

**GOD'S MESSAGES  
BIBLE  
COMMENTARY  
SERIES**

**VOLUME 3**

So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense,  
and caused them to understand the reading.  
(Nehemiah 8:8).

**COMMENTARY  
ON  
THE BOOKS  
OF  
LEVITICUS  
AND NUMBERS**

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# Introduction To Leviticus

## **The Title of the Book:**

The title of this third book of the Old Testament points out it's connection with the priestly tribe of Levi. When Moses asked who would stand on the Lord's side after the folly in worshiping the golden calf, only the tribe of Levi responded. Thus it was quite appropriate that God chose that tribe as the one to take the lead in the presentation and teaching of the law, and in the mediation between Israel and Jehovah.

In actuality the title was placed by the Greek Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate versions. This was done because the book deals with the responsibilities of the Levites in general and the priests in particular.

## **The Time and Place:**

According to the calculations of Archbishop Ussher, the book covers a period of one month in the year 2514 after creation. Other commentators are of the opinion that only one week of activities are included.

Israel had departed from Egypt about one year before this and had traveled in a fairly direct line

toward the promised land. If they had not defiled themselves with the worship of the golden calf, they could have shortly entered Palestine. Now they are to experience forty years of wandering in the Sinai peninsula before entering. It seems fairly clear that God knew when He gave instructions for the construction of the tabernacle that they would need a portable center of worship during those years.

The tabernacle had now been constructed and God had approved the work by filling it with His glory. He was ready to give specific instructions for worshipping the Almighty. Israel had turned away while Moses was on Sinai. The first word in the book of Leviticus is Vayickrah. The literal meaning of the word in English is “and God called.” His people would be given forty years of training in the hearing of His voice and the obeying of His teaching.

### **The Importance of the Book:**

There are many who find the book very difficult to make meaningful in terms of the Christian daily life. This should not be the case. In the perusal of the book of Leviticus one must constantly keep in mind that the were things written ahead of time in order that we who have come later might have patience and hope as we follow Jesus Christ. Notice the explanation of Jehovah as to His reason for including such material in the Holy Scriptures.

Rom 15:4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we





through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

1Co 10:11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

The reader should constantly keep in mind that the law was an instructor intended to bring men to an understanding of the coming Saviour.

Gal 3:24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

Gal 3:25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

Dear friend, if you walk into a strange congregation and ask someone to direct you to the room where the class on the book of Leviticus is being studied, you will probably not find one. Do not allow the absence of interest in this book to deceive you. The mature Bible student will find a wealth of support for his or her hope of heaven in discovering just how God has brought His faithful along in His plan to live with His entire family in the eternal city where there are no tears.

### **Highlights of the Book of Leviticus:**

There are several key words and principles which find strong emphasis.



1. Sin is deadly and has separated man from God.
2. God is not willing that any should perish.
3. God has developed a plan for atonement.
4. Sacrifice must be made as a means of atonement.
5. The blood of animals covered sin for the moment.
6. After man has been sanctified, he must continue to walk in holiness.
7. There is a need for a Perfect High Priest and a Perfect Sacrifice.

### **A Brief Outline of Leviticus**

- I. The five offerings God expected.
  - A. The Burnt Offerings.
  - B. The Meal Offerings.
  - C. The Peace Offerings.
  - D. The Sin Offerings.
  - E. The Trespass Offerings.
- II. The Priesthood.
  - A. Consecration of the Priests.
  - B. Activities of the Priests.
  - C. Restriction on the Priests.
- III. Daily Obligations.
  - A. Food
  - B. Discipline of Children
  - C. Cleansing of leprosy and body issues.
  - D. The Day of Atonement.
  - E. Importance of Blood.
  - F. Keeping God's Commandments.
  - G. Result of Breaking God's Commands.

H. Priests Must Maintain Purity.

IV. Holy Days

A. The Sabbath.

B. The Passover.

C. Pentecost.

D. Feast of Trumpets.

E. Day of Atonement.

F. Feast of Tabernacles.

V. Blessings and Cursings Promised.

A. Blessings for the Faithful.

B. Cursings for the Unfaithful.

VI. Vows and Tithes.







**The Book Of  
LEVITICUS**



## *Chapter 1*

**LEV 1:1 And the LORD called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying,**

Previously God had spoken to Moses from the top of Mount Sinai. Now the tabernacle is finished and He speaks from the Most Holy Place of that structure. It might be expected that specific directions would be given for the worship services that were intended to keep communications open between Jehovah and His chosen people for many years to come, until they were established in the promised land.

This book begins with the word “and.” The first five books of the Holy Scriptures are known as the five books of the law. They are actually one book consisting of five divisions. We observe that the conjunction “and” points out this truth.

**LEV 1:2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man of you bring an offering unto the LORD, ye shall bring your offering of the cattle, even of the herd, and of the flock.**

God blesses man with life, with food, clothing and shelter, with human companionship and with His own Divine guidance. He expects man to respond by paying Him a proper degree of respect. The offering of sacrifices is certainly not a means of filling God's needs. He needs what we offer only in the sense that we might need the love and service of our

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household pets.

Still, it is important to God that we offer both ourselves and that which we possess. Let us honor His desires.

The word “cattle” is not limited to beef and dairy cattle. It included also the sheep and the goats. Instructions will be laid out for offering from each of these classes.

**LEV 1:3 If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish: he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD.**

The burnt offering is the first to be described. It is possible that God considered this to be the most important. It was not to be a sick or crippled specimen. It was to be one of the finest available. God does not want our leftovers. He provides the best for us. He expects a similar response.

The animal was to be offered voluntarily. God did not value that which was offered grudgingly. This was true in Moses time. It is just as true today. It should be a joy to commune with God and let Him know we are proud to be in partnership with Him in accomplishing His purposes.

**LEV 1:4 And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him.**





The placing of the hand upon the head of the offering before it was killed was a means of identifying the death of the animal with the guilt of one's own sins. Throughout the entire book of Leviticus we find markers pointing to the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary, as He took our sins upon Himself.

Note the word "atonement." It can be divided into three words at-one-ment. To atone for our sins is to close the immense gap between ourselves and God which was brought about by the commission of those sins. By the sacrifices which pointed to Christ, and by the personal sacrifice of the Saviour Himself, we are invited to reunited with our Creator.

**LEV 1:5 And he shall kill the bullock before the LORD: and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall bring the blood, and sprinkle the blood round about upon the altar that is by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.**

The one who offered the animal was to do the killing. This action was to be witnessed by the priests, and of course by the Lord. The blood of the animals was to be saved and turned over to the priests. They were then to sprinkle that blood around the altar where the body of the animal would be burnt.

Because the word "sprinkle" is used here some who deny the importance of immersion in the water during baptism attempt to justify sprinkling of babies as an acceptable form. This is not true.

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Baptism is typical of death to sin and the birth of a new spiritual man or woman. The subject of baptism is to go “down into” the water, and then come “up out of” the water.

The reader may object that this sprinkling of blood is a gory spectacle which is repulsive to consider. Yes, it is. But God is reminding us that the life is in the blood and that spiritual death is the result of sin. A book like Leviticus, which deals with sin offerings, might be expected to be unpleasant in much the same sense that a visit to the medical hospital is unpleasant.

**LEV 1:6 And he shall flay the burnt offering, and cut it into his pieces.**

To flay the bullock was to skin it. After skinning it was to be cut into several pieces. It would thus burn faster and more completely

**LEV 1:7 And the sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire upon the altar, and lay the wood in order upon the fire:**

Aaron’s sons were Ithamar, Eleazar, Nadab and Abihu. Nadab and Abihu later lost their lives as a result of using strange fire on the altar of God. At this point the four of them were charged with the preparations for burning the sacrifice.

**LEV 1:8 And the priests, Aaron’s sons, shall**



**lay the parts, the head, and the fat, in order upon the wood that is on the fire which is upon the altar:**

Again it can be seen that the sacrifice was to be a choice specimen. It was to be fat.

**LEV 1:9 But his inwards and his legs shall he wash in water: and the priest shall burn all on the altar, to be a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.**

The entire animal was to be rid from all filth. The intestines and other inwards were to be washed clean. The same was to true with the legs. These legs were very likely the lower part of the legs, including the hooves, which would be unsuitable for human consumption.

The priest was to burn everything on the altar after the proper preparations were made. This was not true with some of the other offerings. Some were eaten by the priests. Others were eaten partially consumed by the people during feasts.

The odor of cooking meat is pleasant to the human nostrils. As the meat of the offering cooked over the fire, the odor was described as a sweet savour in God's nostrils. A pertinent cross reference used in the book of Ephesians is found in 5:2.

**Eph 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.**



**LEV 1:10 And if his offering be of the flocks, namely, of the sheep, or of the goats, for a burnt sacrifice; he shall bring it a male without blemish.**

Bullocks were not the only acceptable type of sacrifice. Male sheep or goats were also approved. Again, the sacrifice was to be male and it was to be a choice animal. The fact that these sacrifices were to be male may point toward Christ as the Son of God. We must add that Christ was without blemish.

**LEV 1:11 And he shall kill it on the side of the altar northward before the LORD: and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall sprinkle his blood round about upon the altar.**

No special reason is given as to why the animal was to be killed on the north side of the altar. This did not give license for the priest to kill it anywhere he chose. God had a reason or He would not have specified the side to be used. If God had desired that the priests be told the reason, He would have done so. He did not give a reason. He gave a command and expected them to observe it! Nadab and Abihu would find out later just how close one was to obey such commands.

**LEV 1:12 And he shall cut it into his pieces, with his head and his fat: and the priest shall lay them in order on the wood that is on the fire which is upon the altar:**

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**LEV 1:13 But he shall wash the inwards and the legs with water: and the priest shall bring it all, and burn it upon the altar: it is a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.**

The only part of the earlier directions for the beef or dairy animals that was not repeated here is the matter of flaying or skinning. Everything else is identical. The sacrifice is not as valuable, but may be all that the less prosperous of the people could offer.

**LEV 1:14 And if the burnt sacrifice for his offering to the LORD be of fowls, then he shall bring his offering of turtledoves, or of young pigeons.**

If the one doing the offering was not able to bring a larger animal, God would accept even a small bird. Pigeons and doves were sometimes used. In the fifth chapter of this same book we are told the poorest of the people could even bring a small amount of meal as an offering.

Lev 5:11 But if he be not able to bring two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, then he that sinned shall bring for his offering the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for a sin offering; he shall put no oil upon it, neither shall he put any frankincense thereon: for it is a sin offering.

God does not expect more from man than that



which man can do. Those who have been prospered the most are expected to offer the most. Those who have been less prospered will not be expected to offer as much. It is important for us not to underestimate our blessings. God can outgive us at any time!

**LEV 1:15 And the priest shall bring it unto the altar, and wring off his head, and burn it on the altar; and the blood thereof shall be wrung out at the side of the altar:**

We are back to another unpleasant sight. The turtledove or pigeon was to have it's head wrung off by the priest. The one who offered it was not the one who killed it this time.

Your present commentator may be classified as overly squeamish by some readers. However, on those occasions when my parents decided to wring the head off a chicken rather than cutting it off with an ax, my stomach would let me know it would be better to turn the other way. I do not like bloodshed, either mine or that of any other living thing. The spear which was plunged into the side of the Son of God is a hideous thought.

**LEV 1:16 And he shall pluck away his crop with his feathers, and cast it beside the altar on the east part, by the place of the ashes:**

**LEV 1:17 And he shall cleave it with the wings thereof, but shall not divide it asunder: and the priest shall burn it upon the altar, upon the wood that is upon the fire: it is a**  
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**burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.**

Neither the crop nor the feathers could be eaten. These were placed in the ashpit. Then the bird was to be partially separated and burnt upon the wood above the altar. It was just as sweet a savour to God as were the larger animals if that was all the one doing the offering could afford.

Give to God willing and cheerfully. Give to Him only as much as He might expect. But do **not** attempt to deceive Him as did Ananias and Saphira did as recorded in Acts 5.





## *Chapter 2*

**LEV 2:1 And when any will offer a meat offering unto the LORD, his offering shall be of fine flour; and he shall pour oil upon it, and put frankincense thereon:**

Chapter one dealt with the burnt offering. This chapter discusses the meat, or meal, offering. This is one of those cases where the English language has changed drastically over the years. We still cling to a vestige of the old meaning today when we speak of meat and drink. The meat offering was not beef or mutton. It consisted of ground grain.

The oil which was to be poured upon it was olive oil. This oil was important in more than one way for the Hebrews. It was burned in their lamps. It was used with their food and it was to be mixed with their meal offerings.

The frankincense was bitter when added to food, however it produced a sweet and very pleasant aroma when burned. The reader will recall that gold, frankincense and myrrh were brought by the wise men to honor the birth of the Christ child.

**LEV 2:2 And he shall bring it to Aaron's sons the priests: and he shall take thereof his handful of the flour thereof, and of the oil thereof, with all the frankincense thereof; and the priest shall burn the memorial of it upon the altar, to be an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD:**

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When the meal offering was brought to Aaron's sons who were priests and acted as intermediaries between God and man, they were required to remove a small amount of the meal and the oil, plus all of the frankincense. This was then burned upon the altar as a memorial that God had been gracious in providing their daily nourishment. The offering was pleasant to the nostrils of those who made the offering, and was also sweet in a different sense to Jehovah. Compare 2 Cor. 2:14 and Eph. 5:2.

2Co 2:14 Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.

2Co 2:15 For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:

2Co 2:16 To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?

Eph 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

**LEV 2:3 And the remnant of the meat offering shall be Aaron's and his sons': it is a thing most holy of the offerings of the LORD made by fire.**

After the initial portion was removed and burned



on the altar, the remainder was reserved for the use of the priests. The frankincense had all been removed. The meal and the oil were used by the priests as food.

**LEV 2:4 And if thou bring an oblation of a meat offering baked in the oven, it shall be unleavened cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, or unleavened wafers anointed with oil.**

**LEV 2:5 And if thy oblation be a meat offering baked in a pan, it shall be of fine flour unleavened, mingled with oil.**

**LEV 2:6 Thou shalt part it in pieces, and pour oil thereon: it is a meat offering.**

**LEV 2:7 And if thy oblation be a meat offering baked in the fryingpan, it shall be made of fine flour with oil.**

The word “oblation” carries the same meaning as gift. There are three closely related offerings listed here. All three were largely fine flour. All three were to be mixed with olive oil. All three were apparently unleavened, although this is not actually mentioned with respect to the last of the three.

The first type of offering was baked in an oven. It could be formed into either cakes or wafers. Many words are devoted to the possible shapes and sizes of these cakes and the kind of ovens used. The facts are that we do not know. We do know they were baked.

The second type was baked in a pan. The difference between this and the first type appears to be the use of a metal pan rather than simply placing the mixture on the surface of the hot oven.

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I consulted with my wife on the difference in baking meal in the oven and using a pan. She explained that the frying requires more oil than baking in the oven.

The third type was baked in a frying pan. It may be that the mixture which was baked in the frying pan was separated out into smaller portions than that which was baked in the other type of pan.

It would be interesting to know more about the reasons for these three distinct classes of meal offerings. It is best to be cautious when dealing with that which has not been revealed.

**LEV 2:8 And thou shalt bring the meat offering that is made of these things unto the LORD: and when it is presented unto the priest, he shall bring it unto the altar.**

**LEV 2:9 And the priest shall take from the meat offering a memorial thereof, and shall burn it upon the altar: it is an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.**

Again the reader is reminded that the word “meat” does not refer to animal sacrifices at this point. This is meat as compared to drink offerings.

The offering the priests burned upon the altar is spoken of as a memorial because it causes the one doing the offering to remember the source of his or her blessings. It is through our Father in heaven that we “live and move and have our being.” We should not forget that the Lord’s supper is also a memorial. It is not a full meal. It only serves to remind the



partaker that the body of Christ agonized upon the cross, and that His life blood was poured out that sinners might be washed clean.

**LEV 2:10 And that which is left of the meat offering shall be Aaron's and his sons': it is a thing most holy of the offerings of the LORD made by fire.**

Do we see a difference in the portion of the offering which was burnt on the altar and that which was eaten by the priests, or is the difference between any meal which was not a part of the offering at all and that which was offered. The more logical explanation seems to be that all of the meal offering was holy, whether burned on the altar or eaten by Aaron's sons.

**LEV 2:11 No meat offering, which ye shall bring unto the LORD, shall be made with leaven: for ye shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of the LORD made by fire.**

Leaven is an interesting word, as found in the scriptures. In general it is used negatively. When the people of God fled from Egypt, they were told to leave before their bread had time to rise. As a reminder, they were to use no leavened bread during the Passover week. See Exo. 12:11 and Deut. 16:3.

Exo 12:11 And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD'S passover.

Deu 16:3 Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction; for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste: that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life.

Leaven is used as a type of contamination. Jesus warned his disciples to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. Their doctrine was mixed with false teaching. The teaching of Jesus was pure and uncontaminated.

It is true that the Lord likened the influence of the Kingdom of Heaven to the power of leaven to spread through a mass of unleavened bread.

Honey is one of the finest flavors. It is pleasant to the taste buds of almost everyone. The people of Israel were told to look forward to entering a land of milk and honey. Why then should honey be avoided in the meal offerings? Could it be that God was teaching His people there would be things that very much pleased them, but did not please Him. Worship should be pleasing to both God and man. But, the first consideration is pleasing God. There have been altogether too many additions to the Divine recipe for worship. Worship is not human entertainment.



It is a means of praising and honoring the Creator and Sustainer of heaven and earth.

**LEV 2:12 As for the oblation of the firstfruits, ye shall offer them unto the LORD: but they shall not be burnt on the altar for a sweet savour.**

The offering of the firstfruits was not burned upon the altar. Honey and leaven were acceptable as firstfruit offerings, but were never to be included in those offerings which were burned.

**LEV 2:13 And every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat offering: with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt.**

Salt was to be a part of every meal offering. Salt is a preservative. The term “covenant of salt” was used as a description of God’s agreement with Israel that they would be His people and He would be their God.

**LEV 2:14 And if thou offer a meat offering of thy firstfruits unto the LORD, thou shalt offer for the meat offering of thy firstfruits green ears of corn dried by the fire, even corn beaten out of full ears.**

This verse contains two words which leave the Bible student wondering. We have already pointed out that a “meat” offering did not consist of flesh, but of plant products. Now we find the term “ears of corn.” The corn spoken of here is far more likely to be small grain such as wheat or barley than it is to be the roaster ear type we eat with butter and salt today. The ears were the heads of the grain.

Firstfruits were the best of the crop. They might be the first to mature, but they must be the best.

**LEV 2:15 And thou shalt put oil upon it, and lay frankincense thereon: it is a meat offering.**

**LEV 2:16 And the priest shall burn the memorial of it, part of the beaten corn thereof, and part of the oil thereof, with all the frankincense thereof: it is an offering made by fire unto the LORD.**

The meat offering might, or might not be a firstfruit offering. If the meat offering was a firstfruit offering it could contain leaven or honey, but if it did contain either of these items it was not to be burned on the altar.

If the firstfruit offering did not contain either honey or leaven it was still classed as a meat offering and a portion was burned by the priest as a memorial of thanksgiving to the Almighty.





## *Chapter 3*

**LEV 3:1 And if his oblation be a sacrifice of peace offering, if he offer it of the herd; whether it be a male or female, he shall offer it without blemish before the LORD.**

The first chapter of Leviticus dealt with the burnt offering. The second chapter had to do with the meal offering. This third chapter is devoted to the peace offering. The reader may find it helpful to consider the seventh chapter along with the material presented in this one. There is further information on the peace offering found there.

An oblation is a sacrificial offering for the purpose of expressing gratitude or thanks. The one doing the offering realizes God has provided that which resulted in his well being. He wishes for God to know of his appreciation. At the same time he desires to inform God of his own willingness to walk in harmony with the Divine will.

**LEV 3:2 And he shall lay his hand upon the head of his offering, and kill it at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and Aaron's sons the priests shall sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about.**

The laying of hands upon the head of the offering is not for the purpose of slaughtering the animal. It is to indicate identification of the animal with the one making the offering. This is a shadow of

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the Lamb of God who shed His blood to reconcile sinners with Jehovah. Humanity could better understand the sacrifice of Christ after having been taught concerning the peace offering through the centuries.

After he had laid his hands on the head of the offering, the one who offered it was to kill it at the entrance of the tabernacle courtyard. Then Aaron's sons were to sprinkle the blood upon the altar. The life is in the blood. When Christ shed his blood he was giving his physical life in order that men might have access to spiritual life.

Much of the book of Leviticus is unpleasant reading because of its gory nature. There is blood everywhere. This is but one example. One of the reasons Bible students bypass the book is that the Christian heart tends to be gentle. Nevertheless, the results of sin are hideous and the picture of blood is appropriate.

**LEV 3:3 And he shall offer of the sacrifice of the peace offering an offering made by fire unto the LORD; the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards,**

Both the burnt offering and the peace offering were related to fire. Nearly all of the burnt offering was burned to ashes. This was not true of the peace offering. In the latter the fat was not burned.

Fat was considered a proof of a healthy and desirable animal. The fatted calf which the father of the prodigal son prepared at the time of his return was selected because it was one of his finest. Even today the farmer fattens his livestock before sending

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them off to the market.

It would be impossible to separate all of the fat from the rest of the tissue. The fat which was to be removed was that which was concentrated in the area of the entrails of the sacrifice.

**LEV 3:4 And the two kidneys, and the fat that is on them, which is by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away.**

The fat in the area of the liver and the kidneys was to be separated from the offering. The reader should be careful about the similarity of the word “caul” and the word “gall” which we use today. We could understand why the excretory function of the kidneys would make them an undesirable part of the sacrifice. It is tempting to see the bitterness of the gall bladder as making it offensive. The “caul” seems to have been an entire lobe of the liver rather than only the gall bladder.

**LEV 3:5 And Aaron’s sons shall burn it on the altar upon the burnt sacrifice, which is upon the wood that is on the fire: it is an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.**

Note that the burnt offering and the peace offering are closely connected. The peace offering was to be placed upon the burnt offering as both were laid upon the altar.



I add just a word about the use of fire in connection with the offerings. Dedication to God ordinarily brings some degree of persecution. The one who allows himself to become a living sacrifice to the God of heaven will find it necessary to pass through those fires of persecution. After having successfully passed through them, he becomes a sweet savour or odor in the nostrils of the Lord.

**LEV 3:6 And if his offering for a sacrifice of peace offering unto the LORD be of the flock; male or female, he shall offer it without blemish.**

While the previous verses of this present chapter discuss the offering taken from the herd, these next verses apply to sacrifices taken from the flock, particularly sheep and goats.

The sex of the burnt offering was to be male only. Now there is permission to use either the male or the female. God does not explain why the female is acceptable for a peace offering but not for a burnt offering. I will not presume to speak where He has not.

Though the restriction to the male sex was lifted, the condition of the offering was still to be unblemished. God does not want seconds. He expects to receive the finest we are able to provide. This should have carryover into our present day worship. The various acts of worship should be done to the very best of our ability. We can never give back to God as much as He has given to us. Let us at least give cheerfully, willingly and generously.



**LEV 3:7** If he offer a lamb for his offering, then shall he offer it before the LORD.

**LEV 3:8** And he shall lay his hand upon the head of his offering, and kill it before the tabernacle of the congregation: and Aaron's sons shall sprinkle the blood thereof round about upon the altar.

**LEV 3:9** And he shall offer of the sacrifice of the peace offering an offering made by fire unto the LORD; the fat thereof, and the whole rump, it shall he take off hard by the backbone; and the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards,

**LEV 3:10** And the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them, which is by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away.

**LEV 3:11** And the priest shall burn it upon the altar: it is the food of the offering made by fire unto the LORD.

Much of these last five verses duplicates the general instructions already given. These refer to the sheep. The following refer to the goat.

One difference has to do with the fat found near the backbone of the sheep. The sheep of that time and place were different from those found in many areas today. They had heavy deposits of fat in the tail and near the backbone. Sometimes this amounted to as much as twenty percent of the weight of the entire sheep. That fat was also to be removed from

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the offering before it was placed upon the fire.

**LEV 3:12** And if his offering be a goat, then he shall offer it before the LORD.

**LEV 3:13** And he shall lay his hand upon the head of it, and kill it before the tabernacle of the congregation: and the sons of Aaron shall sprinkle the blood thereof upon the altar round about.

**LEV 3:14** And he shall offer thereof his offering, even an offering made by fire unto the LORD; the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards,

**LEV 3:15** And the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them, which is by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away.

**LEV 3:16** And the priest shall burn them upon the altar: it is the food of the offering made by fire for a sweet savour: all the fat is the LORD'S.

Again we have much duplication of the requirements for the offering from the herd and the sheep. The statement about the fat near the backbone is omitted.

The word "food" is used in verse sixteen. Does God need that we provide food for Him? It does not seem so from Psalm 50:12-13.

Psa 50:12 If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof.



Psa 50:13 Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?

The word “food” must then refer to the fact that the worshipper has placed food which he could have eaten on the altar. God has given him all that he has. The one who is making the peace offering is letting God know of his gratitude. God has given him peace and well being. It is right that he draw near to God and his fellowman with this offering.

**LEV 3:17 It shall be a perpetual statute for your generations throughout all your dwellings, that ye eat neither fat nor blood.**

The law of Moses has been replaced by the Law of our Lord Jesus Christ. Did all of the principles and details of the Old Covenant pass from existence? The answer is that much of the old law has been restated in the teachings of Christ and the apostles. Stealing, lying and adultery are just as wrong today as they were under the law of Moses. The Sabbath has been replaced by worship on the first day of the week.

One command which was considered by the apostles was the restriction upon the eating of blood. The fifteenth chapter of Acts relates the responsibilities of the Gentiles toward the law of Moses. Were the Gentiles expected to be circumcised and keep the law of Moses, or could they ignore the old law and ignore circumcision?

After having conferred with the apostles upon



the matter, Paul and Barnabas were sent back to inform the Gentiles of the results of the meeting. Following are the conclusions which were relayed to the Gentiles.

Act 15:23 And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia.

Act 15:24 Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment:

Act 15:25 It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

Act 15:26 Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Act 15:27 We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth.

Act 15:28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;

Act 15:29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

The eating of blood was sinful under the Old Covenant. According to the above passage, it is still sinful today. The life is in the blood. Blood is not to be eaten.





## *Chapter 4*

**LEV 4:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

Those who contend that this material was written centuries after the time of Moses must flatly deny the truth of this verse. We do not have the freedom to sift the Holy Scripture and throw out that with which we have personal disagreements.

**LEV 4:2 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a soul shall sin through ignorance against any of the commandments of the LORD concerning things which ought not to be done, and shall do against any of them:**

This present chapter discusses what is usually referred to as the sin offering. However, the sins dealt with are primarily those committed through ignorance rather than through deliberate and intentional rebellion. God does not look kindly upon intentional disobedience. Sacrifices are prescribed for the sins presently being considered. Those who commit deliberate sin are considered adversaries of Jehovah. See Hebrews 10:26-27.

Heb 10:26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

Heb 10:27 But a certain fearful looking for of



judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

There are four classes of individuals who may commit such sins of ignorance. They are:

1. The anointed priests.
2. The congregation as a whole.
3. The rulers.
4. The common people as individuals.

They are considered in that order during the course of this chapter.

**LEV 4:3 If the priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people; then let him bring for his sin, which he hath sinned, a young bullock without blemish unto the LORD for a sin offering.**

Is the priest who is anointed limited to the High Priest who is serving at the time, or does it include all of those who have been appointed to the priesthood? There is some disagreement as to which is under consideration.

Priests have special privileges and special responsibilities. The High Priest was allowed to enter the Most Holy on the Day of Atonement. Other priests were not permitted to do so. The common priests were authorized to make sacrifices which the common people could not make. Since these priests had elevated positions, they had more influence than others and their sins had more damaging effects.



In accord with this, the priest was to offer a more valuable sacrifice. He was to bring a young bullock from the herd. This would have been an immature male from the herd. It was to be one without abnormalities such as disease or deformity.

Peter tells Christians we are a royal priesthood with Jesus Christ as our High Priest. It follows that we must present our bodies as living sacrifices, and we must do so with all of our heart. We have been anointed by the Spirit of God. We have special privileges. Let us live up to the responsibilities God has placed upon us. See I Peter 2:9.

1Pe 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light;

**LEV 4:4 And he shall bring the bullock unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD; and shall lay his hand upon the bullock's head, and kill the bullock before the LORD.**

The bullock was to be led to the area of the courtyard where the entrance to the Holy Place was located. There were three entrances associated with the tabernacle area. There was the entrance to the courtyard. There was the entrance to the Holy Place, and there was the entrance into the Most Holy. This was the second of the three. It was near the altar of burnt offering.

The priest who was making the offering was to lay his hand upon the bullock. This indicated that the bullock was taking his place and would suffer the death which he deserved. The wages of sin is death! He was then to slaughter the animal with God as his witness.

Having been raised on a dairy farm, the present writer has seen the killing of a number of animals that were to be used as food for the family. The scene was very unpleasant. A maul was sometimes used to strike the cow in the space directly between the eyes. Then after the death struggle, it was hung up and its throat was cut in order that the blood could escape. I can still recall very vividly just what the snow looked like when it was saturated with that blood. The animal died that we might live.

Jesus died that we might live. He had no sin. He took our place upon the cross. His blood poured out from the wound produced when the spear of the soldier pierced his side. As our High Priest, he made atonement and led the way through death, hell and the grave. The majority of men who have ever lived are dead. Those who have feared God and kept his commandments will be raised to join our High Priest in heaven.

**LEV 4:5 And the priest that is anointed shall take of the bullock's blood, and bring it to the tabernacle of the congregation:**

**LEV 4:6 And the priest shall dip his finger in the blood, and sprinkle of the blood seven times before the LORD, before the vail of the sanctuary.**

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The priest was to take a small amount of the blood of the bullock and go into the Holy Place which had a vail separating it from the Most Holy where the ark of the covenant was located. The priest was then to sprinkle the blood in the direction of the vail seven times. He was not to enter the Most Holy, but was to offer the blood toward that chamber.

As used in the scriptures, seven is the number of completeness. If offered in the manner prescribed, the sacrifice would be accepted.

**LEV 4:7 And the priest shall put some of the blood upon the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the LORD, which is in the tabernacle of the congregation; and shall pour all the blood of the bullock at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.**

The horns of the altar of sweet incense were associated with prayer and security. When Adonijah was fearful that King Solomon would take his life, he went and took hold on the horns of the altar, praying that his life might be spared. This was as close to God as anyone other than the High Priest was allowed to come to Him.

Some of the blood of the bullock was put upon those horns. Then the rest of the blood was poured out at the base of the altar of burnt offering which stood near the entrance of the Holy Place, and where the bullock had been slain.

**LEV 4:8 And he shall take off from it all the fat of the bullock for the sin offering; the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards,**

The fat was considered the choice part of the animal. God had provided for the well being of the sacrifice. This was a way to honor God for his providential blessings.

**LEV 4:9 And the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them, which is by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away,**

The kidneys and the upper lobe of the liver were to be removed, probably for another reason. The kidneys are excretory organs. The portion of the liver which was to be removed was less desirable for human consumption. The Bible does not state the reason for the removal of the kidneys and part of the liver. The reader may wish to ignore the suggested reason.

**LEV 4:10 As it was taken off from the bullock of the sacrifice of peace offerings: and the priest shall burn them upon the altar of the burnt offering.**

The fat, the kidneys and the portion of liver were to be burned on the altar of burnt offering just as they were for the peace offerings.



**LEV 4:11 And the skin of the bullock, and all his flesh, with his head, and with his legs, and his inwards, and his dung,**

**LEV 4:12 Even the whole bullock shall he carry forth without the camp unto a clean place, where the ashes are poured out, and burn him on the wood with fire: where the ashes are poured out shall he be burnt.**

All the rest of the bullock which was offered by the priest as a sin offering was to be taken outside of the entire camp of the Israelites. It was to be taken to the place where the ashes from the altar of burnt offering were dumped. The priests were not to eat the flesh of the bullock. Wood was to be gathered and the major part of the animal was to be burned to ashes.

Thus we come to the close of the remarks on the sin offering of the priest.

**LEV 4:13 And if the whole congregation of Israel sin through ignorance, and the thing be hid from the eyes of the assembly, and they have done somewhat against any of the commandments of the LORD concerning things which should not be done, and are guilty;**

We come now to the second of the four classes of persons who offered sacrifices for sins of ignorance. This time it is the congregation as a whole. When one is a part of a group of persons who have decided to act in a certain way, that person becomes guilty of sin if the action was of sinful nature. Sin is the



transgression of the law. If one has joined with others in some action which is contrary to God's law, that person carries the same guilt as the other members of the group. He might well have separated himself or herself from the group if he had realized sin was being committed. If the individual did not know the action was sinful, he would have sinned ignorantly.

**LEV 4:14 When the sin, which they have sinned against it, is known, then the congregation shall offer a young bullock for the sin, and bring him before the tabernacle of the congregation.**

Nothing could be done about the sin of ignorance as long as it was not identified. As soon as it was recognized, action must be taken to avert the wrath of God.

Just as in the case of the priest who represented the entire congregation, these sins committed ignorantly by the entire congregation required a sacrifice of high value. A young and unblemished male animal from the herd was to be chosen.

As in the case of the offering made by the priest for his own sins, the animal was to be led to entrance of the Holy Place for sacrifice.

**LEV 4:15 And the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands upon the head of the bullock before the LORD: and the bullock shall be killed before the LORD.**





Before, the priest laid his own hand on the bullock. This time the elders of the congregation laid their hands upon the head of the animal. The entire congregation was guilty of the sin. The elders represented the whole congregation and made many major decisions.

**LEV 4:16 And the priest that is anointed shall bring of the bullock's blood to the tabernacle of the congregation:**

**LEV 4:17 And the priest shall dip his finger in some of the blood, and sprinkle it seven times before the LORD, even before the vail.**

**LEV 4:18 And he shall put some of the blood upon the horns of the altar which is before the LORD, that is in the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall pour out all the blood at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.**

**LEV 4:19 And he shall take all his fat from him, and burn it upon the altar.**

**LEV 4:20 And he shall do with the bullock as he did with the bullock for a sin offering, so shall he do with this: and the priest shall make an atonement for them, and it shall be forgiven them.**

**LEV 4:21 And he shall carry forth the bullock without the camp, and burn him as he burned the first bullock: it is a sin offering for the congregation.**

No comment is necessary for verses sixteen through twenty-one. The instructions duplicate those of the sacrifice of the priest for his own sins of ignorance.

**LEV 4:22 When a ruler hath sinned, and done somewhat through ignorance against any of the commandments of the LORD his God concerning things which should not be done, and is guilty;**

The ruler mentioned here is thought to be any official of high rank. It could be a king. It could be one of the princes of the twelve tribes. The individual would not have the influence of the anointed priest, nor of the entire congregation. He would have more influence and responsibility than the common person of the assembly.

As before, we note that the sin which is to be dealt with is that of ignorance instead of deliberate and intentional rebellion against God's commands. The ruler is guilty of sin if he has transgressed God's law. He must repent of that sin and make amends to the Lord.

**LEV 4:23 Or if his sin, wherein he hath sinned, come to his knowledge; he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a male without blemish:**

As soon as the ruler became aware of the sin, he was to make an offering in order that it be forgiven



him. This offering was of lesser value than the bullock which was offered in the case of the anointed priest and case of the entire congregation. This time it was to be a kid from the flock of goats. It was still to be a male with no defects. Over and over we are reminded that our Lord was a male and He was without blemish.

**LEV 4:24 And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the goat, and kill it in the place where they kill the burnt offering before the LORD: it is a sin offering.**

**LEV 4:25 And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out his blood at the bottom of the altar of burnt offering.**

In each of the offerings in this chapter we read of the directions given to the one who brings the sacrifice which is to be offered and the directions given to the priest who presents it to the Lord. The one bringing the sacrifice lays his hand upon it and then slays it. He cleans it and separates the parts which are to be offered on the altar from those which are to be treated in some other way. The priest then takes the blood and places it where God has commanded, then burns the portion the Lord has directed is to be consumed in that manner.

It should be noticed that the altar this time is not the altar of incense which was near the entrance to the Most Holy. It is the altar of burnt offering which



was near the entrance of the Holy Place. Both the value of the sacrifice and the nearness to the ark of the covenant are less than the previous offerings.

**LEV 4:26 And he shall burn all his fat upon the altar, as the fat of the sacrifice of peace offerings: and the priest shall make an atonement for him as concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him.**

Do not fail to note the repetition of the statement that the sins of the one offering the sacrifice shall be forgiven him.

**LEV 4:27 And if any one of the common people sin through ignorance, while he doeth somewhat against any of the commandments of the LORD concerning things which ought not to be done, and be guilty;**

We have descended from the anointed priest to the entire congregation, then to the rulers or princes and now to the common man. In each case the sacrifices were to be offered for the sins of ignorance. Someone had sinned without realizing God had declared his action or thought to be opposed to the Divine will. At the same time it is made crystal clear that the person has sinned and is considered guilty.

This time the individual who has sinned has no special position of dignity other than that which



applies to mankind as created in the image of God.

**LEV 4:28 Or if his sin, which he hath sinned, come to his knowledge: then he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he hath sinned.**

Up to this point, as soon as the sin became known, the sinner was to offer a male animal. This time the animal is to be a young female goat. Your present commentator has no explanation for the change from male to female. Perhaps the reader can find a scriptural explanation. The animal must still be unblemished. God does not like the idea of being offered that which we hold to be without value. He offered His own Son who was unblemished by sin. He has the right to similar treatment.

**LEV 4:29 And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay the sin offering in the place of the burnt offering.**

**LEV 4:30 And the priest shall take of the blood thereof with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar.**

**LEV 4:31 And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat is taken away from off the sacrifice of peace offerings; and the priest shall burn it upon the altar for a sweet savour unto the LORD; and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him.**



**LEV 4:32 And if he bring a lamb for a sin offering, he shall bring it a female without blemish.**

If the man did not have a female goat to offer, he could offer a lamb. How interesting it is that after the more valuable male bullock, a male goat was accepted. Then, a female goat could be presented. Finally we have a female lamb listed as being acceptable. The typology seems odd in that Christ was male and this offering could be female. The Lord did not give His reason. Neither shall I.

**LEV 4:33 And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay it for a sin offering in the place where they kill the burnt offering.**

**LEV 4:34 And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar:**

**LEV 4:35 And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat of the lamb is taken away from the sacrifice of the peace offerings; and the priest shall burn them upon the altar, according to the offerings made by fire unto the LORD: and the priest shall make an atonement for his sin that he hath committed, and it shall be forgiven him.**



At four different places in this chapter it is stated that the sins of the offerer shall be forgiven him. This may be the proper place to mention the effect of Christ's one time offering upon the cross. Were the sins of the people of Israel actually forgiven, or were they only covered and rolled forward until the death of the Saviour?

The Bible does not contradict itself. In Hebrews 10:4 we are told,

Heb 10:4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

We are also told in the ninth chapter of Hebrews that the blood of bulls and goats was a pattern foreshadowing the one time sacrifice of the Son of God upon the cross of Calvary.

Heb 9:11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

Heb 9:12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

Heb 9:13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

Heb 9:14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Heb 9:24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

Heb 9:25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

Heb 9:26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

How then can we harmonize the statements in the fourth chapter of Leviticus that the persons doing the offering shall have their sins forgiven with the statements in Hebrews that the blood of bulls and goats is not sufficient, but is only a figure of the true sacrifice which puts away sin?

The answer to the question lies in the word “shall.” In one sense the sins had been forgiven. When Christ died those sins were washed away by His blood, not by the blood of the bulls, goats and sheep. The passages do not say, the sins have been forgiven. They say the sins shall be forgiven. The blood of Christ was to be shed only once. All sinners who had made the sacrifices which were figures of the perfect sacrifice had done all they could to insure that they were approved.

Just as the blood of Christ reached back to Adam, it now reaches to the resurrection and judgment. It is not necessary that Christ be offered every morning and evening as was done while the world





was awaiting Him. That one time suffering when His side was pierced and the crown of thorns was placed upon His head made possible the removal of the death sentence for every person who has loved God and kept His commandments, from the creation until time shall be no more!

## *Chapter 5*

**LEV 5:1 And if a soul sin, and hear the voice of swearing, and is a witness, whether he hath seen or known of it; if he do not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity.**

This chapter gives the directions for what are called trespass offerings. There is a break at verse thirteen. The first thirteen verses of this chapter are a continuation of the material discussed in chapter four. At verse fourteen the new topic begins.

The average reader will get the impression that to hear the voice of swearing means one has heard someone cursing. If the person hearing the swearing did not tell about it, he would be guilty himself for not having objected to the blasphemy.

Deeper investigation reveals that the swearing in this case is that done by a witness in a situation where that witness is testifying at a trial. Let us suppose that one who has been accused of committing a crime is on trial. Witnesses are called to testify as to what they know about the innocence or guilt of the accused. They are sworn in by being adjured to tell “the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.” If that witness then gives false witness which causes the individual to be condemned, the witness has sinned. If on the other hand, the witness covers up information which would prove the accused person guilty, the witness himself is guilty of sin.

**LEV 5:2 Or if a soul touch any unclean**

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**thing, whether it be a carcase of an unclean beast, or a carcase of unclean cattle, or the carcase of unclean creeping things, and if it be hidden from him; he also shall be unclean, and guilty.**

God classified certain objects as clean or unclean under the Old Covenant. By coming into contact with those objects which were declared to be unclean, a person made himself unclean. Sometimes he would be aware of the contact. Other times he would not. Regardless of whether he realized at the time that he had become unclean, he had broken the law and needed to make a sacrifice.

Accidental contact could take place in a number of ways. An unclean animal could brush up against one without him knowing this had happened. He could walk across the grave of one who had been buried. In either case the sin would be real even if he did not know of it.

**LEV 5:3 Or if he touch the uncleanness of man, whatsoever uncleanness it be that a man shall be defiled withal, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth of it, then he shall be guilty.**

By coming into contact with another human who was unclean a person could be defiled without being aware that this was true. Such uncleanness would not be visible in the other person, but would be real. The types of uncleanness of the one who



had been touched are not listed here. However, the reader may find such lists in the seventh, eleventh and twenty-second chapters of this same book of Leviticus.

**LEV 5:4 Or if a soul swear, pronouncing with his lips to do evil, or to do good, whatsoever it be that a man shall pronounce with an oath, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth of it, then he shall be guilty in one of these.**

A person might rashly make a vow that he would either do a thing or refuse to do one. When the time arrived that the vow was to be kept, he might overlook the fact that he had made it. He had thus broken the law. As soon as he became aware of having failed to keep the vow, he was to offer a sacrifice.

The sin might be one of omission or commission. He might have failed to do something he had vowed to do. He might have done something he had sworn he would not do. Either way he had sinned.

**LEV 5:5 And it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing:**

Confession now enters the picture. Confession is associated with humility. It is given greater emphasis in the New Testament than in the Old, but is a part of God's plan in both ages. Confession may be made to one's fellow man or to God. In the



present situation it seems that the one doing the confessing humbles himself before God by admitting he has done that which is wrong. In effect, he is saying “I am sorry. I need to be forgiven.”

David at one time asked God to forgive him of “secret sins” (Psalm 19:12).

Psa 19:12 Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.

**LEV 5:6 And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD for his sin which he hath sinned, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats, for a sin offering; and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his sin.**

Such sins as those listed above were trespasses against God. Along with the sinner’s confession, he was to make a trespass offering. This time a female lamb or kid was acceptable as a sacrifice. Please note that this offering is called both a sin offering and a trespass offering in the same verse.

**LEV 5:7 And if he be not able to bring a lamb, then he shall bring for his trespass, which he hath committed, two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, unto the LORD; one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering.**

We have another case here where it is recognized that not all persons are capable of offering a sacrifice of high value. If the sinner did not have sufficient

means to offer a lamb or a kid, he was permitted to offer two small birds. One would be used as a sin offering, the other as a burnt offering.

**LEV 5:8 And he shall bring them unto the priest, who shall offer that which is for the sin offering first, and wring off his head from his neck, but shall not divide it asunder:**

**LEV 5:9 And he shall sprinkle of the blood of the sin offering upon the side of the altar; and the rest of the blood shall be wrung out at the bottom of the altar: it is a sin offering.**

As in the case of the offering of a bird before, the bird was not to be cut apart. It was to have its head wrung off, but was not to be divided. The fat of the bird is not mentioned. It would be extremely difficult to remove the fat from the rest of the meat in a small bird.

One begins to wonder about the appearance of the altar of burnt offering. We hear nothing about the washing of the altar to remove the blood after the sacrifices were made. When we remember, however, that the blood of the animal sacrifices of that time typified the sprinkling of the sinner in our time with the blood of Christ, perhaps we would not wish for it to be removed.

**LEV 5:10 And he shall offer the second for a burnt offering, according to the manner: and the priest shall make an atonement for him for his sin which he hath sinned, and it shall be forgiven him.**

The second bird was to be offered as a sin offering. It would at the same time be both a burnt offering and a trespass offering. Upon sacrificing the two birds, the priest would pronounced that his sins were to be forgiven. Since the blood of bulls and goats does not forgive sin, the conclusion must be that the sin would be forgiven when the blood of Christ was offered on the cross. We must realize that time and eternity are two different realms. God exists outside the boundaries of time and space.

**LEV 5:11 But if he be not able to bring two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, then he that sinned shall bring for his offering the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for a sin offering; he shall put no oil upon it, neither shall he put any frankincense thereon: for it is a sin offering.**

Let us now suppose the person who had sinned was not even able to offer two doves or pigeons. Must he be forever stained with his sin and eternally separated from God? No, God does not demand more than man can offer. This person was allowed to offer the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for his sin offering. The ephah is considered to be a little more than a bushel. A tenth of an ephah would be about seven pints. Even the poorest would be able to make this offering.

It is not clear as to why no oil or frankincense was to be placed on this sacrifice. Perhaps it was because oil and frankincense were ordinarily associated with happy occasions. This sacrifice was the result of sin. It was more sombre in nature.

**LEV 5:12 Then shall he bring it to the priest, and the priest shall take his handful of it, even a memorial thereof, and burn it on the altar, according to the offerings made by fire unto the LORD: it is a sin offering.**

A memorial is a reminder. When the priest burned the handful of fine flour on the altar both God and man recognized the horror of the sin and hopefully the man would not repeat the trespass.

**LEV 5:13 And the priest shall make an atonement for him as touching his sin that he hath sinned in one of these, and it shall be forgiven him: and the remnant shall be the priest's, as a meat offering.**

This verse refers to all of the sins listed in the last part of chapter four and the first thirteen verses of this fifth chapter. The priests lived through the sacrifices of the people. A part of the sacrifices were burnt and ascended unto God as a sweet savour. The priests were allowed to eat from the remainder of some of the sacrifices. The term “meat offering” is applied because the fine flour was a cereal type offering which the Bible terms a meat offering.

**LEV 5:14 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**LEV 5:15 If a soul commit a trespass, and sin through ignorance, in the holy things of the LORD; then he shall bring for his trespass**





**unto the LORD a ram without blemish out of the flocks, with thy estimation by shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary, for a trespass offering.**

Man does not have the right to tamper with these words. They are not the product of the mind of man. They are words spoken to Moses by Jehovah, and are written for our learning and admonition.

**LEV 5:16 And he shall make amends for the harm that he hath done in the holy thing, and shall add the fifth part thereto, and give it unto the priest: and the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering, and it shall be forgiven him.**

Some refer to the present offering as a “reparation” or a “compensation” offering. The reason for this term is given in this sixteenth verse. The offering was to make amends for the harm done to the cause of God. To whatsoever degree it could be determined, the damage done was to be assessed and the sinner was to make compensation for the damage. It was not enough to just offer an equal amount to the damage that was done. One was to add a fifth part to the reparation offering. This means he would be responsible for offering a sacrifice with a value of one hundred twenty percent of the damage done.

The sinner was also to offer a ram from the flock. This means he would have repaid quite a bit



more than the damage he had done to God's holy purposes.

**LEV 5:17 And if a soul sin, and commit any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the LORD; though he wist it not, yet is he guilty, and shall bear his iniquity.**

It is made abundantly clear that sins of ignorance are still sin because the commandments of God have been broken. The person is guilty whether or not he knows he has committed the sin. He has a load of guilt which must be removed in order to be pleasing to his Maker.

**LEV 5:18 And he shall bring a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation, for a trespass offering, unto the priest: and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his ignorance wherein he erred and wist it not, and it shall be forgiven him.**

**LEV 5:19 It is a trespass offering: he hath certainly trespassed against the LORD.**

The person who was guilty of sins committed through ignorance was to bring one hundred twenty percent of the estimated value of the damage done. In addition, he was to bring a ram. This ram was a trespass offering. He might have trespassed against his fellowman. He had certainly trespassed against



God. Walking with God required that a trespass offering be made.

Does this chapter have major lessons for Christians under the new covenant? We do not bring rams, kids, doves or three quarts of meal as sin and trespass offerings in these latter days. Still, the offering made by God's own Son on the cross made our own forgiveness possible. We are also commanded to offer our bodies as living sacrifices every day that we live.

The truth is that we must commit many sins day by day that are hidden from us. We commit them in ignorance. Do not forget, dear reader, that though we may not know that we have sinned, or how we have sinned, God knows. We would do well to pray along with David,

Psa 19:12 Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.

Perhaps we should present a short summary of the classes of sins which have been given in these first five chapters of Leviticus to help clarify the types and their purposes.

Chapter 1      **Burnt Offering**  
(Gratitude for Blessings,

Dedication to His service)

- Chapter 2      **Meat or Cereal Offering**  
(A gift in return for  
God's gifts)
- Chapter 3      **Peace Offering**  
(A response to peace  
with God, health and general prosperity)
- Chapter 4-5    **Purification or Sin Offering**  
(Removed defilement of  
both humans and the tabernacle)
- Chapter 5      **Trespass or Reparation  
Offering**  
(Amended for damage done to  
either God or man)

The reader will observe that offerings tended to have overlapping functions. In one sense, several could have been called sin offerings.



## *Chapter 6*

**LEV 6:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

The reader is again reminded that the material is not originated with man. The God of heaven is the source. He spoke to Moses and Moses relayed the information to mankind.

**LEV 6:2 If a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the LORD, and lie unto his neighbour in that which was delivered him to keep, or in fellowship, or in a thing taken away by violence, or hath deceived his neighbour;**

The discussion of the trespass offering began in chapter five and now continues into chapter six. There are many ways a man may trespass against his fellowman, or against the Lord. Any trespass against fellowman is also a trespass against God.

We are now presented with a situation in which one person committed certain goods into the hands of someone with whom his is acquainted, and who then betrays that confidence by attempting to gain possession of that which was entrusted to him. If one person found it necessary he might place certain possessions, especially livestock, in the supervision of one he trusted.

When it came time for the goods to be returned, the one who had been entrusted with them might lie and say that the goods were never given to him.



One person might also have forcefully taken that which belonged to another.

**LEV 6:3 Or have found that which was lost, and lieth concerning it, and sweareth falsely; in any of all these that a man doeth, sinning therein:**

Another possibility, particularly in the case of livestock, would be that the animals had strayed and mixed with the animals of another person. When this happened, the one with whom the lost animal had been found was obliged to return it to its rightful owner. To obtain such an advantage over another man was a sin of trespassing.

**LEV 6:4 Then it shall be, because he hath sinned, and is guilty, that he shall restore that which he took violently away, or the thing which he hath deceitfully gotten, or that which was delivered him to keep, or the lost thing which he found,**

In any of these listed trespasses, the one who had gained at the expense of another was to restore that which did not truly belong to him. We have four general categories listed.

1. Robbery
2. Lying for gain
3. Deceit
4. Keeping that which had been lost.

**LEV 6:5 Or all that about which he hath**

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**sworn falsely; he shall even restore it in the principal, and shall add the fifth part more thereto, and give it unto him to whom it appertaineth, in the day of his trespass offering.**

**LEV 6:6 And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD, a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation, for a trespass offering, unto the priest:**

Not only was the value of the dishonestly gained property to be returned. Twenty percent of the value of the goods was to be added to that value as a deterrent to any further trespassing.

A ram from the flock of the one who had deceived his neighbor was to be brought to the priest as a trespass offering. At that point the damage was to be considered repaired. The ram was to be unblemished. A sick or crippled animal was not to be accepted.

The “estimation” was the estimated value of the misused property. It was not the estimated value of the ram. Since the one who was repairing the damage done had proven to be untrustworthy before, it is likely that the estimation of the property was done by the priest rather than by the one who had deceived his neighbor.

**LEV 6:7 And the priest shall make an atonement for him before the LORD: and it shall be forgiven him for any thing of all that he hath done in trespassing therein.**





After the previous actions had been taken, the one who had trespassed had done all the Lord expected of him in order that his name be cleared.

**LEV 6:8 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

Verse eight marks the beginning of a new section of the book. We have now looked at the various offerings from the standpoint of the one making the offering. For the rest of this sixth chapter and most of the seventh we will be looking at the sacrifices from the viewpoint of the priests who officiate at the altars.

If you were one who was offering the sacrifices you would wish to know what was to be offered, the part you were to play and what the effect of the offering would be. If you were a priest you would wish to know what to do with the offering once you received it. You would also wish to know how to dress yourself and what other details of conduct would be acceptable to the Lord. The instructions to the offerer have been outlined. Now we will examine the instructions to the priests.

**LEV 6:9 Command Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the law of the burnt offering: It is the burnt offering, because of the burning upon the altar all night unto the morning, and the fire of the altar shall be burning in it.**

Just as the burnt offering was considered first in the instructions to the offerer, we find it first in



order here.

When the evening sacrifice had been completed the burning was to be carefully continued until the next morning. This was the reason for calling it the burnt offering. Other offerings were also burned, but this one was unique in that it was continuous.

**LEV 6:10 And the priest shall put on his linen garment, and his linen breeches shall he put upon his flesh, and take up the ashes which the fire hath consumed with the burnt offering on the altar, and he shall put them beside the altar.**

This is an extremely interesting verse. We cannot avoid making the comparison between the clothing of the priests at that time and the clothing of the royal priesthood of the Christian age, in which every true Christian is a priest.

When the priest approached the altar of God to attend to the burning sacrifice, he was to be dressed in fine linen. He was to have a linen outer garment, supposedly a robe of some type. He was also to have linen underwear which would cover his nakedness. This is a major contrast with what the pagan priests were doing. They worshipped by dancing around their gods almost or completely nude. See Exo. 28:40-42.

Exo 28:40 And for Aaron's sons thou shalt make coats, and thou shalt make for them girdles, and bonnets shalt thou make for them, for glory and for beauty.

Exo 28:41 And thou shalt put them upon Aaron



thy brother, and his sons with him; and shalt anoint them, and consecrate them, and sanctify them, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office.

Exo 28:42 And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness; from the loins even unto the thighs they shall reach:

King David was chastised by Michal, his wife for displaying his flesh as he danced before the Lord.

2Sa 6:14 And David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod.—

2Sa 6:16 And as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal Saul's daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart.—

2Sa 6:20 Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, How glorious was the king of Israel to day, who uncovered himself to day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself!

**LEV 6:11 And he shall put off his garments, and put on other garments, and carry forth the ashes without the camp unto a clean place.**

The priest was to keep this fine linen clothing on until he had removed the ashes from the altar. Then, he was to put on garments other garments



to take the ashes outside the camp.

At the time this commentary is being written there is a decided difference of opinion concerning appropriate dress for those who worship on the first day of the week as Christians. Many of the older members of the church believe firmly that one should be dressed in "Sunday go to meeting" attire. This indicates their respect for the Lord and their desire to offer him the "best."

There is a definite drift among many of the younger members to a more relaxed attire. They believe the spiritual clothing is the important thing, and that Jehovah will look upon the inner man rather than upon the outward appearance. Jesus condemned his followers for disdaining others on the basis of the out garments. He said that if one came in dressed in fine clothing that person would be given a seat of honor. But then the poorly dressed person came in, he would be told to sit under a footstool.

There is a major point of difference. The man whom Jesus discussed may well not have owned any better clothing than that which he was wearing. Many of those who dress carelessly today have less valid reasons.

There are two extremes here. One is the attitude of the Pharisees who felt their fine clothing set them apart and above others. The other is the attitude of the one is trying to demonstrate that he can wear anything he chooses in a worship assembly. Let the dedicated Christian avoid both of these extremes.

**LEV 6:12 And the fire upon the altar shall be burning in it; it shall not be put out: and**



**the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt offering in order upon it; and he shall burn thereon the fat of the peace offerings.**

Wood was to be placed on the altar of burnt offering in order that it be kept burning at all times. The burnt offering was to be laid upon the wood and burned to ashes. Some of the offerings were burned whole with only the skin removed. The fat from the peace offerings was stripped and placed on the altar. The fat from both the burnt offerings and the peace offerings would burn slowly and this would aid in keeping the fire burning.

**LEV 6:13 The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out.**

It is obvious that when the glory of the Lord had settled on the tabernacle and it was remaining stationary the fire on the altar of burnt offering was never to be allowed to go out. A problem arises when we consider the moving of the tabernacle and it's associated items. It would be quite different to keep the fire on the altar burning while the camp was in motion. It might not be impossible, but it would certainly be much more difficult.

Some commentators believe the continual burning referred only to the time when the camp was not moving. The reader is invited to compare with this that which is said about the lampstand inside the tabernacle. A perpetual sweet incense is said to be offered throughout Israel's generations. Yet, Aaron was said to burn incense every morning and every evening. See Exo. 30:7-8.

Exo 30:7 And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it.

Exo 30:8 And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations.

Whichever is true, there is a lesson for the Christian. He is to present himself as a living sacrifice. He is to be continual light to those about him. If the Christian allows the light of Christ to be extinguished, he will walk in darkness and God will not bless him. Keep the spiritual light shining in your life my friend. Then God will walk by your side.

**LEV 6:14 And this is the law of the meat offering: the sons of Aaron shall offer it before the LORD, before the altar.**

We turn now to the meat offering, which is sometimes called the meal offering. It has also been called the “cereal offering.”

There is a change in the order here. When discussing the offerings from the standpoint of the offerer, the peace offering immediately follow the burnt offering. We are not told the reason for the change in arrangement.

**LEV 6:15 And he shall take of it his handful, of the flour of the meat offering, and of the oil**



**thereof, and all the frankincense which is upon the meat offering, and shall burn it upon the altar for a sweet savour, even the memorial of it, unto the LORD.**

The burnt offering was completely burned, except for the skin of the animal. The meat offering was not completely burned. The priest who offered it was allowed to remove about a cupful of the meal for his own use. Then he was to burn the rest as a sweet savour which would rise up toward God.

**LEV 6:16 And the remainder thereof shall Aaron and his sons eat: with unleavened bread shall it be eaten in the holy place; in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation they shall eat it.**

The remainder is that part which remained after the rest was burned. It was that handful which the priest took out of each sacrifice before it was burned. It was to be baked without leaven. This would not be as palatable as it would be if leaven had been added.

It was to be eaten by the priests in the court of the tabernacle, which is here called the holy place. Ordinarily the Holy Place was considered to be the area inside the tabernacle which the High Priest had to pass through before entering the Most Holy Place on the Day of Atonement. The courtyard of the tabernacle was holy when compared with the



entire encampment where the individual tents of the people were located.

**LEV 6:17 It shall not be baken with leaven. I have given it unto them for their portion of my offerings made by fire; it is most holy, as is the sin offering, and as the trespass offering.**

**LEV 6:18 All the males among the children of Aaron shall eat of it. It shall be a statute for ever in your generations concerning the offerings of the LORD made by fire: every one that toucheth them shall be holy.**

The bread made from the meal offerings of the people was to be unleavened. It was to be eaten by the priests, and only by the priests. No one who touched the sacrifices or the bread made from the sacrifices was to be common. We sometimes today speak of a “holier than thou” attitude. God did consider the priests as being holier than the common Israelite.

This last statement is not saying that those who touch the offerings will be made holy by touching them. It means that only the holy have permission to touch them.

Leaven is associated with corruption in the scriptures. Jesus spoke of the leaven of the Pharisees. The Christian today is expected to avoid the leaven of sin and feast upon the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. See I Cor. 5:6-8.

1Co 5:6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

1Co 5:7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that

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ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

1Co 5:8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

**LEV 6:19 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**LEV 6:20 This is the offering of Aaron and of his sons, which they shall offer unto the LORD in the day when he is anointed; the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for a meat offering perpetual, half of it in the morning, and half thereof at night.**

Here we have a special offering which is not mentioned before. It is the offering made by the priests at the time they are anointed as priests. This time it is to be one tenth of an ephah, sometimes called an omer, of fine flour. Half of this type of offering was to be made in the morning and half at night. The offering was to be a means of recognizing the new priests as they first began their service.

**LEV 6:21 In a pan it shall be made with oil; and when it is baken, thou shalt bring it in: and the baken pieces of the meat offering shalt thou offer for a sweet savour unto the LORD.**

**LEV 6:22 And the priest of his sons that**

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**is anointed in his stead shall offer it: it is a statute for ever unto the LORD; it shall be wholly burnt.**

A certain amount of oil was to be mixed with the fine flour and the mixture was to be baked in a pan. This was also to be burned that it might arise as a sweet odor in the nostrils of the Lord. This time the entire offering was to be burned. No handful was to be taken from it.

**LEV 6:23 For every meat offering for the priest shall be wholly burnt: it shall not be eaten.**

If the priest were to have eaten of this offering he would not have offered anything to the Lord. He would have received that portion which belonged to God and would have used it personally. The people would have given their portion, but the priest would not have.

**LEV 6:24 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**LEV 6:25 Speak unto Aaron and to his sons, saying, This is the law of the sin offering: In the place where the burnt offering is killed shall the sin offering be killed before the LORD: it is most holy.**

At key points in this entire discussion we are reminded that God is giving these directions.



They are not the words of Moses. They are the commandments of Jehovah.

The burnt offering was to be killed on the north side of the altar. The sin or guilt offering was to be killed in the same place. Recall that the sin offering was a purification offering. It was necessarily a blood offering. The life is in the blood. The blood of bulls and goats is not a complete and sufficient agent for the removal of sin. This is the function of the blood of the Son of God. Nevertheless, it was that which God specified at the time. It would point to the time when the all sufficient sacrifice would be available. What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

**LEV 6:26 The priest that offereth it for sin shall eat it: in the holy place shall it be eaten, in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation.**

The priest who offered the animal did not eat the blood. He was permitted to eat from the flesh of this sacrifice. He was not to eat it anywhere he chose. He was to eat it in the courtyard of the tabernacle area.

**LEV 6:27 Whatsoever shall touch the flesh thereof shall be holy: and when there is sprinkled of the blood thereof upon any garment, thou shalt wash that whereon it was sprinkled in the holy place.**

Only the anointed priests were to come into

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contact with the flesh of the sin sacrifice after it had been killed and its blood had been shed. If any of the priest's garments became stained with the blood, that garment was to be thoroughly washed. The washing process must take place within the courtyard of the tabernacle.

**LEV 6:28 But the earthen vessel wherein it is sodden shall be broken: and if it be sodden in a brasen pot, it shall be both scoured, and rinsed in water.**

The sin offering could be cooked in order that the priests might eat it, but if the vessel in which it was cooked was made of pottery, or earthenware, that vessel was to be broken. It could not be used for anything else. If the vessel was made of metal, that vessel was to be thoroughly scoured and then washed with water. No part of the sin offering was to remain in the vessel if it was to be used again.

**LEV 6:29 All the males among the priests shall eat thereof: it is most holy.**

The priests who had been anointed were holy. These were males. They were allowed to eat from the flesh of the sin offerings in general.

**LEV 6:30 And no sin offering, whereof any of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of the congregation to reconcile withal in the**



**holy place, shall be eaten: it shall be burnt in the fire.**

Even the priests were not to eat from the flesh of the sin offerings from which blood had been taken for use in purification of the tabernacle area. The blood from some of the animals who were brought as sin offerings was used for that purpose. The blood from others was not. If the blood from a sin offering was used in that manner, that animal's flesh was special. It was not to be eaten, even by the priests.

## *Chapter 7*

**LEV 7:1 Likewise this is the law of the trespass offering: it is most holy.**

In this chapter we continue our examination of the instructions given to the priests as to their responsibilities in the offering of the sacrifices under the law. The reader is reminded that there is bound to be some duplication of previous material because instructions were given in chapters one through five for the Israelites in general. Then in chapter six and this seventh chapter the same major sacrifices are approached from the standpoint of the priests.

The word “holy” is used repeatedly in the book of Leviticus. God is holy. He expects his people to be holy. Uncleanness and profane lives are an abomination in His sight. The trespass offering is to be treated as a means of separating one’s self from that which is unholy.

**LEV 7:2 In the place where they kill the burnt offering shall they kill the trespass offering: and the blood thereof shall he sprinkle round about upon the altar.**

The burnt offering was to be killed on the north side of the altar. This trespass offering is to be offered in the same location. After the animal was killed, it’s blood was to be sprinkled around the altar. The word “sprinkled” has been seized upon by some proponents of baptism by sprinkling. This is

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not justification for that position. The blood of Christ is what is sprinkled today. Baptism is immersion in water. Our hearts are to be sprinkled and our bodies are to be “washed.”

**LEV 7:3 And he shall offer of it all the fat thereof; the rump, and the fat that covereth the inwards,**

**LEV 7:4 And the two kidneys, and the fat that is on them, which is by the flanks, and the caul that is above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away:**

**LEV 7:5 And the priest shall burn them upon the altar for an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it is a trespass offering.**

**LEV 7:6 Every male among the priests shall eat thereof: it shall be eaten in the holy place: it is most holy.**

**LEV 7:7 As the sin offering is, so is the trespass offering: there is one law for them: the priest that maketh atonement therewith shall have it.**

Because of the difference in the order of the different offerings, it is a bit difficult to keep from confusing them. The sin offering and the trespass offering are mentioned together here. The priests were privileged to eat of the fat in the sin offering. They were allowed to eat from the flesh of the trespass offering.



**LEV 7:8 And the priest that offereth any man's burnt offering, even the priest shall have to himself the skin of the burnt offering which he hath offered.**

Now we turn to the burnt offering which was discussed first in the previous discussion. The only part of the animal which the priest could claim in the burnt offering was the skin.

**LEV 7:9 And all the meat offering that is baked in the oven, and all that is dressed in the fryingpan, and in the pan, shall be the priest's that offereth it.**

Do not miss the transition from the burnt offering in verse eight to the meat offering in verses nine and ten. Remember that the "meat" offering was not flesh. It was meal. This is the reason we have the words "oven" and "frying pan." If the offering was baked or fried was to be eaten only by the priest who offered that sacrifice.

**LEV 7:10 And every meat offering, mingled with oil, and dry, shall all the sons of Aaron have, one as much as another.**

The cereal or meat offerings which were not cooked were to be shared. They were not confined to the one who had made the offering.





**LEV 7:11 And this is the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings, which he shall offer unto the LORD.**

The peace offering consisted of both meal and flesh sacrifices. It was not confined to the priests. It was shared by both the priests and the common people. There were three types of peace offerings.

1. The thanksgiving offerings.
2. The vow offerings.
3. The free will offerings

**LEV 7:12 If he offer it for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer with the sacrifice of thanksgiving unleavened cakes mingled with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with oil, and cakes mingled with oil, of fine flour, fried.**

For the thanksgiving offerings, unleavened cakes and wafers made from fine flour were mixed with oil, probably olive oil, and fried.

**LEV 7:13 Besides the cakes, he shall offer for his offering leavened bread with the sacrifice of thanksgiving of his peace offerings.**

It is a bit surprising for us to find leavened bread included in the sacrifice of thanksgiving. Leaven is usually forbidden as a result of the hasty escape from Egypt in which there was not time for the



bread to be leavened.

**LEV 7:14 And of it he shall offer one out of the whole oblation for an heave offering unto the LORD, and it shall be the priest's that sprinkleth the blood of the peace offerings.**

Out of the entire sacrifice, one of the items was to be dedicated as a "heave offering." The heave offering was so called because it was raised and lowered with a heaving motion during the ceremony.

**LEV 7:15 And the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offerings for thanksgiving shall be eaten the same day that it is offered; he shall not leave any of it until the morning.**

Any flesh which was offered as a thanksgiving type of peace offering must be completely consumed on the day it was offered. A hot climate would quickly cause decomposition. That was not to be allowed.

**LEV 7:16 But if the sacrifice of his offering be a vow, or a voluntary offering, it shall be eaten the same day that he offereth his sacrifice: and on the morrow also the remainder of it shall be eaten:**

In contrast to the requirement that the flesh of the thanksgiving type of peace offering be completely eaten the day it was offered, the flesh of the vow offering or the free will offering could be eaten on the second day. I have seen no clear explanation



as to why these sacrifices should have been treated differently. God said to do it that way!

**LEV 7:17 But the remainder of the flesh of the sacrifice on the third day shall be burnt with fire.**

**LEV 7:18 And if any of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offerings be eaten at all on the third day, it shall not be accepted, neither shall it be imputed unto him that offereth it: it shall be an abomination, and the soul that eateth of it shall bear his iniquity.**

Not only would a sacrifice from which the flesh had been eaten on the third day be useless to the offerer, it would cause God to reject it and the one who offered it would carry a burden of sin.

**LEV 7:19 And the flesh that toucheth any unclean thing shall not be eaten; it shall be burnt with fire: and as for the flesh, all that be clean shall eat thereof.**

**LEV 7:20 But the soul that eateth of the flesh of the sacrifice of peace offerings, that pertain unto the LORD, having his uncleanness upon him, even that soul shall be cut off from his people.**

**LEV 7:21 Moreover the soul that shall touch any unclean thing, as the uncleanness of man, or any unclean beast, or any abominable unclean thing, and eat of the flesh of the sacrifice of peace offerings, which pertain unto**



**the LORD, even that soul shall be cut off from his people.**

It was a serious mistake for one to offer an unclean sacrifice. If the offering had even touched that which was unclean, it was to be burnt.

To go even farther, the person who participated in the eating of the peace offering while he himself was in a state of uncleanness was to be isolated from the rest of the camp. At this point we are not told whether this was a permanent rejection, or not.

**LEV 7:22 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

We come now to a general summary of things which are acceptable and unacceptable to God in the way of sacrificial offerings.

**LEV 7:23 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Ye shall eat no manner of fat, of ox, or of sheep, or of goat.**

**LEV 7:24 And the fat of the beast that dieth of itself, and the fat of that which is torn with beasts, may be used in any other use: but ye shall in no wise eat of it.**

**LEV 7:25 For whosoever eateth the fat of the beast, of which men offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, even the soul that eateth it shall be cut off from his people.**

The fat was the choice part of the animal. It belonged to God. Any fat which could readily be separated from the rest of the carcass was

forbidden as food for either priest or commoner. The punishment was disfellowship.

**LEV 7:26 Moreover ye shall eat no manner of blood, whether it be of fowl or of beast, in any of your dwellings.**

**LEV 7:27 Whatsoever soul it be that eateth any manner of blood, even that soul shall be cut off from his people.**

The life is in the blood. Christ shed his life blood that men's sins might be forgiven. The blood was not to be eaten either under the law of Moses or in the Christian age. See Acts 15:23-29.

Act 15:23 And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia.

Act 15:24 Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment:

Act 15:25 It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

Act 15:26 Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Act 15:27 We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth.



Act 15:28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;

Act 15:29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

**LEV 7:28 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**LEV 7:29 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, He that offereth the sacrifice of his peace offerings unto the LORD shall bring his oblation unto the LORD of the sacrifice of his peace offerings.**

**LEV 7:30 His own hands shall bring the offerings of the LORD made by fire, the fat with the breast, it shall he bring, that the breast may be waved for a wave offering before the LORD.**

Before we noted the heave offering. Now we have the wave offering. The left thigh was to be a wave offering and the right shoulder was to be a heave offering. The heave offering was moved in an up and down motion, or heaved. The wave offering was moved in a back and forth motion, or waved.

**LEV 7:31 And the priest shall burn the fat upon the altar: but the breast shall be Aaron's and his sons'.**



**LEV 7:32** And the right shoulder shall ye give unto the priest for an heave offering of the sacrifices of your peace offerings.

**LEV 7:33** He among the sons of Aaron, that offereth the blood of the peace offerings, and the fat, shall have the right shoulder for his part.

**LEV 7:34** For the wave breast and the heave shoulder have I taken of the children of Israel from off the sacrifices of their peace offerings, and have given them unto Aaron the priest and unto his sons by a statute for ever from among the children of Israel.

**LEV 7:35** This is the portion of the anointing of Aaron, and of the anointing of his sons, out of the offerings of the LORD made by fire, in the day when he presented them to minister unto the LORD in the priest's office;

The wave breast and the heave shoulder were given to Aaron and his sons as a right of the priesthood. This was made clear at the time of the original anointing of the priests.

**LEV 7:36** Which the LORD commanded to be given them of the children of Israel, in the day that he anointed them, by a statute for ever throughout their generations.

This was not a temporary injunction. It was to last as long as the Levitical priesthood lasted, and until the priesthood of all believers under Christ



replaced it.

**LEV 7:37 This is the law of the burnt offering, of the meat offering, and of the sin offering, and of the trespass offering, and of the consecrations, and of the sacrifice of the peace offerings;**

And so the detailed specifications for the offering of the five major types of sacrifices had been given by Jehovah through the mouth of his spokesman Moses. Where God had bound, men were not to loose.

**LEV 7:38 Which the LORD commanded Moses in mount Sinai, in the day that he commanded the children of Israel to offer their oblations unto the LORD, in the wilderness of Sinai.**

It is unthinkable that any who claim to be followers of God today would reject such flat statements as the one found in this last verse and claim these words were written centuries after Moses. If we have license to do such surgery on the Word of God we might as well ignore the rest of it as well!!





## *Chapter 8*

Chapters eight through ten of Leviticus introduce a new topic. The first seven chapters dealt with the types of sacrifice which were to be offered, and the manner in which the sacrifices were to be offered. These next three chapters discuss the consecration of the priests. The discussion will include the High Priest, Aaron and also the common priests.

**LEV 8:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

We are not to forget that these instructions did not originate with Moses. Moses was only relaying information delivered to him by Jehovah. Moses was a great prophet. Prophets pass information from God to man. Since the consecration of the priests had not yet taken place, Moses was God's choice to see that these proceedings were completed in accordance with His will.

**LEV 8:2 Take Aaron and his sons with him, and the garments, and the anointing oil, and a bullock for the sin offering, and two rams, and a basket of unleavened bread;**

Before the proceedings are completed, the needed items had to be brought together. There will be offerings made which are similar to the purification offerings, the burnt offerings and the peace offerings. Moses will officiate now. Later the duties will be turned over to the priesthood.



**LEV 8:3 And gather thou all the congregation together unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.**

The commentators in general see this gathering as only the elders of the people, and not the entire six hundred thousand men plus women and children. I suppose the reason for this is that some two million people would not all be able to witness what was about to take place. It is assumed that if they could not actually see the events, there would be no reason for them to assemble at the door of the tabernacle.

This may be true. However, it may be that God desired a degree of unity that could only be had if the entire mass of the people felt they were a part of the ongoings, whether or not they could see them.

**LEV 8:4 And Moses did as the LORD commanded him; and the assembly was gathered together unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.**

**LEV 8:5 And Moses said unto the congregation, This is the thing which the LORD commanded to be done.**

We are left with no doubt whatsoever that Moses was not speaking his own mind. He made absolutely certain the people knew these were God's words, not his own.

**LEV 8:6 And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water.**

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The number of types and shadows involved in the consecration of the priests and pointing to the royal priesthood of the Christian age is quite amazing.

This is one of the first importance. Before a person may become a member of the royal priesthood which exists today that person must be baptized and thus washed from the filth of sin. See 1 Peter 2:9 and Ephesians 5:26.

1Pe 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light;

Eph 5:26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

Remember friends, Jesus serves as our own High Priest today. He also was baptized by John in the Jordan River. We follow his example. He had no sin but did set an example of the submission which takes place when one is baptized.

**LEV 8:7 And he put upon him the coat, and girded him with the girdle, and clothed him with the robe, and put the ephod upon him, and he girded him with the curious girdle of the ephod, and bound it unto him therewith.**

Many of the specifics of that which we are now discussing were presented back in the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth chapters of Exodus. At that time



the directions were given. Now they are being activated.

First, we are given a picture of the garments Aaron was to wear as the High Priest. He had some item which was referred to as a coat. This seems to have been a sort of undergarment.

The robe was very beautiful with colors of purple, blue, and scarlet. It covered the coat and reached down below the knees.

The ephod was a shorter piece of clothing which came down a little below the waist, was worn over the coat. The curious girdle was a belt made of cloth which fastened the robe and the ephod in place.

