israelite camp and died so the Israelites could fix them for food. There was SO MUCH quail that the whole place was covered with them.

You see, God was a bit upset with all the Israelites' whining. No matter what He did – and He did some pretty amazing things – they still complained! He gave them food when they needed it, He gave them water when they needed it, their clothes and shoes never grew old, they were safe from their enemies, and yet what did they do? They WHINED! (play the recording or have the kids whine)

God doesn't like it when we whine and complain. He tells us to do EVERYTHING without complaining or arguing! We should be careful not to WHINE and COMPLAIN, too!

Do you know what can help us to not whine and complain? Thinking about all the good things God has done for us and saying thank you to Him. Let's do that now!

Take a large piece of paper and spread it out. Have the kids draw or write things they are thankful for on this piece of paper. You might also choose to have them cut out pictures from old magazines to glue on the paper. Encourage them to put as many things as they can on this paper. (If it is a nice day, you might want to take them outside and have them do this with sidewalk chalk).

Close in prayer, thanking God for all He has done!

Additional Activities:

1. Make a quail craft (or other bird craft). Use a toilet paper tube and construction paper. (You might want to trace parts of the bird on construction paper and have patterns cut out ahead of time). Glue the construction paper pieces to the toilet paper tube to make the bird. If they dry on time, let the kids "fly" them around.
2. Have a praise party to chase away the whines! Make instruments (or provide instruments) for the kids. Sing a praise song or play music and have the kids march around with their instruments. Go on a praise parade around the church or outside of the building! Stop every once in awhile to point out something else that you can praise God for (such as the trees, the sun, the birds, etc).
3. Have a praise race. Mark a starting line and finish line. The kids should run from the starting line to the finish line. When they cross the finish line, they need to shout out

something that they are thankful for. Make this even more fun by telling them to run a different way each time. Ways they can run include the following:

- Hop on one foot
- Skip
- Crawl
- Gallop like a horse
- Walk on your tippy-toes
- One foot directly in front of each other
- March with super high knees
- As fast as you can!
- As slow as you can!
- Spinning around when you run!