



**Mustard Seed Children's Summary for 2 August 2009  
Released on Wednesday, July 28, 2009**

**"Complaining and Grumbling"**

**Lesson Text:** Numbers 11:1-6, 10-15

**Background Scripture:** Numbers 11:1-35

**Memory Verse:** "When the people complained, it displeased the Lord: and the Lord heard it; and his anger was kindled" (Numbers 11:1)

**Numbers 11:1-6, 10-15**

**1** And when the people complained, it displeased the LORD: and the LORD heard it; and his anger was kindled; and the fire of the LORD burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp.

**2** And the people cried unto Moses; and when Moses prayed unto the LORD, the fire was quenched.

**3** And he called the name of the place Taberah: because the fire of the LORD burnt among them.

**4** And the mixed multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat?

**5** We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic:

**6** But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, besides this manna, before our eyes.

.....

**10** Then Moses heard the people weep throughout their families, every man in the door of his tent: and the anger of the LORD was kindled greatly; Moses also was displeased.

**11** And Moses said unto the LORD, Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant? and wherefore have I not found favor in thy sight, that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me?

**12** Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father beareth the sucking child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their fathers?

**13** Whence should I have flesh to give unto all this people? for they weep unto me, saying, Give us flesh, that we may eat.

**14** I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me.

**15** And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favor in thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness.

**THE OBJECT IN VIEW:**

Help the children see complaining as a sin that offends the Lord.

**TRUTHS TO STRESS:**

1. When the people complained, it displeased the Lord.
2. Their complaining was really against God.
3. We need to pray instead of complain.

**PLANNING LESSON AIDS:**

For Helping to Remember, bring magazines that have pictures of unhappy, complaining faces. Bring safety scissors (blunt tip), glue, paper, crayons, and a large piece of poster board.

For Lesson Activity, make a copy for each student. The Word Scramble and Word Search will use keywords from the lesson.

**TEACHER'S NOTES:**

Time: about 1444 B.C.

Place: Desert of Paran

It is not always easy being God's chosen people. Our lesson for this week finds Israel about a year out of Egypt. They had been traveling through the desert for a long time, and they were tired. Already they had forgotten all of God's blessings. All they could see was the day-to-day grind.

This lesson shows very clearly both our human tendency to complain and God's evaluation of it. In this lesson, everyone complained. First the people complained about the repetitiveness of the food God provided. They longed for variety and for familiar favorites. It is not that desiring a change was wrong; the fault was in their ungrateful attitude toward God after all He had done for them. They showed no appreciation for His care.

Then Moses, their leader, complained too. He complained about the people's dissatisfaction. He even complained about God's provision and about God calling him. The golden text gives God's position. The people's complaining displeased the Lord. It was really complaining about Him - doubting His goodness and His care.

**BEGINNING LESSON:**

Do you have some favorite foods that you like to eat? (Let the children tell some of theirs.)

We all have favorite foods and favorite clothes and favorite things to do, but we cannot have our favorites all the time. Today we will learn about how God's people did something awful just because they did not get their favorite foods.

**TELLING THE LESSON:**

The people were on a long journey. Do you remember how they left Egypt? God had promised to take them to another place, a wonderful place. Getting there took them on a long journey through the desert. There was not much to eat there, and there were many people.

So God did a wonderful thing. He put food on the ground for them every night. In the morning they just picked it up. They called it manna (bread from heaven). Because God took care of them, they had all they needed to eat.

The people should have been thankful. They had no reason to be hungry. The food God gave them was good, but it was not their favorite. It was the same every day. They could have prayed and asked God for a change, but they did not do that.

Instead, they complained. Oh, dear! Can you imagine what it must have sounded like? Whine, whine, whine. Do you think God liked hearing them complain? No. The Bible says, "When the people complained, it displeased the Lord" (Num. 11:1).

The people thought they were just complaining about the food, but they were really complaining against God. They were saying that they did not like the way He cared for them. God sent a fire to punish some of them.

Still, the complaining continued. Some of the people began to remember the food they used to eat in Egypt - fish, cucumbers, and onions were some of their favorites. Did it help to talk about other foods they wished they had? No, of course not! Did they pray and ask God to give them something different? No! They just kept complaining.

