

Lesson 10 Numbers

From Sinai to Moab. We are reading the narrative material from the Book of Numbers, omitting the chapters of the Law we have already scanned.

Omit chapters 1-8

Read chapters 9-25

Omit chapter 26

Read chapters 27 and 36 together

Omit chapters 28,29,30

Read chapters 31,32

Omit chapters 33,34,35

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. *The journey begins again. The people are numbered and given the order of march in chapter 1-4 which you may omit. In chapters 9-10 they set out to the sound of silver trumpets, under the banners of each tribe. They have been at Mt. Sinai one year. Following their journey will be difficult, but attempt it on your Atlas maps.*

2. *Reuel in 10:29 is another name for Jethro (Ex.18), the Midianite priest who is Moses father-in-law. This family is encouraged to go along with the Hebrews. See Judges 1:16. This nomadic family are also metal workers. What service are they to Moses and the people? See 10:31*

3. *In chapter 12 what is the contrast between Miriam and Moses? Why is Miriam punished and not Aaron? What is Aaron's character? (The Cushite woman is probably not a second wife but Zipporah. (N. Arabia where Midianites lived was sometimes called Cush.)*

4. *Why are Caleb and Joshua the only men over twenty years of age allowed to enter the Promised Land? What is the sin of the people that keeps them out? Some of them repented, but then went forward again on their own. What is the sin in this?*

Psalm 68 and prayer

These will be the set-apart people. With the Ark of the Covenant, the

utter holiness of God, at the center of the people, God begins to set apart these people from all the peoples on earth. The utter holiness or glory of God is called Shekinah - see 9:15. For forty years in the wilderness the Lord impressed upon the people their set-apartness - they were to be holy because God is holy. The desert experience, the Law, and the designated form of worship are for the sake of setting these people apart from all others in holiness. Going on from where Exodus and Leviticus left off, the Book of Numbers is an extension of Leviticus. It is, therefore, mostly an instruction to priests of the house of Levi about required holiness - the holiness of themselves as especially set-apart servants, and the holiness, or moral and physical cleanness, of all the people as they serve God. For this reason the priest must have no bodily disfigurement or incompleteness. This is a physical sign to Israel of its destiny to be whole and complete, holy as God is holy. The root of both words, "holy" and "whole" is the same in English.

The Levites are even more set-apart. An ancient story has come to us in Exodus 32:25 about the formation and call of the Levites long before establishment of the Law and its ordination ceremonies. At the time of the first grave apostasy, when the people turned from God and worshiped the golden calf, Moses ordered the Levites to ordain themselves by killing their kinsfolk. It is an inexplicable story. Yet, we can gain this sense from it: the Levitical priests were called to an isolation, a serious renunciation of all normal ties. To be called by God was a fearful thing, first for the people thus called, but even more so for the priests of God. The holiness required was an awesome requirement which demanded cutting oneself off from the rest even to the extent of the dramatic event the old story related.

How do we keep the faith? Many of our parents came from tight Catholic communities where they were set-apart from the main flow of society. Here they kept the faith. The last generations have escaped the ghetto and have been accepted into general society. As a result we have lost much more than the stigma and restriction of a Catholic ghetto. We need to reemphasize the differentness required by being Catholic, the differentness that Catholicity means for our families. We are a royal priesthood, a people set apart (I Peter 2:9). We should be "peculiar." To recapture the peculiarity of being God's people means not to be

absorbed by the increasingly pagan culture in which live. The Israelites did not dare to be absorbed by the culture in which they lived on the command of God; Salvation History depended upon it.

As Numbers opens, the scene is still set before Mt. Sinai. The people camp on the plain during the year in which Moses works out the Law and the rituals of religion that make them a theocentric people. Here the formation of Israel, which will be the foundation of salvation to come, has begun. The work of God is to build with these people the foundation upon which salvation will come in the Person of Jesus Christ. In a certain sense, the people are still moving away from Perfection. The Law is an imperfect instrument, and these people are a motley, scruffy people that God has marked for Himself. He intends them to be His bride. He must prepare them so that they may bring forth the Saviour and comprehend the message He will bring in His life, death and resurrection. The formation is difficult, because readiness must come from the people and not be imposed on them in an artificial way. It must come out of their experience by the involvement of their will (sometimes against it) so that it will be a salvation truly theirs as well as God's. Back on the plain before Mt. Sinai, Moses has sealed the marriage between God and the people in the blood of the covenant. A sacrificial animal's blood is the life that God has given to bind the people to Himself - it is sprinkled on the altar and on them. Thus they are covenanted in blood. No one is to eat blood. Blood is holy. If they eat it they will die (Ex 24:3). Skipping through the Leviticus (11:44, 18:1-5, 19:35, 20:1- 3) passages points out the 'set apartness,' the holiness, the moral and physical cleanliness, God expects from this people. Cleanness is seen as a sign of holiness.

The Law expresses the people's part of the covenant. They are to keep it and God will be in their midst. In the end the Law will show the great gap between God and mankind. Sin, the inability to keep the Law, the desperate lack of what it takes to be holy will become more and more evident. The Law's work will be to raise the consciousness of the people to the realization that it is impossible for them to ever please God as they are. The Day of Atonement is instituted to partially assuage

this state - the priest lays his hands on the scapegoat so that the sins of the people are transferred, then the goat is driven off to the devil (Azazel). But this was no resolution for the chronic state of mankind who was proving to be intrinsically unfit to fulfill the purpose of his creation. As the centuries go on, frustration will bring Man to see his state, then he will be humbled, humbled enough to accept a free salvation. He must see that he cannot earn favor with God no matter how hard he tries. He must see his absolute failure and dependence upon God for his salvation. The law is this goad toward true self-awareness. It says, "do this," the sinner finds with his best effort he cannot. What he can do is only to cry to God, "save me." Which God wills to do.

