

25th February 2018

Speaker: Martin Armstrong



To Be A Transforming
Community Committed
to Jesus Christ

Faith or Fear? (Numbers 13&14)

1. The leaders of each of the 12 tribes of Israel went into Canaan to spy out the land. When they returned 10 of them said: - *"We know God has told us we can go, but we do not believe it. There are giants in the land. There are walled cities. They have fortifications. The people are stronger than we are."" the land is full of Giants. They will surely destroy us if we fight against them.* (Num 13:32) How would you feel if you were one of the people and heard a report like that?
2. But Joshua & Caleb saw things differently. In **Num 14:8-11** They said *"If the LORD is pleased with us, he will bring us safely into that land and give it to us. It is a rich land flowing with milk and honey. Do not rebel against the LORD, and don't be afraid of the people of the land. They are only helpless prey to us! They have no protection, but the LORD is with us! Don't be afraid of them!"* This response was based on faith rather than fear. Do you have a tendency to respond out of faith or fear? Give an example of an occasion you wanted to take a faith response when others were fearful and wanted to play it safe.
3. *But the whole community began to talk about stoning Joshua and Caleb."* Why do you think that the community's response to them was so severe? When people respond with violence, coercion and are not willing to negotiate or compromise, it is a strong indication that they are under a wrong spirit". Discuss, using situations and examples you have experienced or heard about.
4. Some people believe that consensus (the views of the majority) is a good way of ensuring that the best decision is made. But in this case the majority of the leaders got it wrong. Discuss this with regard to church meetings. Give an example of a decision made in a church meeting that in retrospect appears to have been a wrong one.
5. The best way to make a right decision is to "Seek the mind of Christ" and the "Leading of the Holy Spirit". Evidence of this occurring is the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5) and the "Wisdom from Above" (James 3). From memory, list as many of these characteristics as you can.

6. This wrong decision resulted in 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. After this time Joshua sent out 2 spies who ended up in Rahab's house in Jericho. Rahab revealed the truth of the decision 40 years previous. She said "*40 ago, as soon as we heard all that God had done for you everyone was terrified. There wasn't courage in anyone. Every man was shaking with fear*" One wrong thought kept 2 million people from inheriting the Promised Land. God wanted none of those faithless people to inherit the land. Discuss

7. In **Hebrews 3&4**, we're warned, as believers, not to follow the same example of unbelief as that generation of Israelites. The enemy does not have the upper hand. Jesus is in charge. **Heb 2:14** *'For this purpose the Son of God was manifested that He might destroy the power of the devil.'* He made an open show, triumphing over Satan and the cross. What are some ways that we can embrace this reality in our own thinking and actions?

8. Many people and churches have reached their Kadesh. They're on edge of the promised land. Are you trusting God for what lies ahead? Are you trusting His promises? Or are you focussing on your fears, doubts & limited resources. Discuss and pray for each other.