

NUM. 14:17-19 -- MOSES INTERCEDES FOR THE PEOPLE – THE COST OF UNBELIEF!

11/18/2017 Sat Morn Prayer – Phil Twente, 714 425-9221; ptwente@gmail.com

NUMBERS 14:17-19 *And now, I pray, let the power of my Lord be great, just as You have spoken, saying, [18] 'The 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.'* [19] Pardon 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."

"At Your Name (Yahweh, Yahweh)"- Phil Wickham

1 At Your name The mountains shake and crumble, At Your name The oceans roar and tumble

At Your name Angels will bow, The earth will rejoice/ Your people cry out

[Chorus:] - Lord of all the earth/ We shout Your name, shout Your name, Filling up the skies With endless praise, endless praise. Yahweh, Yahweh/ We love to shout Your name, oh Lord

2 At Your name The morning breaks in Glory, At Your name Creation sings Your story

At Your name Angels will bow, The earth will rejoice/ Your people cry out - [Chorus]

There is no one like our God/ We will praise you, praise you

There is no one like our God We will sing, we will sing [x3] - [Chorus x2]

The Biblical Setting: In chapter 11, we saw the people **complaining** – “Where am I to get meat?” In chapter 12, we saw the **jealousy and envy** of Miriam and Aaron; **Moses interceding** for the healing of Miriam from leprosy. In chapter 13, **spies were sent into Canaan**. While **two, Joshua and Caleb** brought back a **good report, believing** in God and His promises, the report of **the other ten and their unbelief**, resulted in **fear and total unbelief, causing all the congregation to weep and complain**.

NUM. 14:19 -- MURMURING, UNBELIEF AND INTERCESSION BY ANOTHER -- “PARDON THE INIQUITY OF THIS PEOPLE, I PRAY!” - 1. The righteous sentence which God gave Israel for their murmuring and unbelief. 2. The humble intercession Moses made for them.

- **God showed Moses the great evil of the people's sin, Num 14:11**. What passed between God and Israel went through the hands of Moses: **when they were displeased with God** they told Moses of it (Num 14:2); **when God was displeased with them** he told Moses too, revealing His secret to His servant.
- Two things God justly complains of to Moses: - (1.) **Their sin**. They **reject**, (reproach, despise) **Me**, for **they will not believe Me**. It was **their unbelief** that made this a day of provocation in the wilderness, Heb 3:8-12, (2.) **Their distrust of God**, of His power and promise, is itself a very great provocation, and at the bottom of many other provocations. **Unbelief is a great sin** 1Jn 5:10 *He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar....*
- Their continuing in it: *How long will they do so?* God keeps an account how long sinners persist in their provocations; and **the longer they persist the more He is displeased**.
- The aggravations of their sin were, [1.] **Their relation to God**: *This people*, a peculiar people, a professing people. The **nearer any are to God**, the more he is provoked by their sins, especially their unbelief. [2.] **The experience they had had of God's power and goodness**, in *all the signs and wonders* which He had shown among them, by which, one would think, he had effectually obliged them to trust Him and follow Him. The **more God has done for us the greater is the provocation if we distrust Him**.
- **God showed Moses the sentence which justice passed upon them for it, Num 14:12** *I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they..*
- And if it be asked, “What will become of God's covenant with Abraham then?” here is an answer, “I shall be preserved in the family of Moses: *I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they.*”
- Thus, (1.) **God would try Moses**, whether **he still continued that affection for Israel** which he formerly expressed upon a like occasion (Ex. 32:10), in preferring their interests before the advancement of his own family. Again we see that **Moses was still of the same public spirit, and could not bear the thought of raising his own name** upon the ruin of the name of Israel.

Now Moses intercedes!

Num 14:13-14 *And Moses said to the LORD: "Then the Egyptians will hear it, for by Your might You brought these people up from among them, [14] and they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that You, LORD, are among these people; that You, LORD, are seen face to face and Your cloud stands above them, and You go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night. That if Israel should be cut off **great notice would be taken of it.***

Num 14:15 *Now if You kill these people as one man, then the nations which have heard of Your fame will speak, saying, It **will be impossible to make them understand it** as an act of **God's justice**, bringing **dishonor to God**. They will impute it to the failing of God's power, and so turn it to His reproach,*

Num 14:16 *'Because 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.'* They will say, He slew them in the wilderness **because He was not able** to bring them to Canaan, his arm being shortened, and his stock of miracles being spent. Please note -- **The best pleas in prayer are those that are taken from God's honor;** for they agree with the first petition of the Lord's Prayer, *Hallowed be thy name. Do not disgrace the throne of thy glory.*

Num 14:17-18 *And now, I pray, let the power of my Lord be great, just as You have spoken, saying, [18] 'The 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.'*

Let the power of my LORD be great: Moses glories in the power of God, but asks that God would use His power by showing mercy and longsuffering to a rebellious Israel. **Just as You have spoken:** The list of Num 14:18-19 is almost a quote from the words of self-revelation God spoke to Moses in the dramatic encounter Moses had with God in Ex 34:6-8

Long-suffering . . . abundant in mercy . . . forgiving iniquity and transgression . . . by no means clears the guilty: Each of these are mentioned first in Exo 34:6-8. Moses basically said: "LORD, you have revealed Yourself to me by Your word. Your word declares who You are. **Now LORD, please act towards Israel according to who You have declared Yourself to be in Your word.**

Num 14:19 *Pardon 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.*

Pardon the iniquity of this people, I pray, according to the greatness of Your mercy: Moses **knew God's power, and appealed to it; Moses knew God's promise and appealed to it, and Moses knew God's glory and appealed to it.** This was a spectacular example of intercession. What made this intercession spectacular was not primarily Moses' method (appealing to God's glory, power, and promise); but Moses' heart. Here, **Moses is totally others-centered, not concerned for his own glory, but only for Israel.** He displays he shares the heart of God towards His people, and that is what made Moses' intercession spectacular, God's intention all along:

SUMMARY:

- **Oh, the cost of unbelief! Of not trusting God!**
- **How often are you murmuring and complaining?**
- **How often do you distrust God? What is your level of unbelief?**
- **Do you intercede for others who by their murmuring and complaining displease God?**
- **Do your prayers include that of honoring God? (*Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done*)**
- **What does God's merciful pardoning mean to you?**

Pray Today For: Our Church, Nationally/locally; Our Nation: Our leaders; Police officers/military. Supreme Ct. Justices: John Roberts, Jr., Anthony Kennedy, Clarence Thomas, Ruth Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer, Samuel Alito, Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan and Neil Gorsuch; President & V.P.: Donald & Melania Trump; Mike & Karen Pence. General James Kelly. The Cabinet and all advisors. Appointee - Christopher Wray, F.B.I.

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