

The Spies of Israel Num. 13:1-14:45

Introduction:

This is one of the greatest stories in the Bible that demonstrate a lack of faith and trust in God. This was the land that God had promised to Abraham (Gen. 12:6-7). This land is the reason that Moses went to Egypt to get the children of Israel out of slavery (Ex. 3:7-10).

I. Retell the story of the twelve spies of Israel.

- A. The spies had their command from Moses (13:17-20).
- B. The spies go all throughout the land of Canaan and are faithful to the command of Moses (13:21-25).
- C. They bring back a report of all that they have seen (13:26-33).
 1. At first, they give some facts about the land (13:27-29).
 2. Caleb immediately wants to go and possess the land (13:30).
 3. However, the ten spies convince the people of Israel that they cannot take possession of the land (13:31-33).
- D. The people begin to complain about Moses and Aaron, saying that they brought them there to die in the wilderness (14:1-5).
- E. Joshua and Caleb beg the people to go and take the land that God had given them (14:6-9).
- F. However, the people do not like their message and want them to be stoned (14:10).
- G. Moses intercedes for the people and saves them when God wants to destroy all of them (14:11-19).
- H. God decides (instead of killing all of the people immediately) that He will let them die in the wilderness and let their children possess the land (14:20-25).
- I. God kills the ten evil spies immediately, and announces His punishment on the rest of the children of Israel (14:26-38).
- J. After receiving this news, the people make a futile attempt to take the land of Canaan (14:29-45).

II. We must be careful whom we put our trust in.

- A. The people trusted the ten spies that gave a bad report.
 1. They had forgotten what God had told them.
 - a. The main duty of the spies was not to see if they could take the land, but rather to see how good the land actually was.
 - b. God had already promised them this land.
 2. They trusted in the wrong spies.
- B. We, today, need to be careful whom we put our trust in.
 1. Men can, and will, fail us from time to time.
 2. When we put our trust in man, we are doomed to fail
- C. Our trust must always be in God.
 1. Ps. 4:5 - Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD.

2. Ps. 62:8 - Trust in Him at all times, you people;
3. Ps. 118:8-9 - It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man. {9} It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes.
4. Pr. 3:5-6 - Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; {6} In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.
5. Jer. 17:7-8 - Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, and whose hope is the LORD. {8} For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, which spreads out its roots by the river, and will not fear when heat comes; but its leaf will be green, and will not be anxious in the year of drought, nor will cease from yielding fruit.

III. Notice the results in putting your trust the wrong people.

- A. This story does not end with the children of Israel not trying to possess the land of Canaan.
 1. They make a futile attempt to possess the land (14:39-45).
 2. Of course, this comes after God tells them the results of their unbelief.
 - a. They would all die in the wilderness and none of them, except Joshua and Caleb, would enter the Promised Land.
 - b. Also, they would have to wonder in the wilderness for 40 years, one year for each day the spies were in the land.
 3. Their trusting in the wrong people literally destroyed them.
- B. We are warned about putting our trust in man.
 1. Ps. 146:3 - Do not put your trust in princes, nor in a son of man, in whom there is no help.
 2. Pr. 25:19 - Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a bad tooth and a foot out of joint.
 3. Pr. 28:26 - He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but whoever walks wisely will be delivered.
 4. Mic. 7:5 - Do not trust in a friend; do not put your confidence in a companion; guard the doors of your mouth from her who lies in your bosom.
- C. Notice what happens when we put our trust in man.
 1. Ps. 20:7-8 - Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the LORD our God. {8} They have bowed down and fallen; but we have risen and stand upright.
 2. Jer. 17:5-6 - Thus says the LORD: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart departs from the LORD. {6} For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when good comes, but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land which is not inhabited.
 3. This is especially true when it comes to spiritual matters.
 - a. When having a Biblical discussion with someone, we have all heard the phrase, "But this is not what my preacher says."
 - b. If we trust in men, we may lose our salvation.

D. We must always trust in God, not in man.

Conclusion:

Today, who are we putting our trust in? Is it in God or man? The children of Israel were destroyed because they trusted in man instead of God. Caleb and Joshua, on the other hand, were allowed to see the Promised Land because of their faith in God. Where would we stand?