

Numbers 13

Verses 1 - 3

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ² “Send out men for yourself to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am going to give the sons of Israel; you shall send a man from each of their fathers’ tribes, everyone a leader among them.” ³ So Moses sent them from the wilderness of Paran at the command of the Lord, all of them men who were heads of the sons of Israel.

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Whose idea was it to spy out the land of Canaan? If we didn't have any other information about this event we would have to conclude that God told Moses to send out the spies. But we have other scripture that clarifies what actually happened here.

See Deut. 1:20-24

²⁰ And I said to you, ‘You have come to the hill country of the Amorites, which the Lord our God is about to give us. ²¹ See, the Lord your God has placed the land before you; go up, take possession, just as the Lord, the God of your fathers, has spoken to you. Do not fear or be dismayed.’ ²² “Then all of you approached me and said, ‘Let us send men ahead of us, so that they may spy out the land for us, and bring back to us word of the way by which we should go up, and the cities which we should enter.’ ²³ The plan pleased me, and I took twelve of your men, one man for each tribe. ²⁴ Then they turned and went up into the hill country, and came to the Valley of Eshcol, and spied it out.

What does Moses mean by “all of you”? It was probably just the leaders of the people that approached Moses but the message was from the people. So Moses went to God and asked if this was ok with Him and God allowed the will of the people to be done and told Moses to send out the spies. So God told Moses to send out the spies but that was after Moses had approached Him with the message from the people concerning their desire to send out some spies.

However, God had brought Israel out of Egypt to give them the land of Canaan so the people were seeking proof that wasn't needed. The land of Canaan was already theirs if they just chose to do His will.

Verses 4 – 16

These then were their names: from the tribe of **Reuben**, Shammua the son of Zaccur; ⁵ from the tribe of **Simeon**, Shaphat the son of Hori; ⁶ from the tribe of **Judah**, Caleb the son of Jephunneh; ⁷ from the tribe of **Issachar**, Igal the son of Joseph; ⁸ from the tribe of **Ephraim**, Hoshea the son of Nun; ⁹ from the tribe of **Benjamin**, Palti the son of Raphu; ¹⁰ from the tribe of **Zebulun**, Gaddiel the son of Sodi; ¹¹ from the tribe of **Joseph**, from the tribe of **Manasseh**, Gaddi the son of Susi; ¹² from the tribe of **Dan**, Ammiel the son of Gemalli; ¹³ from the tribe of **Asher**, Sethur the son of Michael; ¹⁴ from the tribe of **Naphtali**, Nahbi the son of Vophsi; ¹⁵ and from the tribe of **Gad**, Geuel the son of Machi. ¹⁶ These are the names of the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land; but Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun, Joshua.

There are 13 tribes listed here but Joseph and Manasseh appear as one tribe sending out one leader. The tribe of Levi is not mentioned because they will be dispersed thru out Israel. These 12 men will be sent to spy out Canaan.

Caleb and Joshua are the only spies that most of us remember.

1. Caleb means whole hearted, bold, or brave.
2. Joshua means Savior, the same as Jesus

¹⁶ **These are the names of the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land; but Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun, Joshua.**

In chapter 11 we learned that Hoshea (Joshua) came from the tribe of Ephraim. He was the servant of Moses for many years. He was a great military leader under the leadership of Moses

See Exodus 17:8-10, 13

⁸ **Then Amalek came and fought against Israel at Rephidim. ⁹ So Moses said to Joshua, "Choose men for us and go out, fight against Amalek. Tomorrow I will station myself on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand." ¹⁰ Joshua did just as Moses told him, and fought against Amalek; and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.**

¹³ **And Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.**

Joshua became the leader of Israel after the death of Moses.

