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INTRODUCTION:

In the Hebrew Bible, Numbers is entitled "In the Wilderness." It is the Book of Wanderings. The lesson is clear, it may be necessary to pass through wilderness experiences, however, you do not have to live there. For Israel, an eleven day journey became a forty year agony.

Numbers takes its name from the two numberings of the Israelites- **the generation of Exodus** (taken at Mount Sinai in preparation for the wilderness) and **the generation that grew up in the wilderness and conquered Canaan** (taken near the Jordan, almost 40 years later in preparation for entering the Promise Land). The name 'numbers' comes from the Greek translation of the Old Testament and refers specifically to the census figures given in two census reports (Num. 1-21 wilderness years) and (Num. 26-36 before entering Canaan). The content of the Book of Numbers moves back and forth between lists of laws and narratives and begins in the same manner as Leviticus, with more Divine instructions from Mount Sinai, and still dressing priestly matters. It should be studied with Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy.

After Mount Sinai (receiving specific instructions), a census was taken and the second Passover was celebrated (first in Egypt, when they had to eat the lamb in their homes and the death angel passed over) marking one year of freedom from slavery. Preparation was the main key now, for Israel needed organization in order to reach that land flowing with milk and honey.

In the **10th Chapter** of **Numbers**, Moses was told how to summon the people, go to war, in times of gladness, annual festivals, and at the beginning of each month blow the trumpet with a certain blast. Each blast had a different meaning in summoning and breaking camp. Only the priests were permitted to blow the trumpet. This is where God would be reminded of His Covenant with them. This was also a permanent instruction to be followed from generation to generation. God showed up for Moses in the burning bush. He showed up at the Red Sea, and He's showing up in the Wilderness for the Israelites. They moved with the cloud of the Lord by day and a pillar of fire by night.

Chapter 11:1-3 **1**The Israelite people complained and it displeased the Lord. And the Lord heard it; and His anger was burned; and the fire of the Lord burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp. **2**And the people cried unto Moses; and when Moses prayed unto the Lord, the fire was quenched. **3**And he called the name of the place Taberah: because the fire of the Lord burnt among them.

11:4 **And the mixt multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat?**— Now there was a mixed company of strangers who had followed the Israelites from Egypt and began to lust greedily for familiar and dainty food. The Israelites also wept saying who shall give us flesh to eat? Be careful who you mix with, because when encountering

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with unsatisfied people, that same grumbling complaining spirit will rub off on you as it did the Israelites, and will cause displeasure to the Lord. People gravitate to the thing they're not supposed to have, not supposed to do, not supposed to include on their plate, not supposed to inquire about; instead, they're looking at the other small part they don't have, don't need, that won't fit, or God didn't say to have. *"Do not complain, brethren, against one another, that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door" (James 5:9, NASB).* Gratefulness is an attitude of thanks from the heart.

11:5 We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick:— The Israelites remembered the fish that they ate in Egypt. They remembered the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlicks. They were so set on yesterday, than on what God had already done for them, like freeing them from bondage, being made a nation to bring them into a new land. It's like having a new toy for a couple of days and then wanting another new toy the day afterwards.

NOTE:

It is interesting to note that the first complaints about the manna began with the mixed multitude, that is, the Egyptians who traveled with them. This mixed multitude experienced intense cravings for meat. Soon the children of Israel followed their lead and began to crave meat. The children of Israel complained to God that they wanted meat. They actually said, that in Egypt they had fish and meat and cucumbers and melons and leeks and garlic. They complained in a manner that indicated they lived in luxury in Egypt instead of as what they actually were—slaves, being brutally whipped. Had they so quickly forgotten all that God had done for them? Like Freedom? God didn't just move them from Egypt, from oppression, but God moved them to a place of responsibility, from servitude to service.

POINT:

Proof of the prosperity of a country was building monumental buildings like pyramids and tombs. The Egyptians were proud of their ability to organize work. The Israelites had known the city of Ramses, for it was one of the store cities they had built while being slaves.

11:6 But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes. Now they're saying that their soul is dried away, meaning their strength is dried up; gone, and day after day they are faced to look at this manna. No other food before their eyes.

NOTE:

Complaint	Sin	Result
<i>Their misfortunes.</i>	<i>Complained about their problems.</i>	<i>Thousands of people were destroyed instead of praying to God about them. God sent a plague to punish them.</i>
<i>The lack of meat.</i>	<i>Lusted after things they didn't have.</i>	<i>God sent quail, but as the people began to eat, God struck them with a plague that killed many.</i>

SYNOPSIS:

11:7-9 The manna was a substance of bread God provided for the Israelites in the wilderness. **"Manna"**

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means "whatness", or "what is it." It was like bread made with honey. And it appears, the manna did not have much color. The people gathered it from the ground and was pounded into flour, boiled and baked into cakes. When the dew fell, the manna fell.

NOTE:

The Word of God is our gift from God. Like the manna, we must receive it by gathering it, grinding it and cooking it. We gather it by reading it, we grind it by thinking about It, and we cook it by making it part of ourselves. Although God's Word is a gift, we must accept it, ponder it, eat it, and unlike the children of Israel, we must be on guard not to be tempted by the things of the world and grow tired of it.

11:10 Then Moses heard the people weep throughout their families, every man in the door of his tent: and the anger of the Lord was kindled greatly; Moses also was displeased. Moses heard the people from every family. Every man was crying at the door of his own tent. These cries of complaint angered God as well as Moses.

11:11 And Moses said unto the Lord, Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant? and wherefore have I not found favour in thy sight, that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me? Moses spoke to God in what must have been exhausted frustration. He starts off asking God so many questions, "Why have you brought this trouble upon your servant? Where have I found favor in your sight to deserve this burden of all these people upon me?"

11:12 Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father beareth the sucking child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their fathers? "What have I done to displease you, did I give birth to all of these people? Why do you tell me to carry them in my arms, as a nurse carries a baby, to the Promised Land?"

11:13 Whence should I have flesh to give unto all this people? for they weep unto me, saying, Give us flesh, that we may eat. "Where can I get meat for these people?" Now he tells the Lord that the people were crying and complaining for him to give them meat so they can eat.

11:14 I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me. Moses is still complaining by saying that this burden God placed upon him is too heavy for him!

11:15 And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favour in thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness. Moses tells God "if this is how you are going to treat me, put me to death right now! If you favor me at all, please put me to death and do not allow me to see my own wretchedness (miserableness, uncleanness)!"

POINT:

*Moses is upset, asking the Lord, "what is he to do? I can't handle this! Just kill me NOW!
If I have found favour in Your sight...?"*

When we complain, it may not be the problem itself, but only a symptom of a problem.

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11:16-23 Complaining didn't sit well with God, Moses interceded for the people by going to God, and God dealt with the people by sending a burning fire, and consumed some of them in the outskirts of the camp. He could have consumed all, but he didn't. Since Moses had interceded, God now puts a new instruction in place, seventy men of the elders of Israel (leaders) that are true to stand with Moses, will have Moses' Spirit (God's Spirit, *The Holy Spirit*), to help bear the burden of the people, for he was not to bear it alone. What an awesome God! And He still sends provisions, meat (quail). However, He wasn't through with His people yet! God lets Moses know to gather the seventy men of the elders of Israel and bring them into the tabernacle of the congregation that they may stand with him. God will come down and talk with him. They had to sanctify themselves before the Lord and eat the flesh they had cried for in the ears of the Lord. They cried, "**Who** shall give us flesh to eat? for it **was well** with us in Egypt." Yes, God was sending the meat, but it became a very great "Plaque". It would be so bad that they would vomit it through their noses not just for one, or two, or five, or ten, or even twenty. But it would be for one whole month. Moses had addressed God's power of keeping His promise to supply the food for the people. The Plaque was sent because the people despised the Lord when they said, "**Who** shall give us flesh to eat? for it **was well** with us in Egypt." Moses even complained about having enough food to feed everyone, until God answered Moses, "**Has God's arm been shortened? You will now see whether or not what I say will come true.**" God is the only solution to any complaint!

11:24 And Moses went out, and told the people the words of the Lord, and gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people, and set them round about the tabernacle. Moses entrusted himself to God, knowing that everything that happens is totally up to God. Moses did as the Lord commanded. The seventy men of the elders were set around the tabernacle.

11:25 And the Lord came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease. The Lord came down in a cloud, speaking to Moses, and He takes the Spirit that was upon Moses and gave it to the seventy elders, and they began to prophesy, declaring God's Will unceasingly.

11:26 But there remained two of the men in the camp, the name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad: and the spirit rested upon them; and they were of them that were written, but went not out unto the tabernacle: and they prophesied in the camp. Two of the seventy that the spirit rested upon, Eldad and Medad remained in the camp and did not go to the tabernacle as commanded of all the seventy, but prophesied in the camp. God's power didn't leave any out.

11:27 And there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp. Moses was told by a young man that Eldad and Medad were prophesying in the camp.

11:28 And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Moses, one of his young men, answered and said, My lord Moses, forbid them. Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' servant wanted them to stop, saying to Moses "*My lord Moses, forbid them.*" God is always doing a new thing in people we least expect, and we don't know how to handle it. Joshua didn't know what was going on with the two that weren't in the place of the tabernacle, but in the camp. They weren't where they were supposed to be, but God was using them. Don't forbid what God provides. Moses' spirit was upon them. I don't know if they're prophesizing about a plague or not, because one is about to come upon the people.

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11:29 And Moses said unto him, **Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them!** And Moses asked Joshua if he was jealous, for Moses wished that all the Lord's people would be prophets; that the Lord would put His Spirit upon all God's people, not just the 70.

11:30 And Moses gat him into the camp, he and the elders of Israel. This simply means that Moses along with the elders of Israel returned to the camp.

11:31 And there went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp, as it were a day's journey on this side, and as it were a day's journey on the other side, round about the camp, and as it were two cubits high upon the face of the earth. The Lord sent a wind that brought quail from the sea. Quail began to fall all over the camp. If you walked a day's journey on each side of the camp, there laid quail about two cubits high.

