

June 19, 2020

Good morning, Everybody.

My morning devotional reading this week has included chapters in the Book of Numbers. Yesterday brought me to chapter 13's dismaying account of the egregious unbelief of the spies sent to survey the promised land.



It must have stunned Moses, especially because it had been the LORD Himself who directed him to send these men on ahead to gather information. God's initiating of this scouting expedition would almost certainly have suggested to Moses that the ensuing report would be positive and immediately catalytic to an immense surge of national enthusiasm for hastening up to conquer. Scripture doesn't relate Moses' reaction, but we can certainly imagine what a **blow** to Moses it must have been when the returnees transitioned from, *the land . . . certainly does flow with milk and honey*, to the nearly unanimous emphatic negative of, *nevertheless . . . we are not able . . . They are too strong for us*. Oh, oh, oh; what a day. *Thou knowest not what a day may bring forth*. True for even a Moses. How much more so for us?

A few weeks ago, near the chair where I read, I'd left the volume of Matthew Henry's *Commentary* that covers the Pentateuch. I don't guess that I've looked at it since. But I was drawn to pick it up and see the drift of his thought on this incident. One of the paragraphs that struck me as especially insightful concerns the people's hugely emotional outburst.

They lifted up their voices and cried; giving credit to the report of the spies rather than to the word of God, and imagining their condition desperate, they laid the reins on the neck of their passions, and could keep no manner of temper. Like foolish, forward children they fall a crying, yet know not what they cry for. It would have been time enough to cry out when the enemy had beaten up their quarters, and they had seen the sons of Anak at the gate of their camp. But those that cried when nothing hurt them deserved to have something given them to cry for. And, as if all had been already gone, they sat down and wept that night.

Unbelief, or distrust of God, is a sin that is its own punishment. Those that do not trust God are continually vexing themselves.

Can it be that the explanation for at least some, if not much of our internal vexation from day to day is that it is, as Henry proposes, a *punishment*? Unbelief's *own* punishment? Something like the wicked person's getting *snared in the work of his own hands*? Is the explanation for much of a Christian's emotional upheaval as simple as saying that wretchedness is *intrinsic* to unbelief? That it is unbelief's own *natural*, miserable payload? Like nausea just follows swallowing slugs?

If so, the secret to healthy well-being is blessedly simple: **BELIEVE GOD!**

How much better to go that way with whatever a day brings forth.

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:6-7).

How about if we all *choose* the peace of God today (smile)?

Praying for All Of Us Today,

Pastor Minnick