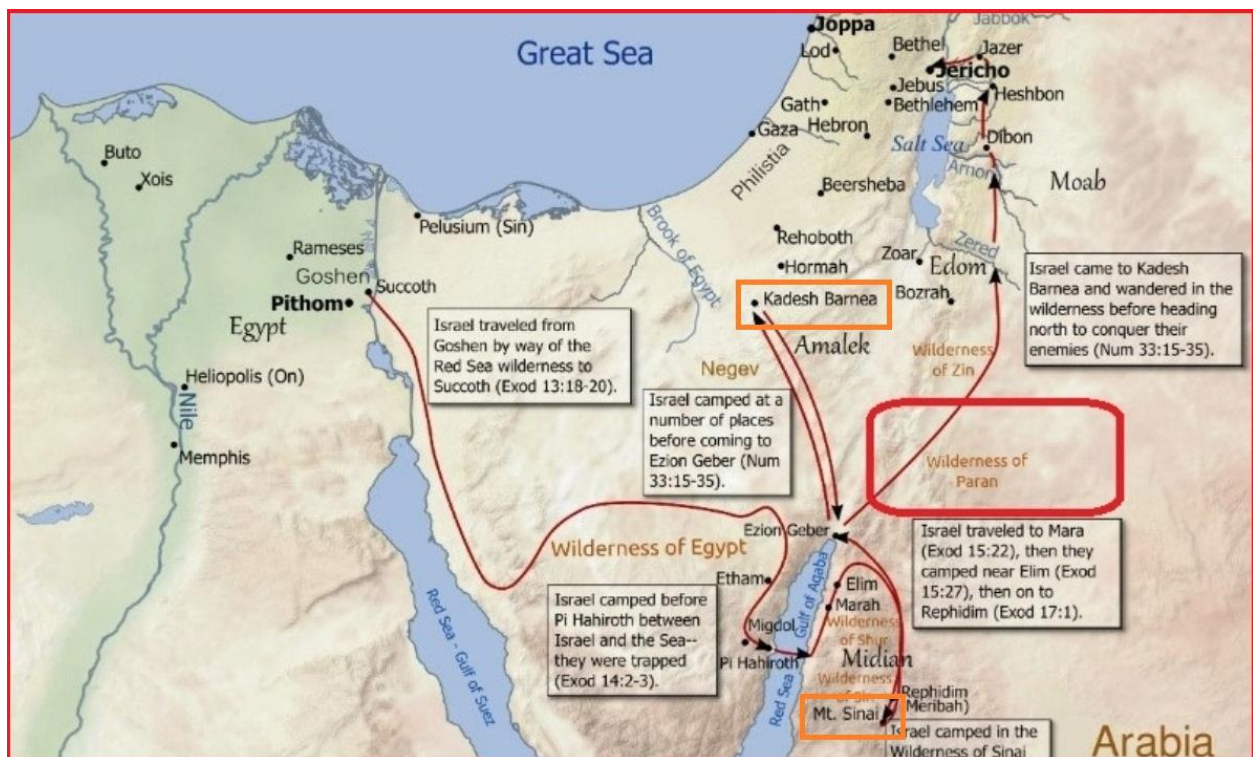
Verses 17 – 20

¹⁷ When Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, he said to them, “Go up there into the Negev; then go up into the hill country. ¹⁸ See what the land is *like*, and whether the people who live in it are strong or weak, whether they are few or many. ¹⁹ And how is the land in which they live, is it good or bad? And how are the cities in which they live, are *the people* in open camps or in fortifications? ²⁰ And how is the land, is it productive or unproductive? Are there trees in it or not? And show yourselves courageous and get some of the fruit of the land.” Now the time was the season of the first ripe grapes.

When Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, he said to them, “Go up into the Negev; then go up into the hill country.”

