

# 18. Trust



## BIBLE STORY / REFERENCE

### Numbers 13-14

Twelve spies explore the Promised Land and bring back their reports



## AIMS

To help the children reflect on the choice we have about where to focus in a challenging situation - on the difficult circumstances, or on God's power - and to encourage them that God is bigger than any of the difficulties we face

**12 spies explored the Promised Land and brought back their reports, but only two trusted God enough to believe that he would help them get into the land. It is important to God that his people trust him.**



## PREP FOR LEADERS

Read through the Bible passages for this session and reflect:

- All 12 spies saw the same land but Joshua and Caleb returned with a very different perspective from the other ten. What was the reason for this?
- What circumstances do you find overwhelming and daunting?
- What truths about God can change this perspective?

Take some time to pray for your group.



## GAMES / INTRO ACTIVITIES

Choose one of the following activities to introduce today's theme:

### ▶ **Wink Murder**

Have the children sitting in a circle and choose one person to be the detective. Get the detective to stand outside the room while you choose another child to be the murderer. Call the detective back in. The child who is the murderer has to murder people by winking at them, trying not to let the detective see, and the murdered child has to act dead, either silently or with a scream.

The detective has to watch carefully and try to work out who the murderer is. Once they guess correctly you can choose a new detective and start again.

### ▶ **What's missing?**

*You will need: tray of 15-20 small objects, cloth to cover the tray*

Show the children a tray of objects you have brought with you - about 15-20 small items such as a pen, key, coin, hair clip etc. Give the children a minute or so to study the items, then cover the tray and remove one item. Uncover the tray again and see how quickly the children are able to identify what is missing.

*(continued overleaf)*

## ▶ Optical Illusions

*You will need: printouts of images from websites below, or equipment to display them on a computer or screen*

Show the children some optical illusions. You can find a selection here:

**[optics4kids.org/illusions](http://optics4kids.org/illusions)**

You can also find a set of pictures where things are not as they seem here:

**[elitereaders.com/50-stunning-photos-arent-seem](http://elitereaders.com/50-stunning-photos-arent-seem)**

Discuss how things are not always as they appear and how we can look at the same thing in different ways and see them quite differently.

## ▶ Trust Games

There are two games on the theme of faith in Session 6 of One Big Story which would also fit well with today's theme.



## EXPLORING THE BIBLE

## ▶ Recap

**It had been quite a journey for the Israelites!**

Recap the story from the last few weeks - God had called Moses to lead the Israelites to freedom, Pharaoh had tried to stop this so God sent plagues on the Egyptians. Finally the Israelites were allowed to leave and God opened up the Red Sea so that they could walk through on dry land.

The challenges continued though as the Israelites got hungry and thirsty as they walked through the wilderness and they began complaining, but God provided food and water and gave them all they needed. Then he gave them his law and told them how to live as his people, but the people struggled to obey. Last time we

heard that they even made a statue of a calf from their gold jewellery and began worshipping that instead of God!

## ▶ The 12 Spies

*You will need: spy cards (see additional document: spy cards: print double-sided and cut into twelve individual cards, hide these around the room before the children arrive), equipment to play music (optional)*

**The Israelites carried on travelling and eventually they arrived at the edge of the land of Canaan, the land that God had promised to give them. God told Moses to send 12 spies into the land, one from each of the 12 tribes. They were to check out the land and come and give a report to the rest of the people before they went in.**

(Choose 12 spies and send them out to find cards placed around the room. (If you have less than 12 children you can ask them to find two or three cards each.)

You could play mysterious music, e.g. the James Bond theme as they do this. Get spies to come back to the front and stand in order of the numbers on their cards. (If some children have more than one card you can just get them to read them in numerical order.)

**After 40 days spying in the land, the spies came back to give their reports.**

**What did you find out?**

(Get the children to read the words on their cards in turn, or give them the option to hand the card to you for you to read it if they prefer.)

1. The land is really nice.
2. It's got lots of trees.
3. Lots of lovely fruit.
4. I found a bunch of grapes so big it took two of us to carry it.
5. They tasted really good.

6. The people are really scary though.
7. They're massive - they're like giants!
8. There's no way we can take them on.
9. They're far too strong for us.
10. We can't go back into the land. If we do they'll kill us.

**Stop there for a moment. The first ten spies gave the report that the land was really good but they were scared of the people there. When Moses asked them what they thought they should do, they said the Israelites shouldn't go into the land because the people there were too powerful. They were afraid they would be killed!**

**That's disappointing after such a long journey to get there. Let's see what spies numbers 11 and 12 think.**

11. Of course we should go into the land. It's a wonderful land.
12. If God's giving us this land, he'll help us. We should do it.

**These two men were called Joshua and Caleb and they, along with Moses, were the only ones who wanted to go into the land. Everyone else listened to the other ten spies and got scared.**

**The Bible tells us that it's really important to God that his people trust him and believe what he says, so, because they wouldn't trust God, he decided that the Israelites would have to wander in the desert for 40 years before they would be allowed into the land. In 40 years' time, most of the Israelites who were adults now would have died and God said that the only ones who would be allowed into the land would be Joshua and Caleb, the two spies who trusted God and believed that he would help them.**

*(continued overleaf)*

(Collect the cards from the children and let them sit down.)

**The people had to go back the way they came and wander in the desert. It would be 40 years before they were able to go into the Promised Land!**



## REFLECT & RESPOND

### ► Reflection

**How do you think you would have felt if you were one of the spies? Would you have encouraged the people to go into the Promised Land or would you have been scared?**

**If the people had already seen God's power when he rescued them from Egypt and parted the Red Sea, why do you think they were worried about the people in the land?**

**When we face challenges it's easy to look at what's happening around us and to feel afraid, but if we are following God, he wants us to know that he is bigger than any challenge we face and to put our trust in him.**

### ► Prayer cards

*You will need: prayer card for each child (see additional document: prayer cards), pens or pencils*

Give the children a card (see additional document: Prayer cards) with Jeremiah 32:17 on one side. On the other side, they have the words, "Please help me with..." Get the children to turn to this side and think about something difficult they are facing - a challenge or a problem. Get them to write or draw something that represents that, assuring them that they won't be asked to share it with anyone.

**When we look at situations we face they can seem difficult and scary, but there's another way to look at things.**

Get them to turn over their cards and read out the verse: "Lord God, you stretched out your mighty arm and made the sky and the earth. You can do anything." (Jeremiah 32:17 CEV)

**This is a prayer a man called Jeremiah (who lived long after Moses) prayed. He was facing a difficult situation but he remembered that God was bigger and that God could help him.**

**This doesn't mean that God will always fix our problems or make things easy. Remember when we talked about the plagues, Moses had to keep going even when it was really difficult. God didn't make everything work out quickly or easily, but he was with Moses and he helped him, and in the end Moses saw that God was in control.**

Lead the children in prayer - let them pray silently for the thing they wrote or drew on their card, then get them to flip the card over and read the verse together.

Encourage the children to take the card home and when they think about the challenge they wrote down to look at the other side of the card to help them remember all they have heard about how powerful God is, and to ask him for help.



## ADDITIONAL IDEAS

► **Song – Our God Is A Great Big God**

*You will need: equipment to play music*

This song links with the theme of today's session.

[youtu.be/eSTfM8M2Md8](https://youtu.be/eSTfM8M2Md8)