

SELF-IMAGE

"Then Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan...."

Numbers 13:17 (NKJV)

Here Moses gives us an account of sending twelve spies to look over the land of Canaan which they were about to enter. In this passage, God shows us the measure by which we see ourselves can hinder, if not stop, God's plan for our life.

When they entered into the land, they discovered every thing God said about the land was true; its fruitfulness and potential for a blessed existence. Along with this discovery of God's promised blessing, came the discovery that opposition was there too. As with Israel so it is with us, opposition almost always comes with blessing as Jesus indicated in Mark 10. He said that along with blessing that was to come to those who gave up all for the Kingdom, persecutions would accompany them also.

When these men saw the giants that lived in the land, they saw themselves as totally helpless in their sight. But more than what the giants saw them as, they believed that about themselves also. The images of the giants that entered their hearts became truth to them to which they responded in fear and created a "*grasshopper*" image in them. Furthermore, they saw themselves as responsible to remove the giants rather than trust God to do that. God had promised them over and over He would "*drive out*" the inhabitants of the land.

He was desiring from them faith and obedience leading to dependence upon His awesome power to carry out His Word. However, those promises melted before the images of death, destruction, and defeat that filled their minds with what they expected from the giants in the land. The giants became strongholds of doubt and defeat in the minds of ten of the spies, as to what God wanted to do. It didn't change what God had said He wanted to do for them, it simply delayed the fulfillment of promise; regrettably, for forty years.

Even though our place of blessing may not be a physical land, as Israel's, it is still a place He has prepared for us where we can enjoy the fulfillment of God's promises. There were obstacles they faced and so it is, and will be, with us. Jesus said in this world we would be faced with opposition, but be happy about it because He had already overcome it all (John 16:33).

Paul places the proposition before us, "*if*" God be for us, who can be against us, because we are "*more*" than conquerors through Jesus Christ (Romans 8:31,37). And John tells us that the indwelling Christ is greater than the external opposition we face (1 John 4:4). So, for some, image comes from vacillating perceptions that reflect the will of external forces and images, communicating we are weak and destined for failure.

For others, image comes from having internalized a sustaining and conquering truth from the Holy Spirit. "The" Truth about who we are that seeks to create in us a reality that He paints on the canvas of our heart. Romans 8:29 clearly states that God predestined us to be conformed to the image of Jesus through the work of the Holy Spirit.

.This image is not the product of mental abilities, but a result of interaction with God through His Word and submitting to the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit can, and will, create within us a belief that what opposition we face seeking to impede our advance into God's blessing will be removed by Him, and not us. That is a place of joy because we know He is fighting our battle, not us. As He fought their giants, He will fight ours! Let it be sooner rather than later!! Commit yourself to trusting God, His Word, and vitally important, His ongoing love for you as your Father!