At the end of chapter 12 Israel had just arrived at the Wilderness of Paran

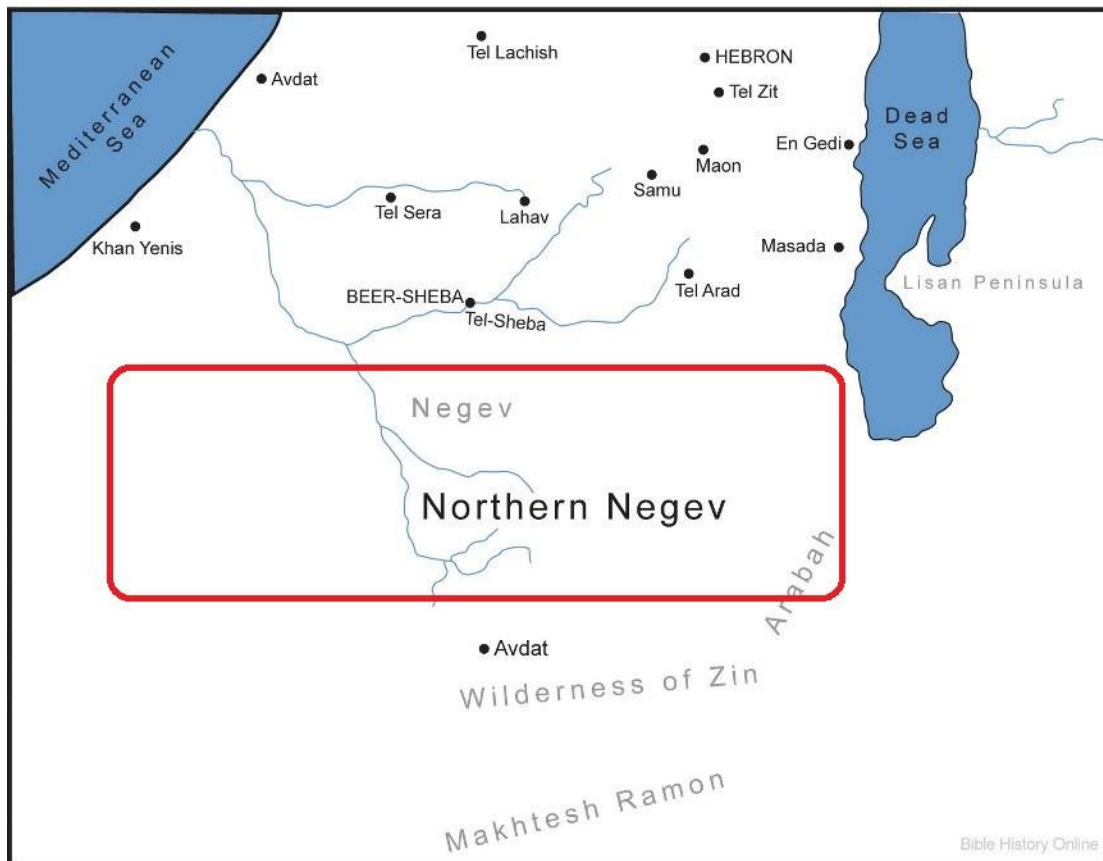
See map 1305



The spies leave the wilderness of Paran and head for the Negev.

