

Numbers 13 - 14

Numbers 13-14 focus upon Israel as they camp at the border of the Promised Land poised to receive the nearly 500-year-old promises of occupying the Land. Unfortunately we find that due to fear the tribes refuse to trust the Lord and partake of the promises. As we walk through the next couple chapters allow the Lord to carefully examine you to determine if your fears are keeping you from experiencing the promises of God.

It might be of value to reexamine the Abrahamic covenant.

Genesis 12:1-3

12 Now the Lord had said to Abram:

“Get out of your country,
From your family
And from your father’s house,
To a land that I will show you.

2

I will make you a great nation;
I will bless you
And make your name great;
And you shall be a blessing.

3

I will bless those who bless you,
And I will curse him who curses you;
And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Remember the promises he received can be divided into 4 categories

- Descendants as the stars of heaven
 - The congregation of Israel was now over 2 million people
- I will make you a great nation
 - Israel spent the last year at Mount Sinai being transformed from a large group of people into a nation. They were given the Word of God as the Law code to govern their living.
- To a Land that I will show you
 - They are now on the brink of entering the Land and seeing the third aspect of the Law completed.
 - Sadly, they will disobey God by refusing to enter the Land. This will slow the promises for an entire generation.
- In you all the families of the earth will be blessed
 - This 4th and final part of the covenant is a promise regarding the coming Messiah. This will be fulfilled 1500 years after the

- events of Numbers 13 with the coming of Christ.
- Galatians 3:8
*And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, **preached the gospel to Abraham** beforehand, saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed."*

Israel's march toward Canaan brought them to Kadesh Barnea Located across the Jordan from what would become the eastern Israeli border.

Years later Moses described the journey from Sinai to Kadesh Barnea

Deuteronomy 1:19

*Then, as the Lord our God commanded us, we set out from Horeb and went toward the hill country of the Amorites through all that **vast and dreadful wilderness** that you have seen, and so we reached **Kadesh Barnea**. (NIV)*

Kadesh Barnea

The Israelites used the area as a staging arena for their conquest of Canaan (Num. 13:26), encamping there while their spies scouted the land (13–14; Deut. 1).

Later, from here Moses sought unsuccessfully to gain the king of Edom's permission for safe passage through that territory (Numbers 20:14–21).

After the wanderings Israel returned to Kadesh (Numbers 33:36–37);

It was here that Aaron died (v. 38).

It was here that Moses struck the rock (Num. 20:1–13; cf. Exod. 17:1–7). Moses renamed the spring Meribah, the "waters of contention"

Numbers 13:1-2

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the children of Israel; from each tribe of their fathers you shall send a man, every one a leader among them."

The first step toward conquering the enemy was to spy out the land. We have two parallel accounts that provide detail regarding this event.

In the narrative of Numbers we are told that the Lord spoke to Moses instructing him to select leaders from among the people who would

be sent into the land and bring back word to the people.

Later when Moses recalls this event he provides further details

Deuteronomy 1:21-23

*Look, the Lord your God has set the land before you; go up and possess it, as the Lord God of your fathers has spoken to you; do not **fear** or be discouraged.'*

"And every one of you came near to me and said, 'Let us send men before us, and let them search out the land for us, and bring back word to us of the way by which we should go up, and of the cities into which we shall come.'

"The plan pleased me well; so I took twelve of your men, one man from each tribe.

We find that because of fear the people presented a plan to Moses that involved one leader from each tribe to enter the land, spy out the situation and report back to Israel. Moses further explained that the plan seemed good to him, so presumably he presented the idea to God who commanded him to send out the spies.

This is not the first time leaders were chosen to assist Moses by spreading out the work of pastoring the congregation of Israel.

Exodus [18:21-22](#)

Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And let them judge the people at all times. Then it will be that every great matter they shall bring to you, but every small matter they themselves shall judge. So it will be easier for you, for they will bear the burden with you.

Numbers [11:17](#)

Then I will come down and talk with you there. I will take of the Spirit that is upon you and will put the same upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, that you may not bear it yourself alone.

