

200708-4 Nu 13, The Spies Search Canaanland & Give an Evil Report—CThurman

The journey from Sinai to Kadesh, the place where Moses sends forth the twelve to search out the land of Canaan should have only taken 11 days.

De 1:2 (There are eleven days' journey from Horeb by the way of mount Seir unto Kadeshbarnea.)

However the word of God records that it took Israel a total of forty days to travel from the one place to the other. There were three days journey to the first resting place. (cf. Nu.10.33) Then there is the thirty days of quail. (cf. Nu.11.20) And finally, the week Israel waited for Miriam to be cleansed from her leprosy. (cf. Nu.12.15.) What does this tell us? There is no question that the people of God are blessed. He has done and is doing so much for us day by day. But sometimes blessings are delayed because we chose, rather than making straight paths for our feet (cf. He.12.13), a longer route through sin.

In light of Deu.1.19-40 it appears that Moses at this encampment encouraged the Israelites to go in to possess the land, but then the men of Israel concocted another plan, which was to survey the land first. To this Moses agreed and evidently the LORD allowed to be done. And so we have the following account which doesn't end well for Israel.

1 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which

[land of Canaan]

search, וַיִּתְּרוּ, Qal fut. 3ppl. masc. of תִּירָה, toor; tss. to search, to espy, to search out, to spy out, to seek, merchantmen; cf. Nu.10.33; 13.2 (twice), 16, 17, 21, 25, 32; 14.6, 7, 34, 36, 38; 15.39.

I give unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a ruler among them.

ruler, וְנָשִׂיא, masc. sing. noun tss. a prince, ruler, captain, chief, governor.

3 And Moses by the commandment of the LORD sent them from the wilderness of Paran: all those men were heads of the children of Israel.

heads, ראשי, masc. pl. noun, ראש, rohsh, tss. a head, the top, a sum, principal, chapters, beginning, chief, company.

4 And these were their names: of the tribe of Reuben, Shammua the son of Zaccur.

5 Of the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat the son of Hori.

6 Of the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephúnnēh.

7 Of the tribe of Issachar, Igal the son of Joseph.

The first four names are of the same arrangement as was in Numbers ch.1. These are names Leah's oldest sons, excepting Levi, who has been appointed to serve in the priesthood.

8 Of the tribe of Ephraim, Oshea the son of Nun.

9 Of the tribe of Benjamin, Palti the son of Raphu.

10 Of the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel the son of Sodi.

11 Of the tribe of Joseph, namely, of the tribe of Manasseh, Gaddi the son of Susi.

These constitute the youngest of Jacob's children to be counted among the tribes of Israel. They are Rachel's youngest child, Benjamin, the children of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, and Leah's youngest son, Zebulun.

Remember that Joseph's sons were taken as sons by Jacob. Manasseh, the eldest, then Ephraim. (cf. Ge.41.51) Ephraim, though youngest received the birthright.

Ge 48:5 And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine.

...

14 And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon

Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly; for Manasseh was the firstborn.

...

17 And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him: and he held up his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's head.

18 And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father: for this is the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head.

19 And his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations.

20 And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh: and he set Ephraim before Manasseh.

12 Of the tribe of Dan, Ammiel the son of Gemalli.

13 Of the tribe of Asher, Sethur the son of Michael.

14 Of the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi the son of Vophsi.

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

And the last four names are the children of the handmaids, Bilhah and Zilpah. So, the names of the 12 tribes, as they are given in chs. 1 & 13 divide into three groups of four:

- The four eldest sons of Jacob through Leah (excepting Levi) (R, S, J, I)
- The four youngest sons of Jacob. (Z, E, M, B) And,
- The children of the handmaids. (D, A, G, N)

16 These are the names of the men which Moses sent to spy out the land. And Moses called Oshea the son of Nun Jehoshua.

Oshea was called Jehoshua. Jehoshua is shortened in our Bible to Joshua, but the Hebrew is the very same, יהוֹשֻׁעַ, y^e-ho-shu-a[g]. (cf. Jos.1.1) The verb יָשַׁע, ya-sha[g], is tss. *to be safe, to help, to defend, to deliver, to*

avenge, to preserve, to bring salvation, to rescue; another noun יִשׁוּעַ, yea-sha[g] or יִשׁוּעַ, ye-sha[g] is tss. *salvation, safety*.

