

GCG Sunday School - 10th/17th December 2023

Lesson Outline



Lesson: Spies in the Land
Passage: Numbers 13-14:38
Big Idea: Trusting God's promises is always the right thing to do, even when it's scary!
Main Aim: Remember God's promises so we can always bravely trust them.

Please pray for the lesson preparation, that you and the children would be built up by God's word.

Laptop (and Bluetooth speaker) check

Unless you are at the Greenwich service, you will need to bring a laptop to play the videos and songs. If needed, Jonny can provide a laptop and a Bluetooth speaker. 😊

Additional resources: [GCG Sunday School Google Drive](#), [Mustard Seeds plan](#)

The Passage

Summary.

God has acted on his promises made to Abraham - the people were saved!

God had also promised the land of Canaan was theirs for the taking.

Spies go out to see the land: They all say it's absolutely fantastic (as God promised!) but it's also filled with scary people who they'll need to fight off.

The words of Joshua and Caleb (trusting the promise) are against 10 spies (who don't trust the promise). Israel chooses not to trust, and so God promises that all who rejected him, would die.

For them then.

When Israel read back over the book of Numbers, they'll remember again how they should have trusted God's promises made to Abraham. Of course, they're going to come true, of course we should trust them, even when it's scary.

For us now.

Similarly, God has made us fantastic promises. God has shown himself to be a good and trustworthy God by saving us. We can press on, trusting that God will deliver on his promises. Let us never doubt God's promise, even when it seems scary.

The Age Ranges

Sailors: Ages 3-7

Officers: Ages 8-11

For CW (average age 4-5 years) and Greenwich (average age 6-7 years):
Prepare the lesson for **all ages**. Then prepare your leaders to divide into separate **Sailor** and **Officer** groups for **Heart & Hands** teaching.

Eltham (Sailors average age: 4-5 years, Officers average age: 7-8 years):
Personalise **all material** for the Sailors or Officers.

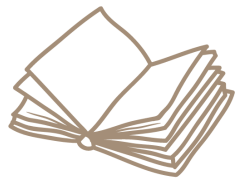
The Rough Format - Repetition is key.

Get Going
3 min + song



Welcome
Quick Recap
Song

Main Teaching
~15 mins



The Big Idea
The Main Aim

Brain Break
~10 mins



Change of scene

Heart & Hands
~20 mins



Discussion
Activities

Land The Lesson
~10 mins



Recap
Memory Verse
Pray

Rough Outline



Get Going
Welcome, Prayer, Quick Recap & Song

Welcome the children

- This is a good time to connect with the children briefly.

You could ask them a simple question which will connect loosely with the theme.

- Sailors - [How scary would it be if you had to fight a giant?](#)
[What would make you not scared?](#)
- Officers - [What would be the scariest thing to fight against?](#)
[What would make the fight worth it?](#)

Link: There were giants in the promised land.

But God had promised the land to them.

Let's see whether Israel was scared of people or trusted God's promises

Prayer

- Let's listen carefully to what God has to say to us today.



Very Speedy Recap - Scroll of time

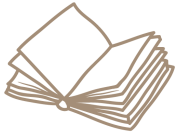
Last week we spoke about: God saved his people, then required that they obey him for blessings, or not for discipline. Leviticus 26.

Link: Now we're going to see that God really did save them,
and God really wasn't joking.

Song

Talk through the words and actions before singing, if needed.

- Getting ready for the All-Age Carol service, we'll sing A Long Long Long Long Time Ago
 - <https://youtu.be/Jb97dhPCVI4>
- The usual song, God's people in God's place, can be found here:
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xivGAMCuvx4>



Main Teaching

Teaching the Big Idea & Main Aim.

Have a Bible open throughout. Feel free to read portions of it out word for word or paraphrase so they see that the story comes from God's word, and not from our heads.

Try to get simply and clearly to the Big Idea and Main Aim.

- Visual aids

Put yourself, or a child by the board/ wall.

On either side of them, near their ears, place the images of the spies. Joshua and Caleb on one side, the 10 spies on the other side. Have the two sides say what they think, the child then needs to choose.

- Video aids

 The Spies Lies

- Lesson Points

1. God promised the land to Israel, and they spied it first.
2. The 10 spies said "no!", Joshua and Caleb said "yes!"
3. Israel agreed with the 10 and were punished.
4. We can be scared of people, but remembering God's promises makes us brave to trust them.

- Sailors

*Explain the passage. Ask questions along the way. **Keep it clear.***

Get to the Big Idea, then arrive at the Main Aim. Repeat both throughout.

*Use the **lesson points above** with the **teaching images**.*

The children need to keep being reminded that God had promised this land to his people.

The ten spies forgot God's promise and so felt afraid.

Caleb and Joshua remembered this promise and so felt brave.

Consider using the "Scroll of Time" to remind them of the promise.

Can the children pretend to be spies? Crawling on their tummies. Not making any noise. Whispering. Wearing special clothes. Perhaps going on a journey to collect some special fruit, then silently returning. Have some 'giants' set up on the journey. Give a sense of the fear those giants would cause. Show relief when everyone is back safely.

The discussion when you return can directly compare God's promise with the giants.

For these children, can you help them see that sometimes there is a choice – being afraid of people or trusting God's promises?

Brief application

We have a choice each day, being afraid of people, or trusting God's promises.

We should remember the promises which make us brave to trust them.

- Officers

*Interactive talk through the text. **Keep it clear.***

Get to the Big Idea, then arrive at the Main Aim. Repeat both throughout.

*Feel free to use crazy ways to add to the fun! Act it out, or have them draw something, or shout out the best thing they see in the passage, make a puppet show using paper and card to build scenery. Use the **lesson points above**.*

You could use the “Scroll of Time” to remind them of the promise, as a visual.

The heart of the lesson will involve the two sides arguing over whether or not to take the land. You could split your children into two groups. One group can pretend to be the ten spies, while the other is Joshua and Caleb – even if the second group has more than two children!

Each group can prepare a report for the class on what they have learnt about the Promised Land and what they think the people should do.

When the groups present their reports, it would be ideal if there were some real tension and drama in the room. This represents a big argument. In the story the people got so angry they wanted to stone Caleb and Joshua!

The Ten spies. Key verses – 13:27, 28, 31, 33 and 14:3.

- "The land is amazing. The best I've ever seen."
- "The people are massive! They're like giants."
- "Next to them, I felt like a grasshopper."
- "Their cities are like huge fortresses. We could never attack them and live."
- "We're all going to die if we try to take the land."

Joshua and Caleb. Key verses – 13:30, 14:7-9 (This group has simpler verses)

- "Let's go! Let's take the land. It can be ours."
- "The land is unbelievable. It's perfect!"
- "God will give it to us. He will win."
- "Don't be afraid of people. God can beat them."
- "We can do this because God is with us."

The discussion after this is simply asking the children who they would agree with and why. Then you can briefly explain how God responded to the people who refused to go into the land.

As with the younger children, emphasise the big issue – are they afraid of people or do they trust God's promises?

Brief application

We have a choice each day, being afraid of people, or trusting God's promises.

We should remember the promises which make us brave to trust them.



Brain Break

A chance to rest the children's minds.

Game idea. Feel free to play something different!

You will need. One coloured-in fruit image (you may need to colour it) and two identical images to be coloured by each team.

- Sailors - [Spying the fruit](#)

Split the children into two teams.

Place the teaching image of fruit somewhere where the children can't see.

One child from each team at a time leaves the team and "spies out" the fruit picture.

They then "report back" to their teams with an idea of what to colour a part of their picture.

They can't go back and look again.

Take teams, the team with the best image, closest matching the image you coloured in, wins.

- Officers - [Spying the fruit + distraction](#)

Same game, add in a distraction. While they're running back to their team, have them do a pressup, star jump, say their name, age, favourite colour, then they can report back to their team.

Link: The spies reported back what they'd seen..?
A little tenuous, I admit...!




Heart and Hands

Think more about the Main Aim with: Discussion and Activities.

Discussion - What would it look like to believe the Main Aim?

Think through with the children what the Main Aim means for our lives.

- You can watch this video to consolidate:

 [Big People, Little Faith: The Story of the 12 Spies \(Numbers 13-14\)](#)

- Talk through the Main Aim again, and how this happened with Jesus, once for all.
- Sailors - [The Bible is so good. It tells us exactly what we need to know.](#)

Let's remember that.

- Officers - [The Bible is so good. It tells us exactly what we need to know.](#)

What can we thank God for?

What challenges us from this passage?

Activities - Craft or worksheet

- Sailors - [Make](#)
- Officers - [Worksheet](#)
- Extra games - In the GDrive.

If you finish craft early, you may want to play a game with the remaining time.



Land the lesson

Bring everything together with: Recap, Memory Verse and Prayer.

Scroll of time update

- Remind them of the Big Idea and Main Aim.



Memory verse

The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing." Genesis 12:1-2 (NIVUK)

[Ideas for learning the memory verse.](#) I will provide the verse on laminated paper with Blu Tack.

- Sailors - [Actions are available here.](#)
- Officers - If capable, they can come up with a rap/ spoken word for the verse.
They can repeat and improve it each week.

Pray

Encourage the children to pray with you about the Big Idea and Main Aim.

They could thank God for something we've learnt, or ask for help with a challenge in believing it.

- Sailors

You could ask for hands up/ thumbs up for those who would like to pray.

You could suggest "Popcorn prayers" - really short prayers. Or "Arrow prayers" - We all shoot up like an arrow at the end. Or you could try the idea we use with Officers.

- Officers

You could pass an object, like a Bible, around the room. When a child receives the Bible, they can choose to pray in their head or aloud.

Sign out with Take Home Sheets

- While signing out with Rollcall, Take Home sheets will be provided to carers and parents about the children's lesson.

Final notes

The following items will be printed for you and brought to the lesson:

- Main teaching pictures and materials.
- Activities: Sailors craft and Officers worksheets.
- Memory verse, laminated.
- Take Home Sheets.

Additional materials will be available:

- Craft materials.
- Pens, paper, glue, scissors.