11:32 And the people stood up all that day, and all that night, and all the next day, and they gathered the quails: he that gathered least gathered ten homers: and they spread them all abroad for themselves round about the camp. And the people were standing up and catching and killing quail all day even throughout the night, and all the next day gathering two homers (more than 100 bushels) and they spread them all out to be cured for themselves round about the camp.

11:33 And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord smote the people with a very great plague. God had already told Moses to tell the people what was to happen, for He would send meat not for one, two, five, ten, nor twenty days, but for a whole month till they hated it (11:19-20). So, now as they began to eat and chew the meat, the anger of the Lord rose against the people and He killed large numbers of them with a very great plague. It began to come out of their nostrils because they had despised the Lord who was among them (11:20). He was the One who brought them out of Egypt and they wanted to go back.

11:34 And he called the name of that place **Kibrothhattaavah: because there they buried the people that lusted.** The name of the place was called Kibroth-hattaavah (graves of greediness) because there they buried the people that lusted. The food was their god, for they had complained to God that they wanted meat, and then actually saying what foods they were accustomed to in Egypt (fish, meat, cucumbers, melons, leeks, and garlic) and saying, "*Why did we leave Egypt?*" You can imagine God's angry.

11:35 And the people journeyed from Kibrothhattaavah unto Hazeroth; and abode at Hazeroth. And the people journeyed from Kibroth-hattaavah to Hazeroth, where they stayed awhile.

SUMMARY:

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The wilderness is that place where you aren't where you were, nor are you where you're going to stay. We sort of lose our identity out there in the wilderness. We forget who we are and whose bringing us out. The Israelites were no longer slaves in Egypt nor were they yet residents of the Promised Land. They're somewhere in between. Yet even in the wilderness God is responsive to the needs of these complaining people. God provides what they cannot.

Deliverance comes, but not in being removed from the wilderness. There is a gift of food where the resources are only temporary and momentary. There is a gift of water where only rocks abound. There is a gift of healing if needed. Death is transformed into life from within a death-filled surrounding of conditions. A sanctuary is provided, in the wilderness by God.

Moses was displeased (the people complained); he was distressed (the people harassed him), and he was defiant (anger made him disobedient). If all these negative feelings are not the root of the problem, what was? Well, Moses expected the people to be grateful because of what God had done for them; and doubting your ability to lead keeps lurking in those low moments that brings up your wretchedness. We let ourselves be distracted by the disappointments and deprivations that God allows for our spiritual good.

However, in his despair he took his complaint to God. You can ask God questions, but be careful when you complain. It's easy to say God did not bring this upon Moses - a carnal and ungrateful people did! Yet, though God did not directly afflict Moses with this, He ultimately allowed it. If we're burdened, we must share it, first of all with God. He can't handle it until you've given it to Him. We can leave our Egypt, our places of oppression, and we can move toward our Promised Land, that place of healing and wholeness, if we don't complain, don't have the negative spirit, and don't allow the issues to cling to you. Elijah was one to allow the issue to cling to him, who also wanted to die after demonstrating a great feat for God. Trust and believe that you have a Covenant keeping God working on your behalf. The reason God allows any affliction in our lives is to compel us to trust Him in all things. Maturity comes in the mist of trials. So whenever we are tempted to grumble, let's remember, *"When the people complained, it displeased the Lord"* 11:1.

Every time you want to grumble,
Think of others who have less;
Ask the Lord to keep you humble,
Grateful for each happiness. —Marye

Now there was a mixed company of strangers who had followed the Israelites from Egypt and began to lust greedily for familiar and dainty food. The Israelites also wept saying *"who shall give us flesh to eat?"* They remembered the fish that they ate in Egypt. They remembered the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlics. Now they're saying that their soul is dried away, meaning their strength is dried up; gone, and day after day they are faced to look at this manna. Moses heard the people from every family. Every man was crying at the door of his own tent. These cries of complaint angered God as well as Moses. Moses starts off asking God so many questions, *"Why have you brought this trouble upon your servant? Where have you found favor in your sight to deserve this burden of all these people upon me?" "What have I done to displease you, did I give birth to all of these people? Why do you tell me to carry them in my arms, as a nurse carries a baby, to the Promised Land?" "Where can I get meat for these people?"* Now, he tells the Lord that the people were crying and complaining for him to give them meat so they can eat. He complains saying *"this burden God placed upon him is too heavy for him! If this is how you are going to treat me, put me to death right now! If you favor me at all, please put me to death and do not allow me to see my own wretchedness (uncleanness, miserableness)!"* (11:4-15).

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Moses entrusted himself to God, knowing that everything that happens is totally up to God. Moses did as the Lord commanded. The seventy men and elders were set around the tabernacle. The Lord came down in a cloud, speaking to Moses, and the Spirit that was upon Moses was given to the seventy elders, and they began to prophesy, and did not cease. Two of the seventy that the spirit rested upon, Elidad and Medad remained in the camp and did not go to the tabernacle as commanded of all the seventy, but prophesied in the camp. Moses was told by a young man that Eldad and Medad were prophesying in the camp. Joshua, the son of Nun, Moses' servant wanted them to stop, saying to Moses *"My lord Moses, forbid them."* And Moses asked Joshua if he was jealous, for Moses wished that all the Lord's people would be prophets, and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon all the Lord's people. This simply means that Moses along with the elders of Israel returned to the camp (**11:24-30**).

The Lord sent a wind that brought quail from the sea. Quail began to fall all over the camp. If you walked a day's journey on each side of the camp, there laid quail about two cubits high. And the people were standing up and catching and killing quail all day even throughout the night, and all the next day gathering two homers (more than 100 bushels) and they spread them all out to be cured for themselves round about the camp. And as they began to eat and chew the meat, the anger of the Lord rose against the people and He killed large numbers of them with a very great plague. The name of the place was called Kibroth-hattaavah, meaning graves of greediness because there they buried the people that lusted. And the people journeyed from Kibroth-hattaavah to Hazeroth, where they stayed awhile (**11:31-35**).

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12:1 And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman. After all that had just gone on about the people wanting meat (quail) to eat, Miriam and Aaron (his family) speak against their own brother Moses, who is God's leader. They held high positions. Miriam was a prophetess (Exo.15:20) and Aaron was Israel's High Priest. They didn't like that he had married an Ethiopian woman; a Cushite, a descendant of Ham; a foreigner. We see jealousy and racial prejudice flaring up in this passage. All of this is going on in his family. Their criticism was twofold: 1. Against his wife. 2. Against his leadership.

12:2 And they said, Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the Lord heard it. Triggers are everywhere. Now, we see them challenging God given authority. They think that they could do a better job than Moses. They think God wants to speak through them. And before they could end those words, it says "*And the Lord heard it.*" Well, this is not good.

12:3 (Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.). This scripture really compliments Moses. This put him above all men upon the face of the earth. "Meek" means gentle, quiet, humble, and disciplined in heart and spirit, strength to hold back emotions because of love; strength to carry loads when faced with difficult situations. Meek is not being weak. It means you're able to keep it together. My acronym for "Meek" is: "MILD EXISTING EVIDENCE KEPT."

12:4 And the Lord spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out. The Lord began to speak to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam suddenly, immediately, unexpectedly telling them to come to the tabernacle of the congregation. They did as the Lord instructed. God didn't speak to them without having the one present they were talking about. Moses is there to hear this too.

12:5 And the Lord came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth. The Lord had to immediately get His point across. We have got to remember who our enemy is. Our house is not to be divided, especially leaders. And if they want to be leaders, they have to do it God's way. God's presence came down and stood in the door of the tabernacle in the pillar of the cloud. He called Aaron and Miriam to Him. And they came. Our words we say about someone else can't be hidden from God. They'll surface back up again. Forgive me Lord!

Can you remember the time when Aaron gave in to the people instead of honoring God (the golden calf situation).

12:6 And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. With a firm authoritative voice, God said "*Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself*

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known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream." As people would say, you heard what I said. There is no need to ask anyone else what was said. God said He spoke to prophets by means of dreams and visions.

12:7 My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. God makes it clear that this is not so with Moses, who was faithful in all of God's House. God sees Moses as special, whom He chose in spite of what he had done, to lead all His people out of Egypt, and be faithful with His tabernacle.

12:8 With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?— God is saying to them that the conversations He has with Moses is face to face, mouth to mouth, not in the dark speeches and similitude (occurs when we think God is saying one thing to us, only to find out later that He was actually speaking about something rather different). *"How do you dare speak against my servant Moses?" "Weren't you afraid to speak against God's servant Moses?"*

12:9 And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them; and he departed. God didn't say another Word, for His anger did the talking. His anger was provoked and ignited against them, and He departed; disappeared.

12:10 And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous. God said what He had to say and did what He had to do, and the cloud departed; disappeared. ¹Miriam and Aaron had no right to complain about this. So, God acted against them. He punished Miriam. She became leprous, white as snow, a disease that affected her skin.

12:11 And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned. However, God did not punish Aaron like this at the same time, but both were equally guilty. Maybe it was because he was the one who cried out on behalf of Miriam and himself to Moses calling him lord and acknowledging that both of them had done foolishly and sinned.

12:12 Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he cometh out of his mother's womb. This disease caused her to look like one that was dead. ²The "leper" was *"as one dead"* in two respects—

1. as being shut out from interaction with his brethren.
2. as causing ceremonial defilement in the case of those who were brought into contact with him, similar to that which was caused by touching a dead body.

"The flesh is half consumed when he cometh out of his mother's womb" gives the picture of a still-born child that had been dead some time in its mother's womb; and therefore, when brought forth its flesh is almost wasted away, or at least half consumed. And Aaron didn't want Miriam to go through such.

¹ <https://www.easyenglish.bible/bible-commentary/numbers-11-20-lbw.htm>

² <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/numbers/12-12.htm>

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12:13 And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee. Immediately after hearing his brother Aaron, Moses cried out to the Lord: Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee!

12:14 And the Lord said unto Moses, If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received in again. The Lord uses an eastern expression of contempt when He says "*If her father had but (in displeasure) spit in her face*", should she not be ashamed seven days? Seven days was the time appointed for cleansing the unclean. So, God imparts for her to be shut out from the camp for seven days, and afterwards she can be let back in and received as clean. This was something that could be swept under the rug, and we forget about it, no! It was a warning to others to keep them from the same transgression.

