

Twelve Spies Sent to Canaan (late Summer/early Fall 1445 BC)

Numbers 13

Yahweh Sanctions the People's Desire to Send Spies Into Canaan (see Deut 1:19–25)

1 And Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,

2 "Send for yourself men, and let them explore the land of Canaan, which I *am about* to give to the Israelites; from each tribe of his father send one man, everyone a leader among them."

3 So Moses sent them from the desert of Paran on the command of Yahweh; all of the men *were* leaders of the Israelites.

List of Tribal Spies (Moses Gives Hoshea, the Ephraimite, the Name Joshua)

4 And these *are* their names: from the tribe of Reuben, Shammua son of Zaccur;

5 from the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat son of Hori;

6 from the tribe of Judah, Caleb son of Jephunneh;

7 from the tribe of Issachar, Igal son of Joseph;

8 from the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea son of Nun;

9 from the tribe of Benjamin, Palti son of Raphu;

10 from the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel son of Sodi;

11 from the tribe of Joseph, from the tribe of Manasseh, Gaddi son of Susi;

12 from the tribe of Dan, Ammiel son of Gemalli;

13 from the tribe of Asher, Sethur son of Michael;

14 from the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi son of Vophsi;

15 from the tribe of Gad, Geuel son of Maki.

16 These *are* the names of the men whom Moses sent to explore the land. And Moses called Hoshea son of Nun Joshua.

Moses Gives the Spies Their Assignment

17 Moses sent them to explore the land of Canaan, and he said to them, "Go up *like* this to the Negev, and go up into the hill country,

18 and you will see what the land is *like* and if the people who inhabit it *are* strong or weak, or whether they are few or many,

19 and whether the land that they *are* inhabiting *is* good or bad, and whether the cities they *are* inhabiting are camps or fortifications,

20 and whether the land *is* fertile or lean, and whether there are trees on it or not. You will show yourself courageous, and you will take some of the fruit of the land." It *was* the time of first ripe grapes.

Journey of the Spies

21 So they went up and explored the land from the desert of Zin until Rehob, at Lebo Hamath.

22 They went up through the Negev and came to Hebron, where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai the descendants of the Anakites *were*. (Hebron was built seven years before Zoan *in* Egypt.)

23 And they came up to the valley of Eshcol, and they cut off a vine branch and one cluster of grapes from there; they carried it on a pole between two *men*, *with* pomegranates and figs.

24 That place he called the valley of Eshcol on account of the cluster of grapes that the Israelites cut off from there.

25 They returned from exploring the land at the end of forty days.

The Spies Report to Moses, Aaron and the People

26 And they came to Moses and Aaron and to the entire community of the Israelites in the desert of Paran at Kadesh; they brought back word to them and *to* all the community, and they showed them the fruit of the land.

27 And they told him, "We came to the land that you sent us, and it *is* flowing of milk and honey; this *is* its fruit.

28 Yet the people who are inhabiting *it are* strong and the cities *are* fortified and very large; moreover, we saw the descendants of the Anakites there.

29 *The* Amalekites *are* living in the land of the Negev; the Hittites, Jebusites, and the Amorites *are* living in the hill country; and the Canaanites *are* living at the sea and on the banks of the Jordan."

30 And Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, "Surely, let us go up and let us take possession of it because surely we will be able to prevail over it."

31 And the men who went up with him said, "We are not able to go up to the people because they *are* stronger than us."

32 And they presented the report of the land that they explored to the Israelites, saying, "The land that we went through to explore *is* a land that eats its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in its midst *are* men of great size.

33 There we saw the Nephilim (the descendants of Anak *came* from the Nephilim), and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their eyes."

The Israelites Revolt (late Summer/early Fall 1445 BC)

Numbers 14

Rebellion—The People Demand to Return to Egypt

1 Then all the community lifted up their voices, and the people wept during that night.

2 And all the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and all the community said to them, “If only we had died in the land of Egypt or in this desert!

3 Why did Yahweh bring us into this land to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little children will become plunder; would it not be better for us to return *to* Egypt?”

4 They said to each other, “Let us appoint a leader, and we will return *to* Egypt.”

Joshua and Caleb Beg the People to Believe God

5 Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before the assembly of the community of the Israelites.

6 Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, from the explorers *of* the land, tore their garments.

7 And they said to all the community of the Israelites, “The land that we went through to explore *is* an exceptionally good land.

8 If Yahweh delights in us, then he will bring us into this land, and he will give it to us, a land that *is* flowing *with* milk and honey.

