

Twelve Spies

Numbers 13 – 14

by Don Falkos

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Moses selected one man from each of the twelve tribes of Israel. He sent them into Canaan to spy out the land. They were there for forty days. When they came back, ten of the men said, "It is a productive land. Here is some of its fruit." Two of them were carrying, on a pole, a huge cluster of grapes. "The people live in great walled cities. They are gigantic and powerful. We felt like grasshoppers compared to them."

The other two men were Caleb and Joshua who said, "This is a magnificent land the Lord is giving us. We should go in and take it. We can do it."

But the people listened to the ten. They were afraid and turned against Moses. "Why didn't God kill us in Egypt or here in this desert? Now we will all die in battle and our wives and children will be taken as slaves. Let's choose a new leader who will take us back to Egypt."

Suddenly, the glory of the Lord appeared at the Tabernacle. God said to Moses, "How long will these people refuse to believe in me? I am sending them back into the desert where they will stay for forty years until they are all dead, just as they have suggested. Then I will lead their children into Canaan and I will give the land to them. The only exceptions will be my servants Caleb and Joshua who followed me without hesitation. I will allow them to enter the land I have promised."

The people of Israel regretted their rebellion. They tried to enter the Promised Land, but the Lord was not with them, and they were beaten back.