

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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