

**Into the Promised Land - Joshua's Story**  
**Lesson #14 – Rebellion and Consequences – Part 2**  
**•HANDOUT•**

**► We pick up Israel's story with Moses and Aaron responding with anguish at the people's rebellion.**

Numbers 14:5-10 • Then Moses and Aaron fell face-down in front of the whole Israelite assembly gathered there. Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had explored the land, tore their clothes and said to the entire Israelite assembly:

"The land we passed through and explored is exceedingly good. If the Lord is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us. Only do not rebel against the Lord. And do not be afraid of the people of the land, because we will swallow them up. Their protection is gone, but the Lord is with us. Do not be afraid of them."

But the whole assembly talked about stoning them. Then the Glory of the Lord appeared at the Tent of Meeting to all the Israelites.

Q: Why did Moses and Aaron fall face-down in front of the whole assembly of Israel? Were they pleading with the people not to be rebellious toward the Lord or were they begging for their own lives?

Q: Culturally, the tearing of one's clothing demonstrated deep grief and mourning, especially when someone died. Why would Joshua and Caleb choose to do that in front of the Assembly?

Q: What is the one thing that Joshua and Caleb did that Moses and Aaron chose not to do?

Q: What is significant about Joshua and Caleb declaring the Canaanites "protection is gone?"

Q: How did the Assembly of Israel respond to Moses, Aaron, Joshua, and Caleb?

**In the midst of this rebellious storm God suddenly appears at the Tent of Meeting...**

Numbers 14:11-12 • The Lord said to Moses, "How long will these people treat me with contempt? How long will they refuse to believe in me, in spite of all the miraculous signs I have performed among them? I will strike them down with a plague and destroy them, but I will make you into a nation greater and stronger than they."

Q: Why would the people risk God's anger? Yes, they're afraid of the giants in the land but shouldn't they be more afraid of the wrath of God?

Q: What new thing is Israel about to learn about God?

**In spite of the rejection and the threats to his life,  
Moses intercedes for Israel.  
Surprisingly, his intercession begins by reasoning with the LORD! ...**

Numbers 14:13-16 • Moses said to the Lord, "Then the Egyptians will hear about it! By your power you brought these people up from among them. And they will tell the inhabitants of this land about it. They have already heard that you, O Lord, are with these people and that you, O Lord, have been seen face to face, that your cloud stays over them, and that you go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

If you put these people to death all at one time, the nations who have heard this report about you will say, 'The Lord was not able to bring these people into the land He promised them on oath; so He slaughtered them in the desert.'

Q: What does Moses reveal about his most ardent concerns in this passage?

Q: What is missing from Moses' words of intercession on behalf of Israel?

**Moses changes his strategy. He moves from concern over the Lord's reputation  
and focuses on the Character of the Lord ...**

Numbers 14:17-19 • "Now may the Lord's strength be displayed, just as you have declared: *'The Lord is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation.'* In accordance with your great love, forgive the sin of these people, just as you have pardoned them from the time they left Egypt until now."

Q: The italicized statement in the above scripture is written as a quote. What is it referencing?

Q: In the end, what does Moses request of the Lord?

### The Lord God responds to Moses' request ...

Numbers 14: 20-27 • The Lord replied, "I have forgiven them, as you asked. Nevertheless, as surely as I live and as surely as the Glory of the Lord fills the whole earth, not one of the men who saw my Glory and the miraculous signs I performed in Egypt and in the desert, but who disobeyed me and tested me ten times-- not one of them will ever see the land I promised on oath to their forefathers. No one who has treated me with contempt will ever see it.

But because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it.

Since the Amalekites and Canaanites are living in the valleys, turn back tomorrow and set out toward the desert along the route to the Red Sea."

Q: God says He forgave them, but they are no longer going to inherit the land. How can God's decision be considered forgiveness?

Q: Why does there have to be consequences?

Q: The general concept today is that the God of the O.T. is a God of wrath and judgment, while in the N.T. God is all mercy and grace. How does this passage change that perception?

### The Lord pronounces the terms of the Consequences of Israel's Rebellion.

Numbers 14:26-35 • The Lord said to Moses and Aaron: "How long will this wicked community grumble against me? I have heard the complaints of these grumbling Israelites. So tell them, 'As surely as I live, declares the Lord, I will do to you the very things I heard you say:

In this desert your bodies will fall – every one of you twenty years old or more who was counted in the census and who has grumbled against me. Not one of you will enter the land I swore with uplifted hand to make your home, except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun.

As for your children that you said would be taken as plunder, I will bring them in to enjoy the land you have rejected. But you – your bodies will fall in this desert. Your children will be shepherds here for forty years, suffering for your unfaithfulness, until the last of your bodies lies in the desert.

For forty years – one year for each of the forty days you explored the land – you will suffer for your sins and know what it is like to have me against you.'

I, the Lord, have spoken, and I will surely do these things to this whole wicked community, which has banded together against me. They will meet their end in this desert; here they will die."

Q: The Lord said "He would do the very things He heard the people say." What is He referring to?

Q: Why did God spare the children under the age of 20 years?

Q: What exceptions did the Lord make?

Q: In God's decision to allow all of Israel's population 20 years and older to die in the Wilderness, what statement stands out as the most stark, even terrifying?

**The men of Israel respond to the words of the Lord.  
But before we look at their response,  
we find that the Lord makes an addendum to His judgment.  
That is where we will pick up the story next time.**



Next Time • Lesson #15  
“The Problem of Presumptive Grace”

