

# SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

## *The Wilderness*

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### **KADESH-BARNEA**

**Numbers 13-14**

**Elementary Lesson**

**Year One, Quarter Three, Lesson Four**

**[0290]**

AIM: to use the story of Kadesh-Barnea to teach my class to choose to live for God the first chance that they have

OBJECTS TO HAVE:   A picture of a tall slide, or of a scary amusement park ride  
                          A picture of a beautiful countryside  
                          A cluster of grapes  
                          Your Bible

POINT OF CONTACT: (Holding up the picture of the slide) Who can tell me what this is? That's right, it's a slide. Do any of you like to go down a slide? I do. I like to go down the slide, then go around, go up the ladder and go down again, and again, and again. Of course, if there are a lot of people at the playground, sometimes you have to wait in line for your turn before you can go down the slide. And if you want to ride on a great big slide like this one, you might have to wait a very long time, and then you only go down that great big slide one time. But that slide is so big and fun that it is worth the wait.

Let me tell you what I saw one time. A little boy was waiting in line to ride on the slide. It looked like so much fun, and he could not wait until it was his turn. Every time somebody would go down the slide, he would think, "Pretty soon, that's gonna be me!" And he would think, "It's gonna be great!" And he would think, "I can't wait!" The little boy waited a whole hour. Person after person took their turn, and before too long, it was the little boy's turn. The man said, "Step up, son, you're next!" And the little boy just stood there. The man said, "C'mon son, a lot of people are waiting behind you. Step up and take your turn." But the little boy froze. You see, now he was at the top looking down. And now he was scared to go down the same slide that just a minute ago he was all excited about. So he turned around crying, and went back down the steps.

But wait...halfway down the steps, he said, "No! I can do it!" So he turned around and ran back to the front of the line, and he said, "Mister, I changed my mind! I can do it! Let me go now!" And what do you think the man said? He said, "Sorry, son, but you missed your turn. You made your choice. Now you'll have to go back to the end of the line and wait for your turn to come up again." He had his chance...but he missed it. Now the line was even longer, and he would have to wait for a very long time before he could ride that big slide again.

Today I'm going to tell you a story about something that happened in the Bible that was just like what happened to that little boy. I'm going to tell you about some people who had waited a very long time for something big to happen, and I'm going to tell you what happened when their chance finally came.

LESSON: The children of Israel had seen God do some wonderful miracles. They had seen God part the great Red Sea so they could pass safely through; they had seen God turn bitter, dirty water into good, clean water so that they would not go thirsty; and they had received bread from heaven every day so that they would not go hungry. These are only a few of the miracles that God did for them. They had also received God's Ten Commandments so that they would know what God expected of them. They had spent many months after leaving Egypt letting God prepare them to enter into the wonderful land that He had promised them. That is why it was called the Promised Land, because God had promised to give it to them.

Now they had finally arrived at a place called *Kadesh-Barnea*. On the other side of Kadesh-Barnea was the Promised Land where they would enter and live, and build their houses, and worship God, and raise their families, and start their businesses. It was finally time! They had waited and prayed for so long! They could not believe that the time had finally come for them to enter into this wonderful place!!

But before they could live in the Promised Land there would be some wicked armies that they would have to defeat. God had promised to fight and defeat these armies for them, if they would go forward and possess the land. God told Moses to choose twelve men out of the people of Israel, one from each tribe. These twelve men would go into the land to see what it was going to be like. None of them had ever been there before, and they did not know what to expect. These twelve men would go and view as much of the land as they could, and then they would come back and give a report to the people.

Moses chose twelve men, one from each tribe of Israel. These men went into the land while the rest of the people waited patiently in Kadesh-Barnea. The men saw everything. They saw the hills and the valleys. They saw the rivers and the

lakes. They saw the rich green grass and the big strong trees. They saw what a wonderful place it would be to raise their children, and what a perfect place it would be for their sheep, their cows, and their farms. They saw all kinds of fruit and vegetables growing in the rich soil: grapes, watermelon, banana trees, corn, wheat, and carrots. These men had never had gardens and fruit trees of their own. They had always worked for other people. But now they were looking at the wonderful place where God was going to allow them to have farms and orchards and vineyards all their own. This is the day for which they had been waiting for so many years.

