

**Date** : 23 July 2023  
**Theme** : Understanding the journey of faith  
**Topic** : The Power of World views (Caleb courage or grasshopper mentality)  
**Passages** : *Numbers 13 - 14*  
**Key Verse** : *...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... Numbers 13:30 nkjv*

**Introduction**

**The journey thus far**

Moses had appointed 12 spies (leaders from each tribe) to recce the land of Canaan, which God had given Abraham whose descendants would occupy 430 years later.

**The assignment for the spies**

The scope of their mission was to identify routes for advance, not to decide whether entering the land was possible or not. The Lord had already given them the land. *Numbers 13:1*

The assignment that Moses gave to the spies resulted in the parting of ways between those who chose to see things God’s way and those who chose the world view of their own way. 12 friends walking together came to a Y junction. No matter how good were their friendships starting out – at this point, one must say to another these decisive words...”This is where we part company... We have different destinies.” Long before they came to this junction, each had made the choice of his own world view or of God’s.

- a) **They saw the same environment.** A fertile land where all sorts of fruit trees thrived (ie a land flowing with milk and honey). Fortified cities, giants in Hebron.
- b) **They gave different reports and recommendations about taking the land.** 2 different reports emerged. The majority scouts had the perception of fear, leading to retreat and paralysis. The minority scouts had the perception of vision and possibilities, hope and opportunity. Their choices were recorded in *Numbers 14:22-25*.

Why was this so? The problem began when the majority scouts undertook the mission with unbelief and gave an exaggerated negative report.

**1. Same observations but contrasting conclusions (regarding taking our inheritance) come from our world views.**

| World view of unbelief (10 spies)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | World view of covenant partners (2 spies)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They saw everything visible, but not the invisible God.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The people<br/><i>...the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw descendants of Anak there. Numbers 13:28-29</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• They exaggerated out of fear<br/><i>...All the people we saw there are of great size. Numbers 13:32</i><br/><br/>Conclusion: They will swallow us up.</li> <li>• Us vs them<br/><i>...We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are. We seemed like grasshoppers... Numbers 13:31, 33</i><br/>World view <i>...we are just grasshoppers...</i><br/><br/>Conclusion: We can't</li> <li>• The Land<br/><i>...The land we explored devours those living in it... Numbers 13:32</i><br/>This contradicted their earlier statement<br/><i>...It truly flows with milk and honey Numbers 13:27</i></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They saw the Lord’s favour...<i>If the Lord delights in us... the Lord is with us... Numbers 14:8,9</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The people<br/><i>...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. Numbers 14:7-9</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• They spoke words of faith<br/><i>...their protection is gone... Numbers 14:9</i><br/><br/>Conclusion: We will swallow them up. <i>Numbers 14:9</i></li> <li>• Us vs them<br/><i>...Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said...We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it. Numbers 13:30</i><br/>World view <i>...The Lord will give it to us... Numbers 14:8</i><br/><br/>Conclusion: We can</li> <li>• The Land<br/><i>...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. Numbers 14:8-9</i></li> </ul> |

## 2. How does God see things?

| God sees unbelief as rebellion (10 spies)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | God rewards the faithful (2 spies)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They saw insurmountable difficulties.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Inhabitants more powerful than us.</li> <li>○ Fortified cities difficult to conquer</li> <li>○ Giants (Anaks, and Amalekites), too entrenched to drive out.</li> <li>○ Cannibals in the land...<i>devours...</i> Numbers 13:32</li> </ul> <p>Problem: They did not consider God's purpose for the journey.</p> </li> <li>• Saw themselves as weak as grasshoppers.               <p><i>Numbers: 13:33</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ They had tested God 10 times by their unbelief.                   <p><i>Numbers 14:22</i></p> </li> <li>○ God's conclusion ...<i>They have rejected Me...</i><br/><i>Numbers 14:11 nkjv</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• The worldview of the 10 is typical of the majority. It disregards what God has commanded.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Their views were shaped by their own agenda, not God's...<i>they said to one another, let us select a leader and return to Egypt. Numbers 14:3-4</i></li> <li>○ Rejection of biblical view to walk by faith leads to insubordination and this constitutes covenant breaking with God's appointed leaders.                   <p>God said ...<i>How long will these people treat Me with contempt... Numbers 14:11 niv</i></p> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• They instigated the whole community to rebel               <p>...<i>The whole community talked about stoning them (Joshua &amp; Caleb)... Numbers 14:10.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ People are easily influenced by words of unbelief. They spread a negative report talk about appointing own leaders.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• God does not excuse those who chose to follow the world out of ignorance or lack of discernment. God's punishment for covenant breaking is sure to follow.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ They were disqualified from entering the land                   <p>...<i>not one of them will ever see the land I (God) promised on oath to their forefathers... Numbers 14:23.</i></p> </li> <li>○ Their carcasses fell in the wildness. It took 40 years – what a waste of life!</li> <li>○ The spies died by the plague before the Lord                   <p><i>Numbers 14:37.</i> God carried out the death sentence on those who sought to abort His will.</p> </li> <li>○ Defeat in battle (without Moses' leadership).                   <p><i>Numbers 14:44</i></p> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They believed the Lord's presence, protection &amp; power. <i>Numbers 14:8</i><br/><i>The Lord will give it to us. Numbers 14:8</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ God fulfilled what He promised.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Saw themselves as being able to overcome the enemies with God's power – We have the authority. God is the landlord. He has allocated it to us. The Lord said...<i>the land...I am giving to the Israelites... Numbers 13:1.</i><br/><i>...we should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it... Numbers 13:30</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ God always works with covenant partners.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Appealed to the people not to give in to feelings of fear, but to submit to Him. <i>Numbers 14:9</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ God's condition for covenant relationships is submission.</li> <li>○ Anything that exalts against Christ must be pulled down. The only acceptable world view is the biblical one.</li> <li>○ God called Caleb's world view that of a different spirit. <i>Numbers 14:24</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Caleb &amp; Joshua stood by God's appointed leaders, Moses and Aaron, and became leaders later.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ They endured the wrath of the misled majority, by saying...<i>If the Lord is pleased with us, He will lead us... Numbers 14:8.</i><br/>God was pleased with them and did lead them.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Both was commended by God and received their inheritance. <i>Numbers 14:30.</i></li> </ul> |

