

Before you read: God led Israel out of slavery in Egypt. God led his people to a new land. This land was called the Promise Land. God had promised to bring Israel to this new land. The Promise Land would be Israel's new home. Israel had seen God do many miracles. Remember, miracles are special things that God can do that don't happen normally. Israel had seen the plagues in Egypt. They had seen God part the Red Sea. Then they walked through the Red Sea on a dry ground. God did many other miracles for them. God brought Israel to the Promise Land. God said he would help Israel defeat the enemies in the land. But Israel was afraid.

Read Numbers 13 and 14.

Numbers 13

God's people camped in a desert. There God told Moses, "Choose some men. Send them into the land of Canaan. It's the land I'm going to give my people. Tell them to look around the land."

So Moses chose 12. Moses told them, "go into the Hill Country. Find out what the land is like. Find out if the people are strong or not. Find out what kind of town they live in. See if the towns have walls. See if they are like forts. Look at the ground. See if it's good for growing food. Find out if trees grow there. Try to bring back some fruit from the land."

So the 12 Men set out. They looked all around the land. They found a valley where grapes were growing. They cut off a branch of grapes. It had one bunch of grapes hanging from it. They got some pomegranates and figs, too. They put these fruits on a pole. Two of the men carried the poles with the fruits.

After 40 days the 12 men came back to Moses. They told him about the land. They showed him the fruit. "It's a good land," they said. "It will be easy to grow food there. There's more than enough for everyone. It's as if milk and honey flow out for people. But the people who live there are strong. The cities are very big. They are like forts. "

Caleb told the man to be quiet. He said, "We should go into the land. We should take it. I'm sure we can do it."

"We can't fight those people," said the other men. "They are stronger than we are. Those people are very big. We felt like grasshoppers next to them. "

Numbers 14

That night God's people cried. They fussed at Moses and Aaron. "we wish we had died in Egypt!" they said. "Or we wish we would die in the desert! Why is God taking us into this land? The people there will kill us. They'll take our wives and children to be theirs. It would be better to go back to Egypt! "

The people even said, "Let's choose another leader. Let's go back to Egypt."

Moses and Aaron bowed down in prayer in front of the people.

Joshua and Caleb were two of the 12 men who looked around Canaan. They said, "The land is very good. If God is happy with us, he will lead us there. It's a land where milk and honey seem to flow out for the people. God will give us the land. Just don't turn against God.

“We’ll win over those people,” said Joshua and Caleb. “Don’t be scared of them. God is with us.”

But people talked about killing Joshua and Caleb.

Then God’s greatness came over the worship tent. God said to Moses, “How long will this go on? How long will these people treat me as nothing? I’ve shown them wonders. But they choose not to believe me. I’ll send a great sickness upon them. I’ll get rid of them. Then I’ll make your family into a nation. Your family will be stronger and greater than they ever were.”

“But nations in Canaan have already heard about you. They heard that you lead your people with a tall cloud in the day. They heard about the cloud of fire at night. What if you get rid of your people? Then these nations will say you couldn’t lead your people. So you killed them in the desert.

“Show these nations you’re strong. Just like you said,” Moses told God. “You said you do not get angry in a hurry. You have more than enough love. You forgive sin. You do bring trouble to people for doing wrong. But your love is great. So forgive your people’s sin. You forgave them before.”

“I will forgive them,” said God. “Just as you asked me to do. But not one person who saw my wonders will go into Canaan. They saw the wonders I did in Egypt. They saw the wonders I did in the desert. But they didn’t obey me. They tested me. So they won’t get to see the new land.

“But Caleb is different,” said God. “He follows me with this whole heart. So I’ll bring him into the land I promised my people.

“My people must turn around tomorrow,” said God. “They must go back into the desert. They must head back toward the Red Sea.

“They said they would die in the desert,” said God. “So they will. Everyone who is 20 years old or more will die. They won’t get to go into the Promised Land. Only Caleb and Joshua will get to go. My people said their children would be taken by their enemies. But the children will get to enjoy that land.

“You’ll be shepherds in the desert for 40 years,” said God. “That’s one year for each day you looked at the Promised Land. I, the Lord, have said this. So you can be sure I’ll do it.”

Now the 10 men who made everyone afraid got sick. They died. They were the men who had looked at the new land. But Joshua and Caleb did not get sick or die.

Moses told all God’s people what God had said. They cried and cried.

The next morning they headed for God’s Promised Land. “We sinned,” they said. “We’ll go into the land and take it now.”

“It won’t work,” said Moses. “You’re not obeying God. Don’t go. God won’t be with you, because you turned away from him. You’ll be killed if you go in now.”

The people didn’t listen. They kept going. They headed to the hill country. But Moses didn’t go with them.

Then their enemies came down from the hills. They jumped out at them and chased them far away.

Look at these pictures. Aren't they funny. How do they do this?





We call this perspective. Sometimes in a picture or video an object looks bigger or smaller than it really is.

Israel was looking at the Promise Land kind of like these pictures. They were looking at the enemies in the land. They looked really big. They forgot that God is bigger. In their minds, God was smaller than the big enemies. This made Israel afraid.

What are you afraid of? Is there anything making you worry?

Remember, God is bigger than whatever we're afraid of.

Pray together.