

GRASS HOPPER SYNDROME!

PART 2

(Scripture: Num. 14:1-3)

1So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night. 2And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, "If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness! 3Why has the Lord brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?" 4So they said to one another, "Let us select a leader and return to Egypt."

Introduction: We talked about the grasshopper syndrome. Our problems in life will start becoming more like a giant or a huge mountain, and our strength becomes so small to fight against these giants. It is true, we cannot win over these giants with our own strength. However, with God's strength, we will be able to face any giant and slay them as David slayed Goliath. Yes, indeed, the battle belongs to the Lord alone, but only very few Israelites understood this truth!

Numbers 14:1,2. 1So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night. 2And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, "If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness!"

All the children of Israel cried all night. It must have been some kind of scene all night. There must have been a lot of screaming, swearing, name calling especially against Moses and Aaron! A sleepless night in the wilderness!

Numbers 14:3,4. 3Why has the Lord brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?" 4So they said to one another, "Let us select a leader and return to Egypt."

Now they decided to elect a new leader and go back to Egypt!

Some of our new Christian friends behave this way. When persecution or tragedy hits them, they give up their Christian faith, shun their church, and go back to their Egypt, which is their old pagan way of living. (Some new Christians say, when I try to be a good Christian that is when all hell breaks loose),

Here is a classic example of freedom vs slavery. Freedom is always sweeter than any form of slavery, any kind of wilderness experience, or even wars or any rumors of war. However, Israelites wanted slavery over battle against God's enemies. What a foolish choice! "Give me liberty or death" is a faithful saying! Sometimes, we tend to make a

passive choice. Now they were ready to choose a rebel leader for themselves, and return to Egypt to become slaves again. What a foolish move!

Numbers 14:5, 6 5Then Moses and Aaron [b]fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel.

6But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes;

Moses and Aaron fell on their faces! Were they actually begging the Israelites through that prostration? On the other hand, were they prostrating before God for the sake of Israelites so that He may forgive them? This seem to be the proper interpretation.

Joshua and Caleb showed their grief by tearing their clothes. They knew rebellion could provoke the anger of God anytime. It is indeed a terrible thing to fall in the hands of God!

Numbers 14:7-10. 7and they spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying: “The land we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. 8If the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, ‘a land which flows with milk and honey. ’9Only do not rebel against the Lord, nor fear the people of the land, for they[c] are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the Lord is with us. Do not fear them.”

10And all the congregation said to stone them with stones. Now the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle of meeting before all the children of Israel.

Moses, Aaron, Joshua, and Caleb tried their best to educate the Israelites, and make them see the facts on the ground. They used solid logic to convince them.

Fact no. 1

The land is exceedingly good, flowing with milk and honey. (America is also so good, but the problem with that is that the monthly bills come and haunt us!)

Fact no.2

If the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us,

Fact no.3

9Only do not rebel against the Lord, nor fear the people of the land, for they[c] are our bread; if God is for us, we can slice through like bread!

Fact no.4.

Their protection has departed from them, and the Lord is with us. Do not fear them.”

However, these solid facts on the ground did not convince the stiff-necked Israelites at all! They chose the exaggeration of giants over these solid facts.

Now we see that in this country also. The big lie that election is stolen, it does stick with some people, and they believe only that. The truth that was told in many different ways through many different independent organizations is not opening the eyes of the people.

Now these people are waiting for the opportunity to rebel and call for armed insurrection.

The vaccination truth is also not sinking into the heads of some people. They are stubborn not to get vaccine and it is going to jeopardize them eventually!

People can be easily brain washed. Once they are brain washed, they will refuse to see the truth. The Israelites perceived only the giants, and not the power of God, or what He can do. When fear sets in our heart, faith disappears, and God is forgotten.

The Israelites were very angry. They were ready to throw stones at Moses, Aaron, Joshua, and Caleb. Reminds us of January 6, 2021. The mob was ready to kill some prominent people in congress and the Vice President. Why? All because they believed that big lie, that election was stolen. Truth disappears when our head is filled with fake news! Go for real fact check every time.

The Lord decided to intervene! The dazzling Shekinah, the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.

Numbers 14:11,12. 11Then the Lord said to Moses: "How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them? 12I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they."

