

Lesson 5: 12 Spies to Canaan

Objectives: Students will...

- 1) Study Numbers 13 – Moses sends 12 spies to explore Canaan
- 2) Discuss their faith in relation to Caleb and Joshua
- 3) Do activities to help them understand that some time we need to stand up against the crowd

Supplies:

Teacher Materials (provided in classroom)

- Bible(s)
- Markers/Pencil Crayons
- Pens/Pencils
- Attendance Chart (See Template)
- Stickers for Attendance
- Map of 12 Spies Journey
- Rating Quiz – one sheet per student

Optional:

- Maze Sheet with Questions – one per student
- 12 Spies Color Page – one per student

Let's Make a Deal

- 1 dollar or chocolate bar – 2 of either chocolate bar or dollar
- Envelopes – 2
- 5 dollars – 2
- Chocolate bar or dollar for every student in the class who did not get one of the above prizes

- Storybook or visuals of this story to show kids (if available)

Snack:

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| - Grapes, Figs and/or Pomegranates | 1-4 pieces for each child |
| - Napkins for snack | one per child |
| - Juice or water and cup | one per child |

Lesson:

1) Introduction to Lesson

2-5 minutes

As students enter, welcome them and help find a chair to sit at. Thank them for coming.

Take attendance (using attendance chart supplied). Say to students: **Can anyone remember what we studied last week?** We studied that Aaron and Miriam spoke against Moses and because of it, God afflicted Miriam with leprosy (a skin disease) and she was sent out of the camp 7 days before being able to return.

If you have your Bibles let's find Numbers and turn there now. (For those that might not have a Bible, have them share with someone or get them one to use. – Help those who need it.)

Today we are studying Numbers Chapter 13. We will meet two men of faith – Joshua and Caleb.

2) Numbers 13 – 12 Spies Explore Canaan

10 minutes

Optional: Storybook or visuals of this story to show kids (if available)

I will read Numbers 13:1-16 because there are a lot of names. Please listen along as I read. (Try your best to read the names of each tribe and the man sent to represent that tribe.)

After reading say, **“There were 12 men sent to check out Canaan. We will see that two of these men – Joshua and Caleb were men of great faith. Who can find in their Bible what tribe Joshua and Caleb were from? Verse 8 and 16 – Joshua was from the tribe of Ephraim – one of Joseph’s sons. Verse 6 – Caleb was from the tribe of Judah.**

Can I get volunteers to read four verses each starting from verse 17-25?

Show them the map of the possible locations the men travelled. Starting from the Desert of Paran (Numbers 12:16) the spies went up through the Negev area in the Desert of Zin (Numbers 13:21) as far as Rehob (we are not sure where that is exactly located, but it was on the way to Lebo Hamath – which is on the map.) They stopped in Hebron and after at the Valley of Eschol (not on the map) they gathered figs, pomegranates and grapes before returning.

How many days were they gone? 40 days.

The Bible says they saw the descendants of Anak – these were referred to as the Nephilim which were a race of extremely tall people. These tall people would be terrifying to most others. (See Genesis 6:4 for reference is desired.)

3) Optional: Let’s Make a Deal Game

5-10 minutes

Before class make sure you have 2 one dollar coins/bills or 2 chocolate bars; and two envelopes with a five dollar put into each envelope. (These will be given to the two students you select so if you do not have the money to give away do not do this activity.)

Select two students to be contestants on Let’s Make a Deal. Then send them out of the room. Quietly tell the rest of the group that each contestant must choose between the two prizes – one is the chocolate or dollar they can see, and the other is hidden in the envelope (containing the five dollars) which they can’t see. Prompt all but two of the students in the group to try to convince the contestants to choose the dollar or chocolate bar (whatever you choice to have as the visible prize). Tell two of the older more spiritually mature students in your group to try to convince the contestants to choose the unknown prize. (Ensure none of the students know what is actually in the envelopes – just tell them it is a really good prize.) All of them will be yelling advice at the contestants so ensure you are in a room that is away from other folks who may be interrupted by this noisy activity.

Invite contestants back into the room one at a time and tell each one they get to choose between the two prizes. Hold up the dollar and the envelope and tell the contestant they have 30 seconds to decide. Allow students in the group to start yelling at him or her what to decide.

When the student makes the choice, give him or her what was chosen and let him or her now join the crowd to holler at the next contestant. ***Don’t let them open the envelopes until the end.**

Now explain to the students when they are all in the room and sitting down:

The two contestants faced a tough choice. First, whether to go for something they could see or something they couldn’t see; second, whether to trust the majority of the crowd, which was pressuring them to go with the safest choice, or to trust the two lone voices urging them to go with the scariest choice.

The Israelites faced the same dilemma when Moses sent the 12 spies to Canaan. Ten came back cautioning and exaggerating that the Israelites should not go. Only two spies said to actually go

for it. Joshua and Caleb tried to convince the people to go. They believed that God had already shown them that God could be trusted and that no opposition was big enough to overthrow God.

Ultimately, the Israelites listened to the 10 rather than the 2 and they did not go in and conquer the land. Can you guess what will happen next? God is going to let them have their way – if they don't want to go to the Promised Land after wandering for over two years, God will make sure they do not enter in and instead as we will study next week – the Israelites will have to wander the desert another 40 years for their lack of faith! The only two people who lived to see the Promised Land were the only two who believed in the first place – Joshua and Caleb!

