

# “Had It With Your Grumbling”

## Numbers Chapter 14

### Num 14:1 1) The People Grumble vs 1-4

Then all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night.

- This is a continuation of the story where the spies returned from Canaan. 10 out of 12 gave a bad report.
- Numbers 13 and Deuteronomy 1:19-25 shows us that the spying of the land was not God's plan. That it originated from the congregation and Moses agreed to it.
- They went to look for things that God had already promised.
- In Numbers 13:32-33 ten of the twelve spies gave Lies, Speculation, and Exaggerations
- These leaders do two things wrong. Terrible wrongs.
  - They Disbelieve the Word of God
  - They Discourage the Saints of God **(10 Men Infected the Entire Congregation)**
- The camp of Israel was worried about the direction Moses was taking them.

Num 14:2 All the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron; and 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!

Num 14:3 "Why is the LORD bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become plunder; would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?"

Num 14:4 So they said to one another, "Let us appoint a leader and return to Egypt."

- Not Obeying Produced Fear of God's Will (Walking by Sight; Not by Faith) Num 13
- Fear of God's Will Produces a Despising of God's Blessing (Past Deliverance/Protection) Num 14:2
- Despising God's Blessing Produces No Hope for Future Num 14:3
- No Hope of the Future Produces a Change of Allegiance Num 14:3-4
- Tragically the Lord will give them what they desired. To die in the wilderness.
- Ever be grumbling and say something really stupid. Something if you are not insane with grumbling you would never say? The children of Israel said the Lord intended evil, to bring us here, to murder us by the sword.

### Num 14:5 2) Caleb Protests vs 5-10

Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces in the presence of all the assembly of the congregation of the sons of Israel.

- The Children of Israel want to replace Moses and Aaron. They do the right thing. They Pray. They don't argue or defend. They know the best thing to do. Pray.

Num 14:6 Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, of those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes;

Num 14:7 and they spoke to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, saying, "The land which we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land.

Num 14:8 "If the LORD is pleased with us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us—a land which flows with milk and honey.

- Joshua and Caleb, two of the 12 spies, had a different report.
  - They tore their clothes, as if in mourning. This was serious.
  - They said the land was good.
  - They said that if the Lord is pleased He will give it to them. But Israel is not acting in a way that would please the Lord.

Num 14:9 "Only do not rebel against the LORD; and do not fear the people of the land, for they will be our prey. Their protection has been removed from them, and the LORD is with us; do not fear them."

- They correctly labeled the action of desiring to replace Aaron and Moses as REBELLION.
  - Rebellion - open, organized, resistance to of any authority, control, or tradition.
- Not rebellion against Moses and Aaron but Rebellion Against the Lord.
- Joshua and Caleb know that the Lord determines who wins the battle. And the Lord is with Israel. They know this from their history. They know this from the Word of the Lord.
  - Exodus 15:13-18 The song all Israel sang after the deliverance at the red sea included these words. "In Your lovingkindness You have led the people whom You have redeemed; In Your strength You have guided them to Your holy habitation. The peoples have heard, they tremble; Anguish has gripped the inhabitants of Philistia. Then the chiefs of Edom were dismayed; The leaders of Moab, trembling grips them; All the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away. Terror and dread fall upon them; By the greatness of Your arm they are motionless as stone; Until Your people pass over, O LORD, Until the people pass over whom You have purchased. You will bring them and plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance, The place, O LORD, which You have made for Your dwelling, The sanctuary, O Lord, which Your hands have established. The LORD shall reign forever and ever."

Num 14:10 But all the congregation said to stone them with stones. Then the glory of the LORD appeared in the tent of meeting to all the sons of Israel.

- The congregation is now engaged in ARMED rebellion. The idea of killing those who don't agree with us.
- Then God shows up.
- We have the tendency to look down our noses at Israel. But this, if we are honest, what we do in our Christian journey. The Lord calls us to something. We are excited. We dream of the possibilities. When we are at the precipice of going in to the promise, we have difficulties. Others have told us that there will be difficulties. But the Lord will be with us.
  - Marriage, Raising Children, Ministry, A New Job,

Num 14:11 **3) The Lord Tests Moses** vs 11-12

The LORD said to Moses, "How long will this people spurn Me? And how long will they not believe in Me, despite all the signs which I have performed in their midst?"

Num 14:12 "I will smite them with pestilence and dispossess them, and I will make you into a nation greater and mightier than they."

- The Lord does not speak to Israel. He speaks to Moses.
  - He realizes Israel probably not listen to Him.  
People want the Lord to speak to them when they do not listen to Him. They wonder why they are not hearing from Him. Listen to what He as already told you. Then you may again clearly hear.
  - And He has something important for Moses to go through.
- The Lord is making an incredible offer to Moses. The Lord will start over. He will make Moses the patriarch like Abraham was.
  - This is a true place in ministry. Everyone who ministers to people experience this as some point. Where we are following the Lord and the people just do not want to go. The offer comes. Be done with these stubborn people. Move on! You are better then they are.
  - **Here is the test. Is it about the YOUR Ministry or is it about the People?**
  - Exodus 32:7-14 Moses faced this before when the Children of Israel were worshipping a golden calf. Moses interceded for the people.

