

E6. The Twelve Spies

Numbers 13:1-14:9

Learning Objectives

1. The children will explore the story of the 12 spies that were sent by Moses into the land of Canaan.
2. The children will examine how God can give us the strength to handle our fears and problems.

Memory Verse: *“My help comes from the Lord....” --Psalm 121:2 (NIRV)*

Getting Started

Choose One

All Ages

What's in Common?

As the children arrive, have pictures of or objects that represent:

1. A Fireman
2. A Policeman
3. A Doctor

Ask the children to identify these three types of people. Then ask them what they have in common? (You may have to give clues...lead them to “they all help to protect us.”) Ask: “How do each of these people help protect us?” (From fire, from the “bad guys”, from getting sick.) Then ask the children how they would feel if we didn't have people to protect us. (Discuss together.)

In today's story, the Israelites were frightened, but they always had someone to protect them. Do you know who that was? (God!) Continue with the lesson.

Spy Discussion

Ask the children the following: “Whenever you think of the word “spy” what do you think of?” Make a list of their responses on the white board or easel. Then tell the children that in our lesson today, they are going to learn about twelve spies who secretly went into the land of Canaan to see what it was like. They will find out what happens as they go into the land and spot big, frightening giants. Continue with the lesson.

Grades K-2

“Don't Worry, God Reigns” Coloring Sheet

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → Preschool → Coloring Pages → “Don't Worry, God Reigns”

You will need to print one coloring sheet for each child.

Grades 3-5

Grumbling – Bible Hunt

As each child arrives, give him or her one of the verses below about grumbling. Have him or her look it up in his or her Bible, read it several times, and be prepared to share with the class what the verse means.

Exodus 15:24, Numbers 14:2, John 6:43, 1 Corinthians 10:10, Philippians 2:14, James 5:9 or 1 Peter 4:9.

Talk about how “grumbling” relates to the Israelites in the desert. Continue with the lesson.

Bible Lesson with Discussion Questions

Message:

Trust in Him.

Teacher Note: Allow the children to share their homework. Talk about their greatest fears. Be ready to share your greatest fear with them first. Sometimes that helps to break the ice. Then continue with the story.

Some Men Check Out the Land of Canaan

The Lord spoke to Moses. He said, "Send some men to check out the land of Canaan. I am giving it to the people of Israel. Send one leader from each of Israel's tribes."

So Moses sent them out from the Desert of Paran. He sent them as the Lord had commanded. All of them were leaders of the people of Israel. Here are their names:

Shammua from the tribe of Reuben.

Shaphat from the tribe of Simeon.

Caleb from the tribe of Judah.

Igal from the tribe of Issachar.

Hoshea from the tribe of Ephraim.

Palti from the tribe of Benjamin.

Gaddiel from the tribe of Zebulun.

Gaddi from the tribe of Manasseh.

Ammiel from the tribe of Dan.

Sethur from the tribe of Asher.

Nahbi from the tribe of Naphtali.

Geuel from the tribe of Gad.

Those are the men Moses sent to check out (or spy on) the land. He gave Hoshea a new name. He named him Joshua instead.

Moses sent them to spy on the land of Canaan. He told them to go up through southern Canaan and then into the mountains. See what the land is like. See whether the people who live there are strong or weak. See whether they are few or many. What kind of land do they live in? Is it good or bad? What kind of towns do they live in? Do the towns have high walls around them or not? How is the soil? Is it rich land or poor land? Are there trees on it or not? Do your best to bring back some of the fruit of the land." (It was the season for the first ripe grapes.)

So the twelve men went up and checked out the land. The men came to the Valley of Eshcol. There they cut off a branch that had a single bunch of grapes on it. Two of them carried it on a pole between them. They carried some pomegranates and figs along with it. At the end of 40 days, the men returned from checking out the land.

The Men Report on What They Found

The men came back to Moses, Aaron and the whole community of Israelites and reported to them. They showed them the fruit of the land. They gave Moses their report. They said, "We went into the land you sent us to. It really does have plenty of milk and honey! Here's some fruit from the land.

"But the people who live there are strong. Their cities have high walls around them and are very large." Then Caleb interrupted the men who were speaking to Moses. He said, "We should go up and take the land. We can certainly do it."

