

# Adult Bible Class

For Adults Ages 18 and Up

In the beginning **GOD**  
*created* the heaven and the earth.

Genesis 1:1

Summer Quarter

June | July | August

2026

*Large-Print Edition*

# Adult Bible Class

Large-Print Edition

SUMMER QUARTER

June, July, August 2026

Editorial..... 2

## The Lord's Patience with His People

### UNIT 1: Slow to Anger

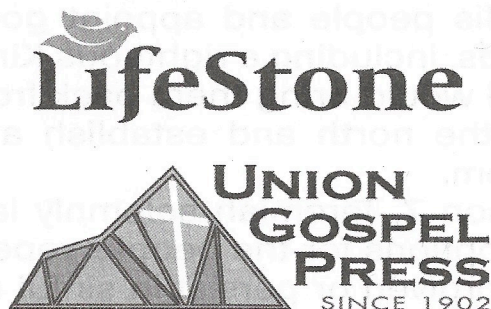
June 7—Moses Prays for Mercy—Numbers 14:11-24 .....	4
June 14—God Renews His Covenant—Exodus 34:1-14 .....	9
June 21—God's Mercy in History—Joshua 24:2-13 .....	14
June 28—God Grants Israel a King—1 Samuel 8:1-18 .....	19

### UNIT 2: Faithful to His Promises

July 5—God Gathers All Nations—Jeremiah 3:11-20 .....	24
July 12—God Sends a Righteous Branch—Jeremiah 23:1-8 .....	29
July 19—God's Faithful Justice—Jeremiah 26:1-13 .....	34
July 26—God's Hope for Exiles—Jeremiah 29:1-14 .....	39
Aug. 2—God's Promised Land—Jeremiah 30:1-11, 18-22 .....	43

### UNIT 3: His Compassion Never Fails

Aug. 9—God Reconciles His People—Jeremiah 31:1-14 .....	47
Aug. 16—The Good Shepherd—Ezekiel 34:1-16 .....	51
Aug. 23—God's Love for Israel—Hosea 11:1-11 .....	55
Aug. 30—God's Faithfulness to Israel—Micah 7:14-20 .....	59
Paragraphs on Places and People .....	63
Daily Bible Readings .....	64



Editor in Chief: James M. Leonard, Ph.D.

Managing Editor: Michelle Birtasevic

Edited and published quarterly by

LIFESTONE MINISTRIES

UNION GOSPEL PRESS

Rev. W. B. Musselman, Founder

ISBN 978-1-64495-774-5

# SCRIPTURE LESSON TEXT

**NUM. 14:11** 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:

**21** But *as truly as* I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD.

**22** Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice;

**23** Surely they shall not see the land which I sware unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it:

**24** But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it.

## NOTES

# Moses Prays for Mercy

Lesson Text: Numbers 14:11-24

Related Scriptures: Exodus 32:7-14; Joshua 2:8-11;  
Ezekiel 36:16-23; Joel 2:12-17; Hebrews 3:7-19

TIME: about 1443 B.C.

PLACE: Kadesh

---

**GOLDEN TEXT**—"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" (Numbers 14:19).

---

## *Lesson Exposition*

### **GOD'S OFFER—Num. 14:11-12**

After miraculously delivering the people from slavery in Egypt through the ten plagues and miraculously providing for them with manna in the wilderness, it should have been obvious that God could miraculously drive out their enemies before them. Sadly, it was not.

The Lord asked Moses how long the people would despise Him and not believe in Him. While pleas of "how long" were often directed to the Lord by His weary people throughout the Bible (cf. Ps. 13:1; Hab. 1:2), here the Lord strikingly asked that of Moses. The implication is clear that the Lord had given His people far more than enough evidence to trust Him to deliver them.

Then the Lord made a very surprising offer. He told Moses that He would destroy the people with a plague and make Moses a nation mightier than them.

Was God genuinely offering to destroy His people, or was this merely a test of Moses? We must start by recognizing that God never lies and always keeps His promises (Num. 23:19; Titus 1:2). The threat would not have broken

God's promise to Abraham, for Moses was a descendant of Abraham. If God had destroyed Israel and created a new nation from Moses, Abraham's descendants technically would still have become a mighty nation. And so, God would not have violated His promise to Abraham. Therefore, though some take God's offer to Moses as merely a test, the text's emphasis was that God responded to Moses' fervent prayer.