**LEV 8:8 And he put the breastplate upon him: also he put in the breastplate the Urim and the Thummim.**

The breastplate was an embroidered pouch which had gems worked into it, giving majesty to the appearance of the High Priest. This pouch was for the purpose of holding the Urim and the Thummim. These were small items which were used to determine whether certain actions were approved or disapproved by the Lord. They are not described in detail. We are given some clue through the meaning of the Hebrew names assigned to them. Urim means "Lights." Thummim means "Perfections." Lights illuminate the way. Perfections are the desired end of any action of service to God.

There is a large degree of mystery attached to the Urim and Thummim. God did not see fit to give us



all the information we might desire. We shall have to be satisfied with what we have.

**LEV 8:9 And he put the mitre upon his head; also upon the mitre, even upon his forefront, did he put the golden plate, the holy crown; as the LORD commanded Moses.**

The mitre was a band of cloth which sat upon the head of the High Priest. On the front of the mitre there was room for a golden plate to be fastened. The present verse calls this a holy crown. We are told in Exodus 28:36 that the words HOLINESS TO THE LORD were engraved upon the golden plate.

**LEV 8:10 And Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and all that was therein, and sanctified them.**

**LEV 8:11 And he sprinkled thereof upon the altar seven times, and anointed the altar and all his vessels, both the laver and his foot, to sanctify them.**

The items of the tabernacle also had to be dedicated to the service of God. Just as Aaron and the rest of the priests were to be devoted to the offering of the sacrifices, these items were to be very important in the sacred worship. Everything involved, whether it be man or altar, or the sacrifices themselves, must be sanctified and made holy.

Sprinkling is mentioned here in connection with the sanctification process. Is this justification for



sprinkling one form of baptism? It is not. It is the heart of the one who leaves the world and comes to Christ that is sprinkled. It is not the body. In addition, it is the blood of Christ which does the sprinkling. It is not the water of baptism. Baptism is an immersion in water.

The word “anointed” is used in the scriptures to talk about appointment to a sacred position such as a prophet, a priest or a king. Oil was sometimes sprinkled upon the individual, or sometimes it was poured out upon the head.

The seven times is an indication of complete dedication to that which is holy.

There is a holy anointing associated with the baptism of the newborn Christian. In this case it is the earnest of the Holy Spirit rather than olive oil. When Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit descended from heaven and the Son of God received the spirit without measure. See John 3:34.

Joh 3:34 For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.

When the new Christian is baptized, the earnest of the Holy Spirit is given to him or her. The word anointed is associated with Christ’s high position as our High Priest. As Aaron was anointed, Christ was anointed, or shown to be approved of God for the work He had ahead.

When the Christian is baptized in water, he is given the earnest of the Spirit, and is marked by



God as dedicated to the work which has been laid out for us.

**LEV 8:12 And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head, and anointed him, to sanctify him.**

Take notice of the word “poured” here. The oil was poured upon the head of the High Priest. The oil was only “sprinkled” upon the head of the common priests. It would be difficult to miss the excessive amount of the oil poured on Aaron and the Spirit without measure which descended upon the Saviour.

**LEV 8:13 And Moses brought Aaron's sons, and put coats upon them, and girded them with girdles, and put bonnets upon them; as the LORD commanded Moses.**

There was a difference in the prestige of the High Priest and the common priests. The High Priest wore the ephod and the breastplate. He also wore the golden plate upon his forehead. The common priests had coats and girdles, plus bonnets. The contrast in uniforms points vividly to the contrast between the glory of the Christ and the glory of His brethren who are common priests.

**LEV 8:14 And he brought the bullock for the sin offering: and Aaron and his sons laid**

**their hands upon the head of the bullock for the sin offering.**

This portion of the activities is the sin offering, as it applied to this dedication of the priesthood. The laying on of the hands of Aaron and his sons upon the head of the bullock signified the transfer of the guilt of sin from them to the bullock. The wages of sin is death. The animal would die in their place.

**LEV 8:15 And he slew it; and Moses took the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about with his finger, and purified the altar, and poured the blood at the bottom of the altar, and sanctified it, to make reconciliation upon it.**

Blood is vitally connected with life. The blood of the bullock was offered to God by putting some of it upon the horns of the altar of incense. The rest of the blood was poured out before the altar for the same reason. You see the importance of the altar itself. It would be necessary for it to be purified and dedicated to its holy purpose.

**LEV 8:16 And he took all the fat that was upon the inwards, and the caul above the liver, and the two kidneys, and their fat, and Moses burned it upon the altar.**

**LEV 8:17 But the bullock, and his hide, his flesh, and his dung, he burnt with fire without the camp; as the LORD commanded Moses.**



The above actions are those connected with the sin offering. Moses did precisely what God had prescribed. There is a slight difference here in that the priests did not receive the skin of the bullock. As yet they were not officially priests.

**LEV 8:18 And he brought the ram for the burnt offering; and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the ram.**

The male sheep was then brought to act as the victim in the burnt offering. This time the emphasis is upon Aaron and his sons rather than upon the altar. The altar needed to be purified and dedicated to its purpose. It would come into contact with the pollution of the priests.

The ram will be the animal which receives the burden of guilt from the purification of the priests themselves.

**LEV 8:19 And he killed it; and Moses sprinkled the blood upon the altar round about.**

**LEV 8:20 And he cut the ram into pieces; and Moses burnt the head, and the pieces, and the fat.**

**LEV 8:21 And he washed the inwards and the legs in water; and Moses burnt the whole ram upon the altar: it was a burnt sacrifice for a sweet savour, and an offering made by fire unto the LORD; as the LORD commanded Moses.**

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The odor of cooking meat is pleasant to the nostrils of a hungry human. The odor of the burnt offering served the same purpose for Jehovah. It is said that the sacrifice of Christ is a sweet smelling savour today. See Ephesians 5:2.

Eph 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

**LEV 8:22 And he brought the other ram, the ram of consecration: and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the ram.**

**LEV 8:23 And he slew it; and Moses took of the blood of it, and put it upon the tip of Aaron's right ear, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot.**

The blood of the second ram was applied to the priests. Some of the blood was placed on the tip of Aaron's right ear, on the thumb of his right hand, and upon the big toe of his right foot. It must surely be clear to the reader that Aaron's ear was to be dedicated to hearing the will of God. His hand was to be dedicated to serving God. His foot was to be used in walking in paths of righteousness.

If it is of any interest to the reader, this bothers the present author just a bit. He is left handed. Does this excuse him from hearing, serving and walking in the way of the Lord? The answer is obvious. It does not!



**LEV 8:24 And he brought Aaron's sons, and Moses put of the blood upon the tip of their right ear, and upon the thumbs of their right hands, and upon the great toes of their right feet: and Moses sprinkled the blood upon the altar round about.**

As Moses had done with Aaron, he also did with the common priests. Every priest of God is to be completely devoted to God's purposes. Again I remind you that every Christian is a priest of God, offering up his mind and his body as a living sacrifice.

There are similarities to the peace offering in this part of the ordination service. We have then a combination of the sin offering, the burnt offering and the peace offering. There are certainly some differences in that at this point Aaron and his sons are only being installed in the priests office. Later, they will be officiating, rather than Moses.

**LEV 8:25 And he took the fat, and the rump, and all the fat that was upon the inwards, and the caul above the liver, and the two kidneys, and their fat, and the right shoulder:**

**LEV 8:26 And out of the basket of unleavened bread, that was before the LORD, he took one unleavened cake, and a cake of oiled bread, and one wafer, and put them on the fat, and upon the right shoulder:**

Now we have the addition of cereal or meat

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offering. These are to be used with the flesh of the animals for a wave offering to God.

**LEV 8:27 And he put all upon Aaron's hands, and upon his sons' hands, and waved them for a wave offering before the LORD.**

By placing these offerings upon the hands of Aaron and his sons, God was receiving a message from them that this was not done as a means of satisfying themselves. They were requesting that the Holy God hear their prayers and receive their offerings.

**LEV 8:28 And Moses took them from off their hands, and burnt them on the altar upon the burnt offering: they were consecrations for a sweet savour: it is an offering made by fire unto the LORD.**

**LEV 8:29 And Moses took the breast, and waved it for a wave offering before the LORD: for of the ram of consecration it was Moses' part; as the LORD commanded Moses.**

As the High Priest would later receive the breast of the wave offering, Moses was now to wave the breast of the sacrifice on his own behalf.

**LEV 8:30 And Moses took of the anointing oil, and of the blood which was upon the altar, and sprinkled it upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon his**

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**sons' garments with him; and sanctified Aaron, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him.**

Both the blood and the anointing oil were applied to the incoming priests. We must not ignore the type. The anointing oil is parallel to the reception of the Holy Spirit. The blood is parallel to the sprinkling of the purifying blood of the Redeemer.

**LEV 8:31 And Moses said unto Aaron and to his sons, Boil the flesh at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and there eat it with the bread that is in the basket of consecrations, as I commanded, saying, Aaron and his sons shall eat it.**

**LEV 8:32 And that which remaineth of the flesh and of the bread shall ye burn with fire.**

**LEV 8:33 And ye shall not go out of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation in seven days, until the days of your consecration be at an end: for seven days shall he consecrate you.**

**LEV 8:34 As he hath done this day, so the LORD hath commanded to do, to make an atonement for you.**

**LEV 8:35 Therefore shall ye abide at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation day and night seven days, and keep the charge of the LORD, that ye die not: for so I am**

**commanded.**

**LEV 8:36 So Aaron and his sons did all things which the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses.**

The newly dedicated priests were not to leave the tabernacle for a period of seven days after all of these sacrifices were completed. If they did so, the result would have been death. Nadab and Abihu, two of the sons of Aaron learned later on that God means just what he says. He had directed the priests as to where the fire was to be obtained for the altar.

## *Chapter 9*

**LEV 9:1 And it came to pass on the eighth day, that Moses called Aaron and his sons, and the elders of Israel;**

This was the first day after the seven days during which the priests were not to leave the tabernacle. Seven days was a period of time very often used for a waiting period before beginning a new course of life. Male babies were circumcised on the eighth day after birth. Those who were cleansed of leprosy, or who had been cleansed from body issues also had to wait seven days before they could resume normal activity.

The reader may wonder why we have so many repetitions of instructions for offering the various kinds of offerings. It must be remembered that during the Mosaic age repeated sacrifices were needed. The once for all sacrifice of the Saviour at Calvary was not yet a reality. The blood of bulls, sheep and other animals had to be offered on a regular basis.

One thing we must consider here is the difference in circumstances between the offerings which Moses offered for the priests before this seven day period, and the transfer of responsibility for the offerings to Aaron as the newly installed High Priest. We will see a sharp decline in the prominence of Moses now, and a greater emphasis upon the duties of the priesthood.

**LEV 9:2 And he said unto Aaron, Take thee a young calf for a sin offering, and a ram for**

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**a burnt offering, without blemish, and offer them before the LORD.**

Moses instructed Aaron to bring a young calf and a ram. The calf was to serve as a sin offering for Aaron himself. The ram would serve as a burnt offering for Aaron. It is our understanding that both of these animals were to be furnished by Aaron. He was not to take these animals from the people. They were his sacrifice.

Several have pointed out the strong possibility of a relationship between this calf Aaron was to sacrifice and the fact that he had sinned in producing the golden calf while Moses was on Sinai receiving the law.

**LEV 9:3 And unto the children of Israel thou shalt speak, saying, Take ye a kid of the goats for a sin offering; and a calf and a lamb, both of the first year, without blemish, for a burnt offering;**

**LEV 9:4 Also a bullock and a ram for peace offerings, to sacrifice before the LORD; and a meat offering mingled with oil: for to day the LORD will appear unto you.**

We have several kinds of offerings listed here. We have the sin offering, the burnt offering, the peace offering and the meat or meal offering. Every animal brought for sacrifice must be the very best available. When God allowed His Son to be sacrificed, He set the example. He offered the very best He had.





**LEV 9:5 And they brought that which Moses commanded before the tabernacle of the congregation: and all the congregation drew near and stood before the LORD.**

I have previously expressed serious doubt that the elders are spoken of as all the congregation because they represented the entire congregation. When we compare verse one of this chapter with verse five, we find some degree of support for this stand. Verse one tells us Aaron called the elders of the congregation. Verse five notes that all the congregation drew near. This observation, when combined with the fact that it would be impossible for two million persons to gather around the tabernacle closely enough to see what was taking place, is the strongest evidence of this idea that the elders were indeed spoken of as “all the congregation.”

**LEV 9:6 And Moses said, This is the thing which the LORD commanded that ye should do: and the glory of the LORD shall appear unto you.**

From the number of times Moses told the people the Lord had commanded that which he was about to pass on to them we should have no doubt that Moses was a meek man who did not desire to take the glory which belonged to Jehovah to himself. God does not see greatness as most humans see it. Moses was capable of standing up for the truth when such became necessary. However, it is almost certain that



he was chosen for his leadership position because he was not filled with self pride. See Numbers 12:3.

Num 12:3 (Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)

**LEV 9:7 And Moses said unto Aaron, Go unto the altar, and offer thy sin offering, and thy burnt offering, and make an atonement for thyself, and for the people: and offer the offering of the people, and make an atonement for them; as the LORD commanded.**

Aaron is to do the offering this time, not Moses. He must first offer sacrifices on his own behalf before he is fit to offer the sacrifices of the people.

**LEV 9:8 Aaron therefore went unto the altar, and slew the calf of the sin offering, which was for himself.**

**LEV 9:9 And the sons of Aaron brought the blood unto him: and he dipped his finger in the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar, and poured out the blood at the bottom of the altar:**

Normally the High Priest would have officiated at the altar of incense. In this case it is the brazen altar upon which the animals are offered. Whatever the reason, Aaron took the blood which his sons had obtained from the calf and put it upon the horns of the brazen altar.



It is not an unimportant matter that it was these horns of the altar that the people could flee to as a refuge from one who was trying to injure or kill them. The blood of Christ has been sacrificed and poured out for the protection of those who will cling to Him for protection. How many times do we see the types and shadows of Christ pointing to the realities evident in his life, death and resurrection.

**LEV 9:10 But the fat, and the kidneys, and the caul above the liver of the sin offering, he burnt upon the altar; as the LORD commanded Moses.**

**LEV 9:11 And the flesh and the hide he burnt with fire without the camp.**

All of the above were for Aaron's own purification. Later on the skin would have become the property of the priest who officiated. In this case it was burned outside the encampment.

**LEV 9:12 And he slew the burnt offering; and Aaron's sons presented unto him the blood, which he sprinkled round about upon the altar.**

**LEV 9:13 And they presented the burnt offering unto him, with the pieces thereof, and the head: and he burnt them upon the altar.**

**LEV 9:14 And he did wash the inwards and the legs, and burnt them upon the burnt offering on the altar.**

This marks the end of Aaron's offering for himself. The next verse make this clear.

**LEV 9:15 And he brought the people's offering, and took the goat, which was the sin offering for the people, and slew it, and offered it for sin, as the first.**

**LEV 9:16 And he brought the burnt offering, and offered it according to the manner.**

Similar offerings will now be offered on behalf of the people. The goat will provide the sin offering. The burnt offering was to follow.

**LEV 9:17 And he brought the meat offering, and took an handful thereof, and burnt it upon the altar, beside the burnt sacrifice of the morning.**

One of the most confusing things in understanding the different offerings described in Leviticus is the use of the word "meat" to refer to a cereal offering. We sometimes speak of meat and drink. By meat, we mean anything that is not drink. Some readers would wonder how one could take a handful of "meat" and place it upon the altar. This becomes clear when we realize this was fine flour, etc.

**LEV 9:18 He slew also the bullock and the ram for a sacrifice of peace offerings, which was for the people: and Aaron's sons presented unto him the blood, which he sprinkled upon the altar round about,**

**LEV 9:19 And the fat of the bullock and of the ram, the rump, and that which covereth the inwards, and the kidneys, and the caul above the liver:**

**LEV 9:20 And they put the fat upon the breasts, and he burnt the fat upon the altar:**

**LEV 9:21 And the breasts and the right shoulder Aaron waved for a wave offering before the LORD; as Moses commanded.**

When each of the types of offerings is recounted, the statement is made that it was done in accord with God's will, as presented through Moses, His servant.

**LEV 9:22 And Aaron lifted up his hand toward the people, and blessed them, and came down from offering of the sin offering, and the burnt offering, and peace offerings.**

As Aaron concluded the sacrificial activities for this first time, he turned and lifted up his hand in the direction of the people and blessed them. This type of blessing occurred at other times. Although we do not have the words of Aaron on this occasion, we do have his words in a like kind of blessing recorded in Numbers 6:22-26.

Num 6:22 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Num 6:23 Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them,



Num 6:24 The LORD bless thee, and keep thee:

Num 6:25 The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:

Num 6:26 The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

God was instructing Moses with that which Moses was to transfer to Aaron and his four sons. It is reasonable to think the blessing which recorded in verse twenty-two of this ninth chapter would have been very much the same.

**LEV 9:23 And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and blessed the people: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the people.**

We are not told the reason for Moses and Aaron entering the tabernacle. It is likely that the reason was that Moses could detail what God expected of Aaron and his sons as they served with the candlesticks, the table of shewbread and the altar of sweet incense.

After an undetermined length of time, Moses and Aaron made their exit from the tabernacle and the two of them blessed the people a second time.

**LEV 9:24 And there came a fire out from before the LORD, and consumed upon the altar**



**the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces.**





## *Chapter 10*

**LEV 10:1 And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not.**

How quickly triumph can turn to tragedy! God had delivered His people out of the hideous bondage in the land of Egypt. He had led them to Mount Sinai where Moses received the law. He had specified the sacrifices needed to assure His willingness to be called their God. He had appointed Aaron and his four sons as priests and He had indicated his approval of their situation by sending His glory into their midst.

Almost immediately the scene changes to disaster. The two eldest of Aaron's sons, who had accompanied him part way up Sinai, offered up "strange fire" to Jehovah. Up to this point we have the repeated phrase that everything had been done "as the Lord commanded Moses." Now we have something done with the command of the Lord. The result is disaster.

What is meant by the words "strange fire?" It means that this fire was strange or foreign to the Holy God. In the book of Proverbs we read several times of the need to avoid strange women. These are women not approved of God. Jude 7 speaks of the dangers of going after strange flesh as those of Sodom and Gomorrha had done. This strange fire was fire which had not been approved by the

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Lord.

Why was it not approved? Turn to the sixteenth chapter of this same book. There you will find the Lord's command as to what the source of the fire was to be. See Lev. 16:12.

Lev 16:12 And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil:

Rather than following the precise directions for what was to be done in drawing near to God through the sacrifices, Nadab and Abihu substituted what is often called "will worship." Will worship is that which is offered according to the will of the one doing the worshiping rather than according to the expressed desires of the Almighty.

It is not permissible for man to add to the Word of God, to take from it, or to modify it to suit our own pleasure. Some today use instruments of music in the worship services. They point out the words of the Lord as given in the one hundred fiftieth Psalm as support for the use of instruments. If, however, the reader will examine the entire New Testament scriptures, he will find absolutely no like command. Circumcision was a direct command during the Mosaic age. In the Christian age the circumcision is to be that of the heart. God looks no differently upon one whose flesh has not been circumcised than He does upon one who has undergone that procedure.

The reason worshipers use instruments of music

in the worship services during the Christian age is not that they are doing this in obedience to a New Testament command of God. It is because they feel it must be pleasing to God if it is pleasing to them. Instead, God says that we are to “sing and make melody in our hearts.” His command today has moved from instruments made of wood and metal to a spiritual instrument, the heart of man. See Eph. 5:19.

Eph 5:18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

Eph 5:19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

**LEV 10:2 And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.**

Numerous lessons are taught in the Bible concerning God and fire. God is called a consuming fire, both in the Old Testament and the New. See Deut. 4:24 and Heb. 12:29.

Deu 4:24 For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.

Heb 12:29 For our God is a consuming fire.

In contrast we find that God sent fire to consume the sacrifice earlier to show His approval when they



had obeyed His will. In the book of Acts we find God's Holy Spirit descending upon the apostles like as tongues of fire. In this case, the fire represented energy and power which they would not have had if God had not given it to them. Hell is pictured as a place of everlasting fire.

There is a tremendous similarity between what happened here and what happened in the case of Ananias and Saphira who lied to the Holy Spirit about their giving (Acts 5:1-11). The punishment seems severe to men who are far removed from the scene, as we are today. If we stop and consider the circumstances, we see a God who cares. In the case of Ananias and Sapphira, Christianity was in it's earliest days. It had to be established that God was serious about His commands. The same was true with Nadab and Abihu. The law of the sacrifices had just been established. God felt it necessary to provide an example which would cause Israel to fear Him and keep His commandments.

It may just be possible that the physical death of all four of these individuals prevented their second death in the eternal fires of hell. We are not told of their final destiny. There are many things we do not know about the afterlife. It is very unwise to accuse God of injustice. He knows what He is doing far better than we do. By the way, if the reader will ponder for a moment, he will realize that God tells what type of people will enter into heaven or hell, but He does not usually tell us how He has judged, or will judge a particular individual. Somewhere, some time, we'll understand.



**LEV 10:3 Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace.**

God expected His people to sanctify and glorify Him. Nadab and Abihu had not done that. The word “sanctified” is used in two different senses in the Word of God. At times it talks about the change from an unclean to a clean condition. Both persons and furniture were sanctified before they could be considered acceptable for God’s holy purposes. It is not so with Jehovah. He has been eternally holy. He has no need to be changed from an unholy to a holy condition. To sanctify God is to declare His glory and goodness both privately and publicly.

Aaron had the good judgment to respect God’s punishment of his two sons. Since God did it, Aaron accepted it. No doubt his heart was cut very deeply, but he did not accuse God of undue severity.

We also must be ready to accept God’s will. Some of us have had to accept the absence of our own children as a result of spiritual circumstances. Our tears and grief must be controlled as much as possible while we wait for God’s wisdom to take it’s course.

**LEV 10:4 And Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel the uncle of Aaron, and said unto them, Come near, carry your brethren from before the sanctuary out**



**of the camp.**

**LEV 10:5 So they went near, and carried them in their coats out of the camp; as Moses had said.**

The priests were not to touch dead bodies. Thus neither Aaron nor his sons Ithamar and Eleazar were permitted to carry the bodies from the tabernacle area. Two of their cousins were asked to remove them. The two dead men were removed to a place outside the camp where the refuse was dumped.

Jesus took our sins upon himself when he died that we might be saved. He also was taken outside the walls of the city of Jerusalem, but the situation in Jesus case was nearly the opposite. He was holy and carried our sins away. Nadab and Abihu had just been sanctified when they brought their sin upon themselves.

**LEV 10:6 And Moses said unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar and unto Ithamar, his sons, Uncover not your heads, neither rend your clothes; lest ye die, and lest wrath come upon all the people: but let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the LORD hath kindled.**

**LEV 10:7 And ye shall not go out from the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: for the anointing oil of the LORD is upon you. And they did according to the word of Moses.**



If Aaron and his two living sons had shown great grief, they might have given the impression that they objected to God's judgment upon their dead brothers. They were not to demonstrate any hint of displeasure with God's harsh punishment. If they were to shave their heads or tear their clothing, they would suffer the same fate as their dead brethren. They might also cause the rest of the people to accuse God. What they were to do was bewail that fact that it had been necessary for God to do what He had done in sending the fire upon the two.

One commentator declared that we do not know the reason why Aaron and his two sons were told not to depart from the tabernacle. Surely the passage does give the reason. The anointing oil of the Lord was upon them. Their preparation for the duties of the tabernacle would have been defiled had they left the tabernacle and mingled with the rest of the people who were mourning the deaths. After having seen what had just taken place, Aaron and his sons feared the Lord and heeded his command, as given through Moses.

**LEV 10:8 And the LORD spake unto Aaron, saying,**

This is the only occasion on which the Lord spoke directly to Aaron. Normally He spoke to Aaron through Moses. This must have been a time of special importance.

**LEV 10:9 Do not drink wine nor strong**

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**drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations:**

Is this an abrupt change of thought, or do these next few verses provide a logical connection with those just above? Some deny there is any connection between what God said to Aaron here and what had just happened. Others are firmly convinced that there is a very real linkage.

Although we can not prove beyond a shadow of doubt that Nadab and Abihu had lost their ability to make accurate choices as a result of the use of strong drink, the probability comes close to certainty.

It is amazing what lengths some will go to in their attempts to justify the moderate use of alcoholic beverages. For example, Aaron and his sons were told not to drink wine or strong drink when they went into the tabernacle. This is used to imply that it was alright at other times, but when on duty they were not to imbibe. An appeal is also made to Paul's advice to Timothy that he should take a little wine for his stomach's sake. Another attempt is made by reminding us that Jesus turned water into wine at a wedding feast. The persons who bring forth such arguments plead that drunkenness is condemned whereas moderate use of liquor is permitted.

Apparently Timothy had some type of stomach ailment which could be treated with wine. The verse under present discussion does not say the priests could use wine. It says they were to abstain when



they entered the tabernacle. It has been proven by scientific tests that one drink of weak wine will cause the scores that persons who are highly proficient in playing video games to decrease significantly. We do not become drunk all at once. We start to become drunk with the first drink. We do not know the alcoholic content of the wine which Jesus made from water.

The safest route for the Christian is to leave alcoholic beverages alone. Well over half of the traffic accidents are a result of liquor. Divorces and poverty are other common consequences.

**LEV 10:10 And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean;**

We are now shown the connection between the sins of Nadab and Abihu and the warning of God for the rest of the priests to avoid drinking. It was in order that they would have clear minds and be able to make better choices than their sons and brothers had made. The two who had died had been unable, or unwilling to choose the holy over the unholy and the clean over the unclean. The rest were to do better.

**LEV 10:11 And that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the LORD hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses.**

There were two reasons why Aaron and his two

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living sons would have trouble teaching the rest of the people about God's commands. First, if they drank intoxicating liquor they would not have the proper ability to distinguish what should be taught from what should not be. Secondly, if they drank they would provide a poor example for those whom they were charged with instructing about the law.

**LEV 10:12 And Moses spake unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar and unto Ithamar, his sons that were left, Take the meat offering that remaineth of the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and eat it without leaven beside the altar: for it is most holy:**

The duties of the priests must be resumed. They were commanded by Moses that they were to proceed with the sacrificial offerings.

They were to eat from the meat or meal offerings. They were previously instructed to take out a handful of the meal offering and then the rest was to be eaten without leaven.

**LEV 10:13 And ye shall eat it in the holy place, because it is thy due, and thy sons' due, of the sacrifices of the LORD made by fire: for so I am commanded.**

The Lord had assigned portions of the sacrifices to the priests, and they were to observe His commands. Just as the people were to make the offerings, the



priest were to eat from them.

**LEV 10:14 And the wave breast and heave shoulder shall ye eat in a clean place; thou, and thy sons, and thy daughters with thee: for they be thy due, and thy sons' due, which are given out of the sacrifices of peace offerings of the children of Israel.**

At an earlier point we came into contact with the wave offerings and the heave offerings. This time we read about the wave breast and the heave shoulder. These came from the flesh of the sin offerings of the people. The wave offerings were waved from side to side and the heave offerings were moved up and down before the Lord. Then the priests were to eat the meat and Aaron was expected to place some of the blood of the offering before the altar.

**LEV 10:15 The heave shoulder and the wave breast shall they bring with the offerings made by fire of the fat, to wave it for a wave offering before the LORD; and it shall be thine, and thy sons' with thee, by a statute for ever; as the LORD hath commanded.**

These instructions were to be followed forever, or as long as the Mosaic priesthood was in existence.

**LEV 10:16 And Moses diligently sought the goat of the sin offering, and, behold, it was burnt: and he was angry with Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron which were left alive, saying,**

After the offerings had been made, Moses looked around for the meat from the goat which was offered. He could not locate it. Further investigation made it evident that the priest's portion had been burnt rather than saved for eating. Moses was quite unhappy because God's commands had not been observed. He confronted Aaron with a question.

**LEV 10:17 Wherefore have ye not eaten the sin offering in the holy place, seeing it is most holy, and God hath given it you to bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the LORD?**

This offering was not intended to be burnt. It was most holy and God had given it to the priests that they might survive as they went about the duties of offering the sacrifices that the people might receive atonement for their sin. Why had Aaron not observed God's will?

**LEV 10:18 Behold, the blood of it was not brought in within the holy place: ye should indeed have eaten it in the holy place, as I commanded.**

Not only had the wave breast and the heave shoulder been eaten by the priests. Aaron had not brought the blood to the holy place. What was Aaron's reason for this neglect?

**LEV 10:19 And Aaron said unto Moses,**  
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**Behold, this day have they offered their sin offering and their burnt offering before the LORD; and such things have befallen me: and if I had eaten the sin offering to day, should it have been accepted in the sight of the LORD?**

Aaron replied that the people had offered their sin offering and their burnt offering just as God had commanded. He admitted that the flesh of the wave and heave offerings was available for the priests to eat. But surely God would understand that he found it impossible to eat after the horrible events which had just happened. Would God have expect Aaron to go on just as if nothing at all had happened?

**LEV 10:20 And when Moses heard that, he was content.**

We are faced with a serious question ourselves. God had Nadab and Abihu killed because they got fire from the wrong source. He did not kill Aaron for failing to eat from the offerings and for omitting the bringing of the blood to the altar. Is God partial? Does He mean what He says or not?

In reply we must look at the difference in the two sins. The sins of Nadab and Abihu were what are called presumptuous sins. They simply thought their way was to be preferred over God's way. It was not so in the case of Aaron. His failure to eat the sacrifice and bring the blood to the altar was not a result of arrogance. God decided to let him live.



This tenth chapter of the book of Leviticus is one of the most meaningful in all of the Holy Book. We must do all God has said. We must avoid doing anything He has denied us. We must not twist what He has said in order that it will please human minds. There are sins of commission, omission and substitution. Each type is just as abominable to God as the other two.

## *Chapter 11*

The book of Leviticus is divided into fairly clear divisions. We have investigated the sanctification of the tabernacle, the types of sacrifices to be offered and the consecration of the priests who were to offer the sacrifices. This present chapter begins a discussion of the clean and the holy as it is to be distinguished from the unclean and unholy. The forty-fifth verse is a key to much of the entire book of Leviticus and particularly for this chapter.

Lev 11:45 For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.

In the beginning God had created man in order that He could have a pure and holy family that would live with him in eternally. When man fell into sin, God began plans for the separation of a holy people from those who desired to be unholy. He selected Abraham through whom He produced the Patriarchal age. He selected Moses to lead in the separation of a holy family from those of the entire earth. He gave a set of laws from the top of Mount Sinai which, if followed, would keep His new nation holy. The instructions given in this chapter were given for that purpose. We must remember that they were given for a special people during a certain period of time. After that time, God would move men into a new age and a world wide kingdom, led by Jesus Christ.

Right here it is wise for us to pause long enough



to present a number of reasons which have been given as to why God would have made such a special issue of which things were to be clean and which were unclean. Your present commentator has identified five basic reasons which have been suggested. Some believe only one of these reasons was critical. Others see a possibility of a combination of several.

Reason Number One. A health or hygienic reason. According to this line of thought, the unclean animals and objects often carried diseases or harmed the health of the persons touching or eating them. It is certainly true that some of these animals and things were disease carriers. The pig was capable of transmitting trichonitis. The rabbit can transmit tularemia. At the same time, there are some of the animals which were declared clean which could transmit disease. Still, the ox which was classed as clean can carry anthrax. In other words, some clean animals carried diseases, and some unclean animals did not.

Reason Number Two. A second suggested reason for considering some animals unclean has been that these animals were considered sacred by the nations around Israel and God did not want His people to be drawn into idolatrous worship.

A problem here is that some animals which God declared clean were worshipped by the heathen nations. The ox and the turtledove, or pigeon, were





both worshipped by heathen. Yet God classed both as clean.

Reason Number Three. The very nature of some of the animals could be connected with sinful actions. Therefore God would not wish for His people to eat them. The owl flies at night. Deeds of darkness are done in the night. Pigs wallow in mud holes and eat garbage. God wishes for His people to be free from slovenly and filthy life styles. It is possible that God had some such thing in mind. However, He did not tell us that was a reason.

Reason Number Four. This group holds that God had no real reasons for defining what could or could not be eaten except to demonstrate to His people that He is God and they were to obey Him. Surely God had reasons for His actions. Men may not have been able to understand what those reasons were, but God does not set an example of action without having purpose. His people were expected to obey His commands whether or not they understood the reasons, but the reasons were there!

Reason Number Five. This is a rather interesting suggestion. It holds that God has norms or ideal standards by which cleanness and uncleanness can be determined. Fish are expected to swim, not fly. Birds are expected to fly and not swim. Land animals are expected to move with their bodies in an upright position if they have hands or paws. People were



intended to be Godlike. Those who are not must be classed as unclean.

Let us admit that there is much here we do not understand. There is one certain conclusion. God has the right to define that which is pleasing to Him and that which is an abomination to Him. He has His own reasons, which He may or may not make obvious to us. There have been numerous commands given in the past that appeared to have no reasons, for example the restriction on drinking blood. We now know that He was pointing us to the importance of the blood of Christ.

**LEV 11:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses and to Aaron, saying unto them,**

We are never allowed to forget that these commands did not come from Moses. God was the source. Moses was only God's messenger.

**LEV 11:2 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, These are the beasts which ye shall eat among all the beasts that are on the earth.**

First, we are to be told which of the land animals were to be considered clean and fit for human consumption.

**LEV 11:3 Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is clovenfooted, and cheweth the cud, among the beasts, that shall ye eat.**



There were two characteristics which had to be present if these animals were fit for eating. They must chew the cud, and they must have cloven hoofs. If either of these characteristics was not present, the animal was unclean and was not to be eaten. Cattle, goats and sheep all fit into this class. These were the animals which were commonly used for food by the Israelites at that time.

**LEV 11:4 Nevertheless these shall ye not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the hoof: as the camel, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you.**

The camel had one of the characteristics, but did not have the other. It did not have divided or cloven hooves. It was unclean. Camel meat was not to be eaten.

**LEV 11:5 And the coney, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you.**

The coney fit into the unclean class for the same reason as the camel. Even though it chewed the cud, it did not have a hoof which was cloven or divided. It could not be eaten.

Before we go any farther, we must mention a very important fact. The names of the animals which are given in this lengthy list of clean and unclean are very difficult to identify in our age and in our language. The commands God gave to



Moses were written in Hebrew. That language had to be translated into the language of the people for centuries to come. English words today vary in meaning from the time the King James Version of the Bible was translated. People of other parts of the world and living thousands of years later have never seen some of the creatures listed here. It has been estimated by very well trained language specialists that over half of the names are uncertain.

This does not mean that the people to whom these commands were given did not know which of the creatures God forbid and which were clean. He knew and they knew. We need to be cautious thousands of years later.

**LEV 11:6 And the hare, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you.**

**LEV 11:7 And the swine, though he divide the hoof, and be clovenfooted, yet he cheweth not the cud; he is unclean to you.**

**LEV 11:8 Of their flesh shall ye not eat, and their carcase shall ye not touch; they are unclean to you.**

The hare meet only one of the qualifications. The people were not only to refrain from eating them. They were not allowed to touch their dead carcasses. It was permissible to ride upon a camel while it was alive. After it was dead, the one who touched the carcase became unclean.

**LEV 11:9 These shall ye eat of all that are**



**in the waters: whatsoever hath fins and scales in the waters, in the seas, and in the rivers, them shall ye eat.**

The second class of animals which had to be classified are those that live in the water. If the animal which lived in the water moved by fins and was covered with scales, it was permissible to eat it. A perch or a bluegill would have been clean.

**LEV 11:10 And all that have not fins and scales in the seas, and in the rivers, of all that move in the waters, and of any living thing which is in the waters, they shall be an abomination unto you:**

If the aquatic animal did not have both fins and scales it was unclean and was not edible. Catfish are considered to be a desirable meat in some of the better restaurants of the present day. They would have been unclean according to the directions God gave to Israel through Moses.

**LEV 11:11 They shall be even an abomination unto you; ye shall not eat of their flesh, but ye shall have their carcasses in abomination.**

**LEV 11:12 Whatsoever hath no fins nor scales in the waters, that shall be an abomination unto you.**

Not only were these animals abominable to God, they were to be abominable to his people.



The student who is interested in exploring the matter a bit more can go to the book of Deuteronomy. In that book there are more specific list of the clean and the unclean.

**LEV 11:13 And these are they which ye shall have in abomination among the fowls; they shall not be eaten, they are an abomination: the eagle, and the ossifrage, and the ospray,**

We have now considered the land animals and those living in the water. The next class is the fowls of the air. This time we find a much more full listing of those that are unclean. Most of these are birds that feed upon either live or dead flesh.

**LEV 11:14 And the vulture, and the kite after his kind;**

**LEV 11:15 Every raven after his kind;**

**LEV 11:16 And the owl, and the night hawk, and the cuckow, and the hawk after his kind,**

The phrase “after his kind” means those who have a very similar nature.

**LEV 11:17 And the little owl, and the cormorant, and the great owl,**

**LEV 11:18 And the swan, and the pelican, and the gier eagle,**

**LEV 11:19 And the stork, the heron after**



**her kind, and the lapwing, and the bat.**

**LEV 11:20 All fowls that creep, going upon all four, shall be an abomination unto you.**

The bat is mentioned here. The bat is listed among the fowls because it spends considerable time flying. Actually the bat is a mammal. It gives birth to it's young. However, to the people of Israel it was more like a fowl than a land animal.

**LEV 11:21 Yet these may ye eat of every flying creeping thing that goeth upon all four, which have legs above their feet, to leap withal upon the earth;**

**LEV 11:22 Even these of them ye may eat; the locust after his kind, and the bald locust after his kind, and the beetle after his kind, and the grasshopper after his kind.**

Some animals are difficult to classify as land animals or fowls. They creep around on the ground and then suddenly you will see them leap into the air and fly for some distance. These animals have more than two legs. They take a horizontal position when moving over the land. Their jointed legs are constructed in such a way that the legs extend well above the body while they are walking. "They have legs above their feet." Out of these types of animals the locust, the beetle and the grasshopper could be eaten.

One is forced to wonder if the locusts were allowed as clean food because they were such a hazard to the food supply. They could come in such swarms that they darkened the sky. When they left the vegetation would be stripped to the ground. Since they ate the food which man would ordinarily use as a food supply, perhaps God allowed them to be eaten.

We do not usually prepare a banquet of grasshoppers or locusts. Some cultures do. You will recall that John the baptist lived on locusts and wild honey. We are told this combination would be quite nourishing.

**LEV 11:23 But all other flying creeping things, which have four feet, shall be an abomination unto you.**

**LEV 11:24 And for these ye shall be unclean: whosoever toucheth the carcase of them shall be unclean until the even**

**LEV 11:25 And whosoever beareth ought of the carcase of them shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even.**

Outside the ones mentioned, all other animals that crawled along the ground and then could be found flying through the air were unclean. If one even touched the carcase of one of these animals after it had died, that person was to be declared unclean. The unclean condition was to last until the sun went down.

The amount of time the person was to be unclean





indicates that this was not as serious an impurity as some of the others. A woman who had borne a child was to be unclean for a week, after which a male infant was to be circumcised. The leper had an even more serious impurity.

**LEV 11:26 The carcasses of every beast which divideth the hoof, and is not clovenfooted, nor cheweth the cud, are unclean unto you: every one that toucheth them shall be unclean.**

This verse adds to the earlier statement that these animals were unclean. They are inedible, but in addition they are not to even be touched. You could ride a live camel, even though it was unclean, but if it died you would become unclean by touching it's dead body.

**LEV 11:27 And whatsoever goeth upon his paws, among all manner of beasts that go on all four, those are unclean unto you: whoso toucheth their carcase shall be unclean until the even.**

**LEV 11:28 And he that beareth the carcase of them shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even: they are unclean unto you.**

The bear and the lion both go on all four and have paws. These paws look a bit like hands. It would be considered abnormal for a man to bend over and walk on all fours. It is possible that God considered the lion and the bear to be abnormal and therefore unclean. This is very speculative.



**LEV 11:29** These also shall be unclean unto you among the creeping things that creep upon the earth; the weasel, and the mouse, and the tortoise after his kind,

**LEV 11:30** And the ferret, and the chameleon, and the lizard, and the snail, and the mole.

**LEV 11:31** These are unclean to you among all that creep: whosoever doth touch them, when they be dead, shall be unclean until the even.

This group have an unusual type of motion. The word swarm or squirm is sometimes used to describe their locomotion. These also were not to be touched when they were dead.

One begins to wonder what percentage of the animals were fit to eat. Upon further consideration it is seen that there were a sufficient supply of the clean animals for the survival of the people in normal times.

**LEV 11:32** And upon whatsoever any of them, when they are dead, doth fall, it shall be unclean; whether it be any vessel of wood, or raiment, or skin, or sack, whatsoever vessel it be, wherein any work is done, it must be put into water, and it shall be unclean until the even; so it shall be cleansed.

If one of the unclean animals died and fell into a container such as a cooking pot, a skin for carrying water, or some other container which humans used for various purposes, that container was to be

unclean until sundown. It must also be cleansed before use. It was to be washed with water.

**LEV 11:33 And every earthen vessel, whereinto any of them falleth, whatsoever is in it shall be unclean; and ye shall break it.**

**LEV 11:34 Of all meat which may be eaten, that on which such water cometh shall be unclean: and all drink that may be drunk in every such vessel shall be unclean.**

If the container was made of pottery it had to be broken and used no more. If the water from such a vessel had come into contact with meat, that meat was unclean. The word “meat” here may be used in the same sense as it was when discussing the meat offering before. The “meat” offering was actually a cereal grain offering.

**LEV 11:35 And every thing whereupon any part of their carcase falleth shall be unclean; whether it be oven, or ranges for pots, they shall be broken down: for they are unclean and shall be unclean unto you.**

If the carcase of an unclean animal fell into a cooking utensil, or even on the oven or the covers of the pots, those objects were to be broken and discarded.

**LEV 11:36 Nevertheless a fountain or pit, wherein there is plenty of water, shall be clean:**

**but that which toucheth their carcase shall be unclean.**

If the unclean object fell into a small quantity of still water, that water became unclean. In contrast, if the body of water was large, the water did not become unclean, particularly if the water was running.

**LEV 11:37 And if any part of their carcase fall upon any sowing seed which is to be sown, it shall be clean.**

**LEV 11:38 But if any water be put upon the seed, and any part of their carcase fall thereon, it shall be unclean unto you.**

The seed would later become food. If the seed was dry when the unclean object made contact with it the seed remained clean. If the seed was wet it became unclean. We could suggest that the water would more easily soak the uncleanness into the seed. Again we are only speculating as to the reason for the difference in dry and wet seed.

**LEV 11:39 And if any beast, of which ye may eat, die; he that toucheth the carcase thereof shall be unclean until the even.**

**LEV 11:40 And he that eateth of the carcase of it shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even: he also that beareth the carcase of it shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even.**



This time we are talking about the carcass of a clean animal. The animal could cause uncleanness in the person who touched the carcass. But, the uncleanness lasted only until sundown.

**LEV 11:41 And every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth shall be an abomination; it shall not be eaten.**

**LEV 11:42 Whatsoever goeth upon the belly, and whatsoever goeth upon all four, or whatsoever hath more feet among all creeping things that creep upon the earth, them ye shall not eat; for they are an abomination.**

**LEV 11:43 Ye shall not make yourselves abominable with any creeping thing that creepeth, neither shall ye make yourselves unclean with them, that ye should be defiled thereby.**

Serpents would be included in this group. From the time of the fall of man in Eden, the serpent has been a symbol of evil. God forbade the eating of snakes.

At one time while this commentator was serving as a supervisor over teen age boys at an orphan home, the superintendent of the home brought a surprise meal for us to try. Most of us decided the meat was some of the best we had ever tasted. After the meal was over, he told us we had just eaten rattlesnake steak. If the Jews in the time of Moses had shared in that meal they would have become unclean.



**LEV 11:44 For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.**

**LEV 11:45 For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.**

It is our view that this verse forty-five contains the reason for God setting up separate clean and unclean groups of animals and other objects. He wished to impress Israel with the idea they were to be holy rather than to follow the ways of the nations surrounding them. This explanation ties in with the teaching of the New Testament concerning the breaking down of the barrier between the Jew and the Gentile. When the time arrived in which God saw fit to have the gospel preached to the Gentiles and invite them into His spiritual kingdom, He made it crystal clear that the distinction between clean and unclean animals had been abolished. Just as all animals were then to be considered clean, in like manner the Gentiles could become clean through faith in Christ, repentance from sin, confession of Christ as the Son of God, followed by baptism for the remission of their sins. See the following passages.

**LEV 11:46 This is the law of the beasts, and of the fowl, and of every living creature that moveth in the waters, and of every creature that creepeth upon the earth:**  
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**LEV 11:47 To make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the beast that may be eaten and the beast that may not be eaten.**

The four main classes of animals are listed in a summary.

They are the:

1. Larger land animals.
2. Fowls of the air.
3. Inhabitants of the waters.
4. Creeping and crawling creatures.

The priests had been told that they were not to drink wine in order that they might be able to make a difference between the clean and the unclean. They were responsible for teaching the people these truths. Both the priests and the people were to avoid contact with anything the Holy Ghost viewed as unholy. The time would come in the days of Cornelius that these lessons would become far more meaningful.





## *Chapter 12*

**LEV 12:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

Moses had attempted to excuse himself from the tasks which were ahead when God told him he was to lead Israel. He had reminded God that he was slow of speech. God had informed him at that time there would be no problem. It had been true. At times Aaron was his spokesman. At times such as this God spoke to Moses and made certain he would convey the will of the Almighty to the people. It was the meekness of Moses which made him a reliable prophet.

**LEV 12:2 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a woman have conceived seed, and born a man child: then she shall be unclean seven days; according to the days of the separation for her infirmity shall she be unclean.**

This twelfth chapter of Leviticus has only eight verses. It might seem it would require little effort to make adequate comment about it. No so! Some have had almost nothing to say about it. Others try to make it teach total hereditary depravity of man. The confusion arises because of the difference in God's attitude toward male and female when a child is born. The critics of the Bible cry out "sexist." Can we discover any logical reason for the contrasting view toward giving birth to a male and a female?

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In this second verse we are told if a woman brings forth a male child, that woman is to be unclean for a period of seven days. Is this because she has given birth to an infant who is born a sinner? Is it because it takes about a week for all of the afterbirth to clear? Is it because she and her husband committed sin in the sexual act at the time she conceived?

The reader may recall that Mary went through a period of purification and then made a sacrifice of two turtledoves after the birth of the Son of God. Who is willing to say Mary was brought into a state of impurity because she gave birth to a sinner?? Who is to say she needed to offer a sacrifice for having conceived through the power of the Holy Spirit? We are left with the conclusion that neither the sex act nor the birth of a sinner was responsible for God's requirement that a woman who gave birth to a male baby was to be unclean for a period of seven days while she recovered from the birth of the child. She was unclean because of the emissions following the birth.

**LEV 12:3 And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.**

After the seven day period the male child was to be circumcised on the first day of the second week. The sign of circumcision separated the Jew from the rest of the world. Today male Gentile infants are circumcised for reasons of cleanliness. That was not the reason for the circumcision of Jewish males on the eighth day. The Jew was to be cut off from intermarriage with Gentiles until Cornelius was instructed to take the gospel to them, as found in the



tenth chapter of Acts. After that time the Jew and Gentile separation was obliterated. See Gal. 3:28.

Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

**LEV 12:4 And she shall then continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days; she shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled.**

Even after the seven days, the woman was to be unclean for another thirty-three days. The total period of uncleanness was to be forty days. She was not even allowed to attend the worship services until the forty days had expired.

Now the reader will ask me why the woman was unclean for forty days when it normally requires from one to two weeks for her to return to normal activities and the emissions resulting from the childbirth have ceased. My answer is that I do not know. I think God did know and I trust his wisdom.

**LEV 12:5 But if she bear a maid child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her separation: and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying threescore and six days.**

Now we come to the shocker! If the child to whom the woman gave birth was a girl the period of initial

uncleanness was two weeks and the subsequent time period was to last for sixty-six days. Thus the total time required before the woman was declared clean was twice the time required when a baby boy was born.

The reader now asks his second question. Why should the period of uncleanness last for twice as long in the case of the girl? I reply with the same answer I gave to the last question. I do not know.

I do know that God made a difference in his treatment of women from the time of Eve's deception by the Devil in Eden. He gave the following statement.

Gen 3:16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

The inspired apostle Paul wrote to Timothy that Jehovah expected the woman to take a followers part in that Adam was created first, and Eve had been deceived.

1Ti 2:11 Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.

1Ti 2:12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.

1Ti 2:13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

1Ti 2:14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.



Paul added the following information in his first letter to the Corinthians.

1Co 11:7 For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.

1Co 11:8 For the man is not of the woman: but the woman of the man.

1Co 11:9 Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.

Putting all of this together, it seems that such instructions as God has given above have two basic reasons. God intended for the male to have dominion over the female from the very time of creation. Then God's position was reinforced by the fact that in general the female is more easily manipulated than the male.

Another similar question arises when we look at the twenty-seventh chapter of this book of Leviticus. In the second through the eighth verses, the estimated price which was to be paid to the sanctuary in the place of a vow was more for the male than for the female. Depending upon the age of the person involved the difference ranged from one half to two thirds. Verses two and three of that chapter list fifty shekels for an adult male and thirty shekels for an adult female. In this case however, a male slave was able to do heavier manual labor than a female.

I am well aware that some will take vigorous exception to the idea that God has insisted on male



dominance. It is not my duty as a commentator to be anxious over the possible attitudes of readers. It is my obligation to bring meaningful scripture to bear on God's expectations for each and all of us.

**LEV 12:6 And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son, or for a daughter, she shall bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtledove, for a sin offering, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest:**

**LEV 12:7 Who shall offer it before the LORD, and make an atonement for her; and she shall be cleansed from the issue of her blood. This is the law for her that hath born a male or a female.**

After the days of purification had passed, the woman was expected to bring a lamb less than a year old and a pigeon or turtledove for a sin offering. It is not logical to conclude that this burnt offering and sin offering was made because she had sinned in having sex with her husband or that she had sinned in bringing a new sinner into this world.

God created both male and female in the beginning. He then told them to multiply and fill the earth. Sex is not sinful. Mary still had to bring these sacrifices after the one who had no sin was born. A babe is not a sinner because he was born to a sinner than the same babe would have been a baker if he had been born to a baker. One must sin before he or she becomes a sinner. Jesus told his



disciples to suffer the little children to come unto Him. The Kingdom of Heaven would be made up of such.

**LEV 12:8 And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons; the one for the burnt offering, and the other for a sin offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for her, and she shall be clean.**

It was a long trip from the glory and riches of heaven to the manger in Bethlehem. The parents of the Lord were so poor they were not expected to bring a lamb and a turtledove. They brought two turtledoves. Jesus voluntarily left the glory of heaven to live his childhood days in one of the poorest of homes. He would later say the foxes had dens and the birds had nests, but the Son of man had not where to lay His head.

He went even farther. He went to the cross and allowed Himself to become the Lamb of God, sacrificed for my sins and yours. If He wants to lead you back to the glory from which He came, please do not treat Him with disdain. He loves you!





## *Chapter 13*

### **LEV 13:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying,**

This time God spoke to both Aaron and Moses. In most of the other instances Aaron's name was not included. Some writers explain this by saying Aaron was more directly involved here than in other situations. This does not seem adequate since in all of these instructions Aaron and his sons were directly involved. It still holds, however, that these were not Moses regulations. They were those of God.

The reader needs to realize these instructions were not cures for leprosy. They were intended as directions for the diagnosis, quarantine and later handling of those who were infected.

There is strong reason to believe that what we call leprosy today was only one of several severe skin problems existing at that time. At the same time, true leprosy does seem to have been one of the several. Suggestions as to the identity of some others are Psoriasis and Eczema. Present day leprosy is the same as Elephantiasis or Hansen's Disease. It does not cure itself. Some of the problems described in this chapter did disappear on their own at times. There are several types of leprosy known today. Some are less severe than others. The disease is much more common in climates such as are found in India, South America and parts of China.

There are few more dreaded diseases than real



leprosy. The name is taken from the scales which develop on the skin of the leper. As the disease progresses body extremities such as fingers and toes, ears and noses either fall off or are eaten off by rats. The leprosy has a numbing effect so complete that the person infected does not even realize the rodents are gnawing on him during his sleep. Gums fall away from the teeth. Teeth loosen and drop out. The bacteria which produce leprosy can be spread from one person to another through inhaling the tiny droplets of mucous that are caused by sneezing and coughing. Those who have visited leper camps come away with a sense of horror almost beyond their ability to picture it. Some forms of leprosy are treatable through present day medicine. These treatments were not known in Biblical times.

This disease is mentioned at several points in the scriptures. Naaman was a leper (Luke 4:27). Moses and Miriam both dealt with leprosy at certain times (Exo. 4:6 and Num. 12:10).. Jesus met a group of ten lepers (Luke 17;12).

Leprosy is used as a type of sin. Leprosy destroyed the body. Sin destroys the soul.

1. Both produce horrifying symptoms.
2. Both can begin small and end in death.
3. Both have a numbing effect.
4. Both can spread from one person to another.

**LEV 13:2 When a man shall have in the skin of his flesh a rising, a scab, or bright spot, and it be in the skin of his flesh like the**



**plague of leprosy; then he shall be brought unto Aaron the priest, or unto one of his sons the priests:**

If one in the congregation of Israel developed symptoms which were suspiciously like those of leprosy, the person was to take the problem to the priests for further diagnosis. Medical practice was far from being as effective in that day as it is in the present. Also leprosy was so contagious the victim was to be sent out of the camp if the priest's diagnosis proved the condition existed. The treatment for leprosy was somewhat similar to disfellowship of a sinner during this Christian age. In both cases the isolation was for the protection of the rest of the people.

This verse lists three suspicious symptoms. An inflamed and swollen area, such as a boil, a scaly scab, or a bright and shiny place on the skin. Any of these three were to be investigated by the priests if there was any doubt about a leprosy condition.

**LEV 13:3 And the priest shall look on the plague in the skin of the flesh: and when the hair in the plague is turned white, and the plague in sight be deeper than the skin of his flesh, it is a plague of leprosy: and the priest shall look on him, and pronounce him unclean.**

Leprosy affects the tissue entirely through the skin and even beyond. Among the effects is the whitish color of the hair in the area. The change

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in hair color is evidence that the infection is not limited to the surface of the skin. If this condition was apparent, the priest was to declare the person unclean.

**LEV 13:4 If the bright spot be white in the skin of his flesh, and in sight be not deeper than the skin, and the hair thereof be not turned white; then the priest shall shut up him that hath the plague seven days:**

Let us suppose the priest has examined the person and found that the spot was still the same color as the rest of the skin, that the hair had not turned white and therefore the problem had not gone through the skin. In that case the person was to be placed in quarantine for a period of seven days. This would give time enough for true leprosy to have made itself evident.

**LEV 13:5 And the priest shall look on him the seventh day: and, behold, if the plague in his sight be at a stay, and the plague spread not in the skin; then the priest shall shut him up seven days more:**

At the end of the seventh day the person was to be brought back to the priest for another examination. If the problem had become worse and the symptoms had spread out, the priest would declare him a leper. He would be removed from the camp.

If the conditions had remained the same and had



not worsened, the individual was to be quarantined for another seven days.

**LEV 13:6 And the priest shall look on him again the seventh day: and, behold, if the plague be somewhat dark, and the plague spread not in the skin, the priest shall pronounce him clean: it is but a scab: and he shall wash his clothes, and be clean.**

If, at the end of the second seven days, the symptoms had not spread and the area had become a dark color, the person did not have leprosy. The place was only a scab and not leprosy.

**LEV 13:7 But if the scab spread much abroad in the skin, after that he hath been seen of the priest for his cleansing, he shall be seen of the priest again.**

This verse does not mean the priest had cured the person of leprosy. It means that by examining him, the priest had determined that he did not have leprosy, and had declared him clean.

**LEV 13:8 And if the priest see that, behold, the scab spreadeth in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it is a leprosy.**

It might be that some time after the person had been declared clean, his symptoms worsened and what had appeared to be only a scab had begun to spread out, the diagnosis had to be changed. The person had leprosy.

**LEV 13:9** When the plague of leprosy is in a man, then he shall be brought unto the priest;

**LEV 13:10** And the priest shall see him: and, behold, if the rising be white in the skin, and it have turned the hair white, and there be quick raw flesh in the rising;

**LEV 13:11** It is an old leprosy in the skin of his flesh, and the priest shall pronounce him unclean, and shall not shut him up: for he is unclean.

This is a separate condition from the last few verses. This time the priest finds that the swollen area is a whitish color, that the hair in the area had turned white, and raw flesh could be seen, it was a case where the leprosy had been present for some time and no doubt existed as to its presence.

If this was the case, there was no need to quarantine the person for any later examination. He was to be pronounced unclean immediately.

**LEV 13:12** And if a leprosy break out abroad in the skin, and the leprosy cover all the skin of him that hath the plague from his head even to his foot, wheresoever the priest looketh;

**LEV 13:13** Then the priest shall consider: and, behold, if the leprosy have covered all his flesh, he shall pronounce him clean that hath the plague: it is all turned white: he is clean.

This is one of the instances which cause Bible students to think more than one type of bad skin

condition are mentioned in this chapter. Does true leprosy reach a point where when it covers the entire body of the person, it becomes non-contagious? If real leprosy reached such a point, it would seem that death would soon follow and the person would be extremely contagious.

Whatever the identity of the condition mentioned here, it was possible for it to cover the entire body. Every place the priest could see was covered with it.

**LEV 13:14 But when raw flesh appeareth in him, he shall be unclean.**

**LEV 13:15 And the priest shall see the raw flesh, and pronounce him to be unclean: for the raw flesh is unclean: it is a leprosy.**

As long as no raw flesh could be seen on the entire surface of the person's body, the person was to be considered clean. There was no need for quarantine. But as soon as raw flesh was seen on the surface which was covered with leprosy, the person was a leper and must be isolated.

**LEV 13:16 Or if the raw flesh turn again, and be changed unto white, he shall come unto the priest;**

**LEV 13:17 And the priest shall see him: and, behold, if the plague be turned into white; then the priest shall pronounce him clean that hath the plague: he is clean.**



If, at a later time the raw flesh disappeared and could not be seen on the white surface, the person was not contagious. He was free to communicate with other people. This points to a problem less serious than Hansen's Disease. There is almost no evidence that the severe forms of Hansen's Disease spontaneously runs its course and then disappears.

**LEV 13:18 The flesh also, in which, even in the skin thereof, was a boil, and is healed,**

**LEV 13:19 And in the place of the boil there be a white rising, or a bright spot, white, and somewhat reddish, and it be shewed to the priest;**

Boils created a serious diagnostic problem. Some of the conditions produced by a boil closely resembled those of leprosy. There could be a swollen and shiny surface followed by emission of a combination of pus and blood. When the boil healed, a shiny red tinted scar was left behind. It was necessary that this be taken to the priest for diagnosis.

**LEV 13:20 And if, when the priest seeth it, behold, it be in sight lower than the skin, and the hair thereof be turned white; the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it is a plague of leprosy broken out of the boil.**

**LEV 13:21 But if the priest look on it, and, behold, there be no white hairs therein, and if it be not lower than the skin, but be somewhat**





**dark; then the priest shall shut him up seven days:**

If the priest found hair which had turned white in the area, and it had sunken to a point lower than the surrounding skin, the person had leprosy.

If the hair had not turned white and the area had only turned darker and had not sunken below the surrounding surface, there was a need for a seven day quarantine to see if further changes would indicate leprosy.

**LEV 13:22 And if it spread much abroad in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it is a plague.**

**LEV 13:23 But if the bright spot stay in his place, and spread not, it is a burning boil; and the priest shall pronounce him clean.**

When the seven days were complete, he was to be examined again. If the dark spot had begun spreading, the person had leprosy. If it had not spread, the priest was to pronounce him clean.

The reader can certainly see two of the basic symptoms which proved the presence of leprosy. The hair in the area turned white and the condition spread into the surrounding flesh.

**LEV 13:24 Or if there be any flesh, in the skin whereof there is a hot burning, and the quick flesh that burneth have a white bright spot, somewhat reddish, or white;**

From this point to verse twenty-eight may refer to conditions arising after a person had been burned, or they could refer to a boil. Since boils were discussed just before this, it would seem that burns are under consideration in these next verses.

The next few verses are repetition of the symptoms for which the priest was to look. We will move on to verse twenty-eight.

**LEV 13:25** Then the priest shall look upon it: and, behold, if the hair in the bright spot be turned white, and it be in sight deeper than the skin; it is a leprosy broken out of the burning: wherefore the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it is the plague of leprosy.

**LEV 13:26** But if the priest look on it, and, behold, there be no white hair in the bright spot, and it be no lower than the other skin, but be somewhat dark; then the priest shall shut him up seven days:

**LEV 13:27** And the priest shall look upon him the seventh day: and if it be spread much abroad in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it is the plague of leprosy.

**LEV 13:28** And if the bright spot stay in his place, and spread not in the skin, but it be somewhat dark; it is a rising of the burning, and the priest shall pronounce him clean: for it is an inflammation of the burning.

Again, if the two major symptoms of white hair and spreading are present, the condition was leprosy. If these were not present, it was only an

inflammation in the burned area.

**LEV 13:29 If a man or woman have a plague upon the head or the beard;**

**LEV 13:30 Then the priest shall see the plague: and, behold, if it be in sight deeper than the skin; and there be in it a yellow thin hair; then the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it is a dry scall, even a leprosy upon the head or beard.**

Leprosy could occur in the hair of the head. This time the priest was to look for thin yellow rather than white hair. Do not confuse the words “dry scall” with what is presently termed “dry scalp.” The condition here was far more serious than flakiness of the skin due to a dry scalp. The word “scall” was used in reference to a flaky condition with scabs. Red eruptions could appear amid the scabs.

**LEV 13:31 And if the priest look on the plague of the scall, and, behold, it be not in sight deeper than the skin, and that there is no black hair in it; then the priest shall shut up him that hath the plague of the scall seven days:**

If no black hair could be seen in the affected place, and if the skin was not sunken down, there was a need for the seven day quarantine and a further examination.

**LEV 13:32** And in the seventh day the priest shall look on the plague: and, behold, if the scall spread not, and there be in it no yellow hair, and the scall be not in sight deeper than the skin;

**LEV 13:33** He shall be shaven, but the scall shall he not shave; and the priest shall shut up him that hath the scall seven days more:

If no yellow hair appeared and there had been no spreading of the condition, the person was to be quarantined for another seven days to be quite certain it was not leprosy.

**LEV 13:34** And in the seventh day the priest shall look on the scall: and, behold, if the scall be not spread in the skin, nor be in sight deeper than the skin; then the priest shall pronounce him clean: and he shall wash his clothes, and be clean.

If, by the end of the second seven day period, there was no spreading, the person was to be pronounced clean.

**LEV 13:35** But if the scall spread much in the skin after his cleansing;

**LEV 13:36** Then the priest shall look on him: and, behold, if the scall be spread in the skin, the priest shall not seek for yellow hair; he is unclean.



If the condition had spread widely, the priest did not even find it necessary to search for discolored hair. The person was leprous.

**LEV 13:37 But if the scall be in his sight at a stay, and that there is black hair grown up therein; the scall is healed, he is clean: and the priest shall pronounce him clean.**

If there had been no spreading, and there was black hair, the person was clean. He or she was not leprous.

This presents the question as to what was to be done if the person were naturally blond or red headed. In the first place, most Jews have dark hair normally. The priest was looking for normal colored hair rather than yellowish hair,

**LEV 13:38 If a man also or a woman have in the skin of their flesh bright spots, even white bright spots;**

**LEV 13:39 Then the priest shall look: and, behold, if the bright spots in the skin of their flesh be darkish white; it is a freckled spot that groweth in the skin; he is clean.**

If the pigmentation of the skin had broken up and there were light and dark spots, it was not serious. It was only freckles.

It is not difficult to see how seriously leprosy was taken. Freckles, scars and scabs were sufficient to make one wonder if he had the dreaded disease.

**LEV 13:40 And the man whose hair is fallen off his head, he is bald; yet is he clean.**

**LEV 13:41 And he that hath his hair fallen off from the part of his head toward his face, he is forehead bald: yet is he clean.**

A bald head was not proof of leprosy. A balding person ordinarily loses hair in two spots. First, it takes place in the forehead or at a spot on the back of the head. There was no need to worry about normal baldness.

**LEV 13:42 And if there be in the bald head, or bald forehead, a white reddish sore; it is a leprosy sprung up in his bald head, or his bald forehead.**

**LEV 13:43 Then the priest shall look upon it: and, behold, if the rising of the sore be white reddish in his bald head, or in his bald forehead, as the leprosy appeareth in the skin of the flesh;**

**LEV 13:44 He is a leprous man, he is unclean: the priest shall pronounce him utterly unclean; his plague is in his head.**

If the same conditions which indicated leprosy in other parts of the body were found in the bald head, the person was leprous and therefore unclean.

Just a note of humor here. We wonder just how many people today who do not have leprosy, might privately confide to their friends that they have a “plague in the head.” Confidentially, your present commentator has a memory “plague in the head.”



**LEV 13:45 And the leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, Unclean, unclean.**

**LEV 13:46 All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be defiled; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be.**

The rending of clothing, the removal of any sort of head covering, and the covering of the lip were signs of mourning. The leprous person was to make it certain that others were warned of the condition in order that they not be infected.

**LEV 13:47 The garment also that the plague of leprosy is in, whether it be a woollen garment, or a linen garment;**

**LEV 13:48 Whether it be in the warp, or woof; of linen, or of woollen; whether in a skin, or in any thing made of skin;**

Clothing might also be affected. It might be wool. It might be linen. It might be leather. Leprosy in garments had to be given serious attention. It could spread to humans.

The terms “warp” and “woof” present some difficulty here. Warp is usually thought of a thread running in one direction through the woven garment, while the woof runs perpendicular to it. One can hardly see how the thread running one



direction could have leprosy while that running perpendicular to it would be free of leprosy. One possible explanation is that two different types of thread were used, and that before the garment was woven one type of thread might be contaminated while the other was not.

**LEV 13:49 And if the plague be greenish or reddish in the garment, or in the skin, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in any thing of skin; it is a plague of leprosy, and shall be shewed unto the priest:**

**LEV 13:50 And the priest shall look upon the plague, and shut up it that hath the plague seven days:**

To some this sounds like mildew or mold. The reader is left to his own to decide whether God was talking about a condition much more serious than mold or mildew. This commentator believes true leprosy could infect organic materials.

**LEV 13:51 And he shall look on the plague on the seventh day: if the plague be spread in the garment, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in a skin, or in any work that is made of skin; the plague is a fretting leprosy; it is unclean.**

The same kind of quarantine period was imposed on woolen, linen or leather clothing as was imposed on humans who were suspected of having leprosy. If, after seven days, the priest determined that





the condition had spread, the garment was to be declared unclean.

**LEV 13:52 He shall therefore burn that garment, whether warp or woof, in woollen or in linen, or any thing of skin, wherein the plague is: for it is a fretting leprosy; it shall be burnt in the fire.**

Whether the condition was found before the warp and woof fibres were woven together, or whether it became evident afterward, the garment was to be burned to ashes.

**LEV 13:53 And if the priest shall look, and, behold, the plague be not spread in the garment, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in any thing of skin;**

**LEV 13:54 Then the priest shall command that they wash the thing wherein the plague is, and he shall shut it up seven days more:**

Just as in the case of the human, there might be a need for a second seven day quarantine period if there was some doubt after the first one expired. The garment was to be washed before the second period began.

**LEV 13:55 And the priest shall look on the plague, after that it is washed: and, behold, if the plague have not changed his colour, and the plague be not spread; it is unclean;**

**thou shalt burn it in the fire; it is fret inward, whether it be bare within or without.**

Since in the previous examinations the lack of spreading was an evidence of absence of leprosy, we find it surprising in this place that the garment was declared unclean when no spreading existed. Perhaps the lack of change in color was the determining factor here.

**LEV 13:56 And if the priest look, and, behold, the plague be somewhat dark after the washing of it; then he shall rend it out of the garment, or out of the skin, or out of the warp, or out of the woof:**

**LEV 13:57 And if it appear still in the garment, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in any thing of skin; it is a spreading plague: thou shalt burn that wherein the plague is with fire.**

If the color of the suspected portion had changed and become darker after washing it, the part was to be torn out. It was possible that after having been removed following the first washing by tearing the infected portion out, the problem might reappear. If so, the garment must be burned.

**LEV 13:58 And the garment, either warp, or woof, or whatsoever thing of skin it be, which thou shalt wash, if the plague be departed from**



**them, then it shall be washed the second time, and shall be clean.**

Following these extensive precautions, if the priest found the plague had been removed, it was not leprosy. The garment was clean and could be used.

**LEV 13:59 This is the law of the plague of leprosy in a garment of woollen or linen, either in the warp, or woof, or any thing of skins, to pronounce it clean, or to pronounce it unclean.**

This is one of the most sickening chapters in the entire Bible. A sensitive person comes close to vomiting just by reading of the awful nature of leprosy. When we realize that God used this disease called leprosy as a means of picturing to us the loathsome nature of sin, we can just begin to understand the importance of avoiding contaminating our soul with it. We can also recognize the need for being washed by the blood of Christ that we might be declared clean.



## *Chapter 14*

**LEV 14:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

If present day preachers and writers would be as careful as Moses was to distinguish their own thought from that of God, we would be profited greatly. Unfortunately this is too often not the case.

I take this occasion to remind the reader that the object of this commentary series is expressed in the book of Nehemiah (Nehemiah 8:8).

Neh 8:8 So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.

If, at any time, the reader finds indication that this purpose has been forgotten he is assured that such is not intentional. The light from God's thoughts is as much brighter than those of the present commentator as the mid-day sun is brighter than a birthday candle. It is not our purpose to subtract from, add to or modify the Word of the Living God. May He bless our humble efforts to apply it.

**LEV 14:2 This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought unto the priest:**

The leper was expelled from the camp when it

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was determined that he was found to be unclean. This chapter proves that in at least some cases the condition of the leper was reversible. At some later time he could be found clean and readmitted to fellowship. He could resume communication with those who were clean.

There is some controversy, even at present, over whether or not the most severe forms of Hansen's Disease are incurable. Some authorities say about three fourths of the persons affected with less severe forms can be cured in a period of six months through modern medicine. If the more severe forms are incurable, part of the leprosy described in chapters thirteen and fourteen must have been due to some lesser malady. Some of those who had been declared lepers later became clean without medication.

When that took place the procedure was for the person to be examined by the priest to make certain the readmission to society was in accord with the will of God.

We do not have priests today who act in the capacity of Aaron and his sons. But, we do need to be cautious about our treatment of one who has made confession that he or she has wandered away from walking in God's paths. There is to be much rejoicing when a sinner repents. However, such a one must be brought along carefully to insure the safety of all.

**LEV 14:3 And the priest shall go forth out of the camp; and the priest shall look, and, behold, if the plague of leprosy be healed in the leper;**  
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Since the leper had been ostracized from the camp, it was necessary for the priest to leave the camp and go to him. Note that the priest did not go for the purpose of curing the leper. He went to see if the leprosy had disappeared and the person could be pronounced clean.

**LEV 14:4 Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds alive and clean, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop:**

The use of the future tense here “to be cleansed” leads one to think the priest is going to cure the leper through the coming procedures. That is not the case. The term means that through these procedures the former leper may be declared clean.

The ritual takes place in order that the people may know the person is to be returned to his former place among the people in the camp. Watch carefully to see the part each of the items mentioned in this verse play in the ritual.

**LEV 14:5 And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water:**

Some of the comparisons between the cleansing of a sinner in the New Testament age and the recognition that a former leper was no longer unclean are quite obvious. Other comparisons are much less certain and caution should be taken not to make too much of them.



**LEV 14:6 As for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water:**

There are two birds involved. One is to be killed. The other is to be freed and released. The first bird is to be killed over running water. The other is to be dipped in the blood of the bird which was killed.

I will not presume to parallel each of these items with a like item in New Testament as some have tried to do. Some believe the first bird who shed it's blood is typical of Christ who shed his blood for the cleansing of others. The bird which was allowed to go free would then represent those who were washed in the blood of the Redeemer.

Others believe the bird who died represented the death of our Lord, and the one who was allowed to fly away represented His resurrection.

**LEV 14:7 And he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose into the open field.**

Sprinkling, dipping and pouring are all mentioned in declaring the former leper clean. Some latch on to one or the other of these three terms and call pouring or sprinkling acceptable baptism. There is a place for pouring, dipping and sprinkling in the conversion of a sinner today. But only a burial in water is true baptism. The heart is sprinkled with the blood of





Christ. The body is dipped in water and the Holy Spirit was poured out and made available on the day of Pentecost. See the following passages.

Heb 10:22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

Act 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Psa 23:5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

David's head was anointed with oil. Our heads are anointed with the Spirit of Truth which through the Bible is able to lead us in paths of righteousness. Thus we have, the body washed with water, the heart sprinkled with the blood of Christ, and the head anointed with truth.

**LEV 14:8 And he that is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes, and shave off all his hair, and wash himself in water, that he may be clean: and after that he shall come into the camp, and shall tarry abroad out of his tent seven days.**

The former leper was to rid himself of every trace of his leprosy. His hair was to be cut and he was to be washed. Then he could come into the camp, but he must not enter his tent for seven days.

**LEV 14:9 But it shall be on the seventh day, that he shall shave all his hair off his head and his beard and his eyebrows, even all his hair he shall shave off: and he shall wash his clothes, also he shall wash his flesh in water, and he shall be clean.**

When the seven days were passed, he was to shave again. This time the shaving was apparently to be more complete than before. Even his eyebrows and body hair were to be removed. After this second shaving he was ready for a series of sacrifices.

**LEV 14:10 And on the eighth day he shall take two he lambs without blemish, and one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish, and three tenth deals of fine flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil, and one log of oil.**

The cleansed leper will provide for four of the basic sacrifices. There will be a burnt offering, a sin offering, a trespass offering and a meat offering. The only one not mentioned will be the peace offering.

**LEV 14:11 And the priest that maketh him clean shall present the man that is to be made clean, and those things, before the**



**LORD, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation:**

Verse nine declares that the person was already clean. The priest had already examined him and found that to be the case. The use of the term “maketh him clean” is the same as making a public statement that he is clean.

The person was to appear along with the priest at the entrance to the Holy Place in order that the series of sacrifices could be made for him. Even more important than appearing before the people, was the fact that he was appearing before Jehovah.

**LEV 14:12 And the priest shall take one he lamb, and offer him for a trespass offering, and the log of oil, and wave them for a wave offering before the LORD:**

The first offering mentioned is the trespass offering. Three lambs had been brought to the priest. Two were males and one was female. One of the males was to be the victim for the trespass offering. This offering was for the damage which had been done to both God and fellow man. The leper had not had the opportunity to offer such sacrifices while purged from the camp. Now he could do so. A log of oil had been included. A log of oil is thought to have been somewhat less than a pint.

Both the lamb and the log of oil were to be waved before the Lord, showing that they were dedicated to Him.



**LEV 14:13 And he shall slay the lamb in the place where he shall kill the sin offering and the burnt offering, in the holy place: for as the sin offering is the priest's, so is the trespass offering: it is most holy:**

The lamb of the trespass offering was to be killed in the same place where the sin offering and the burnt offering would be killed. These were offered in the Holy Place as an indication they were separated from common use and were intended for the use of the priests.

**LEV 14:14 And the priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass offering, and the priest shall put it upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot:**

Trespasses against God may be classed in three categories. That which men refuse to hear, that should do but fail to do, and places men walk where they ought not to walk. The former leper is to receive the truth. He is to serve with his hands. He is to place his footsteps in right ways.

There are some who believe this shows that the leprosy came upon the person because of failure to react properly to the commandments of Jehovah. This is possible, but not necessarily prove. There are many like Job who was a righteous man, but who suffered much.



**LEV 14:15 And the priest shall take some of the log of oil, and pour it into the palm of his own left hand:**

**LEV 14:16 And the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left hand, and shall sprinkle of the oil with his finger seven times before the LORD:**

What if the priest had poured the oil into the palm of his right hand rather than his left hand? We do not know, but from the lesson Uzzah learned when he reached out to steady the ark when he thought it was about to fall on the ground, we suspect the results could have been serious even unto death. What if the priest had sprinkled the oil only six times? The same conclusion can be drawn. It is best to do just what God has said, in just the way He said for it to be done.

**LEV 14:17 And of the rest of the oil that is in his hand shall the priest put upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot, upon the blood of the trespass offering:**

As the blood was to be sprinkled on the right ear, the thumb of the right hand and the big toe of the right foot, the oil was to be placed upon the blood in each of the three positions. It seems to this writer that the blood is typical of the blood of Christ and that the oil is typical of the gift of the Holy Spirit.



