

# Insurmountable

Numbers 14:1-10

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## A. Don't Fear (vs. 1-2):

1. All the congregation lifted their voices – All the people immediately vividly displayed their independence from Moses and Aaron by becoming loudly vocal.
2. Cried – They made a point to make a thunderous noise as they sounded out in sorrow.
3. Wept - ALL the people were continuously, highly, outwardly emotional in much distress as if someone very important to them suddenly died.
4. Murmured - They continuously, boisterously complained about the overwhelming circumstances God led them to. They blamed God for putting them in this situation knowing that they were going to die.
5. Crying, weeping and murmuring - When God's Word is not trusted our circumstances will overwhelm us.
6. THE WHOLE congregation said - to die – They continually, with no desire to stop, kept saying that they were going to be killed. They were convinced by the spies that this was completely true. There was no possibility that there could be any other result. Lies lead to fear, but faith provides us hope.
7. THE WHOLE congregation said - to die – God did not allow them to experience the enemy before He consistently demonstrated His power and commitment to maintain His covenant relationship with them. Faith is based on evidence of things not seen. God gave them evidence when He required faith (Hebrews 11:1).
8. Why the Lord – Even when the Lord's nature, power and authority is acknowledged, it is forgotten because of their fear. This is sad because the enemy was actually afraid of them (Joshua 2:8-11).
9. Why the Lord – Israel spent 40 years dying in the wilderness running from an enemy who saw the power of God and was afraid of the Lord's power.

10. Why the Lord – Israel's enemies were more respectful of the Lord's power and they only heard of it. Israel who saw His power literally manifested before their eyes, did not trust in the Lord's power.
11. Bringing us to fall by the sword – The word “to bring” means to bring an offering. They were implicitly saying that they had no power to overcome such a powerful set of giants that God would sacrifice them to.
12. Deny; Turn away – Because Moses, Aaron, Caleb and Joshua are determined to go into the Promise Land, the people recommended that they find new leadership and return to Egypt. It is interesting how quick people can forget to remember.
13. Deny; Turn away – There will always be leaders available to listen to whatever the majority wants them to do. In our time this is what Paul says because of the effects of the last days on believers; *"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry."* (2 Tim. 4:3-8; NASU)

***"Courage is not the absence of fear; it is the presence of faith"***

## **B. Learn to Listen (vs. 5-7):**

1. Fell on their faces in front of everyone – Moses and Aaron presented themselves continuously before God by falling over on their faces humbly beseeching the Lord God for an obstinate people.
2. Fell on their faces in front of everyone – Moses and Aaron bowing before the Lord represents that they did not see the people's attack as against them, but against God.
3. Caleb and Joshua who spied - Two men who saw the same circumstances mourned for the people because they knew that God's wrath would follow. This time God extended mercy by allowing them to die over a 40-year period but did not allow them to enter the land because their hearts were hardened.
  - a) These men did not let what they saw deter them from what they believed, especially after confirming what God said about the land being rich.

4. Caleb and Joshua who spied - Caleb and Joshua spied out the land to learn how to attack because they believed the Lord for His Word. The other spies spied out the land to see if what God is saying has any chance of getting done.
5. And they spoke to ALL the congregation – Caleb and Joshua kept speaking to the people as if they had no plans to stop trying to convince them not to disobey God.
6. The land which we passed through – Caleb and Joshua went through all the land, so they did not miss anything. They saw everything and everyone that lived there. Despite what they saw there was nothing that could prevent God from accomplishing His purposes.
7. Exceedingly good – Caleb and Joshua said that after seeing everything, they were convinced the land was delightful and practically beneficial and excellent for everyone.
8. Exceedingly good – Everything God said about the land was true, so the people need to go in and take possession of the land God promised. They are focused on the enemy rather than what God would bless them to possess. Even when God proved to be true they held on to fear.

### **C. Defy the Odds (vs. 8-9):**

1. If the Lord is pleased – Caleb and Joshua pled with the people telling them that if the Lord is completely delighted with them, He would provide victory, so there is no need to worry.
1. Bring us; They came – Caleb and Joshua said to the people it is the Lord who comprehensively made the way and makes the way forward, so they have nothing to worry about. They have not and will not fight in their strength.
2. Given you – The Lord does not just bring them into the land, but He completely, generously establishes them so that they are immovable. This fight belongs to the Lord because He promised to provide it to His nation and has demonstrated that He has the power to do it.
3. Flows with milk and honey - The land flowing with milk and honey is evidence that the Lord's way is true.