Soon they were not only complaining. Everyone was crying - for their favorite foods! Complaining often spreads. When Moses stood at the door of his tent, he could hear people everywhere crying for their favorite foods. Then Moses got angry too. Right then he felt that leading those complaining people was a big burden. He felt that leading them was a punishment from God. Then Moses began to complain too. The people complained to Moses, and Moses complained to God. He was not the father of all these people. So why should he have to take care of them? He did not like being a leader when the people complained so much. The people's complaining hurt Moses so much that he wanted to die. What a terrible sin complaining is!

### **TELLING HOW TO LIVE:**

How often do you complain? When something is bothering you, what do you do? (Talk it over with someone who might be able to help. Look at the brighter side of the situation. Make a list of other blessings. Think of things that might help. Pray about it.)

Complaining is never helpful. God does not like it. It makes God sad, it makes you sad, and it makes everyone around you upset. It is discouraging to others.

When we are complaining, we cannot be thankful. The people complained that they did not have fish, cucumbers and onions. They forgot that they *did* have food. It was food from God.

### **HELPING TO REMEMBER:**

As a class, make a collage of unhappy, complaining faces. The children can cut out pictures from magazines and/or draw their own and glue them to the poster. Across the bottom, let each child help write the memory verse.

### **EXPLAINING THE MEMORY VERSE:**

*"When the people complained, it displeased the Lord: and the Lord heard it; and his anger was kindled" (Numbers 11:1)*

This verse tells us what God thinks about complaining. He does not like it. To Him it is a sin. We may think God does not hear us when we complain, but God heard the people's complaints. He was angry because of their complaining.

The people should have thanked God for what they did have and prayed about their needs instead of complaining. That is what God wants us to do too.

### **CONCLUSION:**

The Israelites were often too quick to forget what God had done for them. They found it easy to complain in spite of the many blessings from God.

Israel's grumbling was not at all pleasing to the Lord. Like any parent whose children become spoiled and unthankful, God reacted against their lack of gratitude. Their lack of faith also showed in their failure to trust God to provide what they needed.

As God did with Israel, so He also does with believers today. For our faith to grow, it needs to be tested. Whatever our lives consist of, this lesson teaches us that we need to trust God in our daily cares and worries. We must tell Him about our frustrations, but we should not leave it at that. We must also give God our grateful thanks for what we do have.

### **PRAYER:**

Dear God, thank You for all that You provide to us daily. Help us to always be grateful and to pray instead of grumbling and complaining, in Jesus' name. Amen.

**ANTICIPATING NEXT WEEK'S LESSON:**

Next week's lesson is "**Afraid to Follow God**" and tells how the people of Israel became controlled by fear rather than by faith in God and His promises. Study Numbers 14:1-25.

**Lesson Summarized By:**

Renee Little  
Jesus Is All Ministries  
[www.jesusisall.com](http://www.jesusisall.com)

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The Pulpit Commentary, Spence-Jones, H. D. M. (Hrsg.), Bellingham, WA : Logos Research Systems, Inc.

The KJV Parallel Bible Commentary, by Nelson Books

Holman Bible Dictionary, Holman Bible Publishers

**WORD SCRAMBLE / WORD SEARCH**  
**"Complaining and Grumbling"**  
**(Numbers 11:1-6, 10-15)**

**Unscramble these keywords from the lesson and then find each in the word search. The verse where each word is located is given in parentheses.**

- |                  |       |                    |       |
|------------------|-------|--------------------|-------|
| 1. AOEINDCLM (1) | _____ | 9. AANMN (6)       | _____ |
| 2. MEIFLAIS (10) | _____ | 10. EFHATR (12)    | _____ |
| 3. RAGNE (1)     | _____ | 11. DFCALTEIF (11) | _____ |
| 4. UTMTDUIEL (4) | _____ | 12. YGPET (5)      | _____ |
| 5. DPYREA (2)    | _____ | 13. MCERCSubU (5)  | _____ |
| 6. TSENRAV (11)  | _____ | 14. ALSDESEIPD (1) | _____ |
| 7. IHSF (5)      | _____ | 15. OLESNM (5)     | _____ |
| 8. NOSNIO (5)    | _____ |                    |       |

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