

The Case of the Really Bad Remember-ers*Exodus 5-15, 19-20, 24; Numbers 13-14; Joshua 1-5***Story-telling Tips**

Ahead of time:

1. Read the Bible verses and story. Pray!
2. Choose story action cues and prepare storyboard figures/Story Scenes, if using. (In Visual Aids book)
3. Practice telling story with the storyboard figures/Story Scenes, timing your presentation. Shorten, if necessary.

During your presentation:

1. Maintain as much eye contact as possible as you tell the story.
2. Put up storyboard figures/add story action cues/hold up Story Scenes as you tell the story. Allow the children to help you put them on the board, if desired.
3. Include the children in your story with a few questions about what they think will happen or words/concepts that might be new to them.
4. Watch the kids for signs that their attention span has been reached. Shorten, if necessary.

INTRODUCTION/ LISTENING ASSIGNMENTS

"Our story is called: The Case of the Really Bad Remember-ers. Here is your listening assignment." Read from Detective Dan's Listening Assignment signs, but questions are summarized below:

Detective Dan's Lesson #1 Listening Assignment:

I need to find out:

- 1. Who were the really bad remember-ers? What did they refuse to remember about God?**
- 2. What happened when they did remember God as they should?**

Detective Dan's Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:

Our Bible Verse is Psalm 54:4,6-7: "Behold, God is my helper; the Lord is the upholder of my life...I will give thanks to your name, O Lord, for it is good. For he has delivered me from every trouble, and my eye has looked in triumph on my enemies."

I need to find out:

- 1. What troubles did the people of Israel face?**
- 2. What did the LORD promise to do for them in their troubles?**

Detective Dan's Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

I found six clues, but only 4 of them are in the story.

Our six clues were: grapes; a rocket; a giant enemy; Joshua, the Ark of the Covenant; and an elephant. Hold each of them up for the children to see as you identify them.

I need to figure out:

- 1. Which four belong in the story and which two don't?**
- 2. Who thanked the LORD for keeping His promise to help them? How did He help them?**

Read the assignment questions, THEN SAY,

"Ok, Deep Down Detectives! Put on your best listening ears and see if you can hear the answers to Detective Dan's questions. When I finish telling the story, we will see if we can answer all the questions."

Read the Bible Truth story, answer questions, present the gospel and lead in prayer.

Answers to questions; the gospel; and, ACTS prayer are included with the story text.

The Case of the Really Bad Remember-ers*Exodus 5-15,19-20,24; Numbers 13-14; Joshua 1-5*

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics) Numbers correspond to storyboard pictures and placement upon the storyboard. Always feel free to use less pictures, if it's best for your kids. Simply black out the numbers next to pictures you do not plan to use. All pictures are found in the Visual Aids book. Put BG (background) pictures on storyboard ahead of time. SB pictures (listed below in story text) are added to board as you tell the story. These numbers are also found on the back of each picture. Tip: Stack pictures in numerical before telling story for easy use. Use sticky-back velcro to attach pictures to storyboard felt. Use sticky-tac putty to stick a picture on top of another picture. OR, if using the Story Scenes to tell the story, disregard the storyboard picture references listed below.

“(SB1, SB2) It’s time to go into Canaan, the land the LORD promised you!” Moses told the people of Israel. **This was the moment they had been waiting for! The LORD had rescued them from their enemies in Egypt. He had given them His laws and made them His people at Mt. Sinai. And now, He had led them to Kadesh Barnea, an oasis right next to Canaan.** **“(SB3) Canaan is filled with good things for you. Go in and take it, just as the LORD told you to,”** Moses told the people. **“Don’t be afraid. Don’t be discouraged. The LORD is with you!”** Moses urged them.

But the people weren’t so sure. Maybe the LORD knew Canaan, but they didn’t. (SB4) Maybe there were some very good places to live and some very good food to eat in this land the LORD promised them. Perhaps it did flow with milk and honey (a nickname for a land filled with the best things). But, there might be some very big enemies living there, too. Maybe enemies as big and bad as the armies of Egypt. Hmmm... “Let’s send some men ahead of us to check out the land. Let them spy it out, then come back and report what they find,” they said to Moses.

Did the people of Israel really need to send out spies? Did they really need to know how big their enemies were? No, they didn’t! WHO promised to be with them and was more powerful than any enemy they might face? Who would always help them carry out His plans? Can you tell me His name?

Can you tell me?

