

Tuesday 17th November

Numbers 14: 1-12

Key verse 14: 11

*11 The Lord said to Moses, "How long will these people treat me with contempt? How long will they refuse to believe in me, in spite of all the signs I have performed among them?"*

In verse 2, we read of the Israelites grumbling again. Chapter 1 of Deuteronomy is a good read as Moses is remembering this episode when he speaks to the people 38 years later. They were about to take the Promised Land. He says, 'You grumbled in your tents' (Dt. 1: 27) They were doing it in private, in huddles and whipping each other up into a frenzy of fear and unbelief. In v3 of this chapter the people attribute false motives to God but in v27 of Dt. 1, Moses claims they actually said, 'the Lord hates us!'

How incredible! The story of the Exodus is the story of God's love! In it, we see salvation from slavery, redemption, faithfulness, love and power but the people say, 'We would be better off dead' or, 'better off back in Egypt.' They were even planning to return. (v4)

God's response is our key verse.

We may be horrified by the behaviour of the Israelites after all that God had done. We may not rebel against God as spectacularly as they did but our hearts can still be as defiant. Even David, the man after God's own heart, fell into a situation where Nathan pointed out he had shown utter contempt for the Lord. (Masoretic text version of 2 Sam12: 14)

Two brave men, Joshua and Caleb, went against the crowd and gave Godly advice to the people. They rejected it to the point of wanting to kill them!

We need to take heed that our thinking also can be skewed by gossip, grumbling and negativity. The world is good at this! We can then end up rejecting advice that we don't like without first carefully comparing it to the teaching in God's word.

Let's be grateful not grumbling, remember what God has done for us and submit in obedience to his sovereign will.