12:15 And Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days: and the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again. And it was so, that Miriam was shut out of the camp for seven days. And the camp didn't move until Miriam completed those seven days and was received back in again.³The camp could not move until she returned. People with diseases that affected the skin had to live away from other people. This was so that they did not give the disease to other people. But also, they had to stay outside the camp after the disease had gone. They had to show that it had gone. Also, they had to purify themselves by means of special ceremonies (Leviticus 14:1-32). These were the rules about people with diseases that affected the skin. So, her sin delayed the Israelites' journey to the Promised Land.

12:16 And afterward the people removed from Hazeroth, and pitched in the wilderness of Paran. It's time for the Israelites to move from Hazeroth and move to pitch their tents in the wilderness of Paran.

SUMMARY:

Moses' sister and brother (Miriam and Aaron) began to speak against Moses, their brother. Speaking against Moses because he had married an Ethiopian woman and saying, "*Has the Lord spoken only by Moses? has He not spoken also by us?*" And God heard them. The bible says, "*Then the anger of the Lord grew hot against them, and He departed*" (TLB). Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth. God calls all three of them to the Tabernacle, as He came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, calling forth Aaron and Miriam. With a firm authoritative voice, God said that He spoke to prophets by means of dreams and visions, but it was not so with Moses who was faithful in all of His house. When He had conversations with Moses, it was face to face, mouth to mouth. "*And were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?*" And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them; and He departed (**12:1-9**).

³ <https://www.easyenglish.bible/bible-commentary/numbers-11-20-lbw.htm>
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The cloud departed from off the tabernacle and Miriam was stricken with leprosy. Aaron cries out for forgiveness to Moses (acknowledging Moses' superior position) saying, "*we have done foolishly*", and Moses intercedes for them to God to heal Miriam. Aaron didn't want this disease to cause her to look like one that was dead. He didn't want Miriam to go through having her flesh being half consumed as a still-born would come out of the mother's womb. God considered this a serious sin and compared this to a father spitting in her face, which was the ultimate insult. Miriam had attempted to embarrass Moses publicly; in turn God embarrassed her publicly with leprosy for seven days and putting her outside the camp. Once again God was lenient, it could have been more. And Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days: and the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again. And afterwards it was time for the Israelites to move from Hazeroth and move to pitch their tents in the wilderness of Paran (**12:10-16**).

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13:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,— The LORD is speaking to Moses about getting them ready to go into the Promised Land. He is going to give them instructions on the first strategy.

13:2 Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a ruler among them. The Israelites are in Paran. Paran is a wilderness between Sinai and Canaan. They are on the verge of entering the Promised Land. But first Moses is instructed by God on the way to first spy out the land. He is to select the men that will go and spy out the land of Canaan: One man who is a leader from every tribe was to be selected from among them. It wasn't *'if you choose to accept this mission'*, no, *"you are chosen, and you will go."*

13:3 And Moses by the commandment of the LORD sent them from the wilderness of Paran: all those men were heads of the children of Israel. Moses did as the Lord commanded him and sent the 12 spies out from the wilderness camp of Paran; all were heads of the children of Israel.

13:17 And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up this way southward, and go up into the mountain:— Moses sent out twelve spies to spy, that is, search the land of Canaan, *"The Promised Land!"* They were told to get up and go southward into the mountain.

13:18 And see the land, what it is; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many;— They were to see what the land was like, what the people were like that lived there, whether they were strong or weak, whether there were few or many in number. Their purpose was to survey the land of Canaan.

13:19 And what the land is that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad; and what cities they be that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strong holds;— They were to see whether the land was good or bad, what the cities were like, if they dwelt in tents (villages) or in strongholds (fortified).

13:20 And what the land is, whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time was the time of the firstripe grapes. They were to see whether the land was fat (rich) or lean (poor), whether there is wood (trees) or not, and lastly bring back a sample of the fruit (crops). This will be the mission concerning the quality of the land, and the morale of the inhabitants they are to bring back.

SYNOPSIS:

Chapter 13:21—24 **21**So, they went up, and searched the land from the wilderness of Zin unto Rehob, as men come to Hamath. **22**And they ascended by the south, and came unto Hebron; where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the children of Anak, were. (Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan <http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>)

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in Egypt.) **23** And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates, and of the figs. **24** The place was called the brook Eshcol, because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence.

13:25 And they returned from searching of the land after forty days. After spying out the land for forty days, they have returned.

13:26 And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land. The spies have returned to wilderness of Paran to Kadesh to show them the fruit of the land. They came before the whole congregation of the children of Israel and unto Moses with one cluster of grapes which took two men to carry on a pole, pomegranates, and figs (v.23).

13:27 And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. Their report started out good in that, the land was flowing with milk and honey, exactly what God had promised! And they brought back this giant fruit to prove it.

13:28 Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. The land was good, however, when they got to the people living there, there was a “**But.**” They saw the people as strong and powerful that dwelt there, the cities were fortified and very huge. And there’s more, the children of Anak (race of giants: Anakim) lived there.

13:29 The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan. Then they begin to tell all the nationality of people living in the land of Canaan— The Amalekites lived in the south. The Hittites, Jebusites, and Amorites lived in the mountains. And the Canaanites lived by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.

13:30 And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it. At this point, it was time for an advocate to speak, and that was Caleb, one of the spies. Caleb was assured and he reassured the people that they were well able to possess the land. To him it didn’t matter who was living there. He knew God promised the land to them and God would enable them to receive the victory.

13:31 But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. So, again the other spies told the people, “*we are not able, for the other people are stronger than we are.*” Faith and trust went out the window as they spoke. And the words they spoke did not have God in it anywhere. It was all about what **they** could not do, and doubt, disbelief, and rebellion wreaked havoc among the people at the Promised door, and caused them not to have what God had promised to be now.

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13:32 And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. The 10 spies began to exaggerate and bring up an evil report about the land in which they searched. At the beginning of their report was that it was flowing with milk and honey. Now, they tell the children of Israel that the land ate its inhabitants. They made it out to be a difficult and dangerous place to live; even as they described the people they had seen as huge in stature. It's unbelievable that they're really saying that God would send them to such a place.

13:33 And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight. They claimed to have seen giants, the son of Anak called Anakim, and they felt like grasshoppers in their own sight. And if seeing themselves as grasshoppers, the sons of Anak would see them as the same, and really they had no chance to defend themselves.

SUMMARY:

The LORD is speaking to Moses about getting them ready to go into the Promised Land. He is going to give them instructions on the first strategy. But first Moses is instructed by God on the way to first spy out the land. He is to select the men that will go and spy out the land of Canaan: One man who is a leader from every tribe was to be selected from among them. Moses did as the Lord commanded him and sent the 12 spies out from the wilderness camp of Paran; all were heads of the children of Israel (**13:1-3**).

Moses sent twelve spies to search the land of Canaan, southward into the mountain to see what the land was like, what the people were like, whether they were strong or weak, whether there be few or many, whether the land was good or bad, what the cities were like, if they dwelt in tents (villages) or in strongholds (fortified), whether the land is fat (rich) or lean (poor), whether there is wood (trees) or not and lastly bring back a sample of the crops (**13:17-20**).

After spying out the land for forty days, they have returned. The spies have returned to wilderness of Paran to Kadesh to show them the fruit of the land. They came before the whole congregation of the children of Israel and unto Moses with one cluster of grapes which took two men to carry on a pole, pomegranates, and figs (v.23). Their report started out good in that, the land was flowing with milk and honey, exactly what God had promised! And they brought back this giant fruit to prove it. The report was that the land was flowing with milk and honey, exactly what God had promised! However, when they talked about the people, there was a **"But."** The people living there is strong and powerful, the cities are fortified and very large. What's more Anakim giants live there. Then they begin to tell all the nationality of people living there— The Amalekites lived in the south. The Hittites, Jebusites, and Amorites lived in the mountains. And the Canaanites lived by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan. At this time Caleb, one of the spies reassured the

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people that they were well able to possess the land. But the other spies told the people, we are not able, for they are stronger. Faith and trust went out the window as they spoke. And the words they spoke did not have God in it anywhere. It was all about what **they** could not do, and doubt, disbelief, and rebellion wreaked among the people at the Promised door and caused them not to have what God had promised to be now. The 10 spies began to exaggerate an evil report about the land which they searched. They claimed that the land ate its inhabitants. They made it out to be a difficult and dangerous place to live, even as they described the people they had seen as huge in stature; giants, the son of Anak called Anakim, and the spies felt like grasshoppers in their own sight, and they felt like the giants looked at them as grasshoppers, and really they had no chance to defend themselves (**13:25-33**).

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14:1 And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. How quickly the people of Israel had forgotten God's hand of mercy time and time again. How quickly they had forgotten crying out to God to come and rescue them from the Egyptian bondage. Although the wilderness lacks many things, it was never without the Lord's presence. Because of the spies' report, the Israelite congregation began to shout out loud, lifting their voices and crying, weeping, and complaining all that night.

14:2 And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness! So, the whole congregation have "*ought*" against Moses, Aaron and, God, moaning and grumbling and asking, "*Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness!?*" Most translations used it in the form of a statement: "*If only (God) we had died...*" whether it was in Egypt or in the wilderness, with an exclamation mark! They were grumbling complaining when God brought them out of Egypt, and they're still doing it.

14:3 And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt? The people murmured saying, "*Why has the LORD brought us to this land to die by the sword?*" One key portion of this generation's judgment came from their own lips because they keep talking about dying and dying by the sword. They fretted over the fact that their wives and children would fall prey to their enemies and God had brought them to the edge of Canaan only to let them die. They accepted the ten spies' negative opinion as truth and followed the voice of fear.

14:4 And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt. They've quit talking to Moses and Aaron and said amongst themselves, '*We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt.*' (From Nehemiah 9:17, it appears that they actually did choose a leader). The ultimate sin and rebellion was to want another leader and disregard the one God had chosen. Unbelief was at the base of Israel's fear of entering the land God had promised.