The people waited for forty days, and they couldn't wait to hear the reports of how wonderful the Promised Land would be. Finally at the end of forty days the twelve men came back. All of the people listened as these twelve men gave their report. They couldn't wait to hear what they were going to say.

The man who had been chosen to speak gave the report. "Ladies and gentlemen, we did go into the Promised Land, and now we are back. It is a land that flows with milk and honey, just like God said. It is a beautiful land, just like God said. Here you see some of the fruit of the land that we brought back with us." The man stepped aside, and the people could see a cluster of grapes so huge that it took two men to carry it. The two men held a pole on their shoulders and the huge cluster hung from that pole. The people cheered with excitement. This truly was a wonderful place they were about to enter. "But I have some bad news," the man continued. There are people who live in the land, and not just any people, but big, giant people. They are strong people, and there are many more of them than there are of us. We could not possibly defeat them. If we fought them in war they would surely destroy us. It's hopeless. There is no use in trying to possess this Promised Land."

The people were heartbroken. They could not believe the awful news. Some people began to cry out loud, and others started to blame God, saying that He was trying to kill them.

In the middle of all of the confusion two men, named *Caleb* and *Joshua*, jumped up and said, "Wait a minute! It's not as bad as they are saying. Besides, God has commanded us to go forward and possess the land, and if He has commanded us to do it, He will fight for us!" But the people would not listen to Joshua and Caleb. They decided to quit. They decided that they would not even bother trying to go forward and possess the land, as God had commanded them to do. Do you know what the Promised Land represents for you and me? It represents God's best for your life. You see, kids, God has a plan for every one of your lives. God's plan for you is better than anything you or I could think up. It is the most exciting, most enjoyable, most fun life that any person could possibly live.

Just like the Promised Land, though, there are some difficult days. There are battles to fight, and challenges to face. God has promised to fight those battles for you, and help you through every one of those challenges. But the question is, will you say "no" to God's plan, like those 10 men did, or will you say "yes" to God's plan, like Joshua and Caleb did?

Those 10 men who said "no" to God were never allowed to go into the Promised Land. And none of the people who listened to those men were allowed to go into the Promised Land. God said, "Because you said 'no' to my plan, you will wander in the wilderness for 40 years. You will die in the wilderness, and when your children are old enough and big enough to run things, I will lead them into the Promised Land." They missed their perfect chance because they had said "no" to God.

As soon as they realized that they had made a big mistake, they changed their minds and said, "Never mind, God, we want to go now. Give us another chance." But just like that little boy on the slide, it was too late to change their minds. They had made the wrong choice.

Here is what I want you to remember today: the best chance you have to get God's best for your life is **right now**. Don't say "no" to God, say "yes". Some day you are going to be a teenager, and there is going to come a time when you will think you are too cool to go to church, and too cool to listen to God. When that day comes, don't turn back like the people of Israel did, but keep going forward, like Joshua and Caleb did.

There will be times when it will look like it's too hard to obey God, too hard to keep God's rules, too hard to do right. But just keep going forward for God, like Joshua and Caleb did. Don't say "no" to God's best. If you do say "no" to God, God may give you a second chance some day; but it will never be as good as if you had just said "yes" to God the first time.

Let's learn our memory verse: **Matthew 16:24** – *Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*

# SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

## *The Wilderness*

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### **KADESH-BARNEA**

#### **Numbers 13-14**

#### **Teen and Adult**

#### **Year One, Quarter Three, Lesson Four**

**[0290]**

*Teacher, choose one of the following truths to expand upon in teaching this portion of Scripture to your teen/adult class. Teach and apply the truth that you choose using statements and illustrations that are most helpful and applicable to your students.*

- I. **GOD IS PREPARING YOU FOR SOME VERY IMPORTANT MOMENTS OF DECISION IN YOUR LIFE.** 18 months of traveling through the wilderness, all of the difficult times, all of the training, all of the challenges and all of the victories, were in preparation for this key moment, the moment when they would enter the Promised Land. The Promised Land in the Bible does not symbolize heaven; it symbolizes God's best for us on earth. God is preparing you for some great opportunities. He knows when you are ready to enter in to those great opportunities.
  
