

NUMBERS 13:26-33 (A TASTE OF THE LAND OF PROMISE, PART II)

The day I typed this sermon, the enemies of Israel down in Gaza sent missile after missile into Israel. The notifications on my iPad went on, continuously, for hours. Sergio was so annoyed by them while trying to do his work, that he turned off his notifications so he could think clearly. I left mine on, despite how annoying they were, because I wanted to be able to empathize with Israel when they face these cowardly attacks by their enemies. By the time I got to typing this introduction which I do last on sermons, over 200 had been fired.

The text in today's verses speaks of the land devouring its inhabitants. Nothing has changed since that was written, and it will continue to be that way until Israel calls out to Christ. In fact, until then, it is only going to get much, much worse. But this has been a constant, repeating pattern for Israel. Since their Exodus from Egypt, they have been consistent in rejecting the Lord and His work. Today, we will see the spies begin the process of doing exactly that.

Later, they will do it in Canaan, time and again. It is rare in the Bible that when one turns a few pages, someone, some tribe, or the whole nation *doesn't* turn away from Him. We can look at this pattern, shake our head, and wonder how stupid they could be. And yes, it is true that with the constant presence of the pillar above the tabernacle, the people had to be considerable dolts in order to reject Him and His word. But that pillar wasn't always there.

However, when the pillar was gone, the word remained, and the call of the prophets rang out, warning them of their wayward ways. Eventually, exile came, but the disciplinary effects of that soon waned away, another temple was built, and Israel failed to be the holy nation they were called to be. And then... and then Christ came.

Text Verse: “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life— ² the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us— ³ that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. ⁴ And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.” 1 John 1:1-4

Everything about Jesus and His ministry was already explained to Israel. All they had to do was to simply believe in Him. But once again, they didn't. We'll see that pictured in today's verses. Now, obviously, the spies who went into Canaan didn't realize that the things they did, and the places they went to, were pointing to Christ and His work, but for those who spoke Hebrew, knew what the passage said, and saw the work of Christ, you might think they would have figured this out.

And those spies, as I've already said, they had the presence of the Lord right there with them. In the end, they are simply without excuse. But, Peter tells us that those who hear the word and reject it are actually more guilty than even they were. Like Israel of old, Peter says that he saw the Lord on the sacred mountain, and despite that, he says that we have the more sure prophetic word.

In other words, what is written about Christ, and the fulfillment of those things in Christ, is so certain that it is more sure than actually having seen Him. Our eyes can deceive us, our minds can conjure up false ideas about what we have seen, but something prophesied, and then fulfilled, cannot be more sure. And so as we see what happened today with Israel, let us remember that what they saw actually doesn't compare to what we have in Scripture.

Numbers 13 is a prophetic look into the work of Christ. After it is explained to you, will you say, “That doesn’t mean what Charlie said.” Ok, we’ll grant you that, one time. But not the thousands of times that Christ is revealed – again and again – in picture, in type, in symbolism, and in prophecy. God is trying to wake us up to what is revealed in Christ. What is recorded in the New explains what we see about Him in the Old. It’s all to be found in His superior word. And so let’s turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. A Bad Report (verses 26-33)

²⁶ Now they departed and came back to Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the children of Israel

The words, “now they departed,” refer to the completion of their trek into Canaan. Once the land and its inhabitants had been sized up and evaluated, they departed Canaan for the camp of Israel. Upon arrival, it appears that the first thing they did, even before going to their own tents, was to proceed directly to the east end of the sanctuary where the tents of Moses and Aaron were situated. This would explain the words, “and came back to Moses and Aaron and all the congregation.”

This spot is the last spot before actually entering the sanctuary, and it is representative of all of the congregation. It is amazing to consider that what lies ahead in these verses will occur directly in front of the sanctuary, above which was the pillar of cloud by day and fire by night. In other words, the presence of the Lord is made perfectly manifest by the presence of the pillar. It makes the events ahead all the more egregious. The camp has, until their return, remained in the same location as when they left, which is...

²⁶ (con’t) **in the Wilderness of Paran,**

This is where they are said to have arrived after departing from Sinai. They left Sinai, had a few interim stops, and this is the next main encampment, presumably the last, before entering into Canaan. It is the same location as was mentioned in verse 13:3 when the spies set out forty days earlier. Paran means “Glorious.” However, the location is also, for the first time in the narrative, given another name...

