

# WERE IT NOT BETTER FOR US TO RETURN NUMBERS 13-14

Text: Numbers 14:3-4

## **Numbers 14:3-4**

<sup>3</sup> And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt? <sup>4</sup> And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.

Introduction:

The children of Israel have now come to the edge of the promise land, and are preparing to go in. But in order to go they want to see what it was that they were getting themselves into. So Moses sends out the 12 spies in which all but (2), Joshua & Caleb, come back with a bad report. Keep in mind all that they had been through and all that the Lord had done for them up to this point.

1. Water to blood
2. Frogs
3. Lice
4. Pestilence
5. Boils
6. Hail Storm

7. Locust
8. Darkness
9. Death of the first born
10. Led by a cloud by day & by fire at night.
11. Crossing the Red Sea
12. Manna for food
13. Quail for food
14. Smitten rock for water
15. Defeated Amalek
16. The Brazen serpent
17. Defeated Jericho

So now we have in our text the children of Israel crying and wishing that they had died in Egypt, or in the wilderness, and are ready to return to where they came from.

Isn't amazing how similar this story is to today's Christians & Churches. It seems like in the last few years more than ever before we have seen and heard of preachers quitting the ministry and going back into the world. Not only are preachers guilty of this but Christians in general are guilty.

We have all seen it. An individual gets saved, and begins to serve the Lord, is excited, and encouraged, and is an encouragement to other Christians and to their pastor. They get involved in soul winning, bus ministry, or anything else that they can get involved in, they come to every service, and go to as many as they

possible can get to, they can hardly get enough, and all of a sudden, something happens and they return to where they once were.

The Bible speaks about this in both the Old & New Testaments.

(Prov 26:11) "As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly."

(2 Pet 2:9-22) "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: {10} But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. {11} Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord. {12} But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; {13} And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; {14} Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: {15} Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who

loved the wages of unrighteousness; {16} But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet. {17} These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. {18} For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. {19} While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. {20} For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. {21} For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. {22} But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

Why is it that some turn back? Some turn back because of:

# 1. DEFECTIVE START (2 TIM 3:15)

(2 Tim 3:5) "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."

## A. Never saved.

(Mat 7:21-23) "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. {22} Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? {23} And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

## B. Never stabilized

(Eph 4:14) "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;"

## C. Never settle

(Psa 92:12-15) "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. {13} Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. {14} They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and

flourishing; {15} To show that the LORD is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him."

Some turn back because of a defective start. Others turn back because of :

## **2. DEFEATED ATTITUDE (GAL 5:7)**

(Gal 5:7) "Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?"

A. Compare with others.

1. I can't build a church like that one.
2. I can't preach like so an so.
3. I can't win souls like you know who.

(2 Cor 10:12-13) "For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise. {13} But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you."

4. Looking at others will do several things:

a. Take your eyes off of the Lord.

(Heb 12:2) "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

b. Can cause a proud heart.

(Oba 1:3-4) "The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? {4} Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD."

c. Can lead to a bad attitude and spirit.

d. Will always become a stumbling block either to yourself or to someone else.

Some go back because of a defective start, while others return because of a defeated attitude, still others return because of:

### **3. DISCOURAGEMENT (GAL 6:9)**

(Gal 6:9) "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

A. Discouragement is one of the greatest enemies to a Christian.

1. Some times we must encourage ourselves.

(1 Sam 30:6) "And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God."

Application:

1. Going Back Begin With Tears and Ends In Tragedy

A. Notice verse 1

(Num 14:1) "And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night."

1. Saul went back on the Lord
2. David went back on the Lord.



## 2. Some Who Have Gone Back Have Made A Comeback

1. John Mark
2. Peter
3. Samson

Close:

The Bible is very clear on its position concerning those that would like to go back to where they came from. It is compared to a dog going back to his vomit. You say that is disgusting. No more so than a Christian going back into the world and doing and living a worldly life.

(Luke 9:62) "And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

The Bible very clearly states that it would have been better to have never known the truth than to have known the truth and return back to where you come from.

(2 Pet 2:19-21) "While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. {20} For if after they have escaped the

pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. {21} For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them."

Maybe you have found yourself going back to where you come from. Why not turn around today. Maybe you are here and you have had a defective start, and have never trusted Christ as your personal Saviour, why not trust Him today.

Maybe you are here today and have a defeated attitude. Stop comparing yourself to other and do what you can for the Lord and allow Him to be your measurer.

Maybe you are here this morning and are not planted, why not get planted, and start growing before you find yourself on the way back from where you came from?

Maybe you have found yourself today away from God, why not make a come back today.