



UNIT 6 | SESSION 1

# THE PEOPLE DIDN'T GO INTO THE LAND

NUMBERS 13–14

## KEY PASSAGE:

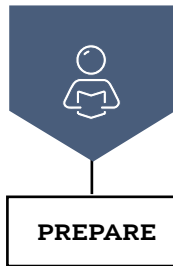
Exodus 15:11

## BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What is God like? God is holy, good, and loving.

## CHRIST CONNECTION:

The Israelites did not trust God. They rebelled against Him. Jesus trusted God perfectly. He came into the world to take the punishment we deserve for our own rebellion against God. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin and invites us into His kingdom forever.



## PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



## LEADER Bible Study

If you've ever bought a house, you likely know that even the "most perfect" house really isn't perfect. There seems to always be some compromise that must be made: location, yard size, location of a bathroom, school district, price, and so forth. The choice is then ours to make: do we live with the compromises we need to make, or do we pass on the house—no matter how perfect it is in other ways—and keep looking?

When the Israelites reached the border of the land of Abraham and their ancestors, they sent in twelve men to scout the territory. The report was glowing: The land was amazing—plenty of room and abundant crops. It was perfect in almost every way. There was a concern, and it was a big one: the people living there were scary-big.

Think back to that house you had fallen in love with. You were already imagining what it would be like to live in it. You were deciding where your furniture would go. It seemed too good to be true. But then, you discovered that imperfection, and your hopes and dreams came crashing down. Now magnify that many times over, and you can begin to relate with what the Israelites must have felt like in that moment. Now where would they go? What would they do?

The tragedy of this account is not found in

what the people felt in that moment; rather, it is found in their failure to recognize that the land was indeed perfect in every way. There was no drawback or compromise. The people living there were inconsequential.

Why? Because this was the land of promise—of God's promise. The same God who had promised this land to them and to their ancestors before them was the same God who had revealed His infinite power in rescuing them from the Egyptians. He was the same God who was with them at that moment. Did they believe the people were too big, or did they believe God was too small?

Joshua, Caleb, and Moses would try to plead with the people to trust in God, but the people refused. Instead of entering the land in faith, they turned from the land in fear. Not one of the adults of that generation, except Joshua and Caleb, would step foot into that land. Instead, they were forced to wander in the wilderness of judgment because of their rebellion against God. That is the tragedy of this account.

### TIMELINE

**c. 1446–1445 B.C.:** God gave Moses His law at Mount Sinai.

**c. 1444 B.C.:** Spies scouted the promised land

**c. 1405 B.C.:** Moses died at the age of 120.

**c. 1404 B.C.:** Joshua led Israel into the promised land.



## WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

**SAY** “Have you ever moved from one place to another? Sometimes it can be scary to live in a new neighborhood, attend a new school, or make new friends. Today we will learn about a time God’s people were afraid to go where God told them to go.”

### 1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete the “Without a Doubt” activity page.

**SAY** “Overcoming a fear to do something is not easy. Today we will talk about a time God’s people learned some information that made them afraid to go into the land God had promised them. Do you think they went into the land or not?”

### 2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

#### ☐ OPTION 1: I SPY



Direct the kids to gather in the center of the room. Secretly select an item in the room and say to the kids, “I spy with my little eye something that is ...” Complete the statement using the color of the object you have selected. Allow the kids to take turns guessing what the item is. Whoever guesses correctly can select the next item for others to guess.

**SAY** “That was a fun game. Today we will learn about a time Moses sent 12 men into the land God had promised them. Their task was to scout the land to see what it was like. What do you think they found? We will learn more about them soon.”

#### ☐ OPTION 2: A FAITHFUL REPORT

Instruct the kids to stand in a single-file line. Whisper a short phrase in the ear of the first kid. He will turn and whisper the phrase to the kid behind him, and so on until the last kid in the line hears the phrase. She will then say the phrase aloud. If the phrase is incorrect, share the original phrase. Play multiple rounds, rotating the order of kids in the line after each round.

Suggested phrases:

- God promised His people land.
- God always keeps His promises.
- The land God promised was very good.

**SAY** “Those phrases changed a lot as they went down the line. They rarely matched what I originally said. Today we will learn about a time 12 men scouted the promised land, but 10 had a report that didn’t match what the other 2 said.”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

# INTRODUCE the Bible Story

### 1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

**SAY** “Hi friends! Welcome back. Who brought their Bibles today? [Allow responses and distribute a classroom Bible to any kids who need one.] We study the Bible so that we can know what is true about God and about ourselves. The Bible is God’s Word. He used many authors over hundreds of years to tell one big story about His goodness and love.

We have been learning about the smaller stories that fit together to tell this one big story. We started with creation and have come quite a long way. Our story today has a lot to teach us about God’s holiness and our brokenness. ”

### 2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

**SAY** “Every story in the Bible is packed with lessons we can learn and examples of how God does or does not want us to live. To help us focus on specific ideas, we use big picture questions and answers to guide our study.

For the next few weeks, we will be looking at a question that seems pretty simple at first. **What is God like? God is holy, good, and loving.** We must remember that God is endless and our ability to understand him is not. God cannot be fully described by just three words, but each of those three attributes—holy, good, and loving—are like many attributes rolled up together. God’s holiness includes His power and unchangeability. God’s goodness includes His righteousness and His justice. God’s love includes His mercy and grace. Any list of words to describe God could go on forever, because God is infinite. That’s why we are summarizing what God is like. **What is God like? God is holy, good, and loving.** ”

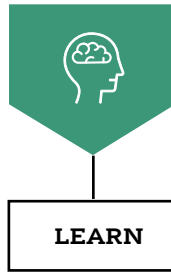
### 3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

**SAY** “When we started our journey through the Bible, we learned that God created everything and everything was perfect. Sadly, Adam and Eve chose to disobey God, and sin brought pain, sadness, death, and chaos into the world. Thankfully, God had a plan to grow a family into a nation—the Israelites—and bless them to bless the whole world.

God rescued His people from slavery and led them through the wilderness to a special land that He had promised to give them. They often failed to obey God and did not always honor God as holy, but God still loved them. He taught them how to worship Him and love one another. Our story today picks up when the Israelites were right on the border of the promised land. Let’s learn what happened next. ”





## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

### LEARN the Bible Story

#### 1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Numbers 13–14. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “The People Didn’t Go Into the Land.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

#### THE PEOPLE DIDN’T GO INTO THE LAND

“Moses and the Israelites made their way toward the promised land of Canaan (KAY nuhn). God told Moses to send men to scout out the land. So Moses chose one leader from each family tribe. He told them to see what the land was like, and whether the people living there were strong or weak, many or few.

So the 12 scouts went into the land and traveled around for 40 days. They cut down a cluster of grapes that was so big it took two men to carry it on a pole. Then they went back to tell Moses and the other Israelites what they saw.

“The land is good. It is flowing with milk and honey,” they said. “But the people who live there are strong, and the cities they live in are large and well protected.”

Then Caleb, one of the men sent to scout out the land, spoke up, “We must go up and take possession of the land! We can certainly conquer it with God’s help!” One other scout, Joshua, agreed with Caleb.

But the other scouts disagreed. “We can’t go up against the people! They are stronger than we are. We looked like grasshoppers compared to them!”

The Israelites were afraid, and they cried all night. They accused Moses of bringing them to Canaan to die. The people said, “Let’s choose a new leader and go back to Egypt!”

Joshua and Caleb said, “The land we explored is extremely good land. If the Lord is pleased with us, He will give it to us. Don’t be afraid of the people living in the land; God is with us!”

While the people talked, God came down to talk to Moses. “How long will these people not trust Me?” God asked. God threatened to destroy all the people, but Moses urged God to forgive them. Moses reminded God that He is patient, loving, and forgiving.

God said, “Since you asked, I will forgive them. But no one who complained against Me will get to see the promised land.” God said the Israelites would wander in the wilderness and would not enter the promised land. Only Joshua, Caleb, and the Israelites’ children would one day enter the land.

Christ Connection: The Israelites did not trust God. They rebelled against Him. Jesus trusted God perfectly. He came into the world to take the punishment we deserve for our own rebellion against God. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin and invites us into His kingdom forever. ”

#### STORYTELLING TIPS

**Incorporate hand gestures:** As you tell the story, utilize dramatic hand movement and body gestures to reflect the complaining and fear of the Israelites.

**Use props:** Bring grapes, milk, or honey to help illustrate the story. Be sure to keep food allergies in mind.



## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

### 2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

**SAY** “Have you ever had a clear idea of what you should do but been too afraid to do it? That’s the situation the Israelites faced. They knew that God wanted them to go into the land—all 12 of the scouts agreed that it was really good land—but they did not trust Him enough to march forward. God wanted them to focus on His unmatched strength, but instead they focused on the strength of their enemies.

Compared to God, even the strongest enemy in the world has no power at all. God wanted to lead His people into the land, but He also wanted them to trust Him and His love for them. The people didn’t seem to understand what God is like. When the 10 scouts told the Israelites not to go into the land, it showed that they thought God would abandon them and allow their enemies to conquer them. But God isn’t untrustworthy, weak, or cruel. God never fails. **What is God like? God is holy, good, and loving.**

Of the 12 scouts, only Joshua and Caleb trusted God. The rest of Israel chose to listen to the report of the 10 scouts who were afraid. That sinful choice had consequences. God would not allow any of the people who did not trust Him to enter the promised land. God led the people to wander in the wilderness for 40 years, until those who doubted Him had died. Only Joshua, Caleb, and the next generation of Israelites would enter the promised land.”

### 3 CHRIST CONNECTION

**SAY** “The Israelites did not trust God. They rebelled against Him. Jesus trusted God perfectly. He came into the world to take the punishment we deserve for our own rebellion against God. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin and invites us into His kingdom forever.”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

### 4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 6, Session 1” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Is it sinful to feel afraid?
2. What can you do when you feel afraid?

### 5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

**SAY** “In our story, only Joshua and Caleb trusted God and wanted to go into the promised land. The rest of the scouts were afraid of the Canaanites and refused to obey God in faith. God calls many people to be missionaries all over the world, and they have to step out in faith too.

Can you imagine growing up without ever hearing the name Jesus or hearing any stories from the Bible? There are people in the world today who have never heard of Jesus. The world needs missionaries who are willing to go anywhere to teach people the good news of the gospel.”

Play the missions video. Then pray that God will send more missionaries to places where