**LEV 14:18 And the remnant of the oil that is in the priest's hand he shall pour upon the head of him that is to be cleansed: and the priest shall make an atonement for him before the LORD.**

The remaining oil was to be poured upon the head of the cleansed leper. To pour oil upon the head was associated with anointing. God would be with him. Atonement can be broken into At-one-ment.

**LEV 14:19 And the priest shall offer the sin offering, and make an atonement for him that is to be cleansed from his uncleanness; and afterward he shall kill the burnt offering:**

**LEV 14:20 And the priest shall offer the burnt offering and the meat offering upon the altar: and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and he shall be clean.**

Now that the person had brought into reconciliation with God, he was ready to offer the sin offering, the burnt offering and the meal or meat offering.

**LEV 14:21 And if he be poor, and cannot get so much; then he shall take one lamb for a trespass offering to be waved, to make an atonement for him, and one tenth deal of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat offering, and a log of oil;**

We see once again the compassion of God. The leper may well have been very poor as a result of



his isolation from the rest of Israel. God reduced the sacrificial demands. The person could bring one lamb rather than three. The lesson that the blood of a lamb was necessary for atonement was not to be dispensed with. One lamb was necessary even in the case of the poor.

**LEV 14:22 And two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, such as he is able to get; and the one shall be a sin offering, and the other a burnt offering.**

One might even be able to catch two small doves or pigeons to bring to the priest. One of these birds would be used to replace the sin offering lamb. The other would take the place of the burnt offering lamb.

The following verses are only a repetition of the ceremony used for the one who could afford the more valuable sacrifices. We will bypass them with almost no additional comment. The amount of meal was reduced and the turtledoves or pigeons replaced two of the lambs. The one lamb and the log of oil were still required.

**LEV 14:23 And he shall bring them on the eighth day for his cleansing unto the priest, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, before the LORD.**

**LEV 14:24 And the priest shall take the lamb of the trespass offering, and the log of oil, and the priest shall wave them for a wave**

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offering before the LORD:

LEV 14:25 And he shall kill the lamb of the trespass offering, and the priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass offering, and put it upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot:

LEV 14:26 And the priest shall pour of the oil into the palm of his own left hand:

LEV 14:27 And the priest shall sprinkle with his right finger some of the oil that is in his left hand seven times before the LORD:

LEV 14:28 And the priest shall put of the oil that is in his hand upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot, upon the place of the blood of the trespass offering:

LEV 14:29 And the rest of the oil that is in the priest's hand he shall put upon the head of him that is to be cleansed, to make an atonement for him before the LORD.

LEV 14:30 And he shall offer the one of the turtledoves, or of the young pigeons, such as he can get;

LEV 14:31 Even such as he is able to get, the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering, with the meat offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for him that is to be cleansed before the LORD.

LEV 14:32 This is the law of him in whom is





**the plague of leprosy, whose hand is not able to get that which pertaineth to his cleansing.**

This marks the end of the stipulated ceremonies for those who had be rid of their leprosy and who were to reenter the camp and resume normal association with the rest of Israel.

**LEV 14:33 And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,**

**LEV 14:34 When ye be come into the land of Canaan, which I give to you for a possession, and I put the plague of leprosy in a house of the land of your possession;**

We turn our attention now from leprosy in a person to leprosy in a house. As mentioned before, a number of different destructive conditions may have been grouped under the word “leprosy.” The Bible does not indicate that a house might contract leprosy from a person, or that a person might contract it from a house. Still, houses could demonstrate forms of rotting and disease that were similarly destructive. The house could have an odor. It could show discoloration. It could crumble and fall apart. Finally, it’s condition could spread from one house to another.

God stated that He might “put” the leprous condition in a house. On occasion that which God permits or allows is spoken of in the Bible as having been done by God.

The fact that the law as delivered to Moses was to outlast those present when it was given is seen in that nearly all of those present at that time never did enter into the land of Canaan. Moses died in the wilderness wanderings. The law was to be applied to the new generation arising in Canaan just as it applied to those at the time it was delivered.

There are many today who feel the commands given by Jesus are outdated and society must keep up with the times. This is a horrid mistake. The truth presented by Christ and by His apostles is to apply until He returns to claim His own.

**LEV 14:35 And he that owneth the house shall come and tell the priest, saying, It seemeth to me there is as it were a plague in the house:**

**LEV 14:36 Then the priest shall command that they empty the house, before the priest go into it to see the plague, that all that is in the house be not made unclean: and afterward the priest shall go in to see the house:**

The priest was a representative of Jehovah. The human who had leprosy was aware that his leprosy was a condition that God could either bring upon a person, or could remove. The same was true in the case of a house. When an owner discovered what seemed to be leprosy in his house, he went to the priest for advice.

The first and most urgent action was to empty the house in order that the persons living there might not become unclean. God's people were to remove



themselves from all that had the appearance of evil. The condition of the house could be unwholesome and unholy. One would not have to contract leprosy from the house to be made unclean through living in it.

**LEV 14:37 And he shall look on the plague, and, behold, if the plague be in the walls of the house with hollow strakes, greenish or reddish, which in sight are lower than the wall;**

After the house was emptied of people, the priest was to enter it for examination. If he observed red or green streaks in the walls, and these streaks had eaten into the wall more observation was needed.

**LEV 14:38 Then the priest shall go out of the house to the door of the house, and shut up the house seven days:**

The procedure was very similar to that used to diagnose leprosy in humans. The house was to be emptied for a period of seven days and then reexamined.

**LEV 14:39 And the priest shall come again the seventh day, and shall look: and, behold, if the plague be spread in the walls of the house;**

**LEV 14:40 Then the priest shall command that they take away the stones in which the plague is, and they shall cast them into an unclean place without the city:**

The most definitive symptom of leprosy was its spreading nature. If the suspected leprosy in the walls of the house spread within the seven day period, the priest was to order the contaminated stones to be removed from the house and discarded in a place outside the city where other unclean things were placed.

**LEV 14:41 And he shall cause the house to be scraped within round about, and they shall pour out the dust that they scrape off without the city into an unclean place:**

A person's hair was shaved off. A house's plaster had to be scraped off in the region where the stones had been removed. The scrapings were to be taken to a place similar to that where the stones had been discarded.

**LEV 14:42 And they shall take other stones, and put them in the place of those stones; and he shall take other mortar, and shall plaister the house.**

Uncontaminated stones were then used to replace the ones which had been removed. Then the house was replastered.

**LEV 14:43 And if the plague come again, and break out in the house, after that he hath taken away the stones, and after he hath scraped the house, and after it is plaistered;**

**LEV 14:44 Then the priest shall come and look, and, behold, if the plague be spread in**

**the house, it is a fretting leprosy in the house; it is unclean.**

If, later on, the same problem reappeared in the house the priest was to return and examine it again. If he found the plague to have spread he was to pronounce the house unclean. It was leprous.

**LEV 14:45 And he shall break down the house, the stones of it, and the timber thereof, and all the mortar of the house; and he shall carry them forth out of the city into an unclean place.**

At that point the priest ordered the house to be demolished. All the stones and wood portions of the house were to be entirely removed from the city No chances were to be taken that the condition might spread to other houses.

**LEV 14:46 Moreover he that goeth into the house all the while that it is shut up shall be unclean until the even.**

**LEV 14:47 And he that lieth in the house shall wash his clothes; and he that eateth in the house shall wash his clothes.**

Anyone who had either entered the house or had slept or eaten in the house had to wash his clothes. He was declared unclean until sundown. This might cause one to conclude that leprosy in a house and leprosy in clothing or in a person was caused by the same bacteria and was an identical disease. This is



highly doubtful. God wants His people to maintain a distance between that which is holy and that which is not.

**LEV 14:48 And if the priest shall come in, and look upon it, and, behold, the plague hath not spread in the house, after the house was plaistered: then the priest shall pronounce the house clean, because the plague is healed.**

The priest might come back for the second examination and discover that the plague had not broken out again. In that case, he was to declare it clean. The following ceremony was followed as a means of recognizing the clean condition.

**LEV 14:49 And he shall take to cleanse the house two birds, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop:**

**LEV 14:50 And he shall kill the one of the birds in an earthen vessel over running water:**

The ceremony closely resembled that followed when the leper who had been quarantined was found to be clean.

**LEV 14:51 And he shall take the cedar wood, and the hyssop, and the scarlet, and the living bird, and dip them in the blood of the slain bird, and in the running water, and sprinkle the house seven times:**



**LEV 14:52 And he shall cleanse the house with the blood of the bird, and with the running water, and with the living bird, and with the cedar wood, and with the hyssop, and with the scarlet:**

**LEV 14:53 But he shall let go the living bird out of the city into the open fields, and make an atonement for the house: and it shall be clean.**

After the living bird was dipped in the blood of the dead bird, the living bird was set free. The atonement had been made and the house was clean. Houses do not sin. The leprosy of the house contracted from the persons who lived in it. Nor is there any proof that the leprosy in the walls of the house could spread to the persons living within. But it had been unclean, and until it was clean the inhabitants were expected to move out.

**LEV 14:54 This is the law for all manner of plague of leprosy, and scall,**

**LEV 14:55 And for the leprosy of a garment, and of a house,**

**LEV 14:56 And for a rising, and for a scab, and for a bright spot:**

**LEV 14:57 To teach when it is unclean, and when it is clean: this is the law of leprosy.**

We have in these last four verses reason to see several different conditions which are all spoken of as leprosy. They were:



1. Leprosy in a garment.
2. Leprosy in the hair or beard.
3. Leprosy in a house.
4. Scabs, risings and bright spots.

Friends, the last verse informs us that the reason for the above instructions in this chapter and the previous one were not given for the purpose of curing the conditions listed. They were for teaching the people the difference between the clean and the unclean in order that they remain clean in the sight of the Lord.



## *Chapter 15*

This chapter is one that is very seldom studied in Bible classes. It contains material which some consider offensive for public discussion. God is exceedingly plain with respect to certain sexual topics. Avoiding the study of this chapter is a mistake. It may be that classes need to be held for males and females separately, but God covers the material and it is there for a reason.

Our present society needs to understand the serious dangers of sexually transmitted diseases. Teenagers in particular will have much hushed conversation containing dirty jokes and songs. There is boasting about either real or made up sexual experiences. Exposure to frank discussion of both the wonders and the dangers sex will reduce the number of unwanted pregnancies and the number of cases of aids, etc.

I will try to be clear as possible in my comments on the chapter without being offensive to spiritually pure minds.

**LEV 15:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses and to Aaron, saying,**

This is God speaking through Moses. Moses is but the voice.

**LEV 15:2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When any man hath a**



**running issue out of his flesh, because of his issue he is unclean.**

We will find four classes of sexual emissions discussed in the thirty-three verses ahead. Those four are:

1. Normal male emissions.
2. Abnormal male emissions.
3. Abnormal female emissions.
4. Normal female emissions.

The word “flesh” is understood by some to mean the flesh in general, as contrasted with the spirit. Others believe the flesh here refers to the primary sexual organ.

**LEV 15:3 And this shall be his uncleanness in his issue: whether his flesh run with his issue, or his flesh be stopped from his issue, it is his uncleanness.**

The “issue” of this verse appears to be a result of some type of infection. The infection may cause a steady flow of semen or of pus. There may also be swelling which prevents the flow of these fluids. Either way, the man is unclean.

**LEV 15:4 Every bed, whereon he lieth that hath the issue, is unclean: and every thing, whereon he sitteth, shall be unclean.**

Any object which makes close contact with this man’s private parts may be contaminated with the uncleanness. Although transmission of disease



through bacteria was unknown to men at the time, God knew, and God fearing men followed His will and His wisdom.

**LEV 15:5 And whosoever toucheth his bed shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.**

Anyone who had made contact with his bed, his chair or his clothing had need of cleansing.

**LEV 15:6 And he that sitteth on any thing whereon he sat that hath the issue shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.**

**LEV 15:7 And he that toucheth the flesh of him that hath the issue shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.**

Verse fifteen makes the difference of opinion on whether the “flesh” means the body in general or the private sexual organ of the man more understandable. It seems unlikely that another man would touch the privates of the man unless homosexual actions were going on. Of course the wife of a man who was married would make very intimate contact.

But a realistic look at the verse gives us the idea that any person who touched any part of the body of one who had such an abnormal issue was unclean from the touching. The reader will recall



that lepers were called “untouchables.” The same restrictions may apply in this case of a man with a running issue.

**LEV 15:8 And if he that hath the issue spit upon him that is clean; then he shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.**

Saliva often contains disease germs. Coughing or sneezing can transmit a number of diseases. Both of these are probably included in the word “spitting.”

**LEV 15:9 And what saddle soever he rideth upon that hath the issue shall be unclean.**

**LEV 15:10 And whosoever toucheth any thing that was under him shall be unclean until the even: and he that beareth any of those things shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.**

We know the word saddle can be applied to a camel or a horse. There are commentators who think the word “saddle” has to do with anything upon which the man sits. The period of time the uncleanness lasts is only until evening. It is not seven days, as in many other cases.

We understand better in modern times just why the washing of the body and the clothing was commanded.



**LEV 15:11 And whomsoever he toucheth that hath the issue, and hath not rinsed his hands in water, he shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.**

It was best to shun all contact with the infected person. Sometimes contact was necessary in the care of such a person. Regardless of the reason for the touching, the one who was touched by the one who had the issue was to wash both his own body and his clothing and remained unclean for the rest of the day.

**LEV 15:12 And the vessel of earth, that he toucheth which hath the issue, shall be broken: and every vessel of wood shall be rinsed in water.**

Every precaution was to be taken that the cause of the issue not be transferred from the infected person to other persons in any way. Washing the flesh and washing the clothing was the best treatment available at the time.

**LEV 15:13 And when he that hath an issue is cleansed of his issue; then he shall number to himself seven days for his cleansing, and wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in running water, and shall be clean.**

If the abnormal issue stopped, the man could



later be considered clean. Even then it required that he wait for a period of seven days before any further action was called for.

**LEV 15:14 And on the eighth day he shall take to him two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, and come before the LORD unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and give them unto the priest:**

Whereas those who had touched the one who had the issue, or who had come into other close contact, were only unclean until the evening, the person who actually had the running issue was unclean for the whole seven days which were so many times prescribed.

After the seven days passed, on the eighth day after the issue had disappeared, the man was to bring the least expensive sacrifice to the priest. This sacrifice was two pigeons or doves. These were to be offered as a sin offering and a burnt offering.

**LEV 15:15 And the priest shall offer them, the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering; and the priest shall make an atonement for him before the LORD for his issue.**

If there had never been sin, there would never have been disease. The relationship between sin and disease is very real. Often disease comes about as a direct result of sin. The man or woman who

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despises God's laws by entering into careless and sinful sex is asking for trouble. Even if the person affected by a sexually transmitted disease has never deliberately defied God's commands, sin was the original source of such horrors. A sin offering and a burnt offering kept Israel aware of the need to fear the Lord and keep His commandments with respect to sexual activity.

**LEV 15:16 And if any man's seed of copulation go out from him, then he shall wash all his flesh in water, and be unclean until the even.**

Verse sixteen marks the beginning of the second main topic of this chapter. This section deals with normal male emissions from the sex organ.

This verse is talking about male ejaculation of semen. It does not specify whether this was the result of masturbation, of wet dreams during the night, or of perfectly proper sexual relations with his own wife. If semen was emitted, the man was unclean until the evening of that day.

Is it really true that sex between a man and his wife is sinful and unclean? Did God not make man male and female in the beginning? Did He not give a command to multiply and fill the earth? Did He not say that children are a blessing? Of course the answer to each of these questions is Y-E-S. The sex drive is to be fulfilled just as the appetite for food. Neither of these is to be abused. It is wrong to eat certain poisonous foods. It is wrong to be a



glutton. It is just as wrong to abuse sex. When used correctly, the sex drive can lead to great pleasure. When used incorrectly the consequences can be pain and even death.

**LEV 15:17 And every garment, and every skin, whereon is the seed of copulation, shall be washed with water, and be unclean until the even.**

**LEV 15:18 The woman also with whom man shall lie with seed of copulation, they shall both bathe themselves in water, and be unclean until the even.**

Physical uncleanness is closely connected to spiritual uncleanness in the scriptures. Though there is nothing sinful about a man and his wife having intimate sex, there would be something wrong with failure to clean the body afterward. Going out into the public without washing would not be proper for either a man or woman of Israel, or those of our own time.

**LEV 15:19 And if a woman have an issue, and her issue in her flesh be blood, she shall be put apart seven days: and whosoever toucheth her shall be unclean until the even.**

We have considered both abnormal and normal male sexual emissions. Our attention is now called to normal female sexual emissions.





**LEV 15:20 And every thing that she lieth upon in her separation shall be unclean: every thing also that she sitteth upon shall be unclean.**

The word “separation” has to do with the normal menstrual period. During this time she was apt to stay at home and not mix as much with friends and neighbors. A woman is reminded every month throughout her reproductive years that life and blood go hand in hand. When conception does not take place the blood which had already moved into the area of the womb to provide nourishment for the living embryo is discarded. Thus the woman becomes physically unclean for a few days.

**LEV 15:21 And whosoever toucheth her bed shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.**

**LEV 15:22 And whosoever toucheth any thing that she sat upon shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.**

**LEV 15:23 And if it be on her bed, or on any thing whereon she sitteth, when he toucheth it, he shall be unclean until the even.**

As in the case of the male, these emissions are capable of transmitting disease. Anyone who came into close contact with the woman at this time was to be careful about cleansing both themselves and their clothing.

**LEV 15:24 And if any man lie with her at all, and her flowers be upon him, he shall be unclean seven days; and all the bed whereon he lieth shall be unclean.**

The “flowers” are the excretions which come about during the menstrual period. If during sexual intercourse the menstrual flow of the woman began, the man was to be unclean for seven day. Note that it is not just until the evening.

It is abnormal for a man to desire sexual intercourse with his wife while she is menstruating. If he is crude enough to insist upon this, he is rendered unclean for an entire seven days.

**LEV 15:25 And if a woman have an issue of her blood many days out of the time of her separation, or if it run beyond the time of her separation; all the days of the issue of her uncleanness shall be as the days of her separation: she shall be unclean.**

This is the last of the four basic divisions in the present chapter. We turn our attention to abnormal female sexual emissions.

This time the woman has an issue, or emission of blood which lasts beyond the normal time for her period. As long as this issue continued, the woman was unclean.

**LEV 15:26 Every bed whereon she lieth all the days of her issue shall be unto her as**



**the bed of her separation: and whatsoever she sitteth upon shall be unclean, as the uncleanness of her separation.**

**LEV 15:27 And whosoever toucheth those things shall be unclean, and shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.**

Anyone who had experienced the least possibility of making contact with her bed or her flesh was to wash both himself and his clothing.

**LEV 15:28 But if she be cleansed of her issue, then she shall number to herself seven days, and after that she shall be clean.**

If the issue lasted beyond the normal time for her period, the woman was to count seven days from the time the issue stopped. Then she could be counted as clean.

**LEV 15:29 And on the eighth day she shall take unto her two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, and bring them unto the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.**

After the seven days were complete, she could take the simplest possible sacrifice to the priest in order that he might offer it for her.

**LEV 15:30 And the priest shall offer the one for a sin offering, and the other for a**

**burnt offering; and the priest shall make an atonement for her before the LORD for the issue of her uncleanness.**

As in other instances, the sacrifice was to be two pigeons or doves. One would serve as a sin offering. The other would be a burnt offering.

**LEV 15:31 Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness; that they die not in their uncleanness, when they defile my tabernacle that is among them.**

The chapter closes with a brief summary of the reason for these instructions, and the main divisions of the chapter.

**LEV 15:32 This is the law of him that hath an issue, and of him whose seed goeth from him, and is defiled therewith;**

**LEV 15:33 And of her that is sick of her flowers, and of him that hath an issue, of the man, and of the woman, and of him that lieth with her that is unclean.**

One last note is needed. Jesus once met a woman who had suffered from an issue of blood for twelve years (See Mark 5:25-34). She had exhausted every possible source of help and had only become worse. She moved through a crowd who had gathered around the Lord and touched the hem of His garment. She felt confident that if she could only touch His clothing, she could be healed. When Jesus



asked who had touched him she hesitated to confess that she had done so. She was not to touch others while in her condition. Normally they would have become unclean as she was.

Such was not the result. Jesus' purity had made her clean rather than her impurity making Him unclean. Jesus was one of the three in the Godhead. Only God can forgive sins in the ultimate sense.

## *Chapter 16*

**LEV 16:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the LORD, and died;**

There are some students of the Holy Scriptures who question the placing of this chapter. The reason for their doubt is that this chapter looks like a direct continuation of the account given of the deaths of Nadab and Abihu when they entered the Most Holy Place and offered strange fire to Jehovah.

To the contrary, this chapter is precisely where it belongs. After giving extended directions as to how Israel was to keep themselves separate from all uncleanness in order that God might be willing to dwell in the midst of them, we come to this highly important chapter which warns of the need for a day of atonement which was to be a time when the High Priest entered the Most Holy and made atonement for himself, for the other priests, and for the entire nation.

All of this was a shadow of atonement made by Jesus Christ. The book of Hebrews was originally written to the Jewish people telling them of the superiority of the Christian system over that of the Mosaic age. No one can fully appreciate this chapter of Leviticus without a careful study of the Hebrew letter. Neither can any fully appreciate the book of Hebrews without a careful examination of this sixteenth chapter of Leviticus. The two go hand in hand.



**LEV 16:2 And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the vail before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat.**

Two of Aaron's sons had already met death as a result of their carelessness in approaching God without heeding His directions. Aaron and the two remaining sons should understand just how important it was to listen to the will of God.

Aaron was not to enter into the Most Holy at any time he chose to do so. Though he was the High Priest, he would face death if he entered when God had not given an invitation. That invitation was to come just once a year on the day of atonement which occurred on the tenth day of the seventh month of the year.

We understand that at certain times the tabernacle was to be disassembled that it might be moved from place to place during the wilderness wanderings. The verse before us has to do with religious ceremony. After the tabernacle was fully assembled in a given location, no person was to enter the Most Holy except the High Priest, and for him it was limited to the day of atonement.

God would appear indirectly in a cloud over the mercy seat of the ark on that day. This was God's way of protecting men from the fulness of His glory. He appeared in that manner on Mount Sinai. He led

the people through the wilderness through a cloud and pillar of fire.

**LEV 16:3 Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place: with a young bullock for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering.**

Before Aaron could offer an atonement for the rest of the people, he was to first make an atonement for himself. This required that he bring a young bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering.

It is wise for us to reconsider the meaning of the sin offering and the burnt offering. An atonement consisted of both types of offerings. The sin offering was to remind the one for whom atonement was being made that he was imperfect in the sight of God and lived in a world that was also sinful. The burnt offering was a consecration offering. The person was offering the sacrifice as a means of stating his willingness to dedicate himself more completely to the service of the Almighty. Aaron needed both a sin offering and a burnt offering.

**LEV 16:4 He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired: these are holy garments; therefore shall he wash his flesh in water, and so put them on.**

After he had made atonement for himself, he was ready to do the same for the people. But he was not





to perform the duties of his high priesthood dressed in his usual majesty. When he appeared before the people as their High Priest he was to be dressed in glorious robes with beautiful ornaments. He was now to appear before God. He was to be dressed as a servant. He was preparing to enter into activities that would soil the majestic robes.

This is parallel to what happened when Christ left the glory of heaven and took upon Himself the form of a servant before He made the Great Atonement. (See Philipians 2:5-8.)

Phi 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

Phi 2:6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

Phi 2:7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

Phi 2:8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

**LEV 16:5 And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering.**

Next, Aaron was to receive from the people two young goats and a ram. The two goats were to serve as a sin offering. The one ram would serve as a burnt offering for the people. The combination of the sin offering and the burnt offering would bring atonement or reconciliation with God.

**LEV 16:6 And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and make an atonement for himself, and for his house.**

Aaron was first to offer the bullock which he had brought for himself and make atonement for himself and those of his own house. We suppose this had special reference to his own two sons who were still alive.

**LEV 16:7 And he shall take the two goats, and present them before the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.**

Now that he had made atonement for his own sins, Aaron was ready to offer in behalf of the people. He brought the two goats which the people had delivered to him for a sin offering and placed them at the door of the tabernacle near to the brazen altar.

**LEV 16:8 And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat.**

The two goats were to make one sin offering. Both of them combined were typical of our Redeemer. Christ died with the guilt of our sins upon his back. He then rose to take our sins away. One of these goats would die for the LORD. The other would go off into the wilderness carrying the sins of Israel away. Christ could do both things because He both died and then rose again. The goat who died could



not rise again. Therefore a second goat called a scapegoat was needed.

The Biblical account is so well known that we use the term “scapegoat” freely to mean someone who is innocent has taken the blame in place of another who was really the guilty party.

**LEV 16:9 And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the LORD’S lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering.**

Ancient Jewish writers tell the manner in which they believe the lots were chosen. They claim two objects which were identical in size and shape were placed in a vessel out of sight. One of the objects was marked “For the Lord.” The other was marked “For Azazel.” The priest reached into the vessel and drew out one of the objects. One goat was placed at the priests right hand. The other goat was at his left hand. If the object which was drawn out was the one marked “For the LORD”, the goat on the right hand was the one to be killed. If the one marked “For Azazel” was chosen, the goat on the left was to be slain.

**LEV 16:10 But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness.**

The scapegoat, which was not to be slain, was to



be presented alive so that it could carry the sins of the people out into the wilderness. The slain goat caused the people to realize the seriousness of their sins. The scapegoat completed the atonement by taking the sins away. Jesus death and resurrection accomplished both purposes.

**LEV 16:11 And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which is for himself:**

The previous statement that Aaron was to kill the bullock and make atonement for himself and for his house was a preview. This is the point in time when the animal was to be sacrificed.

**LEV 16:12 And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the vail:**

The censer was a pan used with the altar of incense which was located just in front of the curtain or vail separating the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. The sweet incense was carried, along with the censer, as the High Priest passed beyond the vail and into the Most Holy.

This passing beyond the vail was a shadow of things to come. Jesus, as our High Priest, has passed beyond the vail in his death and now sits



at the right hand of the Father in heaven as our intercessor. The veil of the temple was rent at the very time Jesus died on the cross. See Matt. 27:50-51 and Heb. 9:24).

Mat 27:50 Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.

Mat 27:51 And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

Heb 9:24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

**LEV 16:13 And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not:**

There are two suggested reasons why God would appear only in the cloud of incense. The first is that it was a means of protecting Aaron from the brilliance of the glory of God. Saul was blinded on the road to Damascus when he had a somewhat similar experience. The other suggestion is that God was not willing to contaminate Himself with the sins of Aaron or any other High Priest who might later take Aaron's place.

The first of these suggestions appears more reasonable. We are told that Aaron would die if the



cloud from the burning incense was not produced over the mercy seat of the ark.

**LEV 16:14 And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times.**

Aaron was then to take some of the blood from the bullock which he had sacrificed on his own behalf and sprinkle it on the east side of the mercy seat with his finger. Some of this blood was also to be sprinkled in front of the mercy seat. Each sprinkling was to repeated seven times, making fourteen times in all.

The tabernacle was always set up with the entrances facing the east. This meant that the blood was to be offered on the side of the mercy seat where the sun rose. Jesus Christ is the light of the world. He is the sun of righteousness who arose with healing in his wings (See John 1:6-9 & Mal. 4:2).

Joh 1:6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

Joh 1:7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

Joh 1:8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

Joh 1:9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.



Mal 4:2 But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.

**LEV 16:15 Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat:**

This is the first of the two goats. It was the one that was to be killed. The blood from this goat was to be sprinkled on the mercy seat and in front of the mercy seat, just as the blood of the bullock sacrificed for Aaron had been. This goat was a part of the atonement for the people. They were made conscious of the seriousness of their sin in the sight of God.

**LEV 16:16 And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness.**

Because the tabernacle as a whole had been in the midst of a people who were sinners, the tabernacle as well as the people had to have atonement made.



The reader will recall the words, “Be ye holy for I am holy!”

**LEV 16:17 And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel.**

The tabernacle was to be completely cleared of all persons except the High Priest. No one could attend to these activities except him. In like manner, no one but the present High Priest, Jesus Christ, has been allowed to present the Great Sacrifice for penitent believers today. He, and He alone can bring about the cleansing of the present tabernacle of God.

**LEV 16:18 And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the LORD, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about.**

**LEV 16:19 And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel.**

Even the altar itself was to be included in the sprinkling of the blood. Both the blood of the bullock





and the blood of the ram had to be sprinkled on the horns of the altar seven times. It had been in the presence of sinful people and must be purified with blood.

**LEV 16:20 And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat:**

The goat which had not been killed was then to be brought to the tabernacle. We note that it says “he” shall bring the live goat. This was a day in which the High Priest was responsible for all of the atonement activities. No lesser priests were to assist him.

**LEV 16:21 And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness:**

Aaron was to lay both hands on the head of the live goat in preparation for the transfer of the sins of the people to the goat. I take the risk of boring the reader by asking another question which I believe to be important. What would have happened if Aaron had placed only his right hand upon the goat’s head? I firmly believe the results would have been

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disastrous. God gave the recipe. Man was to follow it! However, this was not like baking a cake. If the cook fails to put the salt in a cake, it will not be as tasty. If Aaron had not followed the spiritual recipe God gave him, he could have received a sentence of death.

To sin is to “miss the mark.” To transgress is to cross forbidden lines. Iniquity is lawlessness. Sins, transgressions and iniquity raise barriers between men and God. They are not God’s fault. They are the fault of men and women. The High Priest was to confess to God that these faults existed and that they needed to be removed.

**LEV 16:22 And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.**

The iniquities of the people would then be transferred to the scapegoat, who would be released to go away into the wilderness.

Notice the difference in type and antitype here. The scapegoat only carried the sins into the wilderness. They were still present somewhere. When Jesus washes away sins with His blood, they pass out of existence. They are not just carried into the worldly wilderness. The world still has sins, but they are not the sins which Jesus washed from the souls of men in the new birth.



**LEV 16:23 And Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall put off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there:**

When the scapegoat had been released the High Priest had concluded the atonement duties. He was to put off the simple clothing which was now no doubt spattered with blood. He was to put back on his majestic apparel and leave the garments of humility in the Holy Place.

**LEV 16:24 And he shall wash his flesh with water in the holy place, and put on his garments, and come forth, and offer his burnt offering, and the burnt offering of the people, and make an atonement for himself, and for the people.**

Not only would the garments have been blood stained. The blood would have also made contact with his flesh. He was to wash his body clean before he reappeared to the people.

The sin offerings had already been offered. The burnt offerings were now to follow. Full atonement demands both sin offerings and burnt offerings. The seriousness of sin must be made clear. The dedication of the person or object must be declared.

**LEV 16:25 And the fat of the sin offering shall he burn upon the altar.**

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The fat of the sin offering was not to be eaten by the people. (See Lev. 4:8-10).

Lev 4:8 And he shall take off from it all the fat of the bullock for the sin offering; the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards,

Lev 4:9 And the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them, which is by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away,

Lev 4:10 As it was taken off from the bullock of the sacrifice of peace offerings: and the priest shall burn them upon the altar of the burnt offering.

**LEV 16:26 And he that let go the goat for the scapegoat shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward come into the camp.**

**LEV 16:27 And the bullock for the sin offering, and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall one carry forth without the camp; and they shall burn in the fire their skins, and their flesh, and their dung.**

**LEV 16:28 And he that burneth them shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp.**

No traces of contamination from the sacrificial offerings on this day of atonement were to remain on the bodies of either Aaron or the one who led the goat

away. The bodies, and remains of the sin offerings were to taken outside the camp and burned.

It is necessary now to deal with a sharp controversy which has been caused by translation problems. The King James Version uses the word “scapegoat” in verses eight, ten and twenty-six of this chapter. Several other translations translate the Hebrew by the word “Azazel.” For example, the American Standard Version has:

And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for Jehovah, and the other lot for Azazel.

The word Azazel is not found in any other chapter of the Bible. It’s meaning is debated. The word which is translated as scapegoat or Azazel does not have an article before it. In other words it is not the azazel. Some contend that this means it is not a place, but is a name. We do not say, “the Linda.” We say, “Linda.” We do not say we are going “to backyard.” We say we are going to “the backyard.” The argument is then that since the language does not say “the azazel”, it must refer to a being and not a location.

The opposite argument claims that the word “azazel” should not be capitalized; that when it is capitalized, it was used by heathen idolators to refer to a powerful demon. They object to one goat being for God and the other goat for a prince among demons. This to them would seem to be a sacrifice of the scapegoat to a demonic being.

The most literal meaning of the word your present commentator has found is that azazel is composed of two parts. One part meaning “goat”, the



other part meaning “go away.” This would mean the word could have been translated as the “goat who goes away” or the escape goat, or the scapegoat. I see no real problem with the King James rendering of the word.

**LEV 16:29 And this shall be a statute for ever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you:**

The High Priest’s duties had been specified. What were the people to do with respect to the Day of Atonement? They were to observe this day once every year, as long as the nation existed. It was to be observed on the tenth day of the seventh month of the Jewish It was to be a day on which no work was to be done, either by the Jews themselves, or by any non-Jews who were in their country.

To afflict the soul was to deny it food, sex and other pleasant things. Psalm 35:13 tells how David afflicted his soul. Fasting and prayer were involved.

Psa 35:13 But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom.

**LEV 16:30 For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you,**



**that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD.**

This does not suggest that the sins which were cleansed were only those which had taken place since the previous Day of Atonement. The atonement was for all their sins.

In our own day, Christ has made one atonement for all of our sins. His blood is capable of washing away the sins of the old man at the time the new spiritual man is born. It is also capable of continually cleansing one who tries with all his heart to live that new spiritual life walking in the light provided by the glowing footsteps of the Son of God.

**LEV 16:31 It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever.**

**LEV 16:32 And the priest, whom he shall anoint, and whom he shall consecrate to minister in the priest's office in his father's stead, shall make the atonement, and shall put on the linen clothes, even the holy garments:**

Some day Aaron would pass on and another would replace him as High Priest. That successor was expected to carry on the duties detailed in this chapter.

**LEV 16:33 And he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall**

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**make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation.**

**LEV 16:34 And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year. And he did as the LORD commanded Moses.**

It is probably advisable to summarize the activities the High Priest engaged in on this very special day. The reader may find such a summary helpful in realizing the importance of our own Great High Priest who has passed into the heavens and makes intercession for the children of God today.

Burton Coffman has done an excellent job of summarizing these activities. I recommend his commentary and follow his general plan here.

1. The High Priest brought a young bullock for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering.

2. He took a complete bath.

3. He removed his majestic garments and replaced them with those even less prestigious than the common priests wore.

4. The people brought two male goats for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering.

5. The High Priest brought the two goats to the entrance of the tent of meeting.

6. Lots were cast to see which of the two goats was to be slain and which was to become the scapegoat.

7. He killed the bullock as his own sin





offering.

8. He took a censer and handfuls of incense and went past the vail into the Most Holy Place.

9. He put the incense upon the hot coals in the censer to produce a cloud over the mercy seat.

10. The blood of the bullock was sprinkled seven times on the east side of the mercy seat and in front of it.

11. He then killed the goat which was “for the Lord.”

12. It’s blood was sprinkled seven times on the mercy seat and in front of it.

13. He left the Most Holy and entered the Holy Place, where he sprinkled blood on the horns of the brazen altar.

14. He made atonement for the entire tabernacle with all of it’s contents.

15. He placed both hands on the head of the scapegoat and confessed the sins of all Israel transferring them to the goat.

16. He turned the live goat over to a man who then led the goat away from the camp and out into the wilderness.

17. The High Priest then removed the simple garments used during the previous activities and washed his body, leaving the clothing in the Holy Place and putting his garments of majesty back on.

Christ, our High Priest, has finished the days of His humility during which he made atonement for our sins. He has taken His rightful place as King of



kings and Lord of lords. When the imperfections of this present heaven and earth have been replaced by the perfection of the new heaven and the new earth, those who have followed Him will be welcomed into His presence.

### Biblical References to Other Passages

This sixteenth chapter of Leviticus is so interrelated with other Old and New Testament passages that it is well for us to examine a list of some of these.

Exodus 24:15—  
Exodus 28  
Exodus 30:10  
Exodus 34:35  
Leviticus 1  
Leviticus 4  
Deuteronomy 21:22-23  
Psalm 35:13  
Psalm 110:4  
Psalm 141:2  
Isaiah 58:3  
Matthew 3:13-15  
Matthew 27:51  
Mark 15:38  
Galatians 3:13  
Ephesians 25:5-6  
Philippians 2  
Hebrews 5:3  
Hebrews 7:26—  
Hebrews 9:6-14

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Hebrews 9:22-24

Hebrews 10:19-25

Hebrews 13:11

I John 2:2

Hopefully the reader will forgive me if I repeat myself. The sixteenth chapter of Leviticus goes hand in hand with the eighth through the tenth chapter of Hebrews.

## *Chapter 17*

**LEV 17:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**LEV 17:2 Speak unto Aaron, and unto his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, and say unto them; This is the thing which the LORD hath commanded, saying,**

Those who like to search for errors in the Bible claim there are two books of Leviticus. They see the first as being the material up to this chapter. Then they would put chapters seventeen through twenty-seven in a second book. The first portion of Leviticus they title "The Code of the Law." From this chapter through chapter twenty-seven they title "The Code of Holiness." There is no need for such a division. There is solid unity through the entire twenty-seven chapters.

We first encountered the kinds of sacrifices Israel was to offer. Secondly, we saw the importance of the priesthood. Thirdly, the procedures the priests were to use in offering the sacrifices were laid out. This chapter seventeen acts as a linking chapter, which ties together all that has come before with purity in daily living. This is in order that the persons as well as the nation might "Be ye Holy; for I the Lord your God , am holy."

**LEV 17:3 What man soever there be of the house of Israel, that killeth an ox, or lamb, or goat, in the camp, or that killeth it out of the camp,**

Oxen, sheep and goats were the animals most commonly used as sacrifices. God had given specific directions as to who was to officiate in the offering of these sacrifices and where they were to be offered. The killing was to be done at the door of the tabernacle.

This was one way God could discourage any attempts to enter into idolatry by making sacrifices to false gods such as had been the practice in Egypt.

**LEV 17:4 And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer an offering unto the LORD before the tabernacle of the LORD; blood shall be imputed unto that man; he hath shed blood; and that man shall be cut off from among his people:**

It is possible that this applied to the butchering of any animal rather than being limited to those who were killed as sacrifices. This would insure that God and His priests received a portion of all the meat that Israel consumed. This would be a steady reminder that Jehovah was the source of that food.

If a man did kill one of these animals without bringing it to the door of the tabernacle, that man had shown disrespect for the blood. The blood which should have served as a sacrifice had been wasted. The penalty was that the person was to be cut off from the rest of the people. It is not certain whether this cutting off meant the loss of his life,



or a complete disfellowship.

**LEV 17:5 To the end that the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices, which they offer in the open field, even that they may bring them unto the LORD, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest, and offer them for peace offerings unto the LORD.**

This verse seems to support the idea that this was speaking only of the animals which were used as sacrifices. None of these were to be offered wherever the person making the sacrifice chose who do so. They were to serve as peace offerings expressing thanksgiving to God for his providence.

This was practical while the congregation was traveling through the wilderness. They were clustered around the tabernacle. Later on, when they arrived in Canaan, God modified these instructions. It would have been impossible to bring every sacrifice to the door of the tabernacle from many miles away. ( See Deuteronomy 12:15.)

Deu 12:15 Notwithstanding thou mayest kill and eat flesh in all thy gates, whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee: the unclean and the clean may eat thereof, as of the roebuck, and as of the hart.

**LEV 17:6 And the priest shall sprinkle the blood upon the altar of the LORD at the door**

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**of the tabernacle of the congregation, and burn the fat for a sweet savour unto the LORD.**

The fat of the peace offering was to be given to the priest to show respect for Jehovah. If the sacrifice was killed out in the open fields that fat, which was considered the best of the meat, would not have been burned to rise as a sweet smell in the nostrils of the True God in heaven.

**LEV 17:7 And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a whoring. This shall be a statute for ever unto them throughout their generations.**

Many in that day believed diseases, etc. were manifestations of displeased devils. Sacrifices were offered to these demons or evil spirits to pacify them and cause them to remove the afflictions. As an example of that which God was warning against here, Israel had at numerous times made sacrifices to Baal. These sacrifices often turned into sexual orgies. They could truly be said to be “whoring” after devils.”

Is it not interesting that the scapegoat discussed in the previous chapter was called Azazel. Pan was a false god was that was believed to be half goat and half human. The relationship between Azazel and Pan may be insignificant, but it is worth noting.

**LEV 17:8 And thou shalt say unto them, Whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers which sojourn among you, that offereth a burnt offering or sacrifice,**

Moses was to go even farther. If there were some among them who were not Israelites, but who were traveling along with them, those persons were to abide by the same commands. They were expected to bring any sacrifices they wished to offer to the door of the tabernacle where the priest would kill it and burn the fat as a sweet savour to Jehovah. Israel was not to turn to false gods the strangers might have worshipped. The strangers were to turn from their idols to give Jehovah the glory.

**LEV 17:9 And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer it unto the LORD; even that man shall be cut off from among his people.**

The people of the stranger who failed to follow God's commandments concerning sacrificing anywhere but at the door of the tabernacle were to follow the same procedures as Israel. If they were to benefit from association with God's people, it would be necessary to respect their laws. A very important law was to bring all sacrifices to the door of the tabernacle when they were offered.

**LEV 17:10 And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that**





**sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people.**

Anyone who was of the people of Israel, or anyone who was associated with God's people, was to abide by the instructions given. God would cut such a person off whether or not his own people did so.

**LEV 17:11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.**

It is a well known fact, even to small children that when the blood of an animal is poured out, the animal dies. I recall watching a pig having it's throat cut and then watching as it was made to walk around getting weaker and weaker until it could no longer stand up. Then it was hung up by it's hind legs until most of the blood drained out and life ceased. It is most strange that in times gone by, those who treated for serious illnesses by "blood letting." Nothing could have been more damaging to the person than the draining of blood at a time when their strength was already depleted.

Jesus stated that His blood is life. When the Lord's Supper is taken, the blood is symbolic of the blood which drained from the Saviour as the sword of the Roman soldier pierced his side and He spoke those dying words, "It is finished."

**LEV 17:12 Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood.**

The only blood men were to drink then, and the only blood men are to drink today, is the wine of the Lord's Supper. The blood of the sacrifices of the Mosaic age were shadows of the atoning blood of Jesus. Therefore blood was to be held in the highest respect, both then and now.

Many of the restrictions of the Mosaic law are no longer in effect. The command not to eat blood is one that remains to the present. In the fifteenth chapter of the book of Acts, a controversy arose over what Gentiles who became Christians were expected to do. Were the male babies to be circumcised as the Jewish babies had been. A conference was held at Jerusalem and the following directions were given in Acts 15:28-29.

Act 15:28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;

Act 15:29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

It is therefore forbidden to both Jews and Gentiles to eat blood during the Christian age.



**LEV 17:13** And whatsoever man there be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, which hunteth and catcheth any beast or fowl that may be eaten; he shall even pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust.

God went so far as to even forbid any person, either of His people, or associated with His people, to consume blood. Did this command refer to animals who were killed while hunting wild game? Yes. The blood of the animal was not to be eaten. It was to be poured out on the ground and then covered.

**LEV 17:14** For it is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off.

**LEV 17:15** And every soul that eateth that which died of itself, or that which was torn with beasts, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger, he shall both wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even: then shall he be clean.

Touching the carcase of an animal which had died by itself, or had been killed by other animals was enough to render the person unclean in the

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sight of God. It was necessary to wash both his body and his clothing. He then remained unclean for the rest of the day. The next day for the Jews began at sundown and not at dawn.

**LEV 17:16 But if he wash them not, nor bathe his flesh; then he shall bear his iniquity.**

The one who failed to observe the law on this matter would be guilty in the sight of God. The consequences were that God would turn His head away from that person. He had become abominable in the sight of his Maker.

## *Chapter 18*

**LEV 18:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**LEV 18:2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, I am the LORD your God.**

This chapter continues God's moral and ethical instructions. The Lord had made a proposal to Israel after they were delivered from Egypt. If they would allow Him to be their God and would love Him and keep His commandments, He would lead, guide and protect them. He would be their God if they would be His people. He is going to remind them over and over again in this chapter and the following ones that He expects them to keep their part of that covenant.

**LEV 18:3 After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: neither shall ye walk in their ordinances.**

There were things done while back in Egypt that His people were not to do. There would be things done in the land of Canaan to which He was leading them, that they were not to do. They were to make the choice between God's laws and the laws of Egypt or Canaan. They were strictly charged to make the proper decision.

**LEV 18:4 Ye shall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein: I am the LORD your God.**

There is a slight difference between judgments and ordinances. God's judgments would be those choices that He declared were best. His ordinances would be the commands given concerning what they were to do and what they were to refrain from doing.

Some people today have not learned this major lesson. They speak of a "new morality" as if they possessed the authority to use their own wisdom in decisions as to what is right and what is wrong. Man is not capable of legislating his own ultimate set of morals. He is a finite creature and cannot see the consequences which reach beyond time and into eternity. Neither the law of Egypt, the laws of Canaan, or the laws of any nation on earth stand above those of Jehovah.

**LEV 18:5 Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the LORD.**

There are three levels of life for man. One is mere survival. In order to reach the second level in which life here on earth is rich and full, one must honor God's will. Keeping His statutes and judgments is vitally necessary for that richer and fuller life. But there is a third level. That is life eternal in the



presence of God in heaven. This level in particular demands love and obedience to our Creator.

**LEV 18:6 None of you shall approach to any that is near of kin to him, to uncover their nakedness: I am the LORD.**

This chapter speaks plainly about sexual conduct. God's people are not to allow themselves to live their sex lives by feasting upon every opportunity to find a sexual partner. The spirit is to have dominion over the flesh rather than vice versa.

To "uncover the nakedness" very simply means to have sexual intercourse with another. God told Israel there was a time and a place for this activity. When this appetite was kept under control and properly used, it would bring happiness. When it was allowed to run wild and was abused, it would bring misery.

The next few verses will explain how God defined those who were "near of kin" to a man. For the most part they are self explanatory. Only a few comments are necessary.

Nearly all of these commands are directed toward men. This is not because women have no need to take heed of them. It is because at that time and place, the men nearly always took the lead in causing illicit sexual relationship. A woman whose actions resulted in such bonds would be just as guilty as a man. She might either invite a man to make advances, or consent to such actions without resistance.

**LEV 18:7 The nakedness of thy father, or the nakedness of thy mother, shalt thou not uncover: she is thy mother; thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.**

**LEV 18:8 The nakedness of thy father's wife shalt thou not uncover: it is thy father's nakedness.**

A man was forbidden to lie with his own mother. She was related by blood. He was also forbidden to lie with his father's wife if she was his stepmother. The Hebrew only mentions the father in order to forbid sexual intercourse with his present wife, who is not the man's mother. Homosexuality is not mentioned until the twenty-second verse. From this seventh verse until we reach the twenty-second verse only female partners are considered.

Verse eight is simply an emphasis upon the restriction given in verse seven concerning a stepmother.

**LEV 18:9 The nakedness of thy sister, the daughter of thy father, or daughter of thy mother, whether she be born at home, or born abroad, even their nakedness thou shalt not uncover.**

Neither a half sister or a full sister was to be taken. Even if she was the daughter of either the mother and not the father, or the father and not the mother, she was still near blood relation. Even though the half sister was born outside of your own home





**LEV 18:10 The nakedness of thy son's daughter, or of thy daughter's daughter, even their nakedness thou shalt not uncover: for theirs is thine own nakedness.**

A granddaughter, either through a man's son or through his daughter was off limits. There is a close blood relationship.

**LEV 18:11 The nakedness of thy father's wife's daughter, begotten of thy father, she is thy sister, thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.**

This commentator sees no difference between the woman of the ninth verse and the one of the eleventh verse. The key to understanding much of what seems to be bewildering in the present passages is the close blood relationships.

A stepsister might even have been raised in a different home. If she was closely related by bloodline she must not be taken to a man's bed.

**LEV 18:12 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's sister: she is thy father's near kinswoman.**

**LEV 18:13 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister: for she is thy mother's near kinswoman.**

One's father's sister would be his aunt. One's mother's sister would also be an aunt. They are both close kin and forbidden.

**LEV 18:14 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's brother, thou shalt not approach to his wife: she is thine aunt.**

The nakedness of thy father's brother is not talking about homosexuality. When a man and woman marry God tells us they become one flesh. To approach a father's wife was to approach his nakedness. That is why we have the last phrase which tells us this was his aunt.

**LEV 18:15 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy daughter in law: she is thy son's wife; thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.**

The reader is in danger of becoming nauseated by now. The type of relationships discussed are abominable. But they did take place at that time. They also take place now. They were wrong then and they are still wrong.

**LEV 18:16 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy brother's wife: it is thy brother's nakedness.**

The brother's wife is a sister in law. To take her would be to shame the brother.

**LEV 18:17 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter, neither shalt thou take her son's daughter, or her daughter's daughter, to uncover her**



**nakedness; for they are her near kinswomen:  
it is wickedness.**

This is talking about marrying a woman and then taking her daughter as a sexual partner. This would be a daughter who was not your own.

**LEV 18:18 Neither shalt thou take a wife to her sister, to vex her, to uncover her nakedness, beside the other in her life time.**

Do not unite with a woman's sister while the woman is still living. This produces rivalry. We can see the results of such a rivalry in the Leah and Rachel. (See Gen. 30:1).

Gen 30:1 And when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and said unto Jacob, Give me children, or else I die.

This prohibition is not the same as the levirate law which made it compulsory for a brother to marry a dead brother's wife if the brother had expired without having produced children. See (Deut. 25:5-6).

Deu 25:5 If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her.



Deu 25:6 And it shall be, that the firstborn which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel.

**LEV 18:19 Also thou shalt not approach unto a woman to uncover her nakedness, as long as she is put apart for her uncleanness.**

The menstrual or monthly period is spoken of here as her time of separation or time of uncleanness. Intercourse at this time is not to take place.

**LEV 18:20 Moreover thou shalt not lie carnally with thy neighbour's wife, to defile thyself with her.**

No comment is called for on this verse.

**LEV 18:21 And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD.**

Molech was a false god worshipped by the Ammonites. There is some evidence that charred remains of children have been found in the area where the Ammonites dwelt. This leads most to believe the Ammonites sacrificed live children to their god.

Those who have weak stomachs have attempted to remove some of the disgust by contending that the word "seed" can mean either descendants or



semen. Abraham was told that through his seed all nations would be blessed. In his case the word applied to his descendants. However, when Onan was told to go into his dead brother's wife and raise up children to him, Onan rebelled and spilled his seed upon the ground. Compare Gen. 48:4 with Lev. 15:16 with Gen. 38:9.

Gen 48:4 And said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people; and will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession.

Lev 15:16 And if any man's seed of copulation go out from him, then he shall wash all his flesh in water, and be unclean until the even.

Gen 38:9 And Onan knew that the seed should not be his; and it came to pass, when he went in unto his brother's wife, that he spilled it on the ground, lest that he should give seed to his brother.

Another way of avoiding the horror of throwing live children into a blazing pit is to claim that the children were more mercifully killed first and then their bodies were thrown into the fire for Molech.

Yet another salving try is to claim that passing through fire to Molech was but a way of saying they built two fires and the children were allowed to pass between the two fires, thereby dedicating the children to the service of Molech.

**LEV 18:22 Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.**

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Here we have the transition from same sex intercourse to homosexual relationships.

When Abraham and Lot approached the city of Sodom, Abraham gave Lot the choice. He could take the well watered plain of the Jordan where the city of Sodom was, or he could take the highlands. Lot chose the plains and pitched his tent toward Sodom.

Gen 13:10 And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.

Gen 13:11 Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other.

Gen 13:12 Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.

Gen 13:13 But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.

Later Lot realized he had made a drastic mistake. Some men came to his door demanding that he send men out to satisfy their lust. Lot refused and offered to give them his daughters. (See Gen. 19:6-8).

Gen 19:6 And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him,

Gen 19:7 And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly.

Gen 19:8 Behold now, I have two daughters which

have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof.

Throughout the entire Bible God had made it abundantly clear that homosexuality is an abomination in his sight. It is no less an abomination today than it was in the time of Sodom.

**LEV 18:23 Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it is confusion.**

Sexual intercourse with animals is an abominable sin. God speaks of it as confusion. It most certainly is. Men and women do not have offspring through such confusion. Sex was meant to be a means of drawing a husband and wife together, with the end product being children. Therefore sex with one of one's own sex, or sex with a beast was sinful.

This sin took place in Egypt from which the Israelites had come. Herodotus, the historian tells of witnessing such during a visit he made to Egypt.

**LEV 18:24 Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you:**

**LEV 18:25 And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants.**



God had promised this land of Canaan to His people. He would see that the nations who practised these foul deeds would be vomited out and His own people would inherit the land. It is as if the land itself would become so nauseated it would vomit them out. God was not cruel to these sinners. They had become so vile it was necessary to remove them and replace them with the seed of Abraham.

**LEV 18:26 Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations; neither any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you:**

**LEV 18:27 (For all these abominations have the men of the land done, which were before you, and the land is defiled;)**

**LEV 18:28 That the land spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that were before you.**

**LEV 18:29 For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them shall be cut off from among their people.**

**LEV 18:30 Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that ye commit not any one of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I am the LORD your God.**

Israel was not to conclude that they were free to follow the same disgusting pathways as those nations



who were to be removed. Neither His own people, or any who had chosen to associate themselves with His people, were to defile themselves or the land of Canaan.

God's people were to be holy, even as Jehovah is holy. They were to be a righteous nation, separate from the filthiness of the heathen idolators. If they insisted on imitating the abominations of the pagans, Canaan would also become sick of them and would vomit them out just as it had those nations before them.

They failed to take God at His word. As a result, He allowed them to be removed from the land. First the northern kingdom was taken captive and carried out of the land. Then, after a number years, the southern kingdom of Judah suffered the same fate.

Dear reader, take heed. The Lord in heaven will not approve of any people on earth today placing the pleasures of the flesh above the spiritual life which He has commanded. This caution does not exclude what we sometimes call the "enlightened" nations.

## *Chapter 19*

**LEV 19:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**LEV 19:2 Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy.**

We can not overstress God's purpose in working with the children of Israel. We say this because God Himself stressed it most emphatically. He wished to develop a holy nation. Out of this nation would come a holy Saviour. It was critical that contamination with the rest of the nations be held to a minimum.

This chapter contains instructions to the individual Israelites for incorporating Godlike characteristics into daily life. It is a mistake of the most disastrous kind for either a nation or an individual to think true success can be attained without following Divine law.

The chapter is best studied with both the twentieth chapter of Exodus, the first chapter of Romans and Christ's sermon on the mount in mind. All but one of the ten commandments are directly reviewed, and the tenth is certainly in the background.

**LEV 19:3 Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his father, and keep my sabbaths: I am the LORD your God.**

The fear God commanded here is that of respect. Loving parents who expect obedience from their children are necessary in a holy society. Children who respect their parents and return their love are just as necessary. Parents are told to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Children are told to obey their parents in the Lord (Eph. 6:1-4).

Eph 6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

Eph 6:2 Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise;

Eph 6:3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

Eph 6:4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Disobedient and unruly children all too often grow up to be disrespectful to both civil laws of a nation and also the laws of the Father in heaven.

The sabbath was originated in the beginning when God made the heavens and the earth in six days and rested on the seventh. Throughout the entire patriarchal and Mosaic ages the sabbath was to be observed on the seventh day of every week. There were other sabbaths such as the year of Jubilee which were also to be honored.

The command to keep the sabbath day holy was replaced when Jesus arose on the first day of the week. The disciples are found gathering to break

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bread on that day. Others are told to forsake not the assembling of themselves on that same day.

**LEV 19:4 Turn ye not unto idols, nor make to yourselves molten gods: I am the LORD your God.**

Israel existed among nations that demanded visible objects of worship. They worshipped heavenly objects. They worshipped earthly objects. They worshipped objects living in the waters of the sea. Israel was constantly tempted to follow those practices. This is seen when we recall the construction of the golden calf which Aaron supervised at the plea of the people when Moses was on the Mount for longer than they had expected.

The problem has not vanished in the twenty-first century. Most would not today worship the planet Venus, a calf, a goat, or Neptune the god of the sea. Houses, automobiles, bank accounts and sports trophies have largely replaced them as the targets of worship.

**LEV 19:5 And if ye offer a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD, ye shall offer it at your own will.**

**LEV 19:6 It shall be eaten the same day ye offer it, and on the morrow: and if ought remain until the third day, it shall be burnt in the fire.**

**LEV 19:7 And if it be eaten at all on the third day, it is abominable; it shall not be accepted.**

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**LEV 19:8 Therefore every one that eateth it shall bear his iniquity, because he hath profaned the hallowed thing of the LORD: and that soul shall be cut off from among his people.**

Sin offerings and burnt offerings were expected by the LORD in certain circumstances. Peace offerings were free-will offerings expressing gratitude for blessings. They were to be offered only when the person felt a sincere desire to let God know how much His grace and mercy were appreciated. The same attitude is to be present today when contributions are made on the first day of the week. See 2 Cor. 9:7.

2Co 9:7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

The LORD obviously had some reason for saying the peace offering must be eaten within the first two days. We do not know what that reason was except that He said doing so would profane the thing which had been hallowed.

It may be that on occasion those who had offered the sacrifice wished to continue the eating of the meat for a long enough time that the reason for having killed it faded from the picture. If that happened, the offering would have changed from a means of worship to no more than a big meal to which one might invite friends.



Also, that part of the world is not an ideal climate for the preservation of food. This may have been a protection from the possibility of consuming food that was beginning to decay. Any of the offering which was left until the third day must be burned.

**LEV 19:9 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest.**

**LEV 19:10 And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God.**

When I was a teenager my father shared labor with another farmer. He would help us during grain harvest and we would help him in return. I shall not forget the experience. The man owned a sizable farm with a fine home. I soon discerned how he had arrived at that point. When we were loading our wagons we did not worry if a few straws of wheat or oats was left on the ground. It was not so with him. He would point out every loose stalk of grain he could see and make certain nothing was left behind.

God had a method for helping the poor. The reapers were not to pick up every straw. They were to leave a portion deliberately for the benefit of those who were less fortunate. This served two purposes. It made food available for those who would



otherwise not have had enough to eat. At the same time, they found it necessary to do some work in order to get it.

There are two extremes, both of which are evil. One is a complete lack of concern for those who are truly poor and hungry. The other is a free dole which requires no work. One of these extremes starves those who should be helped. The other encourages laziness. Let us look at two related verses.

Gal 2:9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

Gal 2:10 Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

2Th 3:10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

**LEV 19:11 Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another.**

The direct connection with the ten commandments is very easily seen in this verse. God is a Lover of truth and good will. The person who steals is self centered. The person who cheats another in a business deal does so because he has focused his attention on himself. The person who lies has little



concern for how the lie will affect the one lied to.

Love is exactly the opposite. It seeks the well being of the one who is loved. God is love. His children are expected to imitate that love.

**LEV 19:12 And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD.**

If one makes a vow that he will do something as God is his witness, and then fails to perform the promised action, that person has proven that he holds the name of the God of heaven and earth as unworthy of the honor it deserves. He has profaned it. This can happen through lying in court. It can also be done by the use of profanity, using the name of the Lord in vain.

**LEV 19:13 Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning.**

In Bible times men often worked with the understanding they would be paid that evening. When that was not done, the person and perhaps his wife and children could be deprived of much needed food. To keep the wages which he had earned that day was the same as stealing or robbing from him.

**LEV 19:14 Thou shalt not curse the deaf,**  
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**nor put a stumblingblock before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: I am the LORD.**

The deaf can not hear the curses which others might react to vigorously. The blind can not see a stumblingblock which is placed in their path. It would take a very cruel and devilish mind to treat the helpless in this manner. God indicates that though the deaf and the blind might not be able to defend themselves, He does not appreciate such forms of humor. If we treat others as we would like to be treated by others, and we act as if we do not care for others, we are inviting God to treat us as we have treated them. That is folly.

**LEV 19:15 Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.**

This verse can very well apply to both personal judgments as well as judgments in the courtroom. If one meets a person who obviously has very little of this world's goods and also has no great influence on others, there is a temptation to treat that person with less respect than the average person would be treated. Great care must be taken that negative partiality is not shown. The poor man might have accomplished more with the opportunities he had than another who had far more good fortune. God may have a higher estimation of that man than the one who looks down on him.



The reverse is just as true. If one meets a person who has wealth and influence, there will be a temptation to treat that person with greater respect than for the average person. It is quite possible that if that poor man had started with as much as the man of wealth, and had the same opportunities, he would have risen even higher than the man of wealth.

Thy neighbor is not necessarily the one who lives in the house next to yours. It is any fellow human with whom you might make contact. God urged Israel to judge righteous judgment. Partiality is a sin in the eyes of the Lord.

**LEV 19:16 Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour; I am the LORD.**

The gossiping tongue is nearly as dangerous as a loaded pistol. Why is it that some are never satisfied unless they have a juicy morsel which they can spread everywhere they go. It matters not at all whether the gossip is true or false. Any rumor which can catch the attention of a listening ear passes from the ear to the tongue of the talebearer without penetrating the brain.

The one who stands against the blood of his neighbor is one who desires to hurt that person by stating things about him that would even lead to a death sentence for the victim.

Sixteen times in this one chapter God declares He is the LORD! The things He is commanding



are not to be dismissed lightly. He means for these directions to be put into practice.

**LEV 19:17 Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.**

What a list of actions we are building up concerning treatment of a neighbor. We are to love him. We are not to lie to him. We are not to steal from him. Even more, we are not to hate him. You do not allow his sins to simmer in your heart and build a fire of hatred there. You are to go to him and tell him what he has done wrong. It must be done kindly and with the intention of lifting him to higher levels of living.

You are certainly not to sin against him because he has sinned against you.

**LEV 19:18 Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.**

The first commandment is to love the Lord with all the heart, soul, mind and strength. Loving thy neighbor as thyself follows immediately after that. This statement of verse eighteen is nearly as strong as Jesus made it.

**LEV 19:19 Ye shall keep my statutes. Thou shalt not let thy cattle gender with a diverse**

**kind: thou shalt not sow thy field with mingled seed: neither shall a garment mingled of linen and woollen come upon thee.**

It is interesting to compare the teaching in this verse with what God had to say about marrying or having sexual relationships with others from your own bloodline. In the latter case there was warning against mixing with those closely related to you. Now we find admonition against mixing with diverse kinds.

The verse above seems to be a condemnation of hybrids, either in plants or in animals. There are numerous guesses as to why such directions were given. The most probable may be that God was at that time making an effort to keep Israel separate from the idolatrous nations around them. The idea which would be planted in their minds was that if God had caused certain differences to appear, they were not to be dissolved by mixing.

To be perfectly honest, we do not know why such instructions were given. Do such instructions have any bearing on the mixing of the human races today? I ask the question. I do not know the answer.

**LEV 19:20 And whosoever lieth carnally with a woman, that is a bondmaid, betrothed to an husband, and not at all redeemed, nor freedom given her; she shall be scourged; they shall not be put to death, because she was not free.**

A bondmaid was at the mercy of her owner. If he made advances it would be much more difficult for her to refuse him than it would be in the case of a free woman.

If a bondmaid was already engaged to a man, but she had not had the price for her freedom paid, it was a sin to take advantage of her helplessness. She was betrothed to one man and now she was allowing herself to be used by another man. This was considered as adultery at that time, even if she was still in the engagement period and not yet married.

In chapter twenty of this book of Leviticus we are told that the man that commits adultery with another man's wife is to be put to death.

Lev 20:10 And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

Both parties were to face a death penalty.

Jesus critics brought a woman to him who had been taken in the very act of adultery. They asked him if he agreed with the law of God, as given by Moses. According to that law both parties should be stoned to death. Notice they did not bring both the man and the woman to Jesus.

The present passage say the bondwoman was not to be put to death because she was not free to refuse. Nevertheless, she had not made any outcry and she was to be scourged.

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Joh 8:3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,

Joh 8:4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

Joh 8:5 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

Joh 8:6 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.

Joh 8:7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

**LEV 19:21 And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, even a ram for a trespass offering.**

**LEV 19:22 And the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering before the LORD for his sin which he hath done: and the sin which he hath done shall be forgiven him.**

The man who had committed adultery with a bondmaid was to offer a sizable sacrifice for his sin. A ram was not as valuable as a bullock. It was more valuable than a turtledove. It is a bit surprising that he was not scourged as the woman was.



**LEV 19:23** And when ye shall come into the land, and shall have planted all manner of trees for food, then ye shall count the fruit thereof as uncircumcised: three years shall it be as uncircumcised unto you: it shall not be eaten of.

**LEV 19:24** But in the fourth year all the fruit thereof shall be holy to praise the LORD withal.

**LEV 19:25** And in the fifth year shall ye eat of the fruit thereof, that it may yield unto you the increase thereof: I am the LORD your God.

Immature fruit trees do not produce the quality of fruit which is later produced. Was this the reason they were to wait? God desires the first of all things be dedicated to Him. Is this the reason for waiting? The land had been inhabited by gentiles. Was the land unclean and needed time for purification? Was the ungathered fruit a way of aiding the poor by allowing them to gather it?

The twenty-third verse indicates that the fruit was uncircumcised. For some reason God considered it to be unclean and capable of polluting His people.

Israel was still not to eat the fruit in the fourth year after the trees were planted. In that year all of the produce was to belong to God. The verse does not reveal that the fruit was to be taken to the priests during that year. This could have been done.

Finally, in the fifth year, the fruit could be eaten

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by the people. The yield would belong to those who planted the trees.

**LEV 19:26 Ye shall not eat any thing with the blood: neither shall ye use enchantment, nor observe times.**

We have sufficiently discussed the eating of blood before.

The use of enchantments and the observation of times were both signs of dissatisfaction with God's arrangements for human knowledge. It was an attempt to discover that which God had not seen fit to reveal. Fortune telling and enchantments suggest the person making use of them has access to supernatural avenues of information.

**LEV 19:27 Ye shall not round the corners of your heads, neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard.**

Hair has always been used to convey messages. When this author was in high school the hair craze was to get what was called a "butch" haircut. Those who began this craze were declaring their independence of traditions. In both the oriental and the African worlds hair style is used to get attention. Today numbers of the young men are tying up their hair in a pony tail and letting it grow down almost to the belt line.

I do not think the admonition to avoid rounding the corners of the head, or marring the corners of the beard was meant to condemn the cutting of the hair at all. It is more likely that this was used as



a sign of idol worship, or just a demonstration of a rebellious nature.

**LEV 19:28 Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the LORD.**

Mourning for the dead was taken to extremes. Instead of stopping with weeping and dressing in sackcloth and ashes, the mourner would take a sharp instrument and cut gashes in his flesh to show his or her intense grief. The apostle Paul said he bore about on his body the marks of the Saviour. That did not mean he had cut gashes in his flesh. The scars he bore were the result of scourging and stoning at the hands of the enemies of the gospel.

The marks God is forbidding here were tattoos. This was also a way of demonstrating dedication. Proud sailors of the past used tattoos. Those who were devoted to false gods would carry the tattoos which symbolized their loyalty to these gods. Such demonstrations were offensive to Jehovah.

**LEV 19:29 Do not prostitute thy daughter, to cause her to be a whore; lest the land fall to whoredom, and the land become full of wickedness.**

Both married and unmarried men have been willing to pay for the services of prostitutes in all countries and in all times. For this reason, women have used their bodies to gain fees. Husbands



have been willing to prostitute their own wives for financial gain. When a father is so corrupt as to offer his own daughter to sexually greedy men, he is stooping about as low as a man can go.

Prostitution is like cancer or leprosy. It corrupts and it rots that with which it comes into contact.

**LEV 19:30 Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD.**

Both place of worship and the plan of worship were to be respected. Today the first day of the week, and the church, have replaced the sabbaths and the earthly tabernacle. We are just as bound to keep these holy as was Israel in the long ago.

**LEV 19:31 Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God.**

Those who claim to be wizards and those who claim to have communication with spirits which they alone can contact are frauds. They, along with the enchanters and the magicians, are either lying about their abilities, or they are empowered by Satan. The magicians of Egypt did seem to be able to match the power of God for a while. In the end they fell far short. See Exo. 8:18-19.

Exo 8:18 And the magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not: so there were lice upon man, and upon beast.

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Exo 8:19 Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.

**LEV 19:32 Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the LORD.**

We often rise to shake hands with those we are happy to see. There are two kinds of old men. Some are of wicked nature and have stained the earth with sins. These are not the old men about which this verse speaks. The old man who is to be honored is the one who has spent a lifetime in the service of God and his fellowman. He may no longer be keen of mind or agile in movement. He may be blind or hard of hearing. This does not cancel the contribution he has made to others.

Older men have the experience which those who are younger have not yet gained. When Rehoboam consulted the old men about the way the people should be treated, they advised him to be kind. He then went to the young men and they advised him to be unbending. He followed the advice of the young men and the result was the division of the ten northern tribes from the two southern tribes.

See I Kings 12:13-14.

1Ki 12:13 And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him;



1Ki 12:14 And spake to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

**LEV 19:33 And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him.**

**LEV 19:34 But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.**

The stranger who entered the land of Canaan and sought to dwell among the Israelites might have looked different. He might have spoken a tongue they could not understand. That was not an excuse to embarrass or abuse him. They were to treat the stranger just as they would treat other Israelites.

Notwithstanding, the gods of the stranger were not to be worshipped. The stranger was to conform to the will of God if he associated with the people of God.

**LEV 19:35 Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in meteyard, in weight, or in measure.**

**LEV 19:36 Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin, shall ye have: I am the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt.**



Business affairs were to be handled fairly and honestly. Measurements were to be made accurately. This included measurements of length, of weight or in bulk. A yard was to be a yard. An ephah was to be an ephah. Neither was to be 95% of what was expected. Israel did not have government inspectors to check the accuracy of the standards which were used. It was necessary to depend upon the righteousness of the buyer and the seller.

**LEV 19:37 Therefore shall ye observe all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them: I am the LORD.**

God has made judgments as to that which is right and that which is wrong. He has given laws which are in agreement with those judgments. Israel was to bow to His divine authority. If they feared Him and kept His commandments, they would be blessed. If they did not, they would be cursed.

## *Chapter 20*

**LEV 20:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

This chapter is largely a repetition of what was discussed in chapter eighteen. There is not much reason to go into the same matters again.

There is a difference in emphasis upon the penalty for the sins, especially with respect to the death penalty. We will therefore pay attention to the justification for the death penalty.

**LEV 20:2 Again, thou shalt say to the children of Israel, Whosoever he be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that giveth any of his seed unto Molech; he shall surely be put to death: the people of the land shall stone him with stones.**

An increasing amount of evidence indicates giving one's seed to Molech was the sacrificing of children by placing them in a pit before an image of this sun god. It is possible that it was only a ceremony in which the children passed between two fires as a means of dedicating them to this false god.

Any parent who was guilty of murdering his or her own children in this manner deserved to receive a death penalty. (See Genesis 9:6.)

Gen 9:6 Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.

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**LEV 20:3 And I will set my face against that man, and will cut him off from among his people; because he hath given of his seed unto Molech, to defile my sanctuary, and to profane my holy name.**

This was idolatry of the most hideous kind. God was justified in setting his face against such a person. The idolator had attempted to reduce the True God to a level below that of a god which was no god at all.

**LEV 20:4 And if the people of the land do any ways hide their eyes from the man, when he giveth of his seed unto Molech, and kill him not:**

The people who knew of the man's disobedience to the law of Jehovah might turn their heads and act as if they did not know, or did not think the offense was serious enough to warrant death.

**LEV 20:5 Then I will set my face against that man, and against his family, and will cut him off, and all that go a whoring after him, to commit whoredom with Molech, from among their people.**

If the people did not obey Jehovah and kill the man, God would tend to the punishment. In this case I trust that the life of the offender would be taken by the LORD.

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**LEV 20:6 And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people.**

The reader is referred to comments in chapter eighteen.

**LEV 20:7 Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God.**

God was putting plans into action that were intended to develop a holy nation who would inhabit a holy land and grow toward His holy character.

**LEV 20:8 And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am the LORD which sanctify you.**

The only way in which the aims above could be reached was for the people to hear and obey, and the LORD to recognize them as His own.

**LEV 20:9 For every one that curseth his father or his mother shall be surely put to death: he hath cursed his father or his mother; his blood shall be upon him.**

The cursing was no doubt more than just an outburst of profanity such as to say, "God damn you." It would have been a way of life that showed utter contempt for the discipline they applied as a form of correction.





It would be a mistake to limit this verse to children who were still in the home of their parents. The kind of contempt pointed out here could take place after one left home, and in fact even after the death of the parents.

Our own society does not recognize the seriousness of this sin. We do not apply the death penalty to such behavior. God sees it differently.

**LEV 20:10 And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.**

The word adultery reminds us of the adulteration of food products. When a man and a woman marry they become one flesh. If another man forces his way into this marriage by taking the married man's wife, he has diluted, or adulterated the marriage. Again the death penalty was to be applied.

Again, we call attention to the fact that Jesus called for the one who was without sin to cast the first stone at the adulterous woman who was brought to him. One of the reasons why Jesus did not tell them to stone her immediately was surely that they did not bring the man along with her. They were not interested in justice. They were interested in entrapping Christ.

**LEV 20:11 And the man that lieth with his father's wife hath uncovered his father's**



**nakedness: both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.**

**LEV 20:12 And if a man lie with his daughter in law, both of them shall surely be put to death: they have wrought confusion; their blood shall be upon them.**

**LEV 20:13 If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.**

**LEV 20:14 And if a man take a wife and her mother, it is wickedness: they shall be burnt with fire, both he and they; that there be no wickedness among you.**

Some people in later times branded such persons with a large A to signify their adulterous character. This verse does not say anything about branding irons. It speaks of burning the person.

God tells us why the punishment was given. It was to impress others with the seriousness of the sin, that they might not enter into it.

**LEV 20:15 And if a man lie with a beast, he shall surely be put to death: and ye shall slay the beast.**

**LEV 20:16 And if a woman approach unto any beast, and lie down thereto, thou shalt kill the woman, and the beast: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.**



**LEV 20:17** And if a man shall take his sister, his father's daughter, or his mother's daughter, and see her nakedness, and she see his nakedness; it is a wicked thing; and they shall be cut off in the sight of their people: he hath uncovered his sister's nakedness; he shall bear his iniquity.

**LEV 20:18** And if a man shall lie with a woman having her sickness, and shall uncover her nakedness; he hath discovered her fountain, and she hath uncovered the fountain of her blood: and both of them shall be cut off from among their people.

**LEV 20:19** And thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister, nor of thy father's sister: for he uncovereth his near kin: they shall bear their iniquity.

**LEV 20:20** And if a man shall lie with his uncle's wife, he hath uncovered his uncle's nakedness: they shall bear their sin; they shall die childless.

**LEV 20:21** And if a man shall take his brother's wife, it is an unclean thing: he hath uncovered his brother's nakedness; they shall be childless.

**LEV 20:22** Ye shall therefore keep all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them: that the land, whither I bring you to dwell therein, spue you not out.

The above information was handled in the comments on chapter eighteen.



One more word is to be added in saying that Israel had to find out God's truth the hard way. They were taken from Canaan and captivated in Assyria and Babylon because of just such sins as these listed.

**LEV 20:23 And ye shall not walk in the manners of the nation, which I cast out before you: for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred them.**

God hates certain thoughts, words and actions. It is those who stand outside His fold, he hates these. If it is those who have been selected as His chosen people, He still hates that behavior. He had cast out the Canaanites for their sins. He would just as quickly cast out Israel.

**LEV 20:24 But I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it, a land that floweth with milk and honey: I am the LORD your God, which have separated you from other people.**

Palestine may have been a more productive land at the time Israel conquered it than it is as these words are written. In my own personal observation of the fertility of the land, I was not much impressed. That land may have deteriorated from the time Israel entered it until the present day.

God assured them that they would receive that land. He did not promise they would never have to



leave it. That decision was to be based upon their willingness to hear and obey His judgments and statutes.

**LEV 20:25** Ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean, and between unclean fowls and clean: and ye shall not make your souls abominable by beast, or by fowl, or by any manner of living thing that creepeth on the ground, which I have separated from you as unclean.

**LEV 20:26** And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine.

**LEV 20:27** A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them.

Sufficient comment has already been made on each of these last topics.

The only item needing further mention is the outcome of mollycoddling criminals. God said the death penalty was to be enacted for extremely serious sins. Modern day judges see punishment as correction of the criminal. The LORD saw it as protection of the rest of society.

