

CHANGING WANDERERS INTO WORSHIPERS

From the Exodus to the Promised Land

How to Fail—in Four Simple Lessons

Selections from Numbers 13 and 14

SEARCHING
THE
SCRIPTURES

STUDY



LET'S BEGIN HERE

Despite receiving warnings of icebergs, Captain Edward Smith sailed his ship at full speed on the clear night of April 14, 1912. The *RMS Titanic* carried more than two thousand passengers when it struck the ice near midnight. At least fifteen hundred people died when the *Titanic* sank early Monday morning on April 15, 1912.

Many of life's shipwrecks can be avoided if we simply heed the warnings—a statement as true today as it was for Moses and the Israelites as they began their wilderness wanderings from Mount Sinai.

Today, we'll join Chuck Swindoll in exploring the waters of Numbers 13–14, which contain the tragic story of the Israelite spies igniting fear and unbelief in their fellow sojourners. Nevertheless, we'll learn how God would not let their cowardice prevent His plan from sailing forward.



YOUR TURN IN THE SCRIPTURES

As we continue in the book of Numbers for our series *Changing Wanderers into Worshipers*, we come upon the continued testing of God's faithfulness and forbearance by the rebellious wilderness generation found in Numbers 10:11–25:18.

First, the Israelites rebelled by murmuring about their misfortunes. Second, they complained about God's provision of manna. Third, they challenged Moses' authority. Today's passage, Numbers 13–14, covers their rejection of the promised land. They simply refused to believe God's promise to give them a good land of their very own, even after all He'd already done for them.

Quotable

*Keep in mind
that we're after
character, not
comfort, and that
the Christian life
is a faith walk not
based on sight.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



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Before we begin, pray that God would unite His Word with your heart. Really consider what you would like to learn today. Record your prayer below.



Searching the Scriptures Review Tip

Let's review the first step of our *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study method: observation. We observe the passage by reading it thoroughly. During this step we examine:

1. The who, what, where, when, why, and how
2. What you can see, touch, taste, hear, and smell
3. The logical connections, flow of thought, and range of subjects
4. What's repeated, emphasized, related, alike, and unlike



Observation: Reading Thoroughly

As you observe today's passage, note carefully the emphases throughout the dialogue. We've divided the text, according to our subheadings, on *Bible Gateway* with Chuck's two favorite Bible versions: the New Living Translation and the New American Standard Bible.

Numbers 13:1–16—God's Instructions to Moses

Observe Numbers 13:1–16. Record below the speaker and listener in this passage along with any other core observations.



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Summarize in one sentence the content of what was spoken.

Numbers 13:17–20—Moses' Instructions to the Scouts

Observe Numbers 13:17–20. Record below the speaker and listeners in this passage along with any other core observations.

Note below what Moses told the scouts to examine.

1. Are the people _____ or _____, _____ or _____?
2. Is the land _____ or _____?
3. Are their towns _____ or _____?
4. Is the soil _____ or _____?
5. Are there many _____?

Then Moses told them, “Don't forget to bring back pickings from the crops!”

Numbers 13:21–24—The Scouts Spy in the Promised Land

Observe Numbers 13:21–24. In one sentence, summarize this passage by noting the subject and what the author said about the subject.



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Numbers 13:25–33—The Report from the Journey

Observe Numbers 13:25–33. Record below the speakers and listeners in this passage along with any other core observations.

How did Caleb's report contrast with the other spies' report?

Numbers 14:1–12—Congregational Conflict

Observe Numbers 14:1–12. Record below the speakers and listeners in this passage along with any other core observations.

How did Caleb and Joshua's response contrast with the response of the community?



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Numbers 14:13–19—Moses' Intercession

Observe Numbers 14:13–19. Record below how Moses appealed to God by referencing His reputation and character.

Numbers 14:20–45—God's Response

Observe Numbers 14:20–45. Summarize in one sentence God's response to Moses.

The Israelite scouts went to the land and focused only upon the obstacles. They neglected to remember the power God had displayed against Egypt and at Mount Sinai, so they didn't believe God's promise to be with them to take the land.



