

# The Dangers Of Unbelief

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The dangers of unbelief are well documented in the narrative found in Numbers chapter 13 and 14. In these chapters the Bible tells us about Israel sending spies into the Promised Land to spy it out. Twelve spies were sent into the land and when they returned to Moses, Aaron and Israel, ten of them gave a negative report (Num. 13:32) and declared they were unable to conquer the land. The two other spies, Joshua and Caleb, believed they could conquer the land and wanted to go immediately to do so. Despite the plea of Joshua and Caleb Israel refused to invade and conquer the Promised Land on this occasion. This short article examines the dangers of unbelief.

## **Danger #1: Lack Faith In God**

God brought Israel out of Egypt “after he had shown wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red Sea...” (Acts 7:36). Yet Israel said, “If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness! Why 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?” So they said to one another, “Let us select a leader and return to Egypt” (Num. 14:2-4). Compare Israel’s attitude on this occasion with David’s when he went up against the Philistine giant, Goliath. David approached Goliath saying, “But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand...” (1 Sam. 17:45-46). The Psalmist mentioned Israel’s unbelief saying, “Because they did not believe in God, and did not trust in His salvation” (Psa. 78:22). God has demonstrated Himself faithful, powerful, just and upright! Faith is an essential element in pleasing God (Heb. 11:6). Jesus said, “Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins” (Jn. 8:24). A reading of John 20:30-31 reveals, “And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.” Put your faith and trust in God!

## **Danger #2: Lack Trust In God’s Word**

God informed Moses that He had “come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey...” (Ex. 3:8). When Israel refused to invade the Promised Land they lacked trust in God’s word! The Psalmist made mention of Israel’s lack of trust saying, “Then they despised the pleasant land; they did not believe His word” (Psa. 106:24). Israel lacked confidence and trust in the promises of God. Jesus praying to His Father in heaven said, “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth” (Jn. 17:17). God’s word is truth! God means what He says and says what He means! When God says He will do a certain thing, we can have confidence that He will do it! If God instructs us to do something, we best do it! If God says not to do a certain thing, we best not do it! The Psalmist announced, “...I will trust in your word” (Psa. 119:42b). God’s word is infallible!

### **Danger #3: Sow Seeds Of Doubt**

The ten spies who returned to Israel's camp with the bad report sowed seeds of doubt in the hearts of Israel. The ten spies said, "We are not able to go up against the people..." (Num. 13:31). The ten declared themselves to be outmatched physically! They reported that there were giants in the land and fortified cities and while the inhabitants of the Promised Land may have been strong and lived in fortified cities, Israel had God on their side! However, they failed to take into account God's works that He worked in their presence in Egypt and the months during their departure! There are many today who continue to sow seeds of doubt. Folks sow the seeds of doubt when they teach various theories of men as fact, such as evolution and the big bang theory! The Bible reveals, "In the beginning God created..." (Gen. 1:1). One of the very real dangers of unbelief is sowing the seeds of doubt! Israel as a whole gave heed to the bad report and refused to invade the Promised Land! On the sea Jesus said to Peter, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" (Matt. 14:31). Rather than sowing seeds of doubt, we must be busy sowing the seed, the word of God (Lk. 8:11). God is real and His word is powerful enough to save us (Rom. 1:16).

### **Danger #4: Do Not Get To Enter The Promised Land**

After Israel refused to invade the Promised Land, God sentenced them to wander in the wilderness for a total of forty years! God said, "The 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...And your sons shall be shepherds in the wilderness forty years, and bear the brunt of your infidelity, until your carcasses are consumed in the wilderness" (Num. 14:29, 33). The rebellious were not permitted entrance into the Promised Land! The Hebrew writer noted, "Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion. For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt, led by Moses? Now with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief" (Heb. 3:15b - 19). The New Testament teaches that the unrighteous will not enter the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9). Jesus said we would die in our sins if we do not believe in Him (Jn. 8:24). The promised land of heaven belongs to them that believe and obey God! A heart of unbelief will keep us from entering the eternal glories of heaven! Those who exercise of heart of belief respond to the commands of God in obedience! According the Hebrews 5:9, Jesus "became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him."

The dangers of unbelief are as real as tangible objects! May each of us seek God, trust in Him, submit to His rule, and obey His commands!