

## **The Story, chapter 6 (Numbers & Deuteronomy)**

[After escaping from Egypt and making a new covenant with his people, God led the Israelites swiftly to the land he promised them. But the scouts gave a mixed report.]

At the end of forty days they returned from exploring the land. They came back to Moses and Aaron and the whole Israelite community... they reported to them and to the whole assembly and showed them the fruit of the land. They gave Moses this account: “We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit. But the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large.

Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, “We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it. But the men who had gone up with him said, “We can’t attack those people; they are stronger than we are.” And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, “The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. We saw ...the descendants of Anak. We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them. (Numbers 13:25-28, 30-33)

[God listened to the Israelites’ complaints, their disobedience, and their refusal to accept his gift, and he gave them some more time to think about it.]

God said: “As surely as I live, I will do to you the very thing I heard you say: In this wilderness your bodies will fall—every one of you twenty years old or more who was counted in the census and who has grumbled against me. Not one of you will enter the land I swore with uplifted hand to make your home, except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun. As for your children that you said would be taken as plunder, I will bring them in to enjoy the land you have rejected. But as for you, your bodies will fall in this wilderness. (Numbers 14:28-32)

[Forty hard years passed before at last the children of the Israelites, humbled and obedient, finally entered the promised land.]