17 And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them,

עָלוּ זָה בְּנֶגֶב וְעַלֵּיתֶם אֶת־הַהָר
Get you up this [way] southward, and go up [into] the mountain:

in the south

(cf. Nu.13.22, *by the south*; 33.40; Is.22.1, *in the south*;
Dan.11.29, *toward the south*)

into the Negev, Green's Interlinear Bible

Get you up this way southward means for them to go into the south country of the land of Canaan.

Why was it necessary for these men to go up and search out the land. Could it be to prove their faith? Will they believe that God would give them the land that flows with milk and honey in spite of those things which they'll see that contradicts what He promised to them? Remember, faith receives the promises of God and rests in Him. In other words this chosen nation was to enter into and possess the land in a manner that the LORD prescribed. Not as they would but as He would.

Ps 95:11 Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.

The LORD had already essentially said this to them before.

Ex.33.2 And I will send an angel before thee; and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite:

3 Unto a land flowing with milk and honey: for I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiffnecked people: lest I consume thee in the way.

4 And when the people heard these evil tidings, they mourned: and no man did put on him his ornaments.

5 For the LORD had said unto Moses, Say unto the children of Israel, Ye are a stiffnecked people: I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee: therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee.

6 And the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by the mount Horeb.

The truth is that Israel couldn't continue in that land apart from His blessed presence with them and they knew it.

18 And see the land, what it is; and the people that dwelleth therein,
on it

dwelleth, Qal part. (Poel) of **יָשַׁב**, tss. *to dwell, to tarry, to abide, to continue, to remain to inhabit, to sit*; **v.19**.

whether they be strong or weak, few or many;

strong, **קָיָה**, an adj. tss. *strong*, and v.30, *stronger*; in other Scriptures this is tss. *mighty, strong, loud, and sore*; the verb is tss. *to be sore, strong, courageous, confirmed, prevailing*.

weak, **רַפָּה**, an adj. tss. *weak* (4) (cf. Nu.13.18; 2Sa.17.2; Job 4.3; Isa.35.3).

few, **מְעַט**, Hebrew masc. noun, *little, small, few*.

many, **רַב**, Hebrew adj. tss. *great, many, multitude, abundant, long time, long, increased*.

19 And what the land is that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad; and what cities they be that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strong holds;
camps fortifications.

good, Hebrew adj. **טוֹב**, tōhv, tss. *good, goodness, merry, pleasant*,

bad, Hebrew adj. רַע, raⁿg, tss. *evil, wicked, bad, harmful, ill favored, mischief, wickedness, sore, trouble, calamity.*

cities, of the fem. noun עִיר, geer, tss. *city.*

tents, מַחֲנֶה, a noun tss. *Mahanaim, company, band, drove, camp, host.*

strong holds, מִבְצָר, miv-tzar, a masc. noun tss. *a strong hold, a fenced city, a strong city, a hold of, a defended city, a fortress; cf. v.28, the verb בָּצַר, walled.*

20 And what the land is, whether it be fat or lean,

fat, Hebrew adj. שָׂמֵן, sha-mehn tss. *fat (8), plenteous (1), lusty (1).*

lean, רָזָה, only twice in the OT and tss. *lean; the verb רָזָה, to famish, wax lean.*

whether there be wood therein, or not.
tree, timber

wood, עֵץ, [g]ehtz, noun tss. *trees, timber, wood.*

And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land.
strengthen yourselves take or fetch

And be ye of good courage, וְהָתַחֲזַקְתֶּם, Hithpael (reflexive act.) pret. w/a 2ppl. masc. suffix; the verb root is חָזַק, cha-zaq, and in Hithpael it is tss. *to be of good courage, to withstand, to take courage, to strengthen oneself, to show oneself strong, to be strong, to be encouraged, to play (war games) as men, to behave oneself valiantly, to wax mighty, to hold.*

the Hebrew adj. חָזָק, *cha-zaq*, is in vss.18, *strong* and 30, *stronger*; in other Scriptures it is tss. *mighty, strong, loud, and sore*;

Now, the children of Israel were not commanded to search the land whether they could take it or not, but to examine it to discover things concerning it.