26 (con’t) at Kadesh;

The name Kadesh signifies “Sacred,” or “Holy.” It is the same location later called Kadesh Barnea. That name would fit with what will transpire among Israel due to the punishment coming upon them. Kadesh Barnea would mean “Sacred Desert of Wandering,” or maybe in the active sense, “Holy Purifying Wanderings.”

26 (con’t) they brought back word to them and to all the congregation,

In arriving at the tents of Moses and Aaron, there would be an immediate stir of the people. The leaders would probably have ran to this spot to see what the report was in order to then pass it onto the people. After being in the same spot for more than a month, the anticipation would be high, and the change from daily routine would be welcomed. Along with bringing word of the land, it then says...

26 (con’t) and showed them the fruit of the land.

This would have been a marvelous joy for those who had been in the wilderness now for over a year. Though there may have been desert cactus and a few other types of fruit in the wilderness, the quantities would have been extremely limited, and not nearly as delightful to the senses as the products of cultivated fruits from a well-watered land. One would think that at the mere sight of this, the matter would have been settled. What was

anticipated was right there, within reach, and ready to be grasped. And even more...

²⁷ Then they told him,

The Hebrew word for “told” here is *saphar*. It means “to recount.” This is the only time it is used in the book of Numbers. It is not an unusual word in and of itself, but it relays more than just “said,” or “spoke.” They went to the land, searched it out, and now they are *recounting* the details of the journey, as if a step by step record of what transpired.

In *recounting*, the spies are carefully and methodically explaining themselves to Moses, Aaron, and anyone else who has come to hear their words. They catalogued what occurred, and now that minute detail is repeated. In essence, “This is what we saw, these are the roads we took, these are the cities we searched out, this is what the food was like, and so on. And why is this important? It is because what they saw, and what they carefully chronicled, is what was promised from the mouth of the Lord, exactly as He said...

^{27 (con’t)} and said: “We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey,

The description of the land, as promised by the Lord, has not failed. The term, “land of milk and honey,” was introduced in Exodus 3:8. It was stated four times in Exodus and once in Leviticus, all speaking of the promised land of Canaan. Now, what the Lord had said is confirmed by the spies. The term is used a total of twenty times, always, but once, in relation to the land of Canaan.

A land flowing with milk and honey implies richness and fertility. Milk comes from cows and so it means that the spies saw abundant pasture lands.

Honey comes from bees which pollinate flowers and so it implies all sorts of fruit trees, herbs, and flowers.

And more, for Israel the term “a land flowing with milk and honey” should then possess a spiritual connotation. For them, it doesn’t just speak of the physical abundance but also of spiritual abundance because of the Lord, and because they are the Lord’s people, through whom the word of God comes.

The word of God is said to be sweeter than honey. It is also equated with milk which nourishes. Thus, this is a reference to that as well. The land literally flowed with milk and honey for sustaining Israel’s physical lives. It should then, logically, also flow with milk and honey for sustaining their spiritual lives once they arrived. It is a certainty that if the promise of the Lord’s word concerning the abundance of the land is true, so should the abundance of His blessing upon them also be true. In hopefulness that this is so, the spies confirm the news about the land with the words...

27 (con’t) **and this is its fruit.**

The cluster of grapes, the pomegranates, and the figs were a token of guarantee that the word of the Lord concerning Canaan was true. They had them laid out, they could be held, they could be smelled, they could be tasted, and yet the physical reality set before them was not enough for the spies to make the connection between the physical assurances of plenty and the spiritual assurances that what God had said would actually come true.

They considered the abundance their eyes had seen, they looked around at the camps which surrounded them and the people of whom they were comprised, but they failed to simply look up and behold the pillar above the sanctuary. In their failure, they next contrast the land and its abundance with the inhabitants who dwelt in that land...

²⁸ **Nevertheless the people who dwell in the land *are* strong;**

ephes ki, “only, indeed.” It is a new word in Scripture, *ephes*. It signifies a ceasing. In other words, “We have given you the good news, but here comes the bad.” By giving them the good news, showing them the fruit, telling them that the word of the Lord concerning the land was true, then they would more readily be believed in what they would now pass on.