These men were chosen to be leaders of the people. Since Israel was called to follow God their main role was to encourage the people to press after the Lord and into the service of he Lord. Sadly we find that they failed miserably

Deuteronomy [1:28](#)

Where can we go? **Our brothers have made our hearts melt in fear.** They say, "The people are stronger and taller than we are; the cities are large, with walls up to the sky. We even saw the Anakites there."

These leaders came back with an evil report, and stirred the hearts of the people against the mind of the Lord. I think there is a danger for someone who is naturally a leader; that danger is when they are not subject unto the Lord. The most important thing about a leader is that they have learned to be a good follower

For example, if you are going to lead a group to an untraveled destination, the most important step for you to take, as a leader, is to follow the map. You can't just do whatever's right in your own eyes. You can't be Sam the Toucan and "follow your nose." If we are going to be godly leaders, we must follow Jesus. Do you remember the Roman soldier who came to Jesus and wanted healing for his servant? Jesus said to him, "I'll come to your house." The man responded, "You don't need to come to my house. All You need to do is speak the word; because I'm a man in authority and I'm under authority." You see, he said, "I know how to both give orders and receive orders." (Matthew 8:5-13) He was a good leader because he was a man who knew how to follow and as a result knew the direction to go. The problem with ten of the twelve leaders chosen by Moses was not that they weren't leaders. The problem was an inability to follow. They were not subject to the real Commander-in-Chief. They had not put themselves under the authority of God.

Do you want to lead? Follow Jesus. If you want to lead people in the proper direction, to see people join forces in this furthering of the Kingdom, then follow Jesus. The most important thing about being a leader is to follow Christ. The key is, submitting to Christ and going wherever He is going. Ten of these men refused to do that, and led a nation into despair.

Numbers 13:3

So Moses sent them from the Wilderness of Paran according to the command of the Lord, all of them men who were heads of the children of Israel.

Numbers 13:16

These are the names of the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land. And Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun, Joshua.

After listing the names of the tribal leaders Moses gives special instruction regarding the task ahead. I find it particularly interesting that with the exception of Joshua and Caleb few of us have ever heard the names of the other 10. Like Joshua and scores of others they found themselves face to face with circumstances that gave them a chance to trust the Lord, walk obediently with Him and step out to further the kingdom. However because they refused they missed the opportunity to see the miraculous hand of God on their lives and the opportunity to set a pattern for generations of believers to follow.

Joshua and Caleb stand out because of their faithfulness

Joshua, like many other biblical characters will receive a name change

This subtle change in English is a dramatic change in Hebrew.

Hoshea - deliverer or savior

Joshua - YHWY is deliverer or savior

Joshua would be the means by which God would deliver the people. He alone was not the deliverer

Numbers 13:17-20

Then Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said to them, "Go up this way into the South, and go up to the mountains, and see what the land is like: whether the people who dwell in it are strong or weak, few or many; whether the land they dwell in is good or bad; whether the cities they inhabit are like camps or strongholds; whether the land is rich or poor; and whether there are forests there or not. Be of good courage. And bring some of the fruit of the land." Now the time was the season of the first ripe grapes.

Moses gives special instructions to the spies.

- First they are given the way to go

Go up this way into the South, and go up to the mountains

The route of the explorers was north from Kadesh through the Negev and on into the hill country.

The Negev (lit., "south") refers to all the desert of southern Canaan, especially the area from Beersheba south.

The hill country consisted of the mountains of Judah, north to the hills of Ephraim, and all the way to the heights of Galilee.

They were to head northward through the hill country regions later to be known as Judah, Samaria, and Galilee

They would reach as far north as Rebo of Lebo-Hamath in southern Lebanon

This journey took a total of 40 days to complete

Numbers 13:25

And they returned from spying out the land after forty days.

It seems that the original plan did not involve entering the land from the east through Jericho. That was not only far off the main Egyptian access to Canaan but it involved the hazard of passing near the heavily fortified defensive positions at Jericho and Ai.