See Map 1310

The Northern Negev



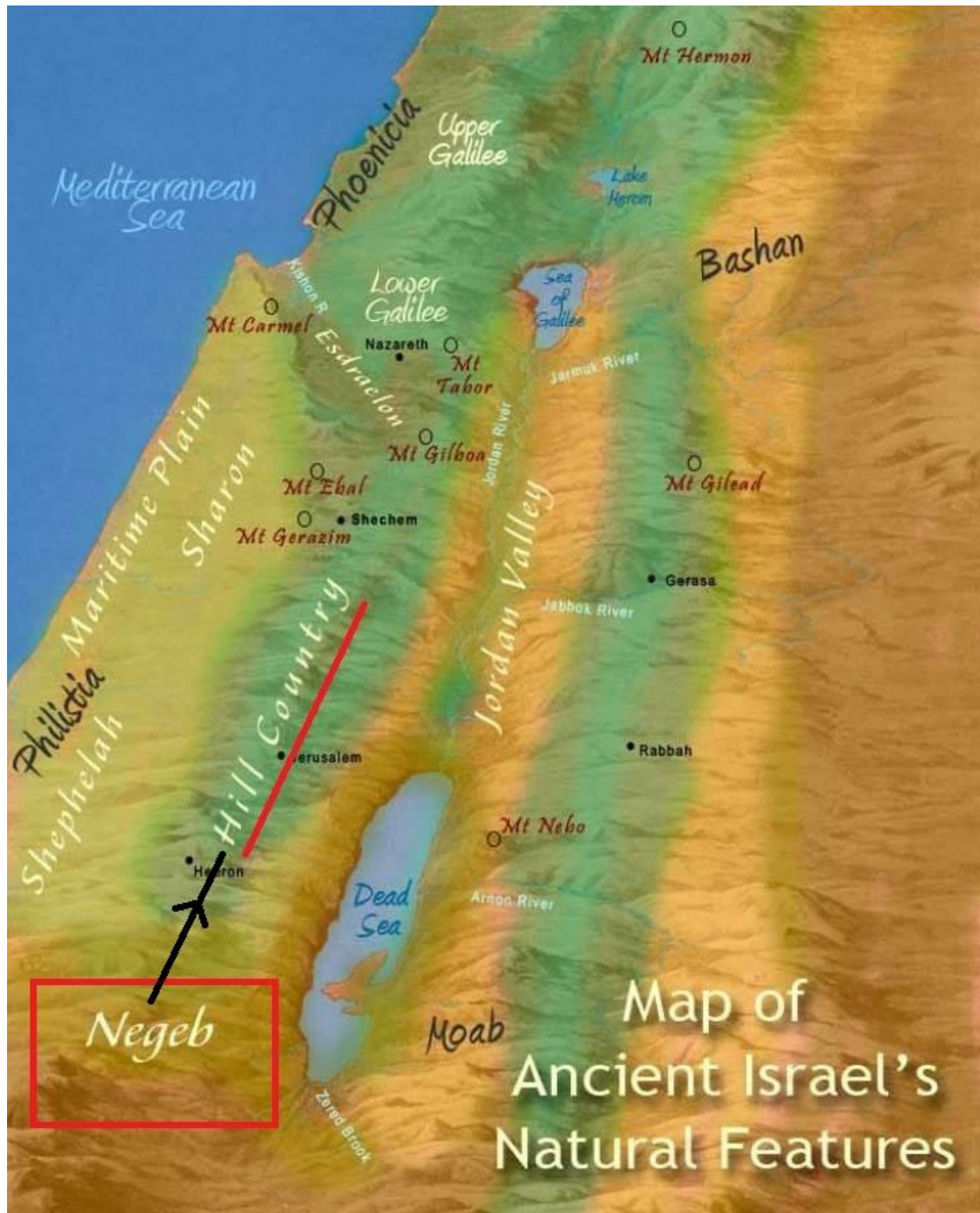
A large portion of the Negev is desert

See Pics 1315



The spies would then enter the hill country (the mountainous areas of Canaan)

See Map 1320



See video 1325 The 4 major regions of Israel

<https://www.levickfamily.com/9.18.html>

¹⁸ See what the land is *like*, and whether the people who live in it are strong or weak, whether they are few or many. ¹⁹ And how is the land in which they live, is it good or bad? And how are the cities in which they live, are the people in open camps or in fortifications?

Since God spoke to Moses face to face, and He had already promised to give this land to Israel, was any of this important to know?

²⁰ And how is the land, is it productive or unproductive? Are there trees in it or not? And show yourselves courageous and get some of the fruit of the land.”
Now the time was the season of the first ripe grapes.

God had already said it was a land flowing with milk and honey, so was any of this information important to know?

The season for the first ripe grapes was in June.

See chart 1330

Harvest Seasons							
	March	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept
Barley	X	X	X				
Flax	X	X	X				
Wheat			X	X	X		
Figs			X	X	X		
Grapes				X	X		
Pomegranates				X	X		
Olives					X	X	
Dates						X	X
Figs 2nd crop						X	X

