

Scripture: Numbers 14: 1-10

¹Then all the congregation raised a loud cry, and the people wept that night.

²And all the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron; the whole congregation said to them, “Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness!

³Why is the LORD bringing us into this land to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become booty; would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt?”

⁴So they said to one another, “Let us choose a captain, and go back to Egypt.”

⁵Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the Israelites.

⁶And Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes

⁷and said to all the congregation of the Israelites, “The land that we went through as spies is an exceedingly good land.

⁸If the LORD is pleased with us, he will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land that flows with milk and honey.

⁹Only, do not rebel against the LORD; and do not fear the people of the land, for they are no more than bread for us; their protection is removed from them, and the LORD is with us; do not fear them.”

¹⁰But the whole congregation threatened to stone them. Then the glory of the LORD appeared at the tent of meeting to all the Israelites.

I. Background

A. Read Numbers 14: 1-10

B. Moses was a Christ-like figure (spokesperson for the Lord)

C. Numbers 13:17-24

1. Verses 17-20 – Moses’s instructions to spy out the land and what to look for
2. Verses 21-24 – The chosen men’s investigation of the land
 - a. Verse 23 – Valley of Eshcol (cluster of grapes)
 - 1) Grapes
 - 2) Pomegranates
 - 3) Figs

D. Numbers 13:25-33

1. Verse 27: Good report
 - a. *Flow with milk and honey* (rich, fertile, desirable land and continually gushing or flowing)
 - b. Evidence with fruit
2. Verse 28-29: Honest report
 - a. Strong people (physically and mentally)
 - b. Fortified barriers
 - c. Large cities
 - d. Types of people
 - 1) Anak
 - 2) Amalek (in the Negev)
 - 3) Hittite, Jebusite, and Amorite (in the hill country)
 - 4) Canaanite (the Dead Sea & along the Jordan)
3. Verse 30-33: The Faithful vs. Faithless

Holiness Purifies

- a. Faithful (2 people) – Caleb (Judah) & Joshua (Ephraim)
 - 1) Conquer despite obstacles
- b. Faithless (10 people) – everyone else who spied the land
 - 1) Stagnant because of the strength of Canaan (verse 31)
 - 2) Lied about its fruitfulness (verse 32) and reminded of the people's strength
 - 3) Reminded of the physical stature of the Nephilim (giants)

II. Numbers 14: 1-10: What Does the Lord Purify?

A. Verse 1 – complaining and victimization

- 1. Temper tantrums (begins in private)
- 2. They never go to God to address their complaints or concerns

B. Verse 2 – bad habits (murmuring)

- 1. They gossip
- 2. They talk under their breath in the presence of their leaders
- 3. They boldly call out their superiors (Moses and Aaron) in exaggeration
 - a. Underlying concern: afraid of death
 - b. Prefer independence (comfortability) over subjection (reliance) to God
 - 1) The promise requires pain; Egypt is much easier

C. Verses 3-4 – pride, impure thoughts, and manipulative speech

- 1. Blame God for their plight
- 2. Abandon God
 - a. Denounce God's sovereignty
 - b. Denounce God's promise
 - 1) Gen. 12: 1-2

2) Ex. 3: 7-10

- c. Denounce God's selection of leaders
 - d. Denounce Moses as leader
- D. Verse 5 – Leader's response: pleading for their people's lives
- 1. Falling on their knees (act of intercession and pleading)
 - 2. Showcasing the people's wrong decision
 - 3. Illustrating that they (leaders) do not take anything personally
 - 4. Begging that their hearts change for the lives' sake
- E. Verses 6-9 – Follower's response: pleading for the people's lives
- 1. Praise God for faithful followers who support their leaders when their strength fails
 - 2. God always backs up His leaders
 - a. Confirmation of God's promised land as favorable (v. 7)
 - b. Confirmation that the promise is predicated on obedience (v. 8)
 - c. Reconfirmation & encouragement of being strong (v. 9)
 - 1) Command 1: do not rebel against God
 - 2) Command 2: walk by faith (Hab. 2:4)
 - 3) Justification 1: enemies are supplanted
 - 4) Justification 2: God is with you
 - 5) Encouragement 1: do not fear
- F. Verse 10 – The verdict: stoning God's chosen leaders
- 1. An example of those who do not walk by faith (act of frustration could lead to serious consequences)
 - 2. Some people will never inherit their promise from God because they do not like the process (no pain, no gain)
 - a. They do not like their blessing
 - b. They have a fixed mindset of what they want (playing God)

- c. They will never understand their promise because they do not understand their worth

III. Holiness's Accomplishments

- A. Holiness gets rid of complaining/victimhood attitude (verse 1)
- B. Holiness gets rid of bad habits (verse 2)
- C. Holiness gets rid of pride (verse 3-4)
- D. Holiness gets rid of impure thoughts (verses 3-4)
- E. Holiness gets rid of a manipulative heart (verse 4)
- F. Holiness gets rid of holistic reliance on the natural/physical (verse 9)