

Planning . . . For Him!

Lesson Text: **Numbers 13:2-3**

INTRODUCTION:

A. Each time one of the following names sounds familiar, please briefly raise your hand.

- | | |
|------------|------------|
| 1. Shammua | 7. Ammiel |
| 2. Shaphat | 8. Sethur |
| 3. Igal | 9. Nahbi |
| 4. Palti | 10. Geuel |
| 5. Gaddiel | 11. Caleb |
| 6. Gaddi | 12. Joshua |

B. **Numbers 13:2-15** - The sending out of the 12 spies to spy out the land of Canaan

"Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the children of Israel; from each tribe of their fathers **YOU SHALL SEND A MAN, EVERY ONE A LEADER AMONG THEM.**"

So Moses sent them from the Wilderness of Paran according to the command of the LORD, **ALL OF THEM MEN WHO WERE HEADS OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL.**

1. Out of this camp of God's New Testament Israel, men are gathered to spy out the future and to begin building a bridge from where we presently are to where God can and will lead us.
2. What we set in motion today will be judged when Jesus comes . . . again.
3. If God is your partner . . . make your plans large.
3. Let your faith look farther than your eyes can see.
4. Today's meeting may be the beginning of God's leveraging this for congregation for the future.
5. That day . . . success was blocked by those leaders assigned for the task.
 - a. Walking by sight and not by faith.
 - b. Relying on their own strength rather than upon God's strength.

C. Two reports in Numbers 13

1. **Verse 31** - 10 of the 12 spies said - "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we."
2. **Verse 30** - Caleb said - "Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it."

D. Israel's hour of decision had come . . . how did they choose?

1. **Numbers 14:1-2** - "So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night. And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron . . ."

2. **Numbers 14:4** – “So they said to one another, ‘Let us select a leader and return to Egypt.’”

E. What were they saying?

1. We have been shown and presented with a new future . . . but we want the past.
2. We have been shown new areas to walk in . . . but we want to walk in the familiar area we have already walked in.
3. We have been show a new way and a new place . . . but we want the old way and the old place.
4. We will listen to leadership sight that will keep us from going forward rather than listen to the leadership of faith that will lead us forward.
5. We will listen to our will for us . . . rather than listen to God’s will for us.

F. Brethren:

1. The congregation of Israel had reached a comfort level from which they did not want to be moved.
2. It was a choice of God’s way or their way. They chose their way.
3. When they chose their way . . . they were denied God’s way.
4. When it came to faith they were without sight.
5. The only thing they had faith in was sight.
6. God does not want His people held back when He has set His will before them.

E. Demonstrating great faith, “Joshua and Caleb said: ‘He will bring us into this land and give it to us.’” **Numbers 14:8**

F. How sad . . .

1. That at this all important junction in their lives they would choose bondage to man rather than the rewards of God.
2. The lack of faith of the ten destroyed the faith of the congregation.
3. 12 spies . . . 10 faithless . . . 2 faithful . . . the majority is not always right.

G. **Sight leads to the past . . . Faith leads to the future.**

H. God’s great will has never depended on great numbers!

I. From this Biblical story we learn how NOT to lead:

1. Do not lead by sight to the past . . . but by faith to the future.
2. Do not oppose God’s will when his will differs from your own.
3. Do not lead by numbers . . . lead by the revealed principles of God’s will.

J. Wrong decisions today will effect the congregation for years to come. Right decisions will avoid that wandering in a in a wilderness of disobedience.

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TODAY AND . . . ANY DAY WE PLAN . . . WE ARE PLANNING FOR HIM!