9 Only do not rebel against Yahweh, and you will not fear the people of the land, because they will be our food. Their protection has been turned from them; Yahweh *is* with us. You should not fear them.”

10a And all the community said to stone them with stones,

Yahweh Intervenes and Prepares to Destroy Israel

10b but the glory of Yahweh appeared in the tent of assembly among the Israelites.

11 And Yahweh said to Moses, “How long until this people will despise me, and how long until they will not believe in me, *and* in all the signs that I have done in their midst?

12 I will strike them with disease, and I will dispossess them; I will make you into a greater and stronger nation than them.”

Moses Intercedes for the People for the Sake of Yahweh’s Name

13 And Moses said to Yahweh, “Then the Egyptians will hear that you brought up this people from their midst in your power,

14 and they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land. They heard that you, Yahweh, *are* in the midst of this people, that you are seen eye to eye, and your cloud *is* standing over them, and in a column of cloud you go before them by day and in a column of fire *at* night.

15 But if you destroy this people all at once, the nations that will have heard your message will say,

16 ‘Yahweh was unable to bring this people in the land that he swore by an oath, and he slaughtered them in the desert.’

17 But now, please, let the power of my Lord be great, just as you spoke,

18 ‘Yahweh *is* slow to anger and great of loyal love, forgiving sin and rebellion; but surely he leaves nothing unpunished, visiting the sin of the fathers on the sons to the third and fourth generations.’

19 Please forgive the sin of this people according to the greatness of your loyal love, just as you forgave this people, from Egypt until now.”

Yahweh Forgives the People but Will Not Let Them Enter Canaan

20 Yahweh said, “I have forgiven *them* according to your word;

21 but as I *am* alive, the glory of Yahweh will fill all the earth.

22 But because all the men who have seen my glory and my signs that I did in Egypt and in the desert yet tested me these ten times and did not listen to my voice,

23 they will not see the land that I swore by oath to their ancestors, and all those who despised me will not see it.

24 But my servant Caleb, because another spirit was with him, he remained true after me, and I will bring him into the land that he entered, and his offspring will take possession of it.

25 And the Amalekites and the Canaanites live in the valleys; tomorrow turn and set out *for* the desert *by* way of the Red Sea.”

The People Continue to Murmur and Yahweh Pronounces a Death Sentence on Them

26 And Yahweh spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying,

27 “How long *will* I bear this evil community who are grumbling against me? I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites which they are making against me.

28 Say to them, ‘Surely as I live,’ declares Yahweh, ‘just as you spoke in my hearing, so I will do to you;

29 in this desert your corpses will fall, and all your counted ones, according to all your number, from twenty years old and above who grumbled against me.

30 You *yourselves* will not come into the land that I swore by oath to make you to dwell in it, but Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun.

31 But your little children, whom you said would be plunder, I will bring them, and they will know the land that you rejected.

32 But for you, all your corpses will fall in this desert.

33 And your children will be shepherds in the desert forty years, and you will bear your unfaithfulness until all your corpses have fallen in the desert.

34 According to the number of the days that you explored the land, forty days, a day for each year, you will bear your sins forty years, and you will know my opposition.’

35 I, Yahweh, have spoken; I will surely do this to all this evil community who has banded together against me. In this desert they will come to an end, and there they will die.”

The Ten Spies are Immediately Killed by a Plague (Joshua and Caleb spared)

36 As for the men whom Moses sent to explore the land, who returned and made the community grumble against him by spreading a report over the land,

37 the men who spread the evil report of the land died by the plague before Yahweh.

38 But Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh lived from *among* the men who went to explore the land.

The People’s False Repentance

39 And Moses spoke words to all the Israelites, and the people mourned greatly.

40 They rose early in the morning and went to the top of the mount, saying, “Here we are. We will go up to the place that Yahweh said, because we have sinned.”

41 But Moses said, “Why *are* you going against the command of Yahweh? It will not succeed.

42 You should not go up because Yahweh is not in your midst; do not let yourselves be defeated in the presence of your enemies, 43 because the Amalekites and the Canaanites *are* there before you, and you will fall by the sword; because you have turned *back* from Yahweh, and Yahweh will not be with you.”

44 But they dared to go to the top of the mountain, and the ark of the covenant of Yahweh and Moses did not depart from the midst of the camp.

45 So the Amalekites and the Canaanites who were living on the mountain descended, and they beat them down, up to Hormah.

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