A Holy God has placed Himself in the center of a People. They now have a religious life governing every hour of every day; they are guided under the authority of Moses; their civil life is bound by a holiness code. They have a form of worship: a tabernacle, accoutrements for carrying out the ritual, priests, vestments, ordinations, sacrifices, festivals and special observances. The Levitical priests have been designated as the ones to oversee their lives and to officiate. Everything concerned with the worship life of the people is holy. Things concerned with worship are to be handled in a prescribed way, carefully so, for God is Holy. Death will ensue if less than the rules for holiness are followed. The Law of Moses can be condensed to 'obey and be blessed, disobey and be cursed.'

How do we think about the penalty of death? In the matter of death, the Twenty-first Century takes it to be the ultimate horror, a terror to be avoided in thought or speech as though not inevitable. We have made death the absolute catastrophe. Someone has said that if an atomic bomb falls it will not kill any more people than will die otherwise. Yet we have made death monstrous. In another sense we don't take death seriously enough - at least the ultimate death of deaths which will come if we disregard God and His way. We all die, and how or when is the only question. Death, in the Old Testament, is the punishment for all those who transgress the Law. This does not change in the New Testament, but the death there means the death of the soul. In the O.T. God's command that brings death seems a very hard and

cruel thing. Is it really necessary that God 's Law puts to death the transgressor?

The answer to that lies in another question. Does our faith mean anything to the world or to us? Are we happy to be sitting here as Catholic Christians with all the unmeasured blessing of eternal salvation? If this salvation with its enlightenment and hope for mankind was to be, God's plan demands that the Israelites be separated from the pagan world. And if they had to be separated from the world, a no-man's land had to be set up around them. Transgressing into that forbidden area, slipping into the ways of unbelievers put them under the punishment of death. When a match is struck in the wind, it must be carefully protected or it will go out. The no man's land protected their "set apartness" and had to be kept secure. Even with this drastic line drawn around them, affecting their every action, the people just barely squeak through. They are the light bearers. Hard discipline scarcely formed them enough to keep the light shining even with death dealt out on every side to transgressors. We all recognize that to be willing to die for a great purpose is the height of human nobility. The deaths of these were for a great purpose which is now visible. Because of the tremendous investment God makes in these people, Christ eventually comes to be the Light of the world.

The People set out on the way to the Promised Land. With ritual, order, and allotment of the promised land established, the people after one year set out on their journey to the Promised Land. Following on our maps we see them come up from Mt. Sinai, finally arriving at Kadesh-Barnea from which they planned to enter the Holy Land from the south - up through Hormah to Hebron. Moses sends out scouts from Kadesh-Barnea. Only two come back with positive input, the rest believe they cannot win any battles with the strong Canaanite city-states they have seen. To this report the whole people respond by two sins: the first is despair. They do not believe and trust God, instead they want to turn back to Egypt. When shaken out of that attitude, they sin again. They run ahead of God and disobey Moses, and for their presumption they suffer a sound defeat at the hand of Amalekites.

Only two are faithful. Joshua and Caleb believe and trust God. The first is from the tribe of Ephraim and the other from the tribe of Judah, the two tribes who in the prophecies of Jacob were to be at the forefront of Israel's history. Therefore, they are the only two of all the adults then living who will be allowed to go in to possess the promised land. "Joshua," the same word in Hebrew as "Jesus" in Greek, means "salvation." Joshua was chosen to lead the people into the land, to be the victorious conqueror, in a sense, the saviour.

After 38 years of desert punishment, they are ready to proceed. Kadesh-Barnea is an area of springs where for these years of purgation the people had their base camp while pasturing their flocks in regions around about. It was here that Miriam died, and where Moses sinned by striking the rock in his own name. At the end of the thirty-eight years when they are commanded to move again, Moses asks "his brother," the King of Edom, if he may cross Edom to the King's Highway, an old north/south caravan route. The numbers of these people, perhaps toward 3,000,000 were too many - he is refused. The King of Edom was called "brother" because Esau, Jacob's brother, about live hundred years earlier had founded the area. It had only been settled about 100 years as a kingdom, and probably was more to be compared to an Arab sheikdom. Then Moab, too (Lot's incestuous union with a daughter was claimed to be its founding), refused them entry or passage across their land, so finally by circuitous routes and with many hardships they came to the plains of Moab at the north end of the Salt Sea.

A soothsayer is called out to curse Israel. Spread out over the plain of Moab they were an impressive multitude. The King of Moab, worried by this invasion, sent for the Mesopotamian soothsayer, magician and seer, Balaam, to curse these people. The great horde of them, such a threat to his country, must be blighted. We seem to have only fragments of the ancient story. Why does the angel bar the ass's progress? Other Bible references imply that Balaam had decided in his heart to accept the money from Balak and not be true to the mission. He was, after all, not one of the people of God, and could not know Yahweh. Anyway, he only has blessings for the people of Israel as he stands on three mountain peaks to view and say words over them. God is master over everything that has to do with His people. Soothsayer,

pagan magician or not, Balaam must bend to God's will in the matter; he may speak only what God commands for words are weighty and totally effective in the manner of curses and blessings.

Challenges are made to God's authority. During the forty years of wilderness wandering many matters are thrashed out. Obedience or disobedience to God is a crucial one. The Book of Numbers is much concerned with the disobedience of the people, some of it is unwitting and is forgivable, but deliberate sin cannot be forgiven. Authority is frequently challenged. There is constant grumbling, but Miriam and Aaron exceed mere grumbling. They challenge God's authority in Moses. Is Moses the only prophet? Doesn't Miriam also have a gift of prophecy? If so, isn't Moses setting himself up too high? Moses is called the meekest man on earth. The meek know their own boundaries; they know what is really appropriate for themselves and what is not. Miriam in her challenge obviously is not meek, she does not know her limitations. The punishment on Miriam is great, but because of the intercession of Aaron, she is finally forgiven.

