

# DROPPING YOUR GUARD: THE VALUE OF OPEN RELATIONSHIPS

## DIGGING DEEPER, RISKING CHANGE (PART TWO)

### NUMBERS 12–14



### The Heart of the Matter

It's good for churches to regularly evaluate their ministry. One way they can do this is by examining the experience of the ancient Hebrews as portrayed in Moses's words in Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The analogies can be remarkable! After the Hebrews' exodus from Egyptian slavery, they crossed the Red Sea and began the journey to Canaan. But in Numbers 11:1–6, the people longed for Egypt or at least a change in diet! As we pick up the story, we find the Hebrews growing increasingly discontent and determined to go back to the familiarity, security, and safety of Egypt—even if it meant personal slavery and direct disobedience to God.



### Discovering the Way

#### 1. Tests That Tempt Us to Go Back (Numbers 13:1–2, 25–27; 14:1–4)

Adversity, surprises, fear, unfair accusations, and unexpected resistance tempted Israel to return to Egypt. But these circumstances were also perfect opportunities for God to teach His people to walk by faith.

#### 2. Barriers That Keep Us from Returning (Numbers 12:3, 9–10; 14:20–23, 30)

In order to keep His people from returning to Egypt, God gave the Israelites clear direction, incredible deliverance, timely relief from discouragement, internal fortification from attack, and extreme discipline.



### Starting Your Journey

It's the desire of our God that we display a message different from the world around us. *So, Lord, intensify your distinctives in us.* It's the uncertainty of our future that strengthens our faith. *So, Lord, increase the risk.* It's the mystery of it all that makes us unique, that gives us power. *So, Lord, enlarge the difference.*



### Tools for Digging Deeper



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