- A. In **Revelation 3:8** – To the faithful church at Philadelphia, Jesus said: “I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it.”
- B. **Luke 12:48** – In concluding the story of the faithful servant and the unfaithful servant, Jesus said: “For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.”
- C. In **1 Samuel 3:9**, Eli told the young Samuel to answer in this fashion – “Speak, LORD, for Your servant hears.”
- D. In **Isaiah 6:8** we read - “Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: “Whom shall I send, And who will go for Us?” Then I said, ‘Here am I! Send me.’”
1. I volunteer to be a leader.
 2. I volunteer to be a follower.
 3. I volunteer to be a worker.
 4. I volunteer my talents and my abilities.
 5. I volunteer to be a giver
 6. I volunteer my leverage any and all influence for my God.
 6. I volunteer to try.

IT WAS AN EXCITING DAY

- A. It was an exciting day when the Israelites began to build the tabernacle . . . and a great day when it was completed.

- B. It was an exciting day when the Israelites began to build God’s temple . . . and an even greater day when it was completed and dedicated.
- C. It was an exciting day when the remnant began to rebuild Jerusalem . . . and an even greater day when it was completed.
- D. It was a great day when the remnant began to rebuild the Temple . . . and an even greater day when it was finally completed.
- E. It was an exciting day when Jesus began to build the church . . . and it will be an exciting day when He takes it home and presents it to His Heavenly Father.
- F. This is an exciting day as this congregation begins to build its future.

A PLANNING DAY FOR THE LORD’S CHURCH AND WORK, IS A GREAT DAY WHEREIN

- A. It will be a day where faith . . not sight will be summoned.
- B. It will be a day when a love for lost souls at home and abroad will be summoned.
- C. It will be a day when fervent prayer will be summoned.
- D. It will be a day when God’s will will be summoned.
- E. It is a day when we must learn . . . know . . . remember . . . and never forget that:
 - Faith is not **BELIEVING** that God CAN . . . faith is **KNOWING** that God WILL.
 - If God is your partner . . . make your plans large.
 - God’s work must go forward . . . not backward.
 - God’s will must be done . . . not debated.
 - God’s servants must serve . . . not slack.
 - You should never plan as if it success depends solely upon your ability . . . if doesn’t
 - There aren’t any rules for success that work . . . unless you do.
 - Take the congregation as it is . . . and make it what it should be.
 - Take the congregation as it is . . . and make it bigger.
 - Take the congregation as it is . . . and make it more faithful.
 - Take the congregation as it is . . . and extend its reach outward into the lives of many.
 - Take the congregation as it is . . . and strengthen its dependance upon God.
 - Take the congregation as it is . . . and prepare it for those who will come after us.
 - Take the congregation as it is . . . and use it to bless God.

FOUR GREAT STATEMENTS FROM THE GREAT BOOK OF NEHEMIAH.

- A. “Let us rise up and build.” (**Nehemiah 2:18**) There was the beginning.

- B. “Then they set their hands to this good work.” (Nehemiah 2:18) There was the effort, . . . the work . . . and the process.
- C. “So the wall was finished.” (Nehemiah 6:15) There was the end result and the accomplishing of the task.
- D. “They perceived that this work was done by our God.” (Nehemiah 6:16) There was the reason for their success . . . and ours.

PLANNING GOOD WORKS FOR GOD IS AN IMPORTANT WORK IN AND OF ITSELF.

- A. Today we rise up and plan . . . in preparation for rising up and doing.
 - Some plans could be immediate.
 - Some plans could begin shortly.
 - Some plans may need to begin sometime in the future.
 - Immediate . . . short range . . . long range . . . each in its season, led by God, will be accomplished.
- B. Today we do some gardening
 - Today we do some planting . . .
 - Today we do some watering of seeds already planted by others in earlier times.
 - In His own time, God **WILL** give the increase.
- C. Brethren . . . we want to be ambitious for our Lord beyond our humble size.
- D. Brethren
 1. Brethren . . . it takes vision.
 2. Brethren . . . it takes planning.
 3. Brethren . . . it takes faith. “For we walk by faith, not by sight.”
2 Corinthians 5:7
 4. Brethren . . . it takes us working **WITH** Him.
 5. Brethren . . . it takes leadership . . . and it takes follow-ship.
- E. There are some “musts.”
 1. We must have zeal . . . and that according to knowledge.
 2. We must put forth effort . . . and that according to His will.
 3. We must minister . . . we must serve. . . we must try!
- F. There is a dying world . . . dying untold . . . There are untold million dying untold.
- G. An example of one who believed in trying—John Wesley
 - Traveled 250,000 miles on horseback . . . averaged 20 miles a day . . . for 40 years.
 - Preached 40,000 sermons.
 - Produced 400 books.
 - Knew 10 languages.
 - At age 83 he was annoyed that he could not write more than 15 hours a day without hurting his eyes.

