

- It appears that it was the people's idea to send spy's into the land so they wouldn't have to go right in ([Deuteronomy 1:22](#)). Remember this fact later, it will be very important.
- God says the process they should follow: one spy should be chosen from each of the 12 tribes of Israel. ([Numbers 13:1](#))
- The Bible records for us the names of each person sent so that we can know God's instructions for selecting the spies was followed. ([Numbers 13:3-15](#))
- Hoshea (or some translations say "Oshea") was called "Joshua" by Moses. ([Numbers 13:16](#)) Some commentators say this is significant because Moses was honoring Joshua or encouraging that, some even say this is basically the same name "Jesus" and that Joshua also was a type of Savior figure in the OT. I am not sure I believe all that personally, but it is worth studying and figuring out what you believe.
- God charged the spies with finding out two things: 1) see what the land is like, and 2) see how the inhabitants of the land are. He also said, "oh and while you are there, bring back some fruit." ([Numbers 13: 17-20](#)) Notice how he also encouraged them to "be of good courage."
- So the spies went all over the land in about 40 days. They also cut down grapes and the grapes were so heavy that it took two people to carry them suspended by a pole. ([Numbers 13:26-20](#)).
- Their report was that the land was really great, but that the inhabitants were strong and they live in walled cities. In fact, their report was very detailed about who lived where. ([Numbers 13:26-29](#)).
- Caleb was the spy who spoke up at this point and said "c'mon let's go now, we can take 'em." ([Numbers 13:40](#))
- The people of Israel, whipped up the other spies (10 of them anyway, we will read about the one who sides with Caleb in the next chapter), said, "no they are too strong and there are too many of them. There are even some giants (we don't really know what that Hebrew word "Nephilim" really refers to but is best translated as Giants, see [Genesis 6:4](#)).
- Remember we talked about how there weren't really chapters and verses when the Bible was originally written? This is a case where the story about the reaction of the children of Israel continues. Then they say "why did God deliver us from Egypt and lead us through the wilderness only to die now at the hands of our enemies?" It would have been better for us to die then, at least our women and children wouldn't be captured." ([Numbers 14:1-4](#)) And they weren't just temporarily emotional about this, they were like this day and night and even crying about it. They even wanted to select a leader to take them back to Egypt. This story becomes so infamous the Jewish people do not forget it. ([Nehemiah 9:17](#) note: some translations even say "in Egypt" here)

- Moses and Aaron fell on their faces. (They were probably thinking “no not this again.” (Numbers 14:5))
- Joshua joins Caleb in saying “we can take them” but he explicitly adds “because God is with us and not with them.” (Numbers 14:6-9)
- Just as the people were about to stone Joshua and Caleb, the “glory of the Lord” appeared so everyone could see it. (Numbers 14:10)
- God says He will destroy the people of Israel and keep the promises he made to Moses another way. Moses says to God “what will the Egyptians (and others) say if you do that? Please forgive these people again.” (Numbers 14:13-19).
- God does agree to forgive the people. (Numbers 14:20). Moses is not telling God anything He doesn’t already know, but if that were a good reason not to talk to God, we wouldn’t pray today since God already knows everything. The point is that God wants us to pray. In fact he tells us too - Jesus provides an example of prayer for us (Matthew 6:5-14) and shows us how we can persuade God to change his mind when He gives us a parable of the persistent widow (Luke 18:1-8)
- Although it is not entirely clear that all this conversation and dialog was audible to all the people of Israel it probably was, because we read in Numbers 14:10 that “everyone could see” the glory of the Lord, and down in Numbers 14:26 we are going to read specifically that God began to speak with Moses and Aaron.
- God ultimately punished the children of Israel for not trusting Him like Caleb and Joshua did after they had seen all God had done for them. Instead of going right into the land and relying on God, they would be have to stay in the wilderness for 40 years (one year for each day the spies were in the promised land). All people alive would die except Caleb and Joshua before entering the promised land. (Numbers 14: 26-38)
- The next day, the people tried to take the land and were unsuccessful (Numbers 14: 39-45).
- Story of God’s sentence against Israel in Numbers 14:36-38 contains a lesson for Christians today not to fall away from God (Hebrews 3:7-19)

#### Questions:

1. What did the people of Israel want to do instead of going right into the land?
2. How many spies went into the land of Canaan? Why this number?
3. What did God charge the spies with doing on their mission?
4. How long were the spies in Canaan?
5. What did the spies bring back from Canaan?

6. What did the spies say about the land and the people who lived there?
7. How many spies said that Israel could never defeat the inhabitants?
8. What were the name of the two spies who thought Israel could take the land? Why did they think that?
9. How did the people of Israel react to the spies news?
10. What did the children of Israel want to do to Joshua and Caleb?
11. Who saved Joshua and Caleb from the people and how did He do it?
12. How does Moses bargain with God?
13. How does God punish the Israelites for their lack of trust in this instance?
14. What happens when Israel tries to take Canaan anyway?
15. What is the moral of this story for us today?