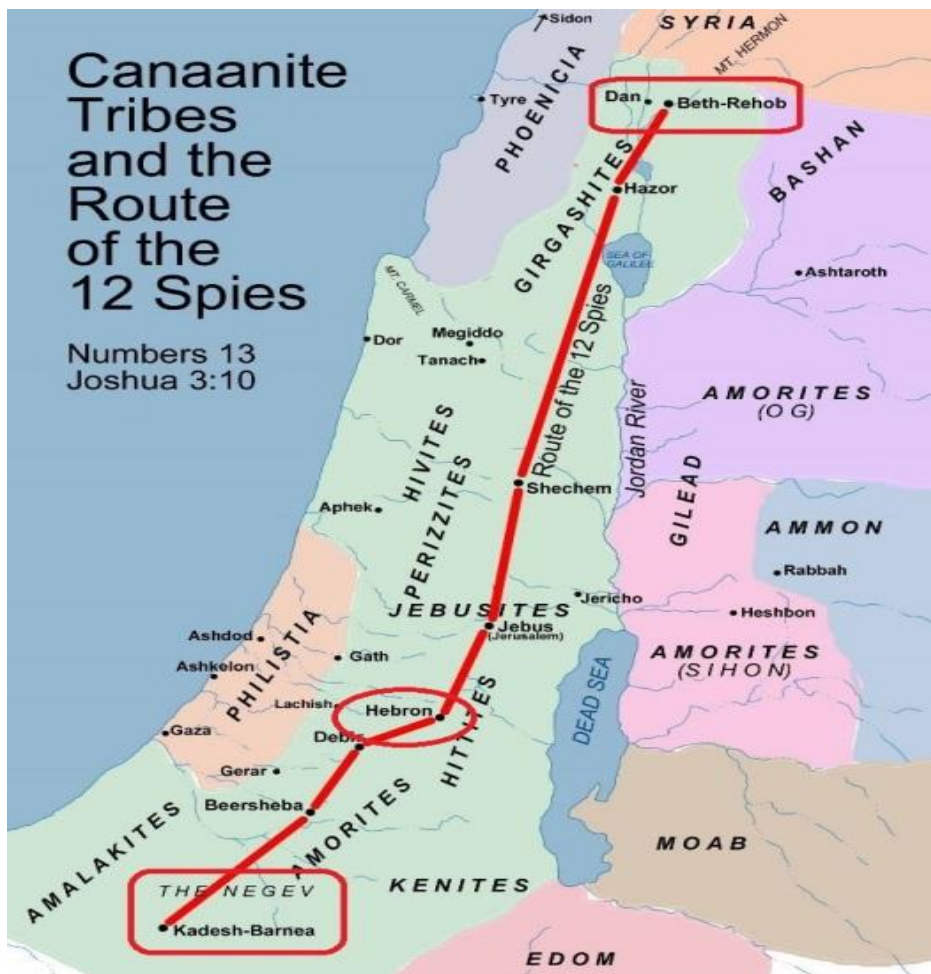
Verses 21 – 24

²¹ So they went up and spied out the land from the wilderness of Zin as far as Rehob, at Lebo-hamath. ²² When they had gone up into the Negev, they came to Hebron where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmi, the descendants of Anak were. (Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.)

²³ Then they came to the Valley of Eshcol, and from there they cut off a branch with a single cluster of grapes; and they carried it on a pole between two *men*, with some of the pomegranates and the figs. ²⁴ That place was called the Valley of Eshcol, because of the cluster which the sons of Israel cut off from there.

So they went up and spied out the land from the wilderness of Zin as far as Rehob, at Lebo-hamath.

See map 1335



²² When they had gone up into the Negev, they came to Hebron where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the descendants of Anak were. (Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.)

See Map above.

This was a very old city, dating from about 2000 B.C. to 1600 B.C. Hebron was known to the patriarchs under its older name Kiriath-Arba. Arba was the father of Anak .

See Joshua 15:13

¹³ Now he gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh a portion among the sons of Judah, in accordance with the command of the Lord to Joshua, *namely*, Kiriath-arba, Arba being the father of Anak (that is, Hebron).

We find out here that Hebron was built 7 years before Zoan.

See Map 1340 Zoan



Moses knew that Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt because He was educated in Egypt as a member of the royal family. He also had access to the archives of Egypt.

²³ Then they came to the Valley of Eshcol, and from there they cut off a branch with a single cluster of grapes; and they carried it on a pole between two *men*, with some of the pomegranates and the figs.

The valley of Eshcol is an area near Hebron. The cluster of grapes that they carried could have been similar to the one below.

See Pic 1345



They also gathered some pomegranates and figs.

See chart 1330 above.

