

## MISSION: CANAAN THE CASE OF THE SPIES

### **Numbers 13:1-4**

The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Send\* men to scout the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelite people; send one man from each of their ancestral tribes, each one a chieftain among them." So Moses, by the LORD's command, sent them out from the wilderness of Paran, all the men being leaders of the Israelites. And these were their names:

\*שלח-לך

**Who's idea was this?**

### **Deut. 1:22**

Then all of you came to me and said, "Let us send men ahead to reconnoiter the land for us and bring back word on the route we shall follow and the cities we shall come to."

### **Num. Rabbah 16:4**

A rich man possessed a vineyard. Whenever he saw that the wine was good he would say to his men: 'Bring the wine into my house,' but when he saw that the wine had turned to vinegar, he would say: 'Bring the wine into your houses.' It was the same with the Holy One, Blessed Be He. When he saw the elders and how worthy their deeds were, He called them His own; as it says, 'Gather for Me seventy of Israel's elders' (Num. 11:16). But when He saw the scouts and how they would later sin, He ascribed them to Moses, saying, shelah-lekha, 'Send men for yourself.'

### **Key Operatives**

From the tribe of Judah, Caleb\* son of Jephunneh.

From the tribe of Ephraim, Hosea son of Nun.

\*בלב

## **Mission Report**

They went straight to Moses and Aaron and the whole Israelite community at Kadesh in the wilderness of Paran, and they made their report to them and to the whole community, as they showed them the fruit of the land. This is what they told him: "We came to the land you sent us to; it does indeed flow with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. However\*, the people who inhabit the country are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large; moreover, we saw the Anakites there. 29 Amalekites dwell in the Negeb region; Hittites, Jebusites, and Amorites inhabit the hill country; and Canaanites dwell by the Sea and along the Jordan."

\* אַפֵּס

## **Rashi's analysis**

A lie that does not begin with a little bit of truth will never stand up.

## **Dissension-Num. 13:30-33**

Caleb hushed the people before Moses and said, "Let us by all means go up, and we shall gain possession of it, for we shall surely overcome it." But the men who had gone up with him said, "We cannot attack that people, for it is stronger than we." Thus they spread calumnies among the Israelites about the land they had scouted, saying, "The country that we traversed and scouted is one that devours its settlers. All the people that we saw in it are men of great size; we saw the Nephilim there — the Anakites are part of the Nephilim — and we looked like grasshoppers to ourselves, and so we must have looked to them."

## **Numbers Rabbah 16:11, Tanchuma 66**

I take no objection to your saying: 'we looked like grasshoppers to ourselves' but I take offense when you say 'so we must have looked to them.' How do you know how I made you look to them? Perhaps you appeared to them as angels?

## **Panic Num. 14:1-4**

The whole community broke into loud cries, and the people wept that night. All the Israelites railed against Moses and Aaron. "If only we had died in the land of Egypt," the whole community shouted at them, "or if only we might die in this wilderness! 3 Why is the LORD taking us to that land to fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be carried off! It would be better for us to go back to Egypt!" And they said to one another, "Let us head back for Egypt."

**Disaster: Num. 14:31-34**

Your children who, you said, would be carried off — these will I allow to enter; they shall know the land that you have rejected. But your carcasses shall drop in this wilderness, while your children roam the wilderness for forty years, suffering for your faithlessness, until the last of your carcasses is down in the wilderness. You shall bear your punishment for forty years, corresponding to the number of days — forty days — that you scouted the land: a year for each day. Thus you shall know what it means to thwart Me.

**The Right Stuff Num 14:24**

But My servant Caleb, because he was imbued with a different spirit\* and remained loyal to Me — him will I bring into the land that he entered, and his offspring shall hold it as a possession.

רוּחַ אַחֲרֵת