Num 14:13 **4) Moses Intercedes** vs 13-19

But Moses said to the LORD, "Then the Egyptians will hear of it, for by Your strength You brought up this people from their midst,

Num 14:14 and they will tell *it* to the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that You, O LORD, are in the midst of this people, for You, O LORD, are seen eye to eye, while Your cloud stands over them; and You go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night.

Num 14:15 "Now if You slay this people as one man, then the nations who have heard of Your fame will say,

Num 14:16 'Because **the LORD could not** bring this people into the land which He promised them by oath, therefore He slaughtered them in the wilderness.'

- Moses knew if what the Lord said He would do to the Children of Israel happened that it would do more against God's reputation before the nations than starting over would do good.
  - The heathen would think "*the Lord could NOT*"
- Moses is jealous for God's glorious reputation.
- Isn't it interesting that Egypt is watching. And it is also interesting that Egypt will be quick to tell other nations as well. ("this land" - Canaan)

Num 14:17 "But now, I pray, let the power of the Lord be great, just as You have declared,

Num 14:18 'The LORD is slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He will by no means clear *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth *generations*.'

Num 14:19 "Pardon, I pray, the iniquity of this people according to the greatness of Your lovingkindness, just as You also have forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now."

- Moses knows that God's greatness of power is in His Loving-kindness and Forgiveness. His greatness of power is not necessarily in parting seas, and manna from heaven.
  - Moses heard this from the Lord Himself when he was upon the Mountain as the Lord Passed by.
  - Exodus 24:6-7 "*And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear [the guilty]; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth [generation].*"
- This is a beautiful picture of INTERCESSION. Moses knew the character of God and appealed to His grace for the people.
  - For us to be intercessors, we need to know His character, His Word and know He hears prayers for grace.
- Moses passes the Lord's test. Moses is OTHERS ORIENTED. Seeking their best interest even at his own loss. Moses sought the good of the Children of Israel at the cost of the Lord starting over with him.
  - Jesus was the same. Stepped down from glory to save sinful man.

**A Pardon** **5) The Lord Agrees But Still Judges** vs 20-35

Num 14:20 So the LORD said, "I have pardoned *them* according to your word;

- PARDONED - What a wonderful word any sinner could ever hear.
- Moses' intercession found success.
- Was this test a Game by God? Or would he have really started over with Moses?
  - Do we change God by Prayer? Or Does Prayer Change us?
  - While our understanding about the relationship between an ALL KNOWING God and our prayer may remain mysterious this we do know.

1. Prayer is a communication that God desires of us. (Matt 7:7; Phil 4:1; 1 Thess 5:17)
  2. God answered "*according to your (Moses') word*". Moses' intercession clearly made a difference. (1 Tim 2:1; Romans 8:26-27)
  3. Our prayers make a difference. (James 1:5; 1 John 3:22; John 16:23)
- It is clear that prayer is NOT a game that the Lord has us do that doesn't make any difference in the Will of God. We ought to pray as if the very outcome of a matter was determined by our prayer.

### Judgment on Grumblers

Num 14:21 but indeed, as I live, all the earth will be filled with the glory of the LORD.

Num 14:22 "Surely all the men who have seen My glory and My signs which I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness, yet have put Me to the test these **ten times** and have not listened to My voice,

Num 14:23 shall by no means see the land which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who spurned Me see it.

**Sparing the Faithful** Num 14:24 "But My servant Caleb, because he has had a different spirit and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land which he entered, and his descendants shall take possession of it.

Num 14:25 "Now the Amalekites and the Canaanites live in the valleys; turn tomorrow and set out to the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea."

- The results of Moses' Prayers
    - The Earth will be Filled with the Glory of the Lord (reason enough to pray)
    - Those who grumbled will not enter the Promised Land.
- GRUMBLED/MURMERED TEN TIMES:
1. By murmuring at the Red Sea (Exodus 14:11-12)
  2. By murmuring at Marah for water (Exodus 15:23-26)
  3. By murmuring for flesh and bread (Exodus 16:1-18)
  4. By leaving the manna until morning (Exodus 16:19-22)
  5. By murmuring for water at Rephidim (Exodus 17:1-7)
  6. By making the golden calf and returning to idolatry (Exodus 32)
  7. By murmuring at Taberah (Numbers 11:1-3)
  8. By murmuring for flesh (Numbers 11:4-34)
  9. By asking that spies be sent into the land (Deuteronomy 1:20-25)
  10. By rebellion at the evil report of the spies (Num 13:26-Num. 14:10)
- Caleb will be rewarded. Remember how outnumbered he was? 2 against 10. How it seemed to be a waste of time to stand against the majority? Yet they died in the wilderness and Caleb was rewarded and honored by God.
    - Caleb had a different spirit - He follows fully
  - The final result of Moses' intercession was a different direction. They were to set out to the wilderness.

