

GUARD THE GATES

Guard Your Ears

Numbers 13:25-33

The Mission

1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 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. 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.

- ♦ God told Moses to send out a group of 12 men to Canaan on a mission to spy out the land He *giving to them*
- ♦ Moses selected one man from each of the 12 tribes of Israel
- ♦ Their mission was to go to Canaan (their Promised Land) and *check out the neighborhood*
- ♦ Their mission in spying out the land was not to determine if the land could be taken, that was already decided
- ♦ Sometimes God wants you to go spy out your future that He has already given to you

The Reports

25 And they returned from searching of the land after forty days. 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. 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. 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. 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.

- ♦ After 40 days the 12 spies return, and they are ready to give their report
- ♦ All 12 spies said, this land *flows with milk and honey* meaning this is an incredibly fertile and prosperous land
- ♦ All 12 spies agreed that the Promised Land was a good land
- ♦ All 12 spies agreed that the land was exactly as God said it would be
- ♦ It would be just a matter of time before Moses and the children of Israel would be in possession of what God promised them
- ♦ The initial report was “suddenly revised” by 10 of the 12 spies
- ♦ They went from the land flows with milk and honey, the land has clusters of grapes so large that it requires two men to carry them to one word, *Nevertheless*
- ♦ Saying, *Nevertheless* is “inserting doubt” into an atmosphere that was once filled with faith
- ♦ Despite all the *good* they saw, the 10 spies still “*said*”:
 - The people who live in the land are “strong”
 - The cities are “fortified” and very large

GUARD THE GATES

Guard Your Ears

Numbers 13:25-33

- We saw the descendants of “Anak” (a tribe of very large men) there
- The Amalekites the Hittites, the Jebusites, the Amorites, and the Canaanites live there
- ◆ Doubt is a feeling of uncertainty, it’s a lack of conviction, it’s to call into question the truth of something
- ◆ These 10 spies were not only “feeling doubtful” about possessing the Promised Land, they were “expressing” their doubts to others!

Caleb’s Faithful Objection

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.

- The doubt-filled report of the 10 spies caused quite a bit of confusion of amongst the people
- Whenever we speak doubt, it causes others to have questions and doubts
- Caleb stood before Moses and the people, ***Let us go up at once, and possess; we are well able to overcome it***
- Caleb heard the promise of God, he saw the land was just like God said, and he heard the doubts of the 10 spies
- Caleb wanted the people to believe despite the negative report you’ve heard, *God said*, He has made us well able to overcome anything we face
- Caleb had the courage and the faith to stand alone when those around him were doubting the promise of God

The Response of the 10 Spies

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. 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. 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.

- ◆ One would hope that Caleb’s impassioned plea would change the minds of the 10 spies who knew the promises of God and saw the land was exactly as God said
- ◆ The 10 spies “said” to Caleb and the crowd:
 - We are “not able” to go against these people
 - They are too strong for us
 - This people devours its inhabitants
 - All the men are giants
 - And we are like grasshoppers in our own eyes and theirs
- ◆ This is no longer an issue of “doubt”, it’s “unbelief”
- ◆ Unbelief is no longer having faith in God and His Word

GUARD THE GATES

Guard Your Ears

Numbers 13:25-33

- ◆ Through unbelief the 10 spies were literally saying God:
 - God can't fulfill the promises He makes
 - God says things, but they won't happen
 - God doesn't have the power to do what He says
- ◆ Unbelief made them feel like grasshoppers

Unbelief is Contagious

32 And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel

- ◆ The 10 doubtful and unbelieving spies were not content with being doubtful and unbelieving themselves, they spread their doubts and unbelief among the children of Israel
- ◆ They began to spread an "evil report" among the Israelites
- ◆ What the 10 spies "said" to the children of Israel was a dangerous mixture of *truth, lies and exaggerations*
- ◆ The 10 spies wanted their unbelief to spread like a virus
- ◆ The 10 spies were going among the people saying *we are not this, we not that, etc.*
- ◆ They even exaggerated their unbelief, they said inhabitants of Canaan "eat people", "all" the people are giants, "we" are grasshoppers
- ◆ The children of Israel chose to *listen* to them and they were "infected" with the same doubt, fear, and unbelief
- ◆ The doubt, fear, and unbelief got so bad that the Israelites complained to Moses that they would choose a "new leader" and return to Egypt (where they were in bondage as slaves) instead of dying in the wilderness
- ◆ The 10 spies and the children of Israel have gone from *doubt to unbelief*, to now *rebellion*
- ◆ Because of Israel's doubt, unbelief and rebellion to the promises of God, they were judged by God

Guarding Your Ear Gate

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.

- How do you avoid the "unholy trinity" of doubt, unbelief and rebellion?
- Desire to *move forward in faith and please God* in spite of what you see, or what others say, Caleb said, ***Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.***
 - Caleb is saying God *knew* the land what occupied when He promised it to us
 - God *knew* how big the people when He made the promise
 - God *knew* the cities had walls around it when He made the promise
 - If you fast forward 40 years, you'll hear God say to Joshua as they were about to enter the Promised Land ***Joshua 1:3, 5 (KJV) 3***

GUARD THE GATES

Guard Your Ears

Numbers 13:25-33

Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses. ... 5 There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

- *Continuously receive the Word of God*
 - An important way to guard your ear-gate is to receive the Word of God preached, taught, small groups and your personal Bible study
 - The Word of God is your food and you grow in strength, faith, wisdom, and discernment when you eat regularly from the Word ***Romans 10:17 (KJV) 17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.***
- Have a *discerning* ear
 - Discernment is the ability to choose between what is true and right and what is false and wrong
 - Discernment is the ability to judge people, things and situations well
 - Discernment is not “an option” for the believer, it’s *a requirement 1 John 4:1 (NLT) 1 Dear friends, do not believe everyone who claims to speak by the Spirit. You must test them to see if the spirit they have comes from God. For there are many false prophets in the world.*
 - Having a discerning ear with what you listen to online, on your radio, on TV
- *Be careful who you allow to speak into your life*
 - The children of Israel missed the Promised Land because they allowed the 10 spies to plant seeds of doubt, unbelief and rebellion in their ears
 - Just because others can’t see it or don’t believe it , doesn’t mean God didn’t promise it
 - Watch what you allow people to say about you, your family, your marriage, your finances, even your church
- *Keep the faith and remember how God has blessed you in times past (i.e. Red Sea parting, protected by a pillar of cloud by and a pillar of fire by night, manna from heaven every day, turning bitter water sweet, etc.)*
 - If God did that in my past, I’m not going to worry about my future
- *Refuse to be the dumping ground for gossip, rumors, and crude conversations*
 - Don’t allow people to spread rumors and gossip to you
 - People get a tidbit of information about someone and they just have tell someone else hoping it will spread
- *Regardless of what people may “report”, believe God’s report about you*