Bible Lesson with Discussion Questions - continued

But the men who had gone up with him spoke. They said, "We can't attack those people. They are stronger than we are." The men spread a bad report about the land among the people of Israel. They said, "All of the people we saw there are very big and tall. (They were like giants!) We felt like grasshoppers. And we looked like grasshoppers to them."

Numbers 14 ~ The People Refuse to Obey the Lord

That night all of the people in the camp began crying very loudly. The people of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron. The people said to them, "We wish we had died in Egypt or even in this desert. Why is the Lord bringing us to this land? We are all going to die because of our enemies. Wouldn't it be better for us to go back to Egypt?"

Then they said to one another, "We should choose another leader and go back to Egypt." Then Moses and Aaron fell and bowed with their faces to the ground. They did it in front of all of the Israelites that were gathered there.

Joshua and Caleb were two of the men who had explored the land of Canaan. They spoke to the people of Israel. They said, "The land there is very good. If the Lord is pleased with us, He'll lead us into that land. It's a land that has plenty of milk and honey. He'll give it to us. "But don't refuse to obey Him. And don't be afraid of the people of the land. The Lord is with us. So don't be afraid of them."

Note: As a result of the Israelites not having trust in God – they had to wander in the desert for 40 more years!

Discussion Questions:

1. How many men were sent to explore the Promised Land? (12.)
2. What types of things did Moses ask the 12 men to look for? (What kind of land it was, what kind of towns were there, what kind of food grew there, etc.)
3. How long were the 12 spies gone? (40 days.)
4. Did the men bring anything back with them? (Yes.) What? (Grapes, figs and pomegranates.)
5. What kind of people did the 12 spies say lived in the land of Canaan? (Very large people or giants.)
6. Did the people have trust in God that He would help them to get the land of Canaan? (No.)
7. What happened to the people because they didn't believe in God? (They had to wander in the desert for 40 more years!)
8. What (if anything) do you think the Israelites should have done differently? (Answers will vary...discuss together.)
9. Do you trust God all the time with all of your fears and problems? (Discuss together.) Why or why not?
10. How can we ask God to help us with our "giant" fears and problems? (Talk to Him. Pray to Him. Trust Him. Discuss together.)

Application to Real Life

Sometimes we all feel like grasshoppers in a world of giants, just like the spies that were sent to check out the land of Canaan in today's story. Ask the children if they can think of a time when they were scared or felt like they couldn't do something. Ask them if they ever said: "I can't do it." OR "It's too hard!" Maybe it was when they were learning to read, or learning to ride a bike, or learning to put their head under the water, or going to school for the first time. Maybe it was when they had to meet someone new, or make new friends in a new class or at a new school, or being nice to their brother or sister, or remembering to pick up their toys, or obeying their parents, etc. Ask them if they gave up or if they kept on trying. Talk about how they were able to accomplish their "giant".

God does not want us to give up just because something seems to be too hard. He is always with us and He will help us. He can give us strength to face our fears and our giants. The Israelites in the story forgot all about all the time God had helped them in the past. (Review with the children a bit some of the recent lessons where God helped the Israelites, even when they complained all the time!) Every time they had to face a new challenge or problem, they got scared and they forgot to trust God. We always want to trust Him, because remember: "My help comes from the Lord." (Practice the memory verse together.)

Memory Work Fun

1. Recite the memory verse. Then explain what it means in your own words.
2. Retell the story of Baby Moses.
3. What is the name of the Holy Sacrament we participate in during every divine service?
4. What is the name of your minister?
5. Ask a volunteer to say a short closing prayer, thanking God for being with us.

Activity Ideas

Choose One

All Ages

Play Grasshopper Tiddlywinks

See: www.daniellesplace.com → search "grasshopper" → "Grasshoppers and Giants – Joshua"

You will need to print out two copies of the grasshopper game cards for each game. (One game for every 8 children.) Please see the above website for game setup instructions. You will be asking the children questions from the story. If they get the question right, they get to try to get their "grasshopper" onto the board. If the "grasshopper" lands on one of the grasshopper circles they get that many points. (Show the children how to press down on the edge of one disc using the edge of another disc so that it jumps up and away from them like a grasshopper.) (If you don't have tiddlywinks, you can use little pompom balls and just have the children toss them.)