POINT:

The Israelites are at the door of opportunity but won't go through! The spies have seen the land but won't possess it! Bottom line, they did not trust God, they trusted in self and what they perceived as right. They trusted the voice of fear instead of the voice of faith.

14:5 Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel. Hearing the bitter ingratitude towards the leaders God had set forth, Moses and Aaron did not speak to the assembly of the congregation, but fell down on their faces before them, and humbling themselves before the Lord.

POINT:

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One key portion of this generation's judgment came from their own lips. They fretted over the fact that their wives and children would fall prey to their enemies and God had brought them to the edge of Canaan only to let them die. They accepted the ten spies' negative opinion as truth.

14:6 And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes:— And Joshua and Caleb which were two of the spies who searched the land, were so upset with the complaints of the Israelites that they tore their own clothes.

NOTE:

Moses and Aaron falling face down to the ground was not to make intercession for them this time, but mostly for the severity of the sin, and what they knew would follow. The tearing of the clothes was meant to serve as a symbol to the people of the extremity of the situation, hoping to turn the people around.

14:7 And they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. Caleb and Joshua were the only ones who spoke up to the people with faith in God and said, "*The land we explored is good land.*"

14:8 If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. They continued, "*If God is pleased with us, He will bring us, lead us, and give us this land flowing with milk and honey.*" They were expressing how God was able to do this. If He delights in us, He will bring, lead, and give it to us.

14:9 Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not. Caleb and Joshua are pleading with the congregation. "*Please do not rebel against the Lord. Do not be afraid of the inhabitants of the Promised Land because the Lord, God has promised we will swallow them up in war. They have no defense; their protection is gone, for the LORD is with us. Do not be afraid of them.*" The clues are going up everywhere if they only heed!

NOTE:

Only two men spoke up against a crowd of unbelievers! Only two men heard what God had said and believed! Only two men pleaded for them to rebel not against God, neither give in to fear or unbelief. Rejecting the men or women of God is the same as rejecting God! Being tested in a battle, should always call for God's direction! That was it! God tests for strength; the devil tempts for weakness!

14:10 But all the congregation bade stone them with stones. And the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel. But the Israelite community did not believe Joshua and Caleb. Their fear and unbelief caused them to draw to stoning Joshua and Caleb. Then, the glory of the Lord like a bolt of lightning appeared visibly in the tabernacle in front of all of the Israelites to confront their unbelief.

14:11 And the LORD said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it bend ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have shewed among them? The Lord speaks to

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Moses, and He's saying how long are these people going to treat Him with contempt, despise Him, and provoke Him? How long will they not believe Him? for He's shown them so many miraculous signs and they still don't believe.

14:12 I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they. The Lord has gone so far as to say, *"I will strike all the Israelites down with a plague and they will all die. I will disinherit (disown) and destroy them all. I will make you (talking to Moses), a great nation, greater and stronger than they could ever be."* God is serious about bringing judgment!

14:13 And Moses said unto the LORD, Then the Egyptians shall hear it, (for thou broughtest up this people in thy might from among them;)— After hearing all the Lord wanted to do to these disobedient people whom He had brought out of Egypt by His power, and wants to kill them with a plague, disown and destroy them (bring judgment upon them), Moses reminds the LORD that His adversaries, the Egyptians will hear of this. He's interceding for the people and points out to the LORD how His adversaries will see Him or think toward Him, and what their reaction and His reputation will look like, for it was by the LORD'S power and might that has brought and rescued the Israelites.

14:14 And they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land: for they have heard that thou LORD art among this people, that thou LORD art seen face to face, and that thy cloud standeth over them, and that thou goest before them, by day time in a pillar of a cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night. Moses tells the Lord that this story will be told to the inhabitants throughout this land, that He, the Lord lives, dwells among His people letting Himself be seen face to face. And sheltering them in the cloud going before them in a pillar of a cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night. Moses is pointing out the Lord's honor and reputation of what the inhabitants of the land have heard about Him, and what they will speak about Him.

14:15 Now if thou shalt kill all this people as one man, then the nations which have heard the fame of thee will speak, saying,— But, if the Lord decides to annihilate all His people with one blow, the nations which have heard of His fame will be speaking and saying something different.

14:16 Because the LORD was not able to bring this people into the land which he sware unto them, therefore he hath slain them in the wilderness. They would be saying that the Lord was not able to bring His people into the land which He swore to; promised them, therefore He had to destroy them in the wilderness.

14:17 And now, I beseech thee, let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying,—Moses begs the Lord *"let my LORD'S power be great as You had spoken."* We all count on God's power in a time of need. And he has never failed us!

14:18 The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation. These are the words the Lord had spoken out of His mouth to Moses on Mt. Sinai (Exodus 34:6-7) when the two new tablets of stone had to be made again because Moses had broken the first tablets after coming off the mountain with God. And so, Moses declares these very words now as he intercedes for a rebellious people. And so, Moses speaks about whom he serves, for the Lord is longsuffering, which means He can put up with a lot. He is slow to anger, patient, and abounding in love. The Lord is of great mercy meaning His compassion and kindness is enduring. The Lord forgives iniquity and transgression

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meaning He can forgive wickedness and rebellion because He is a merciful God to those who repent. But, He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation. There are still consequences for wickedness and rebellion, but it is delayed until God so desires. The general principle is qualified in two ways:

1. **First** it applies only to those who hate the Lord—those who persist in unbelief as enemies of God. The cycle of sin and suffering can be broken through repentance.
2. **Second**, the suffering comes to the third and fourth generation, while God shows steadfast love to thousands of those who love him and keep His commandments.

14:19 Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now. Moses is begging the LORD to pardon the iniquity of His people according to the greatness of His mercy; His love, and that He forgive His people, from Egypt even until now. The people weren't obedient to God when they were in Egypt. They followed after the Egyptian gods, but God knows that. And Moses is asking God for that same great mercy to pardon them that He had from the time of them leaving Egypt.

14:20 And the LORD said, I have pardoned according to thy word:— Well, it looks like God has heard his servant Moses' plea to pardon the people for the Lord said, "I have pardoned according to thy word." We quote Jeremiah 1:12 all the time. It's meaning (to Jeremiah) is literally played out in Moses giving God's Word back to Him. "*Then said the lord unto me, Thou has well seen: for I will hasten my word to perform it.*" We must know God's Word in order to give it back to Him; reminding Him that we remember the truth of His Word and of who he is. That's what Moses did, he gave God's Word back to Him and God looked after His Word to perform it.

14:21 But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD. God tells Moses as truly as He, the Lord lives that His glory; His Presence will fill all the earth, for He is the Living God!

14:22 Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice;— Now that God had pardoned them, they will not go unpunished for the very fact and truth that these men had seen God's glory, His miracles He had done in Egypt, and in the wilderness, and they've tempted God ten times. God put a number to it.

1. At the Red Sea (Exo.14:11-12) *Pharaoh's army would destroy them.*
2. At Marah (Exo.15:23-24) *bitter water.*
3. In the Wilderness of Sin (Exo.16:1-3) *hungry in the desert.*
4. At Rephidim (Exo.17:1-3) *lack of water.*
5. At Sinai (Exo.32:1-6) *making a golden calf.*
- 6-7. At Taberah (two occasions—Num.11:1-3 *their complaining displeased the Lord, vv.4-9 a mixed multitude longed for the good things (food) of Egypt.*
8. At Kibrothhattaavah vv.31-34 *the quail brought a great plague because they lusted.*
- 9-10. In the wilderness of Paran to Kadesh (two occasions— (Num.14:1-4 *grumbled and rebelled against the Lord, vv.10-12 rejected God and His power and provoked the Lord to judgment.*

He's counted the times they had tempted Him and did not heed to His voice. They kept wanting to go back to Egypt. They kept saying they were brought into the wilderness to die. And they didn't even want to enter into the Promised Land when the spies went in. Well, they got exacting what they kept saying when they kept challenging God's power which was unthinkable! They were snared by their words and their hearts did not change.

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14:23 Surely they shall not see the land which I swore unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it:— The LORD shows that He can pardon and still fill the earth with His glory, but He will not tolerate their disobedience while receiving His miracles. The Lord says "*Surely*" meaning that this is a sure thing; He's confident and positive that these men that have seen His Glory and His miracles and have tempted Him and have not heeded His voice shall receive His judgment. They will not see the Promised Land that He swore to their fathers, and neither shall any of them that has provoked Him see it.

14:24 But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it. The Lord is specific in whom He will allow to receive the promise at this point. His servant Caleb will be the one brought into the land and his seed (children) shall possess the land also because of Caleb's spirit, "*for he has another spirit with him, and he has followed God fully.*"

Caleb was 40yrs. old at Kadesh Barnea when he spied out the Land of Canaan. And the Israelites had wandered in the wilderness 38yrs. Then the conquering of the Land took 7yrs and Caleb was now 85yrs old (Joshua 14:10). Caleb reminded Joshua, (the one in charge) of the Word that was given to him by God through Moses. "*Joshua blessed him and gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as an inheritance*" Joshua 14:13.

SUMMARY:

The Israelite congregation began to shout out loud, lifting their voices and crying, weeping, and complaining that night at the spies' report. They moaned at Moses, Aaron, and God, stating, "*If only (God) we had died...*" whether it was in Egypt or in the wilderness, with an exclamation mark! And then asking, "*Why did GOD bring us to this land to die by the sword? Our wives and our children will be taken as the plunder of war. We would be better off back in Egypt.*" Then amongst themselves they said, "*We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt.*" The ultimate sin and rebellion was to want another leader and disregard the one God had chosen (**14:1-4**).

Hearing the bitter ingratitude towards God, Moses and Aaron did not speak to the assembly of the congregation, but fell face down before them, and Joshua and Caleb were so upset with the complaints of the Israelites that they tore their own clothes. They were the only ones who spoke up to the people with faith in God and said, "*The land we explored is good land.*" *If God is pleased with us, He will bring us, lead us, and give us this land flowing with milk and honey.*" *Please do not rebel against the Lord. Do not be afraid of the inhabitants of the Promised Land because the Lord God has promised we will swallow them up in war. They have no defense; their protection is gone, for the LORD is with us. Do not be afraid of them.*" But the Israelite community did not believe Joshua and Caleb. Their fear and unbelief caused them to discuss stoning Joshua and Caleb. Then the glory of the Lord appeared visibly in the tabernacle in front of all of the Israelites to confront their unbelief (**14:5-10**).