- II. **YOUR GREAT MOMENTS OF DECISION WILL BE SCARY, WITH GREAT CHALLENGES.** When you come to those moments of great decision, you will be filled with excitement; but you will also face some fear. You will see that new opportunity brings new opposition, and that new opposition will look scary. You may be tempted to forfeit the opportunity in order to avoid the opposition. In your mental picture of opportunity, always be sure to include the reality that there will be difficult challenges. If you do not prepare yourself mentally for the existence of the challenges, you will never find an opportunity that looks like you want it to look.
  
- III. **YOU MUST LET FAITH OVERCOME YOUR FEAR.** 10 spies let their fears make their decision for them; but two, Caleb and Joshua, had faith that overcame their fear. 14:6-9. Every one of us has access to the faith that will overcome our fears. Our challenge is to tap into that faith, so that we can overcome our fears. Never let your fears make your decisions for you.
  
- IV. **GOD REWARDS THOSE WHO MAKE THEIR DECISIONS BASED ON FAITH.** As a result of the disobedience of the Israelites, God declared that everyone over 20 would die in the wilderness; everyone under 20 would enter the Promised Land in 40 years. Only two men were the exception to that rule: Joshua and Caleb. God let them be the exception to the rule because they were the only ones who believed Him at Kadesh-Barnea, they were the only ones who acted in faith, not sight.
  
- V. **WHEN YOU TURN AWAY FROM GOD'S BEST, YOU MAY NEVER HAVE THAT OPPORTUNITY AGAIN.** As soon as God made the declaration, those who had forfeited the Promised Land realized their big mistake, and some even tried to organize to go in anyway. They, of course, failed, but the reason that they tried at all was that they realized what they had forfeited. They, like Esau, had taken lightly a great God-given opportunity. Do not take lightly the opportunity to have God's best for you.

# KADESH-BARNEA

## Numbers 13-14

[0290]

### *Israel at the Point of Decision*

#### I. The Twelve Spies Give Their Report *Chapter 13*

1-20 Moses sends 12 men to spy out the Promised Land *vs 17-20*

21-25 The 12 spies search the land for 40 days *vs 23*

26-33 The 12 spies give their report *vs 27-30*

#### II. The People of Israel Make a Fatal Choice *Chapter 14*

1-4 The people rebel against the LORD *vs 2*

5-10 The people reject the report of faith *vs 9-10*

11-19 Moses intercedes for the people *vs 19*

20-38 The LORD hands down His verdict *vs 29-30*

39-45 Many die trying to take the Promised land on their own *vs 40, 45*

#### **Matthew 16:24**

*Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me,  
let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*

# KADESH-BARNEA

## Numbers 13-14

[0290]

Search the puzzle below to find the ten words in the wordlist from today's story. Words may be vertical, horizontal, or diagonal. Circle each word that you find.

K A D E G R A M O S E D  
U A L J O S H U A E N O  
G A D E L K A D G A N T  
I K A E D T W E L V E C  
A O P E S T W D L C E G  
N P R O M H E S P A K R  
T R I B E S B C A L K A  
S P I S I P K A D E M P  
M O S M O I C A R B O E  
J O O S H E K L O N S S  
P R I A M S P O I K E J  
P R O M M I S S T A S A

### WORDLIST:

KADESHBARNEA

PROMISEDLAND

MOSES

TWELVE

SPIES

TRIBES

JOSHUA

CALEB

GRAPES

GIANTS

*Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me,  
let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*

**Matthew 16:24**

# KADESH-BARNEA

## Numbers 13-14

[0290]

*The answers to this week's puzzle*

K	A	D	E	G	R	A	M	O	S	E	D
U	A	L	J	O	S	H	U	A	E	N	O
G	A	D	E	L	K	A	D	G	A	N	T
I	K	A	E	D	T	W	E	L	V	E	C
A	O	P	E	S	T	W	D	L	C	E	G
N	P	R	O	M	H	E	S	P	A	K	R
T	R	I	B	E	S	B	C	A	L	K	A
S	P	I	S	I	P	K	A	D	E	M	P
M	O	S	M	O	I	C	A	R	B	O	E
J	O	O	S	H	E	K	L	O	N	S	S
P	R	I	A	M	S	P	O	I	K	E	J
P	R	O	M	M	I	S	S	T	A	S	A

### WORDLIST:

KADESHBARNEA

PROMISEDLAND

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