

Giants in the Land

01/26/2014

Hymns: 1 A Mighty Fortress Is Our God 8 Great Is Thy Faithfulness
Scripture: Psalm 37:1-11; 106:1-7, 21-26

Does anyone know what happens in just seven days? Denver vs. Seattle. Broncos vs. Seahawks. Super Bowl 48. Next Sunday. Are you ready?

Speaking of football, have you heard about the high school player who's bigger than any player in the NFL? His name is Tony Picard. He's seventeen years old, six feet four inches tall, and weighs 400 pounds. He plays for White Swan High School, Cascade Mountains, Washington state. Apparently, opposing teams devote four or five players just to stop this **giant** running back.

Today, we're going to look briefly at a land reported to be **filled with giants** and see what they do to Israel.

Review

Two weeks ago, we looked at how the God,

1. Who wasted Egypt through plagues,
2. won His people's freedom from slavery,
3. spoiled the Egyptians,

saved His people when they were trapped and the Egyptian army was about to descend upon them.

We'll pick up the story there. Israel has left Egypt, God destroyed the Egyptian army, and has headed for the Promised Land.

Deuteronomy 1

*[19] And when we [the Israelites] departed from Horeb [many believe this to be Sinai], we went through all that great and terrible wilderness, which ye saw by the way of the mountain of the Amorites, as **the LORD our God commanded us**; and we came to Kadesh-barnea [a place south and west of the Dead Sea].*

*[20] And I [Moses] said unto you, Ye are come unto the mountain of the Amorites, which **the LORD our God doth give unto us**.*

[21] Behold,

*[who?]
the LORD thy God
[what?]
hath set the land before thee:
go up and possess it,
[how?]
as the LORD God of thy fathers hath said unto thee;
fear not,
neither be discouraged.*

Did the Israelites do what the Lord told them to do?

*[22] And ye came near unto me every one of you, and said, **We will***

Note this is **their plan**, not God's plan.

*send men before us, and **they shall**
search us out the land, and
bring us word again by what way we must go up, and
into what cities we shall come.*

[23] *And the saying pleased me well: and I [Moses] took twelve men of you, one of a tribe:*

Moses directed them to go the length and breadth of the land looking for cities, checking the quality of farmland, and locating military fortresses. And he **told** them to bring back samples of the crops.

Numbers 13

[23] *And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates, and of the figs.*

[25] *And they returned from searching of the land after **forty days**.*

[26] *And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to **all** the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto **all** the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land.*

[27] *And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it.*

Where did that expression “milk and honey” come from? It came from a **promise** the Lord made to Israel (Exodus 3:8; 3:17; 13:5). Here's one example:

Exodus 3

[7] *And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;*

[8] *And I am come down to **deliver them** out of the hand of the Egyptians, **and** to bring them up out of that land unto*

[Where?]

*a good land and a large, unto **a land flowing with milk and honey***

There's that phrase.

; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

The Lord was very specific. Now let's return to our passage in Numbers 13.

[28] *Nevertheless*

*the people be strong that dwell in the land, and
the cities are walled, and
very great: and
moreover we saw the children of Anak there.*

Then came the viewpoint of another spy.

[30] *And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, **Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.***

Did the Israelites listen to him?

[31] *But the men that went up with him said, **We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.***

[32] *And they brought up an **evil report** of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, *The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and **all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature.****

[33] *And there we saw the **giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.***

Numbers 14

[1] *And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and **the people wept that night.***

[2] *And **all the children of Israel murmured** against Moses and against Aaron: and **the whole congregation** said unto them,*

Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness! [as we shall see, the Lord will give them their wish]

[3] *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?*

[4] *And they said one to another,
Let us make a captain, and
let us return into Egypt.*

How could the Israelites so quickly forget their Redeemer? Where is the voice of reason?

[5] *Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel.*

[6] *And **Joshua** the son of Nun, and **Caleb** the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes:*

[7] *And they spake unto **all the company** of the children of Israel, saying, *The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land.**

[8] *If the **LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey.***

[9] *Only
rebel not ye against the LORD,
neither fear ye the people of the land;*

*for they are bread for us:
their defence is departed from them, and*

the LORD is with us:

fear them not.

How did the Israelites respond to this message?

[10] *But all the congregation [said] bade stone them with stones.*

If you don't like the message, kill the messenger. How reminiscent this is of the passage in John 10:31 where people took up stones to stone another Joshua (Jesus Christ).

God had had enough.

And the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel.

[11] *And the LORD said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have shewed among them?*

In Hebrews 3:17-19 the writer explicitly states the reason for this judgment by God was their unbelief.

[17] *But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?*

[18] *And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?*

[19] *So we see that they could not enter in [why?] because of unbelief.*

[12] *I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they.*

Then Moses interceded for the Israelites making the following points:

1. The Egyptians will learn that God's people died in the wilderness.
2. The nations will say the Lord was not able to bring His people into the Promised Land.
3. The Lord is longsuffering, of great mercy, and forgiving – though still the righteous judge.
4. According to God's great mercy as He had shown in the past, Moses requested a pardon.