God says that the Israelites rejected Him. When we try to solve the problems of our lives without involving God leads to rejection.

When we analyze our problems without God, all our problems in our lives will look like humongous giants, and there is no way we can conquer them.

You cannot solve your problems in life without the almighty God solving it for you. We also reject God when we do not trust Him or believe that He can save us from the giants!

In spite of all the miracles God did for Israel, they forgot them too quickly. God was ready to kill them all, and allow only the generation of Caleb, Joshua, Moses, and Aaron.

However, Moses stood in the gap and stopped God from doing it. God executed a similar plan during Noah's time, and no one stopped Him. Now He wanted to carry out the same plan of destroying the rebellious, not through the flood, but through pestilence.

God has the power to raise a nation out of a faithful remnant. God does not care about the mass of wicked flesh, but He does care about the few faithful people like Moses. God will uphold faithful remnant churches that are faithful. He always keeps a remnant in His palm of His hand. God loved Moses so much, He heeded to Moses' advice.

Moses gave the following reasons for not destroying the Israelites.

Numbers 14:15-19. 15Now if You kill these people as one man, then the nations which have heard of Your fame will speak, saying, 16Because the Lord was not able to bring this people to the land which He swore to give them, therefore He killed them in the wilderness. 17And now, I pray, let the power of my Lord be great, just as You have spoken, saying, 18The Lord is longsuffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He by no means clears the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation. 19Pardon the iniquity of this people, I pray, according to the greatness of Your mercy, just as You have forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now.”

God does not care what people think of Him. Therefore, the first reason Moses gave is not a good reason. The second reason is a good one. God should not punish them because He is a God of mercy and compassion. So what did Moses accomplish through this petition? He just extended the lives of Israelites another 40 years of horrible wilderness experience!

Numbers 14:20-23. 20Then the Lord said: “I have pardoned, according to your word; 21but truly, as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord— 22because all these men who have seen My glory and the signs which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have put Me to the test now these ten times, and have not heeded My voice, 23they certainly shall not see the land of which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who rejected Me see it.

Therefore, the Lord pardoned them, but He swore in His wrath that they should not inherit the Promised Land in this life as well as next life!

People who have tasted the heavenly gift of the Holy Spirit, His presence, His numerous miracles, His daily mercies, and grace, and if they turn their back on God, reject the living Savior who saved them and loved them, then there is no hope for them! (Heb. 6:4-6). God swore in His anger, the adults who were 20 and over will never see the Promised Land again.

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 10:1-5. 1Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, 2all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, 3all ate the same spiritual food, 4and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. 5But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.

Ten times, they tested and rebelled against God? We must take that number as approximation. It comes kind of close to it.

Numbers 14:24,25. 24But My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it. 25Now the Amalekites and the Canaanites dwell in the valley; tomorrow turn and move out into the wilderness by the Way of the Red Sea.”

Even though only Caleb is mentioned as a good guy, Joshua also found mercy in Lord's sight.

God gave them marching order to turn back and go back to the wilderness again. Blessing came so close for the Israelites, but they botched it through their bad attitude, and rebellious spirit. He swore in His wrath that only Caleb and of course Joshua would enter that land in their generation.

Numbers 14:26-33. 26And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, 27“How long shall I bear with this evil congregation who complain against Me? I have heard the complaints which the children of Israel make against Me. 28Say to them, ‘As I live,’ says the Lord, ‘just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will do to you: 29The carcasses of you who have complained against Me shall fall in this wilderness, all of you who were numbered, according to your entire number, from twenty years old and above. 30Except for Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun, you shall by no means enter the land which I [g]swore I would make you dwell in. 31But your little ones, whom you said would be victims, I will bring in, and they shall [h]know the land which you have despised. 32But as for you, your[i] carcasses shall fall in this wilderness. 33And your sons shall be [j]shepherds in the wilderness forty years, and bear the brunt of your infidelity, until your carcasses are consumed in the wilderness.

God emphasized again that their carcasses will fall in the wilderness, as they wished. They wished that they had died in the wilderness. And God said, “so be it!” If we become negative with God, what we think will happen to us. Let us not get negative, thinking that God will not save us from any trouble. If we think that way, then God will not save us. However, God promised that their young children would inherit the Promised Land after 40 years!