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The Lord speaks to Moses, and He's saying how long these people going to treat Him with contempt; provoke Him. He's saying how long will they not believe Him, for He's shown them so many miraculous signs? The Lord has gone so far as to say, "*I will strike all the Israelites down with a plague and they will all die. I will disinherit (disown) and destroy them all. I will make you (talking about Moses), a great nation, greater and stronger than they could ever be.*" God is serious about bringing judgment! (**14:11-12**).

After hearing all the Lord wanted to do to these disobedient people whom He had brought out of Egypt by His power, and wants to kill them with a plague, disown and destroy them (bring judgment upon them), Moses reminds the LORD that His adversaries, the Egyptians will hear of this. Moses tells the Lord that this story will be told to the inhabitants throughout this land, that He, the Lord lives, dwells among His people letting Himself be seen face to face. And sheltering them in the cloud going before them in a pillar of a cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night. Moses is pointing out the Lord's honor and reputation of what the inhabitants of the land have heard about Him, and what they will speak about Him. But, if the Lord decides to annihilate all His people with one blow, the nations which have heard of His fame will be speaking and saying something different. They would be saying that the Lord was not able to bring His people into the land which He swore to; promised them, therefore He had to destroy them in the wilderness. Moses begs the Lord "*let my LORD'S power be great as You had spoken, for You are longsuffering; of great mercy; forgives iniquity and transgression, and will by no means leave the guilty unpunished visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation." And Moses is asking God for that same great mercy to pardon them that He had from the time of them leaving Egypt (**14:13-19**).*

Well, it looks like God has heard his servant Moses' plea to pardon the people for the Lord said, "*I have pardoned according to thy word.*" God tells Moses that His glory will fill all the earth as truly as He, the Lord lives. But in God pardoning them, they will not go unpunished for the very fact and truth that these men had seen God's glory, and His miracles He had done in Egypt and in the wilderness, and they've tempted God ten times. Well, they got exacting what they kept saying with their mouths when they kept challenging God's power. The Lord says "surely" meaning that this is a sure thing. The Lord is specific in whom He will allow to receive the promise at this point. His servant Caleb will be the one brought into the land and Caleb's seed shall possess the land because of his spirit, for he has another spirit with him, and he has followed God fully (**14:20-24**).

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SYNOPSIS:

NUMBERS 15:1-41 The LORD instructs Moses to give additional regulations: rules about sacrifices: what they were to offer and how to offer the sacrifices unto God when they come into the Promised Land. These rules and laws showed that they could not live any kind of way, but they had to live as God's people in the Promised Land. This goes for the Israelite as well as the foreigner living among them. One law for all. If a mistake or error had been made, Moses is to tell them what to do to receive atonement. 'But if someone sins defiantly, that person is guilty of blasphemy against God. They cannot live among the people, and that goes for the Israelite as well as the foreigner among them. And if they worked on the Sabbath, it was a very serious crime because this would be defiantly sinning against God, and that's something they were supposed to know (Exodus 31:15; 35:2-3), and punishment would be death. Moses was to tell the people of Israel to make tassels for the hems of their clothes (this is a permanent regulation from generation to generation)... attach the tassels to the hems of their clothes with a blue cord. The purpose of the tassels were to remind them to obey all God's laws instead of following their own desires. And be holy unto God, for He is the LORD their God who brought them up out of Egypt to be their God, for God says, "*I am the LORD your God!*"

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16:1 Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men:— Before Moses could give the additional regulations to the children of Israel, rebellion was sparked in the camp. This man's whole lineage was given. One day Korah, the son of Izhar, grandson of Kohath, and a descendant of Levi, conspired with three Reubenites, Dathan and Abiam (the sons of Eliab), and On (the son of Peleth). This reminds me of the siege upon the U. S. Capitol. Power in the wrong hands breeds stupidity.

At the end of Chapter 14 the LORD had spoken to Moses and Aaron concerning the people's wickedness and complaints. They would be condemned to wander and die in the wilderness for 40yrs because they refused to trust the LORD. The number was related with the number of days the spies spent in Canaan (40 days: a year for each day) to bring back a bad report. Those from 20yrs and up who murmured and complained shall not go into the Promised Land, except for Caleb and Joshua (who would enter). And God would give the Promised Land to the children of whose parents had died in the wilderness, but they will suffer those 40yrs because of the parents' sins. The 10 spies who brought back a bad report would die by the plague sent by the LORD. Moses told the people what the LORD had said, and the people mourned. But the very next day, they were ready to go up into Canaan, for they knew they had sinned against the LORD, but Moses told them that the LORD would not go with them. They tried to go anyway and were defeated by the Amalekites and Canaanites who were waiting for them in the hills.

That window had closed. All of what had just happened, I guess Korah was thinking, all or nothing. This should have been "*a stay with God's plan moment*" for Korah. This should have been a moment to take a look at "*passed mistake*" not "*power driven moments*."

16:2 And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown:— Korah and the three Reubenites along with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty who were leaders of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of distinction made up this group that rose up and incited a rebellion against Moses. This was a coup (a takeover). Remember they said they wanted another captain in Numbers 14:4 "*...choose another leader and go back to Egypt*."

16:3 And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD?— This is the same mistake that Miriam and Aaron made when they came against Moses. Just because the Lord was living among them, they perceived that all of the congregation were holy, in which they thought they had the right to challenge God's servant. At one time they didn't even want to talk to God at Mt Sinai. They told Moses to talk to Him. Now they think they are strong enough to take Moses and Aaron's spot that they want to relieve some of their load. A takeover is all about power. And they want it!

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16:4 And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face:— All Moses could do when he heard this was to fall on his face because he knew what was about to happen to them—He knew God would fight this battle, like He's done before.

16:5 And he spake unto Korah and unto all his company, saying, Even to morrow the LORD will shew who are his, and who is holy; and will cause him to come near unto him: even him whom he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him. Moses told Korah and all his company with him (250) that they would find out tomorrow before the Lord: who are His and who is holy, for God will cause that one to come near to Him, even the one he's already chosen. If the people didn't know that they were on the wrong side, they will see firsthand who the Lord chooses, for that one will come near unto Him. Since Korah had decided what God needed, he will see personally.

16:6 This do; Take you censers, Korah, and all his company;— Moses instructed Korah and all those with him; his company to take their censers.

16:7 And put fire therein, and put incense in them before the LORD to morrow: and it shall be that the man whom the LORD doth choose, he shall be holy: ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi. They are instructed to put fire within their censers, and put incense in them in the presence of the Lord on tomorrow. This will show the one who is consecrated and who's holy, for this would be the one the Lord has chosen. Moses says to them "*Sons of Levi you have presumed too much upon yourselves*" meaning you've gone too far. Korah and his company should have remembered what happened to Nadab and Abihu when they offered up (strange) fire unto the Lord which He had not commanded, and He killed them. They should have remembered about Miriam when she became leprous by the LORD after speaking against Moses, and even the 10 spies who gave a bad report about Canaan were zapped by the plague sent by the LORD. That was just a few, but there were many more. However, I think they thought they were in the clear.

16:8 And Moses said unto Korah, Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi:— Moses tells Korah, "*Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi...*" This meant to listen carefully because the words Moses uses are to really get his attention; to really cause him to think.

16:9 Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the LORD, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them?— Moses says, "*Does it seem a small thing that the God of Israel has separated you out of all the congregation of Israel to bring you close to Himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord and stand before the congregation to minister unto them?*"

16:10 And he hath brought thee near to him, and all thy brethren the sons of Levi with thee: and seek ye the priesthood also?— Moses is reiterating that the work as a Levite in the tabernacle gives them access to the very important service to the Lord. And Korah holds a special responsibility as he shares in the responsibility with the other members of the Levi tribe. But Moses is really asking "*Are you seeking the*

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priesthood also?" We have to be careful in wanting what others have. It's the spirit of covetousness, envy, and greediness. We can't serve God by stepping on another trying to get their job. We are to wait on God.

16:11 For which cause both thou and all thy company are gathered together against the LORD: and what is Aaron, that ye murmur against him?— Korah is really blind to the fact that when he goes against God's man trying to get to God, for this cause he and his company have gathered against the LORD, instead of Aaron. Moses is really asking "What is Aaron, that ye murmur against him?"

16:12 And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab: which said, We will not come up:— So, the two Reubenite men, Dathan and Abiram that were with Korah refused to come up as instructed and they give dialogue.

16:13 Is it a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of a land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself altogether a prince over us?— It seems they are using Moses' words, as they come against him, "*Is it a small thing that you have brought us up out of a land that flows with milk and honey to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself altogether a prince over us?*" It seems like they thought the land (Egypt) that God had brought them out of; were in bondage of was flowing with milk and honey. How could they think this? Oh yeah, the desert has tricked them! Yeah, they're right about themselves dying in the wilderness, but Moses is not going to do it. However, they're wrong about who made Moses in charge and he's not a prince. They asked, "*Is it a small thing...?*" Well, their stance is very shaky! Their accusations were not relevant nor true.

16:14 Moreover thou hast not brought us into a land that floweth with milk and honey, or given us inheritance of fields and vineyards: wilt thou put out the eyes of these men? we will not come up. And what's more they wouldn't go into the Land flowing with milk and honey when God wanted them to. They will not receive the inheritance of fields and vineyards. Another question: Do you think you can keep blinding the eyes of these men?" They're the only ones who have blinded their own eyes with their lies and greediness. And they repeat themselves (v.12) a second time: "We will not come up." At least they are very adamant about it.

