

Numbers 13-14, Dying and Living Faith

Notes:

- More tips on reading narratives (see Num. 11 DQs)
 - Watch for plot tensions illustrated by the frequency of verbs, cf. 14...
 - Knowledge of prior material is assumed, sons of Anak, Horeb (significant for Abraham)
- Basic Outline
 - 13:1-25, The Lord has Moses sends out men to explore the Promised Land
 - 13:26-33, Some of the men, give a bad report and spread it around Israel, ignoring the Lord's promise and forgetting all he has done for them (13:1; 14:11).
 - 14:1-4, Israel's grumbles again and desires to go back to Egypt.
 - 14:5-9, Moses and Aaron mourn and Joshua makes one last plea to repent.
 - 14:10-12, Israel prepares to stone its leaders and the Lord appears to strike all the unbelieving generation.
 - 14:13-19, Moses intercedes again based upon the Lord's reputation and character
 - 14:20-38, The Lord forgives and brings judgment. The generation of unbelief is to die in the wilderness except Caleb and Joshua.
 - 14:39-45, Despite this, the people confess their sin but presumptuously go into the land only to be defeated.
- Other notes
 - v. 1 - the land is always referred to as something the Lord is giving them. The disobedient explorers refer to it as the land Moses sent them to.
 - vv. 13-19, Moses intercession mirrors the golden calf incident.
 - Important text in the Bible, repeated in Num. 32, Deut. 1:20-40; 8:2; Ps. 95:10; 106:24ff; Amos 2:10; 5:25; 1 Cor. 10; Heb. 3:7-4:13.
 - **Key lesson is summarized in Hebrews 3:12-14**

Questions

1. What is so bad about Israel's rejection of the Lord in this story? How does Caleb and Joshua respond differently?
2. What does it say about God that in one verse he states he will destroy them and then in another that he will forgive them but they will still face punishment (14:12, 20)?
3. What do you think is the difference between struggling with faith in the Lord versus a lack of faith? What is the best way to respond to each?
4. What has helped you when you struggled with faith and what did not help you?
5. What are different ways to help encourage faith when things are difficult?
6. Hebrews 3:12-14 warns us against doing what the wilderness generation did. But to encourage each other frequently and hold fast to Jesus. How can you do that?