Numbers 14:34,35. 34According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for each day you shall bear your [k]guilt one year, namely forty years, and you shall know My [l]rejection. 35I the Lord have spoken this. I will surely do so to all this evil congregation who are gathered together against Me. In this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die.” ’

Why did God choose the number 40 years for the rebellious Israelites? They went to spy the Promised Land for forty days, and therefore they had to spend each day for each year until that whole generation was wiped out. Believe me, it is a terrible thing to fall in the hands of Almighty God. Do not try to challenge Him and rebel against Him.

Numbers 14: 36-38. 36Now the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land, who returned and made all the congregation complain against him by bringing a bad report

of the land, 37those very men who brought the evil report about the land, died by the plague before the Lord. 38But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh remained alive, of the men who went to spy out the land.

Those ten spies who brought the fear of giants to Israelites were consumed by some plague and they died. However, Joshua and Caleb were spared.

Numbers 14:39,40.39Then Moses told these words to all the children of Israel, and the people mourned greatly. 40And they rose early in the morning and went up to the top of the mountain, saying, "Here we are, and we will go up to the place which the Lord has promised, for we have sinned!"

Moses relayed all the words of the Lord to Israelites. They mourned all night long, and repented of their sins. They realized that they stand or fall because of God. However, it was too late. Through this incident, they revealed their true color. They tried to rely on their own strength and not on God. Had they relied and trusted on God, they would have faced any giant in their lives. We are in the same shoes also. When mountains of problems hit us, we lose confidence in God, and we think that we will be run over by our problems. We feel that God abandoned, even worse, we believe that God is punishing us. Our lack of trust may only infuriate God. Let us not go that route and provoke God. The giant in your life could be your sickness, your marriage, your precarious job situation, your visa status, your poverty, your inferiority complex, your poor self-esteem, your unloving friends and family. Do not be intimidated by these giants. Trust and hope in the Lord alone until you have your last breath. He will vindicate you from your situation.

Now the Israelites wanted to go back to plan A and fight those giants, and take over the land. However, Moses warned them not to do so!

Numbers 14:41-43. 41And Moses said, "Now why do you transgress the command of the Lord? For this will not succeed. 42Do not go up, lest you be defeated by your enemies, for the Lord is not among you. 43For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and you shall fall by the sword; because you have turned away from the Lord, the Lord will not be with you."

Moses spoke to them in a simple, clear language, don't go! The Lord is not with you, and you will lose! However, as usual, Israelites did not listen!

Numbers 14:44,45. 44But they presumed to go up to the mountaintop. Nevertheless, neither the ark of the covenant of the Lord nor Moses departed from the camp. 45Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who dwelt in that mountain came down and attacked them, and drove them back as far as Hormah.

Israelites were so foolish. They tried to go without God and win those big guys with their own strength. Moses and the Ark of the Covenant did not go with them. They were thrashed and driven back to where they came from.

It is a faithful saying, we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. But this is also a very faithful saying:

“We can do absolutely nothing without Christ”. We need the Lord for everything in life, even to breathe normally. In Him alone, we live, move, and have our being.

Summary of Grass Hopper Syndrome, part 1 and part 2.

- So what is a grasshopper syndrome? Our problems grow to be a huge mountain, or become giants, and it will make us feel so small like grasshoppers! It happens because we blatantly leave out God in our equation, and reject Him.

- We forget that the Lord is much bigger than these giants are, and He can crush them just like that! Never forget! Our God is much bigger than our problems. If God be for us, who can be against us?

If we see problems through Christ, no problem is insurmountable. Even if we have to go through excruciating pain, suffering, anguish, even death, the very thought and faith that Jesus is with us, in us, and holding on to us, that very thought should give us comfort, and His loving arms around us should always assure us that He will never leave us nor forsake us.

Take away points (Conclusion)

1. We cannot win the giants without Christ!
2. Stick with the plan of God in your life and let Him lead you every step of the way. Do not make your own plans trying to execute God's overall plan. (Iraq war)
3. If we do not look at our problems through the eyes of Christ, the problems will start looking more like a giant or a huge mountain! But if we see through eyes of Christ, we will look at our goliaths like David looked. He laughed at the giant and was confident about overcoming him. Are you getting that kind of confidence in your life?

Let us thank God through Christ. We stand because of Christ!

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