



SMALL GROUP Discussion/Activity Suggestions for 9:45 Service

THE ISRAELITES COMPLAINED

Isn't that one of the most amazing stories you've ever heard? Can you imagine being one of the Israelites when they were crossing the Red Sea? Don't you think you'd be pretty thankful? (*Let kids respond.*) Me too! In fact, let's make a quick list of all the things the Israelites could be thankful for.

Draw a line down the middle of your paper pad. On the top left, write the word "Israelites." Ask the kids to give you answers, write them down on the left-hand side underneath "Israelites" for all the kids to see. Leave the right-hand side open for later.

That's a pretty good list! If God had done all those things for you, do you think you'd have much to complain about? (*Kids respond.*) I wouldn't think so either, but that's exactly what the Israelites did. God gave the Israelites everything they needed—freedom, protection, food, and water—but they still complained. In fact, they eventually stopped trusting God to take care of them and because of that, God made the Israelites wander through the desert for the next 40 years. Can you believe that? The Israelites weren't very thankful, were they? Can you imagine complaining like that after God had given you so much? (*Kids respond.*)

WE ARE LIKE THE ISRAELITES

You know what, though—we probably *can* imagine it, because we can be just like the Israelites sometimes. Let me show you what I mean. In the same way the Israelites had a lot to be thankful for, we have a lot to be thankful for too. Let's make a list for ourselves. What do we have to be thankful for?

Write "Us" on the top right of the marker board or paper pad next to "Israelites." Give each child a sticky note and ask them to write two things that they are thankful for and to put it on the "Us" side.

That's a great list! God has given us all these things, so you might think we would never complain about anything. But do we? (*Kids respond.*) Sure we do. In fact, here's what we're going to do. I'll show you some things that kids might complain about. Let's all read them together, but we have to read them in our whiniest voices. Are you ready?

CG: It's not fair! My brother got a bigger piece of cake than I did.

Great whiney voices! How about this one:



3.5 Large Group Lesson | Elementary



CG: Why do I have to eat that? It tastes sooooo gross!

CG: Why can't I get that new video game? I don't get to have anything fun!

CG: I always have to go to bed early. No one else has to go to bed this early.

Does that sound like anything you've ever said before? I'll bet it does! But that's not what the Bible tells us we should do. Let's take a look. *(Encourage kids to open their Bibles to Philippians 2:14. Be prepared to give younger kids more time and assistance in finding the verse. When ready, choose a kid to read it aloud or read it aloud yourself while the kids follow along.)*

CG: "Do everything without grumbling or arguing." Philippians 2:14

When we complain, it's usually because we've forgotten about all the incredible things that God has already given us, just like the Israelites. In fact, there's one thing God has given us that we should ALWAYS be thankful for. The Bible tells us that God gave us His one and only Son, Jesus, so that anyone who believes in Him will have forever life in Heaven. There is no gift more incredible than that!

So the next time you find yourself complaining about something or using your whiney voice, be sure to stop and think about all of the things God has given you. God is incredibly giving, so we can be thankful without complaining!

**Today is the day for memory verses! (Joshua 1:9)
They may say it to you for a prize!**

