

Returning to Egypt

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Scripture references: Numbers 14; I Cor. 10:1-13; Hebrews 3

While reading through Numbers this month I was forcefully struck with the similarity between Israel's Kadesh Barnea experience and most churches today. I would encourage you to read Numbers 14 and you will see the parallel.

Let's review their brief history to this point. They had been "taken captive" in Egypt; they were "alive" but they were enslaved. They served an evil, wicked ruler, Pharaoh. We all know that Egypt is a *type* of the world and Pharaoh a *type* of Satan who tries to hold people in bondage to the world and world systems. These were God's chosen people – the people He had chosen to work with to redeem the earth!

God not only sent a chosen leader, Moses, to lead the people out of Egypt but the Lord also manifested Himself supernaturally to the people over and over again. They obeyed Moses and the Lord in sprinkling the blood, spoiling the Egyptians and leaving Egypt. What an exciting time! We're finally going to get to leave this enslavement and oppression of the enemy and be free!

Notice they were happy to obey the Lord as long as things were easy – as long as the Lord's plan didn't require them to have much faith or to engage in warfare. But at Kadesh the nation of Israel was confronted with their future – God was not going to just "give" them the Promised Land – they were going to have to fight the enemy and dislodge him from *his* territory; he had been there for centuries, he had a big investment there and he wasn't going to give it up easily.

Unless we read it often or else the Spirit of God gives us a *rhema* word concerning an Old Testament passage we fail to see the significance and relevance to our lives today. But this incident is spoken about often in the New Testament, especially by the Apostle Paul. The warning in I Corinthians 10 catches my attention every month when I read it. Hebrews is equally emphatic that we must persevere in Christianity and not lose faith in "The Living God."

However, I think even a casual look at most churches today, especially in the USA and Canada, reveals that most have "returned to Egypt." They are not engaged in spiritual warfare to *free* their Promised Land and seem to be less interested in fulfilling The Great Commission than in enjoying the meat and melons of Egypt. Part of covenant and the Great Commission is to take the Gospel to the world through missions and to free the captives through deliverance ministry. Most churches are engaged in neither.

The Lord has ordained Five-fold ministry to teach, train and mature the Body of Christ yet most churches and “Christian” television devotes no time to this but rather to Egypt with such programs as dieting, exercise, investing, and beg-a-thons to raise money, etc. We need to shake ourselves, awake from lethargy and enter into spiritual warfare to free the Promised Land given to the Church by the Lord. If we don’t, like Israel we will be condemned to “die in the desert.”