Again we look at woman's role. Salvation History has such dependence on woman as sign that she must not be mistaken about the obedience which is crucial to it. Confusion about the value of authority will always tempt her as it did in Eden. Authority is not a prestigious exercise, it a service. For Moses it is a burdensome service. Again the old trouble of the Garden of Eden reasserts itself - envy of authority. The values of the Fall are seen to be dominant. It is most important that Miriam's confusion not be allowed to prevail as she enviously challenges Moses' authority. The woman is the key to the continuance of Salvation History. All the people of God need woman to center them, to image for them the obedient and submissive heart. If she does not have it, none of the people will have it. If she misunderstands her gifts and tries to take over the other, authority side, we have nothing but chaos in the relationship of God and mankind. Yes, Miriam has a prophetic gift of a certain kind, but it is not in the order of governance. Miriam's envy and challenge is, therefore, dealt with dramatically. Aaron after all, does have an authority for governance from God. She has none. Her

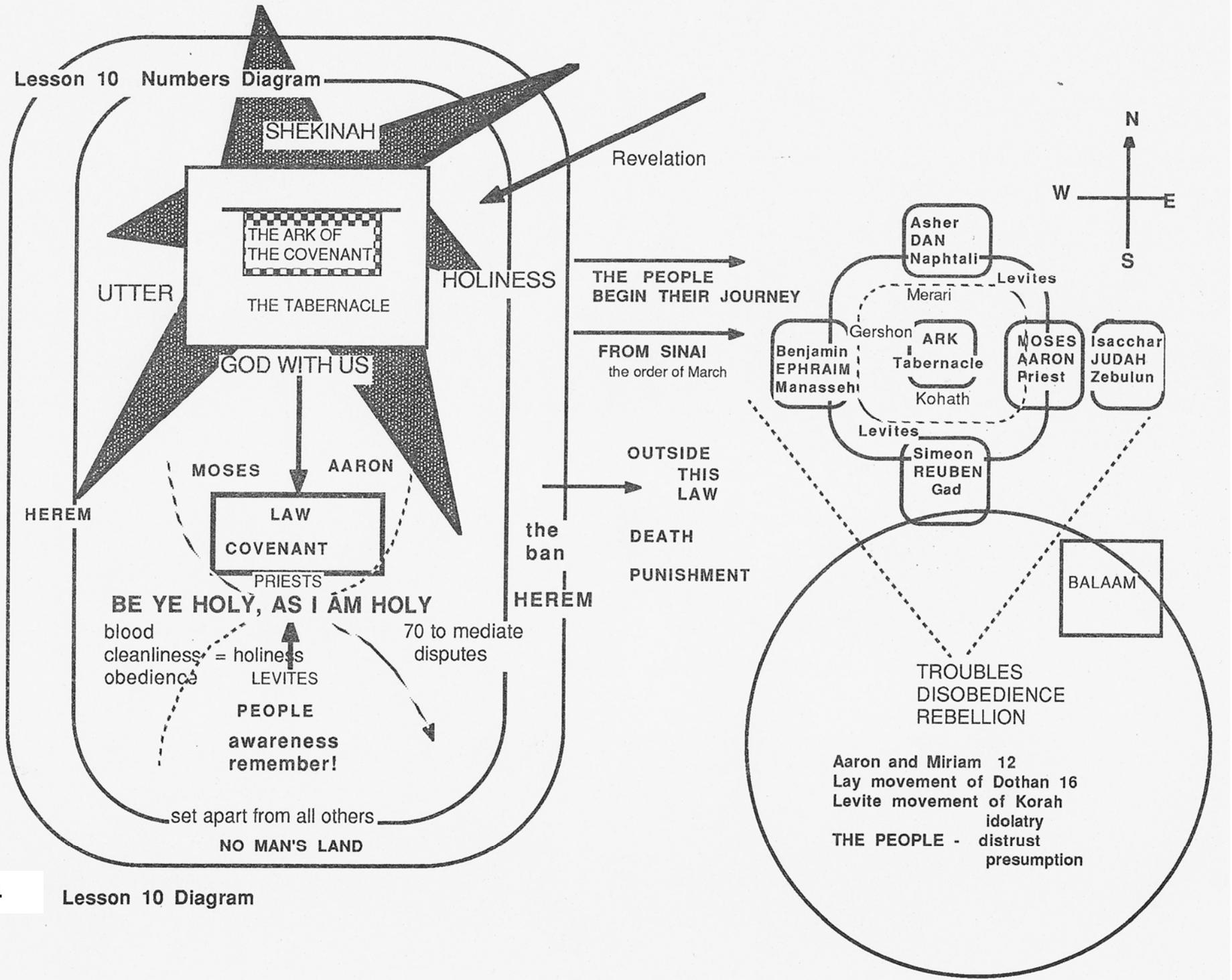
presumption is greater and more potentially harmful to the whole community. It is not, however, as the feminist views it. It is not a matter of putting the woman down, or keeping her subjected. It is rather a matter of elevating the essential sign of the woman who at the heart of the community is to model obedience where all are to be obedient to God in order that ultimate good prevail.

These challenges have a contemporary sound. There is the further challenge to the authority of the priesthood. "Aren't we all priests (set-apart for holy worship)," say some of the people. Why should priests behave as though they were something special? Who needs them anyway? These anti-clerical feelings go on from generation to generation - the envy and hatred of those who have more authority by those who have less. Korah, the Levite, wants priesthood. Dotham, the layman, wants priesthood, or, on the other hand, doesn't see any need for it. It all has a very contemporary sound.

The depth of disobedience is even greater. They are no sooner on the plain of Moab than one of the men is caught in the tent of idols with a woman- probably a cult prostitute. (Aaron, the High Priest, has died, and Phineas, his son has taken his place.) Phineas runs the two of them through with the sword. "You are my people and you must be holy as I am Holy." It is the first serious apostasy on the soil of the Promised Land and will be remembered as indicative of the struggle of God with His people who are much more inclined to unholiness than holiness.

