

## The Grasshopper Complex

No. 270

### Introduction.

I. In the book of Exodus we read of the children of Israel in bondage in Egypt. Through the power of God Moses and Aaron led the children of Israel out of Egypt and through the divided Red Sea and on to Mount Sinai where God gave the 10 commandments.

II. Later Moses led the children of Israel to the wilderness of Paran near the promised land of Canaan.

A. God told Moses to send 12 spies, one from each tribe, into Canaan to spy out the land. (Num. 13:2). They were to find out if the people were **few or many, strong or weak**, and report on whether the **land was good or bad**.

B. The 12 spies went out and after 40 days the spies returned and said that Canaan was a wonderful land and that it truly flowed with milk and honey

1. Two of the spies, Joshua and Caleb, had a great report. (Num. 13:30).

2. The other ten spies had a very negative, pessimistic report.

**31 "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are too strong for us." 32 So they gave out to the sons of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, "The land through which we have gone, in spying it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great size.**

**33 "There also we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak are part of the Nephilim); and we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight."**

3. Even though Joshua and Caleb were full of faith and optimism, the 10 other spies prevailed and Israel followed their negative, pessimistic report and began to murmur against God and complained they had been brought out into the wilderness to die. Because of their lack of faith, Israel was made to wander in the wilderness for 40 years. Most of the Israelites were not allowed to enjoy Canaan because they followed the report and attitude of the 10 spies.

III. For our lesson I would like to us to consider some of the lessons we can learn from the 12 spies.

I. **Negative Attitudes Of The Ten Evil Spies** - Let us first consider the negative attitudes of the ten evil spies.

A. These men because of fear and lack of faith in God had a grasshopper complex.

1. They viewed themselves as tiny grasshoppers in comparison to the Canaanites.

2. **This was a gross exaggeration** . The Canaanites may have been a few inches taller than the Israelites, but they certainly were not literal giants or hundreds of times the size of Israelites.

**B. The evil report sparked terror in the hearts of tens of thousands of the Israelites.**

1. The people, in fear, quickly forgot that God had delivered them from slavery by sending 10 plagues on the Egyptians. They had quickly forgotten God had led them on dry ground through the divided Red Sea. They had quickly forgotten that God had drown the Egyptian army in the Red Sed and God had led them with a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.
2. They became filled with negative thoughts and even wanted to stone Joshua and Caleb who gave a positive report. (Num. 14:6-8).

C. Because of the pessimism of the 10 spies and the majority of the Israelites, Israel did not enjoy the great blessing of God. God wanted them to be victorious, but most of them spent 40 miserable years in the wilderness.

**II. Forty Years Later** - Forty years later the Israelites once again had the opportunity to enter the promised land.

A. Joshua and Caleb were leading Israel.

**B. They are filled with courage and optimism.** They are confident that God was with them and were determined to do His will. (Num. 14:9b).

C. Because they followed Joshua and Caleb (men of great faith and courage), they entered Canaan and defeated the Canaanites. The so-called giants turned out to be no match for those who had faith in God.

**III. Great Lessons For Us** - The story of Israel and the 12 spies contains some great lessons for us.

A. It teaches we must never have the grasshopper complex.

1. God created grasshoppers, but He never intended for His children to be grasshoppers.
2. **He wants us to be men and women of great faith, not fearful weaklings.** He wants us to bravely and courageously face the challenges before us.
3. God wants us to be a powerful force for good bringing glory to Himself, not ourselves.
4. **He does not want to hear statements like these from His children.**

|                               |   |  |
|-------------------------------|---|--|
| We are too small.             | We have too many personal needs.                          | We do not know where the money will come from. |
| We do not have enough talent. | People are not interested, and so why should we even try. | We just do not have the time.                  |
| We have to many old folks.    | We just can't do any more.                                | Someone else will do it.                       |
| We are too young.             | We are already doing more than most.                      | Let someone else do it.                        |
| We're scared.                 | We're too busy.   |  |

**B. We are not to be men and women of faithless excuses,** but God wants us to be men and women who have unwavering faith in Him.

1. We need to realize that our God is Bigger and more Powerful than we can even imagine and with His help we can do anything.
2. We have God on our side. All we need to do is trust Him and depend on Him rather than our feeble

finite thinking. (Jos. 1:9; Psa. 20:7; Rom. 8:1, 31, 37; Phil. 4:13; 1 Jn. 5:4,5).

C. All of us need to trust God and need to be able and willing to meet the great challenges God has set before us.

1. **Recently I read these words about a farmer who had two mules.** Because the story of these two mules is so strange and complicated I am going to read it.

One was named "**willing**" and the other was named "**able**." The story goes that **willing** was willing, but was not able. On the other hand, **able** was able, but was not willing. **Able** thought **willing** should have been more able, but how could he, when he was not able, but was willing? **Willing** thought **able** should have been more willing, but how could he, when he was not willing, but was able? All would have been great, if only **willing** would have been more willing, and **able** more able; but, neither **willing** nor **able** were both willing and able, and as you might well expect, the farmer didn't get much done.

2. **The moral of this story is very clear.**

- a. God wants us to have a great dynamic faith. He wants us to be spiritual dynamite.
- b. But all the faith in the world is worthless unless we are both able and willing.

3. **With the help of God we are able to do great things.** We are able to soar like eagles. We are able to make a big difference in this world of sin.

4. **But we must be willing.** We must be on fire for God and be ready to be used in His service or not much work will be done in the church and we nor the world will not know the blessings of God.

## Conclusion.

I. I believe the New Road congregation has a great future. I believe, if we trust God, He will make us a **shining light** in the world. I believe if we will put our trust in God and His word that God will bless us exceedingly above all that we ask or think. I believe He will open doors in this community and in the world.

II. But if we think and act with a grasshopper complex, we will miss the great blessing of God in this world and the world to come.

III. I would like to close by reading the words of this great song of faith.

"His banner over us is love,  
Our sword the Word of God;  
We tread the road the saints above,  
With shouts of triumph trod.

By faith they, like a whirlwind's breath,  
Swept on o'er every field;  
The faith by which they conquered death,  
Is still our shining shield. Faith is the victory!  
Faith is the victory!  
Oh glorious victory that overcomes the world."

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