Interpretation: Understanding Deeply

During the interpretation step in our study on Numbers 13–14, we'll contrast the faithful and faithless Israelites along with the grace and judgment of God in His response to them.

The Faithful Israelites

Which characters in this passage demonstrated *faithfulness* to God?



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Specify the actions or attitudes that demonstrated the faithfulness of each of these characters.

The Faithless Israelites

Which characters in this passage demonstrated *faithlessness* to God?

Specify the actions or attitudes that demonstrated the faithlessness of each of these characters.

God's Judgment

What did God say that expressed His judgment?

What did God do that expressed His judgment?



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God's Grace

What did God say that expressed His grace?

What did God do that expressed His grace?

Consulting Your Resources

Lastly, refer to your Bible commentary, Bible dictionary, or the *NET Bible* website to answer any questions you may have on this passage as well as to dig deeper in your understanding of Numbers 13–14. Record your notes below.

The scouts placed their eyes on the giants, causing them to lose their eyes of faith. Then their fear-driven report impelled the congregation to let their emotions steer them; they nearly stoned Moses, Aaron, Joshua, and Caleb! Episodes like the one in this passage superbly prefigure both the severity of God's judgment and the majesty of God's grace as we see it in the person and work of Jesus Christ, our Lord.



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Correlation: Comparing Carefully

During correlation, we'll examine a passage in the letter to the Hebrews. The author of Hebrews mentioned in chapters 3:1–4:13 the scene we studied above. The author argued that the status of Jesus exceeded Moses and that Jesus' promise of rest eclipsed any kind of rest the Israelites may have entered after the exodus.

First, read *Hebrews 3:1–4:13*.

How is Jesus greater than Moses?

How is Jesus' rest greater than God's prior promise of rest to the Israelites?

According to the author of Hebrews, how do God's people today obey God and keep from failing spiritually?



Application: Internalizing Personally

The Israelites focused on their obstacles rather than God's objective. They relied on themselves rather than remembered their God. They sought instant gratification and let their emotions get a hold of them rather than exercise self-control and develop character.



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In his sermon, Chuck provided four helpful lessons to help us avoid failing spiritually today.

1. Focus on your spiritually informed objectives.
2. Refuse to compare yourself with others.
3. Trust God's revelation over your emotion.
4. Choose character development over comfort.

Use this reflection time to either reexamine your goals in life or maybe develop new ones. Do any of Chuck's principles stand out as especially relevant to your season of life? You may need to intentionally save more money to get out of debt. Others may need to spend more time cultivating an important relationship with their spouse or child. Some may need to go to church more consistently. Record below the way you believe God is steering you as it relates to your goals.

Remember Paul's words:

Dear friends, you always followed my instructions when I was with you. And now that I am away, it is even more important. Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him. (Philippians 2:12–13)

To close this study, record a prayer below incorporating what you learned about God's character and how you should respond to His leading.



A FINAL PRAYER



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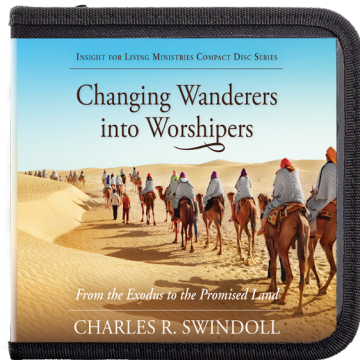
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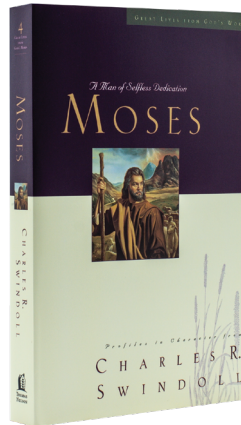
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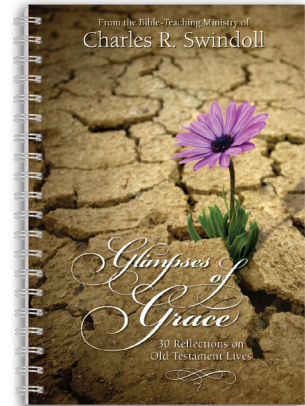
Tools for Digging Deeper



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For the 2018–2019 broadcast, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Aaron Massey in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, executive vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.



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