

MOSES.....4

(Numbers 13: 17—Deuteronomy 34)

Before entering Canaan Moses sent 12 spies to check out the land, providing various types of information. When they reported back they were impressed with how good the land was, but 10 of the 12 were sure that the Canaanites were much too strong for the Israelites to defeat. But 2 of the spies were sure that the Israelites would succeed, since God was on their side. But despite their pleas, along with the urging of Moses and Aaron, the people rebelled, grumbling and refusing to go on.

Again God was very angry at the people and was ready to destroy them with a plague, but responded to Moses' plea for mercy. Instead, the Lord decreed that the people would wander in the desert for 40 years, one year for each day the spies were gone. Except for Joshua and Caleb, none of the adults (20+) would be allowed to enter Canaan.

But then, foolishly, some of the people decided that they had sinned and should go attack anyway, but they were badly beaten.

Chapter 16 records the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram against Moses. But the Lord killed them all. Chapter 20 records the Lord providing water from a rock for the people. But because Moses claimed credit for himself and Aaron, the Lord was displeased, decreeing that Moses would not enter Canaan. Both Moses and Aaron died before Canaan was invaded.

Throughout the period in the wilderness the people were rebellious, speaking against both God and Moses. In chapter 21 God sent poisonous snakes to afflict the people. Finally a bronze snake was placed on a pole. Those who looked at the snake lived.

Chapters 22-24 record the story of Balaam and the unsuccessful attempts of Balak to have the Israelites cursed.

The book of Deuteronomy contains a repetition of a number of the laws given earlier, along with other events occurring during the wandering period.

Deuteronomy 31 records the last days of Moses and his appointment of Joshua as his successor. God took Moses up on Mt. Nebo to look and see Canaan before he died. God buried him. No one ever found his grave.