(SB5) It was the LORD! The LORD was with them. No enemy would ever be too powerful for Him. It was His plan for them to have this land and no one can ever stop His plans. The LORD would give them all the help they needed, no matter what enemy they faced. All they had to do was think back and remember. They had been helpless to free themselves from Pharaoh, but the LORD had helped them with His mighty power. He sent gnats, frogs, and other sadnesses...and they were free! They had been helpless against Pharaoh’s chariots, trapped by the Red Sea. But the LORD had helped them with His mighty power. He had parted the Red Sea and made a way for them to escape. He washed away Pharaoh’s men. Remember! Remember! The LORD would always help them. He would always rescue them. He would always take care of them. But the people weren’t remembering as they should, so the LORD allowed them to send out spies.

(SB6) Twelve men were chosen: Joshua, Caleb, and ten other leaders. They would be best to see what the land was like for the people. “Go through the Negev mountains, then into the grassy, hill country,” Moses ordered the men. **“Look at the people. Are there lots of them? Are they weak or strong? Do they live in tents or cities surrounded by strong walls? See what the land is like. Does it have trees? Is it good for farming?”** Moses told them. **“Be brave and bring us back some fruit!”** he said.

So, sneaky sneak, sneak went the twelve men into the Promised Land of Canaan. (SB7) First, they went through the tall, dry, Negev mountains. No one lived there and no food would grow there either. Would ALL the land God promised them be like this?

What do you think?

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics)

No, it wasn't! (SB8) At last, the spies came to the grassy, hill country. Now this was MUCH better! What beautiful views from the hills! What good farming in the valleys! Lots of fish and fresh water in the lakes and rivers. Lots of trees with red, juicy pomegranate and delicious, sweet figs, too. Yum! And the grapes. Oh, how good were the grapes! (SB9) The men cut off a huge branch covered in them and slung it over a pole to carry back to Moses and the people. It took two of them to carry just that one branch it was so big! Oh, yes! The land the LORD was giving them very good!

But, there wasn't just plenty of food in this Promised Land. There were plenty of people, too! And not just any kind of people! (SB10) These were fierce, giant people who lived in strong, tall cities and worshipped bad, fake gods. They wouldn't welcome the people of Israel to Canaan. They would fight hard to keep their beautiful land, and they certainly seemed strong enough to beat the people of Israel and keep them out!

(Move SB10, then remove) With fruit in hand, Joshua, Caleb, and the other, ten men started back to Kadesh Barnea. Back through the hill country, back through the Negev mountains they went, sneak, sneak, sneaking and walk, walk, walking. Back to Moses and the people. And as their legs were busy sneaking and walking, their minds must have been busy thinking. What do you think they were thinking about?

Can you guess?

I bet they were thinking about what to tell the people when they got back to camp. Big fruit; big enemies; big cities. Would the people be in big trouble if they went into the Promised Land; or, could they trust in big help from the LORD?

How excited the people were when at last the twelve men returned! "(SB11) Look at that fruit! Those delicious pomegranates and figs! That huge branch of juicy grapes!" the people exclaimed. They eagerly gathered around the twelve spies to hear more about the wonderful land of Canaan.

(SB12) Ten of the spies (all except Joshua and Caleb) stood up and gave their report. "The land is beautiful and good, just as the LORD said," they told the people, "But, the land is full of fierce giants who live in great cities with strong walls. We can't do it. We are helpless to fight them and take the land," they exclaimed. "We shouldn't even try. If we do, we will all die, we and our children!"

How sad! These ten leaders had refused to remember the LORD or trust that He would keep His promise to help them. Now, it was the people's turn. What would they do with the spies' report? Would they remember the LORD and trust in His promise to help them; or, would they choose to forget Him, just as these ten leaders had?

What do you think?

The people chose to forget the LORD. (SB13) "WAAAAA!" the people wailed when they heard what the ten spies said. They cried and cried and cried all the rest of the day and all night long.

(SB14) By the morning, their tears had dried and their cries had stopped. Their "WAAAAA!" changed to "GRRRRR!" They were FURIOUS at the LORD and Moses and Aaron. "Why did you bring us out here to be killed by these enemies?" they grumbled. "Let's get a new leader and go back to Egypt! We were better off there!" they said.

This was terrible! (SB15) Moses and Aaron bowed down and prayed to the LORD for the people. They deserved the LORD's punishment for doubting His goodness and His help. Moses and Aaron begged for His mercy.

