

## SEND FORTH - NUMBERS 14

This chapter deals with the power of human emotion and the mistakes men make when they *face their fears*, then realize their mistakes, then try to fix it themselves without the **"right-hand power of God."** The continuation of the story of the twelve spies not only gives us the biblical historical record but tells us exactly how Yahweh works in given situations, what He desires and how we are supposed to react. So let's continue our study from chapter 13 here in chapter 14.



Read all of Chapter 14.

If there is one single theme that you might take away from this chapter, it could be, "Be careful what you ask for." As the chapter starts off with the Israelites crying their eyes out that they have come this far only to be destroyed by the Amalekites and the Canaanites, they move from tears to accusations...which is pretty much what we humans do when we're emotional. We get upset, then cry, then make ourselves feel better by blaming someone else for our problems that are many times self-induced. Read verses 2-4 again.

In these verses we see the Israelites giving several options themselves in their out-of-control emotional state:

- 1. They wish they would have died in Egypt.**
- 2. They wish they would have died in the wilderness.**
- 3. They could appoint another leader to take them back to Egypt.**

Ironically, their own hearts would dictate their destiny. Yahweh would give them exactly what they wanted by the end of this chapter. It can't be number one because they already left Egypt. That leaves either number two or three.

It's also interesting to me that the basic nature of humans is that when someone is leading them into a place that looks like it could be rough, our carnality seems to rise to the surface, and we want to choose another leader to take us an easier route. It did not take the Father very long in full-time ministry to see this in action. When hard times come and the people don't know what they're going to do, how they're going to move forward, or how they're going to cross the Jordan in the face of giants, the first thing they do is complain, cry, and then those that do not have the proper vision try to choose a different leader that can use a different vision to try to accomplish the goal. Unfortunately, that "easier" route may sound logical, but it always ends with dying in the wilderness. When Yah chooses to do something through someone, He will follow through with His will. But many times, He will test the people and the leader to see what is really in their hearts. Do they still see the vision and the Promise, or do they see their fears? What they do next will determine their destinies. In the case of the Israelites, God chose Moses, even though he had committed murder and had an anger and stuttering problem. His grace and divine assistance would cover those no problem. Besides, He loves to use the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.

Do you ever feel like God cannot use you because of your past, or because of how difficult the situation is that you might be facing? (Discuss) No matter what's in your past, the Father can still use anyone that is fully invested in following Him and trust Him with all their heart, mind, soul, and strength. He is not looking for perfection. He already has that in His Son. He is looking for humble willingness. When He finds a willing party, that is when the test begins to see how willing that person is. When that test comes, these verses tell us how important it is to be careful what we say. Your words are powerful and creative. We are given the divine power to partner with Him in the ongoing creation process. Read James 3:1-12. "We are what we eat," the doctors say. It is truer, however, that "We are what we speak." Whether it be evil words about others or yourself and your situation, be careful what options you throw out on the table, for those are the options you might well end up with.

## **Read Numbers 14:5**

This is an amazing scripture that shows us exactly what we who are spiritually mature are supposed to do for those who are not. Instead of Moses allowing Yahweh to just destroy the Israelites because of their lack of faith, the first thing he does is fall on his face before them in

intercession. He knows that Yahweh is angry for all that He has done for this ungrateful bunch. And rightfully so. So he wastes no time and goes right before the Throne of God. Read 1 Timothy 2:1 and Romans 8:26-27.

We can see from this story and from the scriptures in the New Covenant that intercession is extremely powerful and truly moves Yahweh in ways that I don't think many truly understand. The results of this intercession can be seen in verses 20-23. After Yahweh says in verses 11-12 that He is going to strike them down and disinherit them because of their slanderous rebellion, Moses intercedes and reminds Yahweh that an act like this would cause great damage to His name as the surrounding nations would look at it as *"The god of the Israelites brought them out of Egypt only to kill them Himself."* His intercession worked as the Father chose to forgive them for their sin of treason. Unfortunately, it was not the typical religious forgiveness that many of us have grown up with where there are no consequences to our sins. They were forgiven. He chose to spare them even though they deserved death. (According to Romans 6:23, the wages of sin is death.) But *"God is not mocked. Whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap"* -- Galatians 6:7. And in this case, the consequence was the Israelites would not be allowed to cross over the Jordan to receive their inheritance. Those that complained would have to spend the rest of their lives in the desert.

Have you ever done something that you know is wrong, then ask for forgiveness, and then expect there to be no consequences for those actions? There are times in life when it appears that there were no consequences to our actions, but we sometimes don't see the things that happen to us in this life as being connected to certain wrongs that we committed along the way. And as we see here, sometimes forgiveness is not giving us what we fully deserve, but giving us a lesser sentence. Real biblical repentance requires:

- 1. Recognize the gravity of your sin.**
- 2. Sincerely apologize for your mistake.**
- 3. Make a vow to do your best not to repeat that mistake.**
- 4. Making restitution to the other person for your mistake.**

This last one is the one that we tend to like to skip. We don't realize that our mistakes steal something from someone else. No man is an island. That is why the Torah says that we must give restitution for the mistakes we make. Without us trying to make the other person whole, even though we feel like we are "sorry" and have done our job, they will still be empty and feel negatively toward us. It is critical that the heart of that person be healed, no matter what it takes. It is not about us feeling better when we apologize. It's about making the other person whole.

Have you ever made a mistake, offended someone, and in that process of apologizing made it worse because you did not do what the other person needed to make their heart whole? Real love cares about the person that is hurt to the point that you would do anything to make it better. Real love is not concerned about making itself feel better and just *"moving on"* with life. Real love will not move until the other person is totally healed, their feelings fully validated, and the

relationship restored to the best possible place. Let's skip down to the last part of this chapter and see exactly how the Israelites tried to "apologize" to Yahweh for their sin. What did they decide to do to "make up" for their lack of belief? Why did it not work? (*Discuss.*)

They offended Yahweh and didn't know it. Then they realized the consequences and it sobered them up to the reality that "Oh, we have Yahweh on our side. We can do anything!" So to make it up to God, their way of saying "Sorry. My bad" was to attack the Amalekites and take the land like Caleb and Joshua said they could. The only problem was that they were **PRESUMING** that that was what God wanted. Read verse 41-43. He had already made up His mind that their punishment was they were not going to be able to go into the land. Just like us, instead of just admitting our mistakes, humbling ourselves and taking our licks like adults, we defend ourselves, quickly apologize to make ourselves feel better and then try to do something that the other person doesn't even want us to do! When we make restitution, we have to do whatever the **OTHER** person needs to make their heart whole again. Instead, just like the Israelites did, we take a simple offense and make it much worse because we just don't fully understand the process of how to love our neighbor as ourselves when we're all upset. I think we are all more like the Israelites than we care to admit!

And while we're on the subject of presuming, let's actually unpack that word for a moment. There are some pretty amazing things in Hebrew. In English when we think of the word "presume," we may think of "assuming." And while that would be a pretty good "assumption," in Hebrew, it is **FAR** deeper. In Hebrew, the word is not *presume* at all. It's "awfal," which means to "lift up," as in to lift up one's hands against another. In this context, the word "awfal" means that a person "lifted" themselves and what they wanted to do up instead of lifting up the word of God and what He wanted to do. Whenever we lift ourselves up, we are bound to fall, and that's not only "awfal" but "awful"!

**Read Proverbs 16:18 and Deuteronomy 17: 9-13.**

This section gives a great definition of "*presumption.*" It's flat out not listening to the Lord or His designated authorities and instead doing what we want to do. Presumption is a serious sin and always leads to death in an area of our lives if left in its unrepentant state. Obedience is the opposite of presumption and brings life to everyone that believes in the word of the Lord in action.

## **EYE TO EYE or FACE TO FACE?**

Read Numbers 14:14. Your version probably reads the same way mine does: "**face to face.**" And this is certainly true. Yahweh **DID** meet with His people "face to face," or, more properly in the Hebrew, "presence to presence." But strangely, the Hebrew word for face - "panah" - is not in this verse. It is "ayin," which is the Hebrew word for "eye." So technically, the phrase should read "...that you Yahweh, are seen eye to eye." What's the difference? Trust me, if the Spirit had wanted to put face He would have had Moses write "face." But He didn't. He chose "eye" for a reason. So as an exercise to make this Hebrew point, if you are in a group, I want you to stand five feet from someone directly across from you. This is being in that person's presence, or face. To be "eye to eye," you have to get much closer. So take your partner and get close enough that

you begin to see things in their eyes. Keep getting closer. What do you see? (*Do exercise and discuss what they see.*)

If you got close enough you should have been able to see in their eyes a reflection of everything they were looking at, namely you! You can see yourself plus everything behind you that you cannot see with your own eyes. Do you understand the power and the significance? Take time to discuss the difference and try to make the connection.

When you are face-to-face with someone you are experiencing all that they are. You can see them in detail. When you are eye-to-eye, you are able to experience all that you are and are able to see yourself the way others see you. In Temple days, before the priest would go into the Temple, they would wash themselves in the brazen laver, a large, highly polished brass bowl that was filled with water. They could see their reflection in both the water and the polished brass. When we see eye-to-eye with Yahweh and are so close to Him that we are intently looking into the water of the Word, we can see our reflection. We see what needs to be changed and what doesn't line up with Him. He shows us what we look like: the good, the bad, and the ugly. When we are looking into His eyes, we cannot see the giants and we don't need to worry about our backs because He will show us what is behind us in the reflection of His eyes. When we are looking into His eyes, we see what He sees...and what He sees is nothing but grasshoppers and ants. If we turn around, we'll see giants, but if we stare into His eyes, we'll see them as they really are...nothing but the gate to our destiny.

What was the punishment for not believing the Lord and giving into the spirit of fear? Forty years in the wilderness, wandering around just waiting for death so the Joshua generation could inherit the land. Read Numbers 14: 26-28 and 33-34. We see here that not only did Yahweh give the Israelites what they wanted, but the number of years was directly connected to the 40 days they were in the land spying it out. Can you think of another time that there was 40 days of testing in the desert? Read Mathew 4:1-11. Here Yeshua is tested to see things and experience the temptations of fear as well, but He passed the test and immediately became qualified to enter His ministry. *The pattern is always the same: calling, testing, qualifying promotion.*

What are the major themes we have learned from this chapter? (Discuss.)

- 1. The power of intercession and prayer**
- 2. The real definition of presumption is not believing and obeying Yahweh and looking for ways around a difficult situation.**
- 3. Looking God right in the eye removes the ability to get distracted by the giants and allows us to see ourselves and the situation through His eyes.**
- 4. No one, including Yeshua, can ever receive their full calling until they are fully vetted, tested, and qualified.**

The power of God's word is truly amazing, and I encourage you to continue to dig into it so the Truth can set you free! We are taught that there are commandments of God in the black text of

His Word. But the real power is in the "white fire," the spiritual principles behind the "black fire" text. So as you study on your own, stop and ask these questions: "What was His original intent? What is He really trying to say? And how can I apply this principle to my life today?"

Shalom,  
Jim Staley