Note: This activity would work especially well with larger class sizes but can be adapted for smaller ones as well. Modify as needed.

Grades K-2**“Giants in the Land” Activity**

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → Preschool → Activities → “Giants in the Land”

Before class, you will need to print one copy of the activity sheet. You will be telling them a story. Please see the above website for detailed and guided instructions.

Finish up by telling the children that we can find all of these things, and much more, in our Bibles. Ask the children if any of these items seem familiar to them. Tell the children that all of these things belong together in today’s story, as Moses had sent 12 men to check out the land God had promised Israel. These spies saw many things, some of which were giants, huge grapes and a land flowing with milk and honey.

Grasshopper Craft

You will need egg cartons for this activity. Cut the bottom of an egg carton so that you have 3 cups connected in a row (the head, abdomen, and thorax). Cut out a pair of wings and 6 legs from green construction paper. Turn the three attached egg cups upside down and paint green. Add wiggly eyes, the wings, the legs, and a pair of pipe cleaner legs. Remember to talk about the story as you work.

Grades 3-5**Desert Venture Game**

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → Grade School → Lessons → Old Testament → The Life of Moses → Wandering in the Desert → Scroll down to “Class Exercise – Desert Venture”

In order to play this game you will need to use the true or false questions provided. This is a great game for a review.

Have the children line up along one wall of the room and use masking tape to mark a line about 8 feet in front of them. Tell the kids you will ask a question that the answer is either true or false. If they believe it is true, they raise their right hand. If they believe it is false, they keep their hands down. Everyone who guesses correctly takes one baby-step towards the line (one foot directly in front of the other). Everyone who guesses wrong takes one baby-step backwards, (unless already at the wall).

Play continues until all the questions are gone or until all the children make it to the line. You can let the children who reach the line start over at the wall if they want to continue to play.

Journal*Optional***Grades K-2**

How do you think God feels when we grumble and complain (like the Israelites did)? Draw a picture.

Grades 3-5

Think about today’s story. What would you tell someone who felt as if they were in a hopeless situation and had nowhere to turn? How would you persuade them to turn to God? Write about it.

Do you believe God can help you handle any fear or problem? Why or why not? Write about it.

Homework Ideas

- Read at home with a grownup: **Moses Disobeys God** (Numbers 20:1-13).
- Be able to recite the memory verse: *"Blessed is the man who always has respect for the Lord."*
--Proverbs 28:14 (NIRV)
- Work on commandment #_____ to memorize.
- Color the "**Moses Disobeys God**" coloring sheet as your parents read you the Sunday School Lesson. Return your coloring page for a sticker.
- When was the last time you received a reward for doing something good? Draw a picture or write about it. Bring it class to share.

Other Resources

<http://children.cccm.com/curriculum/> → OT Support Curriculum → Page 5 → "The Twelve Spies"

Name: _____

Moses Disobeys God



"Blessed is the man who always has respect for the Lord."
-Proverbs 28:14 (NIRV)

Take Home Page: E6. The Twelve Spies

Today I learned...

Today your child learned that God wants us to learn to **trust in Him**. The children explored the story of the 12 spies that were sent by Moses into the land of Canaan. They also talked about how God can give us the strength to handle our fears and problems.

Help me learn my memory verse...

"My help comes from the Lord...." --Psalm 121:2 (NIRV)

Ask me...

1. What were the spies looking for in today's lesson? What did they find?
2. What happened to the people because of they didn't trust God?
3. Do you trust God with all of your problems or fears? Why or why not?

Live Your Faith...

Crawl under your kitchen or dining room table together and talk about things that you are afraid of. Share with your child that some people are afraid of thunderstorms and they hide under the table or under a blanket until the lightning and thunder finally stops. Remind your child that our help comes from the Lord, and that we can go to Him anytime of the day or of the night for strength and help. He wants to hear from us when we are afraid. Pray together and ask God to help you to remember to trust Him with all of your fears and challenges.
