

### **Forfeiting the blessing (greatness)! Numbers 13:26-14:14**

Last year we celebrated the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this church and we had chosen a theme “Moving forward.” We talked about in order to move forward you must not linger in the past; leave the past behind and press forward to the goal. We all set goals in life, we make plans but many times we don’t accomplish them all because somewhere along the way, we stop pressing forward. At time we forfeit victory because we give up too quickly; ***we keep ourselves away from the blessing God had for us due to our attitude.***

God’s people, the Israelites just did this. They kept themselves from victory, from the blessing of God.

Two years after Israel was freed from slavery in Egypt, God put them on a journey to victory, freedom, a journey to the Promised Land. This would be the greatest blessing for slavery-burdened people. God had told Moses to build the tabernacle and it would be the place where God would dwell among his people. God’s presence guided them everywhere they went. God brought them to the edge of the Promised Land and told Moses to send 12 men from each of the 12 tribes to spy or explore the land. Moses gave them specific instructions: **Num.13:17-20.**

*Find out what kind of land it is.*

*-The dwellers of inhabitants of the land*

*-the towns, cities (unprotected open camps or strongholds*

*-the type of soil of the land*

*Bring some sample of the fruit of the land.*

*They were to do this exploration for 40 days (v25)*

At the end of the exploration the men returned and reported their findings to Moses and the whole assembly. **Num.13:26-33**

This is the story of Israel’s biggest failure; they forfeited their greatest blessing. **Why did Israel fail here?** What kept them from moving forward and taking possession of the land?

#### **Fear kept them from moving forward**

They had reported that the land was indeed just as God had told them. Productive, a land flowing with milk and honey. (27). they even brought fruit as evidence.

***-they were fearful of the people of the land (powerful people, giants)***

***-well protected cities, very large***

***-the neighboring or surrounding nations were wicked and feared by everyone.*** The nation of Israel was afraid to go into the land God was sending them; fear kept them from going to where God was leading them.

There were only two people of the twelve who were not afraid and were to move go forward.

***Caleb silenced the people (v.30) “We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it.”***

The rest of the men said, ***we can’t do it; they are stronger than we are.*** Fear paralyzes you, it makes you see things differently.

They spread a bad report. The land devours those who live there; all the people are giants. The Nephilim are there. ***We seemed like grasshoppers in our eyes and in their eyes (v.33)***

**Why this fear?** They were looking at everything with their own eyes. They had forgotten who brought them to where they were; they were trusting their estimation rather than God’s.

When fear comes in, faith goes out. ***Their trust in God was gone because they saw the cities and the people larger than their God.*** Just like at times, we see our situations larger than God. We act as if God is not big enough to keep his word, to keep his promise. **The nation of Israel fell on self-reliance;** *“We can’t attack those people”* They forgot the one who has been fighting their battles.

#### **Bad attitude. 14:1-4**

There were not just afraid, that night they raised their voices and wept

**-If only we have died in the desert. Why is the LORD bringing us to this land? Only to let us die. They talked about choosing a leader to go back to Egypt. Why is God doing this to me?**

They were ready to go back to the past. They were choosing slavery over the blessing God was giving them. They were rejecting God’s blessing with their attitude. Their attitude wasn’t pleasing to God

Only Joshua and Caleb honored God with their attitude, for they knew if the LORD was sending them there victory would be guaranteed. *(v.7-9) the land we passed through is extremely good and if the LORD is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey. Only do not rebel against the LORD and do not be afraid of the people because we will swallow them up. Their protection is gone, but the LORD is with us. Do not be afraid of them.* If the LORD is pleased with us; he will lead us. If we rebel and sin against the LORD, then he won’t lead us and we forfeit his blessing. ***Rebelling against God will not get you the blessing. It will prolong it for some and for others it will be gone altogether.***

**Israel sinned against God’s command to go and take possession of the land.** They sinned against God and wanted to stone Caleb and Joshua that day (v.10)

**They truly were not trusting God’s promises here.**

**Rebellion against God has drastic consequences. (v.11-12)**

***God was ready to destroy them.***

Moses pleaded for the people and the LORD forgave them, but their sin didn’t go unpunished. (v.20, 30). They were not allowed to enter the land. Only Caleb and Joshua would enter v.30) God said that they would wander in the desert 40 years until they all perish there. (34) Only their children will enter the land. The men responsible for the bad report died of a plague (v.37)

Israel lost the Promised Land God was giving them because of their attitude. Because of their fear and unbelief. Their fear kept them focused on the enemy’s strength rather than God’s mighty Strength. They sinned, they turned away from the Lord. Turning away from the LORD will not get you his blessing. It will prolong it or you may lose it altogether. Sin has consequences, Israel learned that lesson that day.

**How many of us today forfeit God’s blessing because we are afraid of the challenges.** Even if they seem like giants. We forfeit victory because of our lack of trust. Let’s remember that our God is faithful to keep his promises; Only do not rebel against him as we wait for him. He is big enough, strong enough to get us through the challenges of this life even if at time you may look and feel like a grasshopper. *I rather feel like a grasshopper with God on my side than to feel like a giant away from him.*