**Week of Sept 29, 2019**

**Numbers 14:10b-20**

**Key Verse:** “I have forgiven them, as you asked.”

(Numbers 14:8)

10 But all the congregation bade stone them with stones. 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? 12 I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they. 13 And Moses said unto the LORD, Then the Egyptians shall hear it, (for thou broughtest up this people in thy might from among them;) 14 And they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land: for they have heard that thou LORD art among this people, that thou LORD art seen face to face, and that thy cloud standeth over them, and that thou goest before them, by day time in a pillar of a cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night. 15 Now if thou shalt kill all this people as one man, then the nations which have heard the fame of thee will speak, saying, 16 Because the LORD was not able to bring this people into the land which he sware unto them, therefore he hath slain them in the wilderness. 17 And now, I beseech thee, let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying, 18 The LORD is longsuffering\*, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation. 19 Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now. 20 And the LORD said, I have pardoned according to thy word:

**Understanding the Scriptures**

In continuation of last week’s lesson, the people reached the borders of Canaan, the Promised Land that God instructed Moses to send spies into. One reason why the spies were sent was to see if the land was as good as God had promised. In fact, the spies brought back a cluster of grapes so big that it took two men to carry it. Leas week’s lesson showed us the spies’ report and the reaction of Moses and Aaron to the spies’ disbelief, notwithstanding the plea from Joshua and Caleb to believe and trust God. The test picks up with Moses and Aaron facing a serious predicament and God realized it. God appeared in His Glory. The glory of the Lord is associated with the appearance of the fiery cloud of the divine presence. God appeared at the tabernacle. The “Tent of Meeting,” also known as the tabernacle, is composed of the portable sacred tent and is the divine presence in the midst of Israel’s camp where Moses communicated with God (Exodus 33:7-11). God was angry. He had heard the pe people’s lack of faith and saw their rebellion. The gravity of this rebellion is underscored by the fact that God threatened to destroy and disinherit Israel from the promises He had made to them. This had occurred only once before, during the golden calf incident (Exodus 32:10). God’s appearance in His glory probably blinded the rebels. God was ready to destroy the nation, but Moses intercedes on their behalf, serving as a mediator between God and the people. In Moses’ prayer, he reminded God that He promised Abraham that his descendants would inherit the land (Exodus 32:13). As a result of Moses’ intercession on behalf of the people, God forgave the Israelites. But God told Moses that because the people had rebelled against Him, their numbered men would die in the wilderness, except for Joshua and Caleb. In Moses’ prayer, he pleaded for the Lord’s promise, former mercies, and – most important – Moses argued in his prayer that God’s honor was at stake.

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