Maybe that another consequence of their failure to enter was the greater difficulty of the battles when the next generation did enter. The inhabitants no doubt ramped up defenses when they heard of a nomadic people circling about the desert.

Our failure as parents will make it more difficult for our children to follow the Lord.

Sins of parents are often repeated in the children.

Alcohol or substance abuse

Smoking

Divorce

Abuse

Indifference to spiritual things

Consumed with worldly treasures

Biblically speaking a person is held accountable for his or her own sins. The actions of a father don't justify the sins of a child, nor do the actions of a child justify the sins of a father. We are all held accountable for our own actions. That does not mean that our sins will not have an effect upon those around us. It is clear from all research that the behavior of parents is transferred to their children.

- Second they are told exactly what to look for

Numbers 13:18-19

See what the land is like: Whether the people who dwell in it are strong or weak, few or many; Whether the land they dwell in is good or bad; Whether the

cities they inhabit are like camps or strongholds; Whether the land is rich or poor; and whether there are forests there or not.

They were to examine the people, the land and their defenses. They would see with their own eyes all that their hearts had been longing for hundreds of years.

- Third they were reminded to trust the Lord rather than being discouraged by the magnitude of the task before them

Numbers 13:20
Be of good courage.

- And finally they are told to bring something back to show the people so their hearts could be excited about what lay ahead

And bring some of the fruit of the land." Now the time was the season of the first ripe grapes

Numbers 13:21-25

*So they went up and spied out the land from the Wilderness of Zin as far as Rehob, near the entrance of Hamath. And they went up through the South and came to **Hebron**; Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmi, the descendants of Anak, were there. (Now **Hebron** was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) Then they came to the Valley of Eshcol, and there cut down a branch with one cluster of grapes; they carried it between two of them on a pole. They also brought some of the pomegranates and figs. The place was called the Valley of Eshcol, because of the cluster which the men of Israel cut down there. And they returned from spying out the land after forty days.*

A couple of places stand out

Hebron

Some of you have made a trip to Israel. After years of reading you bible, hearing the stories and imagining the land you finally arrived. Think about some of the emotions that were stirred up in you when you stood on rest of galilee or walk the first century street in Jerusalem or made you way to the top of a mount Carmel. Imagine the emotions stirring within the spies as they snuck through the land visiting places like **Hebron**

Hebron was the ancient home of the patriarchs. Abraham moved their after separating from Lot. It was there that Abraham and Sarah raised Isaac, and where Abraham buried

his wife and became the home of Isaac and Jacob after him.

This city was heavily fortified and we find later that they were in allegiance with several other city states in the region. It may have been apparent to the spies that a fight with Hebron was a fight with the whole region

Joshua 10:3-4

Therefore Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem sent to Hoham king of Hebron, Piram king of Jarmuth, Japhia king of Lachish, and Debir king of Eglon, saying, "Come up to me and help me, that we may attack Gibeon, for it has made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel."

Hebron was given to Caleb

Joshua 14:13-15

13 Then Joshua blessed him, and he gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh for an inheritance. 14 Therefore Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he wholly followed the Lord, the God of Israel. 15 Now the name of Hebron formerly was Kiriath-arba. (Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim.) And the land had rest from war.

Later Hebron became the capital of David's kingdom

2 Samuel 2:1-4

2 After this David inquired of the Lord, "Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah?" And the Lord said to him, "Go up." David said, "To which shall I go up?" And he said, "To Hebron." 2 So David went up there, and his two wives also, Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel. 3 And David brought up his men who were with him, everyone with his household, and they lived in the towns of Hebron. 4 And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah.

2 Samuel 2:11

And the time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

We are given another very interesting fact about Hebron

Numbers 13:22

And they went up through the South and came to Hebron; Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmi, the descendants of Anak, were there. (Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.)

Hebron was built 7 years before Zoan. This is a very interesting statement if for no other reason than this is the first mention of Zoan in the narrative of Scripture. It seems somewhat obscure and out of place.

