

SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 2021

“The Wandering Congregation”

Number 14:26-33

I. THE CIRCUMSTANCES

A. The complaining laity (14:27)

1. The people had complained since they left Egypt
2. The people complained on the doorstep of the Promised Land

B. The complacent leaders (13:27-29)

1. Moses sent twelve men to spy out the land
  - a. There was one man from every tribe (13:2)
2. They gave a good report about the land
  - a. It is a land flowing with milk and honey; it is fruitful
3. They gave a bad report about the people
  - a. The people have built walled cities
  - b. The people are big and strong

II. THE CHOICES

A. The majority report

1. Ten spies (the majority) gave an “evil report” (13:32)
  - a. Numbers 13:31, “We be not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we”
  - b. Numbers 13:33, “And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak”
2. The evil report discouraged the people
  - a. Numbers 14:1-2, “And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron”
  - b. They forgot why it is called the Promised Land; Numbers 13:2, “Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel”

B. The minority report

1. Joshua and Caleb (the minority) gave a good report
  - a. Numbers 13:30, “Let us go up at once and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it”
2. What was the difference in these men?

- a. Numbers 14:8-9, "If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth milk and honey. Only rebel ye not against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defense is departed from them, and the Lord is with us: fear them not"
- b. Numbers 14:24, "But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit in him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it"

C. The majority is not always right

### III. THE CONSEQUENCE

A. The wilderness wandering

- 1. The congregation chose the majority report
- 2. The congregation will wander in the wilderness for 40 years
  - a. The older generation will not enter the Promised Land
  - b. Moses will not enter the Promised Land
- 3. They wandered aimlessly for 40 years
  - a. The people continued to worship God
  - b. God continued to provide for the people
  - c. The people did not advance the kingdom of God