In Numbers 20 we have the account of Moses' sin. To bring out water for the thirsty people, he is instructed to speak to the rock for God. He does speak, but also, in anger at the people strikes it twice. Claiming the result for himself, as though he and Aaron were the originators of this miracle, he seriously presumes on God. For this slip done in anger, he will not be allowed to enter Canaan. God demands utter obedience, and though Moses is a whole and holy man, dying with full faculties and taken right to God, he must receive justice at the hand of God like all other transgressors. His punishment is that he, too, can only look upon the land. The real authority then passes to Joshua to lead the people in to claim what God has promised.

Lesson 10 Numbers Diagram



**Lesson 10 Numbers
Synopsis**

1. a census of the tribes
2. the order of march from Sinai
3. duties of the Levites (Moses Aaron) Gershon, Kohath, Merari the sons of Aaron Kohath is preeminent his sub-tribe handles holy things
4. duties of Kohathites, Gershonites, Merarites
5. the Holiness code a trial by ordeal the purity of the camp hygienic and religious law
6. rule for the Nazarites the blessing of the people
7. gifts from the princes listed
8. setting up the lampstands rules for purification of Levites who are then a wave offering Levites are taken for the Lord instead of the first born
9. the keeping of the Passover at appointed time if unclean by touching dead body should they keep Passover the Lord says if unclean or on a journey they still keep the Passover also the sojourner and native the Shekinah is over Tabernacle fire and cloud lead the people
10. silver trumpets are made and their use is to summon they strike out to trumpets trumpets kept as a remembrance the order of march' is given

- Hodab (Reuel's family) to go also a blessing from liturgy of the ark
11. the people complain again the fire of the Lord burned them more complaints, manna is given they are tired of manna poor Moses is exasperated God gives Moses' spirit to 70 and God Shall give quail meat until it is loathsome
 12. a plague_comes on the people Miriam and Aaron conspire against Moses' primacy God is angry at their presumption Aaron forgiven, Miriam punished Aaron prays, she is healed
 13. spies are sent to spy out the land reports on the Anak or Nephilim and fortified cities frighten them the report is brought back we are only grasshoppers
 14. the people raise a cry would that we died in Egypt let us go back to Egypt they would stone Joshua, Caleb because both believe God will overcome these enemies God is angry at the lack of belief Moses defends the people God's covenant loyalty does not exclude punishment they will not live to see the land only Caleb and Joshua may enter forty years they are condemned to the wilderness wandering then they attempt to go to battle but because of presumption they are defeated by Amalek Sacrificial rules are given

- and the offering of first fruits errors are forgiven by atonement but no atonement is possible for those who revile God a man gathering sticks deliberately on the Sabbath is sinning and stoned to death tassels aid remembering the rebellion of Korah Levites who wanted priesthood Moses warns them the rebellion of Dothan layman who want to be priests Moses warns them the rebels are swallowed alive Moses' authority is vindicated fire consumes incense bearers because the censers are holy they are hammered into a cover for the altar as a reminder of the set-apart priesthood more murmurs against Moses because of death of rebels God threatens to consume them but a plague is stopped by Aaron's intercession
16. a rod from each house is brought each house's name is upon it Aaron's is the rod of Levi the rods put before the Lord Aaron's rod sprouted it is a testimony against rebels people fear they will all perish priesthood is a gift for anyone else it is death Aaron is told about offerings these are given to God who gives them to priests "every devoted thing is yours"
 - 17.
 - 18.

- redemption prices are set for redemption of the first born Levites receive no inheritance their portion for their livelihood is the Lord: the Levite receives a tithe from the people a tithe of this is given to the Lord do not profane holy things preparing the water of impurity with ashes of the red heifer this lustral water purifies uncleanness of the dead and the place of death coming into the wilderness of Zin Miriam dies there more grumbling for water Moses and Aaron intercede at the waters of Meribah they slip in arrogance Moses strikes the rock he claims the miracle and God punishes him he will not enter the land he requests that brother Edom allow them to pass through the request is denied with force Aaron dies at Mount Hor Eleazar his son made chief priest Israel weeps for Aaron
- 19.
 - 20.
 21. a war with Canaanites they shall be utterly destroyed more grumbling about food, water serpents are sent to punish Moses prays for them he makes a bronze serpent looking upon it heals the people they are opposite Moab popular war songs, a water song a message is sent to Sihon

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| <p>22. he refuses passage to a highway
Israel defeats Sihon, takes cities
an Amorite war poem
battle at Edrei, the defeat of Og
Balak of Moab calls Balsam
overcome with fear of Israel
sends to Balaam a diviners' fee
Balaam refuses to go to Balak
because God speaks in the night
Balak sends again to honor him
God says, go with them but only
do what I say
Balaam went and God is
angered the ass balks at angel in
the way beaten, the ass speaks
and Balaam's eyes are opened
the angel calls him perverse
Balak sacrifices to Baal
Balaam now will speak for God</p> <p>23. Balak takes him to Bamoth-baal
Balaam, Balak make 7 offerings
what the Lord shows, I will tell
Balaam blesses, does not curse
taken to the top of Pisgah
another 7 altars, bulls, rams the
word from God is blessing God
is with them
they will devour like a lioness
Balak is disgusted
but what God says, Balaam says</p> <p>24. to a third place in the wilderness
Balaam goes and blesses Israel
Balak's anger is kindled
tells Balaam to flee
his promise to honor is void
because of Balaam's blessings
and a further oracle
a star shall come out of Jacob
a scepter rise out of Israel</p> | <p>25. Balaam rose and went home
Balak went his way
the people play the harlot
with Baal of Peor's cult
Phinehas, Eleazar's son,
spears a man in a pagan tent
together with a cult prostitute</p> <p>26. a census is taken</p> <p>27. the daughters of Zelophehad
gain their inheritance the
death of Moses foretold the
installation of Joshua</p> <p>28. offering rules and sacrifices</p> <p>29. days of festival Yom Kippur</p> <p>30. women's vows
when valid and when not</p> <p>31. the Midian war
and the avenging God
unclean booty
the counsel of Balaam
from another tradition
kill all, but keep the virgins
purify the booty
through fire and water
divide it between the warriors
and priests as an offering
Reuben and Gad promise to fight
with their brothers till all settled
Gilead given to Reuben
Gad and 1/2 tribe of Manasseh</p> <p>33. whole journey is recounted</p> <p>34. boundaries, divisions of Israel</p> <p>35. Levite cities, cities of refuge
crimes punished by death</p> <p>36. sequel to the story
of the daughters of Zelophehad</p> |
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Lesson 10 Numbers Outline