They have confirmed the words of the Lord concerning the land, but they then dispute the word of the Lord concerning the people of the land. In them, a complete disconnect is made between His word of knowledge and His word of capability. They imply that the Lord knows the good, but He cannot deliver that same good.

One can almost hear the debate as they left Canaan and trudged back to the camp, “I ain’t going up there in battle.” “Oh come on, we can do it.” “No way! Didn’t you see the people, the cities, the fortifications!” It would have gone back and forth, and the weaker of the group would naturally follow the strongest of the weak. “If he thinks the people in the land are too strong, I’m with him.” The opposing view would be drowned out by the insecurities of the majority. This, then, is the position agreed upon by the majority, and this is what is now reported.

The people are described as *az* – mighty, fierce, and powerful. The last time the word was used was concerning the “strong east wind” which divided the waters of the Red Sea for Israel to pass through. It is not coincidence that this was its last use. In the eyes of the spies, the *az* of the Lord is being challenged by the *az* of the inhabitants. In their eyes, the Canaanites have already prevailed. And the words of the spies must be considered in relation to who they are as was stated in verse 13:2. There, the Lord told Moses to take men from each tribe, “every one a leader among them.” The best of Israel now stands before Moses and whines about the daunting challenge of facing the enemies in Canaan.

28 (con't) the cities *are* fortified *and* very large;

The land is good, sure, but the people are fierce. And more, they are fierce in defended cities which are massive in size. If the cities are large, the number of people in them is also large. The case is built, one superlative upon the other. The marvel of causing an entire sea to divide for Israel, and which then swallowed up the great army of Pharaoh, is a long distant memory. They forgot the great deeds of the Lord, and they cower in their minds over something not nearly as impossible to overcome.

28 (con't) moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there.

Like verse 22, it says, “the Anak.” It is a clan of people known for their unusual necks, or the adornments on their necks. In stating the name, it shows that their reputation went ahead of them. There was no need for further explanation. The name itself drew fear from those who heard it spoken. In this, their reputation is elevated to a position greater than even that of the giant, fortified cities already described.

As they were seen to be associated with the Egyptians in the previous sermon, they then present a fearful challenge to Israel. They had left Egypt and the Egyptians behind, but these people are a force allied with Egypt through their ancestry, and they will be eager to destroy the people who had destroyed their families at the Red Sea. But the spies have more bad news to reveal than this...

29 The Amalekites dwell in the land of the South;

It is the same group of people whom Israel fought in Exodus 17. The battle was fierce and the lines changed according to the raising of the rod of Moses. As his strength failed, the Amalekites would begin to prevail. However, it is this same group – not a war party – but the entire clan, who

dwelt in the South, right where Israel would have to enter. The battle of the previous year would be fresh on Amalek's mind, and he would be in a defensive, fortified position. If the battle lines changed in a war away from their territory... oh my! It would be an utter slaughter in a land they defended. And yet, there is more...

29 (con't) the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains;

"Hittite" comes from a word meaning, "terror." Jebusite comes from a word meaning "to tread down, or "to trample." "Amorite" comes from the word *amar*, or "to speak." The connection may be that they were noted people, thus "Renowned." The names themselves give a sense of foreboding. If their names fit their character, and they dwelt in the mountains, meaning the southeast part of the land. One could not enter that way without encountering them. And in encountering them, there would be great difficulty in overcoming them because of the advantage of their holding the high ground. As bad as this is, hold on to your hats. There is more...

29 (con't) and the Canaanites dwell by the sea and along the banks of the Jordan."

The term Canaanite here is a general term. The sea referred to is debated. Some say it is the Dead Sea, or even the Sea of Galilee, but that doesn't seem to be the intent. It is referring to the Mediterranean on the west, which is then contrasted to the Jordan on the east. In other words, descendants of Canaan filled both sides of the land. This is actually confirmed by Joshua 11:3, which says that the Canaanites dwelt in both the east and the west.