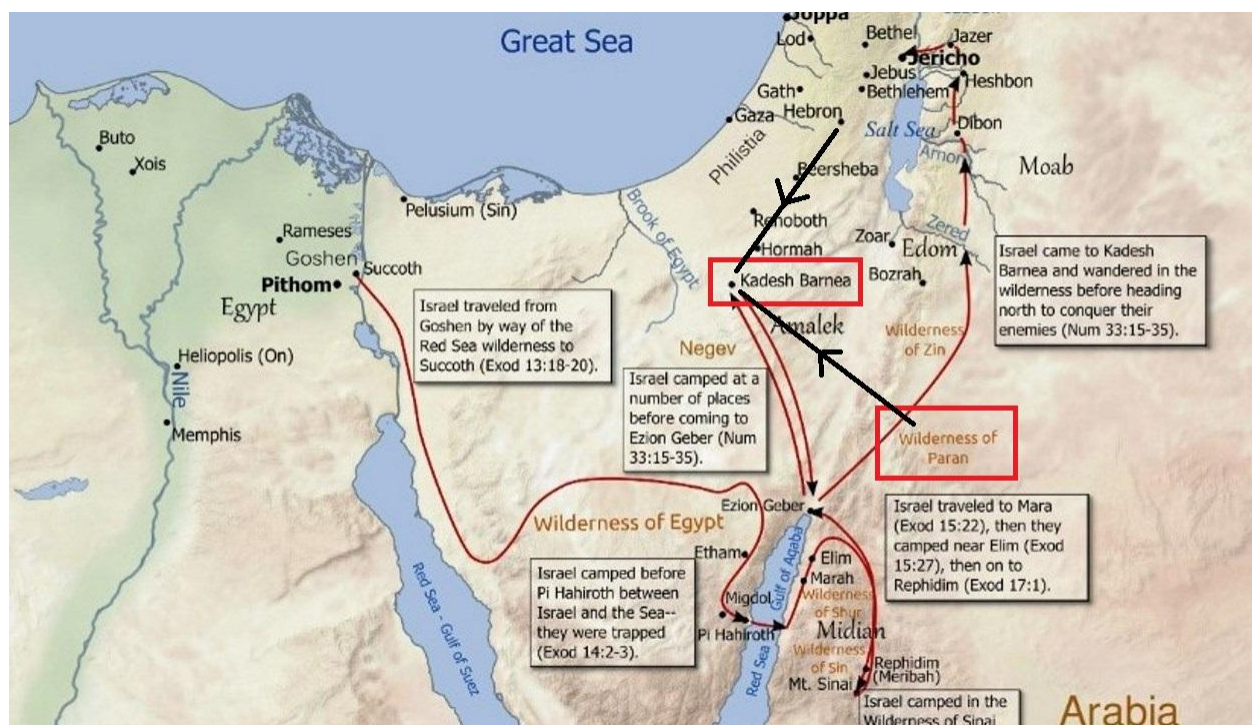
Verses 25 – 29

²⁵ When they returned from spying out the land, at the end of forty days, ²⁶ they went on and came to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, in the wilderness of Paran at Kadesh; and they brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. ²⁷ So they reported to him and said, “We came into the land where you sent us, and it certainly does flow with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. ²⁸ Nevertheless, the people who live in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified *and* very large. And indeed, we saw the descendants of Anak there! ²⁹ Amalek is living in the land of the Negev, the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites are living in the hill country, and the Canaanites are living by the sea and by the side of the Jordan.”

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In verse 17 the spies left the wilderness of Paran in Saudi Arabia and headed for the Negev and then went north into the land Of Canaan. When they come back from spying out the land of Canaan the rest of Israel had made it from the wilderness of Paran in Saudi Arabia to the wilderness of Paran at Kadesh (the Negev).

See map 1350



²⁷ So they reported to him and said, “We came into the land where you sent us, and it certainly does flow with milk and honey, and this is its fruit.

