Has God ever walked by your life and given you an assignment to the point that you know what it was, and you knew what you were to do? All throughout the pages of Scripture, the God of all creation made it His business to come to individual after individual and give them one assignment after another. It is the very nature of our Heavenly Father to come to individuals, families, and churches and give them His assignments. After all this is His world, He is on a mission to redeem a lost world, and He alone knows what He is up to. When you come to this particular section in Numbers, God has given Moses an assignment to bring the children of Israel into the Promised Land. In Genesis, God told Abram to leave his family, and go to a place where God would tell him, and Abram went. Throughout the years, God was in the process of developing a people for Himself...a people to worship Him, adore Him, follow Him, and reverence Him. And as a byproduct, God would bless that people with blessings that they could not imagine. It seemed like the time had come. The children of Israel had been given an assignment to enter the Promised Land, and now they were just outside that land in the Desert of Paran. But now abundant blessings are in store for His people...if the will obey. When God gives an assignment whether it be to Israel or to us,

1. HE HAS ONLY THE BEST IN STORE, WHEN WE FOLLOW. When you read the complete text of Numbers 13, it is unbelievable what is found by the spies as they journey throughout the land. They are given a directive under Moses to go throughout the land and see what the land is like, and to spy out the entire territory. It took them 40 days to spy out a land of about 500 miles, but when the returned to Moses they declared what they saw. When the spies came to the “Valley of Eschol” they cut down a single cluster of grapes. But when they cut that once cluster of grapes, there was something unusual about that single cluster. That “one cluster” was so large, and so fruitful that it took two men to carry that “single cluster” back. What they experienced in that land was so unbelievable that they wanted to bring it back as proof of the wonderful abundance that God had in store for His people. The land was a land flowing with milk and honey, and the Bible declares that it was a “magnificent land”. Why is all this so significant? It paints a sobering picture of what happens when God’s people follow Him, and what is in store when they follow His assignments. The journey thus far had not been without difficulties and problems...but God had a wonderful abundance in store for them if they would simply follow through in their walk with God.

It was God that created this magnificent land. It was God that caused these grapes to be of such size. It was all God’s doing that this land was filled with “milk and honey”. It is completely impossible to follow God, and His assignments and not experience the best of His blessings IF WE FOLLOW HIM.
2. HE WILL ALLOW OBSTACLES TO TEACH US TO TRUST HIM. While this land was a land flowing with milk and honey, and wonderful abundance, Scripture reports that there were obstacles that stood in the way of receiving that land. The spies reported to Moses the wonderful abundance in the land...but they also reported that they saw giants in the land. They saw the Anakim giants, and they saw the Amalekites that lived in the south. While God had already promised this land to His people, God also allowed them to see giants in the land to determine what type of faith they had in the Living God. When God gives us an assignment, He will often times allow purposeful obstacles, not for the purpose of discouraging us, but rather to teach us to trust Him in ways that we never trusted Him before. To those that had faith, these giant were a call to faith, to a deeper level of trust. However, to those that lacked faith and confidence in the living God, these obstacles could and would prove to be devastating to their lives. In the personal life of Caleb, his life revealed a life of trust in the Living God. Caleb believed that the God that called them to the assignment to enter the Promised Land would take care of the giants. However, that was not the belief and attitude of the other spies.

Obstacles to God’s assignments can do one of two things....build our faith and confidence in the Living God, or they can discourage us from following the God that has given us and assignment, and potentially paralyze our lives for years to come, and possibly miss His best during this one earthly life.

3. THERE WILL COME A POINT OF DECISION...TO OBEY OR DISOBEY. After viewing the land, that wonderful land of Canaan, where there was an abundance, and the land that God had promised to His people, there came a point of decision...would the people now continue to follow God, and His assignments or would they allow themselves to be discouraged by the obstacles, the giants in the land, and those opposing God’s people.

Scripture reveals that the spies reported that “Indeed it was a magnificent land...a land flowing with milk and honey....but the people living there are powerful, and their cities are fortified and very large”. But the majority report of the spies was negative. Ten of the twelve spies were more oriented to what they saw than to the Living God. They were more oriented to the size of the giants that their eyes could see, than to the Living, Eternal, Almighty God that they couldn’t see. And when the report came to taking the land the vote was 10 against taking the land, and 2 for taking the land. The only two that voted for taking the land was Caleb and Joshua.

God, in His divine providence and power allowed the people to make a decision regarding His assignment...but they decided not to follow. They focused on disbelief, fears and giants. Scripture reports that Moses, Aaron, Joshua and Caleb were so grieved that they cried before the Lord for the people...but all the people were interested in doing was stoning them. Caleb attempted to reorient the people to God, declare that God loved them and would bring them into the land...but the people would not listen.
While God loves His people, He will not make them follow Him. Moses pleaded with God for the people and their rebellion...but God declared by His name that these people would never get to see what He had in store for them. Their rebellion would prove to be costly and it would result in “wandering in the desert” for 40 years...one year for each day the spies went throughout the land.

4. OTHERS CAN BE A HINDRANCE TO FOLLOWING GOD’S ASSIGNMENT. When you review the fact that the children of Israel were indicted before God...one sobering reality cannot be overlooked. It is the fact that the ten spies were a hindrance to the children of Israel following the assignment of God. When these ten spies came back to the people of Israel, the Bible declares that they sent “an evil report” all throughout the people of Israel. Their negative, defeatist attitude had a bearing on hundreds and thousands of lives.

Because these spies were not oriented to obedience to God, they may well have thought that their opinions were not that significant, but that was not the case at all. Their attitudes and their outlook affected others lives. They were skilled men, but they proved to be a sobering hindrance to others in their family, clan and tribe.

If God gives an assignment and a person is not oriented to God, it is very easy to hear about all the giants ...and completely overlook the fact that God is God over all the giants of life.

5. FAILURE TO FOLLOW HIS ASSIGNMENT WILL ALWAYS PROVE MORE COSTLY THAT WE IMAGINED. Listen to this sobering indictment from the Living God to the people of Israel, “But as for you, your dead bodies shall fall into the wilderness. You must wander in the desert like nomads for forty years. In this way you will pay for your faithlessness, until the last of you lies dead in the desert” (Nu. 14:32-33).

What a sobering indictment from the Living God. Yet, it was the indictment from God, when the people became more oriented to fear, disbelief, giants, than to the Living God. Rather than walking in obedience and moving toward the Promised Land...they could only live and wonder what might have been if they had obeyed God. Their failure to follow God, resulted in COMPLETELY MISSING THE BEST OF GOD’S BLESSINGS.

When we become completely disoriented to God through rebellion and disbelief, we too, will miss the best of God’s blessings, and we will go to our grave only wondering what might have been. All over twenty years of age...would die and God would take the next generation and begin to work in their hearts.

When God gives us an assignment and makes it known to us, and we persistently rebel....we will pay more than we ever dreamed...for God is a Holy God.