It is not administering justice to sentence a murderer to death and then place him on death row for ten or twenty years while lawyers and judges haggle over whether he really should be executed, and if so how and when. If this writer were in that position he would much rather be executed rapidly than to be put through such mental torture.



## *Chapter 21*

Much of what is covered in this chapter has been presented before. Comment will be lighter, but there is additional material. We shall attend to that as we meet it.

**LEV 21:1 And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto the priests the sons of Aaron, and say unto them, There shall none be defiled for the dead among his people:**

Moses still takes the lead position in God's presentation of the law, even though that which is being presented deals with the duties of the priesthood.

Contact with the dead was defiling. The priests were to avoid making such contact with a corpse unless it was his closest kin. This defilement lasted until sundown and the priest could not perform his duties if he was defiled.

**LEV 21:2 But for his kin, that is near unto him, that is, for his mother, and for his father, and for his son, and for his daughter, and for his brother.**

If, however, the dead was a close relative he was permitted to make contact. This included his parents and his children. It also included his brothers.

**LEV 21:3 And for his sister a virgin, that is nigh unto him, which hath had no husband; for her may he be defiled.**

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If the priest had an unmarried sister who had died, he was allowed to defile himself by making contact with her body.

**LEV 21:4 But he shall not defile himself, being a chief man among his people, to profane himself.**

The word “profane” is contrasted with the word “holy.” Touching the dead, or mourning for them rendered the priest profane. He was to remain holy since he was allowed to make sacrifices and approach God more closely than other men.

**LEV 21:5 They shall not make baldness upon their head, neither shall they shave off the corner of their beard, nor make any cuttings in their flesh.**

Shaving the head and the beard was a way of demonstrating grief. Lacerating the flesh was the same. The beard and hair of the head was a matter of pride with Jewish males. To rend their clothing, to shave off the hair, or even to let the hair become disheveled was a sign of mourning. The priest was allowed to approach the body of his close relatives who had died, but he was not to show signs of grief.

**LEV 21:6 They shall be holy unto their God, and not profane the name of their God: for the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and the bread of their God, they do offer: therefore they shall be holy.**

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A certain dignity was expected of those who offered the sacrifices for the people. The offerings are spoken of as if they were a meal presented to Jehovah. As the bread and the fruit of the vine represent the body and blood of the Son of God today in the Lord's Supper, the various offerings from the people to God were seen as a sort of fellowship meal with Him. The priest who made himself profane by touching the dead, or grieving for them was unfit for offering that meal to God.

A number of times when this commentator was a lad, his earthly father sent him to the wash basin to clean his hands. God told the priests not to get their "hands dirty."

**LEV 21:7 They shall not take a wife that is a whore, or profane; neither shall they take a woman put away from her husband: for he is holy unto his God.**

It is difficult to believe that any man would seek to marry a woman who fit any one of these three classes. The woman who had been put away from her husband was put away for a reason. To marry an immoral woman was to become one flesh with her. The priest therefore made himself unfit to represent the people to God.

**LEV 21:8 Thou shalt sanctify him therefore; for he offereth the bread of thy God: he shall be holy unto thee: for I the LORD, which sanctify you, am holy.**





In a sense, the priest set the table for a meal of fellowship with the Lord. He must not insult God by appearing before him in a spiritually defiled condition.

**LEV 21:9 And the daughter of any priest, if she profane herself by playing the whore, she profaneth her father: she shall be burnt with fire.**

If the daughter of a priest lowered herself to accepting the sexual advances of one man after another, that daughter brought reproach upon her father. This was a major sin. She was not to simply be chastised. Her punishment was to be burnt.

There is some question here as to whether the burning was that of the entire body, or whether it was a branding of the woman with a hot iron as a fornicator or an adulterer. Either way, she caused her father to be profaned and unfit for priestly duties.

**LEV 21:10 And he that is the high priest among his brethren, upon whose head the anointing oil was poured, and that is consecrated to put on the garments, shall not uncover his head, nor rend his clothes;**

When the high priest was installed in that position he received the glorious garments which set him apart from the rest of the people, including the other priests. He also received a special anointing by the pouring of oil upon his head. Other priests



were anointed by sprinkling oil upon their garments. His anointing was unique.

**LEV 21:11 Neither shall he go in to any dead body, nor defile himself for his father, or for his mother;**

This verse has nothing to do with sexual activity. It was instruction from God that the high priest was not even allowed to touch “any” dead body, even that of his own father or mother. This was allowed to the common priests, but not to the high priest.

**LEV 21:12 Neither shall he go out of the sanctuary, nor profane the sanctuary of his God; for the crown of the anointing oil of his God is upon him: I am the LORD.**

This high priest had responsibilities that took priority over all else. He was to attend to those duties without interruption by any other consideration.

**LEV 21:13 And he shall take a wife in her virginity.**

**LEV 21:14 A widow, or a divorced woman, or profane, or an harlot, these shall he not take: but he shall take a virgin of his own people to wife.**

The selection of a wife was even more restricted for the high priest than for the common priests. He was only to marry a woman who had never known



man. A widow was not eligible, even if she was one with high character.

The high priest was typical of Jesus Christ. His bride was to be spotless. Christ was not married during His earthly stay, but His spiritual wife is the church. She is to be unblemished.

To take a wife from his own people may mean that he was to select a wife from the tribe of Levi.

If we place two of the above restrictions side by side we may have a clue as to the meaning of the next verse. He was neither to marry a divorced woman nor a widow. This would fairly well insure that his children would be his own rather than those of some other man.

**LEV 21:15 Neither shall he profane his seed among his people: for I the LORD do sanctify him.**

There were several ways in which the seed of the high priest might be profaned. One possibility was that his own daughters might become immoral. It would be most despicable if the high priest himself was responsible for such behavior in his own daughter. He must constantly be on guard that his children remain faithful to the commandments of the Lord.

**LEV 21:16 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**LEV 21:17 Speak unto Aaron, saying, Whosoever he be of thy seed in their generations**



**that hath any blemish, let him not approach to offer the bread of his God.**

The sacrifices were to be unblemished, and so were the priests who offered those sacrifices. Obviously all men have some deficiencies. But here God is forbidding the offering of sacrifices by those with extremely visible handicaps.

This is one of the more difficult commands to see through. Some individuals of the present day have established themselves as dedicated and effective servants of God though they have such blemishes. We know in particular of a man who had to walk with crutches throughout his life. This man has been one of the most respected Christians in his entire community. Few have done more to glorify their Father in heaven than this man has.

Conditions were different in the time of the Levitical priesthood. These persons foreshadowed the spiritual priesthood of which Christians today are a part. God expects the royal priesthood of today to be spiritually unblemished.

**LEV 21:18 For whatsoever man he be that hath a blemish, he shall not approach: a blind man, or a lame, or he that hath a flat nose, or any thing superfluous,**

The flat nose was probably more than just one that did not protrude. It was likely one that had only two holes for nostrils, etc.

Six fingers or toes would be superfluous.



**LEV 21:19 Or a man that is brokenfooted, or brokenhanded,**

**LEV 21:20 Or crookbackt, or a dwarf, or that hath a blemish in his eye, or be scurvy, or scabbed, or hath his stones broken;**

Having his stones broken is thought to have reference to genital deformity preventing production of children.

**LEV 21:21 No man that hath a blemish of the seed of Aaron the priest shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the LORD made by fire: he hath a blemish; he shall not come nigh to offer the bread of his God.**

**LEV 21:22 He shall eat the bread of his God, both of the most holy, and of the holy.**

The deformed descendants of Aaron were still allowed to share in the eating of the offerings of the people which were designated for the priesthood. But they could not take part in the presentation of sacrifices on the altar.

**LEV 21:23 Only he shall not go in unto the vail, nor come nigh unto the altar, because he hath a blemish; that he profane not my sanctuaries: for I the LORD do sanctify them.**

**LEV 21:24 And Moses told it unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel.**

Can we have any doubt as to the responsibilities of the royal priesthood of this Christian age? God expects the very best from those who offer sacrifices to Him. This was true of the Aaronic priesthood. It is just as true today. We cannot afford to be careless in our daily lives if we expect God to accept us as living sacrifices.

## *Chapter 22*

**LEV 22:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

We are constantly reminded throughout the book that these are the commandments of the Lord, and that Moses is only a spokesman for Jehovah.

**LEV 22:2 Speak unto Aaron and to his sons, that they separate themselves from the holy things of the children of Israel, and that they profane not my holy name in those things which they hallow unto me: I am the LORD.**

The instructions in this chapter are primarily aimed toward Aaron and the Aaronic priesthood. Still, we must remain aware that there are many types and shadows of the Christian priesthood in that which we read here.

The reader must be careful here. We are not being told that the priests were not to touch the sacrifices. If they were to perform their priestly duties it would be necessary for them to come into contact with the sacrifices. What is being warned is that they were to be ceremonially clean. Any personal uncleanness would render them unfit for officiating in the sacrificial offerings.

The previous chapter had warned against the offering of blemished sacrifices. This chapter emphasizes the need for the one who offers the sacrifice to be clean. If either the sacrifice or the

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priest who offered the sacrifice was defiled God was being profaned.

**LEV 22:3 Say unto them, Whosoever he be of all your seed among your generations, that goeth unto the holy things, which the children of Israel hallow unto the LORD, having his uncleanness upon him, that soul shall be cut off from my presence: I am the LORD.**

The regulation presented here was to hold not only for Aaron and his immediate sons; it was to be binding upon future priests who dealt with that which was offered to God.

If any of the priestly family proceeded to offer sacrifices while he was unclean, that priest was to be denied any opportunity to present the offerings of the people to the Lord in heaven.

**LEV 22:4 What man soever of the seed of Aaron is a leper, or hath a running issue; he shall not eat of the holy things, until he be clean. And whoso toucheth any thing that is unclean by the dead, or a man whose seed goeth from him;**

We have now a list of conditions which would render a priest unfit for offering the sacrifices. Leprosy was a shadow of sin in the New Testament age. Leprosy disqualified a priest from touching the sacrifices of the people. Leprosy was contagious and led to death.





A running issue would be caused by some type of infection. Infection was a deficiency in health and like leprosy, it could lead to death and could be communicated to others.

Let us not be vague here. The man's seed was his semen. We shall not question God as to His reason for saying the man whose semen had issued from him. Did this include natural sexual intercourse? We cannot be sure. It is, however, interesting that this is found in the same sentence as being made unclean by touching the dead. We leave the reader to make a judgment as to whether the two are closely related. Can sperm cells and egg cells be considered as living previous to conception?

**LEV 22:5 Or whosoever toucheth any creeping thing, whereby he may be made unclean, or a man of whom he may take uncleanness, whatsoever uncleanness he hath;**

Serpents are creeping things. Satan is called a serpent. Disease germs are often carried by insects that are also creeping things. A priest who had been contaminated by contact with either unclean persons or creeping things was not to enter into the priestly duties.

**LEV 22:6 The soul which hath touched any such shall be unclean until even, and shall not**

**eat of the holy things, unless he wash his flesh with water.**

The priest who had been in contact with such things was not to eat his normal portion of the sacrifices during the same day that he had become unclean. He was to wait until evening, or sundown. Then he could eat, but even then he must first take a bath.

**LEV 22:7 And when the sun is down, he shall be clean, and shall afterward eat of the holy things; because it is his food.**

The priest who had become unclean was not to abstain from eating after sundown. He was not to starve himself.

**LEV 22:8 That which dieth of itself, or is torn with beasts, he shall not eat to defile himself therewith; I am the LORD.**

An animal that had died by itself would very likely be contaminated with disease. An animal that had been killed by another animal was torn and imperfect. Neither of these was to be offered. God is worthy of the best, not that which is blemished.

**LEV 22:9 They shall therefore keep mine ordinance, lest they bear sin for it, and die**



**therefore, if they profane it: I the LORD do sanctify them.**

A priest who failed to observe God's restrictions and offered in an unclean condition, or offered an unclean sacrifice was worthy of death. This was sin and the wages of sin is death. God desired to maintain pure conditions in His priests and in the sacrifices they offered. If they willfully defiled themselves how could they expect the Holy God to make them clean. If they wished to be unholy, He would not make them clean.

**LEV 22:10 There shall no stranger eat of the holy thing: a sojourner of the priest, or an hired servant, shall not eat of the holy thing.**

Only those of the priestly family were to eat from the priest's portion of the sacrifices. A stranger would be someone who was not an Israelite, or even someone who was not of the descendants of Aaron and the tribe of Levi.

**LEV 22:11 But if the priest buy any soul with his money, he shall eat of it, and he that is born in his house: they shall eat of his meat.**

This verse has been used at time in the attempt to prove the Bible approved of slavery. Can one buy a person and that person not be considered as a slave? The reader will note that the person who was

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bought by the priest was actually considered equal to one who was born in his house. He could expect to be treated as a part of that family.

Remember, my friends, that Jesus purchased the church with His own blood. We are not our own. We were purchased at a very high cost. We are now considered a part of the royal priesthood, and of the family of God.

**LEV 22:12 If the priest's daughter also be married unto a stranger, she may not eat of an offering of the holy things.**

As long as the priest's daughter was unmarried and living in her father's home, she was privileged to eat of the priestly portion. As soon as she married one who was not of a priestly family, she was not to eat from the sacred offerings.

**LEV 22:13 But if the priest's daughter be a widow, or divorced, and have no child, and is returned unto her father's house, as in her youth, she shall eat of her father's meat: but there shall be no stranger eat thereof.**

Could this woman who had married someone who was not of a priestly family ever return and eat from her father's table? Yes, she could, if she had lost her husband or had been divorced by the stranger whom she had married. She was no longer considered as a stranger.



There is a reminder here that as the royal priesthood of the Christian system, the Christian has a right to special privileges and blessings from God. The stranger may appear to be doing well if he lives in a mansion on earth and has a butler to serve him scrumptious meals. But that one who is outside of Christ is missing out on the True Bread of Life which is offered to men in the Bible and in the Supper of the Lord.

**LEV 22:14 And if a man eat of the holy thing unwittingly, then he shall put the fifth part thereof unto it, and shall give it unto the priest with the holy thing.**

It was possible that a priest could become unclean and eat from the priestly portion without realizing he had profaned God. In that case, when he found out his sin, he was to return that which was of equal value, and was to add twenty percent more to indicate his penitence for having disobeyed.

**LEV 22:15 And they shall not profane the holy things of the children of Israel, which they offer unto the LORD;**

**LEV 22:16 Or suffer them to bear the iniquity of trespass, when they eat their holy things: for I the LORD do sanctify them.**

These two verses are used to emphasize everything which had been stated up to this point. God does



not appreciate men causing that to be unclean which He has been attempting to cleanse!

**LEV 22:17 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**LEV 22:18 Speak unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, and say unto them, Whatsoever he be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers in Israel, that will offer his oblation for all his vows, and for all his freewill offerings, which they will offer unto the LORD for a burnt offering;**

It was permissible for those who were not Israelites to offer a sacrifice in connection with vows or offerings. If either an Israelite or a stranger offered a freewill offering, certain specifications were given.

**LEV 22:19 Ye shall offer at your own will a male without blemish, of the beeves, of the sheep, or of the goats.**

The animal offered was to be an unblemished male. The Greatest Sacrifice of all was Jesus Christ, an unblemished male.

These freewill offerings were to be either from the cattle, from the sheep or from the goats. Two turtledoves are not mentioned in this instance.

**LEV 22:20 But whatsoever hath a blemish, that shall ye not offer: for it shall not be**  
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**acceptable for you.**

**LEV 22:21 And whosoever offereth a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD to accomplish his vow, or a freewill offering in beeves or sheep, it shall be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein.**

Let us note here the words which are used to describe the personal sacrifice of the Son of God.

Heb 5:8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

Heb 5:9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

Heb 5:10 Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

**LEV 22:22 Blind, or broken, or maimed, or having a wen, or scurvy, or scabbed, ye shall not offer these unto the LORD, nor make an offering by fire of them upon the altar unto the LORD.**

The only term in this verse needing explanation is the "wen." A wen is thought to have been some type of ulcer.

**LEV 22:23 Either a bullock or a lamb that hath any thing superfluous or lacking in his parts, that mayest thou offer for a freewill offering; but for a vow it shall not be accepted.**



The reason for making a differentiation between the vow and the freewill offering is not clear. It is possible that the vow was considered as a debt, while the freewill offering was not.

**LEV 22:24 Ye shall not offer unto the LORD that which is bruised, or crushed, or broken, or cut; neither shall ye make any offering thereof in your land.**

The surrounding nations might have offered such blemished animals to their false gods. That did not give Israel the right to copy their actions.

The sacrifices were to be male. Some see the terms of this verse as referring to the insufficiency of using castrated males as sacrifices. The term “cut” is still used by many farmers when speaking of the castration of hogs. The main thrust of the verse is that maimed animals were not acceptable.

**LEV 22:25 Neither from a stranger’s hand shall ye offer the bread of your God of any of these; because their corruption is in them, and blemishes be in them: they shall not be accepted for you.**

Israel was not to offer blemished sacrifices to God, nor were they to accept blemished animals from the non-Israelites who lived among them for the purpose of using those animals as sacrifices. Regardless of the source, a blemished sacrifice was not pleasing to Jehovah.





**LEV 22:26 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**LEV 22:27 When a bullock, or a sheep, or a goat, is brought forth, then it shall be seven days under the dam; and from the eighth day and thenceforth it shall be accepted for an offering made by fire unto the LORD.**

When a male calf, sheep or goat was born, it was not to be used as a sacrifice until the eighth day after it's birth. This was almost certainly a matter of humane conduct. A mother has endured much discomfort during her pregnancy. She has a very special attachment to her newborn. She was to be allowed it's presence for a few days.

**LEV 22:28 And whether it be cow, or ewe, ye shall not kill it and her young both in one day.**

We like to think that our offspring will survive us and live through a normal lifetime. To kill a young animal is painful for it's mother. For the mother to face death in the same day just adds to the grief.

**LEV 22:29 And when ye will offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving unto the LORD, offer it at your own will.**

**LEV 22:30 On the same day it shall be eaten up; ye shall leave none of it until the morrow: I am the LORD.**

A thanksgiving offering was a freewill offering. Just as we today enjoy a thanksgiving meal, those people of Israel offered a sacrifice to God and then ate part of it as a celebration of their gratitude for God's care.

**LEV 22:31 Therefore shall ye keep my commandments, and do them: I am the LORD.**

**LEV 22:32 Neither shall ye profane my holy name; but I will be hallowed among the children of Israel: I am the LORD which hallow you,**

**LEV 22:33 That brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD.**

God had delivered Israel from the bonds of slavery in Egypt. He was their God and they were His very special people. He had cared for them up to that point, and He would continue to care for them if they continued to hallow his name. God had made them a hallowed people. He expected them to honor His commandments and respect His Perfection.



## *Chapter 23*

This is one of the highlight chapters of the book of Leviticus. An extensive list of the various feasts, plus the assigned times of observance, is given. The reader is urged to make comparisons between this chapter and the twenty-eighth and twenty-nine chapters of Numbers. The two chapters in the book of Numbers give some details which are not included in this one.

**LEV 23:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**LEV 23:2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts.**

The material given in this chapter indicates a very early date for Leviticus rather than a date after the captivity and exile. The instructions are quite logical if we assume that they were given after the tabernacle was built and the priesthood was instituted. The listing of the various feasts and their meanings would naturally follow the events in the book of Exodus.

These feasts brought the people together in holy convocations or assigned gatherings. They were to be very special occasions which would weld Israel together and cause them to continually remember that they were God's people. They were to honor Him and He would provide for their needs.

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**LEV 23:3 Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings.**

The weekly sabbath was basic. It was first noted at the time of creation when God made all things in six days and then rested on the seventh, hallowing it. This takes first place in the listings of this present chapter.

On the seventh, or last day of the week, no work was to be done. This sabbath was brought to their attention, seemingly as a sort of introduction to others which were to be observed.

One is caused to wonder what differences would be effected in the society of the twenty-first century if all work was to be eliminated. Some religious groups claim to recognize the sabbath now, but this would be difficult for some, such as dairy farmers whose milk cows would immediately react to not having been milked one day each week. Milk production would drop sharply. Many other situations of like nature can be thought of.

God no longer expects the weekly sabbaths to be observed. (See Colossians 2:16-17.)

Col 2:16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:

Col 2:17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.



The saints met together on the first day of the week for worship services. There are few occasions where it would be impossible to meet with the saints either on a morning or an evening worship service. Both farmers and factory workers would find it possible to meet at one of these times.

**LEV 23:4 These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons.**

It was assumed that the weekly sabbath was to be observed. Now the Lord revealed to Moses a number of other feasts and sabbaths which He expected them to honor.

**LEV 23:5 In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD'S passover.**

The Jews had two sets of calendar years. One was the civil year. The other was the religious year. Here He is speaking of the first month of the religious year. That month was called "Nisan." It corresponded to the latter part of March and the early part of April on our English calendar. Nisan is considered the first month of the Jewish year because it was in this month that the Angel of the Lord passed over the houses which were marked with the blood of the lamb.

Since three of these Jewish religious months were mentioned repeatedly in the Old Testament scriptures the list is given below.



## Month No. Corresponds to: Feast

1. Nisan March-April Passover
2. Iyydr April-May
3. Siwan May-June Pentecost
4. Tammuz June-July
5. Abh July-August
6. Elul August-Sept.
7. Tishri Sept.-October Tabernacles
8. Marheshwan October-Nov.
9. Kislew Nov.-December
10. Tebheth December-Jan.
11. Shebhat Jan. February
12. Adhar Feb.-March

There is some problem here in that the Jewish months carried different names after the exile from those before the exile. Those given above are post-exilic.

Passover, the first of the three major feasts was to be observed on evening of the fourteenth day of the first month.

**LEV 23:6 And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.**

The day after the Passover was to be designated as the beginning of the feast of unleavened bread. It had been necessary to leave Egypt hurriedly. The bread had not had time to rise. They were

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to memorialize that fact by a feast in which only unleavened bread was used. From the fifteenth day of that first month until the twenty-first day, no leavened bread was to be eaten.

**LEV 23:7 In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.**

There was to be an appointed holy assembly on the fifteenth day of the month. No servile work was to be done. But, what is meant by servile work? We shall assume that this refers to hard labor such as one might do when gathering grain or washing clothing. Take note that the verse does not say there shall be no work done.

**LEV 23:8 But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days: in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.**

Each of the days of the feast of unleavened bread, a burnt offering was to be presented to Jehovah.

As was true on the first of the seven days, there was to be no heavy labor done. The Pharisees of the time of Jesus would most certainly have quibbled over just how heavy the labor could be. How many straws could be picked up on those two days?



**LEV 23:9 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

We now move from the feast of Passover and of Unleavened Bread to the feast of Firstfruits of the harvest.

**LEV 23:10 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest:**

Here is further indication that the material we are studying came before the exile. Israel had not yet come into the land of Canaan.

When the very first heads of grain were ripening, Israel was to go out into the fields and gather enough to tie one sheaf together. That sheaf was called the “firstfruit” of the harvest. God was the one who had provided their food. They were expected to recognize that and honor Him for His providence. Bringing the sheaf to the priest was the same as bringing it to Jehovah. The priest was Jehovah’s representative.

**LEV 23:11 And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.**

The priest would make a gesture which would be unmistakable. He would wave the firstfruit sheaf





back and forth before heaven. The Lord was to come first!

By the way, the day after the sabbath would have been equivalent to our Sunday, or the first day of the week. The next verse may become more meaningful if this is kept in mind.

**LEV 23:12 And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf an he lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto the LORD.**

Jesus Christ is called the “Lamb of God.” Christ also was a male without blemish.

**LEV 23:13 And the meat offering thereof shall be two tenth deals of fine flour mingled with oil, an offering made by fire unto the LORD for a sweet savour: and the drink offering thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of an hin.**

A meat offering does not refer to beef, mutton or goat. It is contrasted with drink offerings as we would speak of meat and drink.

Two tenth deals of fine flour would have been about one fifth of a bushel. The fourth part of a hin would have been around three pints. There is no reason to equate the word “wine” with any alcoholic content. It could have been fresh grape juice.

God was Israel’s support. Only by His grace would they have had food and drink. They were to



keep this forever in mind. We would do well to thank God every time we enjoy a meal of food.

**LEV 23:14 And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.**

We sometimes instruct our children not to start eating until everyone has been seated at the table. In addition, it would be advisable to instruct them that God is also present at that table and a prayer of thanksgiving should be offered before feasting on the blessings He has provided.

**LEV 23:15 And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete:**

Fifty days after the waving of the sheaf of the firstfruits of the harvest there was to be another feast day. They were to count seven weekly sabbaths and one more day.

**LEV 23:16 Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD.**

On the first day of the week after the seven sabbaths had been observed, they were to offer a



new meat offering to God. There is some difference of opinion as to whether the word “new” here means fresh food, or whether it means another offering in addition to those of the Passover Feast.

The word “Pentecost” refers to the fifty days which would have elapsed from the time of the Feast of the Passover to the Feast of Firstfruits.

**LEV 23:17 Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals; they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the LORD.**

Each household was to provide two loaves of bread. This time, the bread was to be leavened.

It was on the Day of Pentecost that the Church of Jesus Christ was established. Some three thousand souls were added together on that very special day. They were the firstfruits of the harvest of God.

**LEV 23:18 And ye shall offer with the bread seven lambs without blemish of the first year, and one young bullock, and two rams: they shall be for a burnt offering unto the LORD, with their meat offering, and their drink offerings, even an offering made by fire, of sweet savour unto the LORD.**

The difference in the meat offering and the burnt offering is evident here. The bullock, the two rams and the seven lambs were for a burnt offering. The bread was the meat offering.



**LEV 23:19 Then ye shall sacrifice one kid of the goats for a sin offering, and two lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace offerings.**

The burnt offerings could be either sin offerings or peace offerings. Both were burnt offerings.

**LEV 23:20 And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits for a wave offering before the LORD, with the two lambs: they shall be holy to the LORD for the priest.**

When the priest waved these offerings before the Lord, they were “wave offerings.” Thus meat offerings, sin offerings and peace offerings could also be termed wave offerings.

**LEV 23:21 And ye shall proclaim on the selfsame day, that it may be an holy convocation unto you: ye shall do no servile work therein: it shall be a statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.**

The Feast of Firstfruits, or Pentecost was to be kept throughout the entire Mosaic period. It would be replaced by the living sacrifices of the saints after the church was established.

No hard labor was to be engaged in on that day.



**LEV 23:22** And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the LORD your God.

God was making provision for the poor and needy of every sort. The corners of the fields were to be left unharvested in order that the unfortunate might find enough food to survive. The reader will remember that Ruth was gleaning in the fields of Boaz at a later date.

There is a truth of major importance to the survival of society embedded in this verse. The owners did not harvest the fields and then hand out that which they had harvest to lazy persons who did not have enough ambition to work. The poor were expected to work for that which they ate. This is in harmony with Paul's inspired statement that "If a man will not work, neither let him eat." (2 Thess. 3:10).

**LEV 23:23** And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

**LEV 23:24** Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation.

As can be seen by referring to the calendar given  
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earlier, the seventh month of the religious year was Tishri. This was the month which began the civil year. There are those who hold that creation began on the first of Tishri. The first day of the month Tishri was a day of blowing trumpets, and so we have the name “Feast of the Trumpets.”

**LEV 23:25 Ye shall do no servile work therein: but ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.**

No heavy labor was to be done on the first day of Tishri. It was a rest day, or sabbath. Not all sabbaths occurred on the seventh day of the week.

**LEV 23:26 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**LEV 23:27 Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.**

Now we come to a day which was not a feast day. This is known as the day of “Atonement.” It was a day of fasting rather than feasting. It looked forward to the Great Atonement which the Son of God made possible by His death upon the cross at Calvary.

**LEV 23:28 And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the LORD your God.**

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Do not fail to notice the change in the admonition. Previously it had been stated several times that no “servile work” was to be done. This time the command is that “NO” work was to be done. Special recognition to the importance of Christ’s sacrifice was foreshadowed by the Day of Atonement.

**LEV 23:29 For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people.**

The Day of Atonement was not a day of great joy. It was a day set apart for the recognition that men separate themselves from Jehovah by committing sin. This brings about the need for a means of eliminating that gap. If a man ignored the sorrow which should have been acknowledged for sin, that person had cut himself off from both the Lord and the Lord’s people.

**LEV 23:30 And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people.**

This does not mean God would cause that person to die at the end of the day of atonement if he had worked on that day. It does mean that the individual would be considered an outsider. It is true however, that those who worked on the weekly sabbath were to be put to death.

Exo 31:14 Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it  
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shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people.

Exo 31:15 Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.

**LEV 23:31 Ye shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.**

**LEV 23:32 It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath.**

For one twenty-four hour period there was to be mourning for sin. Compare this with the joy associated with the various feasts. The fact that men sin is not good news. The feast shadows which pointed to Christ were good news.

**LEV 23:33 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**LEV 23:34 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the LORD.**

The ninth day of the seventh month was the day of atonement. On the fifteenth day of the same





month, a feast was to begin. It was to last for seven days. It was to be the third of the three major feasts of the Jews, the Feast of Tabernacles.

**LEV 23:35 On the first day shall be an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.**

**LEV 23:36 Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it is a solemn assembly; and ye shall do no servile work therein.**

These two verses simply reiterate what was said in the previous verses. Each of the seven days a burnt offering was to be made.

The Feast of Tabernacles would remind Israel for centuries to come that God had delivered them from the oppression of Egypt and arranged for them to live in booths or tepee like structures which could be erected and dismantled on short notice as the journey was made to the land of Canaan.

**LEV 23:37 These are the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, a burnt offering, and a meat offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, every thing upon his day:**

**LEV 23:38 Beside the sabbaths of the LORD, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows,**

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**and beside all your freewill offerings, which ye give unto the LORD.**

If like the comments of E.M. Zerr on these verses. He pointed out that the word beside is repeated a number of times. One was not to think that if he observed one command of the Lord, he might be excused from other duties. God presents a complete way of life for us. Those who believe they can keep part of His will and ignore other parts will only cheat themselves out of the spiritual strength which they could enjoy.

**LEV 23:39 Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath.**

**LEV 23:40 And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days.**

**LEV 23:41 And ye shall keep it a feast unto the LORD seven days in the year. It shall be a statute for ever in your generations: ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month.**

**LEV 23:42 Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths:**

**LEV 23:43 That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land**

**of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.**

**LEV 23:44 And Moses declared unto the children of Israel the feasts of the LORD.**

The reader may wish to examine the eighth chapter of the book of Nehemiah in connection with this Feast of Tabernacles.

Let us close the discussion on this chapter by reading Hebrews 13:14.

Heb 13:14 For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

The continuing city which the writer of Hebrews speaks of is the New Jerusalem which awaits the righteous in heaven.

## *Chapter 24*

**LEV 24:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**LEV 24:2 Command the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamps to burn continually.**

There is a certain amount of concern about the relationship of this chapter to that which preceded it and that which follow it. The previous chapter had given instructions for the keeping of various feasts and a fast. There are three main topics in this present chapter. There is a discussion of the seven pronged candlestick which was placed in the Holy Place. Then we find directions for the twelve loaves of shewbread. The last of the three topics has to do with the treatment of a man who blasphemed the name of the Lord.

The material may not be as unrelated as some see it. One who would use the name of the Lord in vain is of the same nature as one who would ignore the laws concerning God's appointed feasts.

We begin this chapter by reading of the care which was to be taken of the seven pronged candlestick and the table of shewbread, both of which were found in the Holy Place of the tabernacle.

The people were to bring pure olive oil that might be used in the lamps to keep them burning continually. Olive oil was a precious item to Israel. It was used in food. It was used for anointing

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individuals into the service of God. It was used for the lighting of lamps. In this case, the lamps were the seven on the golden candlestick.

**LEV 24:3 Without the vail of the testimony, in the tabernacle of the congregation, shall Aaron order it from the evening unto the morning before the LORD continually: it shall be a statute for ever in your generations.**

The candlestick was not in the Most Holy Place. The vail separated the Most Holy from the Holy Place. The candlestick was located without, or outside the vail.

Aaron himself was to see that it was kept in order continually. We must ask ourselves if the word “continually” means twenty-four hours a day and every day of every year. Continually may have only meant from evening to morning every day. It has also been pointed out that it would have been very difficult to carry a lighted candlestick with them while the tabernacle had been dismantled and they were traveling through open territory.

The fact that the text says, “from evening until morning” leads some to feel that the lamps did not remain lighted during the daylight hours. The reader is reminded, however, that there were no windows in the tabernacle and there could have been a need for light even during the daytime.

**LEV 24:4 He shall order the lamps upon the pure candlestick before the LORD**

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**continually.**

The candlestick was called pure because it was made of pure gold. The light from it prefigured the Light of the World which is shed today through the life and teachings of the Saviour of the world.

**LEV 24:5 And thou shalt take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes thereof: two tenth deals shall be in one cake.**

Each of the twelve cakes, or loaves of bread represented one of the twelve tribes of Israel. They were fairly large. God specified precisely how much flour was to be used in each loaf.

**LEV 24:6 And thou shalt set them in two rows, six on a row, upon the pure table before the LORD.**

This verse gives the impression that the loaves were laid side by side in two nice neat rows. One commentator believed the loaves were large enough that some of the loaves may have been placed upon others.

**LEV 24:7 And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon each row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, even an offering made by fire unto the LORD.**

The word pure is used four times in seven verses. God expects purity of His people. Hypocrisy

and diluted religion is not acceptable. (See James 1:27.)

Jam 1:27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

**LEV 24:8 Every sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, being taken from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant.**

It is interesting that God provided bread for His people through manna from heaven during their wilderness wanderings. It is just as interesting that He instructed them to provide bread for His priests. This bread was not provided by God for Israel. It was provided by Israel for God.

The bread was to be left on the table of shewbread for a week. It was then to be removed and replaced by a new supply. Bread from the grocery store today would be a bit stale by the end of a week. Perhaps God intervened and prevented the bread from molding and becoming stale. We are not told.

**LEV 24:9 And it shall be Aaron's and his sons'; and they shall eat it in the holy place: for it is most holy unto him of the offerings of the LORD made by fire by a perpetual statute.**

The priests were not allowed to remove the bread



from the Holy Place. They were to eat it there. The procedure was to be continued as long as the Mosaic age lasted.

**LEV 24:10 And the son of an Israelitish woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel: and this son of the Israelitish woman and a man of Israel strove together in the camp;**

There was a mixed multitude who left Egypt along with the Israelites. There had been intermarriage between the Israelites and the Egyptians. When God's people marry those who are outside the fold it is an invitation to trouble. Those who have been raised in a family where one of the parents was a Christian and the other was not can verify the difficulties.

When Israel left Egypt it became necessary for the Egyptians who had married Israelites to make a decision as to whether or not they would leave with them. Some did and some did not. In the case of the woman here, it seems that her Egyptian husband decided to remain in Egypt.

Strife very often breaks out between those of different racial backgrounds. The child produced by this mixed marriage would have had difficulty feeling himself as a part of either Israel or Egypt. He found himself in a confrontation with one of the men of Israel. During the strife he made a serious mistake.





**LEV 24:11 And the Israelitish woman's son blasphemed the name of the Lord, and cursed. And they brought him unto Moses: (and his mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan:)**

The mistake was in using the name of the Lord in vain. This was in opposition to the commandment listed in Exodus 20:7.

Exo 20:7 Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

One of the evidences that the Bible is truly a record of actual events is the number of specific names given in cases such as this one. Shelomith and Dibri were real persons. One case would not prove the point. Hundreds of cases are powerful proof.

The question was what was to be done with the person of mixed parentage. He was not strictly a Jew. Should he be punished, and if so how?

**LEV 24:12 And they put him in ward, that the mind of the LORD might be shewed them.**

The man was arrested and placed in custody until God's will could be determined. Moses was not to make the decision himself. His opinion was not sufficient. We need to pay attention to Moses faith and seek out the will of God as presented in the Bible. Our opinions are subject to human weakness.

**LEV 24:13 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**LEV 24:14 Bring forth him that hath cursed without the camp; and let all that heard him lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him.**

God's will was that the sin was worthy of execution. The man was to be removed from the camp and stoned to death. Note that God did not just strike the man dead. He expected His people to show their disapproval by participating in the stoning.

The laying on of the hands of the people upon the guilty man was a means of placing the guilt where it belonged.

**LEV 24:15 And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin.**

**LEV 24:16 And he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the LORD, shall be put to death.**

Israel was to realize the very grave nature of dishonoring Jehovah. They were not to allow this sin to go unpunished. The sentence was to be death. We gather the conclusion that if Israel did not put the guilty person to death by stoning, they would be held guilty themselves.

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**LEV 24:17 And he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death.**

If one person took another person's life, the murderer was to have his own life taken. As I write these words, there is a man on death row who has been convicted of raping and murdering a young girl. His case has been hanging on for a matter of years. God did not intend for such to happen. Punishment was to be sure and certain.

**LEV 24:18 And he that killeth a beast shall make it good; beast for beast.**

**LEV 24:19 And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbour; as he hath done, so shall it be done to him;**

**LEV 24:20 Breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth: as he hath caused a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him again.**

**LEV 24:21 And he that killeth a beast, he shall restore it: and he that killeth a man, he shall be put to death.**

Jesus referred to this principle in the fifth chapter of Matthew.

Mat 5:38 Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:

Mat 5:39 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.



How can we harmonize what Jesus said with the thrust of the verse under consideration? There is a difference in personal vengeance and corporate law. The sentences of the civil law are to attend to the punishment of criminals. It is not correct to apply Jesus statement to the action of the courts. They are expected to see that the offenders are punished. Failing to do so will result in disrespect for the rights of the innocent.

**LEV 24:22 Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger, as for one of your own country: for I am the LORD your God.**

The problem with the man who had killed his foe in the example above was that he was not a pure Israelite. Did this make a difference in his treatment? It did not! If a non-citizen of the United States murders an innocent person during the alien's stay in the country, he is to be brought before the courts and duly punished. His non citizenship does not excuse his sin.

In some cases this could even cause an international incident. That would not alter the situation. The offender is to be punished.

**LEV 24:23 And Moses spake to the children of Israel, that they should bring forth him that had cursed out of the camp, and stone him with stones. And the children of Israel did as the LORD commanded Moses.**



Moses relayed the information he had received from the Lord, and the people followed the will of the Almighty.

## *Chapter 25*

**LEV 25:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying,**

If the reader will turn back to verse one of chapter one, he will find that God spoke to Moses out of the tabernacle. It is necessary to remember that the tabernacle was erected near Mount Sinai. This will erase possible confusion in the mind of the Bible student. (See below.)

Lev 1:1 And the LORD called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying,

**LEV 25:2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the LORD.**

It was to be many years later that much of what is found in this chapter was to be put into practice. There were many years of wandering before they reached the promised land of Canaan. God was giving long range views of Israel's expected behavior. That fact did not make His instructions any less binding.

**LEV 25:3 Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof;**



**LEV 25:4 But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.**

Cycles of seven can hardly be overlooked in the study of the Word of God. God created the heaven and the earth in six days and rested on the seventh. He kept this truth before His people from the book of Genesis to the book of Revelation. The number seven is particularly obvious in this twenty-fifth chapter of Leviticus.

It is well known that land can be exhausted by sowing and reaping for many years in succession. Farmers still allow their land to lie fallow for a year as a means of rejuvenating it. God's command then served two purposes. It allowed the land to rest and be refreshed. It also reminded Israel that God could provide for them in His own way.

**LEV 25:5 That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land.**

The people of God were not even to reap that which volunteered. Reaping implies laying up in store. The grapes and grain that were produced without human assistance could be picked or gathered as they ripened, but they were not to be stored for future use. Cultivation and storage were prohibited.



**LEV 25:6** And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee.

**LEV 25:7** And for thy cattle, and for the beast that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat.

Here again the word “meat” may lead to confusion in the mind of the present day reader of the King James Version. It is not used to speak of beef, chicken or mutton. It refers to solid food versus drink. God made a serious promise that without working the land there would be sufficient food for survival of both man and beast throughout the sabbatical year.

**LEV 25:8** And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years.

After seven of these seven year cycles had passed, there was to be a very special sabbath year. It would occur once every fifty years. There would be forty-nine years with seven sabbaths. Then in the following fiftieth year they were to observe this year of the Jubilee. A person who lived a normal lifetime would experience one Jubilee year.



**LEV 25:9 Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land.**

The day of atonement took place every year. It was observed on the tenth day of the seventh month of the year. The Jubilee year was to begin on that day. A trumpet sound was to herald it's arrival. Let the present reader not forget that when Christ returns in judgment the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall arise. The day of His appearing will be a day of joy just as the day of atonement was to be at the beginning of the year of Jubilee.

It is not reasonable to believe that a single trumpet would be heard over the entire land of Canaan. It is more likely that one trumpet sounded, and then another in the distance sent the call beyond the reach of the first. This could take place again and again. In that manner the trumpet sound could easily be heard throughout the entire land.

**LEV 25:10 And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.**

Just as the seventh day of each week, and the seventh year of each seven year cycle was to be hallowed, at the end of the seventh seven year cycle there was to be a hallowed year. This would mean



that both the forty-ninth year and the fiftieth year were to be a sabbath years.

**LEV 25:11 A jubile shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed.**

**LEV 25:12 For it is the jubile; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field.**

This regulation would mean that for two years in a row the Israelites were not to cultivate crops or reap any volunteer crops for storage purposes. The land was to be allowed to rest and was not to be forced into crop production.

The eating which was to be done was to take place in the field and not from a storehouse.

**LEV 25:13 In the year of this jubile ye shall return every man unto his possession.**

The land of Canaan truly belonged to Jehovah. Just as men today do not own the land in the same sense that God owns it, Israel was only a possessor of the land of Canaan. Still, God would give it to them as a possession for a time. If one had found it necessary to leave his possession in order to pay his debts, that person was to return to the possession in the year of Jubilee.



**LEV 25:14 And if thou sell ought unto thy neighbour, or buyest ought of thy neighbour's hand, ye shall not oppress one another:**

The people of Israel should have learned first hand just how despicable oppression is. Taking advantage of others because one happens to be in a more advantageous position is just as evil in an Israelite as it is in an Egyptian slave driver.

**LEV 25:15 According to the number of years after the jubile thou shalt buy of thy neighbour, and according unto the number of years of the fruits he shall sell unto thee:**

**LEV 25:16 According to the multitude of years thou shalt increase the price thereof, and according to the fewness of years thou shalt diminish the price of it: for according to the number of the years of the fruits doth he sell unto thee.**

The land could be transferred from one Israelite to another for a price. That price was to depend upon just how many years remained until the next Jubilee year. If there were twenty-five years until the next Jubilee, the land was to be sold for one half of what it would be sold for if the full fifty years were left. The reason for this was that it must be returned to the one who had sold it when the Jubilee year arrived.

**LEV 25:17 Ye shall not therefore oppress one another; but thou shalt fear thy God for I am the LORD your God.**

The people of God were to have a very special concern for one another. That was to be true in the land of Canaan, and it is still to be true at present. We are brothers and sisters with God as our Father. Jealousy and mistreatment are serious in the eyes of the Father.

**LEV 25:18 Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety.**

**LEV 25:19 And the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell therein in safety.**

By fearing Jehovah and keeping His commandments, His people would find all things working together for their good. Even their enemies would not prevail against them. Although God did not say so at this time, the reverse was also true. If they became rebellious and divided among themselves, life would become miserable and their enemies would be able to overcome them.

**LEV 25:20 And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase:**



They had just been told that they were to observe a sabbath year after each sixth year has passed. In addition they were to observe two sabbath years in succession when the Jubilee year came. The question would naturally arise as to what they would have to eat on those sabbath years, especially when a regular sabbath year was followed by the Jubilee sabbath.

**LEV 25:21 Then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years.**

**LEV 25:22 And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruits come in ye shall eat of the old store.**

They need not be worried. God was both willing and able to see that they did not go hungry. On the sixth year of the usual cycles, the land would produce enough to feed them for that sixth year and also for the sabbath year which followed.

On the cycle in which the Jubilee year came, the land would produce enough to feed them for three years. The sixth year of the cycle would be three times as productive as usual. It would feed them for itself. It would feed them for the seven year sabbath which followed, and it would feed them for the Jubilee sabbath following the usual sabbath year.

They were permitted to sow and take a harvest in the ninth year which followed the Jubilee year.



**LEV 25:23 The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine, for ye are strangers and sojourners with me.**

Jehovah was the actual owner of the land. He had the right to tell who could dwell in it. Israel did not own it and did not have the right to sell it outright.

Men are also pilgrims and sojourners in our own century. We await our permanent inheritance in heaven. (See Hebrews 11:13 and 1 Peter 2:11.)

Heb 11:13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

1Pe 2:11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

**LEV 25:24 And in all the land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the land.**

**LEV 25:25 If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold.**

At times one person of Israel might become so poor that it would become necessary to place his



land in the possession of another in order to pay his debts. If that was the case, a near relative was expected to pay the debt and redeem the land. God expected the one who had purchased it to return it to the original owner when the redemption price was paid. The case of Ruth and Boaz and the case of Naboth's vineyard illustrate applications of this arrangement.

We are poor dear reader. We have sinned and sold ourselves to Satan. Christ is the Redeemer. He has paid the price for our redemption. The most foolish thing a man or woman can do in this present life is to turn our back on the Saviour of the world.

**LEV 25:26 And if the man have none to redeem it, and himself be able to redeem it;**

**LEV 25:27 Then let him count the years of the sale thereof, and restore the overplus unto the man to whom he sold it; that he may return unto his possession.**

It was quite possible that the one who had sold his possession would not have any close kin who were able and willing to pay the redemption price. If the circumstances of the man who had sold it changed and he found the needed funds to redeem it himself, he was to be permitted to do that.

The overplus would be the percent of the selling price which had not yet been used. If the purchaser had paid a given amount for the use of the land until the next Jubilee, (Let us say twenty years.) and the redemption was paid in ten years, one half of the purchase price was to be returned to the one who



had made the purchase. It was the overplus which he had paid for the years he had not used it.

**LEV 25:28 But if he be not able to restore it to him, then that which is sold shall remain in the hand of him that hath bought it until the year of jubile: and in the jubile it shall go out, and he shall return unto his possession.**

If the man who sold the possession could not redeem it himself, and could find no close relative to redeem it, the land was still to be returned when the Jubilee year arrived.

**LEV 25:29 And if a man sell a dwelling house in a walled city, then he may redeem it within a whole year after it is sold; within a full year may he redeem it.**

**LEV 25:30 And if it be not redeemed within the space of a full year, then the house that is in the walled city shall be established for ever to him that bought it throughout his generations: it shall not go out in the jubile.**

**LEV 25:31 But the houses of the villages which have no wall round about them shall be counted as the fields of the country: they may be redeemed, and they shall go out in the jubile.**

The situation was somewhat different in the case of a dwelling in a walled city. There were cities where much merchandising was done. There





were other smaller centers of population in the countryside. The possession which was located in one of the merchandising areas did not fall under the same regulations as the one in the country. If the owner did not find the means to redeem such a property within one year from the date it was sold, that property did not return to the original possessor in the Jubilee year.

Your present writer has found no satisfactory explanation as to why the dwellings in walled cities should be treated differently, nor does he have one to offer.

**LEV 25:32 Notwithstanding the cities of the Levites, and the houses of the cities of their possession, may the Levites redeem at any time.**

The Levites were not given any extensive territory in the land of Canaan. They were granted forty-eight cities and a very small amount of land surrounding each city. The restriction about redeeming property within walled cities only within one year after the sale would have caused them. If a Levite had sold his house in one of the Levite cities and could not redeem it after the first year, he could have been left homeless.

**LEV 25:33 And if a man purchase of the Levites, then the house that was sold, and the city of his possession, shall go out in the year of jubile: for the houses of the cities of**

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**the Levites are their possession among the children of Israel.**

If a Levite did sell his house, although he could redeem it at any time up to the Jubilee, it was to return to him in the Jubilee year. Their homes in the walled Levite cities were their only possession. The other tribes had sizable territories. The Levites did not.

**LEV 25:34 But the field of the suburbs of their cities may not be sold; for it is their perpetual possession.**

The small suburbs of the Levite cities were never to be sold as the properties of other Israelites could be.

**LEV 25:35 And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee.**

We now come to a section dealing with general consideration for the poor. According to Matthew 26:11 this is an ever present problem.

Mat 26:11 For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always.

Note that this was not necessarily a brother in the immediate family. It might not even be a fellow Israelite. It could be a stranger or a wanderer.



The words “that he may live with thee” do not have to mean in the same house. God’s people are to have sympathy for those who are unfortunate. Above all, they are not to take advantage of the poor.

**LEV 25:36 Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee.**

**LEV 25:37 Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase.**

The word “usury” is taken from the word “use.” Usury is a fee paid for the use of money. If one is helping another person by making a loan which will allow that person to become more comfortable and productive there is nothing wrong with charging a reasonable rate of interest. What this verse is prohibiting is taking advantage of the person and leaving him even more dependent than he was before the loan was made.

Jesus became poor that we might be made rich. Too many walk the opposite road today by making others poor while they become rich.

**LEV 25:38 I am the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, and to be your God.**

**LEV 25:39 And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant:**

Jehovah made it possible for Israel to be released from bondage and slavery in the land of Egypt. He points out here that an Israelite who wishes to make his brother a slave is reversing that which God desires. An Israelite is not to become a slave to another Israelite.

**LEV 25:40 But as an hired servant, and as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, and shall serve thee unto the year of jubile.**

**LEV 25:41 And then shall he depart from thee, both he and his children with him, and shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his fathers shall he return.**

The Israelite may work for another Israelite as an employee, but not as an owned slave. A sojourner is one who moves from place to place. A slave is not free to do that. The hired servant must be free to return to his family and his property at the time of the Jubilee.

**LEV 25:42 For they are my servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: they shall not be sold as bondmen.**

**LEV 25:43 Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour; but shalt fear thy God.**

To rule over another person with rigor was to be merciless toward him. The Israelites had been ruled with rigor in Egypt. They should have learned that their brothers and sisters had



suffered enough at the hands of those who had no love for them. The second commandment is to love one's neighbor as one's self (Mat 22:38-39).

This is the first and great commandment.

Mat 22:39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

**LEV 25:44 Both thy bondmen, and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids.**

**LEV 25:45 Moreover of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land: and they shall be your possession.**

It was permissible for an Israelite to buy those who were not Israelites as owned servants. This was true of both menservants and women servants. They were permitted to buy the people of the land of Canaan. They could also buy those who were passing through.

I think, however, that we are safe in saying Jehovah would not have appreciated them abusing a bondservant. God is love. Men are expected to love one another even as God has loved them. The mistreatment of human property would be hateful to the Father in heaven.

**LEV 25:46 And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to**

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**inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bondmen for ever: but over your brethren the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigour.**

These bondservants who were taken from the people of the land of Canaan or from the strangers who passed through could be passed down as an inheritance from their owners to the owners children.

**LEV 25:47 And if a sojourner or stranger wax rich by thee, and thy brother that dwelleth by him wax poor, and sell himself unto the stranger or sojourner by thee, or to the stock of the stranger's family:**

**LEV 25:48 After that he is sold he may be redeemed again; one of his brethren may redeem him:**

It was quite possible that a stranger might prosper in the land of Canaan among the Israelites. If that took place and the stranger was able to buy an Israelite because he had become poverty stricken, that person could be bought back from the stranger by the Israelite's brethren. The implication is that such a redemption would be the honorable thing to do rather than allow An Israelite to become a bondservant to a stranger.

**LEV 25:49 Either his uncle, or his uncle's son, may redeem him, or any that is nigh of**



**kin unto him of his family may redeem him; or if he be able, he may redeem himself.**

**LEV 25:50 And he shall reckon with him that bought him from the year that he was sold to him unto the year of jubile: and the price of his sale shall be according unto the number of years, according to the time of an hired servant shall it be with him.**

**LEV 25:51 If there be yet many years behind, according unto them he shall give again the price of his redemption out of the money that he was bought for.**

**LEV 25:52 And if there remain but few years unto the year of jubile, then he shall count with him, and according unto his years shall he give him again the price of his redemption.**

The situation here was similar to that in the case of selling land. The amount to be paid as the redemption price was to depend upon the number of years remaining before the Jubilee.

**LEV 25:53 And as a yearly hired servant shall he be with him: and the other shall not rule with rigour over him in thy sight.**

Once the Israelite has redeemed his fellow Israelite, he was not to consider him as a slave. The man was to be respected as one would respect a hired employee.

**LEV 25:54 And if he be not redeemed in these years, then he shall go out in the year of jubile, both he, and his children with him.**

If the Israelite who had sold himself to a stranger could not redeem himself, and had no fellow Israelite who was both willing and able to redeem him, the man and all of his children were to be released in the year of the Jubilee.

**LEV 25:55 For unto me the children of Israel are servants; they are my servants whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.**

The children of Israel were very special in the sight of the Lord. They were His people and He was their God. As long as they continued to love Him and obey His commandments, he would love them and provide for them. He had not brought them out of Egypt that they might return to slavery. They were His precious children!





## *Chapter 26*

This chapter has two main divisions. It tells of the blessings Israel would receive if the commandments of God were heard and obeyed. It tells of the curses which will fall upon them if those commandments were ignored or disobeyed. The word “if” is found nine times. The words “I will” are found even more often. God’s treatment of Israel was to be in accordance with their treatment of His statutes.

**LEV 26:1 Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am the LORD your God.**

We are told repeatedly that Jehovah is a jealous God. Men are not to place any false gods before Him. Those objects which men have made with their own hands are nothings. They cannot hear. They cannot see. They cannot answer prayer. Stone, metal and wood are materials which the True God has made available for men’s use, not for adoration.

**LEV 26:2 Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD.**

The word “sabbaths” is in the plural. There were weekly sabbaths. There were yearly sabbaths. There were seven year sabbaths and there were fifty year sabbaths called Jubilees. All of them were to be kept according to the commandment of Jehovah.

**LEV 26:3 If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them;**

**LEV 26:4 Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.**

Right away we have an “if” and an “I will.” Rain is critical in that part of the globe. A shortage of rain can very quickly bring disaster. The land is very productive when rain is sufficient. It can be just the opposite when drought takes place.

**LEV 26:5 And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time: and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely.**

God’s blessings of rain would be so effective that the grain crops such as wheat would not be completely threshed until the grapes would be ripe and ready for plucking. The grapes would produce until it was time for another sowing of grain.

There would be an abundance of food for all. None would come and take that which they had cultivated.

Ezekiel presented almost identical promises in his prophecy. (See Ezekiel 34:26-27.)

**Eze 34:26 And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the**



shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing.

Eze 34:27 And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the LORD, when I have broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them.

**LEV 26:6 And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid: and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land.**

Bear and lions were greatly feared in that area. God would see to it that these ferocious animals did not attack them or their children.

**LEV 26:7 And ye shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword.**

**LEV 26:8 And five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight: and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword.**

Those who decided to attack Israel would find no success. Just how God would cause this fear to strike the hearts of Israel's enemies is not detailed. Nevertheless, numbers would be no hindrance to their safety. A relatively small number of Israelites



would be able to defeat much larger forces who sought to drive them out of the land.

**LEV 26:9 For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you.**

The respect of God's people for Him would lead to His respect for them. In the beginning He had commanded Adam and Eve to multiply and fill the earth. At the time when this present chapter was written there was no problem of overpopulation. Large numbers of children were considered a blessing. As a matter of fact, if man were to give God the respect which is due Him today, peace would reign and far more people could exist on the food supplies which would become available.

**LEV 26:10 And ye shall eat old store, and bring forth the old because of the new.**

The blessings would be so great that supplies of food would still be left when the new harvests were ready. It would be necessary to consume the stored food before there would be room for that which was being taken in.

**LEV 26:11 And I will set my tabernacle among you: and my soul shall not abhor you.**

**LEV 26:12 And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people.**



What happens in your neighborhood when a new family moves in? Are they welcomed and made feel at home? How do you feel when you move into a new neighborhood? Do you feel comfortable? God is saying that He desires to set up His presence in the midst of this people. He will feel comfortable in doing that if they live righteously. He will enjoy their fellowship and will love and care for them.

**LEV 26:13 I am the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright.**

His people are reminded that He was responsible for their success in leaving the slavery and bondage they endured in Egypt. He had given them pride and allowed them to stand up straight rather than being bent over in labor and beatings. He had proven that He was willing and able to keep His promises.

**LEV 26:14 But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments;**

**LEV 26:15 And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant:**

Here is the other side of the coin. We have another “if” and another “I will.” This time we deal with disobedience and resulting curses.



God does not give His commandments and statutes in selfishness. He created man in His own image. He desires that they have full and happy lives. Obedience to His will should never be a source of bitterness. All things will work together for our good if we live in harmony with His purposes.

**LEV 26:16 I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it.**

Those who are so filled with pride and selfishness that they set their own will up in opposition to that of their Creator will find misery unlimited. That will be true in this life and also in the existence after the resurrection of the dead.

**LEV 26:17 And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you.**

Now we have the complete opposite of the previous situation. Before, when they were obedient, the enemies fled in fear before them. Now they flee before the enemies. It would be impossible for the enemies to defeat them while God was with them. It would be impossible for them to stand before the enemy when God had been spurned.

How many of the readers can remember the days when you were children and called you parents into



the bedroom when a shadow on the wall seemed to be a monster? It would be the same for grown men in Israel when they separated themselves from Jehovah.

**LEV 26:18 And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.**

We see the number seven again. Whatever amount of punishment is necessary will be put upon them.

**LEV 26:19 And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass:**

No rain can pass through iron. No crops can come up through brass. They would receive no help from the earth below or from heaven above.

**LEV 26:20 And your strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits.**

They could spend every effort in sowing and cultivating. It would be wasted. The wheat crop would yield no harvest. The grape vineyards and the olive trees would be barren. Hunger and the grim reaper would stalk through the land leaving death and sorrow behind.



**LEV 26:21 And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me; I will bring seven times more plagues upon you according to your sins.**

**LEV 26:22 I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number; and your high ways shall be desolate.**

God could make it no clearer that He demanded reform. Disease and wild animals would haunt every footstep. People would fear to leave their homes. Commercial activities would grind to a halt.

**LEV 26:23 And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me;**

**LEV 26:24 Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins.**

This present writer taught school for many years. Some of those years were spent with fifth and sixth grade students. The paddle was still used in those days. Most of the time three or four licks with a paddle would bring a change in behavior. On occasion that was not so. One could see the student brace himself and challenge you to make him change. God was saying He had enough disciplinary means to make men wish they had changed.





**LEV 26:25** And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant: and when ye are gathered together within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy.

Walled cities were a refuge against armed enemies. When the enemy was too strong to be resisted, the people could hide behind the walls of the city for protection. That would not work in cases where Israel had stiffened their neck before God. He would cause disease to break out among them. There would be no way to hide from that enemy.

**LEV 26:26** And when I have broken the staff of your bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall deliver you your bread again by weight: and ye shall eat, and not be satisfied.

**LEV 26:27** And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me;

**LEV 26:28** Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins.

At each stage the punishment becomes more severe. There would be only one tenth of the food which would normally be needed. Food would have to be rationed. Even when they did have a few crumbs, there would not be enough to relieve the hunger.

**LEV 26:29 And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat.**

Just how far would a loving God go in bringing His children to their senses? He would go far enough that parents would forget how much they cared for their own children and would cook and eat them.

Is this impossible? We have at least three examples of this very thing happening. One is recorded in 2 Kings 6:29. Another is found in Lamentations 4:10. The third is recounted by Josephus as he described the conditions in Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

**LEV 26:30 And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your images, and cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols, and my soul shall abhor you.**

This chapter began with a warning against idolatry. What would God do about it if they decided to continue in their adoration of the works of men's hands? He would see that those high places where the idols were erected were demolished. The images would be chopped into pieces. The remains would be piled in heaps and the dead bodies of Israelites would be piled on top of them.

**LEV 26:31 And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation,**



**and I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours.**

Oh yes, they would still be going through hypocritical worship services. But, they would be mixing those services with prayers to false gods. That would not be enough. The places of worship would be emptied. The smell of their sacrifices would be a stench in God's nostrils rather than a sweet smelling savour.

**LEV 26:32 And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it.**

**LEV 26:33 And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste.**

God had a land flowing with milk and honey to which he was ready to lead His people. If His people were not appreciative of this gracious favor, he would most certainly separate them from it.

**LEV 26:34 Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths.**

**LEV 26:35 As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it.**



This is precisely what took place. For hundreds of years Israel forsook the sabbaths of the Lord. Then He arranged for the land to rest for the period of time it should have rested while they abused it. For seventy years His people were help captive in Babylon while their enemies overran Canaan.

**LEV 26:36 And upon them that are left alive of you I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth.**

**LEV 26:37 And they shall fall one upon another, as it were before a sword, when none pursueth: and ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies.**

**LEV 26:38 And ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up.**

If Israel fell victim to their own pride to the extent that they felt their blessings were the result of their own strength, or that of their idols, God would demonstrate just how weak they were. They would become as cowardly as they had been courageous. They would fight with one another and would be taken captive and sent to the land of those who hated them.

**LEV 26:39 And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them.**

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When He speaks of those who are left of them He is not referring to those who were left in Canaan when others were taken to Babylon. He is talking about those who were left alive after the famine, the disease, the crop failures, the wild beasts and the enemies had killed off large numbers.

**LEV 26:40 If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me;**

They would never be completely forgotten. Some would no doubt come to realize their dependence on Jehovah. They would come to understand the reason why the suffering had come. If they would confess their sins and admit that they had brought these horrors upon themselves by disobeying the True God of heaven, there could be a reversal of fortunes.

**LEV 26:41 And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity:**

Circumcision was a symbol of a people who were ready to reject a life of selfish pleasure and follow God's will wherever it led. A circumcised heart was one that felt it could handle it's own affairs without the help of the Lord.

**LEV 26:42 Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.**

When those who recognized the error of their ancestors and themselves in defying God were ready to turn again to Him, He would be ready to embrace them once more and bless their land.

**LEV 26:43 The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity: because, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes.**

**LEV 26:44 And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God.**

Provided the Jews did turn from their folly, God would abandon His disciplinary action. Even though they were made captives in Babylon or other places, God would allow them to return to His service, and His blessings. His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob would be honored. He would not forget his promises.

**LEV 26:45 But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors,**



**whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the LORD.**

**LEV 26:46 These are the statutes and judgments and laws, which the LORD made between him and the children of Israel in mount Sinai by the hand of Moses.**

The reader must remember that this chapter records the blessings and the cursings which would take place in the future if Israel glorified Him, or if Israel defied Him. These things were written before the wilderness wanderings and not after they had done just what He warned them not to do. Some people have a hard time realizing that God means what He says!

Take note that verse forty-six is apparently a conclusion to the entire book of Leviticus. God's statutes, laws and judgments have been presented. Israel's future would depend upon whether these were ignored or whether they were obeyed.

## *Chapter 27*

**LEV 27:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

How many times now have we seen a chapter in the book of Leviticus begin with the words of this first verse. Moses was making absolutely certain that the Israelites realized he was not the originator of the statutes and judgments which were being given.

Some controversy exists as to whether this chapter is out of place. There are many who feel that chapter twenty-six provides a much more logical place to bring the book to a conclusion than does this chapter. In addition, the closing verse of this twenty-seventh chapter are nearly identical with those of the preceding one.

There is a solid answer to those who doubt the propriety of allowing this chapter to close out the book of Leviticus. Throughout the book the topic has been the need to obey the commandments and laws which Jehovah has spelled out with much detail. This last chapter deals with voluntary promises which His people might make above and beyond that which He has declared to be necessary to avoid being defiant toward His will. The vows which are discussed are free-will offerings. They arise out of dedicated hearts that love God and wish to do even more than he requires.



**LEV 27:2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When a man shall make a singular vow, the persons shall be for the LORD by thy estimation.**

A singular vow is one that sets that which is to be vowed apart from that which is around it and dedicates it to God. It may be persons, livestock, houses or land. The individual who is making the vow states that he is separating the object of the vow from his other possessions in order to promote the glory of Jehovah.

**LEV 27:3 And thy estimation shall be of the male from twenty years old even unto sixty years old, even thy estimation shall be fifty shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary.**

Much of this section which deals with the vowing of persons is related to slaves. The estimations given have to do with the market value of the individual who is being dedicated. A male was worth more than a female because he was capable of producing more physical work. A male in the prime of life was worth fifty shekels. A shekel was approximately the amount a worker might be paid for one month's labor. This would mean that the value of the male slave in his prime would be about equal to four years of labor.

**LEV 27:4 And if it be a female, then thy estimation shall be thirty shekels.**

The value of the female was less than the male in that she could only produce about sixty percent as much physical labor.

**LEV 27:5 And if it be from five years old even unto twenty years old, then thy estimation shall be of the male twenty shekels, and for the female ten shekels.**

:Both the male and the female were worth less from the time they were five years old until they were twenty. They had to be fed during these years even though the amount of work which could be expected was less.

**LEV 27:6 And if it be from a month old even unto five years old, then thy estimation shall be of the male five shekels of silver, and for the female thy estimation shall be three shekels of silver.**

Those of the early childhood years could not be expected to produce much work, if any at all. Even at these early ages the male was estimated at more than the female because of the future potential.

**LEV 27:7 And if it be from sixty years old and above; if it be a male, then thy estimation shall be fifteen shekels, and for the female ten shekels.**



The same was true of the aged that was the case with the immature. After sixty years of age the male was estimated at fifteen shekels as compared with the fifty shekels assigned at the age of twenty.

**LEV 27:8 But if he be poorer than thy estimation, then he shall present himself before the priest, and the priest shall value him; according to his ability that vowed shall the priest value him.**

The estimated values were not bound in concrete. If the priest found that a man who was dedicating a slave to God was comparatively poor, the priest could reduce the standard value of the slave. This was done because the dedicated slave was normally redeemed by the one who had offered the individual. If the owner was not able to pay the standard estimation value, the priest could reduce the estimation to keep from working a hardship on the one who had made the vow.

**LEV 27:9 And if it be a beast, whereof men bring an offering unto the LORD, all that any man giveth of such unto the LORD shall be holy.**

In addition to humans, livestock could be offered. When livestock was dedicated, the animal was distinct from the rest of the stock. It was to be used only for the work of the Lord.

**LEV 27:10 He shall not alter it, nor change it, a good for a bad, or a bad for a good: and**

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**if he shall at all change beast for beast, then it and the exchange thereof shall be holy.**

If one who had vowed an animal to the Lord, he might decided later he had acted hastily. If so, it was too late to make a change. The value of the animal was due to Jehovah. There was to be no substitution of another less valuable animal for the one which had been promised.

A penalty was even spelled out for attempting to switch an inferior beast for one of higher quality which had been vowed. The penalty was that both the animal which had been vowed, and the animal which the owner had tried to hold back were the property of the Lord.

**LEV 27:11 And if it be any unclean beast, of which they do not offer a sacrifice unto the LORD, then he shall present the beast before the priest:**

It was possible to vow an unclean beast to the Lord, even though the animal could not be eaten or sacrificed. An ass was an unclean animal. Yet it had value which could be dedicated.

**LEV 27:12 And the priest shall value it, whether it be good or bad: as thou valuest it, who art the priest, so shall it be.**

This time the estimation was not set by Jehovah at a certain number of shekels. It was the duty of

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the priest to set the value. Whatever the priest declared was to be accepted.

**LEV 27:13 But if he will at all redeem it, then he shall add a fifth part thereof unto thy estimation.**

In many cases the person or beast was not actually turned over to the priests when it was vowed. The owner would pay the estimated value to the priest and keep the individual or the animal for his own purposes. This process was known as “redemption.”

It would be well for the reader to recall the teaching of Christ concerning those who condemned the Pharisees for neglecting their parents by declaring that the property which could have been used for the parents support had been declared as a gift to God. (See Mark 7:10-13.)

Mar 7:10 For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death:

Mar 7:11 But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free.

Mar 7:12 And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother;

Mar 7:13 Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

**LEV 27:14** And when a man shall sanctify his house to be holy unto the LORD, then the priest shall estimate it, whether it be good or bad: as the priest shall estimate it, so shall it stand.

**LEV 27:15** And if he that sanctified it will redeem his house, then he shall add the fifth part of the money of thy estimation unto it, and it shall be his.

Some of the more well to do might even have a house they decided to vow to God. Probably, in most cases it would not have been the house in which they were living, although it certainly could have been.

No standard value existed for the estimation of a house. Thus the priest was expected to estimate the value. His estimation was to be accepted. Then, if the one who made the vow decided to pay money to redeem it and maintain possession of the house, he must add one fifth of the estimate to it. A house that was valued at 1,000 shekels would be redeemed for 1,200 shekels.

**LEV 27:16** And if a man shall sanctify unto the LORD some part of a field of his possession, then thy estimation shall be according to the seed thereof: an homer of barley seed shall be valued at fifty shekels of silver.

**LEV 27:17** If he sanctify his field from the year of jubile, according to thy estimation it shall stand.

A man's land could also be vowed. If this was done, the estimate would vary according to the  
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amount of barley seed it would require to plant the land. Some believe this referred to the amount of barley the parcel of land would probably produce. The important thing is that acreage could be estimated by the priest and vowed by the owner.

**LEV 27:18 But if he sanctify his field after the jubile, then the priest shall reckon unto him the money according to the years that remain, even unto the year of the jubile, and it shall be abated from thy estimation.**

**LEV 27:19 And if he that sanctified the field will in any wise redeem it, then he shall add the fifth part of the money of thy estimation unto it, and it shall be assured to him.**

It was unlikely that most would vow their land on the year of the Jubilee. Most of the time the action would take place between Jubilee years. Since the land normally went back into the possession of the one who inherited it at the time of the Jubilee, the estimate would decrease according to the number of years that had passed since the last Jubilee.

**LEV 27:20 And if he will not redeem the field, or if he have sold the field to another man, it shall not be redeemed any more.**

If the owner did not decide to pay the estimated value and left it in the possession of the priests until the next Jubilee, he could no longer redeem it. If he sold the property to another person who failed

to redeem it before the next Jubilee, the first owner could not redeem it.

**LEV 27:21 But the field, when it goeth out in the jubile, shall be holy unto the LORD, as a field devoted; the possession thereof shall be the priest's.**

That field which had not been redeemed before the coming of the next Jubilee was to be the possession of the priests. That does not indicate that any one priest could claim ownership. The priests were not to possess an inheritance. It means that the property would be dedicated to the Lord from that point on.

**LEV 27:22 And if a man sanctify unto the LORD a field which he hath bought, which is not of the fields of his possession;**

**LEV 27:23 Then the priest shall reckon unto him the worth of thy estimation, even unto the year of the jubile: and he shall give thine estimation in that day, as a holy thing unto the LORD.**

**LEV 27:24 In the year of the jubile the field shall return unto him of whom it was bought, even to him to whom the possession of the land did belong.**

The above three verses consider what was to happen if a man who had bought land which was not a part of his inheritance when the land was





divided upon entry into Canaan. The inheritance was not to be passed from person to person. Now the land had been bought by someone who did not own it by way of inheritance. What was to be done in the year of Jubilee?

If the new owner wished to vow the land to God, he could do so. However, the value was to be adjusted according to the number of years from when he made the vow until the coming of the next Jubilee. At the time of the Jubilee the land was to return to the possession of the original owner who had inherited it.

**LEV 27:25 And all thy estimations shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary: twenty gerahs shall be the shekel.**

**LEV 27:26 Only the firstling of the beasts, which should be the LORD'S firstling, no man shall sanctify it; whether it be ox, or sheep: it is the LORD'S.**

From the time of the passing of the death angel over the houses of the Israelites who had placed the blood of the passover lamb on their doorposts, God had claimed the firstborn of both man and beast as His own. There was no choice about this. Every firstborn belonged to God without man making a vow. The vow was voluntary. The claim on the firstborn was obligatory. You can not sanctify that which already belongs to Jehovah.

**LEV 27:27** And if it be of an unclean beast, then he shall redeem it according to thine estimation, and shall add a fifth part of it thereto: or if it be not redeemed, then it shall be sold according to thy estimation.

Clean animals could be sacrificed. Unclean animals could not be sacrificed, but they could be sanctified and redeemed. If the one who vowed it desired not to redeem it, he was required to sell the animal and contribute the sale price to the Lord. In that case he would not keep the animal for his own purposes.

**LEV 27:28** Notwithstanding no devoted thing, that a man shall devote unto the LORD of all that he hath, both of man and beast, and of the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed: every devoted thing is most holy unto the LORD.

There are language difficulties here. The Hebrew word which is translated as “devoted” in this verse is the word *cherem*. It always means an irreversible grant to God. See Adam Clarke on this verse. Any object devoted in this manner was absolutely unredeemable.

**LEV 27:29** None devoted, which shall be devoted of men, shall be redeemed; but shall surely be put to death.



Now we see a partial change of thought. If men who are devoted irrevocably to destruction as the enemies of Jehovah, they must be destroyed. They cannot be redeemed from that destiny. As examples of this type of devotion we have the case of Achan who took a wedge of gold in at the time of the defeat of Ai. God had banned this property. They were not to touch it. It was accursed. Another example is that of Saul who saved Agag when God commanded that every Amalekite was to be destroyed. (Also see Numbers 21:2).

Num 21:2 And Israel vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will utterly destroy their cities.

Israel had devoted the people for destruction as God's enemies. They were expected to see that those enemies were devoted to that end.

**LEV 27:30 And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S: it is holy unto the LORD.**

The tenth of the crops belonged to God. It might be wheat or barley. It might be olives or figs. But one tenth of the harvest was God's. It already belonged to Him.



**LEV 27:31 And if a man will at all redeem ought of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth part thereof.**

A person could retain possession of the tenth of the harvest which belonged to God. If he chose to do so, he must add twenty percent of the value of the crop to the redemption price.

**LEV 27:32 And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD.**

It was similar with the animals. The tenth belonged to Jehovah. Passing under the rod was a means of counting the livestock. As they were allowed to pass through a narrow gate, every tenth animal was marked and it was God's possession.

**LEV 27:33 He shall not search whether it be good or bad, neither shall he change it: and if he change it at all, then both it and the change thereof shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed.**

The owner of the livestock was not to pick out the weakest and least valuable tenth for God. He was not to be substituted for in any manner. Any attempt to change or substitute rendered both the original animal and the one which had been offered to God in place of the original became God's own.



**LEV 27:34 These are the commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses for the children of Israel in mount Sinai.**

The similarity of this verse to the last verse of chapter twenty-six is not evidence of tampering. The words at the end of chapter twenty-six refer to the obligations placed upon Israel. The words here refer to free-will dedications to the Creator and Sustainer of heaven and earth, with all that is contained in them.

### **A Final Note**

I reiterate that if the book of Leviticus is looked upon as a dry piece of legislation which applied to those living in a distant part of the world in times which have no relevance to today's reader, it will be a burden to study. If it is looked upon as a preparation for the day in which Jesus Christ came as the substance predicted by the many shadows cast by God's providential hand, it becomes alive and extremely meaningful to men of every age.

The Christ Himself said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." John 5:39.

### **And A Few Afterthoughts**

There is one other thought which must be paid some attention at this time. There are strongly divided beliefs as to what God did mean when He said He would not break His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and that He would never utterly

destroy Israel. Many volumes have been written about God's promises to the seed of Abraham by the flesh. This commentary is not designed to explore every facet of every them in the Bible.

We do not propose to place the comments of several commentators side by side in order that the reader might examine and compare them in depth. Nor do we feel justified in running down every cross reference related to fleshly Israel versus spiritual Israel. Our task is to present in the plainest manner possible the meaning of the verses before us.

It is our understanding that verses forty-four and forty-five apply primarily to the fleshly descendants of Abraham, but that the secondary promises apply to those who have become the seed of Abraham through their faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

God did not cast off His people when they were being chastised in the land of Babylon. A remnant were allowed to return to the land of Canaan. One day God is going to destroy this present heaven and earth by fire. A new spiritual heaven and earth will replace this one. Those who are the spiritual seed of Abraham will be resurrected from the grave. Those who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the air. God will not cast off His remnant. They will enjoy an eternal inheritance in new spiritual bodies.

One thing is clear. That is the difficulty of comprehending all of the details of the future. Far more able men than your present commentator have admitted that we will have to wait and see just



how these promises are kept. God knows both the beginning and the end of all

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**The Book Of  
NUMBERS**



# Introduction To Numbers

## **The Title:**

The five books credited to Moses are not truly five. They are actually one. The names we use were not chosen by Moses. They were selected by others at a later date. The name chosen for this book of Numbers was not as well chosen as those of the other four books. If we place them together and look at the contents of each book we can see this rather easily.

Genesis - Beginnings.

Exodus - Coming Out.

Leviticus - The Levites and the Law.