Now the time was the time of the firstripe grapes.

firstripe, בְּכוֹר, *bi-koor*, a masc. noun tss. *firstfruits, firstripe, hasty fruit*, and so, the early fruit. (in Numbers see 13.20; 18.13; 28.26)

21 ¶ So they went up, and searched the land from the wilderness of Zin unto Rehob, as men come to Hamath.

The wilderness of Zin, also called the Negev, is a largely sand and desert area located to the west and south of the southernmost tip of the Dead Sea. (cf. Nu.20.1; 27.14; 33.36; 34.31; Jos.15.1)

It will be in the wilderness of Zin where Miriam dies. (cf. Nu.33.36) And in this same wilderness Moses, at the waters of Meribah, rebelled against the commandment of the LORD when he smote the rock instead of speaking to it. (cf. Nu.20.11-13)

Rehob, otherwise called Beth-rehob (meaning the house [beth-] of rehob), has a number of possible locations. The northernmost location seems likely because of the reference to Hamath of Syria. Rehob becomes a Syrian settlement. (2Sa.10.8) If this is correct, then it would be located about 25 miles north of the Sea of Galilee. (cf. Jos.19.28; 2Sa.10.8)

as men come to Hamath, probably refers to the ancient trade route that led north, as one came from Canaan, to Hamath of Syria, which was approximately 200 miles north of Rehob. (cf. 2Ki.17.24; 18.34; 23.33; Is.11.11; Am.6.2; Zec.9.2)

So the spies of Israel surveyed the whole land of Canaan, from south to north and back.

22 And they ascended by the south, and came unto Hebron; where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the children of Anak, were. (Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.)

Hebron – Mamre, Arbah, and Kirjatharba are the different names that refer to the same place, Hebron. Arbah is probably the name of this place in the time of Moses. Arba was the father of Anak, and Anak's sons are those stated above.

Mamre – Ge 13:18 Then Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the LORD.

Arbah – Ge 35:27 And Jacob came unto Isaac his father unto Mamre, unto the city of Arbah, which is Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac sojourned. Jos 21:11 And they gave them the city of Arba the father of Anak, which city is Hebron, in the hill country of Judah, with the suburbs thereof round about it.

Kirjatharba – Jos 14:15 And the name of Hebron before was Kirjatharba; which Arba was a great man among the Anakims. And the land had rest from war.

Hebron already has a lot of history. During the days of Abraham this place was called Mamre. Even then it was where the Canaanite and the Perizzite lived. (cf. Ge.13.7) Abraham was living here when Lot, his nephew, was taken prisoner during the war of the several kings, after which he met Melchizedec, priest of the most high God. (cf. Gen. ch.14) Here he met the three visitors on their way to Sodom. (cf. Ge.18.1) It was here that Abraham & Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah are buried. (cf. Ge.49.29-33) This is a famous city and place to the people of Israel.

Zoan – *Ps 78:12 Marvellous things did he in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan.* The establishment of the city of Hebron

precedes Zoan. The point is that the people are well-established in the land; naturally speaking, difficult to rout. Isn't that the consideration?

Forty years from now Caleb, the son of Jephuneh will receive this portion of Hebron as inheritance. Then he will drive out these same giants (v.33): *Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmi, the children of Anak* (or Anakims, plural for the singular Anak). (cf. Jos.15.13, 14) No matter when the children of God will possess the land, to possess it, to enter into rest they must believe that the LORD will give them the victory over them.

For the Christian, the NT, baptized-believing church member (these are the only ones that will ever begin to enter into the conflict), faith is the victory. (1Jo.5.4) The Christian that believes God is unceasingly engaged in the conflict of the spirit against the flesh, putting on the Spirit and putting off the flesh (carnality), resisting the devil, and becoming steadfast in and contenders for the faith of Jesus Christ. Possessing the land of promise is the same whether we engage it now or later. Forty years later the Israelites will face the very same sons of Anak.

23 And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff;

staff, mōht, a masc. noun, tss. in Nu.4.10, 12, bar; and Ps.66.9; 121.3, to be moved (though a noun); Nah.1.13, yoke.

and they brought of the pomegranates, and of the figs.

pomegranates, רִמּוֹן, rim-mohn, a masc. noun, and always tss. pomegranate (22).

figs, תְּאֵנָה, t^e-eh-nah, always tss. fig or fit trees.