- At age 86 he was ashamed that he could not preach more than twice a day.
- He complained in his diary that there was an increasing tendency to lie in bed until 5:30 in the morning.

H. **2 Corinthians 4:7** – “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.”

I. **2 Corinthians 9:15** – “Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!”

J. As Mordecai said to Esther in **Esther 5:14** – “. . . Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this.”

1. Brethren . . . Who knows whether you have come to the church for such a time as this,
2. Brethren . . . who knows whether you have come to for such a time as this.
3. Brethren . . . who knows whether you have come to this congregation for such a time as this.

K. Brethren:

1. Maybe you can see what others have not been able to see.
2. Maybe you can plan what others have not been able to plan.
3. Maybe you can do what others have not been able to do.

L. Illustration: On day Michelangelo saw a block of marble which the owner said was of no valuable to me,” Michelangelo. “There’s an angel imprisoned in it and I must set it free.”

M. Consider this:

1. Longfellow could take a worthless sheet of paper, write a poem on it and make it worth \$6,000—that’s GENIUS.
2. Rockefeller could sign his name to a piece of paper and make it worth a million dollars—that’s CAPITAL.
3. Uncle Sam can take silver, stamp and emblem on it and make it worth a dollar—that’s MONEY.
4. A mechanic can take metal that is worth only \$5.00 and make it worth \$50.00—that’s SKILL.
5. An artist can take a 50 cent piece of canvas, paint a picture on it and make it worth \$1,000—that’s ART.
6. God can take a worthless sinful life, wash it in the blood of Christ, and make it a blessing to humanity—that’s SALVATION.
7. God can take a plan He desire to have carried out, place it in the hearts and minds of His faithful servants—that’s UNSTOPPABLE.
8. What can you do with an idea whose time has come? If that idea is of God, there is no power on earth to stop it. It has been said that **“There’s nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come.”**

N. I invite you to consider this:

- Shamgar had an oxgoad . . . and God used it.
- David had a sling . . . and God used it.

- Samson had a jawbone of a donkey . . . and God used it.
- Rahab had a string . . . and God used it.
- Mary had an ointment . . . and God used it.
- Aaron had a rod . . . and God used it.
- Dorcas had a needle . . . and God used it.
- A lad had some a few loaves and fishes . . . and God used it.
- Appolos had an eloquence . . . and God used it.

O. Maybe spiritual history will note:

- Myrtle Beach had a congregation . . . and God used it.
- That congregation was not many in number . . . but God used them.
- That congregation had faith . . . and God used it.
- That congregation had a planning meeting . . . and God used it.
- That congregation had some great ideas . . . and God used them.
- That congregation reached out to serve . . . and God blessed them with success.

P. **Faith honors God . . . God honors faith . . . Will you give Him faith to honor?**

Q. **Proverbs 16:2** - (NASB) – “Commit your works to the Lord And your plans will be established.”

R. In whatever works God may enable us to do “. . . Know this! For as the rains come down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there. But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater.

So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.” (**Isaiah 55:10-11**).

CONCLUSION:

A. “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” **Philippians 4:13**

B. **ILLUSTRATION:** I have no hands but yours “**There nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come.**”

C. **God’s Plan for Man’s Salvation**