

WATER·FIRE·STONE

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF MOSES

Session 17 – The Crab Bucket List, Part Two | Numbers Ch. 13-14

The journey was almost over. After settling the multitude at Kadesh-Barnea, Moses sent twelve men into Canaan to scout the land and determine the best route of entry. The promised land was so close now, Moses could almost taste it. Bring back some of the fruit, he said. Forty days later, the spies returned with giant clusters of fruit on their shoulders and mutiny in their hearts.



In many ways, Israel was its own worst enemy. Like crabs in a bucket, they kept pulling each other down. Fear. Rebellion. Anger. Regrets. This three-part series, *The Crab Bucket List*, confronts sins that trip us up and attitudes that get in our way.

Icebreaker

Share a favorite *go-to* scripture for overcoming obstacles or facing down fear.

Goals for this Session

- Discover what derailed the Israelites from possessing the land God gave them.
- Consider the power of faith to inhibit fear and shape perspective.
- Pray with determination to filter every obstacle through the promises of God.

1 Numbers 13:1-33 | What is happening? Highlight what stands out to you, and why.

- a. Whose idea was it to send an advance team to explore the land? (Deuteronomy 1:20-23)

- b. The purpose of the mission (verses 18-20). When God told Moses to send twelve men on a fact-gathering mission, it wasn't so they could decide *if* they should inhabit the land. What was the specific purpose of their assignment?

2 After forty days the scouts returned, but it was obvious they were no longer a team. Only Joshua and Caleb still believed they should go in to inhabit the land God promised.

- a. What obstacles did the ten scouts focus on, and how did this affect their report?

- b. When you step out in obedience to God's Word, are you prone to hesitate or re-think it when others disagree or it requires more than you anticipated? Why or why not?

Giants?
Anak's descendants were uncommonly tall, fierce warriors who controlled hill country in Canaan. Later Joshua would all but destroy them and their territory was given to the tribe of Judah. It was "give me this mountain" Caleb who drove them out (Joshua 14:11-14).

3 Numbers 14:1-10 | Twelve men scouted out the same land, saw the same cities and their inhabitants. Two men focused on the opportunities and the other ten focused on the obstacles.

Think about it. How many of these men had safely crossed the Red Sea and escaped Pharaoh's army? Who experienced victory when Amalek attacked Israel? Which of these men had a valid reason to doubt God's promise and spread fear among His people?

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- a. Fear has a short memory and a strong imagination. According to verses 2-3, what did the ten spies (and all who listened to them) think God would let happen to them?

Fear arises when we imagine that everything depends on us.

Elisabeth Elliott

- b. What had God promised? Review God's previous statements for help with your answer.

Exodus 6:6-8

Exodus 19:3-6

Exodus 34:10-11

4 Joshua and Caleb could not persuade anyone to listen—in fact, their attempt to encourage the people struck a raw nerve. According to verse 10, how did the people respond?

- a. *Only do not rebel against the Lord.* Sometimes disobedience can be traced back to a weak will, vulnerable and easily snared. But rebellion stems from being strong-willed, choosing to ignore the Lord's authority and faithful guidance.

How seriously does God view rebellion? Use the verses below for help with your answer.

1 Samuel 15:22-23

Psalms 68:6

Isaiah 30:1-3

b. By contrast, what does God desire and promise to those who submit their ways to Him?

Deuteronomy 5:29

Psalm 32:8-9

Proverbs 3:5-6

c. Recall a time when you stepped out in faith even though you were afraid. Briefly share what you learned about yourself and about God, through that experience.

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Faith is simply obeying God
in spite of how we feel,
what we see,
or what we think
might happen.

Warren Wiersbe

Memory Verse

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?
Psalm 27:1 NKJV

Which part of this verse resonates most with you today? How or in what way?

5 Numbers 14:11-45 | For a second time, God says that He will destroy the Israelites and offers to start over with Moses to make a new nation. When Moses intercedes, the people are spared from being wiped out all at once but they will never reach the promised land. The spies who stirred up the rebellion died immediately by a plague.

These things were written down to warn us (1 Corinthians 10:10-11) so what can we learn from this episode?

Give an example to follow or avoid from:

→¹ Moses

→¹ Caleb and Joshua

→¹ The ten spies

→¹ The people

Action Steps ►► As you think through this part of Moses' story, what is the most important takeaway point for you personally? How will you put what you've learned into action?

Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. —Ephesians 6:18 NIV

Adoration – Giving praise and honor to God for who He is and what He does.

Confession – Honestly deal with sin; acknowledge to God the ways (and whys) you fall short.

Thanksgiving – Verbalize your gratitude; express your praise and a thankful heart.

Supplication – Pray specifically for the needs of others, ourselves, our church, our nation.



Close your discussion time by praying together. Use the A·C·T·S pattern as a group focus and keep it simple. No need to be lengthy or profound—just authentic.

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