אֶשְׁכּוֹל

- וְאֶשְׁכּוֹל -

24 The place was called the brook Eshcol, because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence.

25 And they returned from searching of the land after forty days.

at the end of

after, מִקְּהֵצַי, miq-qehtz, masc. sing. noun w/a prefixed preposition מִן, *from*; the noun is קְהֵצַי, qēhtz, *a process of* [time], *the end* [of all flesh, or forty days, of seventy years], *after* [Abram dwelt], [the lodging of, height of his] *borders, from the uttermost border, an end.*

26 ¶ And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh;

Kadesh is the same place as Enmishpat and Kadeshbarnea. (cf. Ge.14.7; 16.14; Nu.32.8) This area is to the west of Sodom, where Abraham's nephew, Lot, settled so many years earlier. (Ge.13.10-13)

and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation,
returned

and brought back, וַיָּשִׁיבוּ, Hiphil (causative act.) fut. 3pl. masc. of שׁוּב, shoov, meaning *to return or come again.*

and shewed them the fruit of the land.

and shewed, וַיַּרְאֵם, Hiphil (causative act.) fut. of the verb רָאָה, to see, and so a visual display; tss. *to shew, to let see.*

27 And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it.

28 Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land,

strong, adj. אַז, [g]az, tss. *strong, fierce, power, mighty.*

and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there.

are walled, בְּצָרוֹת, Qal part. pass. (Paul) of בָּצַר, *to be walled, fenced, strong, mighty*; in Piel (Intensive act.) it is tss. *fortify*; cf. v.19, the noun מִבְּצָר, , miv-tzar, *strongholds*, and בְּצִיר, ba-tzeer.

29 The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.

So this report translates into something like this (cf. Jos.11.1-3):

- The very first thing we'll have to do is fight against the Amalekites. They came against us when we were first brought out of Egypt. (Ex.17.8-16)
- The Hittites, Jebusites, and the Amorites are the backbone of the land, holding all the high places. We know that the high places are extremely difficult to bring down.
- The Canaanites hold the lush and fertile ground of the lowlands on both sides of the country, east and west, by the Mediterranean sea and by the Jordan River.

(not to mention all of their horses and chariots)

The promised land has no appeal when viewed through the eyes of natural reason. That's why Israel turned in their hearts back to the things of Egypt again and again. (cf. Ac.7.39; Nu.11.4, 5, 20b) They didn't understand what God could do for them when He worked through them. They came into unbelief. This is why Christians turn back to the world. They don't understand what the power of the grace of God can do as they yield themselves to the Spirit of God to do the will of God. (cf. Ro.6.19)

30 And Caleb stilled the people before Moses,

and ... stilled, שָׁטַט, Hiphil (causative act.) fut. 3ps. masc. of שָׁטַט, tss. *to keep silence* (Jud.3.19; Hab.2.20), *to be silent* (Zec.2.13), *to hold your peace* (Neh.8.11; Zep.1.7), *to hold your tongue* (Am.6.10), *to be stilled* (Nu.13.30)

That Caleb had to still the people means that they had become troubled, agitated, or disturbed at the report that the ten men gave before Moses and Aaron. Once people become disturbed almost all hearing ceases. In that moment everything that might be said falls on *deaf ears*.

and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it;

and possess, Qal pret. of יָרַשׁ, ya-rash, tss.

Nu.14.24, Hiphil fut.; 13.30; 27.11, Qal pret.; 21.24, 35, Qal fut.; 36.8, Qal part (Poel); Nu.33.52, 53, Hiphil pret., *to possess*; Nu.21.32, Qal fut. & Hiphil fut.; 32.21, Hiphil infin.; 33.55, Hiphil fut., *to drive out*;
Nu.33.29, Hiphil fut., *to dispossess*
Nu.14.12, Hiphil fut., *to disinherit*..

also tss. in other Scriptures as *to cast out, to succeed, to enjoy, to inherit, to expel, to destroy*.

for we are well able to overcome it.

the words *for we are well able to overcome*, כִּי־יָכוֹל נוּכַל, are of the result of the repetition of the Hebrew word יָכַל, ya-kohl, tss. *can, might, to be able, to prevail, to overcome*, which repetition gives emphasis to the verbs. It could be interpreted to mean *being able we are able*.