Thus, the entrance would be guarded on both sides by a united people as they were all clans of their father Canaan. If one attempted to attack on the west, those on the east would come to their aid. And if they attacked on the east, those on the west would do the same. This is the intent of the words

being conveyed. It is a hopeless situation for people such as Israel. They would be swallowed up by foes no matter where they entered and no matter where they went. That is, at least, the majority position. It is one lacking faith in the Lord, and it is one of peevish cowardice. However, not all the spies were peevish cowards...

³⁰ Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses,

Here is a new word, *has*, or “Hush!” It is an onomatopoeic interjection which will be seen just eight times. Caleb, or “dog,” who, being a Kenizzite, is probably not even a native Israelite, is brave enough to stand against the ten faithless spies right in front of Moses. If he were alive today, he probably would have said, “Why don’t you all shut up.” What has happened is that the spies have given their report, and Moses *has*, in fact, responded. Though not recorded here, it is seen in Deuteronomy 1 –

“Then I said to you, ‘Do not be terrified, or afraid of them. ³⁰ The Lord your God, who goes before you, He will fight for you, according to all He did for you in Egypt before your eyes, ³¹ and in the wilderness where you saw how the Lord your God carried you, as a man carries his son, in all the way that you went until you came to this place.’ ³² Yet, for all that, you did not believe the Lord your God, ³³ who went in the way before you to search out a place for you to pitch your tents, to show you the way you should go, in the fire by night and in the cloud by day.” Deuteronomy 1:29-33

After this, the people rejected what Moses said, and so Caleb has come out in defense of Moses’ words and in opposition to the words spoken against Moses. Once they were quieted...

^{30 (con’t)} **and said, “Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it.”**

His words carry two repetitions. First, he says, *aloh na-aleh*, or “arising, let us arise.” It is an adamant statement that they should get up off their duffs and go forward in order to take possession of the land. He then next says, *yakol nukal*, or “overcoming, we will overcome.” Again, there isn’t the slightest hint of indecision in him. He firmly states that the land is theirs, and all they have to do is act in order for that to come about. By saying, “take possession” of the land, rather than, “conquer” the land, he is showing absolute confidence in the fact that the land is theirs already. It is a certain confidence in what the Lord has spoken.

Although it will be many years later, this confidence of Caleb will be seen realized in him when he enters into Canaan with Joshua and together they engage in, and win, battle after battle against the enemies. In fact, Caleb is given the credit for taking out those of Anak already described in verse 22 of this chapter –

“Now to Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a share among the children of Judah, according to the commandment of the Lord to Joshua, *namely*, Kirjath Arba, which *is* Hebron (*Arba was* the father of Anak). ¹⁴ Caleb drove out the three sons of Anak from there: Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai, the children of Anak. ¹⁵ Then he went up from there to the inhabitants of Debir (formerly the name of Debir *was* Kirjath Sepher).” Joshua 15:13-15

In the next chapter, it will be seen that Joshua sided with this minority view. However, Joshua, being Moses’ personal assistant, probably deferred to Caleb in the initial response. Caleb would appear as an impartial witness to the congregation. If Joshua spoke first, they could ignore his words as simply a mirror of what Moses would expect him to say.

Together, Joshua and Caleb will bear anguish at the attitude of the people. But their imploring words will be wasted on the cowardly spies of Israel. They feared for their lives more than they trusted the Lord, and their weakness became an impenetrable wall against the words of Moses, Joshua, and Caleb...

³¹ But the men who had gone up with him said, “We are not able to go up against the people, for they *are* stronger than we.”

They completely reject Caleb’s support of Moses, speaking directly to him as if he had been sleeping during the entire expedition. In this, they specifically say *ki khazaq hu mimenu* – “for mighty they than we.” In a sense, this is an obviously true statement, *if* it was merely referring to Israel the people. Their numbers were smaller, they were unskilled in battle, and they would be going into a defended land.

However, the statement is absolutely false, because they are Israel the people. And as such, they belonged to, and were led by, the One who is all-powerful. The statement of these cowardly men in this verse is a total rejection of the Lord in their lives – both His presence, and His ability to keep His promises. In today’s lingo, we would say of these spies, “Epic fail.” And in their failure, they decide to share the misery beyond the tent of Moses...

