BACKGROUND

2. In response, God was frustrated (per humanity) with Israel (14:11-12). Moses interceded in prayer (14:13-19).
3. God's infinite patience and grace answers Moses prayer with a. pardon (14:20) and b. prediction (14:21). God's purpose for the nation would never be frustrated by the sinful nation.
4. Meanwhile, immediate measures would be taken with the people. These are recorded:

      The Lord has previously raised this issue: how long? (cf. v. 11). Three times He mentions the murmuring of the people in one verse (v. 27). To murmur is to be obstinate, stubborn. The root means to remain over night.
      The Lord is not mistaken about this murmuring. He has heard it (v. 27) and Israel has spoken in God's ears (v. 28).

   2. MEASURE #2: DETERMINATION
      What will God do with obstinate Israel? He must, as a just God, bring sentence of judgment. This He does. It unfolds in four ways:
      a. The rebellious adults
         1) The reason v. 22. These are listed carefully:
         2) The sentence Four times they are warned they will fall dead in the wilderness (vv. 29, 32, 33, 35). Moreover, they would not see the land nor come to it (vv. 23, 30). They would wander 40 years in the wilderness (v. 34). N.B. This is fair for Israel had committed acts of prostitution against God (v. 33), hence God's displeasure or breach of promise (v. 34).
      b. The "innocent" children
         The children are promised entrance into the land (v. 31). Yet they will suffer the wilderness because of
parental neglect of God (v. 53). N.B. How important God views parenting!

c. The ten spies (vv. 36, 37)
   A divine plague killed these because 1) they
gave an evil report, 2) discouraged the people from obey-
ing God.

d. The notable exceptions vv. 24, 30, 38
   Caleb and Joshua are listed as those exempt from
sentence. Of Caleb it is stated 1) he had a different
spirit (attitude) and 2) he fulfilled to walk after God
(literally). God surely takes count of those who are
different in their commitment to God. Obedience does
pay off with the Lord.

   N.B. Since the Levites were not counted in the
census, they also may have been excluded from the sentence.

3. MEASURE #3: EVACUATION

   Simply put, God withdrew from Israel so that their
efforts to enter the land were useless (cf. Jn 15:5).

   a. Precipitated v. 39

      Clearly Moses was God's mediary to bring the
sentence to the people. As a consequence, they cried
(Hebrew: were languid, hung their heads).

   b. Provoked vv. 40-43

      Despite God's sentence, the people tried to do
now what they refused to do before. They even confessed
their sin (v. 40). But it was too late. The door was
now shut to the land for that generation. Moses warned
that any attempt would fail (v. 41). In fact, Moses
said they would be smitten (Hebrew: defeat) before their
enemies (v. 42). The bottom line was the withdrawal
of God from their fighting forces (v. 43).

   c. Practiced vv. 44, 45

      God's presence (the ark) and Moses (God's appointed
leader) did not move out of the camp (v. 44). As a
consequence, the Canannites absolutely crushed Israel.
The Hebrew for "discomfited" means to crush by beating.
Rashi renders it "pounded them, blow upon blow." "Hormah"
means destruction. The defeat was utterly humiliating.
Elsewhere it says they were overcome by bees (Deut. 1:44).

AFTERTHOUGHT

Being obedient is doing God's will at God's time. Later
on God did capture Hormah (Josh. 12:14). Oh, to walk
after God fully (v. 24).