
Joshua and Caleb: Believing God in the Unexpected

Numbers 13:1-14:10

Do not _____. 14:9a

Do not _____ in fear. 13:28-33; 14:1-4, 9b

Do not _____ God's Words. 14:8, 9



Numbers 13:1-14:10

^[1] The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ^[2] "Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the people of Israel. From each tribe of their fathers you shall send a man, every one a chief among them." ^[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 people of Israel. ^[4] And these were their names: From the tribe of Reuben, Shammua the son of Zaccur; ^[5] from the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat the son of Hori; ^[6] from the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh; ^[7] from the tribe of Issachar, Igal the son of Joseph; ^[8] from the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea the son of Nun; ^[9] from the tribe of Benjamin, Palti the son of Raphu; ^[10] from the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel the son of Sodi; ^[11] from the tribe of Joseph (that is, from the tribe of Manasseh), Gaddi the son of Susi; ^[12] from the tribe of Dan, Ammiel the son of Gemalli; ^[13] from the tribe of Asher, Sethur the son of Michael; ^[14] from the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi the son of Vophsi; ^[15] from the tribe of Gad, Geuel the son of Machi. ^[16] These were the names of the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land. And Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun Joshua.

^[17] Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan and said to them, "Go up into the Negeb and go up into the hill country, ^[18] and see what the land is, and whether the people who dwell in it are strong or weak, whether they are few or many, ^[19] and whether the land that they dwell in is good or bad, and whether the cities that they dwell in are camps or strongholds, ^[20] and whether the land is rich or poor, and whether there are trees in it 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.

^[21] So they went up and spied out the land from the wilderness of Zin to Rehob, near Lebo-hamath. ^[22] They went up into the Negeb and came to Hebron. Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmi, the descendants of Anak, were there. (Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) ^[23] And they came to the Valley of Eshcol and cut down from there a branch with a single cluster of grapes, and they carried it on a pole between two of them; they also brought some pomegranates and figs. ^[24] That place was called the Valley of Eshcol, because of the cluster that the people of Israel cut down from there.

^[25] At the end of forty days they returned from spying out the land. ^[26] And they came to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation of the people 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. ^[27] And they told him, "We came to the land to which you sent us. It flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. ^[28] However, the people who dwell in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large. And besides, we saw the descendants of Anak there. ^[29] The Amalekites dwell in the land of the Negeb. The Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the hill country. And the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and along the Jordan."

^[30] But Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, "Let us go up at once and occupy it, for we are well able to overcome it." ^[31] Then 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 are." ^[32] So they brought to the people of Israel a bad report of the land that they had spied out, saying, "The land, through which we have gone to spy it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people that we saw in it are of great height. ^[33] And there we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak, who come from the Nephilim), and we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them."

^[1] Then all the congregation raised a loud cry, and the people wept that night. ^[2] And all the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The whole congregation said to them, "Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness! ^[3] Why is the LORD bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become a prey. Would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt?" ^[4] And they said to one another, "Let us choose a leader and go back to Egypt."

^[5] Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the people of Israel. ^[6] And Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes ^[7] and said to all the congregation of the people of Israel, "The land, which we passed through to spy it out, is an exceedingly good land. ^[8] If the LORD delights in us, he will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land that flows with milk and honey. ^[9] Only do not rebel against the LORD. And do not fear the people of the land, for they are bread for us. Their protection is removed from them, and the LORD is with us; do not fear them." ^[10] Then all the congregation said to stone them with stones. But the glory of the LORD appeared at the tent of meeting to all the people of Israel. (ESV)

Joshua and Caleb: Believing God in the Unexpected

February 21, 2021



Open: What is something unexpected that recently happened to you?

Read & Discuss: *Numbers 13:1-14:10*

1. According to 13:17-20, what were the goals of “spying out the land”? In connection with these goals, what did they discover (13:25-29)?
2. What is the basis of the disagreement between Joshua and Caleb and the other spies who went into Canaan (13:30-33)? Describe the response of the people to the report given by the spies (14:1-4). What does this response tell you about the emotional and spiritual condition of these people? If you were in this situation, how do you think you might have responded?
3. What does the reaction of Moses, Aaron, Joshua and Caleb (14:5-6) tell you about their view of the people’s response? Why do Joshua and Caleb believe that Israel can successfully occupy the land of Canaan (14:8-9)? When you are fearful, are you able to tell yourself the same important truths about God that Joshua and Caleb told Israel? How can we effectively impart these truths to those we are discipling?
4. In 14:8, Joshua and Caleb describe Canaan as a land that “flows with milk and honey.” This phrase was used by God himself in His promise to deliver Israel from bondage in Egypt (Ex. 3:7-8, 17). What kind of expectations might this promise have stirred in the people regarding their entry into Canaan? In contrast, how would they have been affected by the report given in 13:31-33? When have you experienced disappointment in an unmet expectation you had of God?
5. Joshua and Caleb exhort the people not to rebel against the Lord (14:9). Why might the people have been inclined to rebel? When have you been tempted to walk away from faithfully following God? If you were able to resist that urge, what helped you take a different path?

Apply: Share Scriptures or songs that have helped you hold fast to God in the midst of difficult or unexpected circumstances. Consider committing to memory one or more of these to help you in the face of hard circumstances in the future.

Pray: Pray that the people of NCAC would be full of faith and resilient to the difficulties present in a fallen world in which our enemy seeks to destroy us. Ask God to cause us to be light into the darkness and anoint our lips with words of Gospel-hope to encourage the weary.

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