³² And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying,

The only other time a *divah*, or bad report, has been noted is when Joseph brought a bad report about his brothers back to his father. Now, it is used of spies giving out a bad report of the land. What makes their words here worse is that they have already acknowledged to Moses that it is a land of milk and honey, confirming the Lord’s word. However, they cannot relay this to the people without having them divided, just as the spies were divided. And so instead of telling them of its positives, they now give a bad report of the land, implying the Lord’s word was untruthful...

³² (con’t) “The land through which we have gone as spies *is* a land that devours its inhabitants,

This is a statement which is to be taken metaphorically. However, in doing so, they implicitly state how good the land actually is. In saying that the land “devours its inhabitants,” it implies that the land is so good that the inhabitants are willing to destroy one another over its possession. Ironically, this is a phrase used in Leviticus 26 concerning what would happen to Israel when they were disobedient to the Lord.

The focus for them here is not on the beauty and fruitfulness of the land, but on what that beauty and fruitfulness leads to. This is exactly what is happening in that same land today. Since Israel returned, the land has blossomed, and the surrounding peoples intend to devour its inhabitants over that which they have not produced, and to which they have no right.

³² (con’t) **and all the people whom we saw in it *are* men of *great* stature.**

This isn’t just an exaggeration, it is an outright lie. First, the term in Hebrew is *anshey midot* – men of measures. It is a way of saying they are twice as tall as normal men. And even if it is true that there were men of great size living in the land, they are implying that this is the state of all of them. Such is not the case. The people were just like any others, with but certain exceptions. However, in their cowardice, they magnified the lie in order to stop the heart of even the most trusting soul in regard to the word of the Lord.

³³ **There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants);**

The words of this clause say, “and there we saw the Nephilim, sons of Anak, from the Nephilim.” The word “giants” is assumed from the next clause. The word *nephilim*, most likely comes from the word *naphal*, meaning “to fall.” Thus, they are known as “Fallen Ones.” However, what that means is debated. It could merely be fallen in the sense of prostrating oneself for prayer.

The reason for the spies using this term though is obvious. Moses had received the book of Genesis, and it – along with any verbal traditions – would have been known to the people. By stating that these were *nephilim*, they were claiming that their origins predated the flood, and thus they must be supernatural beings. This is because the flood narrative very clearly said that the Lord would destroy all flesh in which was the breath of life.

If such a race of people existed in Canaan, they would be impossible to defeat. But the Bible doesn't make this claim, only the spies do. It is they who are speaking to the people, and their words are gross exaggerations of the situation. There were large people there, just as there are a number of large people in any given society at any given time. But they were the exception, not the standard.

***33 (fin) and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight."**

The words here are absolute hyperbole. In an attempt to terrify the people, and to keep them from any desire of aligning with Moses, these cowardly men have gone to great lengths in order to steer the people away from the otherwise sure and reliable word of the Lord.

*A land of milk and honey lies ahead of you
Just a short trip and it shall be yours to possess
I shall go before you; the way is paved, it is true
Enter the land, and there, you I shall certainly bless
We cannot go up against those people. No way!
They are stronger than we are; we will be wiped out for sure
We aren't going up, not now or on any other day
We will return to Egypt where we can be secure*

*O Israel, how long until you accept Me at My word?
When will you pay heed to what I have already for you done?
In believing in My past faithfulness, you can know I am the Lord
And in that you can then, finally, believe in Jesus My Son
Believe My word, that which is written to you
And there you will find Jesus My Son – My word to you is true*

II. The Symbolism of the Journey; Pictures of Christ

The passage found in Numbers 13 follows immediately after the account of Aaron and Miriam's rebellion against Moses and which resulted in Miriam's leprosy. As we saw, that was a picture of the unclean state of Israel in her time of punishment and exclusion from the camp of the Lord. This story follows after that and it reveals the work of the Lord which brought that about. In other words, it explains Israel's failure to enter the kingdom.

Spies were selected in order to search out Canaan, emblematic of the kingdom of God. Before someone flips out, this is not speaking of the literal kingdom which is ahead for Israel after the Tribulation. It is what Paul refers to a dozen times in his epistles as the kingdom of God for believers. It is our inheritance because of Christ. How this came about is explained in the journeys listed in this chapter.

