

References

Numbers 13:1-3, 17-33;
Patriarchs and Prophets,
pp. 387-394



Memory Verse

“Let us encourage
one another”
(Hebrews 10:25, NIV).

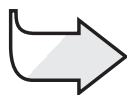


Objectives

The children will:
Know that we encourage
one another to
follow Jesus.

Feel connected to
those who share
our hope.

Respond by looking for
ways to share hope
and encouragement.



The Message

We encourage
one another
to follow the Lord.

Giants and Grasshoppers

Monthly Theme

We encourage one another to follow Jesus.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

The Israelites reach the border of Canaan at last. Twelve spies are sent ahead to study the Promised Land. Ten of the spies see insurmountable obstacles. Only two—Caleb and Joshua—remember that God is greater than any obstacle. The discouraging words of the ten spies cause the people to rebel, and they threaten to stone Caleb and Joshua. The Lord tells the rebels that none of them will enter Canaan. They will wander in the wilderness for 40 years, and their children will then enter Canaan after the rebels die in the wilderness.

This is a lesson about community.

Discouragement is one of Satan’s effective tools to deter His people from following the Lord’s leading. God needs people who will rise above Satan’s spell of discouragement and encourage others in the community by pointing them to their infallible, reliable Leader—the Lord Himself. We can take courage that He will surely bring His people safely to the Promised Land.

Teacher Enrichment

“Although Kadesh was only an oasis in the wilderness, it was a crossroads in Israel’s history. When the scouts returned to Kadesh from scouting the new land, the people had to decide either to enter the land or to retreat. They chose to retreat and were condemned to wander 40 years in the wilderness. It was also at Kadesh that Moses disobeyed God (Numbers 20:7-12). For this, he, too, was denied entrance into the Promised Land. Aaron and Miriam died there, for they could not enter the new land either. Kadesh was near Canaan’s southern borders, but because of the Israelites’ lack of faith, they needed more than a lifetime to go from Kadesh to the Promised Land” (*Life Application Study Bible, New Living Translation*, Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1996, p. 218).

Room Decorations

Somewhere in the room place a representation of the wall of Jericho, with Rahab’s house on the wall. Somewhere else, place a cutout of a very tall person (at least to the ceiling) dressed in armor to represent the giants in Canaan. Place an actual size grasshopper cutout at his feet. Perhaps a drawing of a huge cluster of grapes (or papier-mâché cluster) could be displayed elsewhere in the room with some figs and pomegranates.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Warm Fuzzies</i> B. <i>Rubber Band Wrists</i> C. <i>Home Team Advantage</i>	a package of self-stick notes for every two children in class, pencils/markers, Bible large rubber bands, raisins or nuts, Bible a blindfold, Bible, obstacle course
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	<i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> offering container none
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	Bible-times costumes, a large cluster of large "grapes" representing the cluster the spies brought from Canaan that can be carried by two children, figs and pomegranates if available, Bible none chalkboard or white board, chalk or markers, Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>The Encouragement Game</i>	Bible
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Fruits of Encouragement</i>	construction paper, markers, pictures of fruit (see p. 140), fruit stickers, yarn, glitter, etc., Bible

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Have them begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- a package of self-stick notes, such as Post-it® notes, for every two children
- pens/pencils/markers
- Bible

A. Warm Fuzzies

Pair the children so any nonwriters are paired with someone who can write. The children are to see how many “warm fuzzies” they can make and stick on the other children. Warm fuzzies are affirming messages. (Note: Supervise this activity to be sure the notes are kind and that nobody gets left out.)

Debriefing

Adults affirm the messages and help the children read their notes. Ask: **How did it feel to write notes of encouragement to your classmates? How did it feel to read what they had written to or about you? How would you feel if you were facing something hard in your life and someone said something encouraging to you?** (Better. It would give me hope.) Read aloud Hebrews 10:25. **The words you use are important. They can bring hope to other people. Our message today is:**



WE ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER TO FOLLOW THE LORD.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- large rubber bands
- raisins or nuts
- Bible

B. Rubber Band Wrists

Have the children sit in a circle. (Large church: form groups of 8-10.) Ask the children to join hands with the children on either side of them and raise their hands. As they do this, slip a rubber band over each pair of wrists. Everyone in the circle should be banded together at the wrist. Place in front of every child a treat of some kind, such as a few raisins or nuts, etc. Invite the children to eat. They will probably protest that they cannot. Give them a little time to decide how all can eat. If necessary, instruct the children each to feed the snack to the person on his or her right.