I. Background to the Events Recorded in Numbers

- A. The rise of awareness of the people's relationship to God
 - 1. the frustration of the Law upon their natures
 - a. disclosed their inability to obey
 - b. discussed by St. Paul in Romans 7:7
 - c. the Law raises consciousness of what God requires
 - 2. it important to *remember* their relationship with God all the time
 - a. tassels 15:37 to remember my commandments and be holy to God
 - b. trumpets 10:10 will be blown for war, for feasts, for sacrifices
 - c. censers of rebels hammered out as altar covering to remember where priestly authority comes from
- B. Revelation is given to them
 - 1. Sinai's conclusions were not from natural evolution of pagan thought
 - 2. the Almighty One pulled back the veil and revealed Himself
 - 3. the result was a theocentric (God centered) people unlike all others
- C. They are to utterly annihilate - harem, the ban, doom, the enemies 21
 - 1. we take death both too lightly and too seriously
 - a. all persons die, the only difference is how and when
 - b. life is eternal; there is more behind the death screen
 - 1) the Semite believed in a waiting place called Sheol
 - 2) a place of gloom and nothingness - but waiting .. for what?
 - c. *spiritual* death, however, is final
 - d. harem was a dedication of human life back to God
 - 1) a consecration
 - 2) a putting of lives back into His hands
 - 3) the sword was, therefore, merciful
 - 3. if salvation is to come to this earth, this people must be separate
 - a. a no man's land is established around them
 - b. if they transgressed into a forbidden area, they would die
 - c. and enemies they contact must be under the ban
 - 4. even with this drastic line drawn about them they barely kept the faith alive
 - a. death dealt out on every side
 - b. to keep them a holy people
- D. Blood has much religious significance
 - 1. the "uncleanness" or untouchableness of women in menses or after childbirth (NAB notes the "Contamination of Holiness")

- a. chances are the woman above was first considered to be "contaminated" because of the blood
 - b. therefore she was not to be touched
 - c. nor anything that she touched to be touched
 - d. she was set apart because of blood flow until it ended
 - e. degenerated into the idea of uncleanness
 - f. therefore the two weeks of being contaminated with holiness after birth of a girl is the sign of the special significance of the feminine to faith
 - g. the week of being contaminated with holiness after birth of a boy means that masculinity is of a different order
- 2. in blood is Life which is from God
 - 3. there are prohibitions about its use and handling - don't eat!

Accomplishments of the Year at Sinai

- A. The utter holiness of God has been revealed
 - 1. the utter need to respect that holiness
 - 2. Shekinah Ex 33-34 -the holy presence
 - a. appearance of fire and cloud, glow 9:15
 - 1) when the cloud was taken up, the people set out
 - 2) wherever it rested they encamped
 - 3) as long as it rested on the tabernacle, they remained 9:18, two days or a month or a longer time
 - b. later "glory"- John 1:14
 - 3. God-with-them 10:35-36
 - 4. "Be Holy as I Am Holy"
 - a. holiness is related to cleanliness and wholeness
 - 1) lustral water for cleansing 19
 - a) made from ashes of a red heifer specially prepared
 - b) cleansed from touching the dead, and places of death 19:14
 - b. uncleanness of dead
 - 1) everyone in his tent is unclean for seven days
 - 2) every open vessel without a cover is unclean
 - 3) touching a body in a field makes a person unclean
 - 4) or touching a bone, or a grave
 - 5) anything that the unclean touches is unclean
 - 6) to be cleansed
 - a) a clean person takes hyssop
 - b) dipped in running water and sprinkled on everything and everyone unclean

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- c) sprinkled on the third and the seventh day
 - d) on the seventh day he shall wash his clothes and bathe
 - e) evening of the seventh day he will be clean
 - 7) the uncleansed shall be cut off from the tribe 5.
- holiness may inspire trance, rapture, prophecy, frenzy
- B. The Law's aspects
1. the blood covenant Ex 24:3
 2. some special functions
 - a. women's inheritance 27 - 36
 - 1) daughter of Zelophehad given their father's inheritance 27:5
 - 2) these daughters' marriages must be within a family of the tribe
 - 3) there is no land inheritance transfer from tribe to tribe 36:6
 - b. freewill offerings of cereal and burnt offering, vow 15
 - c. before eating in the land present an offering 15:17
 - d. unwitting sin offerings 15:24ff
 - e. rules about manslaughter, murder and cities of refuge 35
 3. obedience and disobedience
 - a. Gen 2:16-17 death follows disobedience
 - b. disobedience of Sabbath law and the man gathering sticks 15:32
 - 1) the penalty: he is stoned to death
 - 2) he knew what he was doing and was not ignorant
- C. The Tabernacle is built
1. the Presence of God is at the mercy seat (propitiation)
 2. God speaks from the mercy seat on the ark of the testimony 7:89
 3. seven lamps and the lampstand are described 8:1
- D. Offerings and Sacrifices are codified
1. the Day of Atonement
 - a. Azazel is the demon of the desert
 - b. the scapegoat is burdened with the sins of the people
 - c. there is a gap between man and God because of sin
 2. unwitting sin - versus witting sin (instant death) 15
 3. offerings of the tribes to dedication of the altar listed in 7 a. silver plates, basins, golden dishes, incense, bulls, lambs, rams, cereal offerings, goats for burnt offering and sin offerings
 4. further chapters on feasts and offerings by days etc. 28, 29
 5. rules concerning vows of a woman 30
 - a. she is not her own boss unless she is single
 - b. she is under *the* authority of her father or husband
- E. Priesthood versus the Levitical service – kingdom of priests, Ex 19:6

