

## How To Discern Disobedient People

### *Numbers 14: 39-45*

<sup>39</sup> When Moses told these words to all the Israelites, the people mourned greatly.

<sup>40</sup> They rose early in the morning and went up to the heights of the hill country, saying, “Here we are. We will go up to the place that the Lord has promised, for we have sinned.”

<sup>41</sup> But Moses said, “Why do you continue to transgress the command of the Lord? That will not succeed.

<sup>42</sup> Do not go up, for the Lord is not with you; do not let yourselves be struck down before your enemies.

<sup>43</sup> For the Amalekites and the Canaanites will confront you there, and you shall fall by the sword, because you have turned back from following the Lord. The Lord will not be with you.”

<sup>44</sup> But they presumed to go up to the heights of the hill country, even though the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and Moses, had not left the camp.

<sup>45</sup> Then, the Amalekites and the Canaanites who lived in that hill country came down and defeated them, pursuing them as far as Hormah.

### **I. Background of Numbers 14**

1. Separation continues (disobedient vs. obedient)
2. Many Israelites complained against leadership and God (Num. 14:1-12)
3. God wanted to judge Israel and Moses interceded on their behalf (Num. 14:13-19)
4. God desired to forgive, but also said that the disobedient people will not inherit the land (Num. 14:20-23)
  - a. Why?
    - 1) Rejected God’s nature (His glory)
    - 2) Rejected God’s continual instruction (His signs)
    - 3) Irritated God because they questioned His sovereignty (tested Him 10 times)
    - 4) Disobeyed His desire to communicate (His voice)
5. God desired to give His land to Caleb and his descendants (Num. 14:24-25)
  - a. Why?
    - 1) His spirit was different (positive, faithful, strong, courageous, and action-oriented)
    - 2) He followed God without a doubt
6. God instructed Moses to go to the Red Sea (Num. 14:25)

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7. God proclaimed judgment on the Israelites for continual complaints against God (Num. 14:26-38)
8. God's people disobeyed Him which lead to the first major consequence of disobedience (Num. 14:39-45)

### II. Understanding the Judgment (Num. 14:39-45)

#### 1. Facts

- a. Deuteronomy has not been published (Deuteronomy 1:34-45 = parallels this story) fully
  - 1) Deuteronomy 28:1-14 contains God's blessings for obedience
  - 2) Deuteronomy 28:15-29:1 contains God's warnings against disobedience
- b. Israelites experienced God's judgments in Egypt on 10 occasions
- c. Israelites experienced God's voice through Moses, Aaron, and Miriam
- d. Israelites experienced God's deliverance from Egypt (Red Sea)
- e. Israelites experienced and participated in God's righteous and holy ceremonies
  - 1) Seven lamps (Num. 8:1-4)
  - 2) Passover at Sinai (Num. 9:1-14)
  - 3) Silver trumpets (Num. 10:1-10)
- f. Israelites experienced God's direction through the pillar of cloud during the day and fire at night
- g. Israelites experienced God's provision in the wilderness
  - 1) Quails (Num. 11:31-35)
- h. Israelites experienced God's correction in the wilderness
- i. Israelites experienced God's distaste for their complaints and unbelief

#### 2. Conclusions

- a. Israelites had evidence of God's judgment
- b. Israelites had evidence of God's glory
- c. Israelites had significant time to understand how God deals with His people
- d. Israelites had evidence of God's grace
- e. Israelites had specific instructions to succeed

#### 3. Purpose

- a. So that future generations of God's people would not disobey the Lord
- b. Case study to understand God's grace in judgment
- c. Understand God's sovereignty and authority

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### III. Characteristics of Disobedient People

1. Controlling (Num. 14:39-40)
  - a. Mourned/grieved for their situation
  - b. Solution for their problem – took matters into their own hands
2. Pideful (Num. 14:39-40)
  - a. Prov. 16:18 – “Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.”
    - 1) They took God’s Word to justify their own righteousness (Num. 13:2 – God instructs to spy out and conquer the land)
3. Stubborn (Num. 14:44-45)
  - a. Prov. 28:14 – “Happy is the one who is never **without fear**, but one who is hard-hearted will fall into calamity”
  - b. Prov. 29:1 – “One who is often reprovved yet remains stubborn will suddenly be **broken beyond healing.**”
  - c. Prov. 1:23 – “Give heed to my reproof; I will pour out my thoughts to you; **I will make my words known to you.**”
  - d. Failed to recognize that God’s glory (ark of the covenant) and God’s representative (Moses) were not with them
  - e. glorified works over relationship with God

### IV. Purpose for Recognizing Disobedient People

1. God wants us to rely on Him rather than man (all about Jesus)
2. God has warned us that there are false Christians (Matt. 7:15 – “Beware of false prophets, who comes to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.”)
3. God needs us to be separated from the world
4. God wants us to go to the Promise Land and some people cannot go with you