*Let students open the envelopes and see what is inside. Let them keep their prize – but if desired, allow all students in the class to get a “prize” of a chocolate bar or a dollar so that every student gets something.

*If time allow the two students to share what helped them make their decision – the crowd, the security of knowing what was visible, the delight in wondering what was unknown, etc.

4) Joshua and Caleb's Faith and Rating Quiz

10-15 minutes

Say to students; **let's finish studying Numbers 13:**

Can I get some volunteers to finish reading from verse 26 to 33? Read 26-33 as a group.



Discussion Questions:

What is faith? Hebrews 11:1 says; Now faith is **confidence** in what we hope for and **assurance** about what we do not see.

Faith from the Bible is not a blind, I don't have a clue, I just have a gut feeling belief. According to Scripture faith is confidence and assurance. What made Caleb and Joshua confident? It was just as God said it would be rich and fertile land, able to support the Israelites with all their needs, they trusted in what God said knowing that God had been proven trustworthy during the entire 2 years they had been travelling in the desert.

How did Joshua and Caleb show faith in God? Let students answer. They believed what God said and were willing to stand up for that belief, have confidence and assurance that God would deliver on His promises.

Describe the pressure that Joshua and Caleb must have felt from the crowd of peers and relatives who resisted their confident advice to take the land. Let students answer

How would it feel to be in the minority (the smaller group) and have the majority think your opinion was wrong?

How does that happen to us today? Let students answer. Idea is that we are in the minority of people who believe and follow Jesus as Lord – even though the Bible is 100% right – the majority of people refuse to follow or even read it. We have to have faith in God that He is right, knowing that everything He has ever said has come true, and that the Bible has been proven true and accurate in every single detail. We can have absolute confident faith that God will care for us as we try to show others the importance of following Him!

What is the difference between the way Caleb talks about the land (verse 30) and the way the rest of the men (except Joshua) talk about the land? Faith in God!

Mark 11:22 says: "Have faith in God," Jesus answered.

Hand out one Rate Your Ability to Stand up Against the Crowd Sheet to each child.

Hand out pencils and as a group, read through each question out loud, but have the children circle the number that relates best to them on their level of confidence in standing up against the crowd. Rating personalizes an otherwise hypothetical situation.

After the Rating Quiz ask the students:

What are some ways we can build our faith and stand up against the crowd? Study the Bible, pray for help from the Lord in dealing with opposition, practice standing up to people in a loving way who want you to do inappropriate things, learn from people in the Bible like Joshua and Caleb and pray to be more like them in faith and practice, get help from church members, etc.

5) Optional: 12 Spies Color Page

5 minutes

Hand out one sheet to each child with crayons and color the page.

Discuss questions while they color such as reviewing the events of the Bible account, talking about the difficulties faced in life when standing up for what is right and true, Asking the names of the two faithful men. Asking what fruits they brought back, etc.



6) Optional: Maze Sheet

5 minutes

Hand out one sheet to each child with pencils. Read the directions aloud and then have the students help the spies find the Promised Land. When done, read through the questions and have the students decide on their own, how much faith they currently have and what they can do to increase their faith in the coming week.

*Students do not need to write down the answers if they are too young to write, just have them think of the answer in their head and keep it to themselves.



Talk about ways we can increase our faith this week – study the Bible, pray, talk to other Christians who are strong in their faith and ask why, look at videos from World Video Bible School or Apologetics Press.org that show proof that the Bible is accurate, God is real, prophecies were true and fulfilled, etc.

7) Optional – Snack: Grapes, Pomegranates, and or Figs

Hand out snack to each child along with a glass of water or juice. Explain that: **Today we studied that the Promised Land was full of figs, grapes and pomegranates that the spies brought back to show the Israelites and that even with all this food and the fact that the land was full of good things – the Israelites doubted as to whether they should go. As we eat this fruit – let's remember that God provides us with all good things – like this wonderful fruit. But, we have to have faith to trust God that not only He can provide us with everything – but that we need to live**

up to our end and do what God asks us to do and that by doing so we will be confident and assured! Provide a napkin for children to clean their hands.

Discuss any questions while snacking. See if students can remember the names of the two faithful men and the fruit they all brought back.

8) Optional - Songs

5 minutes

Have children sing songs with you. An example:

12 Men Went to Spy on Canaan

Twelve men went to spy on Canaan,

Ten were bad and two were good.

What did they see when they spied on Canaan?

Ten were bad and two were good.

Some saw the giants strong and tall

Some saw grapes in clusters fall

Some saw that God was in it all

'Cause ten were bad and two were good.

(Then sing it faster each time.)

9) Close in prayer

*If desired, ask the children if they have any prayer requests and write them down to help you remember. Then ask all children to bow their heads and fold their hands to pray.

Dear God, thank you for the events in the Bible that help us learn how we should be. Thank you that we can learn how to stand up against others as Caleb and Joshua did. Help us to be more like these men of faith who trusted in You. We thank You for Jesus, who came and died for our sins and who teaches us how to live in accordance with Your good will. Help us this week as we go to school and home. Help us to remember to pray and to study Your Word this week and grow in our confidence and assurance that You are God and that You know what is best for us. We pray for those who may be sick or traveling that you will bring them back to us safe and soon. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen!

Thank you for serving Christ in this way!