

Sept 22, 2019



# Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks Baptist Church**  
Grand Prairie, Texas

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## Faithful During Unfaithfulness Numbers 13:1-2, 17-18, 25-28, 14:1-2, 5-10

### Lesson Background and Introduction

On the first day of the third month, the Israelites entered the wilderness of Sinai (19:1). There they camped before the mountain where the Lord established His covenant with the Israelites and gave His Ten Commandments and other laws to them. The Israelites stayed at Mount Sinai for a little less than a year (comparing Exodus 19:1 with Numbers 10:11), in what should have been a sacred time of dedicating themselves to be God's covenant people. But the attitude of rebellion and discontent that we saw demonstrated in last week's lesson (Exodus 16:2, 3) reappeared at the foot of the mountain. Sadly, while Moses was on the mountain receiving God's laws, the people were breaking them (specifically the first two of the Ten Commandments) by building a golden calf and attributing God's mighty act of deliverance from bondage to the gods the calf represented (32:1-4). Thus, perhaps it should come as no surprise that as the people traveled from Mount Sinai toward the promised land, their grumbling and discontent were right by their side. Once the Lord sent a fire to burn among the people, which consumed the fringes of the camp. Moses interceded on the people's behalf, and the fire died down (Numbers 11:1-3). Then the "mixed multitude" (11:4; likely comprised of non-Israelites who had chosen to journey with the Israelites; compare Exodus 12:38) initiated a complaint about growing tired of the manna provided by God. They claimed as they had done previously that living in Egypt was so much better than journeying through the desert (11:5). At this point, Moses became extremely frustrated with the people's behavior and voiced his frustration to the Lord. The Lord provided 70 men from among the elders of Israel to assist Moses with leading the people for a time (Numbers 11:25). The Lord also responded to the people's complaint with a provision of quail (11:31, 32), similar to what He had done in the wilderness of Sin (Exodus 16:1, 12, 13). Still, the grumbling did not end. Moses' brother Aaron and sister Miriam lodged their own protests against Moses, expressing an envy of Moses' position of authority (Numbers 12:2). The Lord responded by afflicting Miriam with leprosy. She was quarantined for seven days, during which time the people paused their travels. When their journey resumed, they reached the wilderness of Paran (12:16) and specifically Kadeshbarnea (Deuteronomy 1:19), where today's lesson text begins.

*(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)*

God delivered the Israelites from their bondage in Egypt, but sadly, that generation failed to enter the Promised Land. They refused to believe God's promise to their ancestors that Canaan would be their home. This blessed nation vacillated, neglecting to keep their eyes fixed on the almighty God. Nevertheless, God kept His end of the bargain. The children of this faithless generation took the land 40 years later.

**The Spies Report** - While the Israelites camped on the border of Canaan, Moses sent one man from each tribe into the new land to search out the territory. They traveled south to north, observing the inhabitants of the land, evaluating their strength and numbers, and seeing evidence of the land's fertility. After 40 days of scouting, the spies returned to the camp with good and bad news. They showed the people huge, luscious fruit from the territory and confirmed it was a land flowing with milk and honey. However, 10 of the spies said the land was impossible to conquer—the cities were walled, and the inhabitants of the land were powerful and strong. Giants lived there. God's people wept and complained before Moses.

**Spies Who Believed in God's Word** - However, two of the spies, Joshua and Caleb, tore their clothes in grief as they listened to their fellow spies and the despairing response of the nation. They said that with God on their side they would defeat these people and the Lord would bring them into the land He promised. But the multitude refused to heed their encouragement, threatening to stone them, Moses, and Aaron to death. How soon they forgot everything God had done for them in all His miracles. They focused on the obstacles and the challenges in the land. They focused on what appeared to be humanly impossible. God is searching out believers who stand on His Word. Those are the ones He desires to support to display His power and glory. Those who focus on the obstacles and the challenges, who claim they are small and weak and that the enemies can't be defeated, fail to believe in God's Word and His promises. They will not see all that the Lord can do through them.

*(Adapted from the Echoes Commentary)*

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

#### **THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:**

Sin will add to your trouble,  
subtract From your energy, and  
multiply your difficulties

#### **POEM FOR THE WEEK:**

Consider what you're doing right—  
Thank God for His direction;  
Consider what you're doing wrong,  
Then make complete correction.  
—Hess

#### **SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:**

*Nevertheless I have a few things  
against you, because you allow that  
woman Jezebel, who calls herself a  
prophetess, to teach and seduce My  
servants to commit sexual immorality  
and eat things sacrificed to idols*  
(Rev 2:20 NKJV)

*(from "Our Daily Bread", Feb 23, 1998)*

**Series: Responding to  
God's Grace**

**UNIT: God is Faithful**

### NEXT WEEK

**Faithful In Consequences**

(Numbers 14:10-20)

## NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

### **Sending Out the Spies (Num 13:1-2, 17-18)**

#### *God's command and guidance (1-2)*

- A willingness to be guided that says send me (Isa 6:8)
- A willingness to be guided that results in humble availability (1 Sam 3:10)
- A willingness to be guided that manifests itself in an eagerness to serve (1 Peter 5:2)
- A willingness to be guided that results in immediate obedience (Matt 4:18-20)
- A willingness to be guided to listen and follow (John 10:26-28)

#### *Moses leadership (17-18)*

- Leadership that leads to the way of God and truth (Matt 22:16)
- Leadership that leads to the right way (Mark 10:32)
- Leadership that leads to the Father God (John 14:6)
- Leadership that leads to a cleared way (1 Thess 3:11)
- Leadership that leads to the Most Holy Place (Heb 9:8)

### **Reporting on the Exploration (Num 13: 25-28)**

#### *Report on the provisions of the land (25-27)*

- Provisions through God using others (2 Cor 8:14)
- Provisions through God's supplying directly (2 Cor 9:10)
- Provisions of faith (1 Thess 3:10)
- Provisions that should evoke thanksgiving to God (2 Cor 9:12)
- Provisions through God's glorious riches (Phil 4:19)

#### *Report on the people in the land (28)*

- Report of fear because of the influence of people (1 Sam 15:24)
- Report of fear because of rejection and ridicule (John 7:13)
- Report of fear because of people revolting (Matt 14:5)
- Report of fear because of people's opinions (Matt 21:26)
- Report of fear not realizing that we should only fear God (Matt 10:28)

### **Response to the Report (Num 14:1-2, 5-10)**

#### *Response of the people's complaints (1-2)*

- Complaining only makes God angry (Num 11:1)
- Complaining usually comes from someone who has sinned (Lam 3:39)
- Complaining could cause death of the complainer (1 Cor 10:10)
- Complaining reveals wanting own desires to be met (Jude 16)
- Complaining against leadership also angers God (Num 12:7-9)

#### *Response of leader's call for faith (5-9)*

- Faith in the power of God (John 11:14-15)
- Faith in the word of God (John 20:30-31)
- Faith in God's indwelling presence (Exod 4:4-5)
- Faith in Jesus as the Son of God (John 19:34-35)

#### *Response of God's grieved presence (10)*

- God's grief over man's going astray (Ps 95:10)
- God's grief over man's rebellion (Isa 63:9-10)
- God's grief doesn't extend to His taking pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezek 33:11)
- God's grief over man's grieving the Holy Spirit (Eph 4:30)
- God's is grieved over evil (Ps 5:4)