1. Levitical duties are different from priests
 - a. they are responsible for the tabernacle of testimony 1:50, 3:70, 18:1ff
 - b. they care for all its furnishings and all that belongs to it
 - c. they shall encamp around it, taking it down and pitching it
 - d. anyone else attempting to do these things shall be put to death
 - e. there are fixed assignments and duties (see below under families)
 - f. the Levites shall serve the priests 3:9
2. Aaron and Moses' relationship to the tribe of Levi
 - a. sons of Aaron: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, Ithamar 3:2
 - 1) all are anointed priests
 - 2) Nadab and Abihu died offering unholy fire LA/ 10:1-2
 - 3) Eleazar and Ithamar served as priests during their father's lifetime
 - b. Moses numbers the tribe of Levi 3:16 22,000 3:38
 - c. the sons of Levi, only workers 30-50 years old are counted: 8,580 total
 - 1) Gershon - 7 subunits, 500 fighting men, or 7,500 fighting men; 2,630 who could enter service
 - a) to encamp behind the tabernacle to the west 323
 - b) in charge of the tent of meeting, its covering, the screen for the door, the hangings for the court, the altar and its cords
 - c) is at the command of the priests overseen by Ithamar
 - 2) Kohath - 8,600 (Ex 6:18-20 the line of Moses and Aaron) 2,750 who could enter service
 - a) to encamp on the south side of the tabernacle
 - b) their charge to be the ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars, the vessels, the screen
 - (1) they merely carry these as prepared by the priest
 - (2) if they touch them they will die, even if they look at them
 - 3) Merari is counted: 6,200; 3,200 who could enter service
 - a) encamped on the north side of the tabernacle
 - b) in charge of the frames, the bars, pillars and bases, and all accessories, bases, pegs and cords. 4:29ff
 - c) oversight of the Merarites is by the priest, Ithamar
 - 4) Moses is set apart; Aaron and sons are the priests 3:38
 - a) they encamp on the east
 - b) they are in charge of all the rites inside the sanctuary
 - c) anyone else who came near was put to death
 - d) they take down the veil of the screen, cover the ark with goatskin and blue cloth, it's put on poles
 - e) blue cloth covers the table of bread of presence and utensils

- then covered with red cloth and a goatskin, put on poles
 - f) over the golden altar they place a blue cloth, covered with goatskin and put on poles
 - g) all vessels are covered in cloth of blue, covered with goatskin on a carrying frame
 - h) the same for all altar utensils which are put on poles
 - 5) Eleazar is in charge of oil for the light, incense, cereal offering, anointing oil, oversight of all the tabernacle and its vessels and the sanctuary
- 3. the livelihood for priests and Levites
 - a. for the Levites, six wagons full - a wagon for every two leaders 7:2ff given for their service (none to Kohathites)
 - b. the offerings that will support them 18:8ff
 - 1) cereal offering
 - 2) guilt offering
 - 3) wave offering - every devoted thing shall be yours
 - 4) all first born of animals offered to the Lord, the flesh is yours
 - c. six cities of refuge are given the Levites 35:1ff and their pasture lands
- 4. the Levites belong to God like the first born 3:11ff, 3:40ff
 - a. Levites instead of the first born dedicated to the Lord 3:44, 8:14
 - 1) one for one
 - 2) the 273 extra first born shall pay five shekels apiece
 - 3) give the money to Aaron as redemption money
 - b. all first born males 22,273 (the *elep* theory mentioned below?)
 - c. Levites shall be mine, for service at tent of meeting as a buffer 8:19
 - 1) they serve from age 25 to 50
 - 2) at 50 they keep their charge but do no service
- 5. the Nazirite Laws 6
- 6. the Levitical blessing of priests
 - a. the Lord bless you and keep you - - etc. 6:24ff
- 7. Levitical cleansing 8:5
 - a. sprinkled with water of expiation for remission of sin
 - b. shaved their bodies
 - c. offer sin offering - an atonement for sins
 - d. present them before the Lord
 - e. the people of Israel shall lay their hands upon them
 - f. they shall be offered by Aaron as a wave offering
 - 1) for the people of Israel
 - 2) theirs to do the service of the Lord

III. First Stage: The Journey Begins toward Canaan

- A. Keep the Passover 9:1ff
 - 1. first month of the second year - the fourteenth day
 - 2. according to all its statutes they eat the lamb
 - a. eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs
 - b. leave none of it till morning
 - c. break not a bone of it
 - 3. the unclean and those on journeys shall still keep Passover 9:9
 - 4. any who do not keep it will be cut off from the people 9:13
 - 5. sojourner and native alike shall **keep** it
- B. Order of March
 - 1. a numbering census was **made, helped** by a man from each tribe a. by families, by father's houses - *elep* here is translated "1000" in our Bibles, but it could mean a unit of a subsection of a tribe which would translate thus:
 - 1) Reuben, 46 units of subsections with 500 fighting men 20 yrs. and up (instead of Reuben numbering 46,500 males 20 yrs. and up)
 - 2) Simeon, 59 units - 300 men, instead of 59,300 fighting men
 - 3) Gad, 45 - 650
 - 4) Judah, 64 - 600
 - 5) Issachar 54 - 400
 - 6) Zebulun 57 - 400
 - 7) Joseph (Ephraim) 40 - 500
 - 8) Manasseh 32 - 200
 - 9) Benjamin 35 - 400
 - 10) Dan 62 - 700
 - 11) Asher 24 - 500
 - 12) Naphtali 53 - 400
 (this theory does not, however, work out with other countings of things in the Old Testament where numbers are always a question)
 - b. according to the number of names
 - c. count every male twenty and older, head by head
 - d. number them company by company
 - e. the total was 5,400 fighting men; 603,550 if added the other way
 - f. Levi shall not be numbered
 - g. (numbered at the end of 40 yrs, 26:51 - all first generation adults dead except Caleb and Joshua 601,730)
- 2. heads of the tribes were the elders