Numbers - Wilderness Wanderings.

Deuteronomy - Repeating the law.

Only the first three chapters and the twenty-sixth chapter are given to the numbering of Israel. The majority of the material in the book deals with the experiences of the people as they wandered for nearly forty years through the wilderness from Mount Sinai to the borders of Canaan. Some of the older Hebrew texts are actually given the title "Wanderings."

## **The Author:**

Very little needs to be said concerning the author. Moses has been thoroughly discussed in the introductions of the three books preceding this one.

We will add that Moses no doubt knew the facts more

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completely than any other man alive. He was the one through whom the law had been given, and he was the one who led the people during those years of trial and triumph.

### **The Date:**

God to order their lives during their travels. The Christian has received the New Testament as a guide for faith and practice. The Israelites had to be nourished with food from the hand of God. Christians gain spiritual nourishment from the Bread of Life. Israel had to meet many trials of their faith. Christians do the same. Israelites were to keep their eyes on the pillar and the cloud which were guiding them to a Promised Land. Christians must constantly keep in mind that they must follow Him who said, "Come follow me." and that each step they take should bring them closer to the land of endless day.

### **A Brief Outline:**

- I. Preparations for the Journey.
- II. From Mount Sinai to Kadesh Barnea.
- III. Fear of giants and failure to trust God.
- IV. A ten days Journey in almost forty years.
- V. At the borders of the Promised Land.

## *Chapter 1*

**NUM 1:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the tabernacle of the congregation, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying,**

It might well be of interest to the reader to count the number of times this same phrase “And the Lord spake unto Moses” is used in this book. Some writers have decided this means Moses did not write the book. They see it as being written about Moses rather than by Moses. This is not a solid argument. The Bible has other places where the writer spoke of himself in the third person. For example, Paul spoke of a man who was caught up into the third heaven. It was himself.

The time of this event was the first day of the second month of the second year after leaving Egypt. Just one month before this, on the first day of the first month of the second year, the tabernacle had been completed. During the time between the leaving of Egypt and the date of verse one, God had spoken to them from Mount Sinai. Now that the tabernacle is built and ready for use God spoke from it.

**NUM 1:2 Take ye the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, after their families, by the house of their fathers, with the number of their names, every male by their polls;**

God commanded that a census be taken. This census was not simply for the purpose of counting noses. The people were to be opposed by numerous enemies. There was a serious need to be organized. They were to count  
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the number of individual males. They were to determine to which family and tribe each belonged.

**NUM 1:3 From twenty years old and upward, all that are able to go forth to war in Israel: thou and Aaron shall number them by their armies.**

There were certainly other reasons for taking this census, but the primary reason was to discover the number of men of fighting age were available in case of military action.

One other purpose could well have been to decide which part of the inheritance in the land of Canaan should be imparted to each individual.

**NUM 1:4 And with you there shall be a man of every tribe; every one head of the house of his fathers.**

There was to be a leader chosen for each of the tribes. This would have served well in time of conflict. It would also be useful in disciplinary matters among themselves.

**NUM 1:5 And these are the names of the men that shall stand with you: of the tribe of Reuben; Elizur the son of Shedeur.**

We find reference to a few of these persons later in the Biblical record. Two of them are found in the genealogy of Jesus Christ. The others are mentioned in this same book of Numbers.

**NUM 1:6 Of Simeon; Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai.**



**NUM 1:7 Of Judah; Nahshon the son of Amminadab.**

Nashon and Amminadab are mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus Christ. (See the third chapter of Luke.)

**NUM 1:8 Of Issachar; Nethaneel the son of Zuar.**

**NUM 1:9 Of Zebulun; Eliab the son of Helon.**

**NUM 1:10 Of the children of Joseph: of Ephraim; Elishama the son of Ammihud: of Manasseh; Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur.**

**NUM 1:11 Of Benjamin; Abidan the son of Gideoni.**

**NUM 1:12 Of Dan; Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai.**

**NUM 1:13 Of Asher; Pagiell the son of Ocran.**

**NUM 1:14 Of Gad; Eliasaph the son of Deuel.**

**NUM 1:15 Of Naphtali; Ahira the son of Enan.**

**NUM 1:16 These were the renowned of the congregation, princes of the tribes of their fathers, heads of thousands in Israel.**

Moses did not choose these leaders. God called them by name and told Moses and Aaron to select them. Men of renown are not chosen in that same manner today. Every Christian must prepare himself or herself for responsibility. Then, in His providential wisdom God will see to it that the person and the responsibilities are brought together. We must be cautious in seeking out positions of fame and renown. God will see that everything works to the glory of His Kingdom and for the welfare of those who are willing to serve.

**NUM 1:17 And Moses and Aaron took these men which are expressed by their names:**

**NUM 1:18 And they assembled all the congregation together on the first day of the second month, and they declared their pedigrees after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, by their polls.**

During the second World War, those who were eighteen years of age were eligible for the draft. God chose the age of twenty in Moses time. The Jewish historian Josephus claims that at the age of fifty they were excused from military service.

We go to the polls to vote today. Each individual has the right to cast a vote. The word “poll” has reference to the head. Each head was counted in numbering the fighting men of Israel.

**NUM 1:19 As the LORD commanded Moses, so he numbered them in the wilderness of Sinai.**

**NUM 1:20 And the children of Reuben, Israel’s eldest son, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, by their polls, every male from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;**

**NUM 1:21 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Reuben, were forty and six thousand and five hundred.**

The fighting men of the tribe of Reuben - 46,500.

**NUM 1:22 Of the children of Simeon, by their**





**generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, those that were numbered of them, according to the number of the names, by their polls, every male from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;**

**NUM 1:23 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Simeon, were fifty and nine thousand and three hundred.**

The fighting men of the tribe of Simeon - 59,300.

**NUM 1:24 Of the children of Gad, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;**

**NUM 1:25 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Gad, were forty and five thousand six hundred and fifty.**

The fighting men of the tribe of Gad - 45,650.

This is the only figure which is not given in even hundreds.

**NUM 1:26 Of the children of Judah, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;**

**NUM 1:27 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Judah, were threescore and fourteen thousand and six hundred.**

The fighting men of the tribe of Judah - 74,600.

**NUM 1:28 Of the children of Issachar, by their generations, after their families, by the house of**

**their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;**

**NUM 1:29 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Issachar, were fifty and four thousand and four hundred.**

The fighting men of the tribe of Issachar-54,400.

**NUM 1:30 Of the children of Zebulun, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;**

**NUM 1:31 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Zebulun, were fifty and seven thousand and four hundred.**

The fighting men of the tribe of Zebulun-57,400.

**NUM 1:32 Of the children of Joseph, namely, of the children of Ephraim, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;**

**NUM 1:33 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Ephraim, were forty thousand and five hundred.**

The fighting men of the tribe of Ephraim-40,500.

**NUM 1:34 Of the children of Manasseh, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names,**

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**from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;**

**NUM 1:35 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Manasseh, were thirty and two thousand and two hundred.**

Fighting men of the tribe of Manasseh-32,200.

Ephraim and Manasseh were not the sons of Jacob. They were his grandsons through Joseph. In the forty-eighth chapter of Genesis we find Jacob blessing Joseph's sons and telling Joseph that he would thus have an extra portion over his brothers. If we add the totals for Ephraim and Manasseh we have the total for the tribe of Joseph-72,700.

At the time Jacob blessed the two children, he declared that Ephraim would become greater than Manasseh. This became true, as seen above.

Since the Levites were not numbered among the twelve tribes. We still have twelve. The two sons of Joseph replace the tribes of Levi and Joseph.

**NUM 1:36 Of the children of Benjamin, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;**

**NUM 1:37 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Benjamin, were thirty and five thousand and four hundred.**

Fighting men of the tribe of Benjamin-35,400.

**NUM 1:38 Of the children of Dan, by their generations, after their families, by the house of**



**their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;**

**NUM 1:39 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Dan, were threescore and two thousand and seven hundred.**

The fighting men of the tribe of Dan - 62,700.

**NUM 1:40 Of the children of Asher, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;**

**NUM 1:41 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Asher, were forty and one thousand and five hundred.**

The fighting men of the tribe of Asher - 41,500.

**NUM 1:42 Of the children of Naphtali, throughout their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;**

**NUM 1:43 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Naphtali, were fifty and three thousand and four hundred.**

The fighting men of the tribe of Naphtali-53,400.

**NUM 1:44 These are those that were numbered, which Moses and Aaron numbered, and the princes of Israel, being twelve men: each one was for the house of his fathers.**



**NUM 1:45** So were all those that were numbered of the children of Israel, by the house of their fathers, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war in Israel;

**NUM 1:46** Even all they that were numbered were six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty.

The total of the twelve tribes was 603,550, not counting Levi.

**NUM 1:47** But the Levites after the tribe of their fathers were not numbered among them.

**NUM 1:48** For the LORD had spoken unto Moses, saying,

**NUM 1:49** Only thou shalt not number the tribe of Levi, neither take the sum of them among the children of Israel:

It is true that the Levites were not numbered here as a part of the fighting men of Israel. They are numbered in the third chapter of this book, but not for military purposes. At that point their numbers amounted to 22,270 men.

**NUM 1:50** But thou shalt appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of testimony, and over all the vessels thereof, and over all things that belong to it: they shall bear the tabernacle, and all the vessels thereof; and they shall minister unto it, and shall encamp round about the tabernacle.

**NUM 1:51** And when the tabernacle setteth forward, the Levites shall take it down: and when the tabernacle is to be pitched, the Levites shall set

**it up: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.**

The Levites would have plenty to do. It would be their task to care for the tabernacle and its furnishings. They were to put up the tabernacle upon arrival at a new location. They were to see that everything was in order for the various sacrifices. They were to camp immediately around the tabernacle. When it was time to move to another location, the Levites were to take it down.

No one who was not of the tribe of Levi was to touch it. Even the Levites were not to touch the ark of the covenant. It was to be carried by staves passed through rings. When God's instructions as to how the ark was to be carried were ignored, and it was carried on a cart, it began to topple over. Uzzah reached out and touched it. He died!

**NUM 1:52 And the children of Israel shall pitch their tents, every man by his own camp, and every man by his own standard, throughout their hosts.**

When the people were settled at every location where they camped, each tribe was to be in its own designated position relative to the tabernacle.

**NUM 1:53 But the Levites shall pitch round about the tabernacle of testimony, that there be no wrath upon the congregation of the children of Israel: and the Levites shall keep the charge of the tabernacle of testimony.**

**NUM 1:54 And the children of Israel did according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so did they.**



All that God had commanded Moses was enacted. The people were ready to set out for the promised land.

All that remains with respect to this chapter is to make an estimation of the total population of Israel based upon the expected ratio of young men, old men and women, none of which were counted in the census. Let us attend to that.

If there were 603,550 men from age twenty to age fifty or sixty, we would expect an approximately equal number of women. This would give a total of 1,207,100 persons. The Levites did marry. Leviticus 21:14-15 give regulations as to the kind of woman the high priest could marry. We may then add the 22,700 Levites and an approximately equal number of women to our figure-45,400, giving a total of 1,252,100. Various census figures for modern times indicate that about 46 percent of the population is under the age of twenty years. We can surely add another 4 percent for those over fifty or sixty.

This means it would be valid to double the 1,252,100 and arrive at a population of 2,504,200 persons in the camp of Israel when they set out.

Could 70 souls who went down into Egypt have grown to over two and one half million in the 430 years of bondage? Let us see.

Reuben had four sons. If each of these four sons had five, we would have a total of 20 for the first generation. If each of these had five sons, we would have 100 in the second generation. If each of these had five sons, we would have 500 in the third generation. By the fourth generation we would have 2,500. The fifth generation would amount to 12,500, and the sixth generation would total 60,000. This is several thousand greater than the 46,500 listed for the tribe of Reuben. Allowing 30 years for a generation, we would have 180 years. This is much less than the 430



years. It is also less than the 215 years which some would say was the amount of time for this increase.

Simeon had six sons. After six generations, or 180 years, we would have:

30

150

750

3,750

18,750

93,750

Again, this is much more than the 59,300 counted in the census.

If this same procedure is followed for the rest of the twelve tribes, it will be found that 430 years would most certainly not have been insufficient time for the seventy souls to have reached the two and one half million counted in this present census.

It is admitted that deaths could have occurred, etc. Nevertheless, logic tells us that nature alone could have produced this increase. When we add the fact that God was involved, there is no problem whatsoever.





## *Chapter 2*

**NUM 2:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,**

It is the supreme authority in heaven and on earth who is speaking. Jehovah stands above either Moses or Aaron. Man makes a serious mistake when the words and thoughts of any man are put on a par with those of the Creator.

**NUM 2:2 Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard, with the ensign of their father's house: far off about the tabernacle of the congregation shall they pitch.**

The census had been taken. Each person knew his own place in the order of encampment. All things were to be done decently and in order. Our God is not the author of confusion.

It is agreed that the standards were some type of insignia representing the four major groups which surrounded the tabernacle on each of the four sides. The Bible does not tell us just what the designs on these standards were. However, there is some reason to believe they were the four living creatures mentioned in Ezekiel 1:10 and in Revelation 4:7.

Eze 1:10 As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle.

Rev 4:7 And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle.

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According to the Jewish commentators, the standard for the side of the camp hosted by Judah was a lion, for the side hosted by Reuben was a man, for that hosted by Ephraim it was an ox, and for the side hosted by Dan it was an eagle. Still other Jewish writers hold that the standards were of solid color and that each was the color of one of the four gems in the breastplate of the high priest. The truth is that we do not know for certain.

**NUM 2:3 And on the east side toward the rising of the sun shall they of the standard of the camp of Judah pitch throughout their armies: and Nahshon the son of Amminadab shall be captain of the children of Judah.**

The reader needs to remember that these positions of the various tribes refers to the time of their encampment and not to their position during the time they were marching. More will be said later concerning the order of march.

The tribe of Judah encamped on the east side of the tabernacle. When Israel began their travels the land of promise lay to the east of them. The east is the direction of the sunrise. Jesus is called the Sun of Righteousness in Malachi 4:2. Judah was the tribe from which the Saviour came. If Israel had not forgotten God and walked in their own ways, they could have followed the tribe of Judah east and entered the promised land in just a fraction of the time they spent wandering in the wilderness.

**NUM 2:4 And his host, and those that were numbered of them, were threescore and fourteen thousand and six hundred.**

The figures given here agree with the totals recorded in the census which had just been concluded. Judah was

the leading tribe on the east and thus that number is given first. There were 74,000 fighting men in the tribe of Judah.

**NUM 2:5 And those that do pitch next unto him shall be the tribe of Issachar: and Nethaneel the son of Zuar shall be captain of the children of Issachar.**

**NUM 2:6 And his host, and those that were numbered thereof, were fifty and four thousand and four hundred.**

The tribe of Issachar traveled under the standard of Judah. It's captain was Nethaneel who was over 54,400

**NUM 2:7 Then the tribe of Zebulun: and Eliab the son of Helon shall be captain of the children of Zebulun.**

**NUM 2:8 And his host, and those that were numbered thereof, were fifty and seven thousand and four hundred.**

The tribe of Zebulun also traveled under the standard of Judah. It's captain was Eliab, who commanded 57,400

**NUM 2:9 All that were numbered in the camp of Judah were an hundred thousand and fourscore thousand and six thousand and four hundred, throughout their armies. These shall first set forth.**

When the numbers of all three of the tribes who traveled under the standard of Judah are totaled, we have 186,400 fighting men.

Note that these three tribes were to start the order of march. The positions during the march would not be identical to those while encamped.

Since Moses and Aaron were both from the tribe of Judah, and since they were to take a leading part in the travels, they were encamped on the east side of the tabernacle and would have been included in the first rank to set in motion

**NUM 2:10 On the south side shall be the standard of the camp of Reuben according to their armies: and the captain of the children of Reuben shall be Elizur the son of Shedeur.**

Reuben was to the major tribe on the south of the tabernacle. Elizur was to be the captain.

**NUM 2:11 And his host, and those that were numbered thereof, were forty and six thousand and five hundred.**

Elizur would command the 46,500 fighting men of the tribe of Reuben.

As we review the tribes we will be moving around the tabernacle in a clockwise direction. Judah was on the east. Reuben was on the south.

**NUM 2:12 And those which pitch by him shall be the tribe of Simeon: and the captain of the children of Simeon shall be Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai.**

**NUM 2:13 And his host, and those that were numbered of them, were fifty and nine thousand and three hundred.**



Associated with Reuben, we find the tribes of Simeon and Gad. Simeon numbered 59,300 and was commanded by; Shelumiel.

**NUM 2:14 Then the tribe of Gad: and the captain of the sons of Gad shall be Eliasaph the son of Reuel.**

**NUM 2:15 And his host, and those that were numbered of them, were forty and five thousand and six hundred and fifty.**

The tribe of Gad numbered 45,650 fighting men, and was commanded by Eliasaph. This is the only tribe in which the number was not rounded off to the nearest one hundred. This may have been because it was at the midpoint between hundreds.

**NUM 2:16 All that were numbered in the camp of Reuben were an hundred thousand and fifty and one thousand and four hundred and fifty, throughout their armies. And they shall set forth in the second rank.**

The total number of fighting men who encamped on the south of the tabernacle was 151,450. These three tribes were to wait until the first three tribes had set out. Then they were to follow them. The tabernacle had not yet begun to move.

**NUM 2:17 Then the tabernacle of the congregation shall set forward with the camp of the Levites in the midst of the camp: as they encamp, so shall they set forward, every man in his place by their standards.**

After the first three tribes moved out under the standard of Judah, and the next three had followed under the standard of Reuben, the tabernacle itself was to proceed. Thus, we have a line of march rather than the east, south, west and north positions during encampment. The fact that they were to set forward with each man in his place and under his standard does not mean the standards remained east, south, west and north of the tabernacle. There were six tribes ahead of it, and six tribes behind it, with the tribe of Levi always closest to the tabernacle. There were 22,700 of the Levites, but they were not considered fighting men.

Whether encamped, or on the march, the tabernacle which represented the Divine presence, was always in their midst.

**NUM 2:18 On the west side shall be the standard of the camp of Ephraim according to their armies: and the captain of the sons of Ephraim shall be Elishama the son of Ammihud.**

**NUM 2:19 And his host, and those that were numbered of them, were forty thousand and five hundred.**

Ephraim was the major tribe on the west side of the tabernacle. It was represented by 40,500 fighting men. The captain was Elishama.

The other two tribes which encamped under the standard of Ephraim were Manasseh and Benjamin.

**NUM 2:20 And by him shall be the tribe of Manasseh: and the captain of the children of Manasseh shall be Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur.**

**NUM 2:21 And his host, and those that were**



**numbered of them, were thirty and two thousand and two hundred.**

Manasseh had 32,200 fighting men. The captain was Gamaliel.

**NUM 2:22 Then the tribe of Benjamin: and the captain of the sons of Benjamin shall be Abidan the son of Gideoni.**

**NUM 2:23 And his host, and those that were numbered of them, were thirty and five thousand and four hundred.**

The tribe of Benjamin was 35,400 fighting men. The captain was Abidan.

**NUM 2:24 All that were numbered of the camp of Ephraim were an hundred thousand and eight thousand and an hundred, throughout their armies. And they shall go forward in the third rank.**

The total number of fighting men in the three tribes which encamped under the standard of Ephraim was 108,100. After the tabernacle set forward, they were to follow it.

**NUM 2:25 The standard of the camp of Dan shall be on the north side by their armies: and the captain of the children of Dan shall be Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai.**

**NUM 2:26 And his host, and those that were numbered of them, were threescore and two thousand and seven hundred.**

The tribe of Dan was to be the major tribe on the north side of the tabernacle. The two tribes which camped under the standard of Dan were Asher and Naphtali.

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The total number of fighting men in the tribe of Dan was 62,700. It's captain was Ahiezer.

**NUM 2:27 And those that encamp by him shall be the tribe of Asher: and the captain of the children of Asher shall be Pagiel the son of Ocran.**

**NUM 2:28 And his host, and those that were numbered of them, were forty and one thousand and five hundred.**

The tribe of Asher contained 41,500 fighting men. It's captain was Pagiel.

**NUM 2:29 Then the tribe of Naphtali: and the captain of the children of Naphtali shall be Ahira the son of Enan.**

**NUM 2:30 And his host, and those that were numbered of them, were fifty and three thousand and four hundred.**

The tribe of Naphtali contained 53,400 fighting men. It's captain was Ahira.

**NUM 2:31 All they that were numbered in the camp of Dan were an hundred thousand and fifty and seven thousand and six hundred. They shall go hindmost with their standards.**

**NUM 2:32 These are those which were numbered of the children of Israel by the house of their fathers: all those that were numbered of the camps throughout their hosts were six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty.**

The total number of fighting men who encamped under the standard of Dan was 157,600. The standard of

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these three tribes was to be last. The order was then as follows.

First, the standard of Judah with Issachar and Zebulun.

Second, the standard of Reuben with Simeon and Gad.

Third, the tabernacle with the Levites.

Fourth, Ephraim with Benjamin and Manasseh.

Fifth, the tribe of Dan with Asher and Naphtali.

**NUM 2:33 But the Levites were not numbered among the children of Israel; as the LORD commanded Moses.**

The Levites were excused from military duty. They had many other tasks assigned to them. They were responsible for the care and ministration of the tabernacle, plus the offering of sacrifices

**NUM 2:34 And the children of Israel did according to all that the LORD commanded Moses: so they pitched by their standards, and so they set forward, every one after their families, according to the house of their fathers.**

Every man knew where he was to be both during encampment and during the marches. The lesson for Christians today is very important. God has a place for each person. He expected that person to be in place and ready at all times to fulfill the duties which accompany the special talents and opportunities which have been afforded him or her.

All things are to be done decently and in order!



## *Chapter 3*

**NUM 3:1 These also are the generations of Aaron and Moses in the day that the LORD spake with Moses in mount Sinai.**

Considerable attention has now been paid to the families of the various tribes. It was now time to turn to the Levites, as to their families and to their placement in both the encampment and in the marching order.

The entire congregation is still in the area of Mount Sinai where Moses received instructions for the new nation of Israel.

**NUM 3:2 And these are the names of the sons of Aaron; Nadab the firstborn, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.**

**NUM 3:3 These are the names of the sons of Aaron, the priests which were anointed, whom he consecrated to minister in the priest's office.**

Although Moses was the prime figure in the entire organization, the descendants of Aaron were to become the priesthood. Moses was a Levite through Amram, but his descendants were not included in the priesthood at this time. Thus this chapter will deal primarily with the sons of Aaron. The anointing had taken place previous to this time. The record is simply calling attention to that fact. (See Exodus 30:30 and 40:15).

**NUM 3:4 And Nadab and Abihu died before the LORD, when they offered strange fire before the LORD, in the wilderness of Sinai, and they had no children: and Eleazar and Ithamar ministered in the**



**priest's office in the sight of Aaron their father.**

Since Nadab and Abihu had died as a result of offering strange fire before the Lord, their descendants are not mentioned. They both died childless. There is a strong lesson here for all Christians. God specifies what He desires in the worship and teaching. When we subtract from that which He has ordained, we fall under His condemnation. When we add to that which He has spelled out, or when we modify it in any way, we also stand condemned.

**NUM 3:5 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 3:6 Bring the tribe of Levi near, and present them before Aaron the priest, that they may minister unto him.**

The entire tribe of Levi was to be called out from the rest and given special instructions. They were to handle the duties outside the tabernacle. There were several layers of servants in the tribe of Levi. Aaron, as the High Priest was allowed to enter into the Most Holy Place and perform the duties relating to the ark of the covenant.

**NUM 3:7 And they shall keep his charge, and the charge of the whole congregation before the tabernacle of the congregation, to do the service of the tabernacle.**

**NUM 3:8 And they shall keep all the instruments of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the charge of the children of Israel, to do the service of the tabernacle.**

Aaron's sons were to be in charge of the Holy Place which contained the table of shewbread, the golden



candlestick and the altar of incense. They were to work under the direction of Aaron.

**NUM 3:9 And thou shalt give the Levites unto Aaron and to his sons: they are wholly given unto him out of the children of Israel.**

The rest of the Levites tended to duties of lesser importance required to see that Aaron and his sons were provided with that which was necessary for the discharge of their obligations. The sons of Aaron served Aaron. The Levites were charged with serving Aaron's sons.

**NUM 3:10 And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their priest's office: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.**

Any of the Levites who took it upon themselves to perform the duties which God had restricted to Aaron and his sons was to die. We are not told whether God would kill them as He did in the case of Nadab and Abihu, or whether the congregation was to execute them.

Again we have need to pay close attention. God has specified in this Christian age that men are to in charge of the worship services and the women are to be silent. They may sing but they may not preach. God may not punish immediately. He will bring all before the judgment seat some day.

**NUM 3:11 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 3:12 And I, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of all the firstborn that openeth the matrix among the**



**children of Israel: therefore the Levites shall be mine;**

All of the people of Israel were God's people. The Levites were His in a more specific way. They were to replace the firstborn in each family as devoted entirely to His worship and services.

**NUM 3:13 Because all the firstborn are mine; for on the day that I smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I hallowed unto me all the firstborn in Israel, both man and beast: mine shall they be: I am the LORD.**

When God sent His angel forth to destroy the firstborn of each family in the land of Egypt, He passed over every household which had placed the blood of a lamb upon the doorpost. He did not wish for the Israelites to ever forget that mercy. Many centuries later He would offer men redemption from sin through the blood of His own Son, Jesus Christ. (See Exodus 12).

The Lord was ready now to show even greater mercy upon His people. Rather than claiming every firstborn child, He would take the tribe of Levi in their place. We can see how this would be of advantage to Him. Families would not be broken up through the loss of their firstborn.

**NUM 3:14 And the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, saying,**

**NUM 3:15 Number the children of Levi after the house of their fathers, by their families: every male from a month old and upward shalt thou number them.**

When the census had been made earlier, the numbering



was limited to those males who were twenty years of age and upward. Now the numbering is to include all who are one month or older.

It is also possible to see clear reason why there was a difference in the numbering system. The previous census had been taken to determine how many men were suitable for military action when facing future enemies. The Levites were not responsible for military duty. It is likely that the babes younger than one month were considered not yet established in life, and still subject to infant mortality.

**NUM 3:16 And Moses numbered them according to the word of the LORD, as he was commanded.**

**NUM 3:17 And these were the sons of Levi by their names; Gershon, and Kohath, and Merari.**

The Levites will be placed in three groups according to the three sons of Levi. This will be important in that each of the groups will have their own assigned position around the tabernacle.

**NUM 3:18 And these are the names of the sons of Gershon by their families; Libni, and Shimei.**

**NUM 3:19 And the sons of Kohath by their families; Amram, and Izehar, Hebron, and Uzziel.**

**NUM 3:20 And the sons of Merari by their families; Mahli, and Mushi. These are the families of the Levites according to the house of their fathers.**

The grandsons of Levi are listed as:  
Two from Gershon



Four from Kohath  
Two from Merari  
Giving a total of eight.

**NUM 3:21 Of Gershon was the family of the Libnites, and the family of the Shimites: these are the families of the Gershonites.**

**NUM 3:22 Those that were numbered of them, according to the number of all the males, from a month old and upward, even those that were numbered of them were seven thousand and five hundred.**

Right here we enter into a point of discussion. The total of the Gershonites is given as 7,500. If that total is used in obtaining the total of the three families, as given in verse thirty-nine, we have a discrepancy of 300. Both non-believers and liberal critics of the scriptures pretend to have a party over this difference.

Conservative commentators answer by pointing out that there is a very close resemblance between the Hebrew letter “caph” which would be cause the reading of the number as 7,500 and another Hebrew letter “resh” which would cause it to be read as 7,200. They suggest that a copyist might have miswritten that one letter, which would account for the variation. One of these characters has a slightly longer tail on it than the other.

Others suggest that only the firstborn who were born after the exit from Egypt were counted in the figure found at verse thirty-nine, compared with all of the firstborn as given in this present count.

**NUM 3:23 The families of the Gershonites shall pitch behind the tabernacle westward.**





The Gershonites were to be encamped on the back side of the tabernacle. The entrance was always to face the east. They were to be on the west.

**NUM 3:24 And the chief of the house of the father of the Gershonites shall be Eliasaph the son of Lael.**

The overseer of the family of the Gershonites was to be Eliasaph. Neither he nor his father are named anywhere else in the Bible.

**NUM 3:25 And the charge of the sons of Gershon in the tabernacle of the congregation shall be the tabernacle, and the tent, the covering thereof, and the hanging for the door of the tabernacle of the congregation,**

**NUM 3:26 And the hangings of the court, and the curtain for the door of the court, which is by the tabernacle, and by the altar round about, and the cords of it for all the service thereof.**

A close look at the duties of the Gershonites shows them being responsible for the care of the fabrics such as curtains and overhangings. This would have been fairly heavy labor, as anyone who has ever worked with tents will appreciate.

**NUM 3:27 And of Kohath was the family of the Amramites, and the family of the Izecharites, and the family of the Hebronites, and the family of the Uzzielites: these are the families of the Kohathites.**

**NUM 3:28 In the number of all the males, from a month old and upward, were eight thousand and six**

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**hundred, keeping the charge of the sanctuary.**

We have now a sum of 8,600 males a month or more old among these families. There is no controversy over this number.

**NUM 3:29 The families of the sons of Kohath shall pitch on the side of the tabernacle southward.**

**NUM 3:30 And the chief of the house of the father of the families of the Kohathites shall be Elizaphan the son of Uzziel.**

With the exception of Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons, the Kohathites were to camp on the south side of the tabernacle. Moses and Aaron's sons were to be encamped on the east.

**NUM 3:31 And their charge shall be the ark, and the table, and the candlestick, and the altars, and the vessels of the sanctuary wherewith they minister, and the hanging, and all the service thereof.**

The Kohathites had a very important task. They were the ones who cared for the transportation of the ark of the covenant, as well as the other items of furniture found in the tabernacle. Uzzah found out just how important God considered this assignment to be. He lost his life because he reached out to touch the ark when it appeared to be in danger of toppling to the ground.

**NUM 3:32 And Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest shall be chief over the chief of the Levites, and have the oversight of them that keep the charge of the sanctuary.**



The immediate supervisor of the Kohathites was to be one of the four sons of Aaron.

**NUM 3:33 Of Merari was the family of the Mahlites, and the family of the Mushites: these are the families of Merari.**

**NUM 3:34 And those that were numbered of them, according to the number of all the males, from a month old and upward, were six thousand and two hundred.**

This time the count amounted to 6,200 males one month old or older. As in the case of the Kohathites, there is no controversy over this figure.

**NUM 3:35 And the chief of the house of the father of the families of Merari was Zuriel the son of Abihail: these shall pitch on the side of the tabernacle northward.**

Zuriel was to be the overseer of the families of Merari. They were to be encamped on the north of the tabernacle.

**NUM 3:36 And under the custody and charge of the sons of Merari shall be the boards of the tabernacle, and the bars thereof, and the pillars thereof, and the sockets thereof, and all the vessels thereof, and all that serveth thereto,**

**NUM 3:37 And the pillars of the court round about, and their sockets, and their pins, and their cords.**

Whereas the families of Gershon were accountable for the curtains and software, the families of the Merarites



were to tend to the hardware or skeletal structure of the tabernacle.

**NUM 3:38 But those that encamp before the tabernacle toward the east, even before the tabernacle of the congregation eastward, shall be Moses, and Aaron and his sons, keeping the charge of the sanctuary for the charge of the children of Israel; and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.**

As mentioned before, Moses, Aaron and Aaron's sons were to take their position on the east side of the tabernacle where the entrance was located. Once the tabernacle was erected, no person other than these was permitted to come close to the tent until it was time to dismantle it for marching.

**NUM 3:39 All that were numbered of the Levites, which Moses and Aaron numbered at the commandment of the LORD, throughout their families, all the males from a month old and upward, were twenty and two thousand.**

Here is the other verse which has been a part of the controversy over the total number of the Levites. If we sum the three individual totals we do not arrive at the figure given in this verse.

Gershon - 7,500  
Kohath - 8,600  
Merari - 6,200  
TOTAL - 22,300



The reader is referred to the comments made at verse twenty-seven. If the sum of the Gershonites was 7,200 rather than 7,500, the total would agree with that of verse 27.

**NUM 3:40 And the LORD said unto Moses, Number all the firstborn of the males of the children of Israel from a month old and upward, and take the number of their names.**

**NUM 3:41 And thou shalt take the Levites for me (I am the LORD) instead of all the firstborn among the children of Israel; and the cattle of the Levites instead of all the firstlings among the cattle of the children of Israel.**

Since the firstborn of Israel were to be replaced by the entire tribe of Levi, it was necessary to know how the totals compared. Were there more Levites than firstborn, or were there more firstborn than there were Levites?

Even the livestock of the Levites was to take the place of the firstborn of the livestock of the other tribes.

**NUM 3:42 And Moses numbered, as the LORD commanded him, all the firstborn among the children of Israel.**

**NUM 3:43 And all the firstborn males by the number of names, from a month old and upward, of those that were numbered of them, were twenty and two thousand two hundred and threescore and thirteen.**

When Moses did as the Lord commanded, he found that there were 22,273 firstborn, as compared with the 22,000 Levites. How would the difference be made up??

**NUM 3:44** And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

**NUM 3:45** Take the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the children of Israel, and the cattle of the Levites instead of their cattle; and the Levites shall be mine: I am the LORD.

**NUM 3:46** And for those that are to be redeemed of the two hundred and threescore and thirteen of the firstborn of the children of Israel, which are more than the Levites;

The solution to the difference in numbers was in redeeming the 273 missing Levites. A price must be paid for every Levite short of the number of firstborn.

**NUM 3:47** Thou shalt even take five shekels apiece by the poll, after the shekel of the sanctuary shalt thou take them: (the shekel is twenty gerahs:)

The price of redemption for each of the missing Levites was reckoned at 5 shekels. At this time the shekel was not a coin. It was a weight of precious metal standardized by one used in the tabernacle. The amount is not certain. One suggestion is that this was the price one might have had to pay for a servant at the time.

**NUM 3:48** And thou shalt give the money, wherewith the odd number of them is to be redeemed, unto Aaron and to his sons.

The total number of shekels would have been 1,365.

**NUM 3:49** And Moses took the redemption money of them that were over and above them that were redeemed by the Levites:



**NUM 3:50 Of the firstborn of the children of Israel took he the money; a thousand three hundred and threescore and five shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary:**

It is not clear just who paid the redemption money. Various methods have been suggested as a means of choosing which of the fathers was to pay for a missing son. Perhaps the total was made up by a collection from the entire congregation.

**NUM 3:51 And Moses gave the money of them that were redeemed unto Aaron and to his sons, according to the word of the LORD, as the LORD commanded Moses.**

Human minds are very active when curiosity bites. What did Aaron and his sons do with the money which was taken up? We must assume that they were honest and used it in financing the expenses of the tabernacle services.





## *Chapter 4*

This chapter adds new information and details to that which was given in chapters 1-3. Some writers who have decided which portions of the Bible were given by Jehovah and which were matters of “tradition” see such added details as man made efforts to help in making the Bible a systematic and coherent presentation. God does not need such help. If we are to eliminate the truth of the first verse of this chapter, we might as well trash any confidence we have in the rest of the Holy Scripture.

### **NUM 4:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,**

The following were the directions given by the Lord. They dealt with the numbering of the portion of the Levites who would be assigned duties in the erection, transportation and dismantling of the tabernacle. These duties were then spelled out for each of the groups. Everyone was expected to discharge his assignments in order that the entire work might be completed in decency and in order.

### **NUM 4:2 Take the sum of the sons of Kohath from among the sons of Levi, after their families, by the house of their fathers,**

Both Moses and Aaron were from the family of the Kohathites. This meant that they were given a measure of prestige which elevated them above the other Levites. This was unusual in the Kohath was not the eldest of the sons of Levi.

### **NUM 4:3 From thirty years old and upward even**

**until fifty years old, all that enter into the host, to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation.**

A new census was to be taken. This time it did not include those who were between the ages of one month and thirty years. No reason is given for setting the low limit as thirty. The supposition is that much of the labor was to be fairly heavy and this would insure that the men would be mature enough to handle their duties. The upper limit was set at fifty years. By this time there would have been some deterioration in physical strength.

Perhaps there is a lesson here with regard to the ages at which elders and preachers should consider resignation. I am not suggesting that no elders or preachers are capable of serving beyond the age of fifty. It is, however, wise for both of these groups to carefully their own abilities and not continue when age or physical disability has brought about either physical or mental handicaps.

Later on, age was reduced to a lower limit twenty-five years. (See Numbers 8:23-26).

Num 8:23 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Num 8:24 This is it that belongeth unto the Levites: from twenty and five years old and upward they shall go in to wait upon the service of the tabernacle of the congregation:

Num 8:25 And from the age of fifty years they shall cease waiting upon the service thereof, and shall serve no more:

Num 8:26 But shall minister with their brethren in the tabernacle of the congregation, to keep the charge, and shall do no service. Thus shalt thou do unto the Levites touching their charge.

The difference in age from thirty to twenty-five is



claimed by some to be a five year period of training for the actual participation in the work.

**NUM 4:4 This shall be the service of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of the congregation, about the most holy things:**

The importance of the work done by the Kohathites is shown by listing them first. They were to be assigned duties involving the items of the tabernacle which were more closely associated with the presence of God.

**NUM 4:5 And when the camp setteth forward, Aaron shall come, and his sons, and they shall take down the covering vail, and cover the ark of testimony with it:**

These instructions were instituted before Israel ever moved out from the vicinity of Sinai. But they were to be honored whenever the tent of meeting was to be moved. When Moses and Aaron arose in the morning they would be able to observe whether the pillar of cloud had moved from over the tabernacle. If it had moved, the dismantling was to begin.

Every detail was carefully laid out. If any man failed to do his assigned part, the congregation as a whole would be hindered. Such is just as true today in the work of the Church of Jesus Christ.

First, Aaron and his sons were to take down the vail which separated the Most Holy Place from the Holy Place. They were to immediately cover the ark that it might not be seen by those who were unauthorized. J. Vernon McGee even goes so far as to say that the ark may have been immediately in back of the vail rather than at the opposite side of the Most Holy Place. This would allow Aaron's sons



to take down the vail without seeing it themselves. Aaron did see it when he went in once a year to offer sacrifice on the Day of Atonement.

**NUM 4:6 And shall put thereon the covering of badgers' skins, and shall spread over it a cloth wholly of blue, and shall put in the staves thereof.**

After the vail was placed over the ark, another cover of "badgers' skins" was laid over the vail. There is some disagreement as to just what animal is spoken of here. Various translations speak of sealskins, porpoise skins and even goatskins. The identity of the animal from which the skins came is not a matter of critical importance. Some type of animal skin was used.

After the vail and the animal skin covers were in place, a cloth dyed blue was used as an outside covering. This blue cloth would be a distinguishing mark to those who were traveling to indicate that the ark, God's throne, was moving along with them.

The ark had rings through which staves were placed for carrying it. After the coverings were spread, the staves were to be inserted into these rings. This is not a contradiction to what was commanded in Exodus 25:15. Note that scripture.

Exo 25:14 And thou shalt put the staves into the rings by the sides of the ark, that the ark may be borne with them.

Exo 25:15 The staves shall be in the rings of the ark: they shall not be taken from it.

Since these present directions are for that which is to take place whenever the ark was moved, it is apparent that the staves were never to be removed while it was being moved, but were removed and placed nearby when the ark



came to rest in the Most Holy Place. They were always in the immediate area of the ark, and were always to be inserted in the rings when the ark was being carried.

If this had been carried by the staves at the time Uzzah reached out to keep it from falling off the new cart in his day, he would not have lost his life.

**NUM 4:7 And upon the table of shewbread they shall spread a cloth of blue, and put thereon the dishes, and the spoons, and the bowls, and covers to cover withal: and the continual bread shall be thereon:**

Aaron's sons were to prepare the table of shewbread for transporting it. They were to place a blue cloth on the table and set it with the shewbread and all of the utensils associated with it. The reader will recall that the priests were allowed to eat the shewbread after a certain period of time.

**NUM 4:8 And they shall spread upon them a cloth of scarlet, and cover the same with a covering of badgers' skins, and shall put in the staves thereof.**

The cloth of blue was spread under the shewbread and the utensils. This scarlet cloth was placed over these items. Then a covering of badger skins was used as an outer covering. In contrast with the ark of the covenant, the visible portion of the table of shewbread was of animal skin where that of the ark was blue.

**NUM 4:9 And they shall take a cloth of blue, and cover the candlestick of the light, and his lamps, and his tongs, and his snuffdishes, and all the oil vessels thereof, wherewith they minister unto it:**

The golden seven branched candlestick also required some preparation before travel began. A cloth of blue was placed over the candlestick and all of it's associated articles.

**NUM 4:10 And they shall put it and all the vessels thereof within a covering of badgers' skins, and shall put it upon a bar.**

The candlestick and it's vessels were then to be wrapped in a covering of badger skins and laid upon a bar. We are not given the material of which the bar was made. Neither are we given any dimensions of width, length or thickness.

**NUM 4:11 And upon the golden altar they shall spread a cloth of blue, and cover it with a covering of badgers' skins, and shall put to the staves thereof:**

The cloth of blue was again used for the initial covering of the golden altar of incense. The animal skin covering was put in place over the blue cloth.

As the ark of the covenant was to be carried by staves, so was the golden altar.

**NUM 4:12 And they shall take all the instruments of ministry, wherewith they minister in the sanctuary, and put them in a cloth of blue, and cover them with a covering of badgers' skins, and shall put them on a bar:**

The various instruments are not individually identified. It seems that these were the items associated with the golden altar of incense. They also were to be covered first with a blue cloth and then with animal skins. The bar



was some type of surface which would prevent them from falling when moved.

**NUM 4:13 And they shall take away the ashes from the altar, and spread a purple cloth thereon:**

We are now talking about the brazen altar just outside the Holy Place. The ashes were to be taken away and the altar cleaned up. The color of the cloth which was first spread over the altar was purple this time rather than blue.

**NUM 4:14 And they shall put upon it all the vessels thereof, wherewith they minister about it, even the censers, the fleshhooks, and the shovels, and the basons, all the vessels of the altar; and they shall spread upon it a covering of badgers' skins, and put to the staves of it.**

All of the items mentioned in this verse were used with the brazen altar. These were next placed on the purple cloth and animal skins were used to cover them. Staves were used to carry the altar and it's utensils.

**NUM 4:15 And when Aaron and his sons have made an end of covering the sanctuary, and all the vessels of the sanctuary, as the camp is to set forward; after that, the sons of Kohath shall come to bear it: but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die. These things are the burden of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of the congregation.**

After all was properly secured and put out of sight by coverings, the males of the family of Kohath were given permission to carry them during the march. Nevertheless,

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they were given sharp warning not to touch any of the holy things. Death would be the result. They were neither to see them nor touch them.

**NUM 4:16 And to the office of Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest pertaineth the oil for the light, and the sweet incense, and the daily meat offering, and the anointing oil, and the oversight of all the tabernacle, and of all that therein is, in the sanctuary, and in the vessels thereof.**

Eleazar was the son of Aaron who was charged with the supervision of the articles to be transported by the Kohathite other than the sons of Aaron. Note that this is called the “office of Eleazar.” This shows that the responsibility did not end with the death of Eleazar. Those who followed him were to pick up that same duty.

**NUM 4:17 And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron saying,**

**NUM 4:18 Cut ye not off the tribe of the families of the Kohathites from among the Levites:**

**NUM 4:19 But thus do unto them, that they may live, and not die, when they approach unto the most holy things: Aaron and his sons shall go in, and appoint them every one to his service and to his burden:**

If the Kohathites in general had abused God’s directions and attempted to assume duties which were only allocated to the sons of Aaron, the entire tribe could have been condemned. Most certainly the one who defied God’s instructions would meet death.

Aaron and his sons were to call those who would bear the inside furnishings of the sanctuary and give each of





them his own charge. This would have been no mean task. There were many of these and each required individual assignment.

**NUM 4:20 But they shall not go in to see when the holy things are covered, lest they die.**

The warning is repeated for emphasis. The only persons who were privileged to see the table of shewbread, the candlestick, etc. were Aaron and his sons. There was to be no excuse because of ignorance.

**NUM 4:21 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 4:22 Take also the sum of the sons of Gershon, throughout the houses of their fathers, by their families;**

The family of the Kohathites has now been dealt with. We are ready to learn of the duties of the family of the Gershonites.

**NUM 4:23 From thirty years old and upward until fifty years old shalt thou number them; all that enter in to perform the service, to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation.**

**NUM 4:24 This is the service of the families of the Gershonites, to serve, and for burdens:**

**NUM 4:25 And they shall bear the curtains of the tabernacle, and the tabernacle of the congregation, his covering, and the covering of the badgers' skins that is above upon it, and the hanging for the door of the tabernacle of the congregation,**



We are not to forget that the tabernacle was a large tentlike structure. It had a roof of two layers. The upper layer was composed of animal skins. There were curtains all the way around the outside of the tent. All of these must be transported. The weight of these coverings and hangings must have been large.

**NUM 4:26 And the hangings of the court, and the hanging for the door of the gate of the court, which is by the tabernacle and by the altar round about, and their cords, and all the instruments of their service, and all that is made for them: so shall they serve.**

Not only were they to move the curtains and coverings of the main tent. They were also to be responsible for the hangings of the courtyard which surrounded the tent of meeting. This was a sizable enclosure.

**NUM 4:27 At the appointment of Aaron and his sons shall be all the service of the sons of the Gershonites, in all their burdens, and in all their service: and ye shall appoint unto them in charge all their burdens.**

Just as Aaron and his sons were to assign duties to the Kohathites, they were to do the same for the Gershonites. Every person knew what he was supposed to do.

The elders of the church today are held responsible for seeing that all is orderly and is done as God commanded. Every member of the congregation is to respect their assignments that the work of the body of Christ may move forward efficiently.

**NUM 4:28 This is the service of the families**



**of the sons of Gershon in the tabernacle of the congregation: and their charge shall be under the hand of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.**

Eleazar was to supervise the Kohathites. Ithamar was to supervise the Gershonites and the Merarites.

**NUM 4:29 As for the sons of Merari, thou shalt number them after their families, by the house of their fathers;**

**NUM 4:30 From thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old shalt thou number them, every one that entereth into the service, to do the work of the tabernacle of the congregation.**

**NUM 4:31 And this is the charge of their burden, according to all their service in the tabernacle of the congregation; the boards of the tabernacle, and the bars thereof, and the pillars thereof, and sockets thereof,**

As mentioned before, the Merarites were in charge of the hardware of both the tabernacle and the courtyard. What does the reader think would have been the result if one who was responsible for one of the pillars of the courtyard had neglected his duty and left the pillar behind? Ithamar was to see that this sort of thing did not occur.

**NUM 4:32 And the pillars of the court round about, and their sockets, and their pins, and their cords, with all their instruments, and with all their service: and by name ye shall reckon the instruments of the charge of their burden.**

**NUM 4:33 This is the service of the families of the sons of Merari, according to all their service, in the tabernacle of the congregation, under the hand of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.**

This summarizes the assignments of all three of the families, the Kohathites, the Gershonites and the Merarites.

**NUM 4:34 And Moses and Aaron and the chief of the congregation numbered the sons of the Kohathites after their families, and after the house of their fathers,**

**NUM 4:35 From thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old, every one that entereth into the service, for the work in the tabernacle of the congregation:**

**NUM 4:36 And those that were numbered of them by their families were two thousand seven hundred and fifty.**

We will now be told the numbers of the male members of each of the three families who were between the ages of thirty and fifty. The total for the family of Kohath was 2,750 men.

**NUM 4:37 These were they that were numbered of the families of the Kohathites, all that might do service in the tabernacle of the congregation, which Moses and Aaron did number according to the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses.**

**NUM 4:38 And those that were numbered of the sons of Gershon, throughout their families, and by the house of their fathers,**

**NUM 4:39 From thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old, every one that entereth into the service, for the work in the tabernacle of the congregation,**

**NUM 4:40 Even those that were numbered of them, throughout their families, by the house of**



**their fathers, were two thousand and six hundred and thirty.**

The count of the males who were eligible for assignment among the Gershonites was 2,630.

**NUM 4:41 These are they that were numbered of the families of the sons of Gershon, of all that might do service in the tabernacle of the congregation, whom Moses and Aaron did number according to the commandment of the LORD.**

**NUM 4:42 And those that were numbered of the families of the sons of Merari, throughout their families, by the house of their fathers,**

**NUM 4:43 From thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old, every one that entereth into the service, for the work in the tabernacle of the congregation,**

**NUM 4:44 Even those that were numbered of them after their families, were three thousand and two hundred.**

The count of the males of the family of Merari who were eligible for assignment was 3,200.

**NUM 4:45 These be those that were numbered of the families of the sons of Merari, whom Moses and Aaron numbered according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses.**

**NUM 4:46 All those that were numbered of the Levites, whom Moses and Aaron and the chief of Israel numbered, after their families, and after the house of their fathers,**

**NUM 4:47 From thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old, every one that came to do the**



**service of the ministry, and the service of the burden in the tabernacle of the congregation.**

**NUM 4:48 Even those that were numbered of them, were eight thousand and five hundred and fourscore,**

Adding the totals of all three families, we arrive at the sum of 8,580 men. This number is to be compared with the 22,300 total of the Levite males from one month old and upward.

A short chart will be helpful here.

Family	1 Month up	30 to 50 years
Kohath	8,600	2,750
Gershon	7,500	2,630
Merari	<u>6,200</u>	<u>3,200</u>
TOTAL	22,300	8,580

**NUM 4:49 According to the commandment of the LORD they were numbered by the hand of Moses, every one according to his service, and according to his burden: thus were they numbered of him, as the LORD commanded Moses.**

I close the discussion of this chapter with a reference to Psalm 84:10.

Psa 84:10 For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.



## *Chapter 5*

There are three basic topics dealt with in this fifth chapter. Each of them begins with the words, “And the Lord spake unto Moses saying,”

The first of the three is the matter of sanitation. When approximately two million persons travel together in close proximity with a shortage of toilet facilities, health problems of various sorts can arise. Diseases could spread rapidly in such an environment. Jehovah was concerned over possible physical uncleanness. He was also very much concerned over spiritual uncleanness. Neither of these conditions was to be accepted in a camp where the Holy God dwelt in the midst of it.

The second topic was that of trespasses against a fellowman or woman. The close association of the people would tend to increase the number of these offenses. Directions were needed to repair such offenses.

The third topic was marriage infidelity. When a husband suspected his wife of unfaithful conduct toward their marriage vows a method was needed by which this suspicion could be proven either true or false.

**NUM 5:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 5:2 Command the children of Israel, that they put out of the camp every leper, and every one that hath an issue, and whosoever is defiled by the dead:**

The word used for leprosy here is more general than we generally think of that disease. It certainly applied to what we know today as true leprosy. But, it also included such problems as psoriasis and eczema which can produce corrupt issues. God is speaking here of both true leprosy

and these other types of running sores. These persons were to be put out of the camp.

In addition, those who had become unclean through contact with a corpse were to be excluded from the company.

In our own day we can see the wisdom of these actions. Centuries before the discovery that illness and death can be caused by disease germs, God knew this was the case. The regulations listed would prevent the spread of contagious disease.

Physical uncleanness was not the only consideration. The Holy God had defined that which was spiritually unclean. A separation was to be made between a pure God and the spiritually unclean persons.

**NUM 5:3 Both male and female shall ye put out, without the camp shall ye put them; that they defile not their camps, in the midst whereof I dwell.**

**NUM 5:4 And the children of Israel did so, and put them out without the camp: as the LORD spake unto Moses, so did the children of Israel.**

The sex of the unclean persons did not excuse them from the command. Both male and female were to be put out. One could defile the group just as certainly as the other.

Although nothing is said about the care of those who were excluded from the camps, many commentators contend that God was not sentencing these persons to wandering in the wilderness and living in caves. They believe this was the beginning of hospital care. This may or may not be true.

**NUM 5:5 And the LORD spake unto Moses,**





saying,

**NUM 5:6 Speak unto the children of Israel, When a man or woman shall commit any sin that men commit, to do a trespass against the LORD, and that person be guilty;**

Here we are introduced to the second of the three topics covered in this chapter. What is to be done if it is found that one person has profited at the expense of another?

It is to be noted that a trespass against one's fellowman is not limited to the abused person. It is also a sin against the LORD. When Potiphar's wife tempted Joseph, the young man informed here that what she was suggesting was not just a sin against her husband. It was a sin against God. (See Gen. 39:9.)

Gen 39:9 There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?

**NUM 5:7 Then they shall confess their sin which they have done: and he shall recompense his trespass with the principal thereof, and add unto it the fifth part thereof, and give it unto him against whom he hath trespassed.**

As soon as the individual realized that such a trespass had been committed, he was obligated to admit the fault. He was to make amends to the person who had been damaged by returning value equal to that which had been taken away. He was also to add twenty percent to that value. If the damage had amounted to one hundred units of value, he was to return the one hundred, plus another twenty.

**NUM 5:8 But if the man have no kinsman to recompense the trespass unto, let the trespass be recompensed unto the LORD, even to the priest; beside the ram of the atonement, whereby an atonement shall be made for him.**

If the offended person was dead there was no way restitution could be made directly to him. In that case the restitution was still to be made. It was to be paid to a relative of the dead. If no near relative could be identified, the payment was to be made to a priest and used for the support of the priest.

**NUM 5:9 And every offering of all the holy things of the children of Israel, which they bring unto the priest, shall be his.**

**NUM 5:10 And every man's hallowed things shall be his: whatsoever any man giveth the priest, it shall be his.**

The payment which was made to the priest was to be his. No other priest was to share in it. Some have used this passage of scripture to prove it is right for preachers to be paid.

We can easily see that there were both positive and negative aspects of this arrangement. It placed the priest in the position of having power to increase his own support by devious means. At the same time it did assure the priesthood of the necessities of life.

**NUM 5:11 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**



From this verse to the close of the chapter we find but one topic. Over half of this chapter is given to the law of jealousy. This must be a serious consideration in the eyes of Jehovah.

**NUM 5:12 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man's wife go aside, and commit a trespass against him,**

**NUM 5:13 And a man lie with her carnally, and it be hid from the eyes of her husband, and be kept close, and she be defiled, and there be no witness against her, neither she be taken with the manner;**

When God created Adam and Eve He stated that they were to become one flesh. He did allow multiple wives because of the hardness of men's hearts, but He did not approve of this from the beginning. A husband was to be true to his wife. A wife was to be true to her husband.

What was to be done then when a man suspected that his wife had been unfaithful? If she denied the accusation and there was no conclusive evidence to be found was there a procedure which could be applied? To be "taken with the manner" is either to be caught in the very act of adultery, or has become pregnant "after the manner of women." Either of these appear to be possible meanings of the phrase.

One becomes curious as to what the wife who suspected her husband of infidelity was to do if her husband denied her accusations. If a man and woman were taken in the act of adultery they were both to be stoned to death. Why does the law of jealousy here not apply to the wife as well as to the husband? It is possible that it is because this was a type of Christ and the church. The sinless Christ will never become unfaithful to his bride!



**NUM 5:14 And the spirit of jealousy come upon him, and he be jealous of his wife, and she be defiled: or if the spirit of jealousy come upon him, and he be jealous of his wife, and she be not defiled:**

If the husband became jealous and suspicious of his wife, he had the right to bring her to the priest for examination. She might be guilty, or she might be innocent. In either case she could be investigated. If she proved to be innocent, the reproach would fall upon her husband for being suspicious of her. If she proved to be guilty, she would bear the reproach of her husband as well as the rest who knew of the investigation.

**NUM 5:15 Then shall the man bring his wife unto the priest, and he shall bring her offering for her, the tenth part of an ephah of barley meal; he shall pour no oil upon it, nor put frankincense thereon; for it is an offering of jealousy, an offering of memorial, bringing iniquity to remembrance.**

The jealous husband was to bring his wife to the priest. He was also to bring an offering to be used in the ritual. The offering was one of the very least value. It consisted of the tenth part of an ephah of barley meal. This would have been a little over three quarts. He was not to include any oil or frankincense. These were often used along with offerings when it was an occasion of joy. This was not such an occasion.

**NUM 5:16 And the priest shall bring her near, and set her before the LORD:**

The priest was to present the woman before Jehovah for determination of the case. This does not mean she was



brought into the Holy of holies, or the Holy Place. Only the priests were allowed entry into these quarters. She was apparently brought into the courtyard surrounding the tabernacle and near the laver.

**NUM 5:17 And the priest shall take holy water in an earthen vessel; and of the dust that is in the floor of the tabernacle the priest shall take, and put it into the water:**

The priest was then to take a container made of pottery rather than of metal and put holy water into it. Holy water would be water that had no contaminants. It was pure water which would not cause disease or physical damage. The priest was then to take some of the dust from the floor of the Holy Place and mix that dust with the pure water. The mixture would then indicate God's presence in the decision which was to be made.

**NUM 5:18 And the priest shall set the woman before the LORD, and uncover the woman's head, and put the offering of memorial in her hands, which is the jealousy offering; and the priest shall have in his hand the bitter water that causeth the curse:**

In most parts of the world today the sight of a woman's hair is no disgrace. However, this was not the case among the Hebrew women. The removal of the vail allowed men other than her husband to gaze upon her beauty. In some countries the uncovered head of the woman is still a matter of shame.

The priest was then to take the barley meal from the husband and put it into the hands of his wife. While she was holding the meal offering in her hands, the priest was to have the mixture of holy water and dust in his own hand.



It was called bitter water because of the bitter curse which would fall upon the woman if she proved guilty.

**NUM 5:19 And the priest shall charge her by an oath, and say unto the woman, If no man have lain with thee, and if thou hast not gone aside to uncleanness with another instead of thy husband, be thou free from this bitter water that causeth the curse:**

The priest was to place before the woman an oath. She had declared herself to be innocent of any adulterous union. If her denial of the accusations was true, she would be free from the effects of the bitter water.

**NUM 5:20 But if thou hast gone aside to another instead of thy husband, and if thou be defiled, and some man have lain with thee beside thine husband:**

If she was lying about her conduct, and she had been unfaithful, she would be place herself under a curse which would result from the bitter water.

**NUM 5:21 Then the priest shall charge the woman with an oath of cursing, and the priest shall say unto the woman, The LORD make thee a curse and an oath among thy people, when the LORD doth make thy thigh to rot, and thy belly to swell;**

If the curse appeared, the woman agreed that she would be an outcast among her people. Her thigh would rot and her belly would swell. The relationship between sexual infidelity and these two parts of the curse is not difficult to recognize. The thigh or loins is the area of the genital organs. The belly is the area of the womb which

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carries an unborn child. If the woman was guilty, both of these parts of her body would be under the curse. Whether or not these conditions were some known to the medical profession today we cannot say. Whatever they were, they would become obvious to those around her.

**NUM 5:22 And this water that causeth the curse shall go into thy bowels, to make thy belly to swell, and thy thigh to rot: And the woman shall say, Amen, amen.**

The woman could refuse to take the oath. If she did, she was admitting guilt. If she did accept the test, she was to say a repeated "Amen." The word "Amen" means "Be it so." She would accept the curse if she was guilty.

**NUM 5:23 And the priest shall write these curses in a book, and he shall blot them out with the bitter water:**

The ink used to write this curse in the book was not permanent ink. We are informed that even to this day, much of the ink used in documents in the eastern nations can be washed off with a wet sponge. The priest was to wash the words of the curse out with the bitter water.

**NUM 5:24 And he shall cause the woman to drink the bitter water that causeth the curse: and the water that causeth the curse shall enter into her, and become bitter.**

The woman was then to take the vessel with the Holy Water, the dust from the tabernacle floor and the words of the curse and drink it's contents.



**NUM 5:25** Then the priest shall take the jealousy offering out of the woman's hand, and shall wave the offering before the LORD, and offer it upon the altar:

**NUM 5:26** And the priest shall take an handful of the offering, even the memorial thereof, and burn it upon the altar, and afterward shall cause the woman to drink the water.

The priest was to take the offering which the woman's husband had put into her hands from her. He was to wave the offering before the altar of burnt offering. Then he was to take a handful of it and burn it upon the altar.

Those critical of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures claim to see a contradiction here. They point out that the offering was waved before the Lord and then offered upon the altar. Then, after it had already been offered, it was burned upon the altar. The supposed contradiction is imaginary. Verse twenty-six is merely a way of explaining how the offering was made. A handful of the meal was burnt; not the entire offering.

It was at this point that the bitter water was to be consumed.

**NUM 5:27** And when he hath made her to drink the water, then it shall come to pass, that, if she be defiled, and have done trespass against her husband, that the water that causeth the curse shall enter into her, and become bitter, and her belly shall swell, and her thigh shall rot: and the woman shall be a curse among her people.

If the curse came upon the woman, she would be disgraced. Her health would be seriously damaged and her reputation would be shattered.





**NUM 5:28 And if the woman be not defiled, but be clean; then she shall be free, and shall conceive seed.**

If the curse did not take effect, the woman would remain healthy. She would be free from any guilt and would be able to bear children. This seems to be an indication that if she was proven guilty, the curse would render her unable to conceive. This would not be as serious in some times and places as it would be in others. At this time and in the nation of Israel child bearing was a precious privilege.

**NUM 5:29 This is the law of jealousies, when a wife goeth aside to another instead of her husband, and is defiled;**

**NUM 5:30 Or when the spirit of jealousy cometh upon him, and he be jealous over his wife, and shall set the woman before the LORD, and the priest shall execute upon her all this law.**

**NUM 5:31 Then shall the man be guiltless from iniquity, and this woman shall bear her iniquity.**

If the ceremony proves the woman to be guilty of the charges placed upon her by her husband, he shall not bear any guilt because he has made the accusation.

It is claimed by some that the husband bears no guilt as a result of the accusation in either case. This last verse does not support that position. It only says the man shall be guiltless if the woman has actually proven guilty.

A few words need to be added with respect to trials by ordeal. The above is not to be compared with the horrors used in past times to determine guilt. Suspected persons have been thrown into a river with weights tied to them and their hands and feet bound. If they drowned, they were considered guilty. If they came to the surface, their



god had intervened and saved them. Others were made to fight wild animals. If they survived, they were innocent. If they died, they were guilty. Some were made to handle red hot metal objects. If they were burned, they were guilty. If they showed no effects, they were innocent.

Pure water with a little dust mixed in it and a small amount of ink dissolved in it would not cause the thigh to rot and the belly to swell. The woman who was innocent had nothing to fear. The one made to handle red hot metal, or fighting against a lion with his bare hands, had a great deal to fear.

In the cases of Daniel in the lion's den, and the three Hebrews in the fiery furnace, the true God of heaven and earth protected them. The handling of deadly rattlesnakes is not one of the wisest things a person can do! Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

## *Chapter 6*

**NUM 6:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

We are repeatedly reminded that these are not the words of Moses. They are the words of God as they are relayed by Moses.

Areas of discussion in the chapter are first, the Nazarite Vow, and second, the blessing which was to be pronounced upon Israel provided they honor and obey the Lord.

There are those who see the material discussed here as evidence of multiple documents being combined to make up the book of Numbers. This is not a valid position. Both of these topics fit very well into the preparation for the upcoming travel through the wilderness. There would be a need for examples of dedication such as that provided by those taking the Nazarite vow. There would also be a need for the comfort provided by Jehovah's promise that He would constantly be with them and that he would support them and give them peace.

**NUM 6:2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When either man or woman shall separate themselves to vow a vow of a Nazarite, to separate themselves unto the LORD:**

The Nazarite vow was available to any person, man or woman. One did not have to be a Levite to enter into such an arrangement with the Lord. The name comes from a Hebrew word meaning "to separate." The Nazarite had to be willing to forego several satisfactions which others were permitted. It was a means of informing others that this person held the God of heaven to be more important than all else.

There is a parallel between the promise of the Nazarite and that of the person who dedicates himself to Christ by becoming a member of His church. In both cases such persons were promising their whole heart, soul, mind and body to the glory of God. Each was to be a part of a separate people.

**NUM 6:3 He shall separate himself from wine and strong drink, and shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moist grapes, or dried.**

The Nazarite was to abstain from any use of grape products. He or she was not to drink grape juice, grape wine or any kind of alcoholic beverage. He was not even to eat grapes, whether fresh or dried.

The question naturally arises as to the reason for such a denial. After all, Jesus changed water into grape juice. Paul also told Timothy to take a little wine for the stomach's sake. The New Testament teaches that drunkenness is evil, but it certainly does not forbid the drinking of grape juice.

The reason probably lies in the connection between celebration and wine or grape juice. The cluster of grapes brought back from Canaan by those who spied out the land was a source of joy. The wedding feast was a happy occasion. When the individual took upon himself the Nazarite vow he was stating that he placed God above his chief joys.

**NUM 6:4 All the days of his separation shall he eat nothing that is made of the vine tree, from the kernels even to the husk.**

The separation was to be complete that even the seeds



or the peelings of the grape were not to be consumed. Some translate the word “husk” to tendrils. Either way the lesson is the same.

**NUM 6:5 All the days of the vow of his separation there shall no razor come upon his head: until the days be fulfilled, in the which he separateth himself unto the LORD, he shall be holy, and shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow.**

There were two quite different types of vows. There was a lifetime vow, and there was a vow set for a given number of days. Lifetime vows were sometimes placed upon one by his parents before his birth. John the baptist, Samuel and Samson are examples. See Judges 13:5, I Samuel 1:11 and Luke 1:15.

Jdg 13:5 For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.

1Sa 1:11 And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.

Luk 1:15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother’s womb.

We search in vain for specific examples of those who



took the Nazarite vow for a given period of time, unless those mentioned in Acts 21:23 were such. The Bible does not call them Nazarites. Jesus is called a Nazarene. This does not have to do with a Nazarite vow. It only means he had been raised in the village of Nazareth.

During the course of the vow, the person was not to cut his hair at any time. Samson connected his hair with his strength. That does not prove that those of that day, or of our own would always gain physical strength through allowing the hair to grow.

There are two possible reasons why the hair was allowed to grow long. The first is that the Nazarite was rebelling against wickedness. He was letting others know he was different. Of course, during much of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century, unusual hair styles were worn by men and boys to call attention to themselves. The Nazarite was using it as a means of calling attention to his dedication to Jehovah. The unique hair styles of men of these later days are intended to call attention to themselves. This is quite a contrast.

A second possible reason for the uncut hair is that the person taking the vow was will to accept shame from others through a visible neglect of physical adornment. He would allow his physical appearance to deteriorate in order to show his emphasis on the spiritual things. I call your attention to the words of the apostle Paul when he said,

1Co 11:14-15 Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering.

In view of Paul's words, it would seem that the first of these reasons is more probable than the second. Your



present author believes the Nazarite was proving he was a separated person and was devoting his life to God for the length of time to which he was committed by the vow.

**NUM 6:6 All the days that he separateth himself unto the LORD he shall come at no dead body.**

**NUM 6:7 He shall not make himself unclean for his father, or for his mother, for his brother, or for his sister, when they die: because the consecration of his God is upon his head.**

The one under such a vow was not to touch any dead body. This included even his closest relatives. It is normal for those who remain alive to reach out and touch the hand or the forehead of the deceased. This was not to be done by the Nazarite.

**NUM 6:8 All the days of his separation he is holy unto the LORD.**

The reason for this prohibition was that death is the result of sin. If there had never been sin in the history of mankind, there would have been no death. However, through being related to Adam, physical death has passed unto all men. The dead are therefore unclean and the Nazarite would become unclean and lose his holy condition if he made contact with a corpse.

**NUM 6:9 And if any man die very suddenly by him, and he hath defiled the head of his consecration; then he shall shave his head in the day of his cleansing, on the seventh day shall he shave it.**

What was to happen if someone died unexpectedly and the Nazarite touch the person by accident? In that



case he had become defiled and must take action to rectify the problem. He would be unclean for a period of seven days. On the seventh day he was to shave the hair off his head.

**NUM 6:10 And on the eighth day he shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons, to the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation:**

One the eighth day he was to bring a sacrifice of two turtledoves or two young pigeons to the priest at the tabernacle. This of course was to take place during the wilderness travels while the tabernacle was still in the midst of the people. It would have been far more difficult after Israel had been settled in Canaan and the distance to the tabernacle was much greater. This would be an even greater hindrance to one who wished to take such a vow today.

This was the same sacrifice as was offered by the one who was too poor to offer more expensive animals. Mary and Joseph were too poor to offer an expensive sacrifice when Jesus was born. During the eighth day, when the child had been circumcised, they offered the two turtledoves. By the way, every firstborn male child was holy unto the Lord. See Luke 2:22-24.

Luk 2:22 And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord;

Luk 2:23 (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;)

Luk 2:24 And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.





**NUM 6:11 And the priest shall offer the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering, and make an atonement for him, for that he sinned by the dead, and shall hallow his head that same day.**

The defiled Nazarite had separated himself from his holy condition by touching the dead, even though it was accidental. One of the turtledoves served as a sin offering and the other served as a burnt offering.

**NUM 6:12 And he shall consecrate unto the LORD the days of his separation, and shall bring a lamb of the first year for a trespass offering: but the days that were before shall be lost, because his separation was defiled.**

In addition to the two turtledoves, the above Nazarite was to offer a young lamb as a trespass offering. He had trespassed God's law.

He was also to start the days of his vow from the beginning. Those days he had served before the defilement were cancelled.

**NUM 6:13 And this is the law of the Nazarite, when the days of his separation are fulfilled: he shall be brought unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation:**

We now consider the Nazarite who had successfully completed the days of his vow. He had either never been defiled by touching the dead, or he had begun his separation period again and had finished it.

This person was also to be presented at the door of the tabernacle for a set of sacrifices. It is fairly easy to



see that much of this set of instructions dealing with the Nazarite vow was intended to bolster the faith and trust of the Israelites during their wilderness wanderings.

**NUM 6:14 And he shall offer his offering unto the LORD, one he lamb of the first year without blemish for a burnt offering, and one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish for a sin offering, and one ram without blemish for peace offerings,**

An entire set of the offerings mentioned earlier were required after the vow was successfully completed. Both a male and a female lamb were to be offered. The male was a burnt offering. The female was a sin offering. A mature ram was to be offered as a peace offering.

**NUM 6:15 And a basket of unleavened bread, cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, and wafers of unleavened bread anointed with oil, and their meat offering, and their drink offerings.**

Both meat offerings and drink offerings were to be added, as well as other groceries and supplies.

**NUM 6:16 And the priest shall bring them before the LORD, and shall offer his sin offering, and his burnt offering:**

**NUM 6:17 And he shall offer the ram for a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD, with the basket of unleavened bread: the priest shall offer also his meat offering, and his drink offering.**

The priest was an important part of the ceremony. One did not just go out and kill the sacrifices on his own. There is quite a difference today, when each Christian is a priest



and the only intermediary is Jesus Christ our High Priest. Jesus has presented Himself as both Priest and the Lamb. The Christian offers himself as a living sacrifice.

**NUM 6:18 And the Nazarite shall shave the head of his separation at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall take the hair of the head of his separation, and put it in the fire which is under the sacrifice of the peace offerings.**

The hair which had been uncut for the entire period of the vow was to be shaved off when the vow was finished. It was to be placed in the fire which normally received the peace offerings. It had served its purpose of calling attention to the dedication of the Nazarite to God. Now it was to be offered to Him

**NUM 6:19 And the priest shall take the sodden shoulder of the ram, and one unleavened cake out of the basket, and one unleavened wafer, and shall put them upon the hands of the Nazarite, after the hair of his separation is shaven:**

The wave breast and the heave shoulder have been mentioned before in the seventh and eighth chapters of the book of Leviticus.

**NUM 6:20 And the priest shall wave them for a wave offering before the LORD: this is holy for the priest, with the wave breast and heave shoulder: and after that the Nazarite may drink wine.**

After the heave and the wave offerings were concluded, the ban on the consumption of grape products was no longer binding.



**NUM 6:21 This is the law of the Nazarite who hath vowed, and of his offering unto the LORD for his separation, beside that that his hand shall get: according to the vow which he vowed, so he must do after the law of his separation.**

The interesting part of this verse is the phrase “beside that that his hand shall get.” It appears that if the Nazarite himself was unable to provide the items needed for his offerings some of his friends were allowed to help provide them. Paul may have done just that when he is said to have paid the charges for some which had taken vows. See Acts 21:23ff.

Act 21:23 Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them;

Act 21:24 Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law.

**NUM 6:22 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 6:23 Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them,**

If the people heard and obeyed the laws and statutes which the Lord had given through Moses, there were rich blessings to be gained. These next four verses list such blessings in some of the most beautiful words found anywhere in the Word of God. They have been incorporated into one of the most loved songs in our worship hymnals.

Moses was told to give them to Aaron and his sons and instruct them to pronounce them over His people.

**NUM 6:24 The LORD bless thee, and keep thee:**

The true servant of God need never worry about being forsaken by the Heavenly Father. Regardless of the troubles and trials as we travel through this life in our march toward the promised land, we can depend upon His loving care.

**NUM 6:25 The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:**

God turns His face toward those who love Him and keep His commandments. He will extend his grace and mercy to them. It is not so with the wicked. He will turn His face away from them and they will deny themselves many blessings in this life, as well as all hope of hearing His words, “Well done faithful servant. Enter into the joys of thy Lord.”

**NUM 6:26 The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.**

The peace mentioned here is far more than just absence of conflict. It has to do with the entire well being of the person. Life will take on meaning and satisfaction which can never be found in selfish and evil lives.

**NUM 6:27 And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them.**

The word “they” refers to the priests who pronounce the blessing upon the people. They were to let the people know that they were the Lord’s inheritance. A related thought is found in the statement by Jesus that if we confess His name before men, He will confess us before the Father in heaven.



When a person is baptized into the body of Christ, that person becomes known as a Christian. God's name is placed upon him. He will own and bless His own.



## *Chapter 7*

The time of departure from the Sinai area was rapidly approaching. All must be ready for that important event. The priesthood had been established. The tabernacle and its associated furnishings and items for worship had been erected and put into place. In this chapter God encouraged the people to bring the necessary materials for the beginning of continuing worship and communion as they moved from place to place.

After the offerings had been provided by the people, God indicated His willingness to be with them and guide them by speaking from the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant.

The chapter is the second longest in the entire Bible. Psalm 119 is the largest. It has 150 verses. This present chapter has 89. A first impression is that due to the repetition found here, the chapter is boring. There is a reason for the repetition. When one grasps the reason, the chapter springs to life.

Throughout the Holy Scriptures, the point is made that God wishes to lead men, and wishes that men respond to His love by offering both themselves and the possessions which He has placed in their hands to His glory and the spread of His reign. He takes note of every gift. He will reward the giver.

**NUM 7:1 And it came to pass on the day that Moses had fully set up the tabernacle, and had anointed it, and sanctified it, and all the instruments thereof, both the altar and all the vessels thereof, and had anointed them, and sanctified them;**

There may be an excessive amount of emphasis placed



upon the word “day” in this verse. It is very possible that the day here is only speaking of a general period of time which took place after the erection, anointing and sanctification of the structure with it’s adjoining items and utensils. It is true that when the Bible uses the words “on that day” it is more apt to mean a specific day than it is when the words are “in that day”, which point to a general period of time. Yet, the context here does indicate that the reference is to order of placement in time rather than a twenty-four hour calendar day.

**NUM 7:2 That the princes of Israel, heads of the house of their fathers, who were the princes of the tribes, and were over them that were numbered, offered:**

These princes were twelve in number. They were identical with those mentioned as being appointed when the original census was taken. The fact that there was one for each of the tribes tells us all of the people were to be committed to the upcoming travels, not just a portion of them.

**NUM 7:3 And they brought their offering before the LORD, six covered wagons, and twelve oxen; a wagon for two of the princes, and for each one an ox: and they brought them before the tabernacle.**

There were six covered wagons presented. If they had been distributed equally, there would have been one wagon for two tribes. There were two oxen provided to pull each of the wagons. Horses were used in war. Oxen were used to pull wagons.

**NUM 7:4 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**



**NUM 7:5 Take it of them, that they may be to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; and thou shalt give them unto the Levites, to every man according to his service.**

Moses may have been wondering how he should make proper use of these wagons, etc. God promptly gave him the answer. He was to receive the gifts from each of the tribes and assign them to the Levites in order that they could handle the duties assigned to them.

**NUM 7:6 And Moses took the wagons and the oxen, and gave them unto the Levites.**

Moses did as he was told. The twelve wagons were received and given to the Levites.

**NUM 7:7 Two wagons and four oxen he gave unto the sons of Gershon, according to their service:**

The Gershonites were responsible for transporting the soft goods such as curtains and the basic fabric of the tent itself. Two wagons were needed for this work.