[20] *And the LORD said, I have pardoned according to thy word:*

Let's see how the Lord stays true to his word and still honors Moses' prayer.

Numbers 14

[21] *But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD.*

[Why?]

[22] *Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice;*

[23] *Surely they shall not see the land which I sware unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it:*

The Lord then instructed Moses to lead the Israelites back into the wilderness.

*[29] **Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness**; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me,*

*[30] Doubtless ye **shall not come into the land**, concerning which I sware to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.*

Note the two exceptions, Caleb and Joshua, were the two spies who had faith.

*[31] **But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in**, and they shall know the land which ye have despised.*

*[32] **But as for you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness.***

*[33] And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, **and bear your whoredoms**, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness.*

Note that even their children faced some consequences of their faithless actions. Moses acknowledged this in his prayer referring to consequences of sin lingering to the third and fourth generations.

*[34] **After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years**, and ye shall know my breach of promise.*

*[35] I the LORD have said, I will surely do it unto **all this evil congregation**, that are gathered together against me: **in this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die.***

Next the Lord pronounced a special judgment on the ten fearful and faithless spies.

*[36] And the men, which Moses sent to search the land, who returned, and made **all the congregation** to murmur against him, by bringing up a slander upon the land,*

*[37] **Even those men that did bring up the evil report upon the land, died by the plague before the LORD.***

Then the Lord restated His blessing upon the faithful few.

[38] But Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of the men that went to search the land, lived still.

Here we see God **did** kill off all of the faithless, but at the same time He showed mercy to those who honored Him and to the innocent. While God remained true to His word, He also showed mercy and brought glory to Himself (as Moses requested) by bringing His people into the Promised Land.

Finally, the Israelites demonstrated to the Lord once again their disobedient, faithless way.

*[39] And Moses told these sayings unto all the children of Israel: and the **people mourned greatly.***

[40] And

they rose up early in the morning, and

gat them up into the top of the mountain, saying, Lo, we be here, and will go up unto the place which the LORD hath promised: for we have sinned.

The Israelites, having been judged by God, decided that they had better go it alone and win the victory in their own strength. Their attempt failed. Some were killed and the rest were humiliated. Without God, they were powerless.

Application

The following excerpt is condensed from The Believer's Armor, Part 3: The Shoes of the Gospel of Peace
Ephesians 6:15 May 20, 1979 1957
Available online at: <http://www.gty.org>
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A little over a week ago, I heard a story told by John MacArthur on his radio show "Grace to You" about an incident from his junior high days. When he was in the 7th grade, he had a friend in the same grade named Roger. Roger was small for his age and sort of looked like the Pillsbury Dough Boy.

The school was rough with lots of violence and some students who were much older than their normal grade age. As you might guess, the bad kids (he called them hoods which is what we called them) liked to tease and pick on Roger. A group of them would come up behind him, knock out his books and notebooks and kick them down the sidewalk and into the bushes.

One day, the leader, Johnny (strangely we had a Johnny too), knocked John and his friend Roger over the seats in front of the lockers -- slamming them to the floor and against the lockers. After that, Roger said that he had enough. Roger was going to tell his brother Steve.

"Steve played middle linebacker for Long Beach State. Steve was 6'4" about 245 and had a thirty inch waist," Steve came to school a couple days later. While he watched from behind a building, Roger summoned Johnny who was hanging out with about six of his friends before school. As Johnny came swaggering and mocking Roger, Steve emerged and asked Roger "Which one?"

Here's how John MacArthur described what happened next. "He just picked the guy up by his shirt, lifted him up, took his fist and knocked out four teeth with one shot just crushed his nose down..." Johnny was out cold. Steve threw him over the bushes and against the wall. Steve then announced to Johnny's friends "don't you ever mess with Roger again." It worked. From then on, according to MacArthur "Roger ruled."

Oh, and by the way. One little tidbit: That Super Bowl that I mentioned earlier, it will be played in the **Giant's** stadium.

So what's the point of this story? We all have **giants** in our lives. Perhaps they knock us down and slam us up against lockers or just mow over us. We feel down and beaten and perhaps without hope. I'm here to tell you we have hope – no matter how formidable our foe may be. His name is not Tony or Steve and He doesn't play football. His name is Joshua which means Savior. He is Jesus Christ.

I Peter 5

*[6] Humble yourselves therefore under the **mighty hand** of God, that he may **exalt you** in due time:*

[7] Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

He spoke the world into existence and will speak and destroy it all. He's the mighty Lion of the Tribe of Judah. And He is the One who wants to fight our battles for us. Will we trust Him? Will we let Him win the victory?

Benediction

*Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think,
according to the power that worketh in us,*

Unto him be glory

in the church

by Christ Jesus

throughout all ages,

world without end. Amen. (Ephesians 3:20-21)