Debriefing

Ask: **What happened?** (We had to feed someone else; we were fed.) **Was this hard?** (Yes; maybe.) **Was it fun? What have you learned about being connected to others?** (You have to help each other. What one person does affects others.) **How is feeding each other with our wrists connected like our church?** (We have to help each other at church.) Read aloud Hebrews 10:25. **Today's message is:**



WE ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER TO FOLLOW THE LORD.

Say that with me.

C. Home Team Advantage

Create an obstacle course with chairs, tables, or other furniture. Have a blindfolded child attempt to walk the obstacle course. Instruct the other children to cheer encouragement when the blindfolded one is going the right way, but not when going the wrong way. Give several students a chance to try.

You Need:

- a blindfold
- obstacle course
- Bible

Debriefing

Was it hard doing this blindfolded? (Yes.) **Was it easier with help from your classmates?** (Yes; probably.) **The encouragement you get from people who want you to do well can make a difference. What does that teach us about what we can do for other people at church?** Read aloud Hebrews 10:25. **Some people need encouragement to follow Jesus. Today's message is:**



WE ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER TO FOLLOW THE LORD.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Review the memory verse and allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "I Was Glad" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 144)
- "Smile, Smile, Smile" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 107)
- "Soon and Very Soon" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 89)
- "Do, Lord" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 91)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. Ask: **Who was encouraging? Who needed encouragement?**



Offering

Say: **Our offering today goes to help others hear words of encouragement so they will want to serve the Lord.**

You Need:

- offering container



Prayer

Form small groups and ask the children to pray prayers of encouragement for each other.

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- Bible-times costumes
- a large cluster of large “grapes” that can be carried by two children
- figs and pomegranates, if available
- Bible

Experiencing the Story

Involve the children in an interactive story by asking them to respond as follows:

When you say:
God
spies
Caleb/Joshua
fruit/grapes/
milk and honey

They do:
Point up.
Plug their ears.
Thumbs up.
Rub tummies.

If the class is large enough, choose 12 children to be “spies.” Dress them in Bible-times costumes and have them walk in with the cluster of “grapes” and some figs and pomegranates at the appropriate place in the story. The remaining children take part in the interactive story.

Read or tell the story.

The Hebrew people had reached the edge of Canaan and they were bursting with questions. What was the Promised Land like? What about the people who lived there? Were there a lot of them or just a few? Were they strong or weak? What kind of towns did they live in? What was the soil like? And what grew there?

So **God** [*Point up.*] told Moses to choose one leader from each tribe to go exploring. (*“Choose” the 12 children dressed in costume.*) “See what the land is like,” Moses told them, “and do your best to bring back some **fruit.**” [*Rub tummies.*] (*The 12 children leave.*)

The leaders were gone for 40 days. The Israelites must have been excited when they saw the men returning to camp. (*The “spies” re-enter the room with a large cluster of “grapes” and some figs and*

pomegranates.) They hurried out to welcome the explorers. As soon as the crowd quieted down, the men began to talk.

“The land flows with **milk and honey**” [*Rub tummies.*], they reported. (*Two children are carrying the large cluster of “grapes.”*) “Here is the **fruit.**” [*Rub tummies.*] They showed the Israelites a bunch of **grapes** [*Rub tummies.*] so large that it took two men to carry one cluster! (*Have some other children holding pomegranates and figs to show at this point.*) And they had pomegranates and figs too! The Israelites were so excited. It was just what they had hoped to hear.

“But,” the **spies** [*Plug ears.*] went on, “the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are strong, and very large.”

What?! **Caleb** [*Thumbs up.*] couldn’t believe his ears! What were the other **spies** [*Plug ears.*] saying? He had been one of the explorers! He had seen the land for himself, and he knew **God** [*Point up.*] would give it to them. “We should go up and take possession of the land,” he quickly encouraged. “We can certainly do it.”