31 But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.

stronger, חָזַק, cha-zaq, adj.; tss. *mighty, strong, loud, and sore*;
Nu.13.20, in Hithpael (reflexive) pret., *and be ye of good courage*;
this verb is also tss in other Scriptures with the words, *to be sore, strong, courageous, confirmed, prevailing*.

In effect these nay-sayers said, ‘We are not able ... they are stronger than we are; they are more encouraged to keep their land than we are encouraged to take possession of it.’ Well, the sad thing is that they were right because they didn’t believe God could do what He promised to them.

32 And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched

sent, root verb יָצָה

an evil report of, דִּבְבַהּ, dib-bah, a fem. noun tss. an evil report, a slander, an infamy, a defaming (cf. Nu.13.32, 37, evil report; 14.36, a slander.)

unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature.

great stature, מִדּוֹת, mi-dohth, a fem. pl. noun of מִדָּה, mid-dah, tss. a measure, size, great stature, piece, tribute, garments, wide; so men of statures.

33 And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants:

giants, נְפִילִים, n^e-phee-leem, found only three times in the OT and tss. giants (Gen.6.4; Nu.13.33 twice); the verb נָפַל, na-phal is tss. to fall, to fall away, to fall down, to fail, to die, perish, to rot.

and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.

Since the land is too much for these men that are of such great stature how can we hope to fare any better than they?

the giants – is defined for us here as referring to those of great stature.

Og – king of Bashan, which is called the land of the giants (cf. Deu.3.13, his bed measured 9 cubits long and 4 cubits wide (13 ½' X 6')

Goliath – was six cubits and a span tall (approx.. 9 ½') (1Sa.17.4)

Goliath's four brothers were all born to giant in Gath. (cf. 2Sa.21.16-22)

This was not at all the answer which Moses had expected to hear from those that he sent to search out the land.

Nu.32.8 Thus did your fathers, when I sent them from Kadeshbarnea to see the land.

9 For when they went up unto the valley of Eshcol, and saw the land, they discouraged the heart of the children of Israel, that they should not go into the land which the LORD had given them.

My opinion is that Moses was certain that when these men went up to spy the land that they would return with a report that would encourage Israel to desire to take possession of the land immediately. But instead the evil report discouraged them from it.

Israel now comes to the crossroads. Will they take possession of the land promised to them by the LORD or not?

Closing remarks:

Canaanland is often misunderstood. Folks look at it as if it is a type of coming into glory. Canaanland is a place for conflict and maturation or perfecting. Yes, it is presented in Scripture as a place of rest to the people of God but what that translates into for Israel is that they were supposed to cease from their unbelief, enter into the works of God, and take possession of the land: live victoriously; conquer. Israel was supposed to take possession of the land according to the works which God has ordained for them as a nation *under the law covenant*. However, there was a problem: they could not take possession of the land because of the weakness of the flesh to sin. The law covenant which God had given to Israel could not empower sinful flesh to act in faith to God because it was an *external commandment*.

Ro 8:3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh ...

Therefore the result is that they failed to possess the land. In fact, as we shall see in the next chapter, they outright rejected Canaanland. Not until another generation is raised up will they go into Canaanland. That first

generation represented the first birth, a birth after the flesh; and the second generation represented a subsequent birth, a new birth or re-birth; a spiritual birth.

Joh 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

You see, there must be a *new birth*, a birth that is subsequent to the first birth. So, this second generation that shall come to possess the land of Canaan forty years from the time of the history of our text today (Numbers ch. 13) represents those that are under the new covenant. These are they that can enter into the rest of God, which is doing the will of God from the heart. The new covenant works from *within* the heart of the sinner. God by it imparts to the sinner a new and living principle. Read the text of Romans chapter 8 again.

Ro 8:3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Again,

Heb 8:10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel (and into which the Gentiles have been grafted, [cf.Ro.11.17]) after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord (strictly external knowledge): for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest (internal knowledge).

12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

Canaanland is a land of conflict. The application we can make today of this historical account of Israel is that the NT believer is to live victoriously by the faith of Jesus Christ as long as we are in this present evil world. We should not live defeated lives. We should not be led by and overcome with the lusts of the flesh. We should be conquering the enemy that is both inside and outside of us. We are to be faithful applicants to the commandments of Jesus Christ.

Joh 10:10b ... I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.