

GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide
SB 11.26.2023

WALK BY FAITH— NUMBERS 13 & 14

Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles or observations stood out to you from this week’s message? Discuss with your group.

Pastor John states, “Numbers 13&14 record the history of what happened when the people of Israel first came to the Promised Land. This was some 38 years before the events of Joshua 3, where they crossed the Jordan River on dry ground and finally entered the Land, but only about 15 months after they had been delivered from slavery in Egypt. God had led Israel to the border of the Promised Land and was ready to lead them in and give it to them. But as we will see, because they chose not to trust God, they were not able to enter. Instead, they ended up wandering in the wilderness for 38 years. This is a tragic story, but one that provides an encouragement and invitation to us. If you want to walk with God, you have to learn to walk by faith.” Let’s get into our lesson...

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

1. What struck you most from the Pastor John’s sermon?
2. Do you tend to defer to the majority opinion and go along with the crowd? Or do you tend to speak up for what you want?

Digging Deeper in God’s Word: Life Lessons

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ NUMBERS 13:26-31

Today we will see the consequences of fearful disobedience of God are worse than any challenges that might be encountered as a result of courageous obedience. God has given strong affirmations in His Word, promises to be taken by faith, that He will support those who follow and obey His guidance. However, the difference between reading God’s promises and acting upon them is as distinct as the difference between studying a map and actually traveling the terrain it describes.

1. Read Numbers 13:21-25 and summarize what happened in this passage?
2. Why do you think that the ten spies focused more on the difficulties rather than the promise of a land flowing with milk and honey?
3. In what ways does the reaction of the Israelites to the spies’ report reflect human tendencies when faced with intimidating situations?
4. Pastor John said, “Biblical Faith is not blind,” what does that statement mean to you? Explain...

At the Lord’s command, Moses sent one man from each of the twelve tribes of Israel to scout out the land of Canaan, bringing back a report on what the land was like, and bringing back some of the fruit of the land (Num. 13:1-3,17-20). Their assignment was not to decide whether Israel should possess the land. God had already decided that (v. 2). But 10 of the 12 scouts reacted based on what they would be able to accomplish in their own strength. We must be careful not to repeat the scouts’ error of basing our decisions on what we can accomplish in our own strength. When God’s command is clear, we should trust Him and obey even if there are legitimate obstacles and concerns.

1. How can fear rise up and thwart God’s purpose in our life even though we have seen His faithfulness?
2. What’s keeping you from obeying God? What action is He calling you to take? What reasons are you giving to justify your choice not to obey?

“PROMISES” in 2023

3. How can we distinguish between wise caution and faint-hearted disobedience? What will it take to obey even when afraid?
4. How can we learn to have true dynamic faith in God’s promises? Explain what this faith looks like lived out?

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ NUMBERS 14:6-9.

1. Is fear a sin? Why or why not? What is the relationship between trust and obedience?
2. How would truly believing “the Lord is with us” (v. 9) impact your willingness to obey in a situation you are facing today?

In Numbers 13:32-33 the majority party of the scouts appears to have added exaggerated or false details to their report to persuade the people not to risk the conquest of Canaan. They certainly emphasized the negative aspects of their report while minimizing the positive factors. Joshua and Caleb begged the people not to rebel or to be afraid. They were so dismayed over the whole situation that they tore their clothes as an act of mourning or sorrow.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ NUMBERS 14:17-23

1. What did Moses ask the Lord to do? How did God answer him?
2. What truths about God did Moses declare and depend on (vv.18-19) when he asked the Lord to pardon the Israelites?
3. What was the result of the Israelites’ disobedience? Is this outcome a demonstration of God’s faithful love? If so, how?

This wasn’t the first time God threatened to destroy the rebellious Israelites and create a new nation under Moses’ leadership. (See Ex. 32:1-14.) Moses intervened on behalf of the people, begging God to relent. The Israelites who disobeyed God died in the wilderness during 40 years of wandering (Num. 14:28-35). From that entire generation, God permitted only Joshua and Caleb to enter the promised land.

1. How can we be more like Caleb and Joshua when we are confronted by testing and trials?
2. Pastor John said “Faith is how we walk with God. Read Hebrews 11:6 and discuss how true faith works.
3. What is true “spiritual sight” according to Pastor John? (cc Psalm 34:8) How does faith change what we see?

Pastor John talked about How to walk by faith.

1. **Look back**- Look back and remind yourself of God’s faithfulness in the past. We need to remind ourselves of His faithfulness to us in earlier places, times when God has come through for us in important moments, because we have a tendency to forget.
2. **Look around** - Look around in the present and begin to see God at work in your life. You are not looking for God to part the Red Sea, though sometimes He does. Much more often God works in small ways, ways we don’t notice unless we are looking for Him in the details of our lives.
3. **Look ahead** - Get to know God’s character and His ways. This is how Moses learned to walk with God (Exodus33:13) and got to know His promises.

Have your group read these 7 passages and share how each encourages you to trust God with every circumstance.

- a. Heb. 13:5, b. Phil. 1:6, c. Jn. 10:10, d. Rom. 8:31, e. 2 Tim. 1:7, f. Ps 138:8, g. Matt. 28:20

“PROMISES” in 2023

Applying God’s Word

What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.

As you look ahead, see your circumstances through the lens of God’s ways and His promises. This is how He works and what He wants to do. As you encounter your own giants, as enemies circle around you and those you love, remind God of His promises to you. He will fulfill them in your life because He always keeps His promises.

1. How has disobedience in the past affected your relationship with God? What steps can you take today to restore your relationship and receive God’s forgiveness and mercy?
2. How has God shown you mercy despite your failure to obey? How has that helped you understand His character? How does this affect your obedience today?

Joshua 23:14 said “Now I am about to go the way of all the earth. You know with all your heart and soul that not one of all the good promises the LORD your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed.” **This will be our testimony too. God will fulfill every promise He has made to us; not one will fail.**

PRAYER: Close in prayer, asking God to keep your group members faithful to Him and to help them accept His plans for their lives. Pray that as they grow in their faith and see God’s fulfilled goodness to them, their fears will take a back seat and they will testify to God’s hand of blessing on their lives.

“For we walk by faith, not by sight.” (2 Cor. 5:7)