

**Into the Promised Land
Joshua's Story**

Lesson #13 – Rebellion & Consequences • Part I

•HANDOUT•

► The Desert of Paran is in the Negev, at the edge of the Promised Land. God promised that the Land He was giving them would be a rich and lush agricultural land.

But where they were camped was anything but rich and lush. The ground was rocky with very little soil and very little rain. In fact, what soil could be found would be quickly blown away by the wind.

As Chapter 13 opens, God gives Israel new instructions. They are to explore the Land He is about to give them. He tells Moses to organize a crew to explore the land of Canaan, which is going to be theirs, by decree from God in accordance with the Abrahamic Covenant.

The Desert of Paran



Numbers 13:1-16 • The Lord now said to Moses, "Send out men to explore the land of Canaan, the land I am giving to the Israelites. Send one leader from each of the twelve ancestral tribes." So Moses did as the Lord commanded him. He sent out twelve men, all tribal leaders of Israel, from their camp in the wilderness of Paran. These were the tribes and the names of their leaders:

- From the tribe of Reuben: Shammua, son of Zaccur
- From the tribe of Simeon: Shaphat, son of Hori
- From the tribe of Judah: Caleb, son of Jephunneh
- From the tribe of Issachar: Igal, son of Joseph
- From the tribe of Ephraim: Hoshea son of Nun
- From the tribe of Benjamin: Palti, son of Raphu
- From the tribe of Zebulun: Gaddiel, son of Sodi
- From the tribe of Manasseh [son of Joseph]: Gaddi, son of Susi
- From the tribe of Dan: Ammiel, son of Gemalli
- From the tribe of Asher: Sethur, son of Michael
- From the tribe of Naphtali: Nahbi, son of Vophsi
- From the tribe of Gad: Geuel, son of Maki

These are the names of the men Moses sent out to explore the land. (Moses called Hoshea son of Nun by the name **Joshua**.)

Q: Why is it significant that Moses changed Hoshea's name to Joshua before sending him out as a Scout?

Moses gives the twelve Explorer Scouts explicit instructions ...

Numbers 13:17-20 • When Moses sent them to explore Canaan, he said, "Go up through the Negev and on into the hill country. See what the land is like and whether the people who live there are strong or weak, few or many. What kind of land do they live in? Is it good or bad? What kind of towns do they live in? Are they unwalled or fortified? How is the soil? Is it fertile or poor? Are there trees in it or not? Do your best to bring back some of the fruit of the land." (It was the season for the first ripe grapes.)

Q: Why does Moses give the Scouts explicit instructions regarding the evaluation of the land? In Exodus 3:8 God told them the land was good, large, and a land flowing with milk and honey. Did Moses' instructions result from him doubting the truth of God's promise?



Q: What were the instructions Moses gave the men?

Number 13:21-25 • So they went up and explored the land from the Desert of Zin as far as Rehob, toward Lebo Hamath. They went up through the Negev and came to Hebron, where Ahiman, Sheshai and Talmi, the descendants of Anak, lived. (Hebron had been built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.)
When they reached the Valley of Eshkol, they cut off a branch bearing a single cluster of grapes. Two of them carried it on a pole between them, along with some pomegranates and figs. That place was called the Valley of Eshkol because of the cluster of grapes the Israelites cut off there. At the end of forty days they returned from exploring the land.

Q: What are the two things this passage tells us about Hebron?

- 1.
- 2.



Q: Beyond these two statements, what is reasonable for us to expect from these 12 Israelites when they arrived in Hebron?



Q: So, is it possible that after so many generations as slaves in Egypt, they were no longer taught and no longer knew the specifics about the Promised Land?

► Look at this passage from Genesis:

► Genesis 15:13-16 • Then the LORD said to Abraham, “Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated four hundred years. But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions.

You, [Abraham] however, will go to your father in peace and be buried at a good old age. In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here...”

Q: Instead of being excited about entering Hebron, they compared it to Zoan. What is significant about Hebron being built seven years before Zoan in Egypt?

Q: This scripture passage talks about the descendants of Anak. What is significant about Anak?

Q: When they left Hebron they went to the Valley of Eschol. What instructions did they fulfill in this valley?

**The twelve men have been exploring in the land for forty days
They have done everything Moses instructed, including getting samples of fruit.
It is time to return back to camp and give their report ...**

Numbers 13:26-29 • They came back to Moses and Aaron and the whole Israelite community at Kadesh in the Desert of Paran. There they reported to them and to the whole assembly and showed them the fruit of the land. They gave Moses this account: "We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit.

But the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw descendants of Anak there. The Amalekites live in the Negev; the Hittites, Jebusites and Amorites live in the hill country; and the Canaanites live near the sea and along the Jordan."

Q: Are these Scouts telling Moses and the people something new and shocking regarding the people they found living in the land?

Q: In what way is the word “BUT” meaningful in this passage?

Number 13:30 • Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it."

Q: Where was Joshua when Caleb boldly contradicted the report the other Scouts were giving?

Number 13:31-33 • But the men who had gone up with him said, "We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are." And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, "The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them."

Q: Why did the spies change the identity of the Anak in verse 22 to the Nephilim here, when describing the people they encountered during their 40 days in the country?

Q: How did the "Ten" summarize the Land God was giving them?

Q: Ultimately, what are these "Ten" Scouts saying about God?

The words of the Ten have brought the people to rebellion against God.

Number 14:1-4 • That night all the people of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, "If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this desert!

Why is the Lord bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn't it be better for us to go back to Egypt?"

And they said to each other, "We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt."

Q: What ultimate lie have the people now uttered against God?

Q: What wish did they express?

Q: What decision did they make?

God has been merciful with Israel, but He must respond to their latest act of rebellion. This is where we will pick up the story next time.



Next Time • Lesson #14
"Rebellion & Consequences – Part 2"

