



PITWM VERSE BY VERSE NUMBERS 14:1-12 REBELLION OF THE PEOPLE— October 31, 2021

INTRODUCTION:

Chapter 13:25-33 After spying out the land for forty days, the spies have returned to wilderness of Paran to Kadesh to show them the fruit of the land. They came before the whole congregation of the children of Israel and unto Moses with one cluster of grapes which took two men to carry on a pole, pomegranates, and figs (v.23). Their report started out good in that, the land was flowing with milk and honey, exactly what God had promised! And they brought back this giant fruit to prove it. However, when they talked about the people living there, there was a “**But.**” They described them as strong and powerful; a race of giant warlike people, and the cities were fortified and very large. What’s more they were the children of Anak (descendants of Anak, an Anakite or Anakim). Then the spies begin to tell all the nationality of people living there— The Amalekites lived in the south. The Hittites, Jebusites, and Amorites lived in the mountains. And the Canaanites lived by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan. At this time Caleb, one of the spies brought good news and told them that they were assured that they were well able to possess the land. But the other spies told the people, that they were not able, for they were a stronger people. Faith and trust just went out the window as these 10 spies spoke. And the words they spoke did not have God in it anywhere. It was all about what they could not do, was not able to do, and doubt, disbelief, and rebellion wreaked among the people at the “*Door of Promise*”, and caused them not to have what God had promised to be theirs now. The 10 spies had exaggerated an evil report about the land they searched. They claimed that the land ate its inhabitants. They made it out to be a difficult and dangerous place to live, even as they described the people they had seen as huge in stature; giants, and the spies felt like grasshoppers in their own sight, and they felt that the giants looked at them as grasshoppers, and really, they had no chance to defend themselves.

LESSON: I. THE VOICE OF FEAR NUMBERS 14:1-4

14:1 And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. How quickly the people of Israel had forgotten God’s hand of mercy time and time again. How quickly they had forgotten crying out to God to come and rescue them from the Egyptian bondage. Although the wilderness lacks many things, it was never without the Lord’s presence. Because of the spies’ report, the Israelite congregation began to shout out loud, lifting their voices and crying, weeping, and complaining all that night.

14:2 And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness! So, the whole congregation have “ought” against Moses, Aaron and, God, moaning and grumbling and asking, “*Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness!?*” Most translations used it in the form of a statement saying: “*If only (God) we had died...*” whether it was in Egypt or in the wilderness, with an exclamation mark! They were grumbling, and complaining when God brought them out of Egypt, and they’re still doing it.

14:3 And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt? The people murmured saying, “*Why has the LORD brought us to this land to die by the sword? One key portion of this generation’s judgment came from their own lips because they kept talking about dying; dying by the sword and returning to Egypt. They fretted over the fact that their wives and children would fall prey*”



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to their enemies and that God had brought them to the edge of Canaan only to let them die. They accepted the ten spies' negative opinion as truth and followed the voice of fear.

14:4 And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt. They've quit talking to Moses and Aaron and said amongst themselves, *'We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt'* (vv.3, 4). (From Nehemiah 9:17, it appears that they actually did choose a leader). The ultimate sin and rebellion was to want another leader and disregard the one God had chosen. Unbelief was at the base of Israel's fear of entering the land God had promised.

POINT:

The Israelites are at the door of opportunity but won't go through! The spies have seen the land but won't possess it! Bottom line, they did not trust God, they trusted in self and what they perceived as right. They trusted the voice of fear instead of the voice of faith.

II. THE VOICE OF FAITH NUMBERS 14:5-10

14:5 Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel. Hearing the bitter ingratitude towards the leaders God had set forth, Moses and Aaron did not speak to the assembly of the congregation, but fell down on their faces before them, and humbling themselves before the Lord.

14:6 And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes:— And Joshua and Caleb which were two of the spies who searched the land, were so upset with the complaints of the Israelites that they tore their own clothes.