They left from the Wilderness of Zin, meaning "Thorn." That would be, like Sinai, a picture of Christ's cross – the Thorn. From there, forty days of travels provide almost no details at all, only a mere handful of verses. It says they left the Wilderness of Zin, just as Christ left the cross. It then says they went as far as Rehob, or "Wide Space." That pictures Christ passing through the veil of death and into heaven, pictured by Rehob or "Wide Space," there to present His blood, as is described in Hebrews. Thus, we have the narrow path which is Christ, who is the Veil, leading to heaven, the wide place. Rehob is said to be "near the entrance of Hamath. Hamath means Citadel, it would be reflective of the dwelling of God, His place of authority and rule.

From there, they went through the South and to Hebron. First, the South signifies intelligence which comes about by means of knowledge. It is the place of light leading to truth. This is why the menorah was placed on the south side of the holy place. In this, they came to Hebron. That signifies a conjunction, or joining. That is the joining of Jew and Gentile into one kingdom, as Paul explains in Ephesians 2:14-18 –

“For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵ having abolished in His flesh the enmity, *that is*, the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man *from* the two, *thus* making peace, ¹⁶ and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. ¹⁷ And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.”

While in Hebron, the odd introduction of Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, sons of the Anak, are noted. Those names are given to explain the position of those who are a part of this joining together. Ahiman means, “My Brother is a Gift.” That is the relationship of the believer to Christ. Christ is the Gift. Sheshai, or Whitish, looks to the purification of the believer because of Christ. Talmai, or Plowman, looks to the one who puts his hand to the plow and doesn’t look back. In other words, a believer in Christ.

Anak requires more explanation. It means neck, or necklace, but that comes from the word *anaq* which means being fitted out with supplies, and thus furnished liberally, just as a necklace is made up of many pieces. Thus, being a son of Anak signifies the believer is one who is furnished liberally by God for every necessary work to which he is appointed.

As far as why the enigmatic statement about Hebron being built before Zoan is included, I can only speculate on this, but Psalm 78 equates Zoan with the plagues of Egypt. As those plagues actually look forward to the tribulation period in typology, it appears that this is a statement saying that

the work of Christ in joining Jew and Gentile in the church age precedes the tribulation. It is a big speculation, but if that is why this verse is here, as a parenthetical thought, it is a subtle hint of a pre-tribulation rapture.

After this, they then proceeded to the Valley of Eshcol. As we saw, this isn't a valley in the modern sense. The word is *nakhal*, and it signifies a wadi where water would flow through during the seasons of rain. That comes from *nakhal* meaning, "to take possession," or "inherit."

Eshcol means "cluster," and that, in turn, comes from the word *eshek*, meaning testicle. This is a picture of Christ's work. Once having been accepted, He took possession of that which proceeds from the spot where man is generated from. In other words, it is a picture of the overriding of original sin in man. Sin transfers from father to child. The semen, which is generated in man, is what transfers that sin. Christ has, through His work, taken possession of that in all who move from Adam to Him. It is the realization of the kingdom for His people through this act.

After that, we are told that there in Eshcol, they cut down a branch of one *eshcol*, or cluster, of grapes. Christ is the Vine, we are the branches. The single cluster is a sample of the fruit of the kingdom of Christ. The Bible reveals grapes as providing a sense of cultural expression. The grapes of the kingdom, though many, are a single cultural expression.

This pole, or *mot*, is the same word as used for carrying the menorah and the golden altar of incense. That it is carried by two speaks of the Old and New Testaments being united as one. The beam signifies the work of the Spirit. There is one Spirit working, and thus the cluster of grapes, signifying the fruits of the Spirit in a cultural expression, is transported in this manner. Therefore, the one cultural expression is that of those in the kingdom, both Jew and Gentile. They are one in Christ.

Along with that were *rimmon*, or pomegranates, which signify mental maturity, and calling to remembrance. They picture exactly this, calling to remembrance the work of the Lord, and thus mental maturity in Christ. The figs, or *te-enuh*, signify connection to God because of the work of Christ. This is the sum of the travels of the spies.

