

## Numbers 14:1-45 **Israel's rebellion and its consequence – 40 years wandering**

### People responding in fear, desiring to return to Egypt just as God had predicted

<sup>1</sup> So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night. <sup>2</sup> And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, "If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness! <sup>3</sup> Why has the LORD brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?" <sup>4</sup> So they said to one another, "Let us select a leader and return to Egypt."

### Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before the assembly

<sup>5</sup> Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel.

### Joshua and Caleb encouraged the people

<sup>6</sup> But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; <sup>7</sup> and they spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying: "The land we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. <sup>8</sup> If the LORD delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, 'a land which flows with milk and honey.' <sup>9</sup> "Only do not rebel against the LORD, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the LORD is with us. Do not fear them."

### The congregation sought to stone them with stones

<sup>10</sup> And all the congregation said to stone them with stones.

### Yehowah took action and spoke in the hearing of the people

Now the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of meeting before all the children of Israel. <sup>11</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses: "How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them? <sup>12</sup> I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they."

### Moses interceded for the people

<sup>13</sup> And Moses said to the LORD: "Then the Egyptians will hear it, for by Your might You brought these people up from among them, <sup>14</sup> and they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that You, LORD, are among these people; that You, LORD, are seen face to face and that Your cloud stands above them; and You go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night. <sup>15</sup> Now if You kill these people as one man, then the nations which have heard of Your fame will speak, saying, <sup>16</sup> 'Because the LORD was not able to bring this people to the land which He swore to give them, therefore He killed them in the wilderness.' <sup>17</sup> "And now, I pray, let the power of my LORD be great, just as You have spoken, saying, <sup>18</sup> 'The LORD is longsuffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He by no means clears the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation.' <sup>19</sup> "Pardon the iniquity of this people, I pray, according to the greatness of Your mercy, just as You have forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now."

### Yehowah accepted the intercession of Moses but pronounced punishment for the people

<sup>20</sup> Then the LORD said: "I have pardoned, according to your word; <sup>21</sup> but truly, as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD-- <sup>22</sup> because all these men who have seen My glory

and the signs which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have put Me to the test now these ten times, and have not heeded My voice, <sup>23</sup> they certainly shall not see the land of which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who rejected Me see it. <sup>24</sup> But My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it. <sup>25</sup> Now the Amalekites and the Canaanites dwell in the valley; tomorrow turn and move out into the wilderness by the Way of the Red Sea."

<sup>26</sup> Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, <sup>27</sup> "How long shall I bear with this evil congregation who murmur against Me? I have heard the complaints which the children of Israel murmur against Me. <sup>28</sup> Say to them, 'As I live,' says the LORD, 'just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will do to you: <sup>29</sup> The carcasses of you who have complained against Me shall fall in this wilderness, all of you who were numbered, according to your entire number, from twenty years old and above. <sup>30</sup> Except for Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun, you shall by no means enter the land which I swore I would make you dwell in. <sup>31</sup> But your little ones, whom you said would be victims, I will bring in, and they shall know the land which you have despised. <sup>32</sup> But as for you, your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness. <sup>33</sup> And your sons shall be shepherds in the wilderness forty years, and bear the brunt of your infidelity, until your carcasses are consumed in the wilderness. <sup>34</sup> According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for each day you shall bear your guilt one year, namely forty years, and you shall know My rejection. <sup>35</sup> I the LORD have spoken this; I will surely do so to all this evil congregation who are gathered together against Me. In this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die.' "

#### The spies died for bringing fear to the congregation

<sup>36</sup> And the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land, who returned and made all the congregation complain against him by bringing a bad report of the land, <sup>37</sup> those very men who brought the evil report about the land, died by the plague before the LORD.

#### Joshua and Caleb were preserved

<sup>38</sup> But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh remained alive, of the men who went to spy out the land.

#### After sentence is pronounced by God it is too late to repent

<sup>39</sup> Then Moses told these words to all the children of Israel, and the people mourned greatly. <sup>40</sup> And they rose early in the morning and went up to the top of the mountain, saying, "Here we are, and we will go up to the place which the LORD has promised, for we have sinned!"

