

IN THE WILDERNESS

THE BOOK OF NUMBERS

Week 3: The Tragic Turning Point (Num. 11-15)

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

To maintain a healthy group, focus on four key components: Word, prayer, relationships, and outreach. This guide will help you study a biblical passage through observation, interpretation, and application. As you study Numbers 11-15, remember that this week's big idea is that **possessing the promise requires faith in the face of fear.**

CONNECT

Ask this ice-breaker: "Share about a time when fear almost held you back from doing something, but it turned out to be really important that you stayed brave. What happened, and how did it make a difference in the end?"

INTRODUCTION

Numbers 11-15 marks a tragic turning point in Israel's journey, where complaining and fear overshadow God's faithfulness. Despite His miraculous provision of manna and constant guidance, the people grumble, question Moses' leadership, and even express a desire to return to Egypt. Their refusal to trust God's promise, highlighted by the spies' report, results in the devastating decree that they must wander the desert for forty years. These chapters serve as a stark reminder of how unbelief derails our relationship with God, setting the stage for deeper lessons on reliance and obedience.

OBSERVATIONS & INTERPRETATION

Read: Numbers 13:1-3

- The Lord specifically says He is giving the land of Canaan to the Israelites (v. 2). What does it teach us about trusting God's assurances today?

Read: Numbers 13:25-33

- How do we see fear overshadowing faith in this passage, and what parallels can we draw about letting fear influence our perspective on God's promises?
- The Israelites say they felt like grasshoppers in the eyes of the land's inhabitants (v. 33). What does this reveal about their self-perception, and how might our view of ourselves affect our trust in God's power and calling?

Read: Numbers 14:1-25

- In verses 1-4, the Israelites reject God's promise, yearning to return to Egypt. How does their fear reflect our tendency to turn away from God's plans, and what does this show about the nature of rebellion in our hearts?

APPLICATION

- How does Moses' intercession (vv. 13-19) foreshadow Jesus as the truer and better Mediator? What does this mean for you?
- Discuss the parallels between God's judgment (vv. 20-25) and the final judgment. How should this affect the way we live?

PRAYER

- Take a moment and pray for each other, thank God for the intercessory work of Christ, and pray for those in your life who have not yet trusted in Christ.