Num 14:26 The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying,

Num 14:27 "How long *shall I bear* with this evil congregation who are grumbling against Me? I have heard the complaints of the sons of Israel, which they are making against Me.

Num 14:28 "Say to them, 'As I live,' says the LORD, 'just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will surely do to you;

- "*As I Live*" - When the Lord says "As I live" it's a done deal.
- "*Just as you have spoken*" - What did they say? Numbers 14:2 "would that we had died in the wilderness"
- Like I said, it's a done deal.

## The Details of Judgment

- Num 14:29 your corpses will fall in this wilderness, even all your numbered men, according to your complete number from twenty years old and upward, who have grumbled against Me.
- Num 14:30 'Surely you shall not come into the land in which I swore to settle you, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun.
- Num 14:31 'Your children, however, whom you said would become a prey—I will bring them in, and they will know the land which you have rejected.
- Num 14:32 'But as for you, your corpses will fall in this wilderness.
- Num 14:33 'Your sons shall be shepherds for forty years in the wilderness, and they will suffer *for* your unfaithfulness, until your corpses lie in the wilderness.
- Num 14:34 'According to the number of days which you spied out the land, forty days, for every day you shall bear your guilt a year, *even* forty years, and you will know My opposition.
- Num 14:35 'I, the LORD, have spoken, surely this I will do to all this evil congregation who are gathered together against Me. In this wilderness they shall be destroyed, and there they will die.'

- No one from the current generation (20+ older) will enter the Promised Land except for Joshua and Caleb.
- Moses and Aaron will not enter in either for their issues before God.
- Because of the failed 40 DAY test with spying out the land, they will wander in the wilderness for 40 YEARS.
- Lesson for all ages:
  - Psalm 95:7b-11 "Today, if you will hear His voice: Do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion, as in the day of trial in the wilderness, when your fathers tested Me; they tried Me, though they saw My work. For forty years I was grieved with that generation, and said, 'It is a people who go astray in their hearts, and they do not know My ways.' So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest.'"
  - Psalms 106:24-27 "Then they despised the pleasant land; they did not believe His word, but complained in their tents, and did not heed the voice of the LORD. Therefore He raised up His hand in an oath against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness, to overthrow their descendants among the nations, and to scatter them in the lands."
  - Nehemiah 9:16-17 "But they and our fathers acted proudly, hardened their necks, and did not heed Your commandments. They refused to obey, and they were not mindful of Your wonders that You did among them. But they hardened their necks, and in their rebellion they appointed a leader to return to their bondage."
- While our souls have been redeemed the old man cannot be reformed. The only thing for it is to die.
- Mark 8:34 "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."
- Romans 6:6-8 "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with [him], that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:"

## Immediate Judgment

- Num 14:36 As for the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land and who returned and made all the congregation grumble against him by bringing out a bad report concerning the land,
- Num 14:37 even those men who brought out the very bad report of the land died by a plague before

the LORD.

Num 14:38 But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh remained alive out of those men who went to spy out the land.

- The unbelieving LEADER SPYS who tainted the entire congregation had their own punishment.
- They died immediately by a plague.

Num 14:39 **6) Israel Rejects the Lord's Discipline** vs 39-45

When Moses spoke these words to all the sons of Israel, the people mourned greatly.

Num 14:40 In the morning, however, they rose up early and went up to the ridge of the hill country, saying, "Here we are; we have indeed sinned, but we will go up to the place which the LORD has promised."

Num 14:41 But Moses said, "Why then are you transgressing the commandment of the LORD, when it will not succeed?"

Num 14:42 "Do not go up, or you will be struck down before your enemies, for the LORD is not among you.

Num 14:43 "For the Amalekites and the Canaanites will be there in front of you, and you will fall by the sword, inasmuch as you have turned back from following the LORD. And the LORD will not be with you."

Num 14:44 But they went up heedlessly to the ridge of the hill country; neither the ark of the covenant of the LORD nor Moses left the camp.

Num 14:45 Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who lived in that hill country came down, and struck them and beat them down as far as Hormah.

- The children of Israel decided that it was better to obey the first commandment than to die in the wilderness. It is one command too late. God had given another direction.
- They sinned before by unbelief. Now they will sin by presumption.
- They believe all will be ok by a religious act.
- The problem they still think it is by their greatness that it will happen. It happens because of God's greatness.
- They at first didn't believe they could do it with God. Now they believe they can do it without Him
- Moses warned them. The Amalekites and Canaanites showed them their need for God.

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