

TWELVE -- TWO -- TEN

These numbers are from a portion of Scripture found in the Bible, the Book of Numbers, chapters 13 & 14. It is the story of Moses forming a party of spies to search out the Promised Land before they go in to possess it.

The TWELVE were chosen, one from each tribe of Israel, for their outstanding reputations -- *“every one a ruler among them”* (vs.2) and *“all those men were heads of the children of Israel”* (vs.3).

Among them were TWO notable men, Caleb (vs.6) and Joshua (vs.8) -- the other TEN are not mentioned by name again. *“And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan”* (vs.17). He encouraged them (vs.20) to *“be of good courage”* -- a statement repeated four times by God (in the Book of Joshua, chapter 1, verses 6, 7, 9 & 18), as He turned the leadership over to Joshua after the death of Moses.

“So they went up, and searched the land” (vs.21). They returned forty days later (vs.25) reporting to Moses, Aaran and the congregation of the children of Israel (vs.26) saying that it was truly a land *“flowing with milk and honey”* (vs.27).

Their report was glowing at first, but then the TEN told of the people who were as giants, the children of Anak (vs.33), and great walled cities (vs.28). And they discouraged the congregation from attempting to move forward to immediately take possession of the land as God directed.

Caleb however *“quieted the people, and said, Let us go up at once and possess it -- for we are well able to overcome it”* (vs.30) but the TEN urged the people to not make the move. They even suggested selecting a new captain and returning to Egypt (chapter 14, vs.4), and to stone Moses and Aaron (vs.10).

Remember, the land was called “The Promise Land” because God had promised it to the Israelites and nothing could stand in their way, IF they continued to walk in obedience with the Lord.

Because of their actions the Lord told Moses that He would destroy them all and give Moses a *“greater nation”* (vs.12). However Moses entreated the Lord not to do so because it would be a reproach against Him among the other nations indicating that God had failed in His mission.

God then pronounced that all the adults would not see the Promised Land because of their rebellion but only those under twenty years of age would, after wandering in the wilderness for 40 years (vs.29-34). Those TEN men who were fearful and rejected the Lord’s provision *“would die by the plague before the Lord”* (vs.37). *“BUT Joshua and Caleb, the TWO which were of the men that went to search the land would live”* (vs.38).

The lesson that we must realize for ourselves today is that when God gives a promise we must act on it and have courage to follow His instructions all the way, even when it often seems fearful and impossible.

The journey from Egypt to the Promised Land through the wilderness would have taken them just 11 days, IF they had obeyed the Lord. Instead it took 40 years of wandering and an entire generation missed the Blessings of the Lord and was wiped out.

What Victory has God promised you? Are you ready to follow Him by Faith? Will you reap the Blessings God has promised you? Or will you hesitate and rebel and miss God's Perfect Will for your life?

Remember, the words of Caleb, "*Let us go up AT ONCE -- for we are WELL ABLE to overcome it*"-- **BECAUSE GOD HAD PROMISED!**

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