

Turning Back from the Border of Blessing (Refusing the Parcel of Promise)

Text: Numbers 13 – 14:10

Introduction:

The story of the Exodus, wilderness wanderings, and conquering the promised land have rich application for us.

The account is true, and there is an allegorical application for the Christian

Key idea: We retreat from God's blessings and promises because we are afraid of the fight, and because we lack faith. We should neither be afraid nor lack faith. He is faithful who promises.

- I. **The Charge:** Spy out the land (1-20)
 - a. Was this required by or permitted by God? (Deut 1:19 – 22)
 - i. Moses' calling (Exodus 3)
 - ii. Gideon's fleece (Judges 6)
 - iii. Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Jebusites were given to Israel from God (Gen 15: 18-20)
 - b. The Chosen (1-16)
 - i. One from each tribe (leader)
 - c. The Details (17 – 20)
 - i. See the land
 - ii. Find out if the people were strong or weak, few or many
 - iii. Determine if the land they dwell in is good or bad
 - iv. Do they dwell in walled cities or tents, are they rich or poor, and are there trees?
 - v. Do not be afraid!
- II. **The Mission:** Forty-day Road trip (21-25)
 - a. They did a thorough search and met the details of their charge (almost)
 - i. They saw the land
 - ii. They identified the people of the land
 - iii. They studied where they lived
 - iv. They brought back grapes, pomegranates, and figs
 - v. They did not have courage!
- III. **The Report:** Good and bad (26-33)
 - a. All twelve spies agreed upon what they saw, but ten came to different conclusions than two others
 - i. The facts were not in dispute
 - ii. The land was a land which flowed with milk and honey (vs 27)
 - iii. The people were strong and dwell in fortified cities (vs 28-29)
 - iv. Giants were very large giants there
 - b. The Good report from Caleb and Joshua (vs 30)
 - c. The Bad report from the other ten (vs 31, -33)
 - i. Discussed in Hebrews 3:12-19
- IV. **The Response of the People:** Weep, Lament, and Rebel (14:1-10)
 - a. The leaders hopeless report insighted the people to cry and despair (1 – 3)
 - i. They wished to return to Egypt (forgetting they were slaves – Exodus 13:3)
 - ii. Despair leads to bad decision making and worsens the situation (vs 4)
 - b. The godly leaders respond (Moses, Aaron, Caleb, Joshua)
 - i. Moses and Aaron pray (vs 5)
 - ii. Joshua and Caleb seek to encourage the people to turn to the Lord (vs 7-9)
 - c. Defeated in despair the people choose to abandon all faith in God (vs 10)
- V. **Conclusion / Application:**
 - a. If it were easy, we would not need God!
 - b. Believe that when you are entering and walking in the promises of God that He will give you what you need for the battle (1 Thess 5:24)

- c. In this life we will have troubles and persecutions, fightings without and fears within (John 16:33. Acts 14:22, 2 Cor 7:5)
- d. The just shall live by faith (Rom 1:17)
 - i. Without faith it is impossible to please him
- e. We are called to be conquerors, not intimidated sheep (Rom 8:35-39)
- f. Older Christians both men and woman should be like Caleb (Joshua 14: 10-12)
- g. Courage should not come from outward circumstances or inward confidence. Courage should come from believing God, and knowing you are doing his will.
- h. Leaders who are afraid should not be surprised when discouragement and fear grow in those they lead
- i. **Jesus is our example of striving to live out the Father's will in the face of suffering (Heb 12:2 and John 6:38, 40)**

VI. Questions:

1. What is the difference between living a victorious Christian life and striving to live your best life now?
2. What are some of the walled cities in your life that keep you from living a victorious Christian life?
3. Who are some of the people you fear that keep you from entering the victorious Christian life?
4. What sins do you love to remain enslaved to because you are too afraid or unwilling to do battle against them?
5. How can you change your attitude to fight the good fight of faith regarding living the victorious Christian life?
6. What Giants in your life are keeping you from believing that God can help you conquer them?
7. Can a Christian ever completely conquer the walled cities, people, and giants in this life?
8. What practical steps can you take to change your attitude about the personal battles that you are afraid to wage?