



## A PEOPLE SET-APART

*And YHWH spoke to Moshe, saying, “Send men to spy out the land of Kena’an, which I am giving to the children of Yisra’el. Send one man from each tribe of their fathers, every one a leader among them.”*

In this parasha, we see YHWH commanding Moshe to send the choicest men of each tribe into the land to gather information in preparation for its conquest. Scripture uses the word *Nassi* – leader – to describe those men selected. The men sent to spy out the land had that worthiness and pioneering spirit which was necessary to complete the task.

If we know anything about pioneers, it is that they usually traversed rugged, uncivilized territory and made inroads for later settlers. However, Scripture tells us that the land of Kana’an contained vineyards, houses, cities, and wells that the people of Yisrael did not have to plant, build or dig. Imagine it like a ready to eat home-made apple pie in a box. All you have to do is take it out, heat it up some, then enjoy it.

YHWH told the people to go in and take the land, but the report returned by ten of the twelve chosen men made the people’s heart quake because, when they looked at the wonderful place YHWH had given to them, all they could see were the giants and their fortifications which stood against them. Rather than making inroads, those men put up verbal and mental roadblocks for others. They even spoke against YHWH and against the leaders, Moshe and Aharon. Then, for their unbelief in the promises of YHWH, they ended up back in the wilderness for forty more years. Only two of the twelve spies, Yehoshua ben Nun and Kalev ben Yephunneh, spoke well of the land, spoke the truth about the giants, and had faith in YHWH to fulfill His promises to Avraham, Yitzchaq, and Ya’akov, and to give them the land.

Like those men in the story of the spies, we have choices, too. We can either take YHWH at His Word and go forward in the direction that He shows us, or we can go some other way. Often, we fear the consequences that men threaten us with in order to keep us from going forward and taking those things that YHWH has promised to us. And we should reasonably and respectfully consider the men who have control over us temporarily here, but we should not remain stagnant in our quest for righteousness or in our advancement toward the condition of *Qodesh L’YHWH*. As a people set-apart for His purposes, we must boldly strive forward in our obedience towards YHWH and in our personal commitments to our brothers who walk alongside us in The Way that YHWH prescribes. Like Yehoshua ben Nun and Kalev ben Yephunneh, we can encourage our brothers, then go in together and take that land which YHWH has given us.

As YHWH said to Yehoshua ben Nun, “No man is going to stand before you all the days of your life. As I was with Moshe, so I am with you. I do not fail you nor forsake you.” And then He said, “Have not I commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid, nor be discouraged, for YHWH your Elohyim is with you wherever you go.”

B’Shalom,  
Yochanan