**NUM 7:8 And four wagons and eight oxen he gave unto the sons of Merari, according unto their service, under the hand of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.**

Four wagons were assigned to the Merarites. They were to transport the heavier hardware items such as the pillars and sockets. This would require more wagons than did the service of the Gershonites.

**NUM 7:9 But unto the sons of Kohath he gave none: because the service of the sanctuary belonging**

**unto them was that they should bear upon their shoulders.**

The Kohathites did not receive any wagons to accomplish their service. They were to carry the items used in the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place through the use of staves which were passed through rings. They were not to be carried by carts or wagons. They were to be carried by placing those staves on their shoulders. If this command had been heeded, Uzzah would not have had occasion to reach out and touch the ark when it began to topple off the new cart upon which it had been placed. See I Chron. 13:7-10.

1Ch 13:7 And they carried the ark of God in a new cart out of the house of Abinadab: and Uzza and Ahio drave the cart.

1Ch 13:8 And David and all Israel played before God with all their might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets.

1Ch 13:9 And when they came unto the threshingfloor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled.

1Ch 13:10 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God.

Men have great difficult in understand the principle that they should do the things God has commanded, in the way God said they were to be done.

**NUM 7:10 And the princes offered for dedicating of the altar in the day that it was anointed, even the princes offered their offering before the altar.**



**NUM 7:11 And the LORD said unto Moses, They shall offer their offering, each prince on his day, for the dedicating of the altar.**

Verse ten probably means the entire period of time the offerings were being made, which would include at least the twelve days on which each of the princes presented the offering for the tribe he represented.

The first nine verses of the chapter describe the offerings which were to be used in transporting the tabernacle and its furnishings. These next verses describe the items which were to be used in the worship at the altar.

Some of these items which were offered were used at the altar of burnt offering. Some were used at the altar of incense. The term "the altar" apparently refers to both.

**NUM 7:12 And he that offered his offering the first day was Nahshon the son of Amminadab, of the tribe of Judah:**

**NUM 7:13 And his offering was one silver charger, the weight thereof was an hundred and thirty shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them were full of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat offering:**