SYNOPSIS:

CHAPTER 16:15-22 **15**After the two Reubenites, Dathan and Abiram had told *Moses that he hasn't brought them into the Land flowing with milk and honey, or given them their inheritance of fields and vineyards, so they weren't coming up before the Lord as instructed. And Moses was very angry and said to the LORD, "Do not accept any offering from these men. I have taken nothing from them, not even an ass. I have not done anything wrong to them."* **16**Moses told Korah, that he and his company were to come before the LORD tomorrow, and Aaron will be there too. **17**So, there would be a total of 250 men each with a censer along Korah and Aaron to offer incense to the LORD. **18**So, the next day, the men took their censer, and put fire in them, and laid the incense in it, and stood at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation with Moses and Aaron. **19**Korah and his company gathered to oppose Moses and Aaron at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. Then suddenly the glory of the LORD appeared unto them. **20**This is when the

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LORD spoke unto Moses and Aaron **21**telling them to separate; get away from these people so He can immediately kill them! **22**As usual Moses and Aaron fell on their faces to the ground interceding for the people saying, "*O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh (meaning Maker of all mankind), must you be angry with everyone here, when one man has sinned?*"

16:23 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,— The LORD only speaks unto Moses.

16:24 Speak unto the congregation, saying, Get you up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. The LORD told Moses to speak to the congregation and tell them to get away from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Moses is to give clear warning to any who would want to side with this rebellion against the LORD, Moses, and Aaron. So, God is warning Moses that something is about to happen in the camp. Korah, Dathan, Abiram and the 250 men are in for a rude awakening.

16:25 And Moses rose up and went unto Dathan and Abiram; and the elders of Israel followed him. Moses now rises up to implement the instructions that the LORD had given him, and goes to Dathan and Abiram, the Reubenites who had dared the LORD and wouldn't come before Him when instructed. The elders of Israel followed Moses. These elders were the 70 men God had chosen to help Moses.

16:26 And he spake unto the congregation, saying, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins. Moses gives the dire warning from the LORD to the congregation, telling them "*Depart I pray you, get away from the tents of these wicked men. Don't touch anything that's theirs, lest you be consumed in all of their sins.*" The LORD'S commandment is to be followed with no second guesses. Three phrases stood out: wicked men, *touch nothing of theirs*, and *lest you be consumed in all their sins*. Sin was in the camp and it had to be dwelt with—Get away I pray you! Red Flag!

16:27 So they gat up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, on every side: and Dathan and Abiram came out, and stood in the door of their tents, and their wives, and their sons, and their little children. So, the people moved away from the tents of Korah, Dathan and Abiram. So, this is when Dathan and Abiram comes out of their tents. And they're standing at their entrances, with their wives and children. They don't plead for mercy or regret their fault.

16:28 And Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the LORD hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own mind. Moses is talking to the congregation telling them that they will know that the LORD had sent him to do all that he has done (these works). And that it was not done on his own prompting, plans or impulses. This shouldn't have been a problem again and again for these people, but God is a miracle working God and He also brings judgment. As the saying goes, "*You make your bed hard, you gon lay in it!*"

16:29 If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; then the LORD hath not sent me. Moses lets the people know that "*if these men die a natural death, or from some ordinary accident or disease, then Jehovah has not sent me.*" This was the problem all along with these men: not accepting who God chose to lead them. They didn't accept Jesus Christ either for they kept

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asking Him "who sent you?" Jesus always says "those that have ears to hear, let him hear." But this time those that have eyes to see, well, they will get to see the LORD'S wrath!

16:30 But if the LORD make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD. Moses' is setting them up with this warning, for he speaks the thing that will happen! He says "if the LORD creates something new, and the earth opens up and swallows them up with all that pertain to them (their families and all their possessions). And go down quickly into the pit, then, you will understand that these men had provoked the LORD. This will prove that these men have rejected the LORD." This was their warning, direct and to the point!

The Earth Swallows Up Korah

16:31 And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them:— Moses had just finished speaking when the ground broke loose and caved in right where they stood as warned.

16:32 And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. The earth having opened its mouth, immediately swallowed the wicked men (Dathan and Abiram) and their families, their tents, all of Korah's men who sided with him and all their possessions. Nothing of them or any residue of them was left.

16:33 They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation. They went down alive into the pit (Sheol) and all that pertained to them with all their possessions, and the ground closed over them. They perished (disappeared) from the community.

16:34 And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also. All the Israelites that were around to see this catastrophe ran as they heard the screams of the people going down into the pit, for they were thinking that the same would happen to them; that they would also be swallowed by the earth.

16:35 And there came out a fire from the LORD, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense. Then the LORD sent a fire, and it killed the 250 men who were offering their incense before Him.

SUMMARY:

Korah a Levite conspired with three Reubenites: Dathan, Abiam, and On. Korah and the three Reubenites along with certain of the children of Israel, who were leaders of the assembly, famous in the congregation,

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men of distinction making up a total of two hundred and fifty in the group that rose up and incited a rebellion against Moses. This was a coup (a takeover). Remember they said they wanted another captain; a leader who would lead them back to Egypt (Numbers 14:4). There were others who came up against Moses and it didn't end well. Just because the Lord was living among them, they perceived all of the congregation was holy and wanted to challenge God's servant. At one time they didn't even want to talk to God at Mt Sinai. They told Moses to talk to Him. Now, they think they are strong enough to take Moses and Aaron's spot; they want to relieve some of their load. A takeover is all about power. And they want it! (**16:1-3**).

All Moses could do when he heard this was to fall on his face because he knew what was about to happen to them—He knew God would fight this battle, like He's done before. Moses told Korah and all his company with him that they would find out tomorrow before the Lord who are His and who is holy, for the LORD will cause that one to come near to Him. Since Korah had decided what God needed, he will see personally. Moses instructed Korah and all those with him; his company to take their censers, put fire within and put incense in them in the presence of the Lord on tomorrow. This will show the one who is consecrated and who's holy, for this would be the one the Lord has chosen. Moses says to them *"Sons of Levi you have presumed too much upon yourselves"* meaning gone too far. Korah and his company should have remembered what happened to Nadab and Abihu, Miriam and Aaron and even the 10 spies. Moses tells Korah, *"Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi, does it seem a small thing that the God of Israel has separated you out of all the congregation of Israel to bring you close to Himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord and stand before the congregation to minister unto them?"* Moses is reiterating that the work as a Levite in the tabernacle gives them access to the very important service to the Lord. And Korah holds a special responsibility as he shares in the responsibility with the other members of the Levi tribe. And so, Moses asked Did it seem a small thing? But Moses is really asking *"Are you seeking the priesthood also?"* We have to be careful in wanting what others have. It's the spirit of covetousness, envy, and greediness. We can't serve God by stepping on another trying to get their job. We are to wait on God. Korah is really blind to the fact that when he goes against God's man trying to get to God, for this cause he and his company have gathered against the LORD, instead of Aaron. Moses asks, *"What is Aaron, that ye murmur against him?"* (**16:4-11**).

So, the two Reubenite men Dathan and Abiram who were with Korah refused to come up as instructed by Moses and began to give dialogue. It seems they are using Moses' words, as they come against him, *"Is it a small thing that you have brought us up out of a land that flows with milk and honey to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself altogether a prince over us? And what's more they tell him that "you haven't brought us into the Land flowing with milk and honey, or given us our inheritance of fields and vineyards. "Do you think you can keep blinding our eyes? We will not come up" (**16:12-14**).*

The LORD spoke unto Moses telling him to warn the congregation to get away from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. He's to give clear warning to any who would want to side with this rebellion against

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He, Moses, and Aaron (**16:23-24**).

Moses now implements the instructions the LORD had given him. He rises up and goes to Dathan and Abiram, the Reubenites, and the elders of Israel follows Moses. These elders were the 70 men God had chosen to help Moses. Moses gives this dire warning to the congregation, telling them *"Depart I pray you, get away from the tents of these wicked men. Don't touch anything that's theirs, lest you be consumed in all of their sins."* So the people moved away from the tents of Korah, Dathan and Abiram. Dathan and Abiram were the ones who would not obey the instructions of the LORD to come before Him to offer incense. So, now they come out of their tents and stand at its entrance with their wives and children. Moses tells the congregation that they will know that the LORD had sent him to do all that he has done (these works). And that it was not done on his own prompting, plans or impulses. And if these men die of natural causes as of all men, or if they are visited with the fate of all men, then the LORD had not sent him me. But (warning them), *"if the LORD creates something new, and the earth opens up and swallows them up along with all that pertain to them (their families and all their possessions). And go down quickly into the pit, then, you will understand that these men had provoked the LORD. This will prove that these men have rejected the LORD"* (**16:25-30**).

This certainly came to pass just as Moses had ended his speech. The ground broke loose and caved in right where they stood. The earth having opened its mouth, immediately swallowed them up and their families, their tents, all the men who sided with Korah and all their possessions. They went down alive into the pit (Sheol) with all their possessions, and the ground closed over them. They perished (disappeared) from the community. All the Israelites that were around them ran as they heard the people's screams going down into the pit, for they were thinking that they would also be swallowed up by the earth. Then the LORD sent a fire, and it killed the 250 men who were offering their incense at the door of the tabernacle (**16:31-35**).

[TOP](#)

INTRODUCTION:

Chapter 19 talks about the ceremony to make a person clean. Sin is missing the mark. It could be unintentional, intentional, or defiant. "*Unintentional sin*" is impossible to avoid because of the first man Adam sinned which led to death for all. "*Intentional sin*" is doing wrong on purpose and not repenting. "*Defiant sin*" is "blasphemy" which is insulting the honor of God directly and indirectly and not repenting, "*but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven neither in this world and neither in the world to come*" (Matthew 12:31-32). The 19th chapter ends with what to do after touch a dead body because they would be unclean. Then we come to the 20th chapter to speak about water coming from a rock.

20:1 Then came the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, into the desert of Zin in the first month: and the people abode in Kadesh; and Miriam died there, and was buried there. This part of the chapter begins with Moses and the children of Israel, even the whole congregation coming to the desert of Zin. "*The Wilderness of Zin*" is ⁴a desert on the southern border of Canaan, and the west of Edom (Numbers 34:1-4). It formed part of the great wilderness of Paran (Numbers 13:26); and in its northeast corner was Kadesh-barnea. Moses said that Miriam died there and was buried there. Her age is not mentioned when she died. We do know that Miriam died in the desert in Kadesh and was buried in Kadesh. Her character was strong and unafraid.

