

## MOSES TEACHES THE PEOPLE TO TRUST IN GOD

All Activity Sheets

### KEY WORDS

COMPLAINING THIRST FOR WATER TRUST GOD MARA ELIM

### BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Exodus 15:22-27

### LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help the children learn that God is pleased when we trust in him.

### MEMORY VERSE

"The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him" (Nahum 1:7, NIV\*).

### PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

Moses trusted in God as Moses led the Israelites through the wilderness. The people of God enjoyed their freedom. Then they allowed their daily life to be disrespectful when they experienced unexpected difficulties. They were very happy as they crossed the Red Sea, but then they had a crisis, and their confidence turned into doubt.

The story of Moses and the Israelites making the journey to Mara includes constant complaints of the people. They lost perspective, and let adversity overwhelm their hearts and minds. They went through the Desert of Shur for three days and found no water. They went to Mara and the water was bitter. They were thirsty. They forgot the miracles that God had done to free them, and they remembered with nostalgia the days of their captivity in Egypt. However, the mercy of God was still strong, and He provided fresh water for them at Elim.

Perhaps some Christians doubt the protective hand of God when it seems that everything is going wrong. Young children can also respond in the same way. When a beloved pet dies or a family member hurts a child, it is difficult for the child to trust in God's care. As you present this lesson, try to reinforce the important truth that God cares for His people. Remind them of the love and constant care of God for them. That will help them to increase their confidence in the power of God and live with the knowledge that someone much more powerful than they are cares for them.

## INTRODUCE THE LESSON

### A walk in the desert

Have your children walk around the church or meeting facility, and then return to the classroom.

Give them some cookies, chips or salty snack, but do not give them anything to drink. This will make them thirsty. To introduce the Bible story, begin by talking about what happens when we feel very thirsty.

### Bitter water

Prepare a flavoured drink but do not add sugar. Remember that the children will be thirsty from exercise and the snacks.

Say: "Imagine that you are one of the Israelites, and you are in a place called Mara. You have travelled far in the desert for three days and you had nothing to drink for those three days."

Serve a little unsweetened juice, and let the children drink it. You may hear complaints about its taste. Use this activity to introduce the story.

Say: "Let's find out where the Israelites found something to drink on their journey."

Express as an introduction to the story: "The same thing that just happened to us now happened to the Israelites in the desert. They found water, but the people did not want to drink it. What do you think they did? We will find out in our story today."

Since they will be thirsty, bring sweeten the rest of the juice to share with the class as part of the lesson.

## TEACH THE LESSON

The following activities will help prepare children to experience and review the Bible story.

### Guest speaker

Before class, talk to friends who have travelled. Ask if any of them have travelled somewhere and found themselves without a source of water or other beverages to drink. Ask that person to come to the class and tell how it felt to be so thirsty and tell where they found something to drink. God makes bitter water into good water.

Moses led the people away from the Red Sea. They were walking in the hot desert. On the first day, Moses and the people looked everywhere, but they found no water. The Israelites were very tired and thirsty. The second day, they walked for a long time, but they still did not find any water. Then the third day passed, and they continued without finding anything to drink.

Finally, they came to a place called Mara, where they found water. It looked delicious! They quickly began to drink the water but spit it out. Something had happened to the water. It did not taste good. It was bitter.

"Moses, Moses," the people began to complain. "We are very thirsty. What will we drink? The water is bitter!"

Moses trusted God and prayed for help. While Moses was praying, God showed him a piece of wood and told him to throw the wood into the water. Once again, the people began to drink water.

"Moses, the water is good for drinking, and the taste is delicious!" they said.

God told them, "I want you to obey My law and do the right thing. You must trust in Me, and I will take care of you."

The people learned to trust in God. He led them to a place called Elim, where they camped and enjoyed the beauty of the palm trees and a source of clean, clear water.

## CONNECT THE LESSON

### The bitter water from Mara

Before class, prepare Student Activity Sheet #34. If the children are unable to cut apart the cards from each activity sheet, you can do this in advance and place the cards in a separate envelope for each child.

In class, give each child an envelope and show them how to place the cards facedown on the table. The children will play a matching game with the cards. Have the children select two cards to turn over and check to see if they match. If not, the children should return the cards to their original places. When the children make a match, they put the two cards back in the envelope.

Then they continue playing until they have matched all the cards. Use this game to review the story.

If the children are able, give each child Student Activity Sheet #34, and allow each one to cut the cards along the dotted line. Then place them on the table with the figure facing down, in two rows. Play two cards at a time to try to form a pair that is the same. Encourage children to place their figures in the order of the story.

Remind them that Moses led the people through the Red Sea and through the desert.

“What happened in today’s story?” (People were thirsty.) “What do you do when you are thirsty?” (Drink water.)

Say: “The people of Israel stopped at a place where there was water, but it was bitter. What happened after that?” (God changed the taste of water, and the people thanked him. Moses helped the people to trust in God.)

Put each child’s name on a bag, and then place the cards inside so they can take the cards home to share the lesson with their families and friends.

## **PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE**

[Download Additional Memory Verse Activities PDF](#)

[Download Suggestions for Bible Memorization PDF](#)

### **Verse in motion**

Make up motions for the words for the whole verse, Nahum 1:7. Introduce the motions to the children. Let them practice the motions as you say the verse several times. Then let a volunteer say the verse and do the motions. Give help or guidance if the volunteer forgets any part of it. Then let the whole group recite the verse with motions one more time.

## **WRAP-UP**

### **Pray**

Ask your children if they have prayer requests. Conclude with a prayer, saying: “Thank You, God, for the stories about Moses. Thank you for teaching the Israelites and Moses to trust you to give them good water. Help us learn to trust you. We love you, God. Amen.

### **Encourage**

Remind the children that God provided for the needs of the Israelites. He provided water when they were thirsty. We can trust God to provide our needs.

### **Invite**

Help the children to remember everything they need to take home. Thank each one for coming to class. Encourage the children to come back for the next session. They will hear one more story about Moses and the Israelites.