**NUM 7:14 One spoon of ten shekels of gold, full of incense:**

**NUM 7:15 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt offering:**

**NUM 7:16 One kid of the goats for a sin offering:**

**NUM 7:17 And for a sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he goats, five lambs of the first year: this was the offering of Nahshon the son of Amminadab.**

~~~~~ The princes presented their offerings in the same

order as they were arranged around the tabernacle when they were camped. Nason, of the tribe of Judah was first to appear. That which he presented filled the need for a whole range of offerings. There were ingredients for meat or cereal offerings. There was incense. There were animals for burnt offerings, and sin offerings.

A note may be needed as to the origin of the silver, gold and numbers of animals offered. We are not allowed to forget the riches which were given to Israel by the Egyptians to get them to leave Egypt. Aaron had used some of the gold to melt it and make the golden calf. Now we see another use for it. The animals which were available for this initial dedication ceremony could have been from their own livestock which the Egyptians allowed them to take with them. The number of lambs, goats and oxen which would later be sacrificed inform us that the wilderness was not jungle. It was unpopulated, but must have had a modest amount of pasture land.

At this point I will pass over the offerings of the other eleven princes and will place a table at the close of the repeated material. In doing so, I am not accusing the Lord of being boring by including the details of that which each prince offered. God is interested in what congregations as a whole do in accomplishing His work. But He is also very much interested in what every person does on an individual basis. Every man is expected to give in accordance with his ability. The widow who gave two mites was noticed by our Saviour.

**NUM 7:18 On the second day Nethaneel the son of Zuar, prince of Issachar, did offer:**

**NUM 7:19 He offered for his offering one silver charger, the weight whereof was an hundred and thirty shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them full**



**of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat offering:**

**NUM 7:20 One spoon of gold of ten shekels, full of incense:**

**NUM 7:21 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt offering:**

**NUM 7:22 One kid of the goats for a sin offering:**

**NUM 7:23 And for a sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he goats, five lambs of the first year: this was the offering of Nethaneel the son of Zuar.**

**NUM 7:24 On the third day Eliab the son of Helon, prince of the children of Zebulun, did offer:**

**NUM 7:25 His offering was one silver charger, the weight whereof was an hundred and thirty shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat offering:**

**NUM 7:26 One golden spoon of ten shekels, full of incense:**

**NUM 7:27 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt offering:**

**NUM 7:28 One kid of the goats for a sin offering:**

**NUM 7:29 And for a sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he goats, five lambs of the first year: this was the offering of Eliab the son of Helon.**

**NUM 7:30 On the fourth day Elizur the son of Shedeur, prince of the children of Reuben, did offer:**

**NUM 7:31 His offering was one silver charger of the weight of an hundred and thirty shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them full of fine flour mingled**



with oil for a meat offering:

NUM 7:32 One golden spoon of ten shekels, full of incense:

NUM 7:33 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt offering:

NUM 7:34 One kid of the goats for a sin offering:

NUM 7:35 And for a sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he goats, five lambs of the first year: this was the offering of Elizur the son of Shedeur.

NUM 7:36 On the fifth day Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai, prince of the children of Simeon, did offer:

NUM 7:37 His offering was one silver charger, the weight whereof was an hundred and thirty shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat offering:

NUM 7:38 One golden spoon of ten shekels, full of incense:

NUM 7:39 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt offering:

NUM 7:40 One kid of the goats for a sin offering:

NUM 7:41 And for a sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he goats, five lambs of the first year: this was the offering of Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai.

NUM 7:42 On the sixth day Eliasaph the son of Deuel, prince of the children of Gad, offered:

NUM 7:43 His offering was one silver charger of the weight of an hundred and thirty shekels, a silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them full of fine flour mingled

with oil for a meat offering:

NUM 7:44 One golden spoon of ten shekels, full of incense:

NUM 7:45 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt offering:

NUM 7:46 One kid of the goats for a sin offering:

NUM 7:47 And for a sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he goats, five lambs of the first year: this was the offering of Eliasaph the son of Deuel.

NUM 7:48 On the seventh day Elishama the son of Ammihud, prince of the children of Ephraim, offered:

NUM 7:49 His offering was one silver charger, the weight whereof was an hundred and thirty shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat offering:

NUM 7:50 One golden spoon of ten shekels, full of incense:

NUM 7:51 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt offering:

NUM 7:52 One kid of the goats for a sin offering:

NUM 7:53 And for a sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he goats, five lambs of the first year: this was the offering of Elishama the son of Ammihud.

NUM 7:54 On the eighth day offered Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur, prince of the children of Manasseh:

NUM 7:55 His offering was one silver charger of the weight of an hundred and thirty shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of



the sanctuary; both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat offering:

NUM 7:56 One golden spoon of ten shekels, full of incense:

NUM 7:57 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt offering:

NUM 7:58 One kid of the goats for a sin offering:

NUM 7:59 And for a sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he goats, five lambs of the first year: this was the offering of Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur.

NUM 7:60 On the ninth day Abidan the son of Gideoni, prince of the children of Benjamin, offered:

NUM 7:61 His offering was one silver charger, the weight whereof was an hundred and thirty shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat offering:

NUM 7:62 One golden spoon of ten shekels, full of incense:

NUM 7:63 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt offering:

NUM 7:64 One kid of the goats for a sin offering:

NUM 7:65 And for a sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he goats, five lambs of the first year: this was the offering of Abidan the son of Gideoni.

NUM 7:66 On the tenth day Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai, prince of the children of Dan, offered:

NUM 7:67 His offering was one silver charger, the weight whereof was an hundred and thirty shekels,

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one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat offering:

NUM 7:68 One golden spoon of ten shekels, full of incense:

NUM 7:69 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt offering:

NUM 7:70 One kid of the goats for a sin offering:

NUM 7:71 And for a sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he goats, five lambs of the first year: this was the offering of Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai.

NUM 7:72 On the eleventh day Pagiel the son of Ocran, prince of the children of Asher, offered:

NUM 7:73 His offering was one silver charger, the weight whereof was an hundred and thirty shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat offering:

NUM 7:74 One golden spoon of ten shekels, full of incense:

NUM 7:75 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt offering:

NUM 7:76 One kid of the goats for a sin offering:

NUM 7:77 And for a sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he goats, five lambs of the first year: this was the offering of Pagiel the son of Ocran.

NUM 7:78 On the twelfth day Ahira the son of Enan, prince of the children of Naphtali, offered:

NUM 7:79 His offering was one silver charger, the weight whereof was an hundred and thirty shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of



**the sanctuary; both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat offering:**

**NUM 7:80 One golden spoon of ten shekels, full of incense:**

**NUM 7:81 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt offering:**

**NUM 7:82 One kid of the goats for a sin offering:**

**NUM 7:83 And for a sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he goats, five lambs of the first year: this was the offering of Ahira the son of Enan.**

The reader may wonder why all eighty-three of these verses were included in the scripture text portion of this chapter. The reason is that God did so, and must have had a reason. Do you have difficulty remembering that each of the twelve princes made a dedicatory offering for the services to be carried on in connection with the tabernacle and it's worship. I don't. I believe that justifies including all twelve listings. God's thoughts are higher than my thoughts, or yours.

**NUM 7:84 This was the dedication of the altar, in the day when it was anointed, by the princes of Israel: twelve chargers of silver, twelve silver bowls, twelve spoons of gold:**

**NUM 7:85 Each charger of silver weighing an hundred and thirty shekels, each bowl seventy: all the silver vessels weighed two thousand and four hundred shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary:**

**NUM 7:86 The golden spoons were twelve, full of incense, weighing ten shekels apiece, after the shekel of the sanctuary: all the gold of the spoons**



was an hundred and twenty shekels.

**NUM 7:87** All the oxen for the burnt offering were twelve bullocks, the rams twelve, the lambs of the first year twelve, with their meat offering: and the kids of the goats for sin offering twelve.

**NUM 7:88** And all the oxen for the sacrifice of the peace offerings were twenty and four bullocks, the rams sixty, the he goats sixty, the lambs of the first year sixty. This was the dedication of the altar, after that it was anointed.

Let us put the above into tabular form for ease of summary.

### Gifts From Each of the Tribes

Prince	Tribe	Silver & Gold Vessels	Animals 1 bull, 2 oxen Filled with oil, 6 goats flour, incense, etc. 6 male lambs
6 rams,			
Nashon	Judah	“	“
Nathanel	Issachar	“	“
Eliab	Zebelun	“	“
Elizur	Reuben	“	“
Shelumiel	Simeon	“	“
Eliasaph	Gad	“	“
Elishama	Ephraim	“	“
Gamaliel	Manasseh	“	“
Abidan	Benjamin	“	“
Ahiezer	Dan	“	“
Pagiel	Asher	“	“
Ahira	Naphtali	“	“



We have totals of:   12 Silver Platters (130 shekels)  
                           12 Silver Bowls (70 shekels)  
                           12 Gold Spoons (10 shekels)  
                           12 Bulls  
                           24 Oxen  
                           72 Rams, 72 Male Lambs, 72 Goats  
 The Value =  2,400 shekels of silver  
                   120 shekels of gold.

The total value of the whole offering was very great. It is very difficult to set this value in present day United States dollars. If the reader cared to make an attempt, he would need to find market values for unspecified animal weights and also know the price of gold and silver at the time of his own calculation. Even then, the value of the animals might vary in relation to different social uses for them. An ox at that time might have greater relative value than an ox in the present system.

**NUM 7:89 And when Moses was gone into the tabernacle of the congregation to speak with him, then he heard the voice of one speaking unto him from off the mercy seat that was upon the ark of testimony, from between the two cherubims: and he spake unto him.**

God had previously spoken to Moses from the top of Sinai. They are now to leave Sinai and begin the trek through the wilderness for forty years. God assured Moses that He would still be available from his cloud which stood between the cherubim upon the mercy seat of the ark.

Two way communication had been established. Israel had a means of drawing near to God in worship. God had a means of speaking to the people from the ark.



## *Chapter 8*

**NUM 8:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 8:2 Speak unto Aaron and say unto him, When thou lightest the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light over against the candlestick.**

By following the instructions of Jehovah, Israel is getting closer and closer to the time of departure from the mountain. God's power and wisdom will be demonstrated by the light given off by the seven lamps of the candlestick. Aaron was now to light them.

The phrase "over against the candlestick" may result in some confusion to the present reader. It only means that the lamps were fastened to the candlestick and were to give off their light from the same location as the candlestick which held them in place. The candlestick was located on the side of the Holy Place. The light from it illuminated the rest of the room.

**NUM 8:3 And Aaron did so; he lighted the lamps thereof over against the candlestick, as the LORD commanded Moses.**

**NUM 8:4 And this work of the candlestick was of beaten gold, unto the shaft thereof, unto the flowers thereof, was beaten work: according unto the pattern which the LORD had shewed Moses, so he made the candlestick.**

If Aaron had continued to do as the Lord commanded, he would not have made a golden calf later on. This time he obeyed the will of God.

Other items in the tabernacle were overlaid with gold. It was not so with the candlestick. It was hammered into

shape from a mass of pure gold. The entire candlestick was one piece and must have been a magnificent reminder of the Light of the world.

**NUM 8:5 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 8:6 Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them.**

The tribe of Levi had been chosen to tend to the work of the tabernacle. Not all Levites were priests, but every priest was to be from the tribe of Levi. Being closely associated with either the transportation of the tabernacle or with the worship conducted there, particular care needed to be taken to insure that they were clean both physically and spiritually.

**NUM 8:7 And thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse them: Sprinkle water of purifying upon them, and let them shave all their flesh, and let them wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean.**

Those who attempt to use the sprinkling of “holy water” upon men today as a means of purifying and dedicating them to Christ will look in vain for support of their position in the New Testament age. The person today who wishes to become a Christian must have his **body washed** in the waters of baptism, and have his **heart sprinkled** with the blood of the Son of God. (See Hebrews 10:19-22.)

Heb 10:19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

Heb 10:20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

Heb 10:21 And having an high priest over the house

of God;

Heb 10:22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

**NUM 8:8 Then let them take a young bullock with his meat offering, even fine flour mingled with oil, and another young bullock shalt thou take for a sin offering.**

This verse does not say two bullocks were to be offered for each Levite. There were only two bullocks offered for the entire group.

**NUM 8:9 And thou shalt bring the Levites before the tabernacle of the congregation: and thou shalt gather the whole assembly of the children of Israel together:**

Those of the tribe of Levi were to be brought to the area near the entrance of the tabernacle, and the entire nation was to be gathered as close to the tabernacle as was possible.

Some believe this refers to only representatives of the Levites and representatives of the rest of the people. Overall there were thousands of Levites and over 600,000 men, plus women and children in the congregation as a whole. The point is that this was a momentous occasion and all were to be involved in it. Even if some of the people were far enough so they could not witness the ceremony, we can be sure they felt themselves to be a part of the activities. After all, some one hundred thousand persons attend the Rose Bowl football games. Some are so far from the field that they need binoculars to see, but they yell just as loud as those in the front row.



**NUM 8:10 And thou shalt bring the Levites before the LORD: and the children of Israel shall put their hands upon the Levites:**

This time it is quite certain that this was done in a representative manner. One can only try to imagine what would have been involved if every person in the congregation placed a hand on the several thousand Levites.

However, we must not miss the main point. The Levites had been selected to take the place of the firstborn of each family of Israel. The laying on of the hands of the people told of their willingness to let the Levites replace their firstborn.

**NUM 8:11 And Aaron shall offer the Levites before the LORD for an offering of the children of Israel, that they may execute the service of the LORD.**

Aaron was to make an official pronouncement of the willingness of the Levites to serve, and of the people to depend upon their service.

**NUM 8:12 And the Levites shall lay their hands upon the heads of the bullocks: and thou shalt offer the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering, unto the LORD, to make an atonement for the Levites.**

The Levites themselves would not die as a burnt offering and a sin offering for the people. They would be replaced by the two bullocks which would be killed in their place. Thus the sacrifice of the two animals made atonement for the entire assembly.





**NUM 8:13 And thou shalt set the Levites before Aaron, and before his sons, and offer them for an offering unto the LORD.**

**NUM 8:14 Thus shalt thou separate the Levites from among the children of Israel: and the Levites shall be mine.**

**NUM 8:15 And after that shall the Levites go in to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation: and thou shalt cleanse them, and offer them for an offering.**

When the cleansing and dedication of the Levites had been completed, they were ready to be used by Jehovah. It is the same with those who would serve Him today. Until the person is convinced that Jesus is the Son of God, has repented of his sins, has confessed his faith before men, he is not ready for service. Until he has had his body buried and washed in the water of baptism and his heart sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ, he is not ready to enter into the royal priesthood of which Peter speaks in I Peter 2:9.

1Pe 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light;

**NUM 8:16 For they are wholly given unto me from among the children of Israel; instead of such as open every womb, even instead of the firstborn of all the children of Israel, have I taken them unto me.**

**NUM 8:17 For all the firstborn of the children of Israel are mine, both man and beast: on the day that I smote every firstborn in the land of Egypt I**

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**sanctified them for myself.**

**NUM 8:18 And I have taken the Levites for all the firstborn of the children of Israel.**

Whenever an Israelite cast his eyes upon his firstborn child or his firstborn of the livestock, he would be reminded that at the time of the Passover in Egypt when the firstborn of the Egyptians was killed, God had made arrangements for a replacement of the firstborn of His chosen people. The blood of bulls and goats served that purpose in the Mosaic age. The blood of His own Son serves the same purpose in the Christian dispensation.

**NUM 8:19 And I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and to his sons from among the children of Israel, to do the service of the children of Israel in the tabernacle of the congregation, and to make an atonement for the children of Israel: that there be no plague among the children of Israel, when the children of Israel come nigh unto the sanctuary.**

The plagues which were sent upon the Egyptians were horrible. They were not unjust in view of the treatment of God's people by their Egyptian masters, but they did result in much suffering. If no arrangement had been made for the Levites to take the place of the firstborn of Israel, the approach to the tabernacle would have resulted in similar suffering. The Levites would be a constant reminder of God's mercy toward His people. They would also be a reminder that great danger faced the one who would take God's presence lightly.

**NUM 8:20 And Moses, and Aaron, and all the congregation of the children of Israel, did to the Levites according unto all that the LORD commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so did**

**the children of Israel unto them.**

**NUM 8:21 And the Levites were purified, and they washed their clothes; and Aaron offered them as an offering before the LORD; and Aaron made an atonement for them to cleanse them.**

All was done according to the pleasure of the God of heaven. The bodies of the Levites were shaved of all hair. Their clothing was washed. They were offered to the Lord, and an atonement had been made that their souls might be free of impurity.

**NUM 8:22 And after that went the Levites in to do their service in the tabernacle of the congregation before Aaron, and before his sons: as the LORD had commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so did they unto them.**

Nothing was added. Nothing was subtracted. No modification of any kind was made in the commandments of God. The Levites were ready for their upcoming duties.

**NUM 8:23 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 8:24 This is it that belongeth unto the Levites: from twenty and five years old and upward they shall go in to wait upon the service of the tabernacle of the congregation:**

This time the age span for service is given as beginning at the age of twenty-five and ending at the age of fifty. At the time of the census, the lower limit for counting those who were suitable for fighting was twenty. See Numbers 1:3. In Numbers 4:3 the age for entering the actual work of the priesthood was given as thirty.



There is no contradiction. The age at which a man is suitable for military service was twenty. A Levite began to take training for his service at the age of twenty-five, and began his service at age thirty.

**NUM 8:25 And from the age of fifty years they shall cease waiting upon the service thereof, and shall serve no more:**

At the age of fifty, a man is beginning to have difficulty accomplishing the physical tasks he could complete in his prime. It was best that he not be expected to lift heavy burdens or do other strenuous labor after that age.

This has little to do with the age at which preachers or elders of congregations of the church today should be expected to retire. Many of such men will be quite capable of working effectively into their seventies. It is wise, however, for preachers and elders to recognize when their mental and physical effectiveness is hindering them to the point that there is need for a younger person to replace them.

**NUM 8:26 But shall minister with their brethren in the tabernacle of the congregation, to keep the charge, and shall do no service. Thus shalt thou do unto the Levites touching their charge.**

One of the things a Levite who was over the age of fifty could still do was to see that only those who were permitted to enter certain areas in and around the tabernacle were allowed to be there.

Many who are elderly in our present day, and who have physical limitations, can remind us when there has been trespassing against the Word of God.



## Chapter 9

This chapter will discuss God's command to take the Passover before beginning their journey through the wilderness. It will deal with certain problems involved and will also treat the manner in which the cloud and the pillar of fire are to be used as a guide.

**NUM 9:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying,**

This date is two weeks after the erection of the tabernacle. It may seem strange that it is included at this point. Actually it is a very strong warning that Israel is to be dependent upon God's presence with them as they travel.

**NUM 9:2 Let the children of Israel also keep the passover at his appointed season.**

The appointed season, according to Leviticus 23:5-6 began on the fourteenth day of the first month and lasted for eight days.

**NUM 9:3 In the fourteenth day of this month, at even, ye shall keep it in his appointed season: according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof, shall ye keep it.**

Not only were they to keep it at the specified date; they were to observe it strictly according to the procedures God had prescribed. Those who would take liberties with God's specifications for the time and actions to be observed in

our own time need to pay heed!

**NUM 9:4 And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, that they should keep the passover.**

Moses did not interject his own opinions when relaying God's commands to the people. God is the authority. Moses was but God's messenger.

**NUM 9:5 And they kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at even in the wilderness of Sinai: according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel.**

Burton Coffman makes an interesting point here. Those who contend for the writing of Numbers at a late date should recognize that the months were far more apt to be identified by their position relative to the other eleven than to be known by their names. If Numbers had been written after the exile, the month would have been referred to as Abib.

**NUM 9:6 And there were certain men, who were defiled by the dead body of a man, that they could not keep the passover on that day: and they came before Moses and before Aaron on that day:**

A problem arose. God had declared certain persons unclean and had forbidden that they eat of the Passover. Those who had made recent contact with the dead were among them. Certain men among the Israelites had made such contact. Were they to be allowed to eat, or not.

**NUM 9:7 And those men said unto him, We are defiled by the dead body of a man: wherefore are we kept back, that we may not offer an offering of the**



**LORD in his appointed season among the children of Israel?**

We are not told how it came about that they had touched the dead. It has been suggested that it could well have been relatives of Nadab and Abihu who died just before this time. They came to Moses requesting that they be allowed to partake.

**NUM 9:8 And Moses said unto them, Stand still, and I will hear what the LORD will command concerning you.**

Moses name is connected closely with the word “meek.” Over and over we find him making it extremely plain that he was completely dependent on the Word of God. He is true to form again here.

Both those who preach from the pulpit and those who hear from the pew should follow the same plan. The preacher is not privileged to replace the Word of the Lord with his own opinions, or those of other men. He is charged with dispensing the revealed Word. The person sitting in the pew should not expect to hear jokes and human theories.

**NUM 9:9 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 9:10 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If any man of you or of your posterity shall be unclean by reason of a dead body, or be in a journey afar off, yet he shall keep the passover unto the LORD.**

Moses received an answer from Jehovah. He was to



inform the people that anyone who was unclean because of contact with a dead body was permitted, and even expected, to keep the Passover. In addition, those who had traveled so far off that they could not return in time were also to partake.

**NUM 9:11 The fourteenth day of the second month at even they shall keep it, and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.**

Rather than partaking with the rest of the assembly, they were to celebrate the Passover one month later. However, they were to be just as careful about the ceremony as were the others.

**NUM 9:12 They shall leave none of it unto the morning, nor break any bone of it: according to all the ordinances of the passover they shall keep it.**

God specified four concerns which were to be respected.

1. They were to use only unleavened bread.
2. They were to eat bitter herbs.
3. They were no to leave any of it overnight.
4. They were not to break any bone of the Lamb.

The last of the four was a type of the death of Jesus Christ as the True Lamb of God. (See John 19:36.)

Joh 19:36 For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.

**NUM 9:13 But the man that is clean, and is not in a journey, and forbeareth to keep the passover, even the same soul shall be cut off from among his**



**people: because he brought not the offering of the LORD in his appointed season, that man shall bear his sin.**

The one who had necessarily touched the dead, and the one who had been too far distant to return in time were not deliberately ignoring God's will. They would be excused until one month later. It was quite different in the case of the one who could have partaken and deliberately decided to ignore it. The latter was to be cut off from the rest of the people of Israel. He was guilty and would face God's displeasure.

Oh, how important this truth is all these centuries later! There are many who miss the services of the church with either trivial excuses, or perhaps none at all. One does not go fishing on Sunday morning and then request to take the Lord's Supper on Sunday evening. Such behavior will be written into the book of life.

**NUM 9:14 And if a stranger shall sojourn among you, and will keep the passover unto the LORD; according to the ordinance of the passover, and according to the manner thereof, so shall he do: ye shall have one ordinance, both for the stranger, and for him that was born in the land.**

There was another situation which God tended to at the same time. What was to be done with regard to the proselyte who was not an Israelite by birth, but had determined to cast his lot with God's people? Could he join in with the others and be approved? God's answer was "Yes." The person was to keep the feast along with the rest, but was to be bound by the same rites and ceremonies as the one who had been born as an Israelite.

It is possible to see the situation of the Gentiles under



the New Covenant in the above. Though not fleshly Jews, the Gentiles have been invited to eat the body and drink the blood of the Lamb as Christians meet to take of the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week.

**NUM 9:15 And on the day that the tabernacle was reared up the cloud covered the tabernacle, namely, the tent of the testimony: and at even there was upon the tabernacle as it were the appearance of fire, until the morning.**

**NUM 9:16 So it was alway: the cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night.**

All was ready for the journey. The law had been delivered. The priesthood had been chosen and sanctified. The tabernacle had been erected and dedicated. The marching and camping arrangements had been clarified. Two things remained. When should they depart, and which direction should they take?

Since the people had accepted His presence among them by honoring His Word, God was ready to travel with them. He would indicate this by sending a cloudy pillar during the daylight hours and a pillar of fire during the hours of darkness.

**NUM 9:17 And when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, then after that the children of Israel journeyed: and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents.**

Clouds were associated with the presence of Christ on earth. When Moses, Elijah and Christ appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration, Christ was seen in a cloud of glory. When the Saviour left on his departure into heaven



He disappeared in the clouds of the sky. The Word of God would lead Israel through the wilderness as they traveled toward the promised land.

When the cloud rose from the tabernacle and moved forward, Israel was to follow. When the cloud ceased moving forward, the tabernacle was to be pitched at the location where it rested. God's wisdom and power would be with them both night and day.

**NUM 9:18 At the commandment of the LORD the children of Israel journeyed, and at the commandment of the LORD they pitched: as long as the cloud abode upon the tabernacle they rested in their tents.**

**NUM 9:19 And when the cloud tarried long upon the tabernacle many days, then the children of Israel kept the charge of the LORD, and journeyed not.**

The pattern of movement was not the same day in and day out. Sometimes there were a number of days during which they did not move.

**NUM 9:20 And so it was, when the cloud was a few days upon the tabernacle; according to the commandment of the LORD they abode in their tents, and according to the commandment of the LORD they journeyed.**

**NUM 9:21 And so it was, when the cloud abode from even unto the morning, and that the cloud was taken up in the morning, then they journeyed: whether it was by day or by night that the cloud was taken up, they journeyed.**

It was not even true that they always traveled by day and rested by night. Sometimes the pillar of fire indicated

they were to move during the daylight hours. Whenever the pillar of cloud or fire moved, Israel was to move with it.

**NUM 9:22 Or whether it were two days, or a month, or a year, that the cloud tarried upon the tabernacle, remaining thereon, the children of Israel abode in their tents, and journeyed not: but when it was taken up, they journeyed.**

At times the length of stay in a given location would be a couple of days, sometimes a month, and on one occasion it was an entire year. Whatever the case, the people were to follow the will of the Lord.

At this point in time, the people were respectful and obedient. This was not to last. Soon there was murmuring and complaint on every side. This finally came to head in their fear of entering into the land of promise.

**NUM 9:23 At the commandment of the LORD they rested in the tents, and at the commandment of the LORD they journeyed: they kept the charge of the LORD, at the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses.**

As far as the Biblical record informs us, Israel did not keep the Passover again until they did so in the time of Joshua. (See Joshua 5:10-11).

Jos 5:10 And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho.

Jos 5:11 And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover, unleavened cakes, and parched corn in the selfsame day.



## *Chapter 10*

**NUM 10:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 10:2 Make thee two trumpets of silver; of a whole piece shalt thou make them: that thou mayest use them for the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps.**

The present chapter will inform us concerning the means by which God would bring the congregation to attention concerning the time for setting marches in motion, concerning battles with enemies and concerning a request that Hobab, Moses' brother—in-law go with them and share in any good the Lord put upon them.

They were to make two trumpets of silver. Each trumpet was to be made from one piece of silver. According to the Jewish historian, Josephus, the trumpets were a straight tube of silver about eighteen inches in length with a mouthpiece at one end and a flared bell shape at the other end. These two trumpets were to be used on important occasions to get the attention of the people.

**NUM 10:3 And when they shall blow with them, all the assembly shall assemble themselves to thee at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.**

There is a “sizable” problem here. There were about two million persons in the entire camp. There are only about five million persons in the entire state of Tennessee as I write these comments. This includes the cities of Memphis, Nashville and Knoxville. How were this many people to hear the sound of the trumpets, and how were they to meet at the door of the tabernacle?



The reader will note the word “all” in this verse. It clearly means the entire assembly rather than only representative princes. It seems obvious that the sound from the trumpets was heard by many directly, and then was communicated to others farther away. Gathering at the door of the tabernacle is probably a way of saying they were to come to attention and prepare to begin the indicated activity, whether it be a march, a battle, or a celebration.

**NUM 10:4 And if they blow but with one trumpet, then the princes, which are heads of the thousands of Israel, shall gather themselves unto thee.**

The two trumpets were used together. If only one trumpet blast was heard the princes or heads of the tribes were to appear before Moses. If both trumpets sounded simultaneously, the entire camp was to come to attention. Some commentators suggest that there was a difference in the tone of the two trumpets, or there were short quick sounds for one message and longer sustained sounds for another message. There is not enough information available to draw this conclusion. It does not seem that it would have been impossible to determine that two trumpets were sounding simultaneously, or one by itself.

**NUM 10:5 When ye blow an alarm, then the camps that lie on the east parts shall go forward.**

When all had been alerted and were ready to begin marching, a trumpet was to be used again. When one trumpet sound was heard the persons located to the east of the tabernacle were to set out. This would include the tribes of Judah, Issachar and Zebulon, all three marching under the standard of Judah.



**NUM 10:6 When ye blow an alarm the second time, then the camps that lie on the south side shall take their journey: they shall blow an alarm for their journeys.**

After the three tribes above were in motion, the Gershonites and the Merarites would follow bearing the tabernacle. The tribes of Reuben, Simeon and Gad which had been encamped toward the south of the tabernacle would then follow, marching under the standard of Reuben.

The Holy Scripture does not tell us of a third or a fourth trumpet sound. It is a matter of assumption that the Kohathites were next in order, bearing the furnishings of the sanctuary such as the Table of Shewbread, the Candlestick, etc. It is logical to believe the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh and Benjamin, who had encamped to the west of the tabernacle and marching under the standard of Ephraim, came next. These would then be followed by the tribes of Dan, Asher and Naphtali, who had encamped to the north of the tabernacle and were marching under the standard of Dan.

But where was the ark of the covenant during the march? Was it out in front of the congregation, or was it in the midst of them? We know that when the people crossed the Jordan, the ark crossed first.

Jos 3:14 And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people;

Jos 3:15 And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest,)

Jos 3:16 That the waters which came down from above

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stood and rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan: and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed, and were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho.

Jos 3:17 And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.

We also need to note verse thirty-three of this chapter.

Num 10:33 And they departed from the mount of the LORD three days' journey: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD went **before them** in the three days' journey, to search out a resting place for them.

Compare this, however, with this statement in the sixteenth and seventeenth verses of the second chapter of this same book.

Num 2:16 All that were numbered in the camp of Reuben were an hundred thousand and fifty and one thousand and four hundred and fifty, throughout their armies. And they shall set forth in the second rank.

Num 2:17 Then the tabernacle of the congregation shall set forward with the camp of the Levites in the midst of the camp: as they encamp, so shall they set forward, every man in his place by their standards.

George DeHoff suggested that the ark only went before them in the sense that when it was lifted up to begin motion, the rest were to follow in the order commanded.



The above is a possibility. I personally think the only Levites who were in the forefront were those carrying the ark, and that it was out in front of the march. If this was true, the rest of the Levites who were responsible for moving the tent and the rest of the items associated with the tabernacle were found in the midst of the people.

**NUM 10:7 But when the congregation is to be gathered together, ye shall blow, but ye shall not sound an alarm.**

**NUM 10:8 And the sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow with the trumpets; and they shall be to you for an ordinance for ever throughout your generations.**

The blowing of the trumpets mentioned previous to verse seven dealt only with the signal for either the princes or the congregation as a whole to prepare for marching. These were not alarms. There was another reason why the trumpets might be sounded.

**NUM 10:9 And if ye go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresseth you, then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets; and ye shall be remembered before the LORD your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies.**

In case Israel was attacked by enemies after they entered into Canaan, an alarm was to be sounded. There is no doubt that this could be identified as different from the blowing which prepared for marching. Those who served in the military will be familiar with the difference in “taps” and “reveille.” There was no difficulty in differentiating the two.



**NUM 10:10 Also in the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; that they may be to you for a memorial before your God: I am the LORD your God.**

A third reason for the blowing of the trumpets was to announce the beginning of each month, the special feast days and the sacrifices of both the burnt offerings and the peace offerings. We cannot logically say these trumpet blowings differed from each other. It does have high probability.

**NUM 10:11 And it came to pass on the twentieth day of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud was taken up from off the tabernacle of the testimony.**

It had been over a year since Israel had passed through the Red Sea and found their way to Mount Sinai. During this time God had been preparing them for the upcoming journey and life in the land of Canaan after their entry.

They were now ready to set out. Those who become Christians during our own age must have somewhat the same feelings as did the Israelites. The newborn Christian is usually aware of the challenge facing him or her. There is a wilderness of sin through which he must find his way in order to enter into heaven. The country through which Israel was about to pass was unfamiliar. Who was to say just what obstacles must be overcome?

**NUM 10:12 And the children of Israel took their journeys out of the wilderness of Sinai; and the cloud rested in the wilderness of Paran.**

As Jehovah had commanded, when the cloud was taken up off the tabernacle and moved out in front, they followed. This resulted in fairly direct movement toward the land of Canaan.

Maps are drawn today as if we are able to locate each place where they made camp from the time they; left Egypt until they reached the wilderness of Sinai, and then from Sinai through the years of wandering until they crossed the Jordan River from the east side. We do not know the exact location of Mount Sinai. We do not know the precise location of the wilderness of Paran. We do know the general areas in which these sites were found. Later in this chapter we will see that the first move required three days.

**NUM 10:13 And they first took their journey according to the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses.**

In this first journey, we find them following God's instructions to the letter. They had been relayed through Moses, but all Israel knew "God hath spoken."

**NUM 10:14 In the first place went the standard of the camp of the children of Judah according to their armies: and over his host was Nahshon the son of Amminadab.**

**NUM 10:15 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Issachar was Nethaneel the son of Zuar.**

**NUM 10:16 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Zebulun was Eliab the son of Helon.**

**NUM 10:17 And the tabernacle was taken down; and the sons of Gershon and the sons of Merari set forward, bearing the tabernacle.**

**NUM 10:18 And the standard of the camp of**

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**Reuben set forward according to their armies: and over his host was Elizur the son of Shedeur.**

**NUM 10:19 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Simeon was Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai.**

**NUM 10:20 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Gad was Eliasaph the son of Deuel.**

**NUM 10:21 And the Kohathites set forward, bearing the sanctuary: and the other did set up the tabernacle against they came.**

The Kohathites followed the Gershonites and the Merarites. The tabernacle could be erected and be ready when the furnishings arrived at the new campsite.

**NUM 10:22 And the standard of the camp of the children of Ephraim set forward according to their armies: and over his host was Elishama the son of Ammihud.**

**NUM 10:23 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Manasseh was Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur.**

**NUM 10:24 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Benjamin was Abidan the son of Gideoni.**

**NUM 10:25 And the standard of the camp of the children of Dan set forward, which was the rereward of all the camps throughout their hosts: and over his host was Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai.**

**NUM 10:26 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Asher was Pagiell the son of Ocran.**

**NUM 10:27 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Naphtali was Ahira the son of Enan.**

**NUM 10:28 Thus were the journeyings of the**

**children of Israel according to their armies, when they set forward.**

What a sight this must have been! One wonders what those who dwelt in the wilderness thought when they saw this immense multitude moving through the mostly deserted areas.

**NUM 10:29 And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Raguel the Midianite, Moses' father in law, We are journeying unto the place of which the LORD said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the LORD hath spoken good concerning Israel.**

The land of Midian was the vicinity in which Moses had tended the sheep of Reuel for forty years, and where he found his wife Zipporah. Reuel is taken from the same root word as Raguel. This is somewhat similar to our calling a young man Pete at one time, and Peter another. The same man is known as Jethro at other times.. Reuel or Raguel was the father of Zipporah. Hobab was Zipporah's brother and Moses brother-in-law.

Moses explained to Hobab that Israel was on the way to the land that God had promised to His people. He had said He would bless them if they kept His commandments. Moses invited Hobab to join Israel and share in the promised blessings.

Here is an evidence that God was willing to accept non Israelites as proselytes even though they were not of the fleshly descendants of Abraham.

**NUM 10:30 And he said unto him, I will not go; but I will depart to mine own land, and to my kindred.**

Hobab declined the invitation. He did not desire to leave his own land and his own relatives to share in the good things God had promised His people.

Surely this speaks of coming rejections of the gospel invitation by multiplied thousands when they are informed of providential care in this world and a home in heaven.

**NUM 10:31 And he said, Leave us not, I pray thee; forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou mayest be to us instead of eyes.**

**NUM 10:32 And it shall be, if thou go with us, yea, it shall be, that what goodness the LORD shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee.**

Moses continued to plead with Hobab. The man had much to offer. He knew details of the geography as well as the nature of the inhabitants, both human and beastly. Hobab could give them information which would be of great assistance.

Now just what was it that Moses felt Hobab could do in acting as eyes for Israel. Did not the cloud and the pillar of fire offer sufficient guidance. Did God not have infinitely more information at His disposal than did Hobab? Of course He did. But we must not forget that God does His part, and then expects men to do their part. God causes the food to grow in the fields. He does not place it in our mouths.

The same principle would hold in the case of Hobab. God would lead through the cloud and the pillar of fire. He would then expect the people to do for themselves that which they were able to do. Such things as finding pasture land and water in the general area of the camp could be made easier through the knowledge of one who had lived there for another forty years after Moses had departed at



God's command to lead His people from Egypt.

The Bible does not tell us here whether Moses pleading caused Hobab to change his mind and travel with Israel. There is some evidence that this was what took place. (See Judges 1:16.)

Jdg 1:16 And the children of the Kenite, Moses' father in law, went up out of the city of palm trees with the children of Judah into the wilderness of Judah, which lieth in the south of Arad; and they went and dwelt among the people.

From this passage, it would seem that Hobab did go with Israel, and that he persuaded his father to go with him. Here the father-in-law is found in the wilderness of Judah, and not in the land of Midian. The man is called a Kenite now. There is no reason why a man might not have been a Kenite while he was living in the land of Midian.

**NUM 10:33 And they departed from the mount of the LORD three days' journey: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD went before them in the three days' journey, to search out a resting place for them.**

**NUM 10:34 And the cloud of the LORD was upon them by day, when they went out of the camp.**

In this instance it seems that the group traveled by day and rested by night. After three days journey they had moved from the wilderness of Sinai to the wilderness of Paran. All was going well.

**NUM 10:35 And it came to pass, when the ark set forward, that Moses said, Rise up, LORD, and let**

**thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee.**

**NUM 10:36 And when it rested, he said, Return, O LORD, unto the many thousands of Israel.**

This statement on the part of Moses ought not to be considered a one time prayer. Can we not conclude that Moses asked God for protection from the enemies, and guidance through the day. Then when the ark came to rest and the people stopped with it in the evening, Moses would ask God for peace and comfort to be refreshed in anticipation of the next march.



## *Chapter 11*

This chapter discusses the dissatisfaction of the people with God's provisions, and with God's response to their murmurings.

**NUM 11:1 And when the people complained, it displeased the LORD: and the LORD heard it; and his anger was kindled; and the fire of the LORD burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp.**

It is altogether too common for men and women to forget how gracious the Lord has been to them in the past and complain about what they see as His lack of concern in the present.

Israel had found themselves in bondage to the Egyptians because of failure to trust God completely when they faced difficult problems due to a shortage of food and water in Canaan. After some four hundred years of slavery, God had seen fit to deliver them from slavery. He had proven to them through the plagues which came upon the Egyptians that He had the power to overcome all opposition. He had provided everything necessary to aid them in a return to the promised land. Now they were ready to overlook His love and complain about what they saw as neglect.

God knows the thoughts, words and deeds of men. When He heard their complaints He had a perfect right to be angry. The anger was not based on revenge. It was a result of His love for them and His disappointment in their failure to move forward with His plan for their future.

Therefore, He sent a fire which reached to the uttermost parts of the camp. Some see this as only consuming those who were in the outer edge of the camp. It is more likely

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that the burning was scattered throughout the camp, even to its uttermost parts as related to the ark located in the center of it.

**NUM 11:2 And the people cried unto Moses; and when Moses prayed unto the LORD, the fire was quenched.**

It is always wise to lean upon others who are spiritually strong. Many a Christian has gone to another whom he trusted for strength and guidance when times were difficult. But while the advisor is giving of his strength to the one who has come to him, he is taking a burden upon himself which can take a heavy toll upon his own life.

Moses patiently listened to their cries for help and responded to them. He had been assigned by the Lord to shepherd the people. He was ready to do all he felt he was able to do in acting as a mediator. He prayed to God and God quenched the fire. This should have been sufficient to bring their murmuring to an end. Sadly, it was not!

**NUM 11:3 And he called the name of the place Taberah: because the fire of the LORD burnt among them.**

It is common for various sites in the lands of the Bible for them to be given names that are related to events which took place at each one. This place was called Taberah because the word "Taberah" means "burning." It is not listed in the review of places later in the chapter where Israel found themselves. This may be because the name was due to an event rather than already bearing a name when they arrived there.



**NUM 11:4 And the mixt multitude that was among them fell a lusting; and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat?**

This mixed multitude is thought to be made up of those who were the result of intermarriage between Hebrews and Egyptians. They would have had loyalties toward both Egypt and the Promised land. They seem to have been looked down on by those who were true Hebrews.

There is a strong similarity between their behavior and that of some who associate themselves with the people of God today. There are some who consider themselves Christians who see advantages in claiming the name “Christian” but who still long for the pleasures of the world. They will be there for Sunday morning worship. They will be missing at Sunday morning Bible study, at Sunday evening worship and again on Wednesday evening Bible study. They will be present on Easter Sunday and for most of the festive occasions, but one looks for them in vain among the heavy contributors to the financial needs of the church.

This mass of persons with divided loyalties are usually the first to complain about the leadership of the elders and the hypocrisy of the members.

In the present case, the mixed multitude started the murmuring and the rest followed their example. The weeping and grieving over conditions was impossible to ignore.

**NUM 11:5 We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick:**

It is tempting to the reader who skims over the Bible



records to conclude that in their bondage, they had suffered from skimpy and distasteful food. It is well to remember that Egypt is the land of the Nile River. The people of the land eat fish which are taken from the Nile and its feeder streams. Fish are not bad food. The watermelons of Egypt are said to be of very fine quality. The leeks, onions and garlic are seasoning agents. All in all, the food supplied to them in Egypt may not have been as abhorrent as one might imagine.

Still, it would not have been as nutritious as the manna which God had supplied to them in the wilderness. We can be certain that this food from heaven was well suited in both taste and content to their needs.

**NUM 11:6 But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes.**

I am reminded of an elderly person whom my wife has visited many times in a local nursing facility. Along with a satisfactory breakfast, the staff brings each patient one or two peaches. These are tasty and fairly easy for those who are short of teeth to eat. The person under discussion here complained that she did not like the peaches which were brought to her. When asked if they were not fresh, she replied that they were fresh, but she just did not like peaches every day.

**NUM 11:7 And the manna was as coriander seed, and the colour thereof as the colour of bdellium.**

Were the people justified in their complaint over the manna? It does not seem so. When this account is compared with the description of manna found in the sixteenth chapter of Exodus and Psalm 78, we get a picture of it.



Exo 16:4 Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.

Exo 16:14 And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground.

Exo 16:31 And the house of Israel called the name thereof Manna: and it was like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey.

Psa 78:24 And had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven.

Psa 78:25 Man did eat angels' food: he sent them meat to the full.

Such a food hardly seems to warrant the type of attitudes expressed by God's people.

**NUM 11:8 And the people went about, and gathered it, and ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar, and baked it in pans, and made cakes of it: and the taste of it was as the taste of fresh oil.**

The manna could be prepared in a number of ways. It could be ground up into manna flour. It could be baked into cakes. The oil the Hebrews would have been familiar with was olive oil.

**NUM 11:9 And when the dew fell upon the camp in the night, the manna fell upon it.**

The source was supernatural. It came down during



the night as did the dew. It was not the resin from trees or the excretion from certain insects which some would suggest. If you do not believe the Bible to be inspired, you can make what it says mean almost anything!

**NUM 11:10 Then Moses heard the people weep throughout their families, every man in the door of his tent: and the anger of the LORD was kindled greatly; Moses also was displeased.**

It was not just the mixed multitude who were weeping. Throughout the camp Moses could see the people at the doors of their tents grieving over what they perceived as misfortune and misery.

Two very important personages were unhappy over these demonstrations of distrust. First of all, God was angry. Secondly, Moses was displeased.

**NUM 11:11 And Moses said unto the LORD, Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant? and wherefore have I not found favour in thy sight, that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me?**

Right here we must admit that Moses sinned. He accused God of afflicting him because He did not like him. He asked what it was he had done to bring such burdens upon him. He was not only bearing his own load. He was being made responsible for that of the entire camp.

An observation is appropriate. Preachers and elders have suffered nervous breakdowns from the heavy loads of ministering to the local flocks. If one is sensitive to the problems of others, it can become more than the leader can carry. Moses situation was not his alone.

**NUM 11:12 Have I conceived all this people?**  
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**have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father beareth the sucking child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their fathers?**

Moses was saying in effect, "I did not ask for this job." He had been tending sheep when God called him to deliver Israel from the land of Egypt. Now he was being asked to treat those people as if he was their father and they must be toted about like a child who is still unable to walk.

**NUM 11:13 Whence should I have flesh to give unto all this people? for they weep unto me, saying, Give us flesh, that we may eat.**

**NUM 11:14 I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me.**

Moses was fully aware that he was incapable of providing food for hundreds of thousands of people. Yet they were complaining to him as if he was to do just that.

Moses had reached a point where God's sympathy is touched. When man knows he can only cry out, "God help me. I am unable to help myself." God will hear and help. It may not be in the way man expected. It will be in the way that is best for him.,

**NUM 11:15 And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favour in thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness.**

If God was going to allow the present conditions to continue, he would rather be dead. Things were absolutely unbearable.

**NUM 11:16 And the LORD said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee.**

God was ready to help. He commanded Moses to select seventy helpers who could carry a part of the burdens. These were to be men who were older and who had proven themselves as advisors to the people. They were to be summoned to the area of the tabernacle to aid in handling the problems.

**NUM 11:17 And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone.**

Moses was not to be left to solve the difficulties without divine assistance. He would reveal what was to be done to relieve the situation. God would give of the same Spirit which Moses had received and would grant it to the seventy elders. They would be able to consult with the people and advise them as Moses had been doing.

**NUM 11:18 And say thou unto the people, Sanctify yourselves against to morrow, and ye shall eat flesh: for ye have wept in the ears of the LORD, saying, Who shall give us flesh to eat? for it was well with us in Egypt: therefore the LORD will give you flesh, and ye shall eat.**

Now what was Moses to reply to the people with respect





to their complaints that they did not have flesh to eat? The answer was that they should sanctify themselves in order that God could put His remedy into effect. They had asked for flesh to eat. Flesh they would have!

**NUM 11:19 Ye shall not eat one day, nor two days, nor five days, neither ten days, nor twenty days;**

The people had been thinking of a break in their constant diet of manna. God would see to it that they had a break. It would not just be for one day that they would have flesh to eat. The respite would not be for two days, five days, ten days or twenty. It would be considerably longer than they had desired.

**NUM 11:20 But even a whole month, until it come out at your nostrils, and it be loathsome unto you: because that ye have despised the LORD which is among you, and have wept before him, saying, Why came we forth out of Egypt?**

For an entire month they would have nothing to eat but flesh. They would eat meat until they were nauseated and ready to vomit. They had doubted that God was supervising their needs. They had wished to thwart His plan to move them to the land of Canaan. They would discover just how wrong they were.

**NUM 11:21 And Moses said, The people, among whom I am, are six hundred thousand footmen; and thou hast said, I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month.**

The census had revealed 603,550 men capable of military service. There were women. There were male youngsters under the age of twenty. There were men older

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than fifty. Moses may have believed God would help him. He did not have the faintest idea how it might be done.

**NUM 11:22 Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them, to suffice them? or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to suffice them?**

The flocks of sheep and goats plus the herds of oxen and cattle were not intended for meat. They were to furnish milk and be available for sacrifices. It was out of the question to eat them. Even if Moses had been able to catch all of the fish in the sea, it would not fill their needs.

I might add that this reference to fish was quite proper in view of the people's desire to go back and eat fish in Egypt.

**NUM 11:23 And the LORD said unto Moses, Is the LORD'S hand waxed short? thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not.**

No, the Lord's hand is not shortened. That which He has promised can and will be done. Moses should have learned that lesson by now. He would soon find out that God is not slack concerning His promises.

**NUM 11:24 And Moses went out, and told the people the words of the LORD, and gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people, and set them round about the tabernacle.**

Moses, as usual, did as God commanded. He told the people of God's instructions and His promise of flesh to eat. He chose the seventy helpers and summoned them



to the tabernacle area to aid him.

There is a possible connection between these seventy whom Moses chose and the seventy members of the Sanhedrin who help prominent places among the Jews in the time of Christ. The latter could have been an outgrowth of the former.

**NUM 11:25 And the LORD came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease.**

When we are told God spoke to Moses, we are to understand that He provided His own Divine Spirit of Truth which would enable Moses to advise those who came to him. Solomon was given wisdom in a manner similar to this.

Then God caused the same Spirit which He had given to Moses to be passed on to the seventy aids. This would allow them to also give inspired advice. We are not talking about mumbo-jumbo here. When the Holy Spirit fell upon the apostles as recorded in the second chapter of Acts, they spoke in tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance, but every man heard them in his own tongue. They had the Word of God and conveyed it to the people that they might know God's will.

In one sense the same was true here. God had a message for the people. Moses and the seventy elders were to see that the people learned of God's will. Their prophesying was only the transmission of God's answer to their problems.

**NUM 11:26 But there remained two of the men in the camp, the name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad: and the spirit rested**

**upon them; and they were of them that were written, but went not out unto the tabernacle: and they prophesied in the camp.**

The two who remained in the midst of the people instead of being gathered at the tabernacle were part of the seventy. We are not told why they did not gather with the other sixty-eight. Clearly God was not dissatisfied with their actions, or He would not have given them of the Spirit of truth.

One possible reason for their failure to go to the tabernacle could have been that they had some impurity or uncleanness which made it necessary for them to avoid coming to close to the sanctuary.

**NUM 11:27 And there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp.**

This verse is reminiscent of the disciples of John the baptist when they found that Jesus was baptizing more persons than John. (See John 3:25-26.)

Joh 3:25 Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying.

Joh 3:26 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.

John was not jealous in the least. He answered that a man can receive nothing unless it be given him from heaven.

These two young men were concerned that Eldad and Medad were detracting from the prestige of Moses.



**NUM 11:28 And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Moses, one of his young men, answered and said, My lord Moses, forbid them.**

Joshua was also concerned. He wanted Moses to call on the two who had been prophesying to cease immediately. Neither he or the two who had reported the prophesying of Eldad and Medad understood that these men were approved in the sight of the Lord.

**NUM 11:29 And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the LORD'S people were prophets, and that the LORD would put his spirit upon them!**

Moses was not jealous. Joshua was told not to be concerned over any decrease in Moses authority. Indeed, he wished that the Lord would cause His Spirit to rest upon every man.

Moses understood that he needed help and God had made it available to him. He was grateful. He needed whatever aid Jehovah was willing to offer.

Some commentators have pointed out that the Spirit of God can be passed from one man to another without decreasing the spirituality of the one who passed it on. For example, it does not decrease one man's knowledge of the Word of God for him to teach another man that same Word. A candle can light another candle without going out in the process.

**NUM 11:30 And Moses gat him into the camp, he and the elders of Israel.**

**NUM 11:31 And there went forth a wind from the LORD, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp, as it were a day's journey on**



**this side, and as it were a day's journey on the other side, round about the camp, and as it were two cubits high upon the face of the earth.**

When Moses had obeyed the commands of God, the promise of God began to be fulfilled. The flesh was not fish. It was quail. A wind blew from the direction of the sea and caused quail to move into the camp. There were not just enough for one meal. They fell on every side of the camp to a distance of a day's journey. I have seen no calculations about the actual distance the Israelites could travel in one day. One can walk about three miles per hour, but they no doubt did not move that fast. It would be reasonable to expect they could walk for one mile an hour for eight hours. This would mean there were quail all around the camp for a distance of eight miles.

There are two quite different interpretations of what is mean by saying they were two cubits high upon the face of the earth. One group believes the quail were flying two cubits, or about three feet from the surface of the ground and thus easily netted or knocked to the ground. Another group understands the phrase to mean they were piled up to a height of three feet for miles around the camp.

**NUM 11:32 And the people stood up all that day, and all that night, and all the next day, and they gathered the quails: he that gathered least gathered ten homers: and they spread them all abroad for themselves round about the camp.**

Whatever the amount, there was an enormous supply. They gathered them throughout two days and one night. There is some difference of opinion as to the size of an homer. The estimates run from five bushel to ten bushel. Several bushel of quail would be quite a meal for any one

family! It was not intended to be one meal. It was to be flesh for an entire month!

**NUM 11:33 And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD smote the people with a very great plague.**

The people received much more than they expected. There was enough quail to come out of their nostrils. There was also a plague sent from the Lord to chastise them for their complaining.

**NUM 11:34 And he called the name of that place Kibrothhattaavah: because there they buried the people that lusted.**

The name given to this location was Kibroth-Hattaavah or “graves of lust.” Many had died of the plague because of their lust for something beyond what Jehovah had provided.

**NUM 11:35 And the people journeyed from Kibrothhattaavah unto Hazeroth; and abode at Hazeroth.**

The lesson learned by Israel would be remembered throughout their generations. In addition, it is still being noted by students of the Holy scriptures thousands of years later.





## *Chapter 12*

**NUM 12:1 And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman.**

The major topic of this chapter is the jealousy which Miriam and Aaron demonstrated toward their brother Moses. Their envy was an insult to God who had chosen Moses to lead His people. God quickly and firmly let them know they were out of order. Their criticism of Moses was not founded on his choice of a marriage partner. This was only a cover for their jealousy.

After all, Moses was their “little brother.” Miriam was enough older than Moses that she was able to watch over him when he was placed in a basket in the river as a babe. Aaron was three years older than Moses.

God had called Abraham and promised that through his seed all nations were to be blessed. The Jews were very proud to call themselves the seed of Abraham. In fact, God commanded them not to marry strange women from the land of Canaan when they had settled there. He warned that they would turn Israel from the worship of the True God to the worship of idols. (See Deut. 7:3-4.)

Deu 7:3 Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.

Deu 7:4 For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly.

The book of Deuteronomy was a part of the law which



was given to Moses on Sinai before this criticism by Miriam and Aaron took place. The two of them may have appealed to both the seed promise to Abraham and the warning in Deuteronomy to justify their uprising.

Was this Ethiopian woman different from Zipporah, or was she the same person? Moses was in the land of Midian when he took Zipporah as a wife. She would presumably have been known as a Midianite. The American Standard Version translates the word used here as “Cushite.” Some think the term “Cushite” was an insult based upon a dark complexion. Others disagree and contend that the word used here can even be translated as beautiful. The Cushites included descendants of both Ham and Canaan. Not all of these are black. It seems unlikely that Zipporah, the Midianite would have been black.

Had Zipporah died? If so Moses could not have been accused of taking multiple wives. We could spend even more time attempting to find answers which are not revealed in the Scriptures. It is not necessary. The crux of the matter is that Miriam and Aaron rose up against Moses who was God’s choice as leader of Israel.

**NUM 12:2 And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it.**

The two wished to know just what right Moses had to take authority over them. Miriam was a prophetess. Aaron was the High Priest who had been placed over the Levites and who was the only person authorized to enter into the Most Holy Place on the Day of Atonement. They saw no reason to humble themselves before their own brother.

God heard! There is nothing which escapes the ear or the eye of Jehovah. He considered their challenge to Moses an uprising against His own decisions and commandments.

**NUM 12:3 (Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)**

Did Moses write these words about himself. If Moses was the sole penman of the five books of the law, he must have written it. If he did write the words of this verse it may seem self contradictory to some. We do not think of a meek person as praising himself or herself. This verse is clearly praise for Moses. We must first remember that Moses was not the originator of that which is written in the law. He was the prophet who wrote that which the God of heaven revealed to him.

Secondly, we will not get at the truth here unless we come to an understanding of the meaning of the word "meek." Meekness and cowardice are not identical. The type of meekness which Moses had was a humility before the wisdom and power of God. Moses did not see himself as capable of leading Israel from Egyptian slavery. But when God made it clear that Moses was His choice, and that He would provide him with everything necessary to accomplish the task, Moses bowed to the Divine will.

Jesus was also said to be meek. Yet he did not hesitate to correct the Scribes and Pharisees in no uncertain terms. He did the will of His Father. But He was not a coward.

Moses did make a serious mistake when he struck the rock and cried out to the people, "Must we get ye water?" It was God's power, not Moses' which would bring water from the rock. Yet, all in all, Moses was ready to hear and obey his Lord. That is meekness. Miriam and Aaron had not shown that same willingness to hear and obey. They had questioned God's choice.



**NUM 12:4 And the LORD spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out.**

God took action. All three were summoned to the tabernacle where God's presence was being demonstrated every day and every night by the cloud and the pillar of fire. The three would be given a decision which would be difficult to forget.

**NUM 12:5 And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth.**

The careful reader might wonder if God left the rest of the heavens and the earth to manifest Himself at the tabernacle. That is not implied here. God is omnipresent. He allowed the three to hear His voice from the midst of the cloudy pillar. The pillar rested at the door of the tabernacle and God spoke. God did not appear at this time in the same sense that He appeared to Moses and spoke to Him mouth to mouth. This can be seen from the next few verses.

**NUM 12:6 And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.**

Miriam and Aaron had both decided Moses had no reason to assume a higher level of authority than they. God had revealed truth to each of them. He had revealed truth to Moses. Thus, they must be equal in authority.

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Jehovah pointed out a sharp difference. Any prophet in Israel who had received truth from God had done so through either a vision during the day, or a dream during the night. Visions and dreams left less definite pictures than the clear words which He had used in speaking directly to Moses.

**NUM 12:7 My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house.**

The very scene before them proved Moses to be more faithful in the house of God than either Miriam or Aaron. God was justified in His selection of this man who was meek toward His declared will.

**NUM 12:8 With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?**

Because of Moses humility, God would speak to him in clearer fashion than he had to either of them. Moses would hear His words and actually see some similitude of His presence.

The New Testament tells us that “No man hath seen the Lord at any time.” (See I John 4:12.)

1Jo 4:12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

Perhaps a harmony may be found in the following. No man has ever seen the reader of these words. All they have seen is the body of flesh, bone and blood in which



he lives. Jesus said, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” He meant that by observing His actions and hearing His teachings those witnesses had come as close as an incarnated human being would be able to come to seeing and hearing the Father. As Jesus made it possible for men to hear and see the Father through a similitude of His presence, Moses saw some type of similitude through which he could come as close to seeing and hearing God as the human eye can see, or the human ear can hear.

**NUM 12:9 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he departed.**

**NUM 12:10 And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous.**

When the Lord had presented His message, the cloud disappeared from the place where it had rested. His departure did not mean it would be easy to forget He had been present. Miriam was now covered with leprosy. She was white as snow.

Regulations had been laid down earlier that when one was diagnosed as leprous, that person was unclean and must be banished from the camp. Aaron was astounded at the change in the appearance of his sister. We are not told what Miriam thought when she realized her condition.

The fact that Miriam was stricken with leprosy and Aaron was not affected leaves little doubt in our minds as to the identity of the instigator of the rebellion. Miriam was the culprit.

This could also support the thought previously entertained that the word “Cushite” might mean beautiful. If Miriam had called Moses wife a Cushite in jealousy over her fair appearance, the punishment would have been related to the crime.



**NUM 12:11 And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned.**

**NUM 12:12 Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he cometh out of his mother's womb.**

Aaron quickly admitted he and Miriam had sinned. He wanted Moses to forgive them and plead for Miriam's return to health. Leprosy can be a terrible plague which causes extremities of the body such as finger and toes to corrupt and fall off. Aaron did not want Miriam to be sentenced to such a horrible life. It would not really be life. It would be as if she was a walking corpse.

**NUM 12:13 And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee.**

Moses did not have a jealous bone in his makeup. He must have been just as disturbed over what had happened to his sister as Aaron was. He prayed that God would not forever consign her to this living death.

**NUM 12:14 And the LORD said unto Moses, If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received in again.**

Spitting upon another person has been a sign of disdain in all lands and in every age. Apparently an Israelite father could show his disgust at the behavior of an offspring by spitting on them. If Miriam's fleshly father had spit upon her, she would have carried the shame for at least seven



days. It was not then unjust for God to cause shame to come upon her for a like number of days. She was to be sent out of the camp and declared unclean for seven days. Seven days after a leper had been declared clean, they were admitted back into the camp. She could reenter the camp after one week.

**NUM 12:15 And Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days: and the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again.**

If men only realized how the sins of one person can prevent the progress of an entire congregation of God's people, there would be less misbehavior. I know of congregations which are now only a shadow of what they were in the past as a result of one leader being called into question for sin. Even if the accusation is unjustified, the spiritual growth of the group may be paralyzed. We must not do as Miriam and Aaron did and prevent ourselves and others from traveling the Lord's highway to heaven.

**NUM 12:16 And afterward the people removed from Hazereth, and pitched in the wilderness of Paran.**

The locations of many of the sites mentioned in connection with the wilderness wanderings are difficult to pinpoint. If Israel had traveled straight eastward after crossing the Red Sea, it would have been only a matter of a few days before they were ready to enter Canaan. As it is, they spent forty years wandering about. Maps tend to locate Mount Sinai in the south of the Sinai Peninsula. The Wilderness of Paran is pictured as being about half way back up from Sinai to Canaan.



## Chapter 13

**NUM 13:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 13:2 Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a ruler among them.**

Israel had by this time spent over a year in traveling from where they crossed the Red Sea to Mount Sinai, and then from Mount Sinai to the Wilderness of Paran and Kadesh-Barnea. They were apparently at the southern end of Canaan and were making preparations to enter into the land.

To get a more complete picture of the present set of circumstances we need to look at the first chapter of Deuteronomy.

Deu 1:19 And when we departed from Horeb, we went through all that great and terrible wilderness, which ye saw by the way of the mountain of the Amorites, as the LORD our God commanded us; and we came to Kadeshbarnea.

Deu 1:20 And I said unto you, Ye are come unto the mountain of the Amorites, which the LORD our God doth give unto us.

Deu 1:21 Behold, the LORD thy God hath set the land before thee: go up and possess it, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged.

Deu 1:22 And ye came near unto me every one of you, and said, We will send men before us, and they shall search us out the land, and bring us word again by what way we must go up, and into what cities we shall come.

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Deu 1:23 And the saying pleased me well: and I took twelve men of you, one of a tribe:

Deu 1:24 And they turned and went up into the mountain, and came unto the valley of Eshcol, and searched it out.

When placed beside the text of verses one and two of this present chapter, it is revealed that God had commanded them to enter into the land, but that the people were hesitant to do so without first sending men to spy out the land. They wished to know several things. What route should they take? What cities lay in their path and resist their entry into the land?

**NUM 13:3 And Moses by the commandment of the LORD sent them from the wilderness of Paran: all those men were heads of the children of Israel.**

**NUM 13:4 And these were their names: of the tribe of Reuben, Shammua the son of Zaccur.**

**NUM 13:5 Of the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat the son of Hori.**

**NUM 13:6 Of the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh.**

**NUM 13:7 Of the tribe of Issachar, Igal the son of Joseph.**

**NUM 13:8 Of the tribe of Ephraim, Oshea the son of Nun.**

**NUM 13:9 Of the tribe of Benjamin, Palti the son of Raphu.**

**NUM 13:10 Of the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel the son of Sodi.**

**NUM 13:11 Of the tribe of Joseph, namely, of the tribe of Manasseh, Gaddi the son of Susi.**

**NUM 13:12 Of the tribe of Dan, Ammiel the son of Gemalli.**



**NUM 13:13 Of the tribe of Asher, Sethur the son of Michael.**

**NUM 13:14 Of the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi the son of Vophsi.**

**NUM 13:15 Of the tribe of Gad, Geuel the son of Machi.**

**NUM 13:16 These are the names of the men which Moses sent to spy out the land. And Moses called Oshea the son of Nun Jehoshua.**

There were twelve of these men selected, one from each of the twelve tribes. The tribe of Levi was devoted entirely to the services of the tabernacle and so was not counted among those available for military service. The tribe of Joseph was separated into two tribes, Ephraim and Manasseh. This gave the total of twelve.

The names of these twelve are not the same as the previously chosen rulers. Those men would have been older in years and would not have been as agile in traveling over the countryside. Each of these twelve were no doubt respected men within their tribes.

Two of these names catch our attention immediately. They are Joshua and Caleb. Joshua in particular stands out because of his replacement as leader of Israel after the death of Moses.

**NUM 13:17 And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up this way southward, and go up into the mountain:**

It was a lack of trust in Jehovah that inspired this sending out of the spies. They would not have needed to find out which route was to be taken if they had followed the cloud by day and the fiery pillar by night.



**NUM 13:18 And see the land, what it is, and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many;**

They had overcome the armies of one of the mightiest nations on earth when they crossed the Red Sea. The number of people and the strength of the people were no obstacle if God was on their side.

**NUM 13:19 And what the land is that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad; and what cities they be that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strong holds;**

God had already declared that it was a good land. They had no reason to question His own description of Canaan. Strongholds meant nothing at all when the Finger of God touched them.

**NUM 13:20 And what the land is, whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time was the time of the firstripe grapes.**

The Lord had also spoken of Canaan as a land flowing with milk and honey. He had not directed them to a lean land incapable of supporting an abundant life.

We do not know why they were interested in the amount of wood which grew there. It could have been that they felt it would be needed for building homes. It could also have been that they wondered what type of battles might be fought, whether in the open or in wooded areas.

It was a favorable time of the year to see just how fertile the land was. The grapes were ready to ripen.



**NUM 13:21 So they went up, and searched the land from the wilderness of Zin unto Rehob, as men come to Hamath.**

As mentioned before, they were located at the southern end of Canaan. Thus they began in the south and moved northward until they came to Hamath.

**NUM 13:22 And they ascended by the south, and came unto Hebron; where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the children of Anak, were. (Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.)**

Hebron will be remembered as the place where Abraham took up residence when he first entered the land of Canaan, long before this time. Hebron was a very old city. The Egyptians claimed their cities were the oldest in the world. This verse disagrees and claims Hebron was built before one of the oldest cities in Egypt.

**NUM 13:23 And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates, and of the figs.**

**NUM 13:24 The place was called the brook Eshcol, because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence.**

**NUM 13:25 And they returned from searching of the land after forty days.**

The word “Eschol” means cluster. As the spies came to that location they were in an ideal place for grape production. The climate was warm. There was a supply of water. The land was fertile. They were so impressed with



the size and quality of the fruit found there that they cut one cluster of grapes to take back as evidence of the food available in Canaan.

It has often been assumed that this one cluster of grapes was heavy enough that it required two men to carry it on a pole between them. There are two considerations here. First, the grapes might have been transported in this way because otherwise they could have been damaged by bruising. Second, they also collected figs and pomegranates. These could also have been carried along with the grapes.

Those who have visited Canaan in the time of grape harvest tell us the grapes there are especially fine. Adam Clarke states that he personally cut a single cluster of grapes there which weighed about twenty pounds.

The number of days spent by the spies in searching out the land becomes very important when God decides to punish them for their lack of trust in His commands and promises.

**NUM 13:26 And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land.**

The spies were ready to report on the results of their excursion. The first part of their report was very positive. The land had produced fruit such as that in the samples they had brought back.

**NUM 13:27 And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it.**

Just as the Lord had said, It was a land flowing with milk and honey. It was most certainly the kind of land in which they would be happy to dwell.

**NUM 13:28 Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there.**

**NUM 13:29 The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.**

All was not wine and roses. There was a negative side to their report. In order to take the land they would have to overcome heavily fortified cities with large populations. Also there were some extremely large people living there. Anak was a giant. His descendants were of large stature. There were many different tribes which would have to be defeated before they could live in peace.

The difficulties loomed larger than the benefits. The people were disturbed by the picture which had been painted for them.

**NUM 13:30 And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.**

Caleb made an attempt to build up the confidence of the people. He knew the power and wisdom of God would prevail over all obstacles. Giants and walled cities would both come tumbling down before the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph.

Caleb would later be one of only two who were allowed to enter into Canaan after years of wandering in the Sinai peninsula.

**NUM 13:31 But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.**

**NUM 13:32 And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature.**

Other than Joshua, the rest of the twelve spies made discouraging statements. The people were too strong. The land would present many difficulties for travel. There were men of large size.

**NUM 13:33 And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.**

They even went so far as to say there were giants there. There is an implications that these were possibly the descendants of the giants mentioned in Genesis 6:4 and Deuteronomy 3:11.

Gen. 6:4 There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.





Deu 3:11 For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of giants; behold his bedstead was a bedstead of iron; is it not in Rabbath of the children of Ammon? nine cubits was the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man.

The “grasshopper complex” is all too common. It is easier to flee from challenges than to face them. Israel had no excuse for their fear and trembling in view of their past experiences in which God had proven conclusively that His hand is not shortened. He will provide the final victory over every enemy, no matter how formidable.



## *Chapter 14*

Most conservative students of the Bible are not interested in becoming familiar with the documentary hypothesis. Just in case the present reader would like to find out something about it, this is a favorite chapter for the source critics. They are convinced that we have only second hand information. They speak of “traditions” which supposedly built up over the centuries. According to them, these traditions were placed in written form by certain authors who are designated as J, E and P, etc. The various versions and translations we have today are thought by these liberal commentators to be a result of combining the results of such as the J (Jehovah), E (Elohim) and P (Priestly) documents.

The above comments are not intended to commend the documentary hypothesis. This present commentator does not accept it. The five books attributed to Moses were penned in the Hebrew language by Moses, with some minor parts written by Joshua who was assigned the leadership of Israel after the death of Moses.

The chapter before us speaks concerning the mistrust of Jehovah by His people. It then tells of the horrible consequences of their lack of faith. The chapter is referred to in many other scriptures, some in the Old Testament and some in the New. (See the following.”

Deuteronomy 1:19-46

Psalms 106:21-26

Nehemiah 9:7-17

I Corinthians 10:5-6

Hebrews 3:7-19

**NUM 14:1 And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night.**

Weeping may occur for several reasons. A person may weep in physical pain. He may weep in mental anguish. He may weep for joy. This great multitude were hardly weeping with joy. They were horrified at the report the spies had brought back. What were they to do? There were walled cities and armed forces which would have to be met. There were men of great stature in the land. Israel was as weak as grasshoppers in the face of these giants.

We are not told how long the people wept. We are led to believe they shed tears for a large part of the following night.

**NUM 14:2 And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness!**

Be careful dear reader as to what you wish for in the sight of God. You might just receive what you ask for! The people murmured against Aaron and Moses, but they failed to realize Jehovah was listening to every word. They would rather have died in Egypt or in the wilderness than to enter into what they saw as such a hopeless situation.

**NUM 14:3 And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt?**

**NUM 14:4 And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.**

The people were to fearful of accepting God's invitation to conquer the land of Canaan that they cried out concern for the lives of their wives and children. There is no thought



about that which was happening to their children back in Egypt. Past difficulties often dim out in our memories when we compare them with present problems.

They were ready to choose a new leader who would guide them back to Egypt. Did they really think they could make that journey back through the wilderness without God's help? He had broken the bonds of slavery for them. He had turned back the water of the Red Sea for them to cross. He had provided meat and drink for them. He had led them by the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night. Now they concluded that with their own leader they could make the trip without the Lord. No, not in ten thousand years!

There is strong indication that they had already taken steps in the direction of appointing this new leader. (See Nehemiah 9:17)

Neh 9:17 And refused to obey, neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage: but thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not.

**NUM 14:5 Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel.**

Falling on the face is a way of intense pleading. Even today those in countries surrounding the Mediterranean Sea kneel down and place their foreheads on the ground when they pray. Moses and Aaron realize what a terrible mistake the people are determined to make.



**NUM 14:6 And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes:**

Joshua and Caleb, the two spies who brought back a positive report concerning the conquest of the land joined Moses and Aaron by tearing their clothing. This was another way of showing intense grief.

**NUM 14:7 And they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land.**

**NUM 14:8 If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey.**

The people were reminded that God had led them to the very borders of a land exactly like He had promised. It was a land flowing with milk and honey. The grapes, pomegranates and figs which they had brought back proved it was a good land, capable of supporting them with food.

**NUM 14:9 Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not.**

To rebel against God was absolute folly. They need not fear the people, regardless of their walled cities and huge size. The reader will remember the success against the walled city of Jericho and the victory of David over the giant Goliath when God was with them. Could the people really believe those who dwelt in Canaan were more formidable than the horses and chariots of Pharaoh? If God

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is with us who can be against us? (See Romans 8:31.)

Rom 8:31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

Commentators had made a number of humorous remarks paraphrasing Caleb's words in modern day language. We can "eat them alive." "They will be duck soup." I am not sure the situation was that frivolous to Caleb. Nevertheless, these remarks do make the meaning of Caleb's words quite clear.

**NUM 14:10 But all the congregation bade stone them with stones. And the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel.**

The pleas of Moses, Aaron, Joshua and Caleb were to no avail. The people of Israel had made up their mind. They were not ready to enter a war with giants. If the leaders did not agree with the cowardly decision of the people the solution was to stone them to death and turn back from the promised land.

**NUM 14:11 And the LORD said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have shewed among them?**

**NUM 14:12 I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they.**

God was not ignorant of the things that were being done and said. The people had stretched God's patience to the limit. He was ready to destroy them with a plague. If they did not desire to enter the promised land He would disown them and take away that which He had intended

to give them.

Furthermore, since Moses had been faithful, God would begin again with Moses as the starting point and build a nation through his descendants. Note the place in which this placed Moses. He had also been on the receiving end of the people's lack of faith. If Moses had not been the great man that he was, he could have dismissed the destruction of the faithless people with a mere wave of the hand and gloated in the fact that this new plan would give him prestige and honor until the end of the world.

**NUM 14:13 And Moses said unto the LORD, Then the Egyptians shall hear it, (for thou broughtest up this people in thy might from among them;)**

**NUM 14:14 And they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land: for they have heard that thou LORD art among this people, that thou LORD art seen face to face, and that thy cloud standeth over them, and that thou goest before them, by day time in a pillar of a cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night.**

**NUM 14:15 Now if thou shalt kill all this people as one man, then the nations which have heard the fame of thee will speak, saying,**

**NUM 14:16 Because the LORD was not able to bring this people into the land which he sware unto them, therefore he hath slain them in the wilderness.**

Rather than giving up on the people and taking great glory to himself as the founder of a new nation, Moses begged Jehovah to save their lives. If the people were killed, the word would reach the Egyptians from whom they had been freed, and would also be noted by those who dwelt in Canaan. They would conclude that God was not





able to finish His plan and locate His people in Canaan.

Yes, the Egyptians knew of Jehovah's power through the plagues and the parting of the Red Sea. The Canaanites had also had occasion to observe the cloud which stood over the tabernacle. But both would decided that power was not enough to stand against the Jebusites, Amalekites, Hittites and other nations of the land.

**NUM 14:17 And now, I beseech thee, let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying,**

**NUM 14:18 The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.**

**Num 14:19 Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now.**

What did Moses suggest that God do in order to maintain His reputation for mercy and forgiveness and also His reputation for being capable of bringing His plans to a successful climax?

Surely the Lord would be willing to forgive them just one more time!

**NUM 14:20 And the LORD said, I have pardoned according to thy word:**

**NUM 14:21 But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD.**

Moses intercession was heard. God agreed not to kill the people and begin a new nation through Moses. The

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time would come when men throughout all the earth would recognize His Divine glory. Many of my brethren would disagree with me on the meaning of this passage when it is compared with numerous others of like nature. However, I believe the great prophet Isaiah did agree when he stated the following.

Isa 11:9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

And I believe the apostle John agreed in Revelation 20:1-3.

Rev 20:1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

Rev 20:2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

Rev 20:3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

I do not believe Jesus Christ will return and reign from Jerusalem for a literal one thousand years. I do believe the day will come when the gospel will be heard and accepted by the vast majority of men and women in all nations for an extended period of time. God placed man on the earth in the beginning and commanded that he multiply and replenish it. He also commanded that he have dominion over it.

Christ urged men to pray that the Kingdom come and God's will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Some



claim that prayer is outdated today because the Kingdom has already come. It is true that the Kingdom has been established. It is not true that God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven. Some day God's glory will fill all the earth, and not just the Israelites will see it. All men shall see it.

**NUM 14:22 Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice;**

**NUM 14:23 Surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it:**

The mass of the people of Israel had no excuse for their unbelief and lack of trust. They had seen more than enough evidence that God could keep His promises. In spite of that, they had complained and murmured repeatedly. If one wishes to do so, it is possible to actually itemize ten times the people saw God's power in action. They did not profit from these experiences. They wished to turn back and God would allow it.

God would not kill them that day. He would turn them back into the wilderness where they would die without entering the land. They would neither return to Egypt nor enter Canaan. They would receive their wish that they might die in the wilderness.

**NUM 14:24 But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it.**



The liberals see this verse as support for their documentary hypothesis. Why did the record here not mention Joshua along with Caleb? It must have been because the “author” of the document from which this verse was taken had a different source.

No, there are other much more suitable reasons. Joshua had not spoken up as Caleb did when the people attacked God’s leadership. Joshua was later to become the replacement for Moses. He must have been very close to Moses. The people would have known this and would have questioned Joshua’s motives in speaking up.

At any rate, because Caleb had a spirit of confidence in God’s ability to bring His plans to pass, he would be permitted to enter along with his descendants.

**NUM 14:25 (Now the Amalekites and the Canaanites dwelt in the valley.) To morrow turn you, and get you into the wilderness by the way of the Red sea.**

The armies of the people of Canaan were waiting for Israel to enter the land. It was at that point that God honored the wishes of the Israelites. They would not move into the land and face the “giants.” They were to turn back and try to retrace their steps through the wilderness to return to Egypt. They would try but would not succeed. They would not have the guidance and encouragement of Jehovah on this trip.

**NUM 14:26 And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,**

**NUM 14:27 How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me.**



They were not murmuring against Moses and Aaron. They were murmuring against the Lord. He had heard and was ready to respond to their complaints.

**NUM 14:28 Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the LORD, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you:**

**NUM 14:29 Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward which have murmured against me.**

They would not return to Egypt. They would not enter into Canaan. Instead, all were old enough to fight against the Canaanites and failed to do so would be punished by wandering.

**NUM 14:30 Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I sware to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.**

Caleb and Joshua are both mentioned now. Thus Joshua had certainly made it clear that he was in harmony with Caleb's advice to go in and take the land.

**NUM 14:31 But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised.**

In order that they would know just how wrong they were, God would allow their children, whom they had thought would die in the battle for the land, to go in and enjoy it's blessings.



**NUM 14:32 But as for you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness.**

**NUM 14:33 And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness.**

**NUM 14:34 After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise.**

Their children would not escape all of the consequences of their actions. Those under twenty years of age would have to wait and see the lessons God wished for them to learn about obedience to His will. For each day the spies had searched the land, Israel would roam about.

There are two ways the last phrase in this verse could be taken. The “breach of promise” could mean the breach of promise which the people had made in not acting as His people. It could also be a way of saying to them that they were about to see that His own promises were kept. After all, “The Lord is not slack concerning His promises, as some men count slackness.”

**NUM 14:35 I the LORD have said, I will surely do it unto all this evil congregation, that are gathered together against me: in this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die.**

**NUM 14:36 And the men, which Moses sent to search the land, who returned, and made all the congregation to murmur against him, by bringing up a slander upon the land,**

**NUM 14:37 Even those men that did bring up the evil report upon the land, died by the plague before the LORD.**

**NUM 14:38 But Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of the men that went to search the land, lived still.**

Although the people as a whole did not die at that point, the ten spies who had brought about the murmuring did die. Only Joshua and Caleb, who urged the people to enter the land were spared.

**NUM 14:39 And Moses told these sayings unto all the children of Israel: and the people mourned greatly.**

Now the people began to realize the seriousness of their sin. When Moses told them of God's anger and they saw the ten spies meet their death, they knew the future was bleak indeed. They must do as God had commanded and enter into the land.

**NUM 14:40 And they rose up early in the morning, and gat them up into the top of the mountain, saying, Lo, we be here, and will go up unto the place which the LORD hath promised: for we have sinned.**

Very early in the morning after they had grieved through the night, they climbed to the heights where they could see the land and announced to Moses they were going to go in and face the Canaanites. They still did not realize how serious placing one's own reasoning power before the commandment of God can be. They thought all that would be necessary was to say, "We have sinned."

**NUM 14:41 And Moses said, Wherefore now do ye transgress the commandment of the LORD? but it shall not prosper.**



**NUM 14:42 Go not up, for the LORD is not among you; that ye be not smitten before your enemies.**

**NUM 14:43 For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and ye shall fall by the sword: because ye are turned away from the LORD, therefore the LORD will not be with you.**

Moses pointed out to them that God had now told them not to enter the land, but to turn back into the wilderness where they would wander a total of forty years. Actually it would be thirty-eight years plus the time they had already spent in getting from Egypt to the border or Canaan.

Moses warned them God would not be with them and without Him they would be defeated by the dwellers in the land. They had turned away from God. He had now turned away from them.

**NUM 14:44 But they presumed to go up unto the hill top: nevertheless the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and Moses, departed not out of the camp.**

The Israelites decided to go anyway. They thought they could do without God what God told them could do with Him. Moses did not go with them. Neither did the ark of the covenant go before them. Both Moses and the ark remained in the camp.

**NUM 14:45 Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them, and discomfited them, even unto Hormah.**

The results were just as one might anticipate. They were defeated by the Amalekites and Canaanites.

We can only guess the precise location of Hormah. Since the record says “even unto Hormah” it seems they must have retreated some distance.



With God we can do all things that are in harmony with His will. Without Him Satan and his angels will devour us.



## *Chapter 15*

The reader is apt to wonder why this chapter is included at this point in the record. It seems to be more closely related to the laws of sacrifice which were presented in the first few chapters of the book of Leviticus than to the ones just before and after it in this book of Numbers.

This placement is not as awkward as some might think. God is certain that even though the lack of faith on the part of Israel will result in a forty year postponement of entry into the promised land, His ultimate purposes will not be defeated. The people will someday enter into Canaan and they will need to be refreshed regarding the commandments which had been given them in the past. They also would need some details which were not included in the revelation to Moses at Sinai.

It is amazing how little is said in the Scriptures about what happened during those years during which they wandered because of their cowardly attitude at Kadesh-Barnea. Our first thought is that our curiosity about those details is not satisfied. Immediately after that initial thought, we begin to realize we might not have really wanted to read a page by page account of the guilt and misery which they must have suffered.

These could almost be called the “forty lost years.” The younger generation needed to come to an understanding of the need to trust in Jehovah. They would most certainly have been told over and over again just why they were in such a situation. Since the youngest of the people who had been held responsible for their failure were twenty years of age at the time, after the period of wandering they would have reached an age near sixty at the end of the period of punishment.

**NUM 15:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 15:2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land of your habitations, which I give unto you,**

It was not a question of “if” Israel was to enter into the land. The word was “when” you enter. God’s will would be accomplished. What is the attitude of the reader here toward those who caused this delay? Is there a feeling of anger toward those who would hold up the progress of God’s plan? Be careful! There are still those who for a variety of reasons stand in the way of congregational growth in the work of the Lord. Let us determine that this will not be true of us.

During the time the people were in the wilderness God did not completely abandon them. There was still a supply of manna. Their clothing did not wear out. Even so, they failed to show gratitude in offering sacrifices and keeping the Sabbath. They even turned to the worship of idols and false gods. This is proven through the following passages.

Jos 5:7 And their children, whom he raised up in their stead, them Joshua circumcised: for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them by the way.

(1) They had failed to circumcise the male babies.

Amo 5:25 Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?

Amo 5:26 But ye have borne the tabernacle of your

Moloch and Chiun your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves.

- (2) They had not offered the commanded sacrifices.
- (3) They had worshipped images and false gods.

Act 7:42 Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness?

Act 7:43 Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them: and I will carry you away beyond Babylon.

- (4) They had worshipped the sun, moon and stars.

When they entered into Canaan and took possession of it they were to see that such behavior was abandoned. They were to keep the commandments of Jehovah, including the sacrifices ordered long years before. They were supposed to have learned the lessons God presented to them over a period of nearly four decades.

**NUM 15:3 And will make an offering by fire unto the LORD, a burnt offering, or a sacrifice in performing a vow, or in a freewill offering, or in your solemn feasts, to make a sweet savour unto the LORD, of the herd or of the flock:**

The various kinds of offerings would be as pleasing to God as the odor of roast beef might be to the nostrils of a human.



The emphasis here in Numbers is more on the kind and amount of the sacrifice than on the procedure, as is the case in Leviticus. We are told now that everyone who brought an animal offering as either a burnt offering or as a peace offering was to bring both a cereal offering and a drink offering along with it. The larger the animal was, the larger the cereal and drink offerings were to be.

**NUM 15:4 Then shall he that offereth his offering unto the LORD bring a meat offering of a tenth deal of flour mingled with the fourth part of an hin of oil.**

**NUM 15:5 And the fourth part of an hin of wine for a drink offering shalt thou prepare with the burnt offering or sacrifice, for one lamb.**

One lamb

1/10 ephah of flour

1/4 hin of oil

1/4 hin of wine

**NUM 15:6 Or for a ram, thou shalt prepare for a meat offering two tenth deals of flour mingled with the third part of an hin of oil.**

**NUM 15:7 And for a drink offering thou shalt offer the third part of an hin of wine, for a sweet savour unto the LORD.**

One ram

2/10 ephah of flour

1/3 hin of oil

1/3 hin of wine

**NUM 15:8 And when thou preparest a bullock for a burnt offering, or for a sacrifice in performing a**



**vow, or peace offerings unto the LORD:**

**NUM 15:9 Then shall he bring with a bullock a meat offering of three tenth deals of flour mingled with half an hin of oil.**

**NUM 15:10 And thou shalt bring for a drink offering half an hin of wine, for an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.**

One bullock  
3/10 ephah of flour  
1/2 hin of oil  
1/2 hin of wine

An ephah was equal to about 25 pints.  
There were six hins in one ephah.

**NUM 15:11 Thus shall it be done for one bullock, or for one ram, or for a lamb, or a kid.**

**NUM 15:12 According to the number that ye shall prepare, so shall ye do to every one according to their number.**

**NUM 15:13 All that are born of the country shall do these things after this manner, in offering an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.**

Everyone who was a true Israelite was to offer these sacrifices.

**NUM 15:14 And if a stranger sojourn with you, or whosoever be among you in your generations, and will offer an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD; as ye do, so he shall do.**

**NUM 15:15 One ordinance shall be both for you**

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**of the congregation, and also for the stranger that sojourneth with you, an ordinance for ever in your generations: as ye are, so shall the stranger be before the LORD.**

**NUM 15:16 One law and one manner shall be for you, and for the stranger that sojourneth with you.**

It was permissible for one who was not a true Israelite to become a proselyte and ally himself with God's people. However, that person must agree to live by the same sacrificial rules as the Israelite. He was not to bring idol worship into the camp, nor was he immune to the above rules.

**NUM 15:17 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 15:18 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land whither I bring you,**

**NUM 15:19 Then it shall be, that, when ye eat of the bread of the land, ye shall offer up an heave offering unto the LORD.**

**NUM 15:20 Ye shall offer up a cake of the first of your dough for an heave offering: as ye do the heave offering of the threshingfloor, so shall ye heave it.**

**NUM 15:21 Of the first of your dough ye shall give unto the LORD an heave offering in your generations.**

The first of the harvest was to be offered to the Lord by bringing it before the Lord and moving it in an up and down motion. They were lifting it up to indicate their willingness to give it to the Lord as a sacrifice. It was then





lowered to indicate it was a blessing which had come from the God of heaven.

**NUM 15:22 And if ye have erred, and not observed all these commandments, which the LORD hath spoken unto Moses,**

**NUM 15:23 Even all that the LORD hath commanded you by the hand of Moses, from the day that the LORD commanded Moses, and henceforward among your generations;**

**NUM 15:24 Then it shall be, if ought be committed by ignorance without the knowledge of the congregation, that all the congregation shall offer one young bullock for a burnt offering, for a sweet savour unto the LORD, with his meat offering, and his drink offering, according to the manner, and one kid of the goats for a sin offering.**

**NUM 15:25 And the priest shall make an atonement for all the congregation of the children of Israel, and it shall be forgiven them; for it is ignorance: and they shall bring their offering, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LORD, and their sin offering before the LORD, for their ignorance:**

What was to be done if sins of ignorance were committed? These were sins committed without deliberately defying the will of God. This type of sin could be atoned for by sacrifice. It was still a sin, but could be covered by the sacrifice. If one was cutting wood and the ax head came off and killed a bystander that would be a sin of ignorance. If the man took the ax and deliberately killed another person the sin would be high handed. It must be handled differently.

**NUM 15:26** And it shall be forgiven all the congregation of the children of Israel, and the stranger that sojourneth among them; seeing all the people were in ignorance.

**NUM 15:27** And if any soul sin through ignorance, then he shall bring a she goat of the first year for a sin offering.

**NUM 15:28** And the priest shall make an atonement for the soul that sinneth ignorantly, when he sinneth by ignorance before the LORD, to make an atonement for him; and it shall be forgiven him.

**NUM 15:29** Ye shall have one law for him that sinneth through ignorance, both for him that is born among the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them.

The same principle held here as mentioned before. The stranger and the one born to an Israelite were subject to the same rules.

**NUM 15:30** But the soul that doeth ought presumptuously, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people.

**NUM 15:31** Because he hath despised the word of the LORD, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him.

Presumptuous or deliberate breaking of the commandments of the Lord required that the law breaker be cut off from the people. The meaning of this phrase is explained by the example in the next few verses.



**NUM 15:32 And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day.**

**NUM 15:33 And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation.**

A man was found picking up sticks on the sabbath day. The breaking of the sabbath day command was a sin. But how was this man to be punished. Had he been working? If so should he be sent out of the camp? They needed a clarification of the will of the Lord.

**NUM 15:34 And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him.**

**NUM 15:35 And the LORD said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp.**

God spoke to Moses and gave his answer to the question. The man had knowingly broken the commandment not to work on the sabbath. He was to be stoned to death.

If anyone wonders just how this was done, all they need do is turn on their television and watch a news report of the stone throwing which takes place today in some of those same lands.

**NUM 15:36 And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the LORD commanded Moses.**

It is quite apparent that God did not have mercy on the deliberate sinner, as He did on the one who sinned unknowingly or accidentally.

**NUM 15:37 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 15:38 Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue:**

It is not clear whether this applied during the time of the wandering, or whether it was to be observed when they entered the land after the wandering. It seems reasonable to believe God wished for these fringes to be worn throughout the wanderings and until the Mosaic age was replaced by the Christian dispensation.

It is thought that these fringes were attached to the bottom of a garment which was square in shape and had an opening for the head. This then hung down over the body and the fringes were fastened at the corners. There is reason to believe orthodox Jews even placed knots in these tassels which reminded them of the various commandments which they was not to break.

In the time of Jesus, the Pharisees were making a show of such things to declare their righteousness. Jesus condemned them for doing so.

The woman who touched the hem of Christ's garment may well have touched such fringes as worn properly by the Saviour. (See Matthew 9:20.)

Mat 9:20 And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment:

Adam Clarke, who was a proficient linguist, pointed out that the word translated "hem" could just as easily be translated as "fringe."



**NUM 15:39** And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the LORD, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring:

**NUM 15:40** That ye may remember, and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God.

**NUM 15:41** I am the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD your God.

Here was something visible which would serve as a reminder that they were not to follow their own heart. They were to realize that their long stay in the wilderness was a result of their insolence and faithlessness in days gone by.

God knows it is easier for humans to remember when they have something to look at which will remind them. A wedding ring is a constant reminder of the vows which were taken at the time of marriage. The communion service is a weekly reminder that the body of Christ hung on the cross, and the blood of Christ was shed in order that our sins might be forgiven.



## *Chapter 16*

Chapters sixteen and seventeen both deal with the uprising instigated by Korah, Nathan and Abiram. They are not among the most pleasant in the Bible. They do contain vital lessons for both leaders and followers among God's people.

**NUM 16:1 Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men:**

The people were bitterly disappointed. They had endured much hardship during the period between the crossing of the Red Sea and the arrival at Kadesh-Barnea on the southeast border of the promised land. Then, when the spies came back with discouraging news about the possibility of entering into Canaan, they were disillusioned. First they were afraid to enter. Then they were chastised by the Lord for the lack of faith and told they would have to wander for forty years. They reacted by attempting to enter without God's approval. That resulted in a sound defeat by the dwellers in the land. Now they determined they would appoint a new leader and return to Egypt. They blamed Moses for their sad condition when Moses had tried in vain to follow God's will, and they had murmured at every step.

Four influential men of the congregation stepped forward to challenge Moses and Aaron. One of these men was Korah, who was a Kohathite. The Kohathites had been charged with tending to the most important articles associated with the tabernacle, including the ark of the covenant.

Dathan, Abiram and On were of the Reubenites. This tribe would at one time have held a position of prestige among the twelve tribes. Reuben was the eldest of the twelve sons of Jacob. Reuben committed fornication with his father's concubine. He was punished by a loss of prestige. His descendants were bitter over this. All four of these men were ready to take advantage of the people's attitude toward Moses. Instead of being grateful for the privilege he had of handling the most precious articles of the tabernacle, Kohath clearly envied the greater prestige of Aaron and Moses. It would not have been difficult for him to enlist Dathan, Abiram and On in his cause.

**NUM 16:2 And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown:**

With Korah spearheading the uprising, they found two hundred fifty other men of influence and were ready to challenge Moses and Aaron. This was exceedingly unwise. God had selected both Moses and Aaron for the work they were doing. In rising up against these two the rebels were actually challenging the right of God to select His leaders.

A strong lesson is available in our study of this set of circumstances. God has specified that the elders of local congregations are to be respected as decision makers. They are to rule. They are not to be dictators, but they are expected to see that the congregation is fed with the proper spiritual food. They are also to watch for gainsayers who would prey upon the members of the church and profit at others expense. Elders are not to be challenged unless they have crossed swords with the Word of God. They must have certain qualifications before they are appointed to the





office. These are listed in order that only those who will humble themselves and lovingly guide the members are trusted with the duties God expects them to fulfill.

**NUM 16:3 And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD?**

**NUM 16:4 And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face:**

What a tremendous disappointment Moses must have felt when he saw these two hundred fifty princes, along with Korah, Dathan, on and Abiram standing in the forefront and charging Aaron and himself with love of power. Moses had not taken this position of leadership on his own. He had pointed out to God that surely there must be someone better qualified than he. He also mentioned that he was slow of speech. God had replied that Moses was His choice. Moses had communicated with the Lord throughout the journey and had followed God's instructions. What a terrible thing this was for these jealous and bitter men to accuse Moses of lust for power.

Why do you think Moses fell upon his face? I think it was a combination of things. I believe he was dismayed at what was happening. I also believe he realized the need to ask the Lord for help. God had not failed him before this. Surely God would provide an answer!

**NUM 16:5 And he spake unto Korah and unto all his company, saying, Even to morrow the LORD will shew who are his, and who is holy; and will cause him to come near unto him: even him whom he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him.**

When Moses arose, he had the answer he needed so badly. Note that he spoke to Korah rather than to Dathan, Abiram or On. Korah was the head of the rebels. The name of On is not mentioned again. He fades out of sight. One would hope that this was because he realized the gigantic error which was being made. We do not know.

Moses explained that they would not have to wait long to find out if God was pleased with His present leaders. The next day they were to have a test which would allow God to make his choice known to all.

**NUM 16:6 This do; Take you censers, Korah, and all his company;**

**NUM 16:7 And put fire therein, and put incense in them before the LORD to morrow: and it shall be that the man whom the LORD doth choose, he shall be holy: ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi.**

Since Korah was a priest, he was responsible for seeing that the sacrifices were made according to the will of Jehovah. He and his cohorts were to take censers, which were pans for the holding of incense, and place incense in the pans. They were to light the incense before the Lord. Then God would let them know whom He had chosen.

Moses used the same words the rebels had used in charging him and Aaron. "Ye take too much upon you." They had done so. He had not.

**NUM 16:8 And Moses said unto Korah, Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi:**

**NUM 16:9 Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself**



**to do the service of the tabernacle of the LORD, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them?**

**NUM 16:10 And he hath brought thee near to him, and all thy brethren the sons of Levi with thee: and seek ye the priesthood also?**

All the priests had to be Levites. Not all of the Levites were priests. Moses reminded Korah and his followers that they had been awarded very special opportunities in caring for the tabernacle. Why then did they wish to take further authority which God had not seen fit to assign them?

Great leaders are able to take leadership responsibilities without becoming hungry for additional power. It is pathetic when men use their present authority as a platform from which to leap higher and higher. Pride and lust are the prime tools of Satan. As much damage can be done when these take control as in any other way. Most of us have been associated with great leaders at one time or another. Most of us have also at times had to put up with those who were power hungry. What a contrast is seen!

**NUM 16:11 For which cause both thou and all thy company are gathered together against the LORD: and what is Aaron, that ye murmur against him?**

Moses pointed his finger straight at them and told them they were not challenging Aaron because he had failed in his responsibilities. They were doing so because they wanted to replace him.

**NUM 16:12 And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab: which said, We will not come up:**



Moses was correct in sending for Dathan and Abiram to come before him. Dathan and Abiram were sinning against God when they flatly refused to obey Moses summons.

**NUM 16:13 Is it a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of a land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself altogether a prince over us?**

**NUM 16:14 Moreover thou hast not brought us into a land that floweth with milk and honey, or given us inheritance of fields and vineyards: wilt thou put out the eyes of these men? we will not come up.**

Not only did the two refuse to come when Moses called for them. They accused him of taking them from Egypt, a land which was flowing with milk and honey, and promising to take them to a better place. They claimed he had only made life miserable for them. He was trying to make himself a dictator and he as willing to sacrifice their lives in the wilderness to obtain that power.

When they accused Moses of putting out the eyes of the men they were picturing Moses as one who was blinding them to the truth. He was only trying to maintain his position. He was not being straightforward and admitting he had misled them.

They would not come before him.

**NUM 16:15 And Moses was very wroth, and said unto the LORD, Respect not thou their offering: I have not taken one ass from them, neither have I hurt one of them.**

Moses denied the accusations. He had not used his role as a leader to take a single thing from them. He had not



hurt anyone, to say nothing of killing them.

Moses prayed to the Lord that He would not approve of the sacrifices the rebels offered. That would be the test as to whom the Lord had chosen.

**NUM 16:16 And Moses said unto Korah, Be thou and all thy company before the LORD, thou, and they, and Aaron, to morrow:**

**NUM 16:17 And take every man his censer, and put incense in them, and bring ye before the LORD every man his censer, two hundred and fifty censers; thou also, and Aaron, each of you his censer.**

**NUM 16:18 And they took every man his censer, and put fire in them, and laid incense thereon, and stood in the door of the tabernacle of the congregation with Moses and Aaron.**

**NUM 16:19 And Korah gathered all the congregation against them unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the congregation.**

Why did Korah and the two hundred fifty princes come this time when they had refused to come before. It was very likely because they would have been embarrassed before the people if they had refused the test. The people would then have questioned their right to supervise the sacrifices.

They came. It must have been quite a sight to see over two hundred fifty men, each with a censer containing lighted incense and ready to make an offering to God.

God had heard the prayer of Moses. He appeared in the cloud of glory. Everyone in the congregation could know it would be His choice, not that of Moses. God had appeared in this way a number of other times when the people murmured.

**NUM 16:20 And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,**

**NUM 16:21 Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment.**

God did not just appear in the cloud. He was ready to take action against the entire congregation. Moses and Aaron were to move away from the rest so they would not be destroyed. The Lord was not willing to kill the righteous with the wicked.

**NUM 16:22 And they fell upon their faces, and said, O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and wilt thou be wroth with all the congregation?**

Here is true greatness. It would have been a simple thing for Moses and Aaron to have walked away from the ungrateful rebels and watched them die. That was not even in the corner of their mind. They were ready to plead for God to have mercy upon those who were persecuting them. Jesus urged us to have that same spirit.

Mat 5:11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

Mat 5:12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

The inspired apostle Paul fully agreed with Jesus.

Rom 12:14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.



**NUM 16:23 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 16:24 Speak unto the congregation, saying, Get you up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.**

The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. Moses had prayed that not all the people be killed as a result of the uprising of Korah. Moses was told to call for the people to move away from the tents where Korah, Dathan and Abiram were as they refused to come before him.

**NUM 16:25 And Moses rose up and went unto Dathan and Abiram; and the elders of Israel followed him.**

Since these wicked leaders had refused to come to Moses, Moses went to them. The elders of the people accompanied him.

**NUM 16:26 And he spake unto the congregation, saying, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins.**

Moses did as God told him. He warned the congregation not to be near the tents of these men. God was about to destroy them. Moses did not wish for the people to be destroyed along with them.

**NUM 16:27 So they gat up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, on every side: and Dathan and Abiram came out, and stood in the door**

**of their tents, and their wives, and their sons, and their little children.**

The people did as they were told. Lest the reader become confused by the use of the word tabernacle here, a tabernacle is a movable dwelling place. The large tabernacle was a dwelling place for the Lord. The tabernacles of Dathan and Abiram were their tents. The men came to the door of their tents along with their wives and their children. They must have been a bit surprised by the massive gathering of the people at a distance from their own tents.

**NUM 16:28 And Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the LORD hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own mind.**

Moses flatly denied he had been power hungry. God had sent him to lead Israel from Egypt. They were about to see proof of Moses sincerity.

**NUM 16:29 If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; then the LORD hath not sent me.**

**NUM 16:30 But if the LORD make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD.**

The type of death by which the opposers died would tell the story. If they died a natural death in the same fashion as other men, this would be proof that God approved of their actions. If the Lord caused some new thing to happen and the earth parted to swallow them up with all of that





which they possessed, the people would know God rejected their claims.

**NUM 16:31 And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them:**

It was not a week or a month later, or even an hour, before the proof was seen. If the event had been postponed, some might have said the opening of the earth was a natural event. It would be hard to argue the such an unusual happening would take place just as Moses ended his statement that God would do just what He did.

**NUM 16:32 And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods.**

**NUM 16:33 They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation.**

This hardly seems to fit the description of a large earthquake anyway. The earth seems to have just separated as a person might open their mouth and swallowed up the three main leaders of the uprising.

When the text says the earth swallowed up their houses, it is not speaking of just their tents. The word house is used in the Old Testament as the family of a man. The wives and children of these men were swallowed up with them. Should the children have been punished along with their parents? If the children were innocent, their eternal afterlife would be tended to by a just God. I would not, however, wish to share in the eternal condition of

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Korah, Dathan and Abiram after the judgment.

**NUM 16:34 And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also.**

The majority of the congregation observed the fate of the leaders and fled lest they also share their punishment. One cannot help but wonder if men today would flee from their opposition to God if they caught just the faintest glimpse of eternal torment.

**NUM 16:35 And there came out a fire from the LORD, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense.**

The two hundred fifty princes who had lighted censers would have been able to offer their fire before the Lord if he had approved of them. What did take place was that God rejected their fire and built one of His own. They were consumed with fire.

**NUM 16:36 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 16:37 Speak unto Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest, that he take up the censers out of the burning, and scatter thou the fire yonder; for they are hallowed.**

Eleazar was a priest who was approved of God. He was to see that the fire of the two hundred fifty censers was removed from them. Since these men had offered them to the Lord He would accept them, but He would use them in His own way.



**NUM 16:38** The censers of these sinners against their own souls, let them make them broad plates for a covering of the altar: for they offered them before the LORD, therefore they are hallowed: and they shall be a sign unto the children of Israel.

**NUM 16:39** And Eleazar the priest took the brasen censers, wherewith they that were burnt had offered; and they were made broad plates for a covering of the altar:

**NUM 16:40** To be a memorial unto the children of Israel, that no stranger, which is not of the seed of Aaron, come near to offer incense before the LORD; that he be not as Korah, and as his company: as the LORD said to him by the hand of Moses.

God commanded that the censers of the two hundred fifty men be collected and used to make a covering for the altar. This did not mean a roof to keep the rain off. It is speaking of metal plating which would cover the surface of the altar. When the Israelites looked at the altar in the years to come they would be reminded that not just anyone who chooses to do so is to offer sacrifices as a priest of God.

There may well be more here than meets the eye. The blood of Christ has now replaced that of bulls, sheep and goats. Each Christian is now both a priest and a living sacrifice. Not everyone who claims to be a Christian is one. Those who claim to be Christians when they are not can not offer acceptable sacrifices to Jehovah. The sacrifices of those who rebel against the will of God and decide to do thing their way will be surprised. God will reject them.

**NUM 16:41** But on the morrow all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the LORD.

After all they had seen for nearly two years, and that which they had seen the day before, how could the congregation remain hostile toward Moses and Aaron? The actually accused the two of being responsible for the death of the ones who had been swallowed up in the earth.

**NUM 16:42 And it came to pass, when the congregation was gathered against Moses and against Aaron, that they looked toward the tabernacle of the congregation: and, behold, the cloud covered it, and the glory of the LORD appeared.**

God was ready to come to the defense of His two great leaders. When the congregation looked in the direction of the large tabernacle of the Lord, they saw the cloud and should have realized God was about to show his wrath in a similar manner to that which He had shown in the day before.

**NUM 16:43 And Moses and Aaron came before the tabernacle of the congregation.**

**NUM 16:44 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

Again God was ready to destroy the people as a whole.

**NUM 16:45 Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them as in a moment. And they fell upon their faces.**

The two are commended to separate themselves from the rest of the people. Neither Moses nor Aaron wished that the people be consumed as Korah, Dathan, Abiram and the two hundred fifty had been. They were ready to



accept the will of God if that was the only alternative. They fell on their faces to indicate their willingness to humble themselves before the God of all the universe.

**NUM 16:46 And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them: for there is wrath gone out from the LORD; the plague is begun.**

Moses was ready to make a last effort to save the people from death. He called on Aaron to offer incense and see if the tragedy could be averted. God had already sent a plague. Perhaps if an atonement was made on behalf of the people, God would take away the plague.

**NUM 16:47 And Aaron took as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the congregation; and, behold, the plague was begun among the people: and he put on incense, and made an atonement for the people.**

**NUM 16:48 And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed.**

We see the superior position of Moses with respect to Aaron. Aaron was the older of the two brothers, yet he accepted his assignment here without complaint. Remember, it had not always been so. Miriam and Aaron had once made a similar mistake to that which was made by these who were led by Korah.

When Aaron went into the midst of the people he found that Moses was indeed correct. A plague from the Lord had already begun to take it's toll. He made the atonement Moses had called for and those who were still alive did not perish from the plague.



Every man has sinned, and since the wages of sin is death, every man faces eternal destruction unless atonement is made. Jesus came into the midst of the people and made that atonement for all who will repent of their sin and walk in the Way, the Life and the Truth.

**NUM 16:49 Now they that died in the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred, beside them that died about the matter of Korah.**

**NUM 16:50 And Aaron returned unto Moses unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and the plague was stayed.**

Nearly fifteen thousand persons died before the atonement took effect. Will this bring the remainder of the congregation to their senses, or will they continue to grumble and murmur against the Lord?

## *Chapter 17*

This brief chapter contains an account of a closing test which God used to make it absolutely clear that He stood behind Aaron as the High Priest. All doubt should have been dissolved after this demonstration.

**NUM 17:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 17:2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and take of every one of them a rod according to the house of their fathers, of all their princes according to the house of their fathers twelve rods: write thou every man's name upon his rod.**

The rods spoken of here were symbols of authority. They were to the princes of Israel what the sceptre of a king was. That of the king might be made of gold and covered with precious gems. These were made of wood, which were often taken from almond trees and were covered with carved words and figures.

There were twelve of these rods, one for each of the twelve tribes. Although the tribe of Levi had been set apart for the priesthood, and the tribe of Joseph had been divided into the two tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, this was apparently ignored for the moment. The tribe of Levi was included in the twelve here. Otherwise there would have been thirteen rods. Each prince's name was to be placed on his rod.

**NUM 17:3 And thou shalt write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi: for one rod shall be for the head of the house of their fathers.**

**NUM 17:4 And thou shalt lay them up in the**



**tabernacle of the congregation before the testimony, where I will meet with you.**

These twelve rods were then to be taken to the Most Holy Place and placed in front of the ark of the covenant. It was from this place that God communed with Moses and to which Aaron went once a year on the Day of Atonement.

**NUM 17:5 And it shall come to pass, that the man's rod, whom I shall choose, shall blossom: and I will make to cease from me the murmurings of the children of Israel, whereby they murmur against you.**

The Lord spelled out to Moses exactly how He would make His choice evident. Out of the twelve rods, only one would produce blossoms.

That would be a most remarkable event. The rods had been separated from their source of nourishment in the trees from which they had been taken. Even if some small amount of life remained, the most one might expect would be the development of a bud. More than this would be a sign of Divine intervention. Any murmuring which took place after this would be ridiculous.

**NUM 17:6 And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, and every one of their princes gave him a rod apiece, for each prince one, according to their fathers' houses, even twelve rods: and the rod of Aaron was among their rods.**

It would be interesting to know what the thoughts of the princes were as they put their rods in the hands of Moses.

Some see thirteen rods from this verse. They believe there were twelve from the twelve tribes, and then one



representing the tribe of Levi. It seems more likely that there was one rod for the combined tribe of Joseph.

**NUM 17:7 And Moses laid up the rods before the LORD in the tabernacle of witness.**

**NUM 17:8 And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moses went into the tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds.**

Moses took the rods and placed them before the ark. The next morning he returned to the spot and found the rod of Aaron had not only budded, it had produced blossoms and there were even almonds present. This was far from being with the realm of natural phenomena. It was supernatural.

**NUM 17:9 And Moses brought out all the rods from before the LORD unto all the children of Israel: and they looked, and took every man his rod.**

When Moses brought the rods out from the ark to the princes, each prince claimed his own rod. We can see where some slight quibbling could have taken place. If Moses and Aaron were as dishonest as many of the people thought, they could have collaborated and replaced the rod of Aaron with a rod from an almond tree which had buds, blossoms and almonds on it.

A second look tells us that these princes would have conceived of this possibility just as easily as a present reader might do so. If the circumstances left any room for debate about a substitution the princes would have forcefully presented objections. It may be that it was



not even the time when the live almond trees were blossoming.

**NUM 17:10 And the LORD said unto Moses, Bring Aaron's rod again before the testimony, to be kept for a token against the rebels; and thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from me, that they die not.**

**NUM 17:11 And Moses did so: as the LORD commanded him, so did he.**

Up to this time the tables of stone with the ten commandments written on them and the pot of manna were all that had been placed in the ark. From this time forward the rod of Aaron, which had budded, was found there also. It was to be kept as a memorial to stop the murmuring in the future.

**NUM 17:12 And the children of Israel spake unto Moses, saying, Behold, we die, we perish, we all perish.**

**NUM 17:13 Whosoever cometh any thing near unto the tabernacle of the LORD shall die: shall we be consumed with dying?**

A guilty conscience can be a panic trigger. These people had seen the wrath of God visited upon them more than once. They knew they were guilty in the eyes of Jehovah. Two hundred fifty princes had died. Fourteen thousand seven hundred of the people had been killed by the plague. They had good reason to be concerned.

It would be delightful if we could report that their murmuring was never heard again. That was not to be the case!



## Chapter 18

This chapter is not an interruption of thought as some think. It follows very naturally from the previous one. Israel was crying out in panic that they were all about to die if they came near the tabernacle. They had observed the death of Korah, Nadab and Abihu. They had also felt the sting of a plague from God in which fourteen thousand seven hundred had died. They had entered a state of confusion and fear that all communication with God had been cut off. It was necessary that the Lord clarify the duties and the privileges of the priesthood and the Levites in general.