### **MOSES' PLEA—Num. 14:13-19**

Moses responded with a twofold appeal to the Lord. First, Moses reasoned that the Lord's name would be dishonored if He struck down His people. Second, Moses appealed to promises that the Lord had made previously and asked Him to spare His people.

**God's Name would be dishonored (Num. 14:13-16).** Moses first appealed to God's character and to His reputation. He argued that the nations would hear of how the Israelites had died in the wilderness and question God's ability to bring His people into the land. If the Lord slew His people after repeatedly commanding Pharaoh to let His people go, what would the

Egyptians think? What would the nations that inhabited and surrounded the Promised Land think?

It was a common belief in the ancient Near East that when one nation defeated another, their gods (or God) displayed mastery over the other nations' gods. During the exodus, the Lord Himself said that He was judging the gods of Egypt (Ex. 12:12). His ability to deliver His people out of Egypt and His systematic demonstration of power via the ten plagues demonstrated that He was more powerful than the Egyptian gods. Historically, in fact, scholars have thought that each of the ten plagues demonstrated power over the Egyptian deities.

Moses speculated that the nations would assume the Lord was not strong enough to lead His people into the Promised Land and, thus, gave up on them and killed them in the wilderness. Moses, therefore, first presented an argument against killing the people of Israel, saying that the Lord would be disrespected.

**God promised to go with them (Num. 14:17-19).** Next, Moses referred to what God had told him previously on the mountaintop after the golden calf incident (Ex. 33). This was not the first time Moses appealed to God on behalf of Israel. In both Exodus 32:9-10 and 33:3, the Lord made declarations against Israel, but after Moses pleaded with the Lord, He relented both times.

Though Moses' appeal to God's promise to bring them into the land was implicit, his appeal to God's promise regarding His character was not. He appealed to the Lord to be who He had revealed Himself to be. How could the Lord strike down all His people and start over after He had declared Himself to be slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love and forgiving? Moses was not impertinent in the way that

he questioned the Lord. He did not question God's character. Rather, he humbly asked God to keep His promises and be who He said He was. We too can pray boldly without praying in a disrespectful way.

## **THE LORD'S RESPONSE— Num. 14:20-24**

As Moses requested, the Lord pardoned the people and did not destroy them with a plague. But there was a substantial catch. None of the people who had seen the glory of the Lord and all the powerful plagues poured out on Egypt and yet repeatedly rebelled would see the Promised Land. They would not die of a plague, but they would not experience the full blessing that awaited God's people. Those twenty years old and older would die in the wilderness (vs. 29).

The people had seen God's power displayed but remained obstinate in unbelief. They had said it would have been better to die in Egypt or in the wilderness, and so die in the wilderness they would (vss. 2, 28-30). The ten spies who gave an unfavorable report of the land did die of the plague seemingly quickly (vss. 36-38).

God's pardon does not always mean freedom from consequences. As Christians, we are forgiven of our sins, and we are free from God's final judgment. Sometimes when we sin, however, there are natural consequences. We may experience damaged relationships if we lie or gossip. Our bodies may suffer if we indulge in gluttony, abuse alcohol, or sexual sins. We may lose our jobs or be arrested if we break the law. God may forgive our sins without delivering us from the consequences of our actions.

The case of the Israelites seems a bit more complicated, for the Israelites dying in the wilderness may not seem to be a natural consequence. Couldn't the Lord have led them into the Prom-

ised Land? Why confine them to die in the wilderness? We feel tension between the declaration of pardon and the punishment here.

If we look at the preceding verses, we may find some explanation. In verse 2, the people said it would have been better to die in Egypt or in the wilderness, and the Lord obliged them. They did not enter because of their unbelief (Heb. 3:19).

For some people, this story raises a theological question: does God change His mind? The Bible insists that the Lord does not change (Mal. 3:6; Heb. 13:8). Yet here, He seemed to be influenced by Moses' prayer. How are we to understand this? First Samuel 15 says both that the Lord has regret and that He is not like a man, inferring that He actually does not have regrets (vss. 11, 29). When a single chapter says things that initially appear to be contradictions, it often conveys something nuanced.