But ten of the other **spies** [*Plug ears.*] quickly began to argue with him. “We can’t attack those people. They’re giants! They’re stronger than we are! We felt like grasshoppers next to them.”

Just that fast, discouragement settled over the camp and the people began to weep.

“It would have been better to die in Egypt or even here in the wilderness!” the people cried. “Let’s go back to Egypt!”

Moses and Aaron fell with their faces to the ground. **Caleb** [*Thumbs up.*] and one of the other explorers, **Joshua**, [*Thumbs up.*] tore their clothes in frustration and held up their hands for silence. “The land is exceedingly great,” they urged. “**God** [*Point up.*] will give it to us.

Don't be afraid of the people there, because we will swallow them up. **God** [Point up.] is with us. Don't be afraid of them."

But the crowd was not listening to **Caleb** and **Joshua** [Thumbs up.]. The mood of the people turned uglier. A murmur began to sweep through the crowd. "Let's stone them!" they muttered, pointing to Moses, Aaron, **Caleb**, and **Joshua** [Thumbs up.]. "Stone them! Stone them! Stone them!"

At that moment a dazzling light spread over the tabernacle, the Lord's tent. The people backed away, fearful, squinting, shading their eyes with their hands.

Then the Lord spoke. "How long will these people refuse to believe in Me, in spite of the miracles and signs I have done for them? Not one of the adults who saw the miracles I performed in Egypt and in the desert will see the Promised Land. They will die in the desert. As for your children, I will bring them in to enjoy the land you rejected."

But God spared **Caleb** and **Joshua** [Thumbs up.] because they spoke encouragement. They encouraged the people to follow the Lord.

Debriefing

Ask: **How many explorers were there?** (12) **Why were ten of the spies afraid to take the land?** (They didn't trust God.) **What made Caleb and Joshua so sure they could conquer the land?** (They knew God would help them.)

Memory Verse

Form two groups. Get everyone to clap a brisk four-beat rhythm as follows:

Clap: | | | | | | | | | |

Count: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2

Verse: En- **cour-** age one an- **oth-** er in the **Lord.**

Group 1 does *Encourage one another*. Group 2 adds, *in the Lord*. Switch groups and repeat several times.

What did God think about those who spread discouragement? (He knew they were not ready to go into the Promised Land.) **What happens when people spread discouragement?** (I begin to feel discouraged too.) **How important is it to be an encourager?** (very important) **Let's read Hebrews 10:25, middle part, and then say our message together:**



WE ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER TO FOLLOW THE LORD.

Bible Study

Write the events and references below where all can see (without the answers). Have the children put the events in the correct order by writing number one on the blank before the first event, number two in front of the second event, etc. Then ask children who are readers to read each Bible reference listed after each event to see if you put the events in the correct order.

[2] ___ Moses tells spies what to look for. (Numbers 13:17-20)

[3] ___ The spies find fruit. They return after 40 days. (Numbers 13:23, 25)

[1] ___ Moses sends spies at God's command. (Numbers 13:1-3)

[4] ___ The spies tell good and bad news about Canaan. (Numbers 13:26-28)

[5] ___ Caleb tells the people that they can win in Canaan. (Numbers 13:30)

You Need:

- chalkboard/white board
- chalk or markers
- Bibles

Debriefing

Ask: **Whose side do you think you would have been on when the spies gave their report?** (Caleb's side; the 10 spies' side) **Is the 10 spies' report scary to you?** (yes, no) **Why?** (Because giants are scary; God is bigger than giants, etc.)

What made Joshua and Caleb's report different? (They were positive;

they tried to encourage the people.)

What do you do when you are afraid about something? (trust God; worry; run away, etc.) **Who can encourage you? Let's say today's message together:**



WE ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER TO FOLLOW THE LORD.

3

Applying the Lesson

The Encouragement Game

Say: **Caleb and Joshua found a way to give encouragement when everyone else was spreading discouragement.**

Hebrews 10:25 says: "Let us encourage one another." **In each of the following situations, who might need encouragement, besides you? What encouraging words might you say?**

1. There is an emergency at your house; you have to stay home and help your mom instead of going to the picnic. (Your mom; "Don't worry, Mom. I am here to help you.")