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics)

Then, Joshua and Caleb, the last of the twelve spies, stood up with something very different to say. **“(SB16) The land we spied out is so very good. Don’t rebel against the LORD! Don’t fear the people of the land! They are nothing. The LORD is with us. He’s able to help us and give it to us,”** they exclaimed. These two leaders remembered the LORD. They trusted in His promise to help them. Would their report help the people remember and trust, too?

What do you think?

(SB17) It did NOT! The people STILL refused to remember the LORD. They STILL refused to go into the beautiful Promised Land. They even picked up stones to throw at Moses and Aaron! Grrr! They were so angry!

(SB18) Then suddenly, the bright, shiny glory of the LORD appeared. Everyone stopped in amazement. Their God was the living God! They had forgotten who He was yet again.

You see, this wasn’t the first time the people had forgotten the LORD since He had rescued them from Egypt. This wasn’t even the second, third, or fourth time. It was the TENTH time, and the LORD’s patience had run out. **“How long will the people not believe in Me? When will they remember all the amazing things I’ve done for them and trust Me to help them?”** the LORD said to Moses.

“(SB19) Because you didn’t believe that I would take care of you and defeat your enemies, you will NOT get to go into the Promised Land. You will wander out here in the dry desert for forty years until you grow old and die. Instead, I will take your children to live in the beautiful land when they grow up,” the LORD told them.

How sad the people were! They hadn’t remembered the LORD. They hadn’t trusted He would help them. And now, they would never get to live in the good land He had promised them.

“(SB20) The people, the spies, Aaron, and Moses headed out into the wilderness, leaving Canaan behind. And as the years passed, the adults grew old and died. At last, only Joshua and Caleb, the two faithful spies, remained. (SB22) But, the children grew up and became adults; and, the LORD made Joshua their new leader.

Now, it was time to go into the Promised Land. Once more, the people of Israel camped right outside of Canaan, this time by the Jordan River. **(SB23) Once more, spies were sent to spy out the land. (SB24) And once more, they came back with news of good fruit and powerful enemies living in strong, walled cities. There was STILL no way for the people of Israel to beat these enemies on their own.**

But that was not ALL the two spies had seen. **“The people are mighty and their cities are strong, but they have heard of the LORD and are scared,”** they reported. **“The LORD has surely given us this land!”**

The LORD encouraged the people, too. **“I will go before you and fight your enemies,”** the LORD promised Joshua and the people. **“Many years earlier, I parted the Red Sea to help you escape Pharaoh’s armies. Now, I will part the rushing, roaring waters of the Jordan River for you. I will dry up the riverbed so you can cross to the Promised Land on dry land,”** He said. **“Be strong and courageous as you lead the people!”** the LORD urged Joshua. **“I will be with you wherever you go!”** He promised.

What would the people do this time? Would they remember all the LORD had done for them? Would they trust His promises to help them?

What do you think?

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics)

(SB25) This time, the people did NOT fear! This time they DID remember, and they DID trust! **(SB26) The priests carrying the golden Ark of God's Presence, led the people toward the rushing waters of the Jordan River. If the LORD did not stop the waters, they would surely drown. But as the first priest put out his foot to step into the swirling water, the LORD did just what He promised. (Place BG2 on top of BG1 to create dry riverbed.) He held back the river as the priests with the Ark, then all the people of Israel crossed into the Promised Land for the first time!**

(SB27, SB28) When everyone had crossed safely, the LORD told Joshua, "Choose men to pick up twelve, large stones from the Jordan River. Place them together next to the riverbank. These Remembering Stones will help you remember this day I brought you into Canaan on dry ground. They will help everyone in the world remember that I am the one, true, mighty God and I should be worshipped and obeyed," the LORD said.

The people obeyed. **(SB29) They set up the Remembering Stones and they worshipped the LORD that day. News spread to the enemies of what the LORD had done, and they were filled with even more fear. They might be tall like fierce giants. Their cities might be strong and have tall walls, but who could stand against the one, true, mighty God?**

(SB30) The people of Israel praised the LORD. Already He was going before them. Maybe they DID have a country full of fierce, giant enemies to face, but they knew they would not have to face them alone. They would remember the LORD and trust in Him. Surely, He would help them all the days of their lives, until every enemy was defeated, and the beautiful, Promised Land was all theirs. And the LORD did just that, just as He promised.