**NUM 18:1 And the LORD said unto Aaron, Thou and thy sons and thy father's house with thee shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary: and thou and thy sons with thee shall bear the iniquity of your priesthood.**

Usually the Lord had spoken to Moses. Moses was then told to relate the message to Aaron. This time the instructions are much more directly pointed toward Aaron, the priesthood and the Levites as a whole. Thus the words are addressed to Aaron.

The sanctuary was dedicated to the offering of sacrifices and communion with God. Only Aaron was to enter the Most Holy Place, and then only on the Day of Atonement. The sons of Aaron were permitted to enter the Holy Place and offer sacrifice. The Levites were not allowed entry there. The Levites were permitted to enter the tabernacle courtyard, but were not to enter the tabernacle proper. The Israelites who were not Levites were to remain outside the courtyard of the tabernacle.

To go beyond these limits was a trespass and could result in death. The priests had been told they were to be “watchers” and were charged to see that the restrictions were not broken. If they did allow any such trespassing, they would be held accountable.

There was another side to this. The priests and the Levites had duties to discharge. If these duties were mishandled, they were again responsible and could face a death sentence. There had been confusion about God’s punishment. He was now making it extremely clear as to what He expected from the priests, the Levites and the people. If they obeyed His will they need not fear for their lives.

**NUM 18:2 And thy brethren also of the tribe of Levi, the tribe of thy father, bring thou with thee, that they may be joined unto thee, and minister unto thee: but thou and thy sons with thee shall minister before the tabernacle of witness.**

These words are still being addressed to Aaron. He is to have the assistance of the entire tribe of Levi in carrying out his responsibilities such as the erecting and dismantling of the tabernacle as they moved from place to place. The Lord added that he held only Aaron and his sons responsible for handling the chores related to the Most Holy.

**NUM 18:3 And they shall keep thy charge, and the charge of all the tabernacle: only they shall not come nigh the vessels of the sanctuary and the altar, that neither they, nor ye also, die.**

The Levites in general were not to touch the altar of burnt offering or those items used with it. If they did so they might expect to die.



**NUM 18:4 And they shall be joined unto thee, and keep the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation, for all the service of the tabernacle: and a stranger shall not come nigh unto you.**

The stranger was one who was not of the priesthood. If one who was not a priest attempted to attend to activities assigned to the priests, that stranger could die.

**NUM 18:5 And ye shall keep the charge of the sanctuary, and the charge of the altar: that there be no wrath any more upon the children of Israel.**

Israel had been wondering how they could all avoid the wrath of God, as they had seen it visited upon those who had already lost their lives. Aaron is commanded to tell them just what is necessary. Each and every person must attend to his own charge. This would insure their safety.

It seems fairly easy to see the connection between this chapter and the insurrection described in chapters sixteen and seventeen. The rebellion of Korah and his associates had been just such a trespass against God's will as He was warning against in this chapter. **GOD MEANS WHAT HE SAYS!**

**NUM 18:6 And I, behold, I have taken your brethren the Levites from among the children of Israel: to you they are given as a gift for the LORD, to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.**

It was God's decision that the Levites be selected from the people of Israel as a whole. They were presented to Aaron as assistants to see that certain activities of



the tabernacle were carried out properly. Aaron was to supervise their actions.

**NUM 18:7 Therefore thou and thy sons with thee shall keep your priest's office for every thing of the altar, and within the vail; and ye shall serve: I have given your priest's office unto you as a service of gift: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.**

Aaron would be expected to care for that which was to be done within the vail between the Most Holy Place and the Holy Place. His sons were expected to light the candlestick and see that the table of shewbread were kept in order. Others would invite death if they attempted to approach the ark of the covenant and the mercy seat more closely than their assignments called for.

**NUM 18:8 And the LORD spake unto Aaron, Behold, I also have given thee the charge of mine heave offerings of all the hallowed things of the children of Israel; unto thee have I given them by reason of the anointing, and to thy sons, by an ordinance for ever.**

The heave offerings were those sacrifices which were lifted up before Jehovah. The right shoulder and the heave thigh were among these. The next verse is more specific. It was not by happenstance that these were placed under the supervision of the priests. God had anointed them and personally chosen them to deal with these sacrifices.

**NUM 18:9 This shall be thine of the most holy things, reserved from the fire: every oblation of theirs, every meat offering of theirs, and every sin**

**offering of theirs, and every trespass offering of theirs which they shall render unto me, shall be most holy for thee and for thy sons.**

Each of the kinds of offerings in this verse were offerings by fire. There were some offerings which were completely burned, with the smoke and the smell of the material going up as a sweet savor to the nostrils of the Lord. Each of the above had at least a portion of it reserved from the fire for the use of the priests.

**NUM 18:10 In the most holy place shalt thou eat it; every male shall eat it: it shall be holy unto thee.**

The reader must be careful with this verse. It most certainly does not mean that the males of Aaron and his sons were permitted to eat their portions of these sacrifices in the Most Holy Place where the ark of the covenant was located. They were not allowed to enter that chamber.

It means they were not to eat it outside of the holy tabernacle.

**NUM 18:11 And this is thine; the heave offering of their gift, with all the wave offerings of the children of Israel: I have given them unto thee, and to thy sons and to thy daughters with thee, by a statute for ever: every one that is clean in thy house shall eat of it.**

These heave and wave offerings were commanded by the Lord, but at the same time they were gifts from the people to Jehovah who is the source of every blessing. God desired that they make these offerings because they desired to do so, not just because it was a commandment.



In this case the entire family of the priest was free to eat from these offerings after God's portion had been offered upon the altar.

**NUM 18:12 All the best of the oil, and all the best of the wine, and of the wheat, the firstfruits of them which they shall offer unto the LORD, them have I given thee.**

The priests were expected to give themselves to the service of the tabernacle. As a reward for their dedication, God wished for them to have the best of the crops which would be grown in the land.

**NUM 18:13 And whatsoever is first ripe in the land, which they shall bring unto the LORD, shall be thine; every one that is clean in thine house shall eat of it.**

**NUM 18:14 Every thing devoted in Israel shall be thine.**

Before anyone else partook of the harvest of grain, olive oil and wine, God was to have this best part devoted to Him to glorify Him, thank Him and maintain His presence among them. They would receive far more from Him than they were expected to give to Him. The priests were the ones who would receive that which had been given to Him.

**NUM 18:15 Every thing that openeth the matrix in all flesh, which they bring unto the LORD, whether it be of men or beasts, shall be thine: nevertheless the firstborn of man shalt thou surely redeem, and the firstling of unclean beasts shalt thou redeem.**





In addition to the first fruit of the crop harvest, God claimed every firstborn animal and human. He had saved their firstborn when the firstborn of the Egyptians were killed in the tenth plague. As a memorial of that fact, God owned every firstborn of both man and animal.

There were two instances in which the Lord would allow the firstborn to be bought back by the people. One was the firstborn of any unclean animal. If the firstborn of the unclean animals was not redeemed, it was to have it's neck broken.

The other exception was the firstborn of humans. They could also be redeemed with money and claimed by the parents.

**NUM 18:16 And those that are to be redeemed from a month old shalt thou redeem, according to thine estimation, for the money of five shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, which is twenty gerahs.**

When the firstborn child reached the age of one month, it was to be brought before the priests, along with five shekels of money. The five shekels were given to the priests and then the firstborn child belonged to the parents.

This was a sizable amount of money. It has been estimated that it was the amount one would earn for six months of labor by the average worker. The reader might wish to do a short multiplication here. With an average wage of ten dollars an hour as it is now in the United States, twenty-six weeks, or six months would mean multiplying twenty-six by \$400, assuming a forty hour work week. The product of the multiplication is over \$10,000. As one can see, firstborn babies were costly in those days too.



**NUM 18:17 But the firstling of a cow, or the firstling of a sheep, or the firstling of a goat, thou shalt not redeem; they are holy: thou shalt sprinkle their blood upon the altar, and shalt burn their fat for an offering made by fire, for a sweet savour unto the LORD.**

While the unclean firstborn among the animals could be redeemed, the firstborn of the clean animals could not be. They were to be brought to the priests as a sacrifice. The fat of those animals was burned upon the altar as an offering by fire. The smoke of the offering would rise to heaven as a sweet pleasing fragrance in the nostrils of the Lord.

**NUM 18:18 And the flesh of them shall be thine, as the wave breast and as the right shoulder are thine.**

The remainder of the animal, after the fat was burned on the altar, was to belong to the priests. As early as Exodus 29, the priests were assigned the right shoulder and the wave breast and the right shoulder and the breast of certain offerings. Now God informed the priests that they may eat all of the flesh of the firstborn clean animals, after the fat had been burned. For further investigation of wave and heave offerings, the reader is referred to Exodus 29, Leviticus 7-14 and Deuteronomy 12.

As a young farm lad, this present commentator had the unpleasant task of helping in the butchering. An animal was quartered. There were right and left forequarters, also right and left hindquarters. It is tempting to think of the wave shoulder and wave breast as the front right quarter.

**NUM 18:19 All the heave offerings of the holy things, which the children of Israel offer unto the LORD, have I given thee, and thy sons and thy daughters with thee, by a statute for ever: it is a covenant of salt for ever before the LORD unto thee and to thy seed with thee.**

The heave offerings and the wave offerings were both types of the peace offerings. These could be eaten by the entire family of the priest as long as it was eaten in a clean place. (This is spiritually clean and does not refer to dirty tablecloths.) The sin offerings, the trespass offerings and the meat or cereal offerings were restricted to the priests. Their wives and children were not to eat of them. See verses 9-11 of this chapter.

**NUM 18:20 And the LORD spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them: I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel.**

**NUM 18:21 And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.**

God is still dealing with the rights, the duties and the privileges of the priests and Levites. He had spoken of these before, but now He is a bit more detailed as a result of the uprising by Korah and his cohorts. He does not want the people to die any more than they want to. If they can be made to understand His will the people may obey and live.

The Levites and priests were to receive these benefits from the sacrifices because they were not to receive an

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equal portion of the land when it was settled. They were to attend to the sacrifices and the ceremonies of the tabernacle. As the apostle Paul would say later in I Cor. 9:14—

1Co 9:14 Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

It is right and proper that those who devote full time to the work of the Lord in the sense that gospel preachers do, and in which the Levites did, should be supported in comfortable fashion.

In return, those laborers are to be dedicated and see that God's Word and His will are followed without addition, subtraction or modification.

**NUM 18:22 Neither must the children of Israel henceforth come nigh the tabernacle of the congregation, lest they bear sin, and die.**

If the people were afraid of dying as the two hundred fifty and the fourteen thousand seven hundred had died, all they had to do was do things God's way and not their own. Any attempt to assume responsibilities that had been given to others could result in death.

**NUM 18:23 But the Levites shall do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation, and they shall bear their iniquity: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations, that among the children of Israel they have no inheritance.**

There was no way God could make it any clearer. Aaron had duties as High Priest. His sons had duties as priests.



The rest of the Levites were to see that the services of the tabernacle were carried out in orderly fashion. The people were not to interfere. Each was to fulfill his assignments and was responsible if God's will was not followed. The people were not to resent that part of the offerings which were to be used by the Levites. They would have no land to work when Canaan was settled. They would need support.

**NUM 18:24 But the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer as an heave offering unto the LORD, I have given to the Levites to inherit: therefore I have said unto them, Among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance.**

Even though the word "tithes" often means "one tenth", there are times when it is used in a wider sense to include that which is offered to God. I think this verse does not distinguish wave offerings from heave offerings. Both were placed before the Lord as if they were lifted up as offerings. This is a very complex topic and the reader is invited to do further personal investigation.

**NUM 18:25 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 18:26 Thus speak unto the Levites, and say unto them, When ye take of the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then ye shall offer up an heave offering of it for the LORD, even a tenth part of the tithe.**

The Levites were not excused from giving. Just as the rest of the people of Israel were to offer tithes, the Levites were to follow suit. Just as we would expect gospel preachers to join the rest of the congregation in the giving

today, God commanded that the Levites offer tithes of that which they had received through the sacrifices.

**NUM 18:27 And this your heave offering shall be reckoned unto you, as though it were the corn of the threshingfloor, and as the fulness of the winepress.**

**NUM 18:28 Thus ye also shall offer an heave offering unto the LORD of all your tithes, which ye receive of the children of Israel; and ye shall give thereof the LORD'S heave offering to Aaron the priest.**

**NUM 18:29 Out of all your gifts ye shall offer every heave offering of the LORD, of all the best thereof, even the hallowed part thereof out of it.**

**NUM 18:30 Therefore thou shalt say unto them, When ye have heaved the best thereof from it, then it shall be counted unto the Levites as the increase of the threshingfloor, and as the increase of the winepress.**

If the Levites had worked the land and reaped a harvest they would have offered a tithe. Since their duties required their full attention, their inheritance consisted of that which they received from the people's sacrifices. They were then to offer the best of the best to Aaron and his sons as they discharged the ceremonial duties of the tabernacle worship.

**NUM 18:31 And ye shall eat it in every place, ye and your households: for it is your reward for your service in the tabernacle of the congregation.**

**NUM 18:32 And ye shall bear no sin by reason of it, when ye have heaved from it the best of it: neither**

**shall ye pollute the holy things of the children of Israel, lest ye die.**

The Levites could safely eat from the heave offerings which had been presented to God by the people. There would be no danger of dying from doing so.

There would certainly be danger of dying if the priests and the Levites failed to perform their duties according to the Word of the Lord. Aaron had duties. The priests had duties. The Levites had duties. The people had duties. Let each tend to his own part of the Lord's business and there would be no unnatural deaths.

As stated at the beginning, this is a powerful chapter. It has definite lessons for today. Elders have their duties. They are to see that the flock of God is properly fed spiritually and led in the light of God's revealed Word. Members are to respect the elders and obey them as long as they are doing that which God expects from them. The men of the congregation are to take the lead. Women are not to assume leadership roles over men. Children are to obey their parents. This eighteenth chapter of Numbers underlines these truths with no ifs, ands or buts.







## Chapter 19

This chapter of only twenty-two verses is devoted completely to the purification process through the ashes of a red heifer. We do not hear many sermons based on the material found here. We do not have many Bible classes discussing the ceremony. That does not mean it is unimportant. It contains a number of types related to the purification of men today through the blood of Jesus Christ. It is not hocus-pocus and demonology. It points to the greatest and most powerful means of spiritual purification ever made available to men.

**NUM 19:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,**

**NUM 19:2 This is the ordinance of the law which the LORD hath commanded, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring thee a red heifer without spot, wherein is no blemish, and upon which never came yoke:**

Jehovah saw a very serious problem. Some fifteen thousand persons had died just previous to these instructions. The strenuous circumstances which would exist during the next thirty-eight years would result in about one hundred deaths a day until all those above twenty years of age had passed on and been replaced by a new generation.

Three conditions had been declared sufficiently polluting that a person was to be excluded from the camp. These with running body issues, those who had leprosy and those who had made contact with the dead were be considered impure. If they were to be allowed to associate closely with the rest of the people, the entire camp, and the tabernacle could become unclean. This chapter handles

the ritual which was to be followed in the most serious of these contaminations, contact with a corpse.

They were to select a red cow as a sacrifice. She was to have certain qualifications. She is called a “heifer” in this passage. There is some debate over whether she could ever have calved before this time. There are passages in the Old Testament where this same word which is translated as heifer is applied to a cow with a calf. (See I Samuel 6:7.)

1Sa 6:7 Now therefore make a new cart, and take two milch kine, on which there hath come no yoke, and tie the **kine** to the cart, and bring their calves home from them:

Perhaps the reason for translating the word as heifer is that she was not to have been yoked. This indicates a young age. The red color immediately brings blood to mind. Blood purifies. The ashes of this heifer were to be used for the purification of those who had become unclean through contact with the dead.

She was to have neither spot nor blemish. For all those who are familiar with the characteristics of Christ, it would be difficult to miss the similarities. He was without spot or blemish. He shed His blood to save men from death which is the wages of sin. He never wore the yoke of the bondage because of His own sin.

**NUM 19:3 And ye shall give her unto Eleazar the priest, that he may bring her forth without the camp, and one shall slay her before his face:**

This red heifer was not to be brought to Aaron, the High Priest. It was to be brought to his son Eleazar. He was to take her outside the camp and someone was to kill the animal within his view.

Jesus was crucified outside the city of Jerusalem. He



is the High Priest of Christianity. Someone else did the slaying. He was the victim.

**NUM 19:4 And Eleazar the priest shall take of her blood with his finger, and sprinkle of her blood directly before the tabernacle of the congregation seven times:**

Note that it was Eleazar who sprinkled the blood of the heifer. It was not Aaron. The High Priest was not to make contact with any dead. Aaron was not even to touch the bodies of his two sons, Nadab and Abihu.

At this point let us review some New Testament scriptures.

Heb 9:13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

Heb 9:14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

1Pe 1:18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

1Pe 1:19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

Can there be any doubt as to the reason this animal who was red, who had never tasted the yoke and who had neither spot nor blemish, was specified as a remedy for pollution.



Eleazar was to take some of the blood of this heifer and sprinkle it seven times in the direction of the tabernacle. Seven is the number of completeness. The word “directly” does not mean he was to go to the tabernacle. He was outside the camp when the animal was slain.

**NUM 19:5 And one shall burn the heifer in his sight; her skin, and her flesh, and her blood, with her dung, shall he burn:**

The one who is to burn the heifer is not identified. It is not Aaron or Eleazar. It is however to be burned within sight of Eleazar. Parts of the heifer which were sometimes not burned during a sacrifice were included this time. The blood and the skin of the sacrifices were often reserved. This time everything was placed in the fire.

**NUM 19:6 And the priest shall take cedar wood, and hyssop, and scarlet, and cast it into the midst of the burning of the heifer.**

I am unable to find a satisfactory explanation of the reason for these ingredients being added. There are a number of attempts at explanation, but they leave the reader with the feeling they are for the most part guesswork. God had reasons and we will leave it at that.

**NUM 19:7 Then the priest shall wash his clothes, and he shall bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp, and the priest shall be unclean until the even.**

**NUM 19:8 And he that burneth her shall wash his clothes in water, and bathe his flesh in water, and shall be unclean until the even.**



**NUM 19:9 And a man that is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and lay them up without the camp in a clean place, and it shall be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel for a water of separation: it is a purification for sin.**

**NUM 19:10 And he that gathereth the ashes of the heifer shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even: and it shall be unto the children of Israel, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among them, for a statute for ever.**

There are three persons who make contact with the heifer during this series of actions.

1. The priest who takes the heifer out of the camp.
2. The one that burns the heifer into ashes.
3. The one who gathers up the ashes.

All three of them become unclean and must remain outside the camp until evening.

**NUM 19:11 He that toucheth the dead body of any man shall be unclean seven days.**

The ones who touched either the heifer or that which was associated with her were only unclean for one day if they purified themselves.

In contrast, the one who had touched the dead body of a man was unclean for a seven day period, even when he had undergone the purification process. Does this tell us something about the seriousness of human spiritual contamination?

**NUM 19:12 He shall purify himself with it on the third day, and on the seventh day he shall be clean: but if he purify not himself the third day, then the seventh day he shall not be clean.**



The man who had become unclean through contact with a dead body was required to be purified twice, once on the third day after contamination, and then again on the seventh day.

**NUM 19:13 Whosoever toucheth the dead body of any man that is dead, and purifieth not himself, defileth the tabernacle of the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from Israel: because the water of separation was not sprinkled upon him, he shall be unclean; his uncleanness is yet upon him.**

The versions differ on the translation of the phrase “water of separation.” This is the one given by the King James Version. Some others call it the “water of purification.” Still others label it the “water for purification.” The water was intended to separate the polluted person and the uncleanness which had taken him. It was the water of purification because it resulted in the purification of the person who had been defiled. It was called water for purification because it was used to obtain the pure condition. The last of the three terms is a bit more accurate than the first two.

**NUM 19:14 This is the law, when a man dieth in a tent: all that come into the tent, and all that is in the tent, shall be unclean seven days.**

**NUM 19:15 And every open vessel, which hath no covering bound upon it, is unclean.**

**NUM 19:16 And whosoever toucheth one that is slain with a sword in the open fields, or a dead body, or a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days.**

Is this evidence that the purification was needed for physical contamination or for spiritual contamination? Did God place these procedures in place because He knew of the possibility of transfer of disease germs from the dead to the living? It would not surprise me if it was a combination of the two. Eternal death, or separation from God is the result of spiritual uncleanness if it is not removed. Physical death can also be caused by contact with the remains of one who died as a result of disease.

**NUM 19:17 And for an unclean person they shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of purification for sin, and running water shall be put thereto in a vessel:**

Contact with the dead rendered one unclean regardless of the reason for the death. That pollution remained until the person had been cleansed with the water from the ashes of the dead heifer. The ashes were mixed with fresh clean water to make the water for purification.

**NUM 19:18 And a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water, and sprinkle it upon the tent, and upon all the vessels, and upon the persons that were there, and upon him that touched a bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave:**

Someone who had not been polluted was to dip a branch of hyssop into the mixture and throw it upon the one who had been defiled. The word “sprinkled” is a little mild. The word throw is a better translation. It usually meant to throw a handful, or a bowlful of the material.

We may look with some degree of suspicion upon the practice of some religious orders today who dip the tips of their fingers in water, then snap their fingers to cause



a few drops to fall upon a person and consider this as baptism. By the way, the sprinkling which is done in the purification of the person becoming a Christian today is not done with water. It is the sprinkling of the blood of Christ upon the heart. (See Hebrews 10:22.)

Heb 10:22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

The body is washed in pure water, and the heart is sprinkled with the blood of the Saviour.

**NUM 19:19 And the clean person shall sprinkle upon the unclean on the third day, and on the seventh day: and on the seventh day he shall purify himself, and wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and shall be clean at even.**

The seventh verse above might leave room for only one purification which would take place on the third day. This verse leaves no doubt. There were two purifications, one on the third day and the other on the seventh. The individual who was being cleansed must on the seventh day take a bath, and wash his clothing. Only after both purifications had taken place, along with the bath and washing of the clothes, was the person clean.

**NUM 19:20 But the man that shall be unclean, and shall not purify himself, that soul shall be cut off from among the congregation, because he hath defiled the sanctuary of the LORD: the water of separation hath not been sprinkled upon him; he is unclean.**





How serious is failure to conform to the details of God's pattern for spiritual cleansing. It is serious enough that the person was to be isolated from the rest of the congregation. His polluted condition could spread to any others who associated with him. Sin is compared to leprosy. It is extremely contagious. It is very easy to become infected with sin by rubbing shoulders with others who have defiled souls.

**NUM 19:21 And it shall be a perpetual statute unto them, that he that sprinkleth the water of separation shall wash his clothes; and he that toucheth the water of separation shall be unclean until even.**

**NUM 19:22 And whatsoever the unclean person toucheth shall be unclean; and the soul that toucheth it shall be unclean until even.**

Bringing an unclean person into the camp did not result in the unclean person becoming pure without undergoing God's specified ceremony. But bringing a clean person into contact with that which was unclean could result in making the formerly clean to be unclean. It is wise to follow God's recipe and avoid every appearance of evil. Evil communications corrupt good manners. (I Cor. 15:33).



## Chapter 20

This is a chapter filled with sadness. It records the death of both Miriam and Aaron. It tells of further murmuring of the people of Israel, and of the terrible mistake made by Moses and Aaron as they reacted to that murmuring. Also included is the request to pass through the territory of Edom and the rejection of that request.

**NUM 20:1 Then came the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, into the desert of Zin in the first month: and the people abode in Kadesh; and Miriam died there, and was buried there.**

This verse leads some to think Israel had been scattered to some extent during the thirty-seven or thirty-eight years of wandering which took place after their defeat at Hormah. There is little doubt that they were led by the cloud and pillar of fire during those years. Therefore, they must have been concentrated to some degree or they would not all have followed the same cloud. The text is only telling us they were all present after the long period of time.

We should again remind ourselves that the use of the word “desert” does not imply conditions similar to what might exist in the Sahara. We tend to put the word desert together with the complaints over lack of water and visualize large expanses of sand and blistering heat. The word desert can refer to a deserted area with a lack of inhabitants. We must also remember that the amount of water needed by this very large number of humans and their livestock would make it necessary to have more than just an average number of springs, lakes and rivers. It is not surprising that they would suffer from water shortage.

Now we must take up the question as to their present

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location. Were they back at the same point where they were when the spies were sent out from Kadesh-Barnea, or is this a different spot? The difficulty in answering this question comes from the possibility that there were two different places called Kadesh. Also the area covered by Kadesh-Barnea, from which the spies were sent out may have been much more than some local village.

There are two wilderness areas which have names so nearly identical that it is possible for the modern reader to confuse them. One is the Wilderness of Sin. The other is the Wilderness of Zin. They are not the same. The Wilderness of Sin is in the extreme south of the Sinai Peninsula. The Wilderness of Zin is about two hundred miles to the northeast. The Wilderness of Zin is just southeast of the Dead Sea. The place called Hormah is almost directly west of the southern end of the Dead Sea.

There does not seem to be any good reason for suggesting a second Kadesh. The people were sentenced to their wandering while they were near Kadesh-Barnea. After those unpleasant years, God led them right back to the location from which they were sent out.

What a simple statement we have. "And Miriam died there, and was buried there." Miriam was the older sister of Moses who watched over him when he was laid in the reeds at the edge of the River in Egypt where Pharaoh's daughter found him and treated him as her own child. Miriam led the celebration when Israel escaped from the bondage of Egypt. Miriam is called a prophetess. It is true that she arose along with Aaron to dispute Moses leadership at one time. Yet she definitely held a place in the hearts of the people. Jehovah saw fit to tell of her death in one short sentence.

**NUM 20:2 And there was no water for the congregation: and they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron.**

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This gathering of the people to murmur against Moses and Aaron had happened before. It is recorded in the seventeenth chapter of Exodus. These are not the same event told by two different writers and combined into a single account. There are too many differences in the two records. The reader would be well advised to make a careful comparison between the two. It is important to note that Aaron's name is mentioned side by side with that of Moses in this verse under consideration. The punishment that was placed upon Aaron was severe, but we are to understand that Aaron was surely involved in the coming disobedience.

**NUM 20:3 And the people chode with Moses, and spake, saying, Would God that we had died when our brethren died before the LORD!**

This is no new song! It had been sung over and over again. Moses was tired of hearing it. The people wished to God that they had died with that fourteen thousand seven hundred who died in the plague at the hand of God's wrath.

**NUM 20:4 And why have ye brought up the congregation of the LORD into this wilderness, that we and our cattle should die there?**

**NUM 20:5 And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us in unto this evil place? it is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; neither is there any water to drink.**

Leadership is difficult and trying. Any father or mother can verify this statement. Any elder in a congregation of the church will agree. Leaders in business and athletic organizations know about the ingratitude of those they

lead, and the patience which is required.

Moses is taking the brunt of the people's dissatisfaction. They are convinced he and Aaron should be held accountable for their present condition. They are about to die. There is not water. There is no milk and honey. It is a hateful and miserable cemetery. They will surely die and be buried there!

**NUM 20:6 And Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and they fell upon their faces: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto them.**

The two leaders are again side by side as they flee from the assembly and prostrate themselves before God. As they fall upon their faces pleading for an answer to their difficulties, God's glory appears to them as it had done at other times. He will provide a solution.

**NUM 20:7 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 20:8 Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink.**

The rod was God's sign of authority. Through the power invested in it by Jehovah, Moses was capable of achieving results which would have been completely impossible without it. Moses and Aaron were to call the people together as witnesses of what was about to take place. Both of the brothers are still involved together.



Moses is commanded to speak to the rock before the people. When he does that, he is promised water will come forth from it in order that the thirst of both the people and the livestock will be satisfied.

Let us now consider what Moses was commanded to do in similar circumstances back in Exodus 17:

Exo 17:5 And the LORD said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go.

Exo 17:6 Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

First, we will note that the rod which Moses was to use at Horeb was his own rod which he had used to part the water and allow the people to pass through.. Second, we note that Moses was told to smite the rock. God promised that when Moses struck the rock, water would come forth. He did as God commanded and God kept His promise. I thus ask the present reader a very personal question. Would you have only spoken to the rock? Would you have only struck the rock? Would you have struck the rock and spoken to it?

I have heard numerous sermons based on Moses sin in striking the rock rather than speaking to it. He is criticized harshly for not obeying God's commands to the letter. I have wondered what the preacher would have done had he been in the same set of circumstances as was Moses. It is always wise to follow God's instructions precisely. Moses did not do that. He was told to speak to the rock. Instead, he spoke to the people. He was not told to smite the rock. He did smite it twice.

**NUM 20:9 And Moses took the rod from before the LORD, as he commanded him.**

**NUM 20:10 And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?**

**NUM 20:11 And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also.**

There are several possible reasons why Moses actions were not pleasing to Jehovah. Let us list a few.

1. He smote the rock, not just once but twice.
2. He may have been angry and shown temper.
3. He spoke to the people rather than the rock.

The next verse will make clear what one reason was for God's displeasure.

**NUM 20:12 And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.**

God explained that it was because of the unbelief of Moses and Aaron that He was ready to chastise them. They had not placed the honor where it belonged. It was God who would produce the water. It was not Moses and Aaron. If they had struck the rock a thousand times they would not have produced a drop of water. The people had shown a lack of belief in the power of God to care for their needs. Moses and Aaron had failed to give God the glory and the honor. As proof of this we turn to Psalm 106.32-33.





Psa 106:32 They angered him also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes:

Psa 106:33 Because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.

These two verses tell us it was what Moses said rather than what he did that caused God's wrath. What then was it that Moses spoke rashly or inadvisably with his lips. It was his statement,

“Must we get ye water, ye rebels.”

The striking of the rock may have been wrong also, but God certainly makes it clear through the words of the Psalm that the two leaders took glory which belonged to Him.

One last point must be made. The apostle Paul made reference to Jesus Christ as the rock which followed Israel in the wilderness. He spoke of them drinking from that spiritual Rock. Even though Moses was told to strike the rock when the water came forth that first time, he may have been wrong in smiting it the second time. Christ does not continue to be smitten for our sins. That came to an end when He was caught up to heaven to sit at God's right hand.

1Co 10:1 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;

1Co 10:2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

1Co 10:3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat;

1Co 10:4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

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**NUM 20:13 This is the water of Meribah; because the children of Israel strove with the LORD, and he was sanctified in them.**

Do not fail to notice that verse twelve says Moses and Aaron had not sanctified God. This present verse says God was sanctified. This is not a contradiction. Moses and Aaron did not give God the honor due Him. Nevertheless, when God produced the water and then punished Moses and Aaron for their pride God was sanctified in spite of them.

But the reader may ask, "What did Aaron do? He did not strike the rock. He did not add any words of pride to those which Moses spoke." Sometimes dear friends, silence is consent. Aaron could have intervened. He was side by side with his brother throughout the episode. He did not object.

The punishment may seem too great. These two men had suffered much at the hands of the unhappy people. Now because of just a few short minutes of carelessness, they were denied the satisfaction of leading Israel into that land God had promised. They would die in the wilderness.

God is not unjust. Moses was later seen on the Mount of Transfiguration with Elijah and the Lord Jesus Christ. Though he was punished in this life, it seems he did not lose the opportunity to be with the righteous in the afterlife.

We also make mistakes and sin in the sight of the Lord. We need to pray that He will be merciful and gracious, and that He will not cut us off from His presence in eternity.

**NUM 20:14 And Moses sent messengers from Kadesh unto the king of Edom, Thus saith thy brother Israel, Thou knowest all the travail that hath befallen us:**



The record changes direction at this point. The people are gathered at the border of Canaan once more as they had been when the spies were sent out. It is thirty-eight years later. They had wandered two years before the spies were sent out. The thirty-eight years after the spies reported make a total of forty years, one year for each day the spies inspected the land. What will they do this time?

Conditions are somewhat different. They desire this time to pass through the land of Edom where the people are also descendants of Abraham. From the message Moses sent to the king of Edom, it is evident that this king knew what had happened to Israel when they tried to enter Canaan the first time. Moses said, "Thou knowest all the travail that hath befallen us." He reminded Edom that Israel was their brother. The Edomites were descendants also of Esau. Jacob and Esau were brothers.

**NUM 20:15 How our fathers went down into Egypt, and we have dwelt in Egypt a long time; and the Egyptians vexed us, and our fathers:**

**NUM 20:16 And when we cried unto the LORD, he heard our voice, and sent an angel, and hath brought us forth out of Egypt: and, behold, we are in Kadesh, a city in the uttermost of thy border:**

**NUM 20:17 Let us pass, I pray thee, through thy country: we will not pass through the fields, or through the vineyards, neither will we drink of the water of the wells: we will go by the king's high way, we will not turn to the right hand nor to the left, until we have passed thy borders.**

Moses played on the sympathy of the king of Edom. Since Israel had suffered so long in their attempt to move into the land of Canaan he felt that the king would perhaps allow them to pass through Edom to enter Canaan.

Moses made a solemn promise. The people of Israel

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would not disturb the land. They would pass through on the king's highway without straying out into the countryside. Edom need not worry about being invaded and conquered.

**NUM 20:18 And Edom said unto him, Thou shalt not pass by me, lest I come out against thee with the sword.**

Apparently the appeal to their brotherhood did not have the effect Moses had hoped for. The old animosity between Jacob and Esau had not died. Moses was told not to cross the land of Edom unless he wished to face swords.

**NUM 20:19 And the children of Israel said unto him, We will go by the high way: and if I and my cattle drink of thy water, then I will pay for it: I will only, without doing any thing else, go through on my feet.**

Moses added another promise to the first one. If the people or the livestock drank the water of the land on their way through it would be paid for.

To say that the people would go through on their feet was to promise that they would not be riding war horses, or riding in chariots of war.

**NUM 20:20 And he said, Thou shalt not go through. And Edom came out against him with much people, and with a strong hand.**

**NUM 20:21 Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his border: wherefore Israel turned away from him.**



The king of Edom made is crystal clear that they were not to enter his territory. He assembled a military force to back up his denial. And so Israel decided to enter another way.

We are caused to wonder why they hesitated when they felt Jehovah was behind them. Had the grasshopper complex struck again? It may be that Israel had less hatred than Edom and did not wish to destroy their own kinfolk.

**NUM 20:22 And the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, journeyed from Kadesh, and came unto mount Hor.**

Mount Hor seems to have been on the east side of the land of Canaan. This would mean the journey mentioned above took them around the end of the dead sea and northward toward the land of Moab.

**NUM 20:23 And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in mount Hor, by the coast of the land of Edom, saying,**

**NUM 20:24 Aaron shall be gathered unto his people: for he shall not enter into the land which I have given unto the children of Israel, because ye rebelled against my word at the water of Meribah.**

Miriam had already died. God had promised that neither Aaron nor Moses would lead the people into the promised land. He now affirmed that promise and gave directions for carrying it out.

**NUM 20:25 Take Aaron and Eleazar his son, and bring them up unto mount Hor:**

Moses was to supervise the transfer of the High Priesthood from Aaron to his son Eleazar. This would take place on Mount Hor which was near the edge of the land of Edom, probably near the northern end.

**NUM 20:26 And strip Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his son: and Aaron shall be gathered unto his people, and shall die there.**

This stripping of Aaron's garments does not mean he was left bare of clothing. He had the majestic garments of his office removed. He was to be High Priest no longer. He would die in the wilderness as his people had done.

It is doubtful that this verse has anything to say about the details of life after death. This is not the same as those verses which speak of one sleeping with his fathers.

**NUM 20:27 And Moses did as the LORD commanded: and they went up into mount Hor in the sight of all the congregation.**

Moses, Aaron and Eleazar went up the side of the mountain together. There is no reason to think Aaron made any objection to the will of God. He was ready to obey.

Don't worry about whether or not two million people could all get close enough to watch these three climb the mountain. That is not the point. The people could see the three move upward. It was not a secret.

**NUM 20:28 And Moses stripped Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his son; and Aaron died there in the top of the mount: and Moses and Eleazar came down from the mount.**



The garments were removed from Aaron and transferred to his son Eleazar. Aaron died on the mountain, never to enter Canaan.

**NUM 20:29 And when all the congregation saw that Aaron was dead, they mourned for Aaron thirty days, even all the house of Israel.**

Is this not a surprise. Repeatedly the congregation had bitterly complained about the leadership of both Moses and Aaron. Now that they knew Aaron was dead, they mourned over his death for a whole month.

It is much easier to remember the good that men have done after their death than it is during their lifetime. It is evident after Aaron's death that the hatred was not as deep as the people had made it appear.





## *Chapter 21*

This chapter has several fairly clear subdivisions. First, we have the conflict with Arad. This is followed by the episode of the fiery serpents. Then a list of several encampment sites is given. The chapter concludes with jubilation over the victory against Og and Sihon in Amorite territory.

While the subdivisions of the chapter are quite clear, there is a great deal of uncertainty with respect to the precise location of many of the sites mentioned. For example, the first verse gives us the name “Arad.” It is not certain whether this word is the name of the king, or the name of a territory over which a king reigned.

**NUM 21:1 And when king Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south, heard tell that Israel came by the way of the spies; then he fought against Israel, and took some of them prisoners.**

Israel had been defeated at Hormah some thirty-eight years previous to the happenings of this present chapter. They had decided too invade Canaan without the support of the Lord. They were soundly defeated and were sentenced to the long period of wilderness wandering. Now they have returned to the same territory. The phrase “by way of the spies refers to the former attempt to search out the land for possible entry.

King Arad is very likely a minor power, but was able to take some of the people captive. They may have been on the outskirts of the camp and vulnerable to attack .

**NUM 21:2 And Israel vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will utterly destroy their cities.**



Israel reacted properly this time as they went to Jehovah and requested assistance. If God would help them to overcome those who opposed their entry into Canaan they would completely destroy the opposing cities.

The original Hebrew here hints that any spoils taken would be dedicated to the Lord. The cities would be destroyed and the people would not use the spoils for personal advantage.

**NUM 21:3 And the LORD hearkened to the voice of Israel, and delivered up the Canaanites; and they utterly destroyed them and their cities: and he called the name of the place Hormah.**

God reacted positively to their request and allowed them to defeat their opponents. They kept their vow and utterly destroyed the Canaanite cities.

This is an appropriate time to attend to the critics who deplore the ethics of Israel when they invaded land which was already inhabited and wreaked destruction on those who lived there. The critics ask, "Why did the Lord allow such slaughter? Is this the attitude of a just and righteous God?" God does provide an answer to that question.

These enemies had despised the name of the Lord and rejected his will. They worshipped false gods and could well turn Israel away from paths of righteousness. ( See Deuteronomy 7:6-16.)

Deu 7:6 For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.

Deu 7:7 The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people:



Deu 7:8 But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

Deu 7:9 Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations;

Deu 7:10 And repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face.

Deu 7:11 Thou shalt therefore keep the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which I command thee this day, to do them.

Deu 7:12 Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep, and do them, that the LORD thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which he sware unto thy fathers:

Deu 7:13 And he will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee: he will also bless the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep, in the land which he sware unto thy fathers to give thee.

Deu 7:14 Thou shalt be blessed above all people: there shall not be male or female barren among you, or among your cattle.

Deu 7:15 And the LORD will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee; but will lay them upon all them that hate thee.

Deu 7:16 And thou shalt consume all the people which the LORD thy God shall deliver thee; thine eye shall have no pity upon them: neither shalt thou serve their gods; for that will be a snare unto thee.



**NUM 21:4 And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way.**

The land of Edom was at the southern end of the Dead Sea. God had warned His people not to fight with the Edomites. They were related to one another. Therefore they avoided passing through Edom and went around it.

This was not an easy journey. The path of travel was hard and the people once again murmured against both the Lord and Moses.

**NUM 21:5 And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread.**

The hardships of the past in Egypt, which they had left behind, were ignored when compared with the trials of the present journey. There was still a shortage of water and they had reached the point where the manna which had been provided for them had become extremely distasteful.

The words which has been translated as “light bread” could have been even more intense than our English word “light.” Language students tell us it could mean vile, contemptible, worthless, or miserable. To say the least, they hated it.

**NUM 21:6 And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died.**



In return, Jehovah did not like their attitude. As a punishment, and a means of teaching them a lesson in gratitude, He sent fiery serpents into their midst. These serpents may have been called fiery because of their color. They may also have been called fiery because of the burning effect of their bites. A large number of the people actually died as a result.

**NUM 21:7 Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people.**

Now that the bites of the fiery serpents were worse than the hatred of the manna which God had provided, they came to Moses and pleaded with him to intercede for them that the plague might be taken away. It is to Moses credit that he did as they asked. He had already been told he could not lead the people into the promised land. He could have ignored their request. His prayer is a sign of greatness.

**NUM 21:8 And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.**

We have come now to one of the most difficult portions of the Biblical text. God told Moses to make a model of a fiery serpent and set it upon a pole where anyone who chose to look upon it could do so. When the one who had been bitten looked upon the model serpent, he would not die. What possible explanation can be had for using a serpent as a means of healing? After all the Devil himself



is referred to again and again in the scriptures as the serpent. There is an answer!

**NUM 21:9 And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.**

Moses did as the Lord commanded him and made a serpent of brass. The brass may have imitated the color of the fiery serpents. Copper is an ingredient of brass and copper is found in the area through which they were passing.

Now let us consider God's choice of a serpent as a means of healing the sinful souls of the people. First of all, I wish to remind you that the present emblem of medical doctors is a serpent twined around a pole. There is no doubt that this emblem was chosen because of the experience of Israel.

Most commentators have failed to grasp the deep meaning which is present here. I highly commend Burton Coffman for having discovered that meaning. (See his commentary Vol. 3 on Leviticus and Numbers.)

The explanation is found in the following passages..

Joh 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

Joh 3:15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

Joh 12:32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

Joh 12:33 This he said, signifying what death he should die.



The all knowing God could see the end from the beginning. The plan of salvation had already been drawn up in His mind. Sin was the most deadly thing in all creation. The only thing which was precious enough to cancel it out was the life of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

But God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16).

Yes, the Devil is called the serpent. But when Jesus was placed on the cross He took upon Himself the sins of every man who would believe on Him and obey His Word. He became sin that we might live. Take note of the following.

2Co 5:21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

1Pe 2:24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

**NUM 21:10 And the children of Israel set forward, and pitched in Oboth.**

**NUM 21:11 And they journeyed from Oboth, and pitched at Ijeabarim, in the wilderness which is before Moab, toward the sunrising.**

**NUM 21:12 From thence they removed, and pitched in the valley of Zared.**

As Israel moved past the south of the Dead Sea and made the detour around the Edomite territory and began to move northward on the east side of the sea, they passed through several sites which are almost impossible to

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pinpoint. Verse twenty-one reveals that they were east of Moab. Moab lies on the east border of the Dead Sea just north of Edom. Their travels are carrying them steadily northward after having gone around the land of Edom.

**NUM 21:13 From thence they removed, and pitched on the other side of Arnon, which is in the wilderness that cometh out of the coasts of the Amorites: for Arnon is the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites.**

The Arnon waterway separates Moab from the Amorite and Ammonite land to the north of it and on the east side of the Dead Sea.

**NUM 21:14 Wherefore it is said in the book of the wars of the LORD, What he did in the Red sea, and in the brooks of Arnon,**

All we know about the book of the wars of the Lord is that Moses quoted from it to produce this verse of scripture. There are numerous smaller streams which feed the main Arnon.

**NUM 21:15 And at the stream of the brooks that goeth down to the dwelling of Ar, and lieth upon the border of Moab.**

**NUM 21:16 And from thence they went to Beer: that is the well whereof the LORD spake unto Moses, Gather the people together, and I will give them water.**

The word “Beer” means well. It is found as a part of the name of several villages such as Beersheba. Jehovah was continuing to provide for the needs of His people, even though they hardly deserved it because of their complaining.



**NUM 21:17 Then Israel sang this song, Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it:**

**NUM 21:18 The princes digged the well, the nobles of the people digged it, by the direction of the lawgiver, with their staves. And from the wilderness they went to Mattanah:**

This time, for a change, Israel was grateful. They began to sing with joy as the water came forth. Moses had relayed God's will to the leaders or princes of the people. The princes may not have dug the well personally, but they certainly saw that the digging was done. Things were getting just a little bit more pleasant.

**NUM 21:19 And from Mattanah to Nahaliel: and from Nahaliel to Bamoth:**

**NUM 21:20 And from Bamoth in the valley, that is in the country of Moab, to the top of Pisgah, which looketh toward Jeshimon.**

The people had come to the northern edge of Moabite territory. As they found themselves in the high country, they could look down from Mount Pisgah upon the land of the Amorites to the northwest of them.

**NUM 21:21 And Israel sent messengers unto Sihon king of the Amorites, saying,**

**NUM 21:22 Let me pass through thy land: we will not turn into the fields, or into the vineyards; we will not drink of the waters of the well: but we will go along by the king's high way, until we be past thy borders.**

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When they courteously requested permission to pass through the land of the Amorites, King Sihon rejected their plea. They had promised they would not harm the land if they were allowed to pass through. Nor would they drink any of the precious well water controlled by those people.

Do not form a vision of a modern paved highway when the “king’s highway” is mentioned. It was more likely a well worn passage used by a host of the citizens of the land.

**NUM 21:23 And Sihon would not suffer Israel to pass through his border: but Sihon gathered all his people together, and went out against Israel into the wilderness: and he came to Jahaz, and fought against Israel.**

It was a reasonable request which Israel made. However, it is possible to see why Sihon might resist their passage through the countryside over which he ruled. Six hundred thousand soldiers, plus their wives and children, could pose a serious threat to his position. Rather than give permission, Sihon decided to fight.

**NUM 21:24 And Israel smote him with the edge of the sword, and possessed his land from Arnon unto Jabbok, even unto the children of Ammon: for the border of the children of Ammon was strong.**

It would have been far better for Sihon if he had agreed to the request to pass through his land. The result of his resistance was that he lost practically all of that land. Both the Ammonites and the Amorites dwelt in the land between the streams of Arnon and Jabbok.

**NUM 21:25** And Israel took all these cities: and Israel dwelt in all the cities of the Amorites, in Heshbon, and in all the villages thereof.

**NUM 21:26** For Heshbon was the city of Sihon the king of the Amorites, who had fought against the former king of Moab, and taken all his land out of his hand, even unto Arnon.

Heshbon appears to have been the city from which King Sihon ruled. Sihon seems to have obtained this land by having previously defeated the king of Moab

**NUM 21:27** Wherefore they that speak in proverbs say, Come into Heshbon, let the city of Sihon be built and prepared:

These proverbs were apparently expressed in song. There was great joy among God's people as a result of the victory over King Sihon and the Amorites.

**NUM 21:28** For there is a fire gone out of Heshbon, a flame from the city of Sihon: it hath consumed Ar of Moab, and the lords of the high places of Arnon.

**NUM 21:29** Woe to thee, Moab! thou art undone, O people of Chemosh: he hath given his sons that escaped, and his daughters, into captivity unto Sihon king of the Amorites.

**NUM 21:30** We have shot at them; Heshbon is perished even unto Dibon, and we have laid them waste even unto Nophah, which reacheth unto Medeba.

**NUM 21:31** Thus Israel dwelt in the land of the Amorites.

Israel was beginning to realize the promise of Jehovah



that they would come into a land prepared for them. Although Moses had looked out from Mount Pisgah and viewed the land west of the Jordan, He was not allowed to lead the people in the conquest of the area which is known as the heart of the promised land. Reuben, Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh did settle east of the Jordan, but Moses only caught sight of the land west of the River. He did not enter it.

**NUM 21:32 And Moses sent to spy out Jaazer, and they took the villages thereof, and drove out the Amorites that were there.**

**NUM 21:33 And they turned and went up by the way of Bashan: and Og the king of Bashan went out against them, he, and all his people, to the battle at Edrei.**

Bashan lay to the north of the Amorite country. It was ruled by a giant named Og. After having overcome the land of the Amorites and Ammonites, Moses led the people against Og. This king decided to fight rather than surrender. Would Og and his people succeed in defeating Israel?

**NUM 21:34 And the LORD said unto Moses, Fear him not: for I have delivered him into thy hand, and all his people, and his land; and thou shalt do to him as thou didst unto Sihon king of the Amorites, which dwelt at Heshbon.**

**NUM 21:35 So they smote him, and his sons, and all his people, until there was none left him alive: and they possessed his land.**

Moses was assured by God that Israel need not fear King Og and his people. He would be with them and deliver

them to Moses. God was true to His promise and allowed Israel to defeat King Og.

Thus the land east of the Jordan was delivered into the hands of Israel. It would not be long before God's people would cross the Jordan and begin their conquest of the land between the Jordan and the Mediterranean. There were, however, a few disappointments in Israel's behavior before that time.



## *Chapter 22*

**NUM 22:1 And the children of Israel set forward, and pitched in the plains of Moab on this side Jordan by Jericho.**

The children of Israel had been told not to attack Edom. Edom was situated to the south of the Dead Sea. They had obeyed the voice of Jehovah and had circled around Edom and were at this time just northeast of Edom on the southeastern coast of the Sea. This was land inhabited by the Moabites. Just across the Jordan River was the city of Jericho.

**NUM 22:2 And Balak the son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites.**

**NUM 22:3 And Moab was sore afraid of the people, because they were many: and Moab was distressed because of the children of Israel.**

The entire region was becoming aware of the success of Israel thus far. They had defeated the Amorites and now they had moved into territory inhabited by the Moabites. The King of Moab was very much concerned about the vast numbers of the Israelites. He was persuaded that something must be done.

**NUM 22:4 And Moab said unto the elders of Midian, Now shall this company lick up all that are round about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field. And Balak the son of Zippor was king of the Moabites at that time.**

The land of the Midianites lay somewhat south of



Moab and Edom. Balak, who was king of the Moabites felt it necessary to make contact with the influential men of Midian in order that together they might defend themselves against an invasion by this host which was now becoming established in what they considered their properties.

**NUM 22:5 He sent messengers therefore unto Balaam the son of Beor to Pethor, which is by the river of the land of the children of his people, to call him, saying, Behold, there is a people come out from Egypt: behold, they cover the face of the earth, and they abide over against me:**

Balaam lived in the region of Mesopotamia. This was the region in which Abraham had lived. It was some distance to the northeast of Canaan. It is apparent that Balaam had developed a reputation for being able to bless or to curse others. Balak decided to enlist Balaam's powers to ward off the perceived threat of this host which had come into the land from Egypt. There were so many of them that they "covered the face of the earth." He felt he needed help from more powerful sources than he had available to him.

**NUM 22:6 Come now therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people; for they are too mighty for me: peradventure I shall prevail, that we may smite them, and that I may drive them out of the land: for I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed.**

Balak was ready to take the chance that Balaam could call upon that which is more powerful than man to protect the Moabites from being overrun by Israel. Since it come to his ears that Balaam could pronounce either blessings



or cursings on others, Balak thought he could possibly see a solution to his fears.

**NUM 22:7 And the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian departed with the rewards of divination in their hand; and they came unto Balaam, and spake unto him the words of Balak.**

Balak's efforts to obtain help from the Midianites was successful. Both Moab and Midian sent offers of reward to Balaam if he would curse Israel. They did not consider the possibility that the unlimited power of Jehovah might dwarf their combined strength..

**NUM 22:8 And he said unto them, Lodge here this night, and I will bring you word again, as the LORD shall speak unto me: and the princes of Moab abode with Balaam.**

Balaam had apparently been in the habit of consulting God before he took action in blessing and cursing. He did so this time. It is somewhat surprising that God worked through him at all. He later lost his life when he allied himself with those who ignored the will of God. At this point, however, he told his guests that he would have to consult with the Lord before taking any action.

**NUM 22:9 And God came unto Balaam, and said, What men are these with thee?**

God did not have to ask Balaam who the men were who had come to him. God was using this method as a means of bringing Balaam to an understanding of just what it was he was being asked to do.



**NUM 22:10 And Balaam said unto God, Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, hath sent unto me, saying,**

**NUM 22:11 Behold, there is a people come out of Egypt, which covereth the face of the earth: come now, curse me them; peradventure I shall be able to overcome them, and drive them out.**

Balaam explained his line of thought to the Lord. A vast number of people had come from the land of Egypt and were ready to enter the land of Moab. Balaam had been asked to curse them and provide supernatural assistance in driving Israel out of the territory.

Balaam was doing the right thing by searching out the will of Jehovah. The question then became a matter of whether or not the promised reward would have more influence than any words God might speak in discouragement of this cursing.

**NUM 22:12 And God said unto Balaam, Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people: for they are blessed.**

God made it crystal clear where He stood on the issue. Balaam was not to return to Moab with the messengers. Balaam was not to curse Israel.

**NUM 22:13 And Balaam rose up in the morning, and said unto the princes of Balak, Get you into your land: for the LORD refuseth to give me leave to go with you.**

Balaam is due a certain amount of credit here for paying at least temporary attention to what God had told him. He told Balak's princes to go back home. God had said NO!

**NUM 22:14 And the princes of Moab rose up, and they went unto Balak, and said, Balaam refuseth to come with us.**

**NUM 22:15 And Balak sent yet again princes, more, and more honourable than they.**

Everything was going fine up to this point. The messengers to Balaam returned to Balak and reported that he would not come.

The opposers of God's people do not usually give up easily. Balak saw Israel as a threat. He was not yet ready to abandon his effort. He would up his offer! By sending more prestigious messengers he might be able to build up Balaam's pride. But, that was not all. He had not played his entire hand as yet.

**NUM 22:16 And they came to Balaam, and said to him, Thus saith Balak the son of Zippor, Let nothing, I pray thee, hinder thee from coming unto me:**

**NUM 22:17 For I will promote thee unto very great honour, and I will do whatsoever thou sayest unto me: come therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people.**

The messengers were sent back and told to promise Balaam even greater rewards than had been offered before. Balak would see that Balaam received a place of extremely high honor if he would come and curse Israel. In fact, Balak almost told Balaam he could set his own price.

**NUM 22:18 And Balaam answered and said unto the servants of Balak, If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the LORD my God, to do less or more.**



Balaam's words sound very convincing. There are some things money should not be able to buy. Ignoring the will of God is one of those things. It is far better to be an humble servant of God and obey His word than it is to be a multibillionaire and oppose the Creator of heaven and earth.

**NUM 22:19 Now therefore, I pray you, tarry ye also here this night, that I may know what the LORD will say unto me more.**

It would have been far better for Balaam if he had repeated his firm words to the messengers the first time. Go home. God said NO!

He did not do that. He could see silver and gold floating within reach. He could also see himself arrayed in fine clothing and sitting in a seat of high honor. He would go back and see if God would change His mind.

**NUM 22:20 And God came unto Balaam at night, and said unto him, If the men come to call thee, rise up, and go with them; but yet the word which I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou do.**

God might just as well have said, "If you go you are asking for trouble. I will not prevent you from going. But, I will block you from placing a curse upon my people.

**NUM 22:21 And Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab.**

**NUM 22:22 And God's anger was kindled because he went: and the angel of the LORD stood in the way for an adversary against him. Now he was riding upon his ass, and his two servants were with him.**



Balaam still did not see the seriousness of placing a reward of silver and gold, plus a place of high honor above obeying Jehovah. He went!

God was burning with anger that Balaam would consider cursing Israel. He could have caused the man to die on the spot. He did not. He sent an angel to convince Balaam to change his mind about going. The angel was invisible to Balaam, but the ass upon which he rode was able to see it. The angel was standing directly in the way of their travel.

**NUM 22:23 And the ass saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and the ass turned aside out of the way, and went into the field: and Balaam smote the ass, to turn her into the way.**

Men sometimes speak of a person being as dumb as a “jackass.” The animal upon which Balaam was riding is given a feminine name. I will invite the reader to decide what one might call a female donkey. The point which needs to be made here is that the animal made better decisions than Balaam had made. It would have turned back. Balaam was determined to move forward. He struck the donkey and she began to move forward again.

**NUM 22:24 But the angel of the LORD stood in a path of the vineyards, a wall being on this side, and a wall on that side.**

**NUM 22:25 And when the ass saw the angel of the LORD, she thrust herself unto the wall, and crushed Balaam’s foot against the wall: and he smote her again.**

The angel of the Lord went on ahead and stopped in a pathway between two walls. The donkey saw the angel and in trying to avoid making contact, it crushed Balaam's foot against one of the walls standing on both sides of the path. Rather than turn back, Balaam beat the donkey again. By this time he was absolutely determined to obtain the reward for cursing Israel.

**NUM 22:26 And the angel of the LORD went further, and stood in a narrow place, where was no way to turn either to the right hand or to the left.**

This third time the angel found a place where it was impossible for the animal to pass through beside it. There would be a collision if this was attempted. Angels of the Lord are not the type of entity which either man or beast desires to collide with. An angel of the Lord killed 185,000 Assyrians in a single night (2 Kings 19:35).

**NUM 22:27 And when the ass saw the angel of the LORD, she fell down under Balaam: and Balaam's anger was kindled, and he smote the ass with a staff.**

We can only imagine Balaam's wrath. Over and over we have heard the phrase "stubborn as a donkey." Balaam must have thought he had one which fit the saying. He proceeded to beat the animal again.

**NUM 22:28 And the LORD opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times?**

**NUM 22:29 And Balaam said unto the ass, Because thou hast mocked me: I would there were a sword in mine hand, for now would I kill thee.**



Now we have a couple of serious questions. Can animals see angels when men cannot see them? Is it possible for a donkey to speak in words which are understandable by a man?

In almost every case the answer to both of these questions would be “No.” Critics of the Bible are quick to ridicule the Biblical record when such events as these are included. That is not wise. If God can create men who speak, He can also cause a donkey to speak. If God desires that a donkey be enabled to see an angel, that can be done. The laws of nature were put in place by God. He can modify them in any way He pleases, and at any time He chooses.

**NUM 22:30 And the ass said unto Balaam, Am not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since I was thine unto this day? was I ever wont to do so unto thee? And he said, Nay.**

Now we follow a running conversation between Balaam and his donkey. Let me explain first that I am using the word “donkey” because the word “ass” has taken on a different set of meanings than it had when the King James Version of the Bible was written. I prefer to use the word “donkey” to avoid turning the reader’s mind in directions God did not intend.

The donkey suddenly asked if Balaam had a right to treat it in such way. Had it not been faithful to him at all times? Balaam very honestly replied that it had been faithful.

**NUM 22:31 Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and he bowed down his head, and fell flat on his face.**

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Balaam was in for a shock. He was about to see that which he had not seen before. The things which are concealed belong to God. The things which are revealed belong to man. There is no doubt much truth which is known in high places which is not known in the human realm. Balaam was about to find that out.

When Balaam was enabled to see the angel standing in the way, he realized just how foolish he had been. His donkey knew more about what was going on than he did. The angel was not only standing in the pathway. He had a drawn sword capable of ending the prophet's life.

It was this present writer's privilege to visit the land of Palestine some years ago. One of the most memorable sights was not the place where we were told Jesus had been baptized. It was the sight of a large number of grown men bowed down with their knees on the ground and bent over until their foreheads also touched the earth. Balaam was so humbled that he fell flat on his face.

**NUM 22:32 And the angel of the LORD said unto him, Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? behold, I went out to withstand thee, because thy way is perverse before me:**

**NUM 22:33 And the ass saw me, and turned from me these three times: unless she had turned from me, surely now also I had slain thee, and saved her alive.**

The angel then revealed to Balaam what had been going on in such way that he could not observe it. The angel was standing in the way in order that Balaam might not continue on a path that was opposed to the will of God. The donkey had been right. Balaam had been wrong!

**NUM 22:34 And Balaam said unto the angel of**





**the LORD, I have sinned; for I knew not that thou stoodest in the way against me: now therefore, if it displease thee, I will get me back again.**

Balaam was much impressed. He uttered those three words which are so difficult for many to speak. "I have sinned." He also offered to immediately turn back and return home. If God was displeased, he needed to change direction.

**NUM 22:35 And the angel of the LORD said unto Balaam, Go with the men: but only the word that I shall speak unto thee, that thou shalt speak. So Balaam went with the princes of Balak.**

The angel replied that if Balaam was so determined to go to Balak, he would be allowed to go. However, He would not be able to curse Israel. He would be restrained from saying anything with which God was not in accord. Balaam went.

**NUM 22:36 And when Balak heard that Balaam was come, he went out to meet him unto a city of Moab, which is in the border of Arnon, which is in the utmost coast.**

Balaam was coming from the region of Mesopotamia to the northeast of Canaan. Balak did not wait for him to come all the way. He decided to go and meet him. The river Arnon was on the northern border of Moab.

**NUM 22:37 And Balak said unto Balaam, Did I not earnestly send unto thee to call thee? wherefore camest thou not unto me? am I not able indeed to promote thee to honour?**



Balak wanted to know why Balaam had not come more quickly. Did Balaam doubt that Balak could offer a sufficient reward? The implication was that if Balaam would curse Israel, Balak had the power to assign him a position of great prestige.

**NUM 22:38 And Balaam said unto Balak, Lo, I am come unto thee: have I now any power at all to say any thing? the word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak.**

Balaam explained the situation to Balak. He could not say just anything he chose to say. God would use his mouth just as convincingly as He had used the mouth of the donkey. He would only be able to say that which God approved. We know more about what Balaam was about to say than Balaam did.

**NUM 22:39 And Balaam went with Balak, and they came unto Kirjathhuzoth.**

**NUM 22:40 And Balak offered oxen and sheep, and sent to Balaam, and to the princes that were with him.**

Balak did not begin to understand the situation. He thought all that was necessary was for him to outline the task and watch Balaam earn silver, gold and high honor as a reward for cursing God's people.

**NUM 22:41 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Balak took Balaam, and brought him up into the high places of Baal, that thence he might see the utmost part of the people.**

And so Balak led Balaam to an elevated area where he could see the multitude of the Israelites. It just so happened to also be some of the places where the people of Moab worshipped the false god Baal. Now the question is, “What is going to happen?” What will pass Balaam’s lips when he sets out to make a pronouncement concerning the people of Israel?



## *Chapter 23*

**NUM 23:1 And Balaam said unto Balak, Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven oxen and seven rams.**

If Balaam had been wise he would never have allowed himself to be found in his present position. You do not do business with one who desires that you place obstacles in the way of the people of God.

The fact that Balaam chose to offer seven oxen and seven rams upon seven altars was not a happenstance. Throughout the Holy Scriptures the number seven is given special respect. God created the heavens and the earth in six days and then rested on the seventh. The seventh month of the year was a very special month in that it was a month in which feasts were observed.

This was not just true of the religion of Jehovah. It was also true of Baal worship. Balaam wished to please Jehovah, but he was on one of the high places where Baal was worshipped at that time. He might just have felt that he would be able to please Jehovah and Baal simultaneously. It does not seem to have been a problem with him to serve both Baal and Yahweh.

**NUM 23:2 And Balak did as Balaam had spoken; and Balak and Balaam offered on every altar a bullock and a ram.**

From a human standpoint, this would have been a very impressive ceremony. Each of seven altars were sending up the odor of a roasted bullock and a roasted ram. Burnt offerings were wholly dedicated to the diety which was the object of the worship. In some cases a part of the animal was eaten by the one making the sacrifice and the rest



was offered on the altar. This was not the case with the burnt offering.

**NUM 23:3 And Balaam said unto Balak, Stand by thy burnt offering, and I will go: peradventure the LORD will come to meet me: and whatsoever he sheweth me I will tell thee. And he went to an high place.**

Balaam did not promise that he would receive a set of directions for cursing Israel. He limited his promise to relating what Jehovah revealed to him. He did not even promise for certain that God would respond to the sacrifice. He made it a “Perhaps.”

**NUM 23:4 And God met Balaam: and he said unto him, I have prepared seven altars, and I have offered upon every altar a bullock and a ram.**

God did respond. He spoke to Balaam at the high place to which Balaam had gone while Balak was offering the burnt offerings. However, Balaam spoke first. He pointed out to Jehovah that this most impressive set of sacrifices had been made. Surely Jehovah would have some word of response.

**NUM 23:5 And the LORD put a word in Balaam’s mouth, and said, Return unto Balak, and thus thou shalt speak.**

The reader might wish to notice that Balaam did not remain at the location where Balak offered his sacrifices. He separated himself from Balak and apparently went to either another high place or one which was even higher than the one where the sacrifices had been made.



God told Balaam precisely what he was to say to Balak when he returned to where the king was waiting.

**NUM 23:6 And he returned unto him, and, lo, he stood by his burnt sacrifice, he, and all the princes of Moab.**

Balak was not alone when the sacrifices were made. He had the company of many dignitaries of the Moabites. The entire group were in for a sizable shock.

**NUM 23:7 And he took up his parable, and said, Balak the king of Moab hath brought me from Aram, out of the mountains of the east, saying, Come, curse me Jacob, and come, defy Israel.**

The verses before us now are said to be a parable. They are written in poetic form in the Hebrew. They are not a parable in the same sense as the parables of Jesus. They do contain very strong truth placed in a majestic pattern.

**NUM 23:8 How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy, whom the LORD hath not defied?**

Balaam was not to offer words that would comfort Balak. He was to explain that Jehovah was on the side of the people of Israel. Balaam was not to oppose that which God wished to move forward.

**NUM 23:9 For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.**



The people of Israel could be easily seen from the high places where Balaam and Balak were looking down. They were a special people for whom God had special plans. No other nation was to be compared with them. Jehovah would cause them to be unique among the other peoples of the world.

**NUM 23:10 Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!**

The promise of an abundance of descendents had been made to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. They would become so numerous that one could not more count them than one could count the grains of dust.

This may seem strange to the reader in view of the fact that later counts of the people of Israel were taken and recorded. We must remember, however, that Israel was not just fleshly. Those who have circumcised their hearts and become followers of Christ and children of God are recognized as spiritual Israel. I ask the reader, "Could you count Israel? Could any man or woman?"

Balaam did not wish to defy the will of God by pronouncing a curse on Israel. He wished to die as a righteous man and meet his Lord as Jacob did. It would have been far better if he had maintained this conviction. He did not!

**NUM 23:11 And Balak said unto Balaam, What hast thou done unto me? I took thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast blessed them altogether.**



Balak was absolutely astonished. He had gone to much trouble to bring a curse upon that mass of people who could be seen down below. It appears that he was accustomed to having people follow his desires. This was hard to believe. Balaam had actually pronounced a blessing rather than a curse.

**NUM 23:12 And he answered and said, Must I not take heed to speak that which the LORD hath put in my mouth?**

This was a very wise saying. If Balaam had followed his own statement. Later we find him fighting against God and God's people. He may not have truly felt what he was saying even at this time.

God has today declared His will through the written word found in the Holy Bible. There are those who feel free to modify it from the pulpit when they find it convenient. Let us preach that which God has put in our mouth.

**NUM 23:13 And Balak said unto him, Come, I pray thee, with me unto another place, from whence thou mayest see them: thou shalt see but the utmost part of them, and shalt not see them all: and curse me them from thence.**

Since things did not go as Balak desired this first time, perhaps a different view of what was below would allow Balaam to curse Israel. It might be that if he could not see all of them at one time, he would be more cooperative. It might be that he was intimidated by the massive numbers.

**NUM 23:14 And he brought him into the field of Zophim, to the top of Pisgah, and built seven altars, and offered a bullock and a ram on every altar.**

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Balaam was caught in the trap of his own hunger for reward. It could be that if they went to another location and repeated the bullock and ram offerings on seven different altars the reward could still be his. He should have learned his lesson by this time. Does one prosper more by pursuing selfish ends, or does he prosper more by hearing and obeying the will of Jehovah? Balaam would find out later. (See Jude 1:11.)

Jud 1:11 Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.

**NUM 23:15 And he said unto Balak, Stand here by thy burnt offering, while I meet the Lord yonder.**

**NUM 23:16 And the LORD met Balaam, and put a word in his mouth, and said, Go again unto Balak, and say thus.**

Balaam wanted that reward very badly. If Balak would stand where the Lord could see that he had made such a bounteous offering it was possible that this might alter His willingness to allow a curse to be placed upon the people of Israel.

Now God's people were not perfect. They left much to be desired. Still, He had plans which were to be carried out through them. His Son Jesus Christ would be born into the world to make a way for the forgiveness of sins. Balaam was to go back to Balak and give him a "Thus saith the Lord."

**NUM 23:17 And when he came to him, behold, he stood by his burnt offering, and the princes of Moab with him. And Balak said unto him, What hath the LORD spoken?**



Balak had been waiting anxiously for the approval of a curse upon the feared masses of Israel gathered in the lowlands before him. He expected a quite different reply to his question this time. What answer had Balaam received?

**NUM 23:18 And he took up his parable, and said, Rise up, Balak, and hear; hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor:**

**NUM 23:19 God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?**

Balak did not hear that which his ear longed for. He was informed that Jehovah does not make a statement and then act as if He has not made it. Men may lie and ignore their promises and threats. The Lord does not. When He makes a promise, it will be kept. Balak should have learned not to keep on trying when God had spoken.

**NUM 23:20 Behold, I have received commandment to bless: and he hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it.**

Balaam had no right whatsoever to reverse God's clear command. Israel was to be blessed, not cursed. The man who attempts to fight against the Word of the Living God is headed for tremendous disappointment.

**NUM 23:21 He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel: the LORD his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them.**



This verse does not mean God had never known the descendants of Jacob to sin. They had done so many times. The point being made is that they had not reached such a state that He was ready to give up on them and implement his plan for the redemption of sinners through some other channel.

Who is this King about which Balaam says a shout is heard? He is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. No one can successfully oppose him. He had not yet been born into the world in fleshly form, but He had been a part of the Godhead from before the world began. Since God is on the side of Israel, it is futile to curse them.

**NUM 23:22 God brought them out of Egypt; he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn.**

**NUM 23:23 Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought!**

The unicorn of Aesop's fables is a fictitious animal. The beast which is spoken of in verse twenty-two is not a horse with a horn on it's nose. There is a very strong animal which does have a horn on it's nose and is tremendously strong. That animal is the rhinoceros. Whatever the animal referred to above, it is evident that it possessed extreme power. Through the centuries Israel would be recognized as a people through whom the All Powerful Creator of heaven and earth operated. No divination or enchantments of any kind could match His power. Balak was making a bad mistake.

**NUM 23:24 Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion: he shall not lie down until he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain.**



When the lion of the jungle roars the lesser beasts tremble in fear. He is not to be stopped until he has successfully overcome his foe. Israel would ultimately defeat all opposition.

**NUM 23:25 And Balak said unto Balaam, Neither curse them at all, nor bless them at all.**

Balak found his efforts were doing more to damage his cause than to support it. If Balaam found it impossible to curse Israel it would be better if he did not say anything. Most certainly Balak did not want Israel encouraged or supported by divine power.

**NUM 23:26 But Balaam answered and said unto Balak, Told not I thee, saying, All that the LORD speaketh, that I must do?**

Balaam explained to Balak that he could commune with Jehovah, but he could not misrepresent Him. It does not seem to be a matter of Balaam's desire to obtain Balak's promised reward. The fact was, he would not be allowed to do so.

**NUM 23:27 And Balak said unto Balaam, Come, I pray thee, I will bring thee unto another place; peradventure it will please God that thou mayest curse me them from thence.**

Balak felt it was worth one more try. He would find another location from which the curse might be pronounced. One has to admit Balak was persistent. It almost sounds like the little child who wants a piece of candy. The child is told no. The request is repeated until finally the parent breaks down and gives the child the candy. Balak is scared!



He is ready to do everything within his power to turn Israel back from the land of Moab.

**NUM 23:28 And Balak brought Balaam unto the top of Peor, that looketh toward Jeshimon.**

**NUM 23:29 And Balaam said unto Balak, Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven bullocks and seven rams.**

This makes quite a herd of cattle and flock of sheep which either had been, or were to be offered. Jehovah does not receive bribes as men often do. A thousand rams and bullocks would not have altered His plan for Israel to move into the promised land.

**NUM 23:30 And Balak did as Balaam had said, and offered a bullock and a ram on every altar.**

This is a strange place for the chapter to end. Is this attempt going to be more successful than the previous ones? The Bible student knows the answer before it is given. Balak should have anticipated it by this time.



## *Chapter 24*

**NUM 24:1 And when Balaam saw that it pleased the LORD to bless Israel, he went not, as at other times, to seek for enchantments, but he set his face toward the wilderness.**

There is a change in Balaam's outlook. Up to this point he had sought ways to accommodate Balak and to place curses upon the people of Israel. He has now come to the realization that the Lord is opposed to such action. Balaam placed himself where he could look out over the camp of Israel and come to a better understanding of the entire scene.

**NUM 24:2 And Balaam lifted up his eyes, and he saw Israel abiding in his tents according to their tribes; and the spirit of God came upon him.**

As Balaam looked out over the camp of Israel he could see the orderly arrangement of the tribes as Jehovah had commanded them previously. The tabernacle would have been located in the midst of the camp.

He was now to receive information from the Lord concerning the future of Israel. It was not destined to be destroyed by the Moabites, or any other of the inhabitants of the land to which it had been led by divine guidance. There is a difference in the manner of Balaam's inspiration now compared with what had taken place before this. Previously it had been said that the Lord put a word in the mouth of Balaam. This time it is said the spirit of God came upon him. This is a different level of communication.

**NUM 24:3 And he took up his parable, and said, Balaam the son of Beor hath said, and the man whose eyes are open hath said:**

The man began to reveal the truth which he was obtaining from God. It is said that his eyes were open. This is not talking about his physical eyes. It refers to the eyes of his spiritual understanding.

**NUM 24:4 He hath said, which heard the words of God, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open:**

That which he was about to utter did not originate in his own mind. It was a vision from the Almighty Creator and Sustainer of heaven and earth. The vision of the Almighty is not a picture of God. It is a series of scenes presented through his mind by the finger of God. Let us follow it.

**NUM 24:5 How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!**

These are not the kind of words for which Balak had sent for him. It was intended that Balaam pronounce a sentence of destruction upon Israel, not that he be filled with amazement by their majesty.

**NUM 24:6 As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river's side, as the trees of lign aloes which the LORD hath planted, and as cedar trees beside the waters.**

In his trance Balaam envisioned Israel in the greatest of health and productivity. They spread out like beautiful





gardens, watered by plenteous supplies of refreshing streams.

We are not to be a much concerned over the exact characteristics of the lign aloes and cedar trees are we are to understand their vitality and vibrancy of life. God had planted them. They would prosper at His hand. The curses of Balak would be futile. Israel would live and grow.

**NUM 24:7 He shall pour the water out of his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters, and his king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted.**

The major thought here is that of growth and multiplication. Some see the picture of a person with two watering buckets on each end of a balanced pole. The water would be used to invigorate Israel. Another commentator sees the water in the buckets as related to sexual intercourse, with the seed being vast numbers of descendants spreading abroad.

Agag was a powerful foe of Israel. A coming ruler of Israel would reign over a kingdom more mighty and powerful than any enemy. We are of course reminded of the end times in which Christ, as King of kings, is to conquer every foe, including death.

**NUM 24:8 God brought him forth out of Egypt; he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn: he shall eat up the nations his enemies, and shall break their bones, and pierce them through with his arrows.**

Israel did not just happen to be at the borders of the promised land. God had withstood the Pharoah of Egypt to release His people from slavery and lead them to their present location. No nation on earth was capable of



standing before them as long as they obeyed the will of Jehovah.

**NUM 24:9 He couched, he lay down as a lion, and as a great lion: who shall stir him up? Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee.**

It is best not to disturb a sleeping lion. When the lion roars, the entire jungle trembles. The one who wakes the powerful beast will come to a quick understanding of his power.

We can hardly imagine the expression on the face of Balak when he heard these words from the man he had expected to reward for bringing a curse upon the multitude he saw as a dangerous invader.

**NUM 24:10 And Balak's anger was kindled against Balaam, and he smote his hands together: and Balak said unto Balaam, I called thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast altogether blessed them these three times.**

Balak was absolutely furious. He banged his fists together in anger and faced Balaam in a rage. Each time before he had felt there was still some hope that his plan to bring curses upon Israel had not crumbled completely. Each time Balaam had dashed that hope by predicting God's blessing upon them.

**NUM 24:11 Therefore now flee thou to thy place: I thought to promote thee unto great honour; but, lo, the LORD hath kept thee back from honour.**



It is as if Balak had said to Balaam, "Go on home. Your help does me more damage than good." He reminded Balaam of the honor and wealth which could have been his if he had cursed rather than blessed the people of the Lord.

**NUM 24:12 And Balaam said unto Balak, Spake I not also to thy messengers which thou sentest unto me, saying,**

Now we have an interesting reply from Balaam. It contains thoughts which cause us to wonder just what Jehovah would have thought of him at that time.

**NUM 24:13 If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the commandment of the LORD, to do either good or bad of mine own mind; but what the LORD saith, that will I speak?**

In view of what was said of Balaam in the eleventh verse of the book of Jude we find this very interesting.

Jud 1:11 Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.

It causes one to wonder whether Balaam may have been uttering words which were directly opposed to what he actually felt. He may well have been stating that it was impossible physically for him to do that which Balak wished him to do. It may not have been a matter of righteousness on his part that he spoke a blessing rather than a curse.

**NUM 24:14 And now, behold, I go unto my people: come therefore, and I will advertise thee what this people shall do to thy people in the latter days.**

Yes, Balaam was ready to leave, but he still had something which must be said. Balak had not yet heard the entire message of the Lord. Balak was to hear what God had in store for both Israel and Moab in the days to come. The word “advertise” simply means here “to inform.” We anticipate that Balak is not going to like what he is about to hear!

**NUM 24:15 And he took up his parable, and said, Balaam the son of Beor hath said, and the man whose eyes are open hath said:**

Balaam had been in a trance. His physical eyes may have been shut. His spiritual eyes have been wide open. He would now give Balak some additional truth. I might add that that truth has been passed down through the ages to multiplied millions of persons from that time to the present.

**NUM 24:16 He hath said, which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the most High, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open:**

What else was it that God had made known to Balaam concerning the future of the people Balak had desired to have cursed?

**NUM 24:17 I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel,**



**and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.**

What Balaam had seen was not for the time in which he lived. It was to be a prophecy fulfilled at a later time.

Your present commentator has no doubt at all that the Star out of Jacob was our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Let us look at Malachi 4:1-3.

Mal 4:1 For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

Mal 4:2 But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.

Mal 4:3 And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts.

Add to the above the words of Revelation 22:16.

Rev 22:16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

The Son of God is the Daystar and the Sun of Righteousness. He is King of kings and Lord of lords. He holds the sceptre of power over all foes.

Seth was the son of Adam who replaced Abel. He represents all the sons of men who set themselves up in prideful resistance to God's will.

**NUM 24:18 And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies; and Israel shall do valiantly.**

Neither Edom nor Moab shall stand when they stand up in opposition to the eternal plans of the Almighty God. The enemies of Edom would conquer them. Nor would it be of any advantage for Edom and Moab to unite their powers against God's people. In the end spiritual Israel was to claim the victory, let by the Son of God.

**NUM 24:19 Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city.**

The city spoken of here is far more than Rome, Athens, or any of the larger cities in later times. It is the city made up of those who oppose Jehovah. The book of Revelation calls this city "Babylon."

**NUM 24:20 And when he looked on Amalek, he took up his parable, and said, Amalek was the first of the nations; but his latter end shall be that he perish for ever.**

I remind the reader once again that the word "parable" is used here in a different sense than when it is applied to the parables spoken by Jesus. This parable was a prophecy of the defeat of the Amalekites. These were among the very first enemies of Israel. Their name is only found in the history books today. Spiritual Israel is alive and healthy.

**NUM 24:21 And he looked on the Kenites, and took up his parable, and said, Strong is thy dwellingplace, and thou puttest thy nest in a rock.**



**NUM 24:22 Nevertheless the Kenite shall be wasted, until Asshur shall carry thee away captive.**

Students of the Bible are puzzled when they ponder the identity of the Kenites, as they are presented in this verse. The Kenites which are mentioned only a few times in the scriptures seem to be friendly toward Israel rather than antagonistic. This leads some to believe this present verse refers to a people who have even disappeared from the historical records.

Whatever the case, Assyria was to interfere in any plans Moab or any other nation might have to defeat the children of God.

**NUM 24:23 And he took up his parable, and said, Alas, who shall live when God doeth this!**

**NUM 24:24 And ships shall come from the coast of Chittim, and shall afflict Asshur, and shall afflict Eber, and he also shall perish for ever.**

When God brings final judgment upon those who attempt to thwart His purposes and destroy His people, none can stand. No man, no nation, no philosophy or system of thought which rises up to challenge the ultimate will of the Creator can hope to survive.

**NUM 24:25 And Balaam rose up, and went and returned to his place: and Balak also went his way.**

This verse seems to say Balaam left the land of Moab and returned to his own people. If he did do so, there is reason to believe he came back to this same area later. The Bible reports that he was killed in a battle between



Israel and the Moabites.

(See Numbers 31:8.)

Num 31:8 And they slew the kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain; namely, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword.



## Chapter 25

**NUM 25:1 And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab.**

The children of Israel are still on the east side of the Jordan River and have camped in the area of the Moabites. We are told at the end of the last chapter that Balaam returned to his people. He may have done so and then later rejoined the Moabites and resumed his opposition to God's people. Or, it may be that he went back to his people for a short time and then decided to realign himself with the Midianites and the Moabites in an effort to collect a reward for aiding them in a later victory over Israel.

We do find a report of his death in the thirty-first chapter of this same book of Numbers. He died in the defeat of the Midianites by the forces of Israel. (See Numbers 31:6-8).

Num 31:6 And Moses sent them to the war, a thousand of every tribe, them and Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, to the war, with the holy instruments, and the trumpets to blow in his hand.

Num 31:7 And they warred against the Midianites, as the LORD commanded Moses; and they slew all the males.

Num 31:8 And they slew the kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain; namely, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: **Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword.**

It is evident from Balaam's own words that he knew Israel would be victorious in the end. Still, he was more interested in here and now than he was in then and there. Therefore Balaam taught the Moabites how to seduce the

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men of Israel through the women of the land. (See 2 Peter 2:14-15 and Rev. 2:14.)

2Pe 2:14 Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children:

2Pe 2:15 Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

Rev 2:14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

**NUM 25:2 And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods.**

The Lord Jehovah is a jealous God. He becomes exceedingly angry when men ignore Him and begin to flirt with false gods. Balaam had suggested that the women of Moab and Midian use their charms to entice the men of Israel to commit fornication with them and make sacrifices to Baal.

Baal-Peor was a pagan god of fertility. The worship included both feasting and fornication. When the men of Israel saw the beauty of these foreign women and saw the lust driven activities which could be entered into, they joined in the merry making and lasciviousness.

**NUM 25:3 And Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel.**



The statement that Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor can be taken in two ways. It could mean Israel decided to join the feasting. It clearly means more. They joined themselves sexually to the pagan idolators.

These were God's people. He was, in a sense, their husband. Nourishing and protecting them. He became furious at the disloyalty and determined to let His displeasure be known.

**NUM 25:4 And the LORD said unto Moses, Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the LORD against the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel.**

There are differences in understanding as to the meaning of verses four and five. If one looks only at the King James version as we have before us. There seems to be little question that Moses commanded the death of the chief of the people and that their heads be removed from their bodies and the heads then be hung up in broad daylight that the people might see them and recognize the seriousness of their sin.

If one looks at some of the later translations, the meaning is that the heads of the people were to take the ones who were guilty of fornication and hang their bodies up where others could see them.

Either way, this may seem a most gruesome way to teach a spiritual lesson. Could God not just have stricken the guilty persons dead on the spot? Your present commentator has long ago abandoned criticizing the behavior of Jehovah. His ways are higher than our ways and His thoughts are higher than our thoughts. If the Creator of heaven and earth decided this was the proper route, I will assume that it was! God was not just slightly displeased. He was furious with anger.



**NUM 25:5 And Moses said unto the judges of Israel, Slay ye every one his men that were joined unto Baalpeor.**

Those who believe it was not the principle men of the people who were killed and hung up in the sunlight see verse five as a clarification of verse four. They see the word “them” in verse four as all of those who were guilty of entering into the feasting and fornication.

Whichever the case, God made it very clear that He hated the actions of those who had preferred Baal worship to true worship. Moses commanded that the offenders be slain.

**NUM 25:6 And, behold, one of the children of Israel came and brought unto his brethren a Midianitish woman in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.**

This Israelite who brought a Midianite woman into the camp into the camp under the very nose of Moses, who had commanded that all who did such were to be slain, is not identified in this passage. He is identified in Numbers 25:14 as **Zimri**, a prince of the Simeonites. The woman whom he brought into the camp was **Cozbi**, a princess of Midian.

The people were weeping as a result of the command of Moses that many of them were to be slain for their entry into the false worship of Baal. Even as they were weeping at the door of the tabernacle of God, Zimri challenged Moses authority by bringing an influential woman of Midian right into the midst of the camp. What would Moses reaction be?



**NUM 25:7 And when Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose up from among the congregation, and took a javelin in his hand;**

It was not Moses who took action. It was Phinehas, the son of Eleazar and the grandson of Aaron. He had seen enough misery already. He did not wish to risk any further mockery toward the will of Jehovah. While the others were weeping in sorrow over the death sentence pronounced by Moses, Phinehas rose up from among them and found a javelin or spear.

**NUM 25:8 And he went after the man of Israel into the tent, and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her belly. So the plague was stayed from the children of Israel.**

Phinehas had very good reason to be concerned. His uncles, Nadab and Abihu had lost their lives as a result of failure to follow God's instructions for worship.

We are told that Phinehas went into the "tent" after Cozbi and Zimri. What was this tent? Why did it not say he went into the tent of Zimri? It is very likely that the tent was the tabernacle itself. If so, the two whom he killed were about as insolent as humans could possibly be in the face of God's will. They were having sexual intercourse within the walls of God's chosen center of worship. When all this is considered, it is not surprising that Phinehas took his javelin and thrust it through both of them. We might well take it one step farther and suggest that because of their physical position Zimri was able to run his javelin through both of them at the same time.



**NUM 25:9 And those that died in the plague were twenty and four thousand.**

We are not informed as to the nature of this plague which God sent upon the people. We do know it was deadly. Twenty-four thousand persons died as a result of it.

Another figure is given in I Corinthians 10:8.

1Co 10:8 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.

Some have suggested that the difference between the two figures is accounted for by one thousand of the heads of the people being added to twenty-three thousand of the people under those heads. The difference in the two figures is not critical. When Paul wrote to those in the church at Corinth, that he was far more interested in causing the saints there to avoid fornication and idolatry than he was in the difference between twenty-three thousand and twenty-four thousand.

**NUM 25:10 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 25:11 Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, while he was zealous for my sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy.**

It took considerable courage on the part of Phinehas to do what he did. These were not two insignificant persons whom he had killed. Yet Phinehas knew he was acting in the service of God when he slew them. God did not disappoint him. Moses was told by God Himself that Phinehas had averted even greater disaster for Israel.



Even more of them would have lost their lives if their folly had continued.

**NUM 25:12 Wherefore say, Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace:**

The covenant of peace which God promised to Phinehas was a promise that He would be with Phinehas and his descendants as long as they remained faithful.

**NUM 25:13 And he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel.**

God's satisfaction with Phinehas' behavior would result in one after another of his descendants serving in the priesthood forever. This promise apparently connects Phinehas with the line of Jesus Christ who is our eternal High Priest.

**NUM 25:14 Now the name of the Israelite that was slain, even that was slain with the Midianitish woman, was Zimri, the son of Salu, a prince of a chief house among the Simeonites.**

**NUM 25:15 And the name of the Midianitish woman that was slain was Cozbi, the daughter of Zur; he was head over a people, and of a chief house in Midian.**

The names of the two offenders were not given earlier. Now they are identified as being from very influential families of Midian among the pagans and Simeon of the Israelites.

**NUM 25:16 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

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**NUM 25:17 Vex the Midianites, and smite them:**

The Midianites had made a mistake of the worst sort. They had set themselves up against the will of the True and Living God. Moses is commanded to punish them for their opposition. They had been responsible for the deaths of thousands of His chosen people. The Israelites who sinned were not innocent. They paid dearly for their display of lust and disloyalty. But the Midianites had initiated the folly and were to feel the wrath of God through His people. They were to be smitten by Israel.

**NUM 25:18 For they vex you with their wives, wherewith they have beguiled you in the matter of Peor, and in the matter of Cozbi, the daughter of a prince of Midian, their sister, which was slain in the day of the plague for Peor's sake.**

Christian young men may learn an important lesson from the misfortune which fell upon those twenty-four thousand who died as a result of following the lust of the flesh. God placed our sexual appetites within us for a very good reason. He desired the production of humans who would make up His family and abide with Him when this present heaven and earth have passed away. Those appetites for the opposite sex bind man and wife together for a lifetime when all is as it should be. We must use the blessings which God has offered to us in the way He intended. When that is done God continues to add new blessings. When that is not done, God sends curses rather than blessings.

Would you rather go the way of Zimri and Cosbi, or would you rather follow the footsteps of Phinehas?



## Chapter 26

We find the people of Israel in the plains of Moab, on the east side of the Jordan River, as the events of this chapter take place. They have been opposed by the Moabites and the Midianites. God commanded them to take military action against Midian and begin taking possession of the land of their inheritance.

It would be necessary to take a census before doing so. This would allow the leaders to know just how much force each had to work with. It would also provide information as to which part of the land would be allotted to each of the various tribes.

**NUM 26:1 And it came to pass after the plague, that the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest, saying,**

In chapter twenty-five just previous to this one we found that Israel had committed whoredom with the daughters of Moab. They had bowed down before Baal and offered sacrifices to false gods. Jehovah had become extremely angry with Israel and had sent a plague which destroyed twenty-four thousand of them. It was after that plague when God commanded the following census to be taken.

Aaron had been punished for his lack of faith by not being allowed to enter into the promised land. He died and his son Eleazar assumed the duties of High Priest. Moses and Eleazar are to supervise the numbering of the people.

Other censuses were taken at different times. One is recorded in chapters one through four of this book, as Israel left Egypt. Another is found in I Chronicles, chapters 1-8. On one occasion a census was taken without God's

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approval. Satan caused David to number the people, as recorded in I Chronicles chapter twenty-one. As a result of God's disapproval, seventy thousand died. This time God commanded the numbering.

**NUM 26:2 Take the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, from twenty years old and upward, throughout their fathers' house, all that are able to go to war in Israel.**

The lower age line of twenty years is of interest. It seems that God did not hold those who were under twenty years of age responsible for the failure to enter the land thirty-eight years previous to this. The age of twelve is often thought of as the age of accountability in this twenty-first century. Could it be that we have erred on this point? We also draft our young men at the age of eighteen for military duty. The counts taken in both the first chapters of Numbers, and at this time, were for the purpose of going to war.

**NUM 26:3 And Moses and Eleazar the priest spake with them in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho, saying,**

**NUM 26:4 Take the sum of the people, from twenty years old and upward; as the LORD commanded Moses and the children of Israel, which went forth out of the land of Egypt.**

Moses and Eleazar relayed the command of God to the leaders of the tribes. The fact that they were told to take the sum of the people as had been commanded when Israel departed from Egypt indicates God wished to demonstrate some point by comparison.



**NUM 26:5 Reuben, the eldest son of Israel: the children of Reuben; Hanoch, of whom cometh the family of the Hanochites: of Pallu, the family of the Palluites:**

The census was more detailed than simply listing the numbers of each of the tribes. It reached down into the families within the tribes. One commentator used the word “clan” in speaking of these families.

**NUM 26:6 Of Hezron, the family of the Hezronites: of Carmi, the family of the Carmites.**

**NUM 26:7 These are the families of the Reubenites: and they that were numbered of them were forty and three thousand and seven hundred and thirty.**

**NUM 26:8 And the sons of Pallu; Eliab.**

**NUM 26:9 And the sons of Eliab; Nemuel, and Dathan, and Abiram. This is that Dathan and Abiram, which were famous in the congregation, who strove against Moses and against Aaron in the company of Korah, when they strove against the LORD:**

A few words are included about major events related to each of the tribes. Dathan and Abiram had questioned Moses’ God given authority. The word “famous” as used here has a negative meaning. It was “ill fame.” Korah was a priest who allied himself with the two. All three were punished by death.

**NUM 26:10 And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up together with Korah, when that company died, what time the fire devoured two hundred and fifty men: and they became a sign.**



Dathan, Abiram and Korah were not alone. They had led some two hundred fifty in that rebellion. As the earth swallowed them up they became a warning sign to Israel that Jehovah will not allow such opposition to His will to go unpunished. The results of such rebellion may not be as immediate today as they were in the days of Dathan, Abiram and Korah, but they will have to be faced sooner or later.

**NUM 26:11 Notwithstanding the children of Korah died not.**

Some have felt there is a contradiction between what is said in this verse and the record of the sixteenth chapter of Numbers. A careful reading of both accounts will allow the continuation of the family of Korah, though the families of Dathan and Abiram were eliminated.

**NUM 26:12 The sons of Simeon after their families: of Nemuel, the family of the Nemuelites: of Jamin, the family of the Jaminites: of Jachin, the family of the Jachinites:**

**NUM 26:13 Of Zerah, the family of the Zarhites: of Shaul, the family of the Shaulites.**

**NUM 26:14 These are the families of the Simeonites, twenty and two thousand and two hundred.**

**NUM 26:15 The children of Gad after their families: of Zephon, the family of the Zephonites: of Haggi, the family of the Haggites: of Shuni, the family of the Shunites:**

**NUM 26:16 Of Ozni, the family of the Oznites: of Eri, the family of the Erites:**

**NUM 26:17 Of Arod, the family of the Arodites: of Areli, the family of the Arelites.**



**NUM 26:18** These are the families of the children of Gad according to those that were numbered of them, forty thousand and five hundred.

**NUM 26:19** The sons of Judah were Er and Onan: and Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan.

Onan was the man who spilled his seed upon the ground rather than produce seed which would not be counted as his own. (See Gen. 38:6-10)

If Judah had only two sons and both of them died in the land of Canaan how can the record continue by speaking of the Shelanites, the Pharzites, etc. as sons of Judah? The answer to this question is that grandsons and other descendants are sometimes listed as sons.

**NUM 26:20** And the sons of Judah after their families were; of Shelah, the family of the Shelanites: of Pharez, the family of the Pharzites: of Zerah, the family of the Zarhites.

**NUM 26:21** And the sons of Pharez were; of Hezron, the family of the Hezronites: of Hamul, the family of the Hamulites.

**NUM 26:22** These are the families of Judah according to those that were numbered of them, threescore and sixteen thousand and five hundred.

**NUM 26:23** Of the sons of Issachar after their families: of Tola, the family of the Tolaites: of Pua, the family of the Punites:

**NUM 26:24** Of Jashub, the family of the Jashubites: of Shimron, the family of the Shimronites.

**NUM 26:25** These are the families of Issachar according to those that were numbered of them, threescore and four thousand and three hundred.

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**NUM 26:26** Of the sons of Zebulun after their families: of Sered, the family of the Sardites: of Elon, the family of the Elonites: of Jahleel, the family of the Jahleelites.

**NUM 26:27** These are the families of the Zebulunites according to those that were numbered of them, threescore thousand and five hundred.

**NUM 26:28** The sons of Joseph after their families were Manasseh and Ephraim.

Joseph was to have a double portion of the inheritance. His single tribe was divided into the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim.

**NUM 26:29** Of the sons of Manasseh: of Machir, the family of the Machirites: and Machir begat Gilead: of Gilead come the family of the Gileadites.

**NUM 26:30** These are the sons of Gilead: of Jeezer, the family of the Jeezerites: of Helek, the family of the Helekites:

**NUM 26:31** And of Asriel, the family of the Asrielites: and of Shechem, the family of the Shechemites:

**NUM 26:32** And of Shemida, the family of the Shemidaites: and of Hopher, the family of the Hopherites.

**NUM 26:33** And Zelophehad the son of Hopher had no sons, but daughters: and the names of the daughters of Zelophehad were Mahlah, and Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.

The daughters of Zelophehad will be spoken of in the next chapter and again later when the land is divided.



**NUM 26:34** These are the families of Manasseh, and those that were numbered of them, fifty and two thousand and seven hundred.

**NUM 26:35** These are the sons of Ephraim after their families: of Shuthelah, the family of the Shuthalhites: of Becher, the family of the Bachrites: of Tahan, the family of the Tahanites.

**NUM 26:36** And these are the sons of Shuthelah: of Eran, the family of the Eranites.

**NUM 26:37** These are the families of the sons of Ephraim according to those that were numbered of them, thirty and two thousand and five hundred. These are the sons of Joseph after their families.

**NUM 26:38** The sons of Benjamin after their families: of Bela, the family of the Belaites: of Ashbel, the family of the Ashbelites: of Ahiram, the family of the Ahiramites:

**NUM 26:39** Of Shupham, the family of the Shuphamites: of Hupham, the family of the Huphamites.

**NUM 26:40** And the sons of Bela were Ard and Naaman: of Ard, the family of the Ardites: and of Naaman, the family of the Naamites.

**NUM 26:41** These are the sons of Benjamin after their families: and they that were numbered of them were forty and five thousand and six hundred.

**NUM 26:42** These are the sons of Dan after their families: of Shuham, the family of the Shuhamites. These are the families of Dan after their families.

**NUM 26:43** All the families of the Shuhamites, according to those that were numbered of them, were threescore and four thousand and four hundred.

**NUM 26:44** Of the children of Asher after their



**families: of Jimna, the family of the Jimnites: of Jesui, the family of the Jesuites: of Beriah, the family of the Beriites.**

**NUM 26:45 Of the sons of Beriah: of Heber, the family of the Heberites: of Malchiel, the family of the Malchielites.**

**NUM 26:46 And the name of the daughter of Asher was Sarah.**

Why is the name of Asher's daughter mentioned here? I readily agree with the comments of Burton Coffman here. We do not know the answer. God must have had His reasons for mentioning this woman. He did not have to reveal them to us!

**NUM 26:47 These are the families of the sons of Asher according to those that were numbered of them; who were fifty and three thousand and four hundred.**

**NUM 26:48 Of the sons of Naphtali after their families: of Jahzeel, the family of the Jahzeelites: of Guni, the family of the Gunites:**

**NUM 26:49 Of Jezer, the family of the Jezerites: of Shillem, the family of the Shillemites.**

**NUM 26:50 These are the families of Naphtali according to their families: and they that were numbered of them were forty and five thousand and four hundred.**

**NUM 26:51 These were the numbered of the children of Israel, six hundred thousand and a thousand seven hundred and thirty.**

Now we have a total of the men over twenty years of age and able to go to war as the conquest of Canaan is about to begin. It is best for us to summarize this data in chart form.

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COMPARISON OF THE TWO CENSUS TOTALS

Tribe	Families	Earlier	Later	Change
Reuben	4	46,500	43,730	-2,270
Simeon	5		59,300	22,200
Gad	7	45,650	40,500	-5,150
Judah	5	74,600	76,500	+1,900
Issachar	4	54,400	64,300	+9,900
Zebulun	3	57,400	60,500	+3,100
Ephraim	4	40,500	32,500	-8,000
Manasseh	8	32,200	52,700	+20,500
Benjamin	7	35,400	45,600	+10,200
Dan	1	62,700	64,400	+1,700
Asher	5	41,500	53,400	+11,900
Naphtali	4	53,400	45,400	-8,000
Totals	57	603,550	601,730	-1,820

Adam Clarke points out that if one adds the twelve patriarchs and the name of Moses to the 57 families, we have a total of 70, which is the number of souls in Jacob's house that went down into Egypt.

**NUM 26:52 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 26:53 Unto these the land shall be divided for an inheritance according to the number of names.**

**NUM 26:54 To many thou shalt give the more inheritance, and to few thou shalt give the less inheritance: to every one shall his inheritance be given according to those that were numbered of him.**

In general the tribes with larger populations were to receive larger amounts of territory.

**NUM 26:55 Notwithstanding the land shall be divided by lot: according to the names of the tribes of their fathers they shall inherit.**

**Num 26:56 According to the lot shall the possession thereof be divided between many and few.**

There is a difficulty here. How can the land be divided according to population and also be divided by the casting of lots? It is possible that the larger tribes received more territory, and then the families within those tribes cast lots to see which portion of the tribal territory each family would inhabit.

**NUM 26:57 And these are they that were numbered of the Levites aftefamilies: of Gershon, the family of the Gershonites: of Kohath, the family of the Kohathites: of Merari, the family of the Merarites.**

**NUM 26:58 These are the families of the Levites: the family of the Libnites, the family of the Hebronites, the family of the Mahlites, the family of the Mushites, the family of the Korathites. And Kohath begat Amram.**

The Levites were not to receive any land as their part of the inheritance. Forty cities which were scattered throughout Canaan would be designated as their living quarters. They would receive a tithe of the income of each of the other tribes for their support.



**NUM 26:59 And the name of Amram's wife was Jochebed, the daughter of Levi, whom her mother bare to Levi in Egypt: and she bare unto Amram Aaron and Moses, and Miriam their sister.**

Moses, the great prophet and leader of Israel during the wilderness journey, was one of three children. His brother was Aaron, and his sister was Miriam. Miriam was the one who was responsible for introducing Moses to the daughter of Pharaoh. Aaron became the first High Priest of Israel.

**NUM 26:60 And unto Aaron was born Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.**

**NUM 26:61 And Nadab and Abihu died, when they offered strange fire before the LORD.**

Of the four sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu offered unauthorized sacrifices to Jehovah. They died as a result. Thus the Levites were all descended from Eleazar and Ithamar.

**NUM 26:62 And those that were numbered of them were twenty and three thousand, all males from a month old and upward: for they were not numbered among the children of Israel, because there was no inheritance given them among the children of Israel.**

According to the earlier census, there were twenty-two thousand Levites when Israel left Egypt. Now there were twenty-three thousand, an increase of one thousand.

**NUM 26:63 These are they that were numbered by Moses and Eleazar the priest, who numbered the**

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**children of Israel in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho.**

Moses and Eleazar the High Priest had finished the numbering which Jehovah had commanded to be done.

**NUM 26:64 But among these there was not a man of them whom Moses and Aaron the priest numbered, when they numbered the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai.**

Over six hundred thousand men, plus their wives had died during those years of wandering. If the reader will do some simple arithmetic, he or she will find that over one hundred persons per day died on the average over that entire period of time.

**NUM 26:65 For the LORD had said of them, They shall surely die in the wilderness. And there was not left a man of them, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.**

God had declared that not a one of those who had failed to trust him and enter into Canaan when they first arrived there would ever set foot in the land. God's word does not return unto Him void (Isa. 55:11).

Isa 55:11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

## *Chapter 27*

Two matters will be taken up in this chapter. First, the daughters of Zelophehad present a request to be given an inheritance in the land. Second, Joshua is chosen as a successor to Moses in the coming conquest of Canaan.

**NUM 27:1 Then came the daughters of Zelophehad, the son of Hopher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, of the families of Manasseh the son of Joseph: and these are the names of his daughters; Mahlah, Noah, and Hoglah, and Milcah, and Tirzah.**

Zelophehad was of the tribe of Manasseh, one of the two tribes into which the tribe of Joseph was divided. Zelophehad would have had a right to a portion of the land if he had been alive. He had no sons, but he had five daughters. If his daughters did not receive his inheritance, his name would be erased from the families of Israel.

The daughters all had names ending in the letters “ah.”

**NUM 27:2 And they stood before Moses, and before Eleazar the priest, and before the princes and all the congregation, by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying,**

The five women came before Moses and the High Priest Eleazar. They were ready to voice a serious concern. This was somewhat uncommon for women to speak up forcefully before the princes and leaders of the nation.

**NUM 27:3 Our father died in the wilderness, and he was not in the company of them that gathered**

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**themselves together against the LORD in the company of Korah; but died in his own sin, and had no sons.**

They called attention to the fact that their father had not been among that two hundred fifty who rebelled at the time of Korah, Dathan and Abiram.

However, he had died in the wilderness along with the entire generation who refused to enter into Canaan when the spies came back with a fearful report. Since he had no sons to receive his portion of the land the family name was in danger of being lost.

**NUM 27:4 Why should the name of our father be done away from among his family, because he hath no son? Give unto us therefore a possession among the brethren of our father.**

The five daughters wanted to be allotted some portion of the land.

**NUM 27:5 And Moses brought their cause before the LORD.**

Moses did not feel that he should make a personal decision without consulting a higher authority. He took the case before God. We are not told the details of his communication. We only know he asked God for help.

**NUM 27:6 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

The Lord was receptive to Moses request. He gave a firm decision. The decision might have been a bit surprising to the men of Israel. Women had long held a submissive position. That was not the way this case went.

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**NUM 27:7 The daughters of Zelophehad speak right: thou shalt surely give them a possession of an inheritance among their father's brethren; and thou shalt cause the inheritance of their father to pass unto them.**

To say that these women spoke right was to say they had a just cause. Their request was to be attended to. The inheritance from their father was to be passed on to them.

**NUM 27:8 And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a man die, and have no son, then ye shall cause his inheritance to pass unto his daughter.**

God used this case as a model for further instructions regarding the rights of inheritance.

If a man had no sons, but did have daughters, the inheritance was to be awarded to the daughters.

**NUM 27:9 And if he have no daughter, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his brethren.**

If the man had neither sons nor daughters, his inheritance was to go to his fleshly brothers.

**NUM 27:10 And if he have no brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his father's brethren.**

If the man had neither sons, daughters, nor fleshly brothers, his inheritance was to go to his father's brothers, or uncles on his father's side.



**NUM 27:11 And if his father have no brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his kinsman that is next to him of his family, and he shall possess it: and it shall be unto the children of Israel a statute of judgment, as the LORD commanded Moses.**

If none of the above existed, the inheritance was to go to nearest of his kin. Thus, a Divine pattern was provided for seeing that the land remained within each tribe to which it was assigned.

This concludes the first division of the chapter. We move on to the arrangements for replacing Moses as the leader of the people.

**NUM 27:12 And the LORD said unto Moses, Get thee up into this mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given unto the children of Israel.**

God commanded Moses to go up into Mount Abarim and look down upon the land which was to be given to His people. After leading the people for forty years, Moses was to cast his eye upon the land to which he had led them.

It is our understanding that Abarim was a range of mountains. In the last chapters of the book of Deuteronomy Moses is told to go to Mount Nebo and look out over the land. This same mountain is also called "Pisgah." Though the instruction was given here in the twenty-seventh chapter of Numbers, it apparently did not take place until the last nine chapters of Numbers and almost all of the book of Deuteronomy had passed by.

**NUM 27:13 And when thou hast seen it, thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother was gathered.**





Moses was given some very sombre news. After he had seen the land, he would die. Aaron and Miriam had already met death. Moses would join them without entering into Canaan.

**NUM 27:14 For ye rebelled against my commandment in the desert of Zin, in the strife of the congregation, to sanctify me at the water before their eyes: that is the water of Meribah in Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.**

The reason Moses was not to lead Israel into Canaan was that he had shown a lack of humility when the congregation demanded water while in the wilderness. He had failed to sanctify the Lord before the people.

It is commonplace for Bible teachers to claim Moses sin was in striking the rock to obtain water rather than speaking to it. This may well have been a part of his sin, but Moses did say something. His words were as sinful as his actions. He said, "Must WE get ye water ye rebels." Moses was not the source of the water. God was! Moses had failed to give God the glory. It was fit that he be punished for his lack of humility. If the man who was known as an example of meekness could make such a mistake, each of us should be very very cautious.

**NUM 27:15 And Moses spake unto the LORD, saying,**

**NUM 27:16 Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation,**

Moses seems to have learned his lesson. He made not effort to justify himself for his sin. Neither did he beg God to change His mind and allow him to lead Israel into the land. His greatest concern was what was to become of the people. They would need a leader.

**NUM 27:17 Which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the LORD be not as sheep which have no shepherd.**

Without proper leadership the people would be as helpless as sheep who need to be shown where the pasture is rich and the wolves are few. Someone was needed to continue that which Moses had tried to do for that forty year period.

**NUM 27:18 And the LORD said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him;**

God approved of Moses request. He was ready to appoint a successor. That man was to be one of the two who remained from the entire generation who refused to enter the land before. Joshua had encouraged Israel to enter Canaan. With God's help they could win the land. Now God rewards Joshua with the opportunity to Shepherd them into the land flowing with milk and honey.

To lay hands upon another was to transfer something to that upon which the hands had been laid. Hands were laid upon the sacrificial animals to transfer the sins from the people to the animal. Jesus laid hands upon the apostles to transfer some of His power to them. This time Moses was to lay his hand upon Joshua to designate him as God's chosen leader. He was to replace Moses.

**NUM 27:19 And set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation; and give him a charge in their sight.**



**NUM 27:20 And thou shalt put some of thine honour upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient.**

A formal ceremony was to be held in which the High Priest and the entire congregations would be made to understand God expected Joshua to be honored and obeyed as their new leader. They were to respect him as they had formerly respected Moses.

**NUM 27:21 And he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgment of Urim before the LORD: at his word shall they go out, and at his word they shall come in, both he, and all the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation.**

God had communicated directly with Moses. This would not be true in the case of Joshua. It would be necessary for Joshua to commune with God through the High Priest. Eleazar now wore the breastplate with the Urim and Thummim. In some way the Urim and Thummim made it possible to discover God's will in a given situation. Joshua would use that avenue as a means of leadership.

**NUM 27:22 And Moses did as the LORD commanded him: and he took Joshua, and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation:**

It is little wonder that Moses was one of the three who appeared on the Mount of transfiguration when God set Jesus above both Moses and Elijah as the one whom men should hear in the Christian age. Except for that one mistake when he failed to sanctify the Lord, Moses humbled himself before Jehovah and kept His word.

**NUM 27:23 And he laid his hands upon him, and gave him a charge, as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses.**

At the death of Moses, Joshua was ready to assume the awesome responsibility of shepherding Israel. We must, however, wait until we have covered the rest of the book of Numbers and almost all of the book of Deuteronomy before Joshua assumes the leadership.



## *Chapter 28*

Chapters twenty-eight and twenty-nine of the book of Numbers are so closely related they could have been combined as a single chapter. Most readers will know that the divisions of the Bible text into chapters and verses were made by the translators and printers rather than having been defined by the Lord.

These two chapters are concerned with the sacrifices Israel was to offer on a daily, weekly, monthly and yearly basis.

Some will wonder why these instructions are repeated here when they were given such heavy emphasis in the books of Exodus and Leviticus. There are excellent reasons.

After forty years in the wilderness it is highly likely that they had neglected some of these God given responsibilities and needed to be reminded of their importance as they settled in the promised land. There was also to be a more stable agricultural yield. One would have far more difficulty procuring grain and olive oil while moving from one point to another than would be the case after settling where the same land might be cultivated on a yearly basis.

**NUM 28:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 28:2 Command the children of Israel, and say unto them, My offering, and my bread for my sacrifices made by fire, for a sweet savour unto me, shall ye observe to offer unto me in their due season.**

Joshua has not yet assumed the leadership of the people. The transition from Moses to Joshua will not take effect until after the death of Moses.

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Jehovah had given much to the people. He expected them to show their gratitude and respect toward Him by making sacrifices indicating their desire to please Him. He was about to specify what sacrifices were to be made, and also when each was to be offered. When these sacrifices were made as He commanded, they came up before Him much the same as a dinner of fried chicken might delight the nostrils of humans.

**NUM 28:3 And thou shalt say unto them, This is the offering made by fire which ye shall offer unto the LORD; two lambs of the first year without spot day by day, for a continual burnt offering.**

**NUM 28:4 The one lamb shalt thou offer in the morning, and the other lamb shalt thou offer at even;**

Each day two lambs one year old were to be sacrificed. One was to be offered in the morning and the other in the evening. They were to be entirely burned. Neither the people nor the priests were to eat of their flesh.

These lambs were to perfect. There was to be no blemish of any kind. This, of course, looked forward to Christ, the Lamb of God in whom was no spot or blemish. (See I Peter 1:19.)

1Pe 1:18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

1Pe 1:19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:



**NUM 28:5 And a tenth part of an ephah of flour for a meat offering, mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil.**

Along with each of the lambs, a “meat” or cereal offering was to be made. Humans would normally have a starchy serving along with their meal of flesh. God expected something similar.

The tenth part of an ephah would have been about seven pints. The fourth part of a hin would have been about three pints.

The beaten oil was olive oil which had been obtained from the olives by beating them rather than pressing the oil from them.

**NUM 28:6 It is a continual burnt offering, which was ordained in mount Sinai for a sweet savour, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LORD.**

God does not need a certain number of calories to sustain Himself. What He does desire is the dedication of His followers. They are to indicate their thanks to Him by giving back a small part of that which they receive from His hand.

This morning and evening sacrifice of a lamb with it’s accompanying cereal and olive oil was to continue on a daily basis. It was not to be interrupted.

**NUM 28:7 And the drink offering thereof shall be the fourth part of an hin for the one lamb: in the holy place shalt thou cause the strong wine to be poured unto the LORD for a drink offering.**

There was also to be a drink offering. Jehovah had given His people the fruit of the vine. He commanded that they pour out a small portion at the foot of the altar in return for His care.

**NUM 28:8 And the other lamb shalt thou offer at even: as the meat offering of the morning, and as the drink offering thereof, thou shalt offer it, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.**

The same procedure was to be followed in the evening as was followed in the morning. Another lamb was to be offered, along with its cereal and drink offerings. This would assure that God knew of the dedication and commitment of the children of Israel.

**NUM 28:9 And on the sabbath day two lambs of the first year without spot, and two tenth deals of flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil, and the drink offering thereof:**

On the sabbath day, at the end of every week, the sacrifice was to be doubled. An extra lamb was to be sacrificed on that morning and evening, along with its meat, oil and drink offering.

**NUM 28:10 This is the burnt offering of every sabbath, beside the continual burnt offering, and his drink offering.**

The daily continual sacrifice was to be offered, plus a like sacrifice for the seventh day of the week.

**NUM 28:11 And in the beginnings of your months ye shall offer a burnt offering unto the LORD; two young bullocks, and one ram, seven lambs of the first year without spot;**

Here we have the directions for the monthly, or new





moon sacrifices. This time two young bulls, one ram and seven one year old lambs were to be added to the continual daily sacrifice. This gave a total of nine lambs, two bulls and one ram each sabbath day.

**NUM 28:12 And three tenth deals of flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil, for one bullock; and two tenth deals of flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil, for one ram;**

Just as each lamb for the daily sacrifice was to have an accompanying cereal and drink offering, the animals sacrificed on the sabbath had those accompanying them. Each bull was to have three tenths of a deal of cereal offering. This would have amounted to twenty-one pints. Each ram was to be accompanied by fourteen pints of cereal offering.

**NUM 28:13 And a several tenth deal of flour mingled with oil for a meat offering unto one lamb; for a burnt offering of a sweet savour, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LORD.**

The accompanying offering for each lamb was the same as on the morning and evening of the daily sacrifices.

**NUM 28:14 And their drink offerings shall be half an hin of wine unto a bullock, and the third part of an hin unto a ram, and a fourth part of an hin unto a lamb: this is the burnt offering of every month throughout the months of the year.**

The drink offering which was to be poured out at the foot of the altar was to be six pints for each bull, four pints for a ram and three pints for a lamb.



**NUM 28:15 And one kid of the goats for a sin offering unto the LORD shall be offered, beside the continual burnt offering, and his drink offering.**

In addition to the bulls, ram and lambs offered on the sabbath, one kid of the goats was to be included along with it's drink offering.

**NUM 28:16 And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the passover of the LORD.**

The fourteenth day of each first month was to be the date of the Passover Feast. This memorialized the passing over of the angel of the Lord, as the blood of the lamb sprinkled on the doorposts of Israel's houses protected their firstborn from death.

**NUM 28:17 And in the fifteenth day of this month is the feast: seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten.**

The Passover Feast began on the day after the Passover and continued for seven days. Since there had been insufficient time for the bread to be leavened at the time of the first Passover, the people of Israel were to eat no leavened bread during the seven days of that yearly feast.

**NUM 28:18 In the first day shall be an holy convocation; ye shall do no manner of servile work therein:**

This was the first day after the Passover, or the fifteenth day of the first month. Servile work is that work



which is done in earning a living. The work involved in offering sacrifices did not fall under that classification.

**NUM 28:19 But ye shall offer a sacrifice made by fire for a burnt offering unto the LORD; two young bullocks, and one ram, and seven lambs of the first year: they shall be unto you without blemish:**

**NUM 28:20 And their meat offering shall be of flour mingled with oil: three tenth deals shall ye offer for a bullock, and two tenth deals for a ram;**

**NUM 28:21 A several tenth deal shalt thou offer for every lamb, throughout the seven lambs:**

**NUM 28:22 And one goat for a sin offering, to make an atonement for you.**

**NUM 28:23 Ye shall offer these beside the burnt offering in the morning, which is for a continual burnt offering.**

**NUM 28:