## Summary: Covenant breaking of unbiblical world view. *Numbers 13:14*

The power of world views lies in determining our choices.

Different perspectives result in differing reports and conclusions.

- When the majority among us adopts a secular humanistic world view, such carnal mindedness cannot receive the things of God. What results from which a world view?  
The faithless report of the 10 spies led to deadly results:-
  - The true report of faithful men was rejected by the community.
  - Faith in God's promise was undermined.
  - Hostility against God's appointed leadership aroused.
  - Wandering in the desert for 38 years until death in the desert was their destiny.
- Those who adopt God's biblical world view are usually in the minority.  
The spiritually-minded focusses on God's promises, presence, power and provision.
- Observations
  - God is kind. He will provide for all our needs and ultimately our inheritance, but we have to take possession of His gift. For those who choose to reject His will, God never interferes with our decision no matter how foolish or futile it may be. When they declared *...if only we had died in the desert! Deuteronomy 14:2, The Lord said...I will do the very thing I heard you say... Numbers 14:28.*
  - God is pleased when the minority chooses to keep His covenant.  
On Caleb, the Lord said...*Because My servant, Caleb has a different spirit and follows Me wholeheartedly. I will bring him into the land. Numbers 14:24* (Caleb not only possessed the land; when he asked for another portion, God gave it to him. His descendants also possessed the land).

## 3. Insubmission to authority can result from vicarious anger. *Numbers 16*

Second line leaders are powerful influencers. When they challenge God's appointed leaders, out of pride and arrogance, they break covenant through insubordination. When God punishes them, bystanders get angry vicariously.

Vicarious anger is a common mass behaviour. This kind of anger arises when a person, out of a sense of self-righteousness, joins the crowd to defy their leader whom they deem to have acted unfairly. Even though it may not involve them personally, but out of self-righteousness, they are carried away to become part of the protest.

- A defiance against leadership was led by Korah, Dathan and Abiram. *Numbers 16*  
When called by Moses to a meeting, Dathan and Abiram flatly refused. They blamed Moses for every problem, and mislead others by calling Egypt *...the land of milk and honey...*  
They accused Moses *...you want to lord it over us?...Numbers 16:13.*
  - Result? Korah, Dathan and Abiram were swallowed in the ground when God split the earth under them. Their supporters, 250 other leaders, were all killed by God *Numbers 16:35.*
- Instead of fearing the Lord, the people rebelled even more aggressively. *Numbers 16:41*  
Through vicarious anger, Moses was accused of killing the people.  
Behind vicarious anger is a lot of lobbying by interested parties.
  - God dealt severely with the rebellion. 14,700 were killed by God's plague.
- Moses and Aaron acted as covenant partners. They made atonement for the people.  
Aaron, with his censer of incense, ran into the midst of them and stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stopped. *Numbers 16:48*
- Subsequently, to settle the issue of leadership, God instructed the leader of each tribe to present his rod (symbol of authority). The rod that sprouted and yielded almonds would be the sign of God's choice to be the High Priest. Aaron's rod budded.

God takes submission to His leaders as seriously as submission to Him.

Without this submission to earthly authority figures (national, church, family, workplace), covenant relationship with God is considered broken.

## Application

Can you identify negative patterns of speech and behaviour when, like the unbelieving 10 spies, we show fear and unbelief, instead of moving ahead to trust God's promises and obey Him?

- Exaggerating negative factors...*giving an evil report Numbers 14:36 (=slander kjv to God) ...we can't attack these people...they are stronger Numbers 13:31.*
- Deprecating ourselves ...*we seem like grasshoppers in our own eyes... Numbers 13:33*
- Thinking others look at us that way too  
...*we looked the same (=grasshoppers) to them... Numbers 13:33*
- Mourning and feeling sorry for ourselves (because God did not make it easy for us).  
Allowing feelings of fear and sorrow to overwhelm our thinking and action, (instead of faith in the living God). ...*all the people of the community raised their voices and wept aloud... Numbers 14:1*
- Longing for death without God  
...*if only we had died in Egypt...better to go back to Egypt... Numbers 14:24*
- Using care and safety of our children and family as legitimate reason not to obey God  
...*our wives and children will be taken as plunder... Numbers 14:3*
- Stoning brothers who are faithful to God  
...*the whole assembling talked about stoning them (Joshua & Caleb)... Numbers 14:10*
- Despising God's gift of possessing the land for the idols of comfort, safety, refusing to risk anything for God's promise. ...*the land you rejected... (=despised nkjv) Numbers 14:31. ...suffering for your unfaithfulness (=brunt of your infidelity (=whoredom kjv=spiritual adultery) Numbers 14:31, 33 nkjv.*