2. Your sick brother kept waking you up in the night. Now he gets to stay home, but you have to get up and go to school. (Your brother; "Soon you will be feeling better.")

3. Someone on your team at Sabbath School gives wrong answers to the quiz questions; your team's score is way behind the other team's. (The team, the person who gave wrong answers; "Never mind, we're going to do better," etc.)

4. The substitute teacher is boring. You don't feel like listening to him or her. You wish your regular teacher would come back. (The substitute; "Thank you for coming to help us learn.")

5. Your cousins keep passing down their used clothing for you to wear. It seems like you never have new clothes. (Your parents; "I sure am glad I have so many cousins.")

Debriefing

Read aloud Numbers 14:1. **The people were so discouraged that they cried all night. Whom did they blame for their discouragement?** (God, Moses and Aaron, Joshua and Caleb) **Whom do you think was to blame and why?** (The discouraged spies and the people; because they failed to trust God, they did not listen to Joshua's and Caleb's encouragement, and because they chose to listen to the criticism.) **Instead of choosing discouragement, what do God's children do?**



WE ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER TO FOLLOW THE LORD.

You Need:

- Bible

Sharing the Lesson

Fruits of Encouragement

Say: **When sending out the 12 spies, Moses told them, “Do your best to bring back some of the fruit of the land” (Numbers 13:20, NIV).**

The fruit was meant to encourage the people on their way to the Promised Land. Read aloud Hebrews 10:25, the entire text. **As we wait for Jesus to come, we also need encouragement.**

Using the materials provided, the children are to make greeting cards in the shape of fruit and write the memory verse inside. Reproducible fruit patterns appear on page 140.

Debriefing

When the cards are done, ask every-

one to pair up with the person next to them and practice what they will say as they give a card to someone who needs encouragement. For instance, they could tell something they appreciate about the person and then present the fruit card, saying, “Pass it on, OK? God wants us to encourage each other.”

Ask: **How would you feel if you received one of these cards? What are you going to remember to do this week? Remember . . .**



WE ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER TO FOLLOW THE LORD.

Closing

Ask a child to pray that God will help the class members to encourage someone in the coming week.

You Need:

- construction paper
- markers
- pictures of fruit (See p. 140.)
- fruit stickers
- yarn
- glitter
- Bible

Giants and Grasshoppers

References

Numbers 13:1-3,
17-33;
*Patriarchs and
Prophets*,
pp. 387-394

Have you ever gone camping or moved to a new neighborhood? It is always fun the first day to get up early and go exploring. God gave the Israelites a chance to explore their new land before they moved in.

Memory Verse

“Let us encourage one another”
(Hebrews 10:25, NIV).

The Message

We encourage one another to follow the Lord.

When Moses brought the Hebrew people out of Egypt they marched from Goshen to the edge of the Red Sea. None of them knew the way, but God did. So He led the people with a huge pillar of cloud. This cloud sheltered them from the hot sun during the day. At night the cloud gave them light and heat.

As the people neared the Promised Land, God told Moses to choose one leader from each tribe. These men were to spy out the land. “See what the land is like,” Moses told the spies. “And bring back some fruit.”

After 40 days the men returned. The Israelites came out to welcome the spies and hear their report. Caleb, a tall, strong man from the tribe of Judah, could hardly wait to give his report.

Joshua, a young leader from the tribe of Ephraim, had also brought a good report. Both Caleb and Joshua allowed

the others to speak first.

“The land flows with milk and honey, just as God told us,” the spies reported. “And we have brought back some fruit.”

Both Caleb and Joshua expected two men to

step forward with the

huge bunch of grapes they carried on a pole between them. Instead, the other spies spoke only about walled cities and giants they saw in the land.

The people listening began to grumble and complain. Caleb could see that their mood was growing ugly. Suddenly he stepped between Moses and the people. “We can go up at once and take possession of the land,” he encouraged. “It is a good land, and we can certainly do it!”

“How can we?” the ten discouraged spies complained. “We felt like grasshoppers beside those people. And that is how we seemed to them!”

