

THE SPIES RETURN

(Numbers 13:26-14:45)

Parts:	1st spy	1st man	Caleb	Narrator
	2nd spy	2nd man	Moses	
	3rd spy	3rd man	Joshua	
	4th spy	4th man	The Lord	
Narrator	So they departed and came back to Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the children of Israel in the Wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh; they brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land.			
1st spy	We went to the land where you sent us.			
2nd spy	It truly flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. <i>[He shows grapes, pomegranates and figs.]</i>			
3rd spy	Nevertheless the people who dwell in the land are strong;			
4th spy	the cities are fortified and very large;			
2nd spy	moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there.			
1st spy	The amalekites dwell in the land of the South;			
3rd spy	the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains;			
4th spy	and the Canaanites dwell by the sea and along the banks of the Jordan.			
Narrator	Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said,			
Caleb	Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it.			
Narrator	But the men who had gone up with him said,			
4th spy	We are not able to go up against the people,			
1st spy	for they are stronger than we.			

- Narrator And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying,
- 3rd spy The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants,
- 2nd spy and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature.
- 1st spy There we saw the giants
- 2nd spy (the descendants of Anak came from the giants);
- 4th spy and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight,
- 3rd spy and so we were in their sight.
- Narrator Then all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night. And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them,
- 1st man If only we had died in the land of Egypt!
- 2nd man Or if only we had died in this wilderness!
- 3rd man Why has the Lord brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims?
- 4th man Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?
- Narrator So they said to one another,
- 2nd man Let us select a leader and return to Egypt.

Narrator Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel.

And Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; and they spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying:

Joshua The land we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land.

Caleb If the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, `a land which flows with milk and honey.'

Joshua Only do not rebel against the Lord, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread;

Caleb their protection has departed from them, and the Lord is with us. Do not fear them.

Narrator And all the congregation said to stone them with stones.

(1st-4th men may say "Stone them, stone them." in random order, gradually turning away and growing quieter with the following line.)

Narrator And the Lord said to Moses:

The Lord How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them? I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they.

Narrator And Moses said to the Lord:

Moses Then the Egyptians will hear it, for by Your might You brought these people up from among them, and they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that You, Lord, are among these people; that You, Lord, are seen face to face and that Your cloud stands above them; and You go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night. Now if you kill these people as one man, then the nations which have heard of Your fame will speak, saying, "Because the Lord was not able to bring this people to the land which He swore to give them, therefore He killed them in the wilderness."...Pardon the iniquity of this people, I pray, according to the greatness of Your mercy, just as You have forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now.

Narrator Then the Lord said:

The Lord I have pardoned according to your word; but truly...because all these men who have seen My glory and the signs which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have put Me to the test now these ten times, and have not heeded My voice, they certainly shall not see the land of which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who rejected Me see it. But My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it....How long shall I bear with this evil congregation who murmur against Me?...The carcasses of you who have murmured against Me shall fall in this wilderness, all of you who were numbered according to your entire number, from twenty years old and above. Except for Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun, you shall by no means enter the Land which I swore I would make you dwell in. But your little ones, whom you said would be victims, I will bring in, and they shall know the land which you have despised....According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for each day you shall bear your guilt one year, namely forty years, and you shall know My rejection....

Narrator And the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land, who returned and made all the congregation murmur against him by bringing a bad report of the land, those very men...died by the plague before the Lord. But Joshua...and Caleb...remained alive....

Then Moses told these words to all the children of Israel, and the people mourned greatly. And they rose early in the morning and went up to the top of the mountain, saying,

4th man Here we are,

3rd man and we will go up to the place which the Lord has promised,

1st man for we have sinned!

Narrator Then Moses said,

Moses Now why do you transgress the command of the Lord? For this will not succeed. Do not go up, lest you be defeated by your enemies, for the Lord is not among you...because you have turned away from the Lord, the Lord will not be with you.

Narrator But they presumed to go up to the mountaintop; nevertheless, neither the ark of the covenant of the Lord nor Moses departed from the camp. Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who dwelt in that mountain came down and attacked them, and drove them back as far as Hormah.