4. Do not rebel - Both Caleb and Joshua pled with the people to not continually be disloyal to God by resisting His instruction and at the same time create dysfunction among the people.
    - a) When we walk with God we will always get challenged to faith because His fight is always greater than our ability to deal with the adversity on our own.
  5. ALL the congregation said – They said for them to be stoned so they were going to intentionally make sure that they no longer lead and stop talking - an obstinate heart.
  6. Do not fear the people of the land – The people must not become dysfunctional and resist the Lord's instructions because they allow themselves to continuously be terrified of the giants in the land.
  7. Their protection - The word for protection means to be in the shadow of some looming object. The people rested in the Lord's shadow.
    - a) Verses for do not fret over those who do wickedness (Ps. 37:1, 7-8; Pr. 24:19).
  8. Their protection - The Lord did not live among them but He placed himself in a position that His presence covered them from their enemies.
    - a) The majority of the spies who made their reports only saw the giants (cf. Gen. 6:4), whereas Joshua and Caleb saw victory.<sup>1[1]</sup>
    - b) The descendants of Anak, the giants, were noted for their great size and strength (13:28). They were described as being related to the Nephilim (13:33), who lived on the earth before and after the flood (Gen. 6:4). Using hyperbole (exaggeration for the sake of emphasis), the writer compares the Israelites to grasshoppers.<sup>2[2]</sup>
  9. Has been removed – God has turned away and is on a completely different path that does not include the Canaanites any longer. He is ready for His people to be in His land. The Canaanites have served their purpose.
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- a) So that the meaning of the phrase, “their defense is departed” from them is, that the favor of God was now lost to those whose iniquities were full (Gen. 15:16), and transferred to the Israelites.<sup>3[3]</sup> (1 Thessalonians 2:16).

10. ALL the congregation said – All the people continuously kept speaking out against going into the land and called for Caleb and Joshua to be stoned. They said for them to be stoned, so they were going to intentionally make sure that they no longer led the people into the land. The plan was to remove them from leadership and shut them up.

11. Then the glory of the Lord – God’s imposing presence appeared. This word can mean “heavy” as well. So, either there was a heavy cloud or light, but it was definitely a supernatural event that was prevailing over them.

12. Then the glory of the Lord – The One who had all power and authority took complete control over the entire meeting. God heard enough. He took over leading the people since they rejected Moses, Aaron, Caleb and Joshua.

13. Appeared at the tent of meeting – God was completely in charge, lined up with His leader Moses (tent of meeting) and therefore protected His leaders from this rebellious people.

14. To the sons of Israel - God constantly repeats who He has shown Himself to be. It is their rebellion that causes the Lord who is holy to execute justice. His full intent is to not spend His time with them in this manner because His desire is to be "*compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth*" (Exodus 34:6). "*Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.*" (John 15:13; NASU)

15. To the sons of Israel - We must not allow the insurmountable struggles we experience to turn us away from a loving God, who is slow to anger and is steadfast in His commitment towards us (vs. 11, 17-29; John 14:16-17).

- a) Trust is not based on what we see, it is totally dependent on whether or not we will keep the faith, regardless to what the circumstances may seem to dictate (1 Timothy 6:12-14).
- We must learn to trust who He is (His nature) even when it seems like He is absent (silent; Exodus 34:6-7).

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- We must hold fast to His promises even when it may not seem like it can hold up under the circumstances we may be experiencing (Hebrews 12:4; 1 Peter 1:22-25).
- We must stay within His structure and manage our emotions so that we do not allow fear and anxiety to make us rebellious.
- Circumstances should not define our faith. We must allow our faith to define how we apply ourselves through our circumstances (2 Corinthians 5:6-8; Hebrews 11:6).

***When life is insurmountable believe that God can do the IMPOSSIBLE! (Luke 1:37; 18:27)***

<sup>1[1]</sup> Hughes, R. B., & Laney, J. C. (2001). *Tyndale concise Bible commentary* (p. 62). Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

<sup>1[2]</sup> Hughes, R. B., & Laney, J. C. (2001). *Tyndale concise Bible commentary* (p. 62). Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

<sup>1[3]</sup> Brown, D., Fausset, A. R., & Jamieson, R. (n.d.). *A Commentary, Critical, Experimental, and Practical, on the Old and New Testaments: Genesis–Deuteronomy* (Vol. I, p. 549). London; Glasgow: William Collins, Sons, & Company, Limited.