

## THE TWELVE SPIES

## Numbers 13-14

**Lesson Memory Verse:** Hebrews 3:12 "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief..."

**Lesson Aim:** To teach the students that it is wicked not to believe God in everything and do what He says.

**Lesson Plan:** Use the KEY – HE – SEE – WE – BE plan (explained in the Introductory Notes).

**KEY (for Attention):** What is the worst sin in the world? (Every child should try to give an answer.) The worst sin in the world is not to believe in Jesus Christ for salvation. That is even worse than murdering or stealing or lying or swearing or any other terrible sin. By not believing God, it makes you just as guilty as if you had done all these other sins. So any kind of unbelief toward God is very wicked. Our policemen will not put you in jail for not believing in Jesus, but God will punish you for it. If you do not believe in Jesus, God's Son, to save you from sin, you will be sent to God's place of punishment, which is hell. If you do believe in Jesus for salvation, you will be sent to God's place of reward, which is heaven. There are also many other promises after salvation which God has written in the Bible. You must also believe these or you will get other kinds of punishment from God. It is a terrible sin not to believe God. Our memory verse teaches us to be careful always to believe God's promises.

**HE (for Authority):** First, let us look at Hebrews 3:12. God says, "Take heed." Does anyone know what these two words mean? (This means we are to listen carefully.) We must listen carefully to what God says in this verse. Second, God says, "Brethren." (That means He is writing this warning to Christians.) Even Christians have to be warned about not believing God. The next word is "lest." What will happen if we do not pay attention to what God says? (We will have "an evil heart of unbelief.") What is an "evil heart of unbelief?" It is when you do not listen to God, believe and obey Him. If you listen to other people, believe and obey them instead of God, you have an "evil heart." God warns you to be careful to believe Him so that you do not get an "evil heart of unbelief."

**SEE (for Apperception) and WE (for Application): PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scripture for this lesson. First, let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word.** In today's lesson, we are going to look at what happened to some of the people in the Bible who did not believe God. They had an "evil heart of unbelief," and got into very serious trouble, which caused some of them to die. We will also look at what happened to the people who believed God. God always punishes those who do not believe His promises, but He rewards those who do. The story begins when God told Moses to send twelve spies into the land that He was going to give to them. One spy was chosen from each of the twelve tribes of Israel. Trouble began when the spies brought back the report of what they saw in the land. Two of the spies believed God, but ten did not. The people of Israel listened to the ten spies that brought back a bad report. In this lesson we learn many things that happen to people who do not believe God. Listen carefully so these things do not happen to you.

**I. The Unbeliever trusts in his own strength rather than in God's strength (Numbers 13:18-33)**

A. The giants in the land made ten of the spies afraid. The spies looked at the strength of the giants and felt they could not win any battles against them. They felt like little grasshoppers against those giants (13:33).

B. If they had believed God, they would have felt like Caleb, who knew he could win with God's strength (13:30).

**WE:** We may feel helpless when big problems face us, but if we believe God will help us, we should not feel helpless. He can solve every problem. Remember Daniel who believed God and remained unharmed by lions. Remember David who believed God and defeated Goliath. Remember Jonathan who believed God and defeated the Philistines. We need to believe God like these men, and He will help us, too.

**II. The Unbeliever complains against the Lord, rather than calling on Him for help (14:1-4)**

A. The people cried all night. They complained and wished they could die. That wanted to go back to Egypt (14:1, 2, 4).

B. God had told them He would give them the Promised Land, but they did not believe Him (14:3).

C. If they had believed God, they would have asked Him to help them.

**WE:** What should we do when we have problems? We should not complain and cry, but we should pray to God for His help and obey Him. He will help us if we will call on Him.

**III. The unbeliever is the enemy of those who do believe in God and the friend of those who disobey God (Numbers 14:5-10a)**

A. Joshua and Caleb tried to help the people to believe God even as they believed Him (14:6-9).

B. Instead of believing God, the people doubted God and hated Caleb and Joshua so much for believing God that they were ready to stone them (14:10a).

**WE:** We should love people so much that we want to help the unsaved get saved and help Christians believe God when they have big problems. If we hate people and do not want anything to do with them, we are in trouble with God.

**III. The unbeliever is punished by God and loses his reward from God (Num 14:10b-38)**

A. The people who did not believe God were punished by being made to wander in the wilderness for forty years until they died (14:32-34).

B. These people would never go into the Promised Land (14:35).

C. The ten spies died immediately by a plague (14:36-37).

D. Joshua and Caleb were rewarded for believing God (14:24, 30, 38).

**WE:** I am sure that we all want God to reward us. Then we must be like Joshua and Caleb and believe God like they did. Then God will reward us.

**BE (for Action):** Let me ask you some questions to see if you truly believe God. 1) When was the last time that you asked God to help you solve your problems? If it was a long time ago, you do not believe God very much. 2) Do you cry and complain when you have a problem? If you do, you do not believe God. 3) Do you love the Bible and try to obey it? If you do, you truly believe God. 4) Do you love Jesus and stand up for Him when others take His name a swear word? This shows that you truly believe God. 5) Do you try to solve your problems by your own efforts? This shows that you do not believe God will help you to solve your problems. If you are having trouble in believing God, I will be glad to talk with you about this matter after class and pray with you. It is very important that you learn how God can help you in your life, if you believe in Him. Then pray for your students to believe God in your closing prayer.)