About 200 years ago, there arose a group commonly referred to as the “higher critics.” They were scholars who questioned everything that had been accepted about the Bible for over 1800 years. As a result they began to examine Scripture with critical eyes in an attempt to dismantle the Bible. Everywhere they found an apparent flaw they assumed the Bible to be untrustworthy. The reference to “Zoan, in Egypt” is one such case. They claimed that this was an imaginary place and proved that Moses was not the author of Numbers. That is until archeologists uncovered the remains of Zoan and discovered that it was a retreat place for pharaoh and for his family. It was a place that only someone like Moses who had been a part of Pharaohs family would ever use as a point of reference.

Valley of Eshcol -

Moses wanted the spies to bring back some evidence of the beauty of the promised land, this was no doubt to stir the hearts of the people to look beyond the difficulty of the task before them and to look at the great reward. We can only imagine the scene of the 12 spies marching into the camp with a cluster of grapes so large it had to be carried on a pole.

The cluster came from a place called the valley of Eshcol in the same general region as Hebron.

The valley got its name from the large vineyards in the area. In fact the narrative makes it clear that the name was actually given to it by the spies

Eshcol was also the name of one of the early princes of the region. He is involved in the narrative of Genesis

Genesis 14:13

Then one who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew, for he dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner; and they were allies with Abram.

Abraham dwelt in the region ruled by Eshcol. When he heard news of Lot's capture, Eshcol joined Abraham in pursuit of Chedaloamar to assist in the rescue attempt. For which Eshcol was richly rewarded

Genesis 14:23-24

that I will take nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, "I have made Abram rich"— except only what the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me: Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion."

Numbers 13:23

Then they came to the Valley of Eshcol, and there cut down a branch with one cluster of grapes; they carried it between two of them on a pole. They also brought some of the pomegranates and figs.

Numbers 13:26-29

Now they departed and came back to Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the children of Israel in the Wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh; they brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. Then they told him, and said: "We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. Nevertheless the people who dwell in the land are strong; the cities are fortified and very large; moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the South; the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea and along the banks of the Jordan."

"They brought back word to them..."

Upon returning to the camp, the spies brought a report of their

journey.

Their report is in two parts

- **First**

Numbers 13:27

Then they told him, and said: "We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit.

The land is everything God said it would be

After being enslaved in Egypt and living in the desert they must have been overwhelmed walking through the land.

- **Secondly**

Numbers 13:28-29

Nevertheless the people who dwell in the land are strong; the cities are fortified and very large; moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the South; the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea and along the banks of the Jordan."

Never the less the enemy is strong and the battle will be difficult.

The **Canaanites** were the indigenous population of Canaan.

The **Amorites** had entered Canaan from northeast Aram (Syria) sometime before 2000 b.c., had driven the Canaanites out of the hill country, and took their place there.

The **Hittites** originated in central Anatolia (modern Turkey) about 1800 b.c. and slowly spread south and southeast, probably identifying with the Amorites in Canaan.

Nothing is known of the **Jebusites** except that they were centralized in Jerusalem and were also considered an Amorite group (Josh. 10:5). They remained in control of Jerusalem till 400 years after Moses, when David drove them out, captured the city and made it his capital

The **Nephilim** (this word occurs only here and in Gen. 6:4) were of great size; the Anakites (cf. Num. 13:22), who descended from the Nephilim,

were also “strong and tall” (Deut. 9:2).

They chose to focus on the obstacles they around them instead of the Lord who was with them

They saw themselves in light of themselves and others but failed to see themselves in light of God

Numbers 13:33

There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.”

Every opportunity in ministry is the same. We are faced with the possibility of seeing the great promises of God fulfilled around us but they will only be seen when we are willing to endure much difficulty

Acts 14:22

strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, “We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.”