- a. they were the leaders of the ancestral tribes
- b. heads of clans were also elders
- 3. arrangement of the camp in chapter 2
 - a. encamp by the standard with ensigns of father's houses
 - b. encamp facing the tent of meeting on every side
 - c. toward the east - the sunrise, those set out first
 - 1) Judah the primary tribe
 - 2) complemented by Issachar and Zebulun
 - d. south set out second
 - 1) Reuben the primary tribe
 - 2) complemented by Simeon and Gad
 - e. then the tent of meeting shall set out with the Levites
 - f. on the west - setting out third
 - 1) Ephraim the primary tribe
 - 2) complemented by Benjamin and Manasseh
 - g. on the north - setting out last
 - 1) Dan the primary tribe
 - 2) complemented by Asher and Naphtali
- 4. the first setting out
 - a. it happened in the second year, second month, 20th day from deliverance from Egypt
 - b. moved **from Sinai to Paran** 10:12
 - c. Reuel's family - Jethro goes with them 10:29
 - 1) Moses said, come with us, we will do you good
 - 2) you will serve as eyes for us
 - 3) refused but later are present Judges 1:16 - I Sam 15:6
 - d. prayer for setting out and resting the ark 10:35-36
 - e. **from Kibrothhataavah to Hazeroth** 11:35
 - f. **into the wilderness of Zin -Kadesh** 20:1
 - g. **from Kadesh to Mount Her** 20:22
 - h. **from Mt Hor, around Edom, back to Red Sea** 21:4 **Oboth, Eyebaram, Valley of Zered** 21:12 j. **the other side of the Arnon** 21:13
 - k. **the plains of Moab beyond the Jordan or Jericho** 22:1 1. **the whole journey replayed in 3**
- C. Leadership of Aaron and Moses
 - 1. Moses' complaint to God 11:11
 - a. why this burden?
 - b. did I conceive this people

- c. "nurse" in the text is really "foster father"
- d. I am not able to carry this burden
- e. kill me right now
- 2. election of the seventy to be filled with Moses' spirit 11:16, Ex 18
 - a. the spirit fell on them and they prophesied 11:24
 - b. two men in the camp, not with the others, also prophesy
 - c. Joshua said, "My Lord forbid them."
 - d. Moses would have all the Lord's peoples be prophets. 11:29
- 3. intercession of Moses on behalf of the people 14, 16:46, 20:6,
- 4. their sin 20:10 ff
 - a. paralleled in Ex 17:1-17 at Meribah
 - b. hear now, you rebels, shall we bring forth water
 - c. struck the rock twice unnecessarily dramatizing his role
 - d. God says "you did not believe in me, to sanctify me before the people"
 - e. you shall not bring the people into this land
- D. Grumbling and punishments 11,14
 - 1. about their misfortunes 11:1
 - a. God's anger kindled
 - b. fire burns part of the camp
 - c. Moses intercedes for the people
 - 2. over lack of food "this manna" 11:4 - the quail 11:32
 - a. note: the "rabble among them" means foreign elements among them
 - b. "you shall eat meat until it comes out your nostrils" 10:19
 - c. the arrival of quail 11:32
 - d. while meat was within their teeth the Lord smites with a great plague
 - e. called Kibrothhataavah "graves of craving"
 - 3. we loathe this food and we have no water 11:5
 - a. God angry and Moses displeased with God 11:10
 - b. the fiery serpents bit the people so they died
 - c. they quickly repent
 - d. Moses prayed
 - e. "Make a bronze serpent"
 - f. those who looked upon it would live
 - 4. murmuring against the fate of Dothan, Korah and Abiram 16:41
 - a. a plague stopped by Aaron's intercession - 14,700 die.
 - 5. grumbling for water 20:2 parallel to Ex 17:1-17
 - a. tell the rock to yield water (there are limestone aquifers above ground)
 - b. this was the occasion for Moses's sin 20:10
- E. Kadesh-Barnea and Lack of Trust

105 Lesson 10 Numbers Outline

1. spying out the land 13
 - a. a man sent from each tribe
 - b. they go from Zin to Rehob (Hamath)
 - c. Anak-Nephilim, aboriginal people known for height 13:33
 - d. in the valley of Eschol, they cut down a big bunch of grapes e, spied out the land for forty days - a land flowing with milk and honey
2. they fear of strength of Canaanite cities
 - a. the Anak have dolmens - burial mounds found to this day were assumed by Hebrews to indicate their size.
 - b. Amalekites in the Negeb; Hittites, Jebusites, Amorites in the hill country; Canaanites on the coast and flat areas
 - c. fear in their case is lack of trust in God
 - 1) people cried and murmured against Moses and Aaron 14:1ff
 - 2) let's chose a leader and go back to Egypt 14:4
 - 3) God says, "How long will this people not believe in me?" 14:11
 - a) strike them with pestilence
 - b) I will make a mighty nation out of you (start over)
 - c) Moses pleads for the people 14:13 (repeats Ex 32:11ff)
 - d. none but Caleb and Joshua will enter the land! for this lack of faith
 - 1) turn back and set out for the wilderness 14:25
 - 2) only your little ones will come into the land 14:31
 - 3) forty years you shall know my displeasure 14:34
 - 4) this generation shall come to a full end in the wilderness
 - 5) the men who brought the evil report died by the plague 14:37
 - e. repentance of this leads to presumption 14:40
 - 1) when you do not have faith, do not try to exceed it
 - 2) without following God, you presumptuously run ahead 14:41ff
 - a) neither the ark or the Lord went with them
 - b) the Amalakites soundly trounced them
3. Caleb of Judah, Joshua of Ephraim are spared because of faith
 - a. significance of these tribes and these men Gen. 49
 - b. people want to stone them for their trust and belief. 14:10