Cracking the Case: (story wrap-up for Listening Assignments)

It's time to see how we did with our Listening Assignment.

Detective Dan's Lesson 1 Listening Assignment:

1. Who were the really bad remember-ers? What did they refuse to remember about God? The people of Israel were the bad remember-ers. They chose not to remember the LORD's promises to take care of them. They chose not to remember all the ways the LORD had rescued them from their strong enemies already. Because they did not remember, they refused to trust that the LORD could really defeat the people in Canaan and give them the land as their home.

2. What happened when they remembered the promises? They had courage to go into Canaan. And when they did, the LORD helped them defeat their enemies and made the land their own.

For You and Me:

Like the people of Israel, the LORD wants us to remember who He is and what He is able to do. He wants us to turn to Him and trust Him to take care of us, no matter what we face in life. And what's the most important thing He's done that He wants us to remember? That He sent Jesus to save us from our sins. When we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior, God will make us His people. As His people, we can know that God will always sustain us—He will help us to love Him and live for Him, the rest of our lives.

Detective Dan's Lesson 2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is Psalm 54:4,6-7:**

"Behold, God is my helper; the Lord is the upholder of my life...I will give thanks to your name, O Lord, for it is good. For he has delivered me from every trouble, and my eye has looked in triumph on my enemies."

1. What troubles did the people of Israel face? They faced fierce enemies who lived in strong cities in the land the LORD promised them. These enemies were too strong for them and would kill them, if they fought them on their own.

2. What did the LORD promise to do for them in their troubles? The LORD promised to always be with them. He would help them beat their enemies. He would help them win the land He promised them. He would even go before them.

For You and Me:

Like the people of Israel, God holds out His promises to us. Promises to forgive our sins and make us His people. Promises to help us to live for Him, all the days of our lives. How can these promises from God become promises for us? When we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Ask God to help you. He loves to answer this prayer!

Detective Dan's Lesson 3 Listening Assignment:

Our six clues were: grapes; a rocket; a giant enemy; Joshua, the Ark of the Covenant; and an elephant.

1. Which four belong in our story?

The grapes; the giant enemy; Joshua, and the Ark of the Covenant belong. The rocket and the elephant do not.

2. Who thanked the LORD for keeping His promise to help them? How did He help them? The people of Israel did. He held back the waters of the River Jordan, so they could cross on dry land. He helped them fight all of their enemies and win, so they could settle the land He promised them.

For You and Me:

Like the people of Israel, God holds out His promises to us. Promises to forgive our sins and make us His people. Promises to help us to live for Him, all the days of our lives. How can these promises from God become promises for us? When we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. And if we do, then we, too, will have so very, very much to thank the LORD for!

The Gospel (story wrap-up if NOT using Listening Assignments)**Our Bible Truth is:****Why Do God's People Keep Believing in Him?****It Is God's Sustaining Grace...****God, the Father, Promises to Help His People!**

The LORD helped the people of Israel over and over again. There was no enemy too strong, no problem too big for the LORD. He promised to always help them, and He always kept those promises! And yet, the people kept choosing to forget the LORD. They kept choosing to not trust Him. They were sinners who did not deserve to be His people or His help. Like the people of Israel, we are sinners, too. We may hear about the LORD and His promises, but too many times we choose to forget those promises and not trust in Him. But the good news is, the LORD has still promised to help us, even though we don't deserve it. He sent His Son, Jesus, to live a perfect life and offer it up as the full payment for the sins of God's people when He died on the cross. On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead in victory. Now, all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior will be forgiven and become God's people. He will be their God forever. He will send His Holy Spirit to live in their hearts and help them from the inside. Help them love Him, trust Him, and remember His good promises. And one day, bring them home to live with Him in heaven forever. We can be God's people and receive God's forgiveness for our sins when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Ask Him to help you! He loves to answer this prayer.

Close in prayer.

Closing ACTS Prayer**Closing ACTS Prayer**

- A** God, we praise You for being faithful to help Your people live for You.

- C** We confess that many times we choose not to trust Your promises to help us. We would rather do things our own way or just depend on ourselves. We need a Savior!

- T** God, thank You for sending Jesus to break the power of sin and death. Thank You for Your promises to always help Your people.

- S** Please work in our hearts. Help us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to ask You for help and depend upon You. Help us to love You and live for You every day of our lives. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Go to Lesson Plan, p.9 for the script to the rest of the lesson.