- Miriam looked after her brother Moses by hiding afar to make sure the basket didn't get lost in the river and to assure the one who found him (Pharaoh's daughter) that she could find someone (his mother) to nurse him (Genesis 2).
- Miriam was called a prophetess taking the timbrel and danced, leading the women to do the same after Moses brought them from the Red Sea. She said "*Sing ye to the Lord for He hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea*" (Genesis 15).
- Miriam opposed her brother Moses, and she was stricken by God with leprosy. Her brother Aaron interceded for her to Moses. And Moses cried out for her to the Lord. She was declared unclean for seven days outside the camp and therefore had to go through the purification ceremony before she could come back among the people (Numbers 12).
- Miriam was included as the LORD spoke as one of the ones He had sent to bring the Israelites out of the land of Egypt. "*...I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam*" (Micah 6:4).

20:2 And there was no water for the congregation: and they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron. The Israelites find themselves crying because they were thirsty and unable to find water. The animals were tired and desperately needed water. They were frightened that they might quickly die in the desert with no water and began to come against Moses and Aaron, their leaders.

20:3 And the people chode with Moses, and spake, saying, Would God that we had died when

⁴ <https://biblehub.com/topical/z/zin.htm>
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our brethren died before the LORD!— Interestingly, almost 40 years later the people are still moaning and complaining and saying to Moses, "*Why did you bring us out of Egypt to die of thirst in the desert? If only we had died when our brothers died, we would have been better off. Why did you bring us to this horrible place where there is no water to drink? Surely, you brought us here to kill us.*" So, Moses and Aaron are still hearing these same complaints from the people.

20:4 And why have ye brought up the congregation of the LORD into this wilderness, that we and our cattle should die there?— The complaints continue to come in while they are in the wilderness, even when God has shown them many blessings. They are thinking that they and their cattle will die in the wilderness. They have a complaining spirit. The lies and untruths that tend to filter in, cancels the truth they are willing to accept. They have heard and seen the truth that God can and has their answer to every "Why", but sometimes we're not willing to accept God's timing. You can't get to the other side unless you go through the difficulty. Joyce Myers has said "*Complain and remain, Praise and be raised!*" Complaining is like cancer that spreads, so when we complain about what God has brought us out of, and make it look better than what God has brought us into, makes us very ungrateful! No matter what God has already done, He's able to continue to do exceedingly. Every trial we go through is a battle that's not ours,' but it's the Lord's as we remember His strength to provide.

20:5 And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us in unto this evil place? it is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; neither is there any water to drink. This sounds like "*deja vu.*" Their level of our faith in them has not had a chance to grow, which is really their trust level. They had not replaced the true miracles of "*GOD CAN*" to settle within them. They are still ready to regress backward to old familiar things. They can't even see the big picture. They can't even see the next step. They are still babies on milk wanting figs and pomegranates. They were rescued out of the bondage of Egypt, their familiar place. It's time for them see that God is their provider of water again, for He's already did it before, if they can just believe.

20:6 And Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and they fell upon their faces: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto them. Imagine how many times Moses had heard these complaining words, and must have been exhausted from the people. Nevertheless, Moses and Aaron left the assembly and went to the door of the tabernacle and fell on their faces before God. And the glory of the Lord appeared to them.

NOTE:

We don't want to be outside the Will of God, for this is wasted time. The Lord had led the Israelites here because He loved them and desired to reveal to them His inexhaustible resources, that is, if they would only believe. How will you respond? **Believe: Everything is A Test!**

20:7 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,— God speaks to Moses.

20:8 Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink. God's instruction to Moses: 1)Take the rod—2)Gather the Israelite congregation and Aaron, his brother—3) and **Speak to the rock** before their eyes. **Why? To see the miracle working power of the Lord God**— It would yield water for the

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entire congregation and their animals. It's very clear if you're listening and not distracted.

20:9 And Moses took the rod from before the LORD, as he commanded him. Yes, Moses took the rod, as the Lord commanded. However, everything else must have gone out the other ear and became a blur.

20:10 And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?— Moses took the rod, and Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation before the rock, and said to the Israelite people, *"You rebels..."*

- **(FIRST MISTAKE)** "You rebels" (you protestors; you agitators; you sinners). In Moses' mind they have sinned by complaining that the Lord would not provide for them. In his mind he's saying: *Hasn't God provided for all of your needs so far? Hasn't the Lord been faithful to us? Hasn't the Lord performed many miracles right before your eyes and yet you had no faith that the Lord would provide water for you to drink; so you complain and moan?*
- **(SECOND MISTAKE)** "Must we bring you water out of this rock?" Moses put himself first, before God.

There was:

1. **Anger.** *"Hear now, ye rebels..."* Moses' anger overshadowed his instructions which reverted his ability to think straight.
2. **Pride.** *"Must we fetch..."* Perhaps Moses thought if they saw him as the supplier they would quit complaining. Prov.16:18 says, *"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall, and unbelief was the fall."*

20:11 And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also. God had instructed Moses to speak to the rock,* but Moses' disobedience was costly. God is very meticulous in His instructions.

- **(THIRD MISTAKE)** Moses raised his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod, and water abundantly gushed out of the rock. God told Moses to speak to the rock, not strike it.

NOTE:

*The **"Rock"** represents Jesus Christ, who only needed to be struck once for our sins, once and for ALL time. And Moses broke the resemblance or parallel by striking the rock twice.

There was:

3. **Disobedience.** *"Smote the rock twice..."* This brought him into the place like the people he was to lead. God's **direct command** and him dishonoring Him in the presence of His people was not to be taken lightly. He calls us to be obedient. Any compromise with sin is an erosion of character.

However, God in His mercy allowed the entire Israelite community to have plenty of water to drink.

20:12 And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them. And God spoke to Moses and said, *"Because you did not believe Me, to hallow My name before the eyes of the children of Israel, you will not bring this people into the Promised Land, which I have given them."*

- **(FOURTH MISTAKE)** Moses did not sanctify the Lord before the very people meant his heart wasn't there.

There was:

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4. Unbelief. "Because ye (Moses) believed me not..."

When you don't do what God say do, or when you don't ask God what to do, and He tells you and you still don't do what He says do, then you've taken the place of God. The thing God said in the 12th verse was: 'you didn't believe or trust Me enough to sanctify Me, honor me, hallow Me in the eyes of; in the sight of the congregation. That's very important to God. You can't share His Glory. Glory only goes to Him. If it's not in His Word, if it's not in His Law; if not in His fulfillment of man, you're fulfilling your own words, your own laws, or your own rules, and God is not in it. For God to be in it, you must follow Him—His Word—His Way—His Truth—His Life wherever He leads and do whatever He says do. "If God be for you, who can be against you!" Rom.8:31.

POINT:

God presents three indictments against Moses.

1. Moses did not do what God told him to do. And anytime we disobey the Lord we imply that our way is better. We make it seem that God's way is inferior to us. We make it appear that God is incompetent and needs our correction. That's not just true with Moses; it's true in our lives too. Disobedience is an act of arrogant defiance.
 2. He did not honor God as holy. Moses said to the people, "Listen, you rebels, must we bring you water out of this rock?" Did you get that? It wasn't, "Must GOD bring water from the rock again, it was, must WE bring water from the rock. Not only did Moses disobey God, He took credit for God's work. I believe this was unintentional.
 3. This was no private sin. It was a public sin. These things happened in the sight of the Israelites.
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Moses was a great man. Leaders pass away, but the Lord's work advances. Often our troubles result from our own disobedience or lack of faith. God is not the blame and God did not let Moses off lightly because of his great responsibility to His people.

20:13 This is the water of Meribah; because the children of Israel strove with the LORD, and he was sanctified in them. This place was called the waters of Meribah. "Meribah" means quarreling. This was the place where the people of Israel contended with God, and He showed; vindicated His holiness among them. God is faithful even when we are not. He blessed the end even though He did not approve of the means when Moses struck the rock. Moses' error at Kadesh (the site of the first spy mission that ended in disaster) brought a failed and lost opportunity for Moses to enter the Promised Land at that time, but God did not forget His promise to Israel (with a New Generation). The promise was fulfilled! However, Moses only saw the Promised Land from a distance and even visited it fourteen centuries after his death (Mat.17:3); but would not see the promise fulfilled at that time.

SYNOPSIS:

20:21-29 And Edom refused to allow Israel to pass through his country, so Israel had to turn away from him and go in another direction; from that country and go another way. All the Israelites went from Kadesh and arrived at Mt. Hor (near the border of Edom) where the Lord began to speak to Moses and Aaron saying that it was time for Aaron to die; he would not enter into the land the Lord had given the children of Israel because Aaron the priest and Moses the lawgiver rebelled against the Word of the Lord at the water of Meribah

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(when Moses was to speak to the rock instead of hitting the rock) (20:11). God tells Moses to take Aaron and his son Eleazar to Mt. Hor and there he began to strip Aaron of his priestly garments and put them upon his son Eleazar. This is where Aaron will die. We have read in Numbers 20:1 Miriam had died. And now the brother (Aaron) dies in the same chapter. Moses did as the Lord commanded. The three went up to Mt. Hor and Aaron's priestly garments were removed and placed upon his son Eleazar in the sight of all of the congregation, and Aaron died there on top of the mountain. This now made Eleazar the "High Priest." Then Moses and Eleazar came down the mountain. And the people seeing that Aaron was dead, for Eleazar was wearing the clothing of the "High Priest." And all of Israel began to mourn Aaron's death for 30days.

SUMMARY:

Moses and the children of Israel, even the whole congregation came to the desert of Zin which was near the southern boundary of Canaan in the first month. They dwelt in Kadesh where Miriam, Moses' sister died, and was buried. There is a new generation, and we find them thirsty and unable to find water, and they came against Moses and Aaron, their leaders. So, Moses and Aaron had heard these people complain for a long time. They should have *died when their brethren died. before the LORD?" They were brought into this wilderness, that their cattle should die there. They were made to come out of Egypt, to be brought into an evil place. There's no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; neither is there any water to drink.* Moses and Aaron left the assembly and went to the door of the tabernacle and fell on their faces before God. And the glory of the Lord appeared to them. God speaks to Moses and gives three instructions. 1)Take the rod—2)Gather the Israelite congregation and Aaron, his brother—3)Speak to the rock before their eyes. Moses took the rod, as the Lord commanded (**20:1-9**).

Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, "*Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?"* And Moses lifted up his hand and with the rod he struck the rock twice, and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their beasts drank. The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron for He was not pleased. Moses didn't believe God to sanctify Him in the eyes of the children of Israel. therefore, God would not allow Moses to bring this congregation into the Land which He had promised them. This place where the people of Israel contended with and challenged the LORD, this is the water of Meribah. "*Meribah*" means "*quarreling, water of strife.*" However, this is also where He showed and vindicated His holiness and mercy among them (**20:10-13**).

APPLICATION:

When you don't do what God say do or when you don't ask God what to do and He tells you and you still don't do what He said do, then you're being God, you've taken the place of God . The thing God said in the 12th verse was: 'you didn't believe or trust me enough to sanctify, honor, hallow me in the eyes of, in the sight of the congregation. That's very important to God. You can't share His Glory. Glory only goes to Him. If it's not in His Word, if it's not in his Law, you're fulfilling your own word, law, or rule, and God is not in it. 'If God be for you, who can be against you!' (Rom.8:31)

Whatever God is doing in your life, remember, it is God working through you. And if it were not you, He would work through someone else. The lessons God teaches us are to impel, thrust, and compel us to the True Savior where there are no regrets.

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21:1 And when king Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south, heard tell that Israel came by the way of the spies; then he fought against Israel, and took some of them prisoners. ⁵This chapter starts the third part of the Book of Numbers. The events in this part happened when the Israelites were preparing to enter the Promised Land. The king of Arad lived in the southern part of the country called Canaan. "Arad" was a town in the country called Canaan. The king heard that the Israelite were approaching in the manner of spies were travelling towards the village called Atharim. King Arad attacked them and took some of them away as his prisoners.

21:2 And Israel vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, If thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will utterly destroy their cities. The Israelites pledged a vow; an oath to the Lord, that if He delivered king Arad and his people into their hand, they would utterly destroy; annihilate their cities. This will show that their towns and everything in their towns belong to God. ⁶They couldn't even gain any money or possessions as a result of this battle. The Israelites had to defeat these nations before they could live in the Promised Land.

21:3 And the Lord hearkened to the voice of Israel, and delivered up the Canaanites; and they utterly destroyed them and their cities: and he called the name of the place Hormah. The Lord heard and answered the overwhelming voices of Israel. He helped them to defeat the Canaanites and they utterly destroyed; annihilated their cities. The Israelites then called that place "*Hormah*", which meant "*destruction*."

21:4 And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way. Even after a victory with king Arad, discouragement can creep in. And since the king of Edom would not allow them to enter or pass through their country, the Israelites had a rough going as they traveled from Mt. Hor (near the border of Edom), by the Red Sea which is going around Edom. This reminds me of our roadways or highways when the traffic is horrendous and you are detoured another way that's unfamiliar and trying to get to an appointment. When looking at the point that when we are detoured, it means to trust God, be anxious for nothing; God is fulfilling His attitude in us. However, that was something the Israelites had to learn, for it says "*the soul of the people was much discouraged*." This meant they were in their feelings. They were by the Red Sea again and it seemed like they were going backwards.

21:5 And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread. The people had gotten so angry that they began to speak against God and Moses. They blamed them for bringing them into the wilderness to die. We will always go back to what's familiar in our lives (mentally or physically). We go back to things that made us comfortable and complacent (that was Egypt for them). What is it for you? But they have to remember that they prayed and asked for

⁵ <https://www.easyenglish.bible/bible-commentary/numbers-21-36-lbw.htm>

⁶ <https://www.easyenglish.bible/bible-commentary/numbers-21-36-lbw.htm>

<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>

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God's help. The people began to bring up not having bread or water, and their soul disliked the light bread they had (the manna from God). Do we grumble and complain when God is showing us something new; stretching us? And the supply of food, even clothing we do have, we get fed up with them? We have to be careful what we speak against, especially if it's God!

21:6 And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died. Do you think they got the message then? They grumbled and complained at the wrong One! God was not standing for this. He sent fiery serpents (poisonous snakes) among the people of Israel, that bit them, causing death among many of them.

21:7 Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord, and against thee; pray unto the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. They surely knew how to right the wrong by coming to Moses and repenting, saying that they had sinned by speaking against the Lord and against him. They needed Moses to pray to the Lord who had sent the fiery serpents upon them, and how they want Him to take them away. And Moses did pray for the people.

21:8 And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. The Lord heard the people's repentance and Moses' prayer. The Lord was specific in answering Moses' prayer. He didn't just take the snakes away, but He also required that the people also do something. Those that had been bitten were to look at the pole of the fiery serpent (*a replica of a brass (bronze) snake on a pole*). Then they would live.

21:9 And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived. Without questions, Moses did just as the Lord instructed him to do: make a serpent of brass and put it on a pole. The person who had been bitten by a serpent would live, just by looking upon the brass serpent on the pole. This was a simple test of faith. God did not remove the snakes; just as He does not remove all sin from the world. They just had to play their part: remember who God was. He provided a way to cure every person from the results of sin. Just as the Israelites were healed of the serpents by looking at the snake on the pole, all believers today can be saved from the sickness of sin by looking to Jesus' death on the cross. It was not the snake that healed the people, but it's their belief; their trust; their obedience in God that He could heal them. This belief was demonstrated by following God's instructions.

SUMMARY:

This chapter begins with king Arad the Canaanite who heard that Israel was coming in the manner of spies or by the way of spies. He dwelt in the south, which caused him to fight against Israel, and take some of them prisoners. Israel pledged a vow; an oath to the Lord, that if He delivered king Arad and his people into their hand, they would utterly destroy and annihilate their cities. The Lord heard and answered the overwhelming voices of Israel. And Israel utterly destroyed them and their cities. They called that place "*Hormah*", which meant "*destruction*." (21:1-3).

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Then they journeyed from Mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to the border of the land of Edom, and the soul of the people was very discouraged because of the way they had to go. The people had gotten so angry that they began to speak against God and Moses. They blamed them for bringing them into the wilderness to die; not having bread or water, and their soul disliked eating the light bread God supplied (the manna). The Lord answered their grumbling and complaining very quickly by sending fiery serpents (poisonous snakes) among them, biting them and causing death to many (**21:4-6**).

The people went to Moses and repented, saying that they had sinned by speaking against the Lord and against him. They needed Moses to pray to the Lord who had sent the fiery serpents upon them, to now take them away. And Moses did pray for the people. The Lord heard the people's repentance and Moses' prayer. God was specific in answering Moses' prayer. He didn't just take the snakes away, but He also required that the people also do something. They that had been bitten had to look at the pole of the fiery serpent (*a replica of a brass (bronze) snake on the pole*). Moses did just what the Lord had told him to do: make a serpent of brass and put it on a pole. The person who had been bitten by a serpent would live, just by looking upon the brass serpent on the pole. It is in their belief; their trust; their obedience in God that they would be healed. This belief was demonstrated by following God's instructions (**21:7-9**).

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25:1-3⁷ While Israel was camped at Shittim (Acacia Grove), the men began to have sex with the Moabite women. It started when the women invited the men to their sex-and-religion worship. They ate together and then worshiped their gods. Israel ended up joining in the worship of the Baal of Peor. God was furious, his anger blazing out against Israel.

25:4 And the LORD said unto Moses, **Take up the heads of the people, and hang them up before the LORD against the sun,, that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel.** God said to Moses, "Take all the leaders of Israel and kill them by hanging, leaving them publicly exposed in order to turn God's anger away from Israel."

25:5 And Moses said unto the judges of Israel, **Slay ye every one his men that were joined unto Baalpeor.** Moses issued orders to the judges of Israel: "Each of you must execute the men under your jurisdiction who joined in the worship of Baalpeor."

25:6-9 Just then, while everyone was weeping in penitence at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, an Israelite man, flaunting his behavior in front of Moses and the whole assembly, paraded a Midianite woman into his family tent. Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw what he was doing, grabbed his spear, and followed them into the tent. With one thrust he drove the spear through the two of them, the man of Israel and the woman, right through their private parts. That stopped the plague from continuing among the People of Israel. But 24,000 had already died (MSG).

25:10 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,—God speaks clear instructions to Moses on the matter.

25:11 Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, while he was zealous for my sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy. Phinehas was the son of Eleazar. Eleazar was the third son of Aaron the priest. This makes Phinehas the grandson of Aaron. God is giving a grand introduction to Phinehas' lineage. Phinehas was the one who stopped God's anger against His people (the People of Israel), because he was as zealous for God's honor as He Himself is. Therefore, God didn't kill all the People of Israel in His zeal.

25:12 Wherefore say, Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace:— So Moses is to announce that God is making a Covenant of Peace with Phinehas.

⁷ <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Numbers+25&version=MSG>
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25:13 And he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel. Phinehas and his descendants are joined in a Covenant of Eternal Priesthood, because he was zealous for his God and made atonement for the People of Israel.

25:14-15 ⁸The name of the man of Israel who was killed with the Midianite woman was Zimri son of Salu, the head of the Simeonite family. And the name of the Midianite woman who was killed was Cozbi daughter of Zur, a tribal chief of a Midianite family.

25:16-18 God spoke to Moses: *"From here on make the Midianites your enemies. Fight them tooth and nail. They turned out to be your enemies when they seduced you in the business of Peor and that woman Cozbi, daughter of a Midianite leader, the woman who was killed at the time of the plague in the matter of Peor"*

SUMMARY:

It is clear from Phinehas' story that some anger is proper and justified. Phinehas was angry because of his zeal for the Lord (25:10-11). If we are becoming more like God, we should be angered by sin. Phinehas' act made atonement for the nation of Israel, and in effect, what he did averted God's judgment. Because of this, his descendants became high priests (25:12-13)

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⁸ <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Numbers+25&version=MSG>
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