#### Moses warned the people

<sup>41</sup> Then Moses said, "Now why do you transgress the command of the LORD? For this will not succeed. <sup>42</sup> Do not go up, lest you be defeated by your enemies, for the LORD is not among you. <sup>43</sup> For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and you shall fall by the sword; because you have turned away from the LORD, the LORD will not be with you."

#### Defeat by the Amalekites and Canaanites

<sup>44</sup> But they presumed to go up to the mountaintop; nevertheless, neither the ark of the covenant of the LORD nor Moses departed from the camp. <sup>45</sup> Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who dwelt in that mountain came down and attacked them, and drove them back as far as Hormah.

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## Facts Revealed:

- ✧ **The people** wept that night and murmured against Moses and Aaron.
- ✧ All the people said, “If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness! Why has the LORD brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt. Let us select a leader and return to Egypt.”
- ✧ Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the congregation of the Children of Israel.
- ✧ Joshua and Caleb tore their cloths, and said to the Congregation, “The land we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. If the LORD delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land which flows with milk and honey. Only do not rebel against the LORD, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the LORD is with us. Do not fear them.”
- ✧ All the congregation said, “Stone them with stones”
- ✧ The Glory of the Lord appeared in the Tabernacle of Meeting before all the Children of Israel.
- ✧ God said to Moses, “How long will these people reject me? How long will they not believe Me with all the signs I have performed among them? I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them. I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they.
- ✧ Moses interceded for the Children of Israel and said;
  - ◇ “Then the Egyptians will hear it, for by Your might You brought these people up from among them.
  - ◇ They will tell it to the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that You, LORD, are among these people; that You, LORD, are seen face to face and that Your cloud stands above them; and You go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night.
  - ◇ Now if You kill these people as one man, then the nations which have heard of Your fame will speak, saying, ‘Because the LORD was not able to bring this people to the land which He swore to give them, therefore He killed them in the wilderness.’
  - ◇ Now, I pray, let the power of my LORD be great, just as You have spoken, saying, ‘The LORD is long-suffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He by no means clears the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation.’
  - ◇ Pardon the iniquity of this people, I pray, according to the greatness of Your mercy, just as You have forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now.”
- ✧ The Lord said, “I have pardoned them according to your prayer. However, as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the Glory of the Lord. [[Habakkuk 2:14](#), [Isaiah 6:3](#), [Psalm 72:19](#)]
- ✧ Because they have seen My Glory and the signs I did in Egypt and in the Wilderness, and have put Me to the test now these ten times, and have not heeded My Voice, they shall not see the land I promised to their fathers.
- ✧ The only exception will be My servant Caleb because he has a deferent spirit in him and has followed Me fully, I will bring him into the land and his descendants will inherit it.”
- ✧ So God commanded Moses to take them back into the Wilderness by the way of the Red Sea.
- ✧ God said, “How long shall I bear with this evil congregation who murmur against Me?”
- ✧ God told Moses to tell the Children of Israel that they would spend a year in the wilderness for every day the spies had spent spying out the land, 40 years for 40 days until all who were 20 years old and above have died in the wilderness except Caleb and Joshua.
- ✧ All the spies except for Joshua and Caleb died of the plague before the Lord.
- ✧ After the sentence is pronounced, it is too late to repent. The same will be true at the Judgment Seat of Christ. [[Matthew 25:31-46](#)]

- ✧ The people said that they had sinned and now we are ready to go to the place the Lord has promised.
- ✧ Moses said, “Now why do you transgress the command of the Lord? This will not succeed. Do not go up lest you be defeated by your enemies since the Lord is not among you. You shall fall by the sword because you have turned away from the Lord and He will not be with you.”
- ✧ The Ark of the Covenant of the Lord and Moses did not depart from the camp.
- ✧ The people went up and were defeated by the Amalekites and Canaanites who drove them back as far as Hormah. [\[Numbers 14:45\]](#)