

POWER HOUR

6/7/2026

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

“MOSES PRAYS FOR MERCY”

NLT TRANSLATION

Golden Text: In keeping with your magnificent, unfailing love, please pardon the sins of this people, just as you have forgiven them ever since they left Egypt.”

Numbers 14:19 NLT

Time: about 1443 B.C.

Place: Kadesh

Numbers 14:11-24 NLT

¹¹ And the Lord said to Moses, “How long will these people treat me with contempt? Will they never believe me, even after all the miraculous signs I have done among them? ¹² I will disown them and destroy them with a plague. Then I will make you into a nation greater and mightier than they are!” ¹³ But Moses objected. “What will the Egyptians think when they hear about it?” he asked the Lord. “They know full well the power you displayed in rescuing your people from Egypt. ¹⁴ Now if you destroy them, the Egyptians will send a report to the inhabitants of this land, who have already heard that you live among your people. They know, Lord, that you have appeared to your people face to face and that your pillar of cloud hovers over them. They know that you go before them in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. ¹⁵ Now if you slaughter all these people with a single blow, the nations that have heard of your fame will say, ¹⁶ ‘The Lord was not able to bring them into the land he swore to give them, so he killed them in the wilderness.’ ¹⁷ “Please, Lord, prove that your power is as great as you have claimed. For you said, ¹⁸ ‘The Lord is slow to anger and filled with unfailing love, forgiving every kind of sin and rebellion. But he does not excuse the guilty. He lays the sins of the parents upon their children; the entire family is affected—even children in the third and fourth generations.’ ¹⁹ In keeping with

your magnificent, unfailing love, please pardon the sins of this people, just as you have forgiven them ever since they left Egypt.” ²⁰ Then the Lord said, “I will pardon them as you have requested. ²¹ But as surely as I live, and as surely as the earth is filled with the Lord's glory, ²² not one of these people will ever enter that land. They have all seen my glorious presence and the miraculous signs I performed both in Egypt and in the wilderness, but again and again they have tested me by refusing to listen to my voice. ²³ They will never even see the land I swore to give their ancestors. None of those who have treated me with contempt will ever see it. ²⁴ But my servant Caleb has a different attitude than the others have. He has remained loyal to me, so I will bring him into the land he explored. His descendants will possess their full share of that land.

INTRODUCTION

The Israelites had sent spies out into the land of Canaan to report on its spoil. Instead of feeling secure in the victory God had promised, they rebelled out of fear. Not only did they reject God's word, but they even wanted to appoint a leader to take them back to Egypt—back to slavery. They were unwilling to face an enemy in battle but were willing to crawl back to their previous oppressors! God could have ended their story there and been perfectly just in His response. Instead, we find something shocking: His patience.

Additional Scripture Readings

Moses Appeals to God's Promise. Exodus 32:7-14.

God's Glory in His Deliverance. Isaiah 63:7-14.

God Vindicates His Name. Ezekiel 36:16-23.

A Call to Repentance. Joel 2:12-17.

Hard Hearts. Psalm 95:6-11.

Unbelief—the Source of Hard Hearts. Hebrews 3:7-19.

Mercy and Judgment. Numbers 14:11-24.

1. The Lord judges (Numbers 14:11-2). As the whole assembly of Israel grumbled about their circumstances, the Lord appeared at the tabernacle in His glory. He

began with His complaint against His people: they were rebellious and ignored Him despite the signs He had done for them. As a result, He would wipe them out and make of Moses a new nation.

Moses would have become the “new” Abraham, the founder of a great nation. Moses, upon hearing of the coming judgment, called upon the mercy of the Lord—which was exactly what God intended.

2. The Lord listens (Numbers 14:13-19). Having pronounced His judgment, the Lord waited for Moses to intercede. He chose Moses and knew that Moses would intercede. The words and stories in the book of Numbers bear witness to the character of God (1 Corinthians 10:6, 11).

Here, we see the witness of the Israelites' sin as a warning to us, and we also see the mercy of God as a comfort to us. Moses first appealed to the glory of God. Because God had brought His people into the wilderness, if He killed them now, the nations might think it was because God's power was lacking. The nations knew the Israelites were different because God's presence visibly went with them; nothing should endanger the glory that came with that. Moses then repeated God's own words back to Him: God is forgiving and slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

3. The Lord relents (Numbers 14:20-24). In His patience, the Lord listened to Moses and relented from His judgment. Even so, He did not clear the guilty—the entire generation of rebellious Israelites would pass away, with the exception of Caleb and Joshua, who were innocent. This is a good reminder for us that the Lord's mercy is meant to lead us to repentance (Romans 2:4). That is why the author of Hebrews used the Israelites' wilderness wanderings as a call for the church today. God gives us today to repent, but He does not promise any other day. So, let us not delay any longer, but let us enter the rest God has provided for us in His Son (Hebrews 3:7—4:1).

PRACTICAL POINTS

Many people who do not believe have more than enough information needed to believe (Numbers 14:11 & Romans 1:18-19).

We should not give up on prayer when things seem hopeless (Numbers 14:12 & Luke 18:1-8).

We can appeal to God's glory as we pray (Numbers 14:13-16).

We should appeal to the promises of God as we pray (vss. 17-20).

The whole earth will be filled with the Lord's glory (vs. 21)!

There are often consequences for unbelief and disobedience (vss. 22-23).

The Lord rewards obedience (Numbers 14:24 & Hebrews 11:6).

CONCLUSION

The patience of God displays both His mercy and His coming judgment. He would have been justified in wiping out the nation of Israel, just as He would be justified in destroying all of us for our sin(s). But He demonstrates His glory through his mercy, which should lead us to repent of our sins and to proclaim the gospel.

As we go throughout this week and interact with those who do not believe the gospel, let God's mercy season your words. Do not be afraid to proclaim, by both words and deeds, remembering that there is more at stake than your reputation or comfort. While there is life, we see God's mercy, but His judgment is also certain for those who do not repent.

Next week, we will explore **"God's Renews His Covenant"** with the Israelites and the proclamation of His Name and Glory. **Exodus 34:1-14.**

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