IV. Challenging God's Authority A.

Aaron and Miriam 12

1. Moses marries a Cushite (Zipporah)
2. challenge Moses' prophetic authority a. is he the only prophet? how about us?
3. Moses described as the meekest man on earth

- a. meaning humble
 - b. knew his limitations and boundaries and would not go beyond them
 - 1) Miriam is punished -her presumption is greater
 - a) woman's responsibility as receiver, not to envy, is greater
 - b) the whole design sinks or swims with her obedience
 - c) divine order is essential to this community
 - 2) Aaron not punished - he has a role of authority as Moses' mouth
 4. God calls them all to tent of meeting
 - a. speaks to Aaron and Miriam
 - 1) I the Lord make myself known to ordinary prophets in vision
 - 2) not so with Moses - mouth to mouth, he sees me
 - 3) how dare you question him? 12:8
 - b. God departs, and Miriam is leprous 12:9
 - c. Aaron begs Moses and he begs God for her healing
 - d. for seven days her malady remains
- B. Dothan** (Reubenites) and the lay men - two stories fused 16
1. necessity of a set apart, authorized priesthood
 2. difference between this and "priesthood of all believers"! Pet 2:9 Ex 19:6
 3. Dothan and company will not come up to see Moses
 - a. he is very angry
 - b. he has harmed none of them
 - c. bring censers and incense and come before the Lord
- C. Korah and Levites** (see 71f) 16:1 ff who wanted to be priests
1. struggle over who is authorized for priesthood
 - a. the whole congregation is holy
 - b. why do priests exalt themselves?
 - c. Moses is fearful - the Lord will show you who is His and who is holy 16:4
 - 1) bring censers **with** fire and come before the Lord
 - 2) you don't murmur against Aaron, but God 16:11
 2. they are to bring rods
 - a. only Aaron's flowered which vindicates his chief priesthood 17:1
 - b. this a sign to the rebels
 - c. the priesthood is given as a gift, it is not a right 18:7
 3. censers hammered into a remembrance that only God designates priests
- D. Family punishment** 16:23 ff
1. congregation warned away from Korah, Dothan and Abiram 16:27
 2. the Lord will create something new
 3. you will know that they have despised the Lord

- a. the ground splits and swallows them alive into Sheol 16:32ff
- 4. fire consumed the men offering incense
- 5. people murmur against this punishment and are revisited with plague

V. Stage two: Settling the Transjordan

1. Balak's plan 22-23 Balak king of Moab
 - a. incompleteness of the story - something is unsaid at 22:21
 - 1) why does the angel stop them and why is God angry because he goes?
 - 2) the ass speaks ? why? your way is perverse 22:32
 - 3) to emphasize that Balaam must obey God: no double thinking
 - 4) later Salaam encourages Israel to act treacherously 31:16 is killed
 - b. sends for Balaam, a Mesopotamian diviner, 22:5 to curse this people
 - c. God speaks to Balaam
 - 1) Balsam will obey God not man (sounds like he worships Yahweh??)
 - a) first refuses to go with them
 - b) Balak sends again - God says go with them, but say what I tell you
 - 2) the blessings prophesied for Israel
 - a) Balak sacrifices to his god
 - b) Balaam requires seven altars and seven bulls to God
 - c) first blessing from Bamothbaal; he cannot curse, here is a singular people of special destiny - he wishes he were like them 23:7
 - d) top of Pisgah - second blessing, 23:18 the Lord God is with them behold a people who will have victories
 - e) top of Peor 24:4 (gives up his divination techniques) - third blessing - only bounty in store and victories over enemies
 - f) further oracle - a star and scepter 24:17
2. Encounters with "nations"
 - a. wars (these were sheikdoms, as a nation, no more than 100 yrs old)
 - 1) defeated in the Negeb - Amalekites 21
 - 2) conquest of Sihon of the Amorites 21:23 ff
 - 3) Og of Bashan 21:22
 - 4) Midianites (the woman who was a cult prostitute) 31
 - 5) Edom, Moab and Ammon left unchallenged
 - b. "brother" Edom would not let them pass 20:14 ff to King's Highway
 - c. Moab would not let them pass
 - d. king of Arad, Canaanite fights them and takes captives (under the ban)
 - e. instructions about treating inhabitants of Canaan 33:50
 - 1) drive out all the inhabitants
 - 2) destroy their figured stones, molten images

- 3) destroy their high places
- 4) take possession of the land and settle it - inherited by lot 33:54
3. Idolatry in Israel
 - a. the events of Peor 25:1 yoked to Baal of Peor
 - 1) slay all chiefs 25:4
 - 2) Midianite woman and man of Israel slain by Phinehas
 - a) his "ordination" 15:10ff
 - 3) plague in punishment 24,000 died
 - b. war with Midian -the ban 25:16
 - 1) to utterly destroy is to consecrate to Yahweh
 - 2) they took spoil and captives laws of division 31:25
 - a) two parts - warriors and congregation
 - b) warrior - levy 1 out of 500 to priests
 - c) congregation - levy 1 out of 50 to Levites
 - 3) should keep only things that can pass through fire 31:23
4. Settling Reuben, Gad, Manasseh 32
 - a. promise to fight over the Jordan 32:20ff otherwise sin
 - b. build cities and let your little ones and wives remain in Gilead
 - c. territories and cities listed in 32:33 ff

VI. The Death of Moses and Aaron

- A. Aaron dies at Mt. Her 20:22
 1. his son Eleazar dons his garments
 2. dies on the mountain top
 3. all Israel mourns his death 30 days
- B. Moses dies on Mt. Nebo - Deut 34
 1. can see the land 27:12
 2. God appoints Joshua 27:18
 - a. presented to Eleazar who will use Urim
 - b. Moses laid hands on him and commissioned him

Audio-visuals are available to go with this lesson, reviewing in pictures the events between the time of Joseph and the death of Moses