NOTE:

Moses and Aaron falling face down to the ground was not to make intercession for them this time, but mostly for the severity of the sin, and what they knew would follow. The tearing of the clothes was meant to serve as a symbol to the people of the extremity of the situation, hoping to turn the people around.

14:7 And they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. Caleb and Joshua were the only ones who spoke up to the people with faith in God and said, *"The land we explored is good land."*

14:8 If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. They are still encouraging them with truth, *"If God is pleased with us, He will bring us, lead us, and give us this land flowing with milk and honey."* They were expressing how God was able to do this. And if He delights in us, He will bring, lead, and give it to us. It depended upon them having faith; faith to believe God.

14:9 Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not. Caleb and Joshua are pleading with the congregation. *"Please do not rebel against the Lord. Do not be afraid of the inhabitants of the Promised Land because the Lord, God has promised we will swallow them up in war for they looked at them like bread. They have no defense; their protection is gone, for the LORD is with us. Do not be afraid of them."* The clues were going up everywhere, if they only heed them!

NOTE:

Only two men spoke up against a crowd of unbelievers! Only two men heard what God had said and believed! Only two men pleaded for them to rebel not against God, neither give in to fear or unbelief. When people reject the men or women of God, it's the same as rejecting God! Being tested in a battle, should

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always call for God's direction! That was it! God tests for strength; the devil tempts in their weakness!

14:10 But all the congregation bade stone them with stones. And the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel. But the Israelite community did not believe Joshua and Caleb and didn't want to tear them. Their fear and unbelief caused them to draw to stoning Joshua and Caleb. Then, the glory of the Lord like a bolt of lightning appeared visibly in the tabernacle in front of all of the Israelites to confront their unbelief.

III. THE VOICE OF JUDGMENT NUMBERS 14:11-12

14:11 And the LORD said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it bend ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have shewed among them? The Lord speaks to Moses, and He's saying how long are these people going to treat Him with contempt, despise Him, and provoke Him? How long will they not believe Him? for He's shown them so many miraculous signs and they still don't believe.

14:12 I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they. The Lord has gone so far as to say, *"I will strike all the Israelites down with a plague and they will all die. I will disinherit (disown) and destroy them all. I will make you (talking to Moses), a great nation, greater and stronger than they could ever be."* God is serious about bringing judgment!

SUMMARY:

The Israelite congregation began to shout out loud, lifting their voices and crying, weeping, and complaining that night at the spies' report. They moaned at Moses, Aaron, and God, stating, *"If only (God) we had died..."* whether it was in Egypt or in the wilderness, with an exclamation mark! And then asking, *"Why did GOD bring us to this land to die by the sword? Our wives and our children will be taken as the plunder of war. We would be better off back in Egypt."* Then amongst themselves they said, *"We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt."* The ultimate sin and rebellion was to want another leader and disregard the one God had chosen (14:1-4).

Moses and Aaron heard the bitter ingratitude towards God and fell face down before them. And Joshua and Caleb were so upset with the complaints of the Israelites and tore their own clothes. They were the only ones who spoke up to the people with faith in God and said, *"The land we explored is good land. If God is pleased with us, He will bring us, lead us, and give us this land flowing with milk and honey. Please do not rebel against the Lord. Do not be afraid of the inhabitants of the Promised Land because the Lord God has promised we will swallow them up in war. They have no defense; their protection is gone, for the LORD is with us. Do not be afraid of them."* But the Israelite community did not believe Joshua and Caleb. Their fear and unbelief caused them to discuss stoning Joshua and Caleb. Then the glory of the Lord appeared visibly in the tabernacle in front of all of the Israelites to confront their unbelief (14:5-10).

The Lord speaks to Moses, and He's saying how long these people going to treat Him with contempt; provoke Him. He's saying how long will they not believe Him, for He's shown them so many miraculous signs? The Lord has gone so far as to say, *"I will strike all the Israelites down with a plague and they will all die. I will disinherit (disown) and destroy them all. I will make you (talking about Moses), a great nation, greater and stronger than they could ever be."* God is serious about bringing judgment! (14:11-12).