At this point, it notes that the journey took forty days. As we saw last week, the number forty is defined as a period of probation, trial, and chastisement, but not judgment. It is a time of testing to determine an outcome. It is the product of 5 and 8, and points to the action of grace (5), leading to and ending in revival and renewal (8). This is actually realized in those who accept Christ, receive His grace, and which leads to their regeneration in the Spirit.

From there, they are said to have returned to the Wilderness of Paran, or Glorious, and to a name never mentioned before, Kadesh, or Holy. It is a picture of access into the glorious kingdom of God because of the work of Christ, by which we are made holy. It is a process – from the cross, through the heavenlies at the entrance to the Citadel of God, and then that which then stems from that work. The joining of Jew and Gentile, the movement of man from Adam to Christ in the new birth and the adoption as sons, the work of the Spirit, and the restored connection to God because of it.

Now, in understanding the symbolism of these words which, in very skimpy detail, explain their forty days in Canaan, we can see the correlation between the events, and what lies ahead in the rejection of Israel concerning entering Canaan.

Israel had seen all of this in the coming of Christ, and yet a bad report was made concerning His work. The nation refused to enter, and their punishment came upon them for it. This will be seen in the coming chapter. However, Caleb, a mere dog by name, and a Gentile, at least by genealogy, spoke well of what he saw, he received the inheritance, and he, along with Joshua, were the only ones who would cross over Jordan and into the Land

of Promise. For Israel as a whole, the generation who rejected the Lord was rejected by the Lord. For them, only a later generation would be brought in to the land He promised to their fathers.

It is with great gratitude to the Lord, and the prayers of several friends that I emailed about the complexity of this chapter, that it has been explained to you today. I read the passage again and again over the weeks it was being prepared, and I only half slept as I tried to figure out what the Lord was saying. But there is no doubt in my mind that what has been presented is what the Lord intends for us to see. Once again, God is asking us to consider our relationship with Him, and He is doing it in relation to the work of Christ.

A rejection of Jesus is to reject the only way to be restored to God once again. Sadly, Israel has been in that position as a people for 2000 years. Individually, this is not true for all, but as a body, it is their state. For you, God has also given you the same choice. Will you come to Christ and be reconciled to God through Him? Choose wisely. God is gracious, and He longs to bestow His grace upon you. May today be the day you receive it.

Closing Verse: “Nevertheless you would not go up, but rebelled against the command of the Lord your God; ²⁷ and you complained in your tents, and said, ‘Because the Lord hates us, He has brought us out of the land of Egypt to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us.” Deuteronomy 1:26, 27

Next Week: Numbers 14:1-10 They will march until their years of punishment are done... (A Year for Each Day, Part I) (25th Numbers Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It may seem at times as if you are lost in a desert, wandering aimlessly. But the Lord is there, carefully leading you to the Land

of Promise. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

A Taste of the Land of Promise

Now they departed and came back to Moses and Aaron
And all the congregation of the children of Israel
In the Wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh; they brought back word
-----to them and to all the congregation
And showed them the fruit of the land as well
Then they told him, and said:
“We went to where you sent us *in* the land
It truly flows with milk and honey
And this is its fruit – look and see how grand!

Nevertheless the people who dwell
In the land are strong, we had to beware
The cities are fortified and very large
Moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there

The Amalekites dwell in the land of the South
The Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites
-----in the mountains dwell
And the Canaanites dwell by the sea
And along the banks of the Jordan as well

Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said

“Let us go up at once and take possession now

For we are well able to overcome it

We can whoop up on them folks, and how

But the men who had gone up with him said quite unfaithfully

“We are not able to go up against the people

-----for they are stronger than we

And they gave the children of Israel a bad report

Of the land which they had spied out, saying

“The land through which we have gone as spies

Is a land that devours its inhabitants; bad new we are relaying

And all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature

There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak

-----came from the giants) isn't that right!

And we were in our own sight like grasshoppers

And so we were in their sight

Lord God, we are even now in a wilderness

And we are wanting to be led by You

Without You to direct, our lives would be a mess

And so be our guide, O God; You who are faithful and true

We long for the water in this barren land

May it flow forth from the Rock, our souls to satisfy

Give us this refreshing, spiritual hand
And may we take it, and to our lives daily it apply

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to you for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...