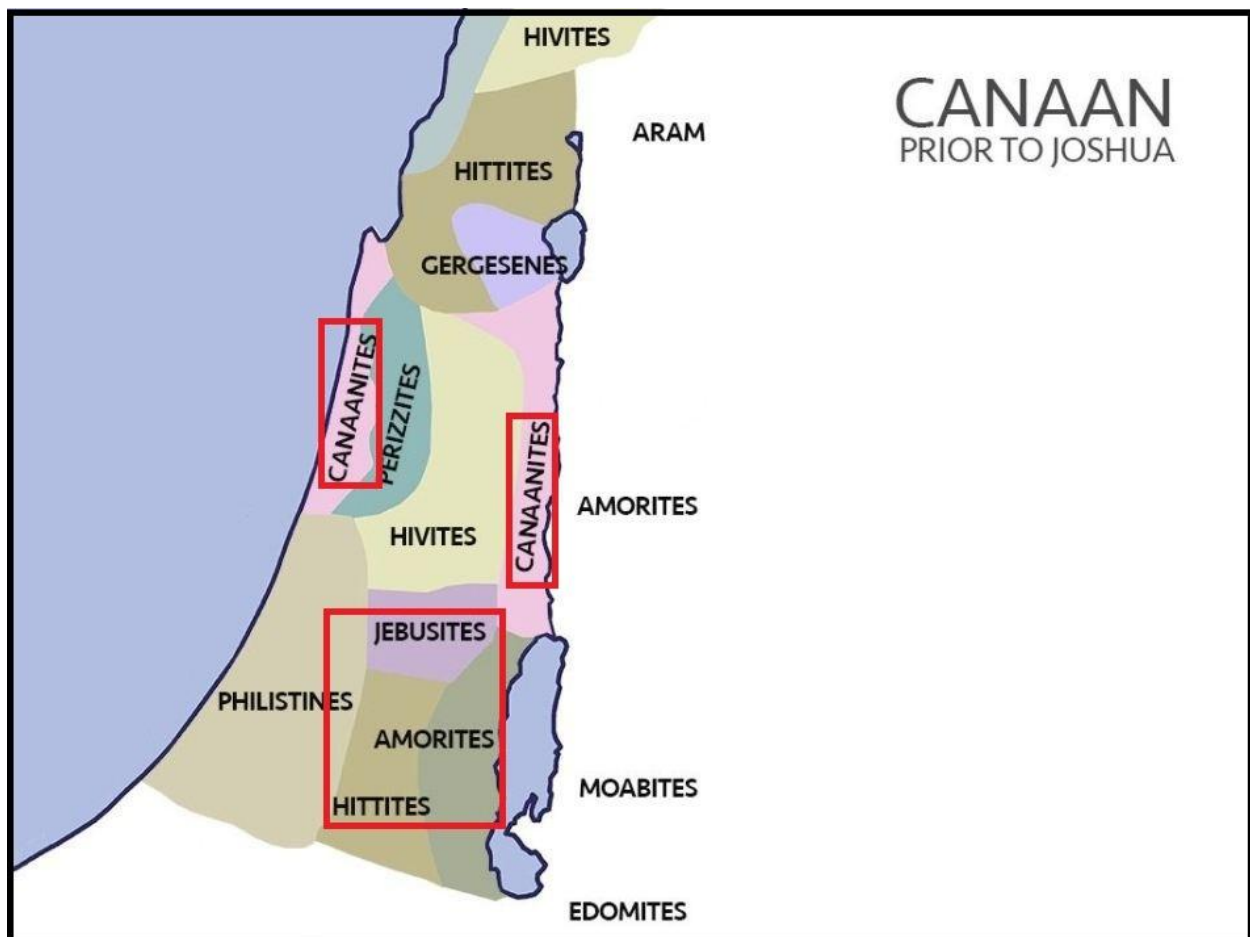
The spies made a positive comment about the productivity of the land.

²⁸ Nevertheless, the people who live in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large. And indeed, we saw the descendants of Anak there!

The land was good but this was outweighed by their fear of going to war against a people who were strong and that lived in large fortified cities.

²⁹ Amalek is living in the land of the Negev, the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites are living in the hill country, and the Canaanites are living by the sea and by the side of the Jordan.”

See Map 1355



Verses 30 - 33

³⁰ Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, “We should by all means go up and take possession of it, for we will certainly prevail over it.” ³¹ But the men who had gone up with him said, “We are not able to go up against the people, because they are too strong for us.” ³² So they brought a bad report of the land which they had spied out to the sons of Israel, saying, “The land through which we have gone to spy out is a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people whom we saw in it are people of *great* stature. ³³ We also saw the Nephilim there (the sons of Anak are part of the Nephilim); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.”

³⁰ Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, “We should by all means go up and take possession of it, for we will certainly prevail over it.

We know both Joshua and Caleb were men of faith but Caleb took the lead here. This is a good example of how faith can overcome fear but unfortunately these two men were in the minority.

³¹ But the men who had gone up with him said, “We are not able to go up against the people, because they are too strong for us.”

It’s almost like the 10 plagues and the exodus never happened. Did they leave Egypt because of their ability? Did they cross the Red Sea by their own power? Those events had taken place just 1½ years ago and now they act as though they have forgotten what God had done for them.

³² So they brought a bad report of the land which they had spied out to the sons of Israel, saying, “The land through which we have gone to spy out is a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people whom we saw in it are people of *great* stature. ³³ We also saw the Nephilim there (the sons of Anak are part of the Nephilim); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.”

Really, ALL of the people were of great stature! Bible students have cried barrels of tears over this exaggeration. 😊

38 years later a new generation will go in and defeat the Nephilim. Why was it possible then but not now?