The people raised their voices and cried all night long. “It would have been better to die in Egypt or even here in the wilderness!” the people wailed. “Why is the Lord taking us into that land? We will be killed in battle, and our wives and children will be captured. Let’s go back to Egypt!”

Moses and Aaron fell with their faces to the ground. Caleb and Joshua were distressed by Israel’s lack of trust in the Lord. They tore their clothes and held up their hands for silence.

“The land we explored is excellent!” the two faithful spies exclaimed. “Don’t be afraid of the people who live there. With God’s help we will conquer them easily. The Lord is with us; He has left them!”

Caleb looked out over the angry multitude. The other ten spies mixed with the crowd, spreading discouragement.

Caleb shook his head. It was a good land, a beautiful land, rich and full of food. After all, it had taken two men to carry home one bunch of grapes! Yes, the people of the land were powerful. Their cities were well protected. But the children of Israel had God on their side.

Suddenly the crying and wailing of the people took an uglier turn. “Let’s stone them!” they muttered, pointing to Moses, Aaron, Caleb, and Joshua. “Stone them! Stone them!”



At that moment a dazzling light spread over the tabernacle, the Lord's tent. The people backed away, fearful, squinting, shading their eyes with their hands.

Then the Lord spoke. "Because you people are afraid of entering the land, you will not do so. You will wander in the wilderness until all of you who are adults die. As for your children, I will bring them in to enjoy the land you rejected."

But God promised Caleb and Joshua that they would go into the land because they spoke encouragement. Like Caleb and Joshua, may we encourage one another to follow the Lord.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- If possible, go for a walk. Imagine you are a spy in Canaan. Describe what you see to your family. Read your lesson and Hebrews 10:25 together.
- Sing together "Do, Lord" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 91).

Sunday

- During family worship read Numbers 13:1-3, 17-20.
- Try to find a Bible map of the Israelites' journey to the Promised Land. Trace their journey from Egypt to Sinai to Kadesh-barnea. Also find the Desert of Paran—from where Moses sent the spies.
- Teach your memory verse to your family. Use the rhythm learned in Sabbath School.

Monday

- With your family, read Numbers 13:21, 23-28. What good things did the spies find in the land? Describe the people they saw. (The descendants of Anak were giants.) Draw a picture of the spies returning with the grapes (at Kadesh-barnea).
- How do you feel when you hear a good report? a bad report? Plan with your family to give someone a good report about heaven, our Promised Land.
- Say or sing your memory verse for your family.

Tuesday

- Read Numbers 13:30-14:4 during family worship. Is this a story of encouragement or discouragement? Why?
- Play the "Change Negative to Positive" game with your family. Everyone tells or writes words of discouragement you often hear. Then pass it to the next person. They change it to words of encouragement and read it aloud. ("It's too cold today." Change to "It is good to have a variety.") Do you look for the

bright side when you hear negative thoughts?

- Say your memory verse together.

Wednesday

- With your family read in Numbers 14 what Caleb and Joshua did and said (verses 5-9). What were they trying to do? Did they succeed? (Verse 10.)
- Whom do you know who might be feeling a little discouraged today? Write or draw an encouraging note to that person. Include your favorite encouraging Bible verse. Pray for that person today.
- Sing "Smile, Smile, Smile" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 107).

Thursday

- Together with your family read about the change of plans for Israel in Numbers 14:21-25, 30, 31, 34, 35.
- How could the story have had a happier ending?
- Draw a different fruit for each family member. Write an encouraging Bible verse on each and give it to them.
- Sing "Trust and Obey" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 113).
- Call a friend and help them learn the memory verse. Ask if they have anything for which you could pray. Then pray together.

Friday

- Act out your lesson story with your family.
- Talk about some good things God has done for you.
- Read 1 Timothy 2:2. Make and decorate a special triangular pennant for your pastor out of stiff cloth or paper. Attach it to a wooden dowel. Write the words "Yea, Pastor!" on one side, and "We're praying for you!" on the other. Have everyone in your family sign their names. Give it to your pastor tomorrow. He needs encouragement, too!
- Sing or say your memory verse.