

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 Then the LORD spoke to Moses saying,

2 “Send out for yourself men so that they may spy out the land of Canaan, which I am going to give to the sons of Israel; you shall send a man from each of their fathers’ tribes, every one a leader among them.”

3 So Moses sent them from the wilderness of Paran at the command of the LORD, all of them men who were heads of the sons of Israel.

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

4 These then *were* their names: from the tribe of Reuben, Shammua the son of Zaccur;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

16 These are the names of the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land; but Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun, Joshua.

Moses Gives the Spies Their Assignment

17 When Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, he said to them, “Go up there into the Negev; then go up into the hill country.

18 See what the land is like, and whether the people who live in it are strong *or* weak, whether they are few or many.

19 How is the land in which they live, is it good or bad? And how are the cities in which they live, are *they* like *open* camps or with fortifications?

20 How is the land, is it fat or lean? Are there trees in it or not? Make an effort then to get some of the fruit of the land.” Now the time was the time of the first ripe grapes.

Journey of the Spies

21 So they went up and spied out the land from the wilderness of Zin as far as Rehob, at Lebo-hamath.

22 When they had gone up into the Negev, they came to Hebron where Ahiman, Sheshai and Talmai, the descendants of Anak were. (Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.)

23 Then they came to the valley of Eshcol and from there cut down a branch with a single cluster of grapes; and they carried it on a pole between two *men*, with some of the pomegranates and the figs.

24 That place was called the valley of Eshcol, because of the cluster which the sons of Israel cut down from there.

25 When they returned from spying out the land, at the end of forty days,

The Spies Report to Moses, Aaron and the People

26 they proceeded to come to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation of the sons of Israel in the wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh; and they brought back word to them and to all the congregation and showed them the fruit of the land.

27 Thus they told him, and said, “We went in to the land where you sent us; and it certainly does flow with milk and honey, and this is its fruit.

28 Nevertheless, the people who live in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified *and* very large; and moreover, we saw the descendants of Anak there.

29 Amalek is living in the land of the Negev and the Hittites and the Jebusites and the Amorites are living in the hill country, and the Canaanites are living by the sea and by the side of the Jordan.”

30 Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, “We should by all means go up and take possession of it, for we will surely overcome it.”

31 But the men who had gone up with him said, “We are not able to go up against the people, for they are too strong for us.”

32 So they gave out to the sons of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, “The land through which we have gone, in spying it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people whom we saw in it are men of *great* size.

33 There also we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak are part of the Nephilim); and we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.”

The Israelites Revolt (late Summer/early Fall 1445 BC)**Numbers 14****Rebellion—The People Demand to Return to Egypt**

1 Then all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night.

2 All the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron; and the whole congregation said to them, “Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness!

3 Why is the LORD bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become plunder; would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?”

4 So they said to one another, “Let us appoint a leader and return to Egypt.”

Joshua and Caleb Beg the People to Believe God

5 Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces in the presence of all the assembly of the congregation of the sons of Israel.

6 Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, of those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes;

7 and they spoke to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, saying, “The land which we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land.

8 If the LORD is pleased with us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us—a land which flows with milk and honey.

9 Only do not rebel against the LORD; and do not fear the people of the land, for they will be our prey. Their protection has been removed from them, and the LORD is with us; do not fear them.”

10a But all the congregation said to stone them with stones.

Yahweh Intervenes and Prepares to Destroy Israel

10b Then the glory of the LORD appeared in the tent of meeting to all the sons of Israel.

11 The LORD said to Moses, “How long will this people spurn Me? And how long will they not believe in Me, despite all the signs which I have performed in their midst?

12 I will smite them with pestilence and dispossess them, and I will make you into a nation greater and mightier than they.”

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

13 But Moses said to the LORD, “Then the Egyptians will hear of it, for by Your strength You brought up this people from their midst, 14 and they will tell *it* to the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that You, O LORD, are in the midst of this people, for You, O LORD, are seen eye to eye, while Your cloud stands over them; and You go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night.

15 Now if You slay this people as one man, then the nations who have heard of Your fame will say,

16 ‘Because the LORD could not bring this people into the land which He promised them by oath, therefore He slaughtered them in the wilderness.’

17 But now, I pray, let the power of the Lord be great, just as You have declared,

18 ‘The LORD is slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He will by no means clear *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth *generations*.’

19 Pardon, I pray, the iniquity of this people according to the greatness of Your lovingkindness, just as You also have forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now.”

Yahweh Forgives the People but Will Not Let Them Enter Canaan

20 So the LORD said, “I have pardoned *them* according to your word;

21 but indeed, as I live, all the earth will be filled with the glory of the LORD.

22 Surely all the men who have seen My glory and My signs which I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness, yet have put Me to the test these ten times and have not listened to My voice,

23 shall by no means see the land which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who spurned Me see it.

24 But My servant Caleb, because he has had a different spirit and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land which he entered, and his descendants shall take possession of it.

25 Now the Amalekites and the Canaanites live in the valleys; turn tomorrow and set out to the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea.”

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

26 The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying,

27 “How long *shall I bear* with this evil congregation who are grumbling against Me? I have heard the complaints of the sons of Israel, which they are making against Me.

28 Say to them, ‘As I live,’ says the LORD, ‘just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will surely do to you;

29 your corpses will fall in this wilderness, even all your numbered men, according to your complete number from twenty years old and upward, who have grumbled against Me.

30 Surely you shall not come into the land in which I swore to settle you, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun.

31 Your children, however, whom you said would become a prey—I will bring them in, and they will know the land which you have rejected.

32 But as for you, your corpses will fall in this wilderness.

33 Your sons shall be shepherds for forty years in the wilderness, and they will suffer *for* your unfaithfulness, until your corpses lie in the wilderness.

34 According to the number of days which you spied out the land, forty days, for every day you shall bear your guilt a year, *even* forty years, and you will know My opposition.

35 I, the LORD, have spoken, surely this I will do to all this evil congregation who are gathered together against Me. In this wilderness they shall be destroyed, 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 spy out the land and who returned and made all the congregation grumble against him by bringing out a bad report concerning the land,

37 even those men who brought out the very bad report of the land died by a plague before the LORD.

38 But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh remained alive out of those men who went to spy out the land.

The People's False Repentance

39 When Moses spoke these words to all the sons of Israel, the people mourned greatly.

40 In the morning, however, they rose up early and went up to the ridge of the hill country, saying, “Here we are; we have indeed sinned, but we will go up to the place which the LORD has promised.”

41 But Moses said, “Why then are you transgressing the commandment of the LORD, when it will not succeed?

42 Do not go up, or you will be struck down before your enemies, for the LORD is not among you.

43 For the Amalekites and the Canaanites will be there in front of you, and you will fall by the sword, inasmuch as you have turned back from following the LORD. And the LORD will not be with you.”

44 But they went up heedlessly to the ridge of the hill country; neither the ark of the covenant of the LORD nor Moses left the camp.

45 Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who lived in that hill country came down, and struck them and beat them down as far as Hormah.

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