



Numbers 14-17

1. It only takes a few disobedient minutes to destroy years' worth of progress and promises (14:1-45; 2Jo 1:8).
2. Wrong expectations in relation to God's promises can lead to mutiny against God and His current elders believing them to be incompetent and nefarious (14:1-3, 4-10a).
3. Crying/whining about what God gives us often indicates that we think we know better than God what is best for our life (14:1; What they didn't realize about their wilderness years and lack of abundance = It was meant to protect/prepare them for entering the land of plenty – Consider Deu 8:2-3 w/Pro 30:8-9).
4. Though justice must always be equitable, different situations can demand different applications (14:10b-16).
5. When possible, apply justice that is also evangelistic (14:10b-16).
6. Mercy does not negate justice (14:17-23; See also Exo 34:6-7).
7. God's forgiveness (or "pardon"): 1) does not mean that all consequences for our sin have been removed (14:18-23 w/Pro 11:31 and Heb 12:6), 2) stops being granted to those who continue to practice sin – regardless of their repentance (Psa 103:11-18 w/Heb 10:26-30).
8. God's glory is His justice (14:21 w/22-23; Glorifying God therefore means to seek/serve His justice or to be just).
9. God gives what He promises to those who trust His promises (14:24).
10. God gives what we fear when we fear He won't keep His promises (14:25-38 w/13:25 and 14:1-3; See also Pro 10:24; Isa 66:4).
"The reader is left with the sense that God's condemnation of the entire wilderness generation to a gradual forty year death in the desert is a punishment that fits the crime. In poetic justice, the old generation gets precisely what it asked for and deserved."
11. Some sins do irreparable damage (14:39-45; Heb 12:17).
12. Because God is fair, He establishes the same expectations for everyone (15:1-29).
13. Those who knowingly commit insurrection by condemning/coming against God's ordained priests/pastors - or their sound teaching, are immediately apostate (i.e. they have committed "insurrection apostasy") (15:30-31 "Does anything" = As in against the priest [See context - verse 28; Consider also v31 – "despised the word of the Lord" = It is the ordained priest who is speaking God's words/judgment that are now being despised]; "with a high hand" = Literally, "presumptuously" [see Deu 17:12] "reviles the Lord" = Blasphemes the LORD/GOD, the unforgiveable sin [see Mat 12:22-32]).
14. Considering the message of Numbers 15 in light of Numbers 14 should remind us that: 1) Revelation establishes (new) obligation (15:30-31 w/14:1-10 = Though incurring severe penalties, insurrection committed before God established the law of insurrection does not result in apostasy [the severest penalty]. This however will now be the case should someone else cross that line [e.g. Num 16:1-50]), 2) Losing a battle isn't the same as losing the war (15:1-29 w/14:11-45 = Though incurring severe penalties, there was still the promise of forgiveness and covenant relationship unto heaven. Hence the reason God brings them back to the basics for remaining in covenant).
15. Sabbath violations are to be treated as capital crimes no matter how small the infraction may seem (15:32-36; e.g. Missed more than my allotted Sundays by not being responsible).
16. God expects us to possess things that will daily remind us to ask yourselves: 1) "How has the LORD commanded me to behave in this situation?" (15:37-39a), 2) "What is more important than full obedience and holiness?" (15:39b-41).
17. Any covenant community acting as though her ordained priests/pastors have real authority runs the risk of being told they "have gone too far!" (16:1-10, 11 w/15:30-31; e.g. recent insurrection/apostasy of a certain individual).
18. Those most rebellious to God often make the fatal mistake of thinking that: 1) any ordained pastor/priest not approved/appointed by them is suspect/illegitimate (16:12-13), 2) the ones to blame when bad things happen to them or others because of their sin, are the ordained pastors/priests since they were the ones communicating and enforcing God's judgment (16:14a, 41), 3) their despising of the ordained pastors/priests will not affect their relationship w/God (16:14b-35, 42-50), 4) they possess the same authority/authorization as the ordain pastors/priests (16:36-40).
19. Fear for your life is the proper response to realizing God has given real authority and power to His ordain pastors/priests (17:1-13 w/Mat 12:22-32 w/16:19 w/Joh 20:21-23 w/Isa 66:21 w/Psa 132:5 w/1Ti 3:1-7 and 14-15 w/Tit 2:15).