The Lord never changes His mind due to new information or a change in His character. In 1 Samuel 8, the Lord foretold the fact that Saul would be a bad king, which must inform our understanding of His regret in chapter 15. He did not have regret because He made a mistake or due to new information. Rather, God is grieved when we act wickedly (Gen. 6:5-6).

A crucial passage for correctly understanding how God relents is Jeremiah 18:5-11. God promised that if at any time He declares a coming judgment and a nation repents, He will relent. Likewise, if a nation turns away from Him to evil, He will no longer bless that nation. If we abandon Him and turn to evil, or if we repent and turn to Him, His actions toward us will change. But that is not because *His* character has changed.

Numbers 14:21 contains a comment that could be easily skipped over. The Lord affirmed that these things would

take place as surely as He lives and as surely as all the earth will be filled with His glory. Given that this statement is being used to affirm the certainty of something else, it is apparent that the Lord considers this an absolute certainty. The whole earth will be filled with His glory!

Because he had an attitude of obedience to God, Caleb would be allowed to enter the land. Joshua, the other spy who agreed with Caleb, would also be allowed to enter the land, as the Lord promised a few verses later (Num. 14:30). We should follow the Lord, no matter the consequences. It is better to stand against an entire nation than it is to stand against the Lord.

—Tom Greene

## QUESTIONS

1. What did the Lord ask Moses, and how was this unusual?
2. What did the Lord offer Moses?
3. If God fulfilled His offer to Moses, would He have broken His promise to Abraham?
4. What two arguments did Moses make to the Lord?
5. What did many Ancient Near East people think happened when one nation defeated another?
6. When had Moses previously interceded for Israel?
7. How did Moses appeal to God's previous revelation?
8. How did the Lord respond to Moses' request?
9. How could the Lord both pardon *and* punish His people?
10. What certain thing did the Lord use to affirm that what He said would come true?

—Tom Greene

## PRACTICAL POINTS

1. Many people who do not believe have more than enough information needed to believe (Num. 14:11; cf. Rom. 1:18-19).
2. We should not give up on prayer when things seem hopeless (Num. 14:12; cf. Luke 18:1-8).
3. We can appeal to God's glory as we pray (Num. 14:13-16).
4. We should appeal to the promises of God as we pray (vss. 17-20).
5. The whole earth will be filled with the Lord's glory (vs. 21)!
6. There are often consequences for unbelief and disobedience (vss. 22-23).
7. The Lord rewards obedience (Num. 14:24; cf. Heb. 11:6).

—Tom Greene

## Golden Text Illuminated

**“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” (Numbers 14:19).**

The unfaithfulness of the Israelites in the wilderness stands as a reminder of the human propensity to rebel against God, even in the face of His provision and miraculous interventions. We find the people of Israel on the verge of entering the Promised Land, yet their fear and unbelief lead them to despise God's gift and long for a return to Egypt (vss. 1-4). This rebellion provokes God's anger, as He declares to 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?” (vs. 11).

Faced with the prospect of divine judgment, Moses intercedes on behalf of the people, appealing to God's *chesed*, His steadfast love and mercy. The Hebrew word *chesed* is a rich, multifaceted term that encompasses God's lovingkindness, faithfulness, and compassion. It is this very attribute that Moses invokes in his prayer, as recorded in the golden text, unto the greatness of God's mercy.

Moses' prayer is a great reminder of the depths of God's mercy. Moses acknowledges the Lord's reputation among the nations, recognizing that God's actions toward His people have a profound impact on how others perceive Him (13-16). By anchoring his plea in God's self-revelation as “merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth” (Ex. 34:6), Moses demonstrates his faith in the unchanging nature of God.

—Gene Kissinger

## RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

1. Can you think of a time in your life when it was hard to trust the Lord?
2. What should we do when God's Word is clear, but it is hard to trust Him?
3. Did Moses convince God to change His mind in this lesson's passage? Why does that matter?
4. If the Lord pardoned the people of Israel, why did He still say they would die in the wilderness?
5. Have you ever seen God answer seemingly hopeless prayers?
6. Are there any situations or people you have given up on praying for because it seemed hopeless?
7. What current obstacles in your life make it hard to trust God? What can you do to strengthen your faith in these areas and follow Him?
8. How can we stir one another up to follow the Lord?

—Tom Greene