

The Twelve Spies

Numbers 13 - 14



The Story

After the Children of Israel wandered around in the wilderness they came to the land of Canaan. The LORD told Moses to spy out the land he was giving to them. He told Moses to send 12 men to see what the land was like. So Moses chose 12 men to be spies as God had told him.

Moses told them to find out what the land and people were like. Moses said, "See if the people are strong or weak, few or many. See if the land is good or bad. See if the cities are strong or weak. Bring back some of the things that grow in the land."

The 12 men went into the land of Canaan and found the first grapes were just getting ripe. They cut a branch of grapes that was so heavy two men had to carry it between them on a pole. They also brought other fruits.

After 40 days the spies returned from the land of Canaan. They came back to Moses and Aaron and all the people. The spies said, "We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruits." They showed them the grapes and other fruit from the land.

Then the spies told them, "The people who live in the land are strong. Their cities are very large with walls built around them."

Caleb said, "Let us go at once. We will be able to take the land."

But some of the other spies said, "The people who live there are stronger than we are. The people are giants and we seemed like grasshoppers next to

them. We will not be able to capture the land.

That night the people cried and complained about Moses and Aaron. They said, "If only we had died in Egypt or in the wilderness. Why did the LORD bring us here to be killed? Let us choose a new leader and return to Egypt."

Then two of the spies, Joshua and Caleb, spoke to the people and said, "The land is a very good land. If it is the LORD's will, He will bring us into this land and give it to us. Do not turn against the LORD. The LORD is with us. We need not fear the enemy."

The people were angry with Joshua and Caleb and wanted to kill them with stones. God was not happy with His people. He told Moses He would let the Children of Israel die in the desert.

Moses prayed for God to forgive the people.

Then the LORD told Moses that He heard his prayer and forgave the people. But everyone who was 20 years old or older would not come into the land of Canaan. They would die in the desert because they had complained about God. Only Joshua and Caleb would enter the land of Canaan.

So Moses told the people that the LORD said, "Your little ones I will bring into the land which you have despised."

Moses told them they were to go back to the desert where they would wander around for 40 years.

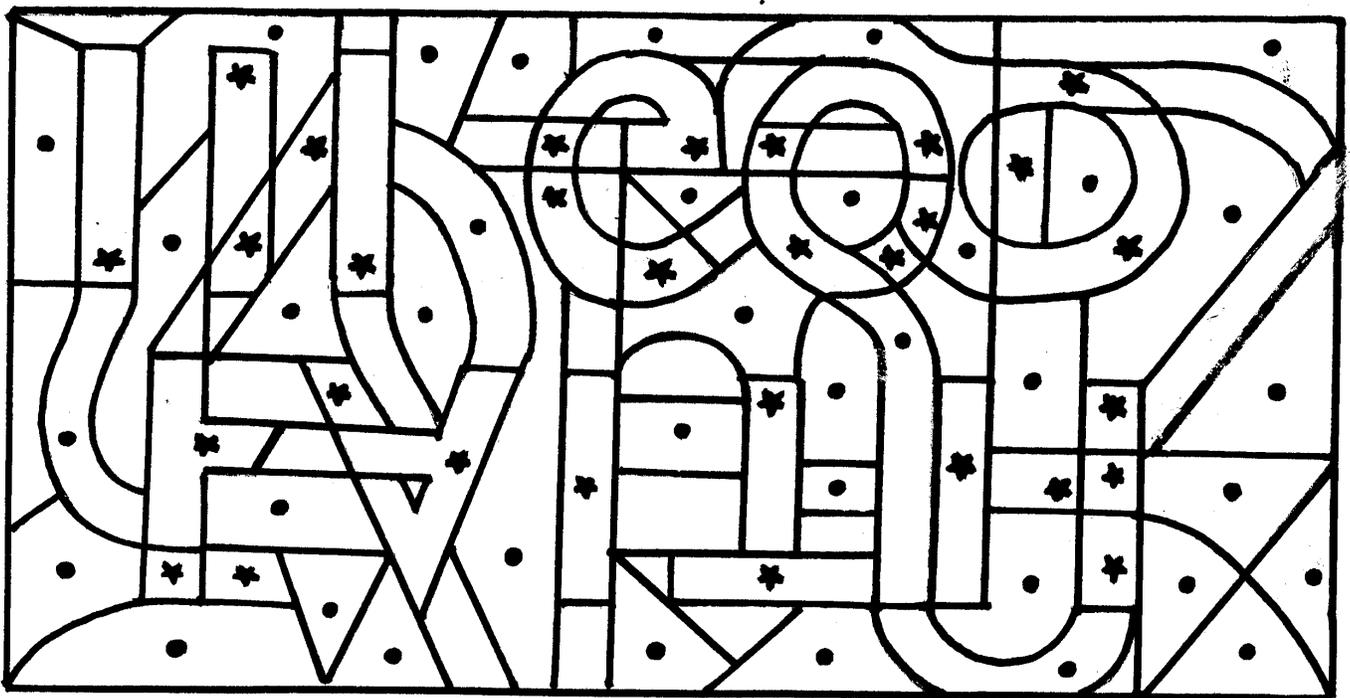
Activity One - Read the following statements. Circle T if the statement is true; circle F if the statement is false.

1. T F Joshua chose 12 men to look at the land of Canaan.
2. T F The explorers returned with amazing reports about the land.
3. T F The people complained about Moses and Aaron.
4. T F The people wanted to stone the 12 explorers.
5. T F Anyone older than 13 years old could not enter Canaan.

Many of God's people did not enter the Promised Land due to their lack of trust.

Activity Two - Color each shape below that contains a star. When you've completed the puzzle, you'll see the very important thing that Joshua and Caleb possessed!

Our life is a time of grace and blessings to help unbelievers find Jesus, their Savior.



Activity Three - Circle the letter of the correct answer in each of the following questions.

1. What did the 12 spies discover about the land of Canaan?
 - a. The weather was beautiful.
 - b. It was a rich and abundant land.
 - c. The people living there were kind and friendly.

2. What did the people of Israel want to do?
 - a. Trust in God and go into the land of Canaan.
 - b. Wander around the desert
 - c. Choose a new leader and go back to Egypt.

3. What did Joshua and Caleb say to the people?
 - a. The LORD is with us. We need not fear.
 - b. You're right. Let's return to Egypt.
 - c. We should send another group of explorers.

Passages

James 5:16 - Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

This passage tells us that it is important to pray to God. Prayer is very powerful! What are some things that you pray about?

Numbers 14:18 - 'The LORD is longsuffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He by no means clears the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation.'

How did God show His mercy for the children of Israel when they complained and did not trust Him?

How did God punish the guilty for their sin of complaining and lack of faith in Him?

Hymn - TLH #434 v. 1, 3, 4

O God of Jacob, by whose hand
Thy people still are fed;
Who thro' this weary pilgrimage
Hast all our fathers led.

Thro' each perplexing path of life
Our wand'ring footsteps guide;
Give us each day our daily bread
And raiment fit provide.

Oh, spread Thy covering wings around
Till all our wanderings cease
And at our Father's loved abode
Our souls arrive in peace.

Prayer

Dear Father,
We learned today how the children of Israel cut themselves off from the blessed land of Canaan by choosing not to trust in You for guidance. Help us always to remember to look to You with faith and to firmly believe Your words, so that we do not miss out on any of the blessings You have in store for us. Teach us to live our lives that others may learn about You, and also take part in all the blessings You offer, especially the blessing of a Savior from sin. Amen.