**Forty Years of Funerals- What It Takes To Enter the Promised Land**

Background: Num.13:23 – 14:35. Forty years of funerals… that’s what Israel did in the Wilderness! Think about it, because that’s what they did for forty years. What if you were one of the ones who each day, wondered if it today would be the day you fell and your children buried you! Can you imagine what that was like?

These things were written for our instruction, 1Cor.10:1-11, and to get us to think and realize what we’re doing, 1Cor.10:12-13,14-22.

Now let’s switch to another passage that is based on this same event and its results, **Heb.3**, and consider:

**1. Cause and Effect is still true, vv.1-6.**

Moses was *faithful* as their leader, v.5; but such didn’t prevent forty years of funerals, nor their generational failure to enter the Promised Land.

Jesus Christ is even *more faithful* as our leader (and obviously, the *Hebrews* to which this letter is written), but He will not be the reason we fail to reach the Promised Land of heaven, if indeed we fail to do so, vv.1-4,6a.

Instead, failure (if such occurs) will be our lack of *faith* and *trust* in God, just as it was for that generation who died in the Wilderness, vv.6b-11.

**2. We need *vigilance,* v.12**.

We need to realize that this verse doesn’t just prove that *believing, God-followers* can turn away from Him and be eternally lost, it proves that we can turn away from God, become lost, die in the wilderness, and not make the Promised Land! Our hearts, too, can become *evil, unbelieving,* and lead us into *falling away from the living God.*

**3. We need *encouragement* from *one another*, v.13**.

How differently might things have been if the other ten spies were as *encouraging* as Joshua and Caleb, cf. Num.13:30; 14:6-9. *Encourage* one another; remind one another of the importance of *“Today;”* remind one another of the *hardened* (of heart) that comes from the *deceitfulness of sin,* cp. 1Tim.4:1-2.

**4. We need *steadfastness* and *commitment,* v.14.**

We must understand *where* our Promised Land is. This world is our *wilderness*. It will take *steadfastness* and *commitment* to keep moving forward to make it our Promised Land. Our *“rest”* comes not in this life, but in the next, cf. 4:1ff! All too often, we say of this world, “Egypt is good enough!” as they did, and give up on heaven, Acts 7:39; Heb.10:39.

**5. We need *tenderheartedness,* v.15.**

Israel’s fatal flaw may well have been *hard-heartedness,* but it was apparently fairly specific. They stopped *listening to God,* v.15a! They said, “Yes, but…” to God’s Word. They stopped believing/trusting that He knew more and better than they did. They *hardened their own hearts,* just as Pharaoh had done, to what they had already *heard* and *seen* from God. May we ever keep *tender hearts* that *listen* and *heed* God’s Word above all else!

**6. We need *courage to stand alone* if necessary, v.16.**

They needed courage to do the right thing even if no one else, or only one other (Joshua or Caleb), did. They needed the courage to stand with the minority rather than the majority. And so do we, Matt.7:13-14!

**7. We need to *turn away from sin* rather than God, vv.17-18.**

How often we, when we are *discouraged* and our *faith is weak,* turn *from God to sin* rather than *to Him* for *strength and courage.* Jesus has *been there* and NOT *done that,* but certainly knows how to help, cf. Heb.4:14-16. Turn to Him, not sin!

**8. We need to be *faithful* rather than *faithless,* v.19.**

*Faithful* Joshua and Caleb were the only ones above 20 years old at the beginning of the Wilderness Wanderings that entered the Promised Land. Above all else, *faith* in God (rather than themselves, or even other men) enabled them to enter. By contrast, all who did not enter, more than anything else, died in the Wilderness because of *unbelief.* Faithlessness. Which will it be for you?