

Joshua Part 3 - "Stare" (5-28-23)
A well worn path to a brand new place

Series Overview & Goals

- Learn from Joshua's life - how to move forward and take new territory
- A journey of identity, freedom, leadership, victory, finding a home, and becoming a people

Review: Start & Stay - learned - to fight, to follow, spend time in God's presence alone & in community

Today: "Stare" - Numbers chapters 13-14

Context: They are approx. 1 1/2 years since the Exodus (a people have been established)

1) Spying the Land

Numbers 13:1-2 (ESV)

(1) The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, (2) "Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the people of Israel. From each tribe of their fathers you shall send a man, every one a chief among them."

Note: God is sending them to observe the land that **He is giving them**. He sends key leaders from each tribe.

The List of Spies (Numbers 13:3-16) - Key Leaders from each tribe

Moses Instructions (Numbers 13:17-20)

- People - strong or weak, few or many?
- How they live - is the land good or bad, do they live in camps or strongholds?
- What are the possibilities - is the land rich or poor, are there trees in it? Bring examples of the fruit.

The Spies - 40 days of Exploring (Numbers 13:21-25)

- The People - in Hebron they found Descendants of Anak (Ahiman, Sheshai, Talmi)
- The Fruit - pomegranates, figs, & a single cluster of grapes (carried on a pole between 2 men)
- Then they return having spied out the land

2) The Report

The Report - Initial Assessment . . .

Numbers 13:27-29 (ESV)

(27) And they told him, "We came to the land to which you sent us. It flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. (28) However, the people who dwell in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large. And besides, we saw the descendants of Anak there. (29) The Amalekites dwell in the land of the Negeb. The Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the hill country. And the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and along the Jordan."

The Report - Recommendations for Action . . .

Numbers 13:30 (ESV)

But Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, "Let us go up at once and occupy it, for we are well able to overcome it."

The other 10 spies . . .

Numbers 13:31-33 (ESV)

(31) Then the men who had gone up with him said, “We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we are.” (32) So they brought to the people of Israel a bad report of the land that they had spied out, saying, “The land, through which we have gone to spy it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people that we saw in it are of great height. (33) And there we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak, who come from the Nephilim), and we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them.”

Note: They all saw the same thing, but they interpreted it differently . . .

- **Caleb** - we are well able, let's go right away!
- **10 Spies** - we are not able, they are all giants (not true), We are like grasshoppers in our eyes & theirs!

What sort of person are you? Do you see obstacles or opportunity? Are you Optimistic vs Pessimistic?

We aren't called to be optimists or pessimists - we look honestly, but we look with eyes of faith!

“We walk by faith not by sight” - 2 Corinthians 5:7 (context: Paul writing about the ultimate promised land)

2 Corinthians 5:6-9 (ESV)

(6) So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, (7) for we walk by faith, not by sight. (8) Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. (9) So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.

Note: Even when looking ahead to promises, hopes, & dreams, what is your true aim?

Remember 2 weeks ago - what you prioritize, you idolize, and therefore you worship

We can look at the opportunities & the obstacles, but we should stare at God - He should hold our gaze!

3) The Response

The People Respond to the report . . .

Numbers 14:1-4 (ESV)

(1) Then all the congregation raised a loud cry, and the people wept that night. (2) And all the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The whole congregation said to them, “Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness! (3) Why is the LORD bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become a prey. Would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt?” (4) And they said to one another, “Let us choose a leader and go back to Egypt.”

Note: The People's response to the bad report . . .

- Raised a loud cry & Wept
- They Grumbled against their leaders
- Wished they were dead - either in Egypt or the Wilderness, as opposed to being killed in conquest
- Questioned why God would bring them to die
- Assumed their women & children would die
- Wanted to choose a new leader & go back to Egypt

How often do I respond this way when things look difficult?

Joshua & Caleb tear their clothes & stand up before the people and say . . .

Numbers 14:7b-9 (ESV)

“The land, which we passed through to spy it out, is an exceedingly good land. (8) If the LORD delights in us, he will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land that flows with milk and honey. (9) Only do not rebel against the LORD. And do not fear the people of the land, for they are bread for us. Their protection is removed from them, and the LORD is with us; do not fear them.”

Note: There is great power in encouragement & a great need for it.

- The Land is good - it's all God promised us it would be!
- The Lord delights in us and is with us!

God is offended by their ongoing doubt . . .

Numbers 14:10-11 (ESV)

(10) Then all the congregation said to stone them with stones. But the glory of the LORD appeared at the tent of meeting to all the people of Israel. (11) And the LORD said to Moses, “How long will this people despise me? And how long will they not believe in me, in spite of all the signs that I have done among them?”

Note:

Moses calls upon God's character for pardon & mercy . . .

Numbers 14:17-19 (ESV)

(17) And now, please let the power of the Lord be great as you have promised, saying, (18) ‘The LORD is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, forgiving iniquity and transgression, but he will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, to the third and the fourth generation.’ (19) Please pardon the iniquity of this people, according to the greatness of your steadfast love, just as you have forgiven this people, from Egypt until now.”

Conclusion: The results . . . The rest of the chapter lays out the consequences (14:20-45)

- The promise comes, but it is delayed - this generation will die in the wilderness.
- The promise is given to the next generation, except for the 2 who believed & brought the good report.
- The people who initially resisted out of fear, now try to take it by force without God. and they are routed.

But 40 years later, at a ripe old age, Caleb takes possession of what he always believed God would give . . .

Joshua 15:13-14 (ESV)

(13) According to the commandment of the LORD to Joshua, he gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh a portion among the people of Judah, Kiriath-arba, that is, Hebron (Arba was the father of Anak). (14) And Caleb drove out from there the three sons of Anak, Sheshai and Ahiman and Talmai, the descendants of Anak.