This is clearly evidenced in the ministry life of the apostles

Peter had to stand before a mocking crowd, endure tribunals, prison and the rejection of many brethren if he was going to see souls won for the kingdom

Paul had to endure travel, sickness, persecution, loneliness, prison, rejection and more to bring Christ to others and others to Christ

Colossians 1:24

I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church,

While at first read this verse may seem confusing, Paul seems to be saying that in addition to the suffering Christ endured, many other much sufferings are involved in each of us coming to Christ. Paul's wounds were a testimony that ministry costs dearly

Sadly the spies emphasized the challenges and the people broke under the pressure of the difficulty ahead of them

Deuteronomy 1:28

Where can we go up? Our brethren have discouraged our hearts, saying,

“The people are greater and taller than we; the cities are great and fortified up to heaven; moreover we have seen the sons of the Anakim there.”

What a contrast we see between their testimony and that of Paul and Barnabas after they left Canaan to bring the gospel to all nations.

Acts [14:27](#)

Now when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

Acts 15:3

So, being sent on their way by the church, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, describing the conversion of the Gentiles; and they caused great joy to all the brethren.

No mention of being chased or beaten instead they gloried in the work that God accomplished and the people were filled with joy.

Our words have the power to instill faith or fear. We choose to emphasize the power of God or the size of the obstacle. Neither one will be bigger than it truly is but if we set our focus upon one we will lose sight of the other.

Numbers [13:30](#)

*Then **Caleb** quieted the people before Moses, and said, “Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it.”*

In an attempt to sway the direction of the report Caleb speaks confidently trusting in the hand of God to give them aid.

Caleb's character is revealed in the confidence he expresses here as well as in Moses' commentary on his life

Numbers [14:24](#)

But My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it.

Deuteronomy [1:36](#)

except Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him and his children

I am giving the land on which he walked, because he wholly followed the Lord.'

Twice we read he "*wholly followed the Lord*" and once we read how, "*he had a different spirit in him*"

Regardless of your view of pneumology it is abundantly clear that there is a constant and continual need of the spirit of God to assist the child of God in both following and serving God. Over and over in Scripture the emphasis is the work of the spirit. This is seen in the lives of characters like;

- Aholiab and buziel who oversaw the artistic work of the tabernacle

Exodus 28:3

So you shall speak to all who are gifted artisans, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments, to consecrate him, that he may minister to Me as priest.

Exodus 31:2-3

"See, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. And I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship,

- They 70 elders chosen to assist Moses in ministry

Numbers 11:17

Then I will come down and talk with you there. I will take of the Spirit that is upon you and will put the same upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, that you may not bear it yourself alone.

- Joshua as he prepared to take the reigns from Moses

Numbers 27:18

And the Lord said to Moses: "Take Joshua the son of Nun with you, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him;

- Gideon

Judges 6:34

But the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon; then he blew the trumpet, and the Abiezrites gathered behind him.

- Jephthah
Judges 11:29
Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah, and he passed through Gilead and Manasseh, and passed through Mizpah of Gilead; and from Mizpah of Gilead he advanced toward the people of Ammon.
- Samson
Judges 14:6
And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he tore the lion apart as one would have torn apart a young goat, though he had nothing in his hand. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done.

Who tragically failed to notice when the spirit departed;
He like Peter is a vivid illustration of the weakness of man apart from the empowering of the spirit.
- Saul, who was turned into another man

1 Samuel 10:6
Then the Spirit of the Lord will come upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man.
- David
1 Samuel 16:13
Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel arose and went to Ramah.
- Elijah and Elisha
2 Kings 2:15
Now when the sons of the prophets who were from Jericho saw him, they said, "The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha." And they came to meet him, and bowed to the ground before him.

While the list goes on and on, the essence of the idea is clearly presented in

- Zechariah 4:6
"This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the Lord of hosts.

- Acts 1:8
But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”
- Ephesians 5:18
And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit

Caleb's success, like that of all our biblical heroes was based upon his reliance upon the spirit of God.

The same is true of the church today. Those who choose to trust in the enabling of the spirit and walk in faith will see God accomplish great things

Perhaps what the church as a whole needs more than anything else is for more individual believers to realize their dependence on the Spirit of God that we might seek Him for a fresh and continuous outpouring

Numbers 13:31-33

But the men who had gone up with him said, “We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we.” And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, “The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.”

The chapter closes as the people assess the evidence and come to a conclusion. The evidence is:

- The land is good as God promised
- The people are many, strong and fortified
- God is powerful and promises victory

After eyewitness testimony from Caleb, Joshua and the 10 Israel determines they will NOT be able to enter the land

Numbers 14

Numbers 14:1-4

So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night. And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, "If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness! Why has the Lord brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?" So they said to one another, "Let us select a leader and return to Egypt."

Their **first** reaction involves weeping. Their weeping may have been motivated by sadness that the land will not be possessed, fear of what will happen to them, grief over their lack of faith, confidence and courage...

They were afraid for their families. This was a genuine fear, crossing into the Land would mean coming face to face with an enemy that did not want to give up easily. There would be battles, obstacles and plenty of danger. This caused them to question what would happen to their children if something happened to them. Their failure came down to the people being unable to trust the LORD for their family. There's a very important truth we need to learn as parents; The Lord cares for my children more than I do.

Their **second** action involves blaming God.

They had developed their own idea of what following the Lord looked like; When that idea was not satisfied they began to blame God as though He had failed to meet His end of the covenant. This is a common struggle today. Many follow the Lord thinking that will guarantee them a certain lifestyle or at least certain tangible benefits. When those are not met in what they deem as a suitable amount of time the person begins to accuse God of letting them down

Their **third** reaction involves an election. They decide that Moses is an inadequate leader and they want a new one who will lead them along the way

It is interesting that they wanted return to Egypt. Imagine what Egypt would have looked like. They were still be recovering from the plagues that happened less than 2 years before. The people would still be in mourning the loss of the firstborn son. They would still be trying to recover financially from the people giving all of their possessions to the Israelites. Egypt would have still been trying to recover from the loss of their greatest soldiers drowning in the Red Sea. Egypt, certainly, would not have been over their anger at the Children of Israel for what had happened to them.

Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel.

Moses reaction is not to the difficulty of conquering the Land but of the difficulty of conquering the people of Israel. His conversation with the Lord is recorded starting with 14:11

Numbers 14:6-10

But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; and they spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying: "The land we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. If the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, 'a land which flows with milk and honey.' Only do not rebel against the Lord, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the Lord is with us. Do not fear them." And all the congregation said to stone them with stones. Now the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle of meeting before all the children of Israel.

Joshua and Caleb also react. Their reaction is to plead with the people to trust in and follow the Lord.

We see here a picture of the two most important aspects of ministry side by side: Moses and Aaron are praying with Joshua and Caleb are preaching. Sadly even with the most persuasive preaching people may still harden their hearts to the Lord.

They speak of the goodness of God's promises and the excellence of His power to provide them with victory.

This is the essential message of sanctification. We are aware of our weakness and the inability we have to overcome the issues of the flesh. The great hope of the Gospel is that God has better for us than what we are settling for and that by the power of His Spirit we can overcome our own weaknesses and experience victory. The problem is that it is often very difficult to convince the flailing Christian that God will give Him victory if He will only let go of his sin.

Instead of heeding the message the congregation seeks to kill the messengers

Numbers 14:11-12

Then the Lord said to Moses: "How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them? I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they."

God assesses the people and diagnosis the real problem. The issue is not the size of the enemy or the inexperience of the people it is in their unwillingness to trust God. They were face to face with opportunity and were incapable of putting their confidence in the God who had proven Himself so many times in the past.

We face the same dilemma today. God has been faithful to His promises. Although many things have broken over time, not the smallest part of his promises has ever failed. At the end of a lifetime of following and serving the Lord Joshua declared

Joshua 23:14

"Behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth. And you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one thing has failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spoke concerning you. All have come to pass for you; not one word of them has failed."

The promises of God are trustworthy. What we fail to realize is that our emotions and our circumstances are not.