

**THE CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY  
CHILDREN’S MEETING LESSON**

**LESSON #18** (Skit version for the blending time at Queens College)

**DATE:** January 12, 2020

**SUBJECT: THE TRAVELS OF THE CHOSEN CHILDREN OF ISRAEL: The Spying of the Good Land**

**SCRIPTURE:** Numbers 13:1-33; 14:1-45; Deuteronomy 1:22-35, 40-46; 9:1-6

**AIM:** To see the importance of believing God and His promises and to see the consequences of having an evil heart of unbelief.

**Narrator:** Today we are going to hear a real story from the Bible about spies. Not just one spy, but twelve spies. Do you know what a spy is? [*Take a few answers from the children.*] A spy secretly investigates and checks out what is going on.

In this story, the children of Israel had been wandering in the wilderness for about two years already since the time they were rescued from slavery in Egypt. Many of them had died in the wilderness because of their murmuring against God and lusting after the things of Egypt. Now they had finally come to the border of the promised good land. But before they went in, Jehovah told Moses to send spies to Canaan. Canaan was the land that God had promised the people of Israel. Since there were 12 tribes, the group of twelve spies was made up of one man, a leader, from each of the twelve tribes. One of the twelve spies was **Joshua**, the son of Nun, from the tribe of Ephraim.

*(Joshua steps forward)*

Another was Caleb from the tribe of Judah

*(Caleb steps forward)*

There were 12 spies in all *(assemble some other serving ones alongside Caleb and Joshua to represent the 12. It does not need to be exactly 12. 6 total including Caleb and Joshua will work.)*

**Moses:** Go up this way into the Negev and go up into the hill country *(gesture the direction.)* Find out what the land is like and whether the people who live in it are strong or weak, whether they are few or many, whether the land is good or bad, whether the cities that they lived in were like camps or with fortifications whether the land was fat or lean, whether there were trees in it or not. Strengthen yourselves and bring back some of the fruit of the land. *(Narrator may freeze the action to question the children about why some of these points are important or what they mean – how can a land be fat or lean?)*

**Narrator:** When the men went to spy out the land. *(6 spies walk to one side of the room then circle around to the other side, remaining in the front of the room for the entire skit.)*

they came to a place called the Valley of Eshcol. There were very large grapes there because the land God had promised was very good.

**Evil Spy#1:** Wow! look how large the grapes are! *(Pantomime the following with some of the other spies; add you own dialogue as you do it-The men cut down a branch with a single cluster of grapes, and they had to carry it on a pole between two men!)*

**Evil Spy#2:** Hey, look at these pomegranates and figs. They look great too and they are also very large. Let’s take some of these back too! *(pantomime picking some and putting in a bag)*

**Caleb:** Quick behind this bush, I hear voices. We don’t want them to see us.

**Evil Spy#3:** That's right we ARE spying out the land! *(As they all huddle behind the imaginary bush, two evil spies (2&3) part the bush in the middle and peer out. Their faces show shock, amazement then fear as their eyes and heads slowly rise up to take in the full stature of the giant people before them. They look at each other with another look of despair. One spy looks to his right the other to his left at the spy beside him.)*

**Evil spies #2&#3:** They're huge!! *(referring to the size of the people in the land)* Take a look. *(Evil spies 1&4 follow the same routine as the other two – part the imaginary bush etc...when they look to the spy to their right and left they say)-*

Let's get out of here!

*(Circle around in the front again and end up center. Evil spies can be breathing heavy and looking scared. Caleb and Joshua are calm.)*

After forty days of spying, they came back to Moses and Aaron and to the people of Israel. The spies reported what they saw and showed them the fruit of the land. *(Let the children know that they are playing the part of all the other children of Israel to whom the spies are reporting.)*

**Caleb:** The land indeed is a land flowing with milk and honey! Just look at these grapes. *(Two spies bring imaginary grapes on the pole. Others show the other fruit. The people ooh and ahh.)*

**Joshua:** And look at the pomegranates and figs!

**Spies1&3:** But the people who live in the land are strong! They are big, really big! *(the people react negatively to all the bad news)*

**Spies 2&4:** And the cities are fortified – they have big, strong walls and they are very large. We also saw the descendants of Anak there. There were also the Amalekites, the Hittites, the Jebusites, the Amorites and the Canaanites. There are a lot of enemies in this land that would have to be defeated before we can take over!  
*(On hearing this the people murmur. Extra serving ones lead the kids in this reaction.)*

**Narrator:** But Caleb quieted the people before Moses even though he had seen those things too. His view was different because he knew what God can do.

**Caleb:** Let us go up at once and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.

**Spy #1:** We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we are!

**Spy #2:** This is a land that eats up its inhabitants; and all the people that they saw in it were men of great size.

**Spy #3:** Yes, that's right. They were all like giants and we were like teeny tiny grasshoppers!

**Narrator:** This report was evil, and it caused all the people to lift up their voice and cry and weep that night. *(Children cry and weep led by other serving ones)*

**Narrator:** Even though God had done very great things for the children of Israel many times, they believed the evil report instead of believing in what God can do. All the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron.

**Children of Israel:** *(some of the other serving ones who have been leading the children)*

1) If only we had died in the land of Egypt!

2) Or if only we had died in this wilderness!...Our wives and our little ones will become plunder.

3) Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?

1) Let us appoint a captain, and let us return to Egypt.

**Narrator:** This caused Moses and Aaron to be so upset that they fell on their faces before the people of Israel. The two positive spies, Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, tore their clothes. *(Caleb and Joshua pantomime doing this. Someone tears some cloth to make a ripping sound)* They told the children of Israel that the land was an exceedingly good land. If Jehovah was pleased with them, then He would bring them into the land and give it to them.

**Joshua:** Only do not rebel against Jehovah, nor should you fear the people of the land, for they are our bread.

**Caleb:** Their protection has been removed from them, and Jehovah is with us; do not fear them.

**Narrator:** Instead of listening to Joshua and Caleb and believing in God, the whole assembly said to stone them with stones! The Bible says they had “an evil heart of unbelief.”

Then the glory of Jehovah appeared in the Tent of Meeting (the tabernacle) to all the children of Israel and said to Moses, “How long will this people despise Me? And how long will they not believe in Me, in spite of all the signs that I have done among them?”

The Lord was so disappointed in the people’s reaction that He wanted to destroy them. But Moses prayed for them. *(Moses should bow down as if praying to God)* Because of Moses prayer, God spared them. You can find out the details of what happened next week, but let’s just appreciate that there was someone so faithful as Moses to pray for them, even when they had messed up. We are also blessed to have many people praying for us. *(Ask the children if they can think of some people who pray for them. Parents, siblings, other relatives, serving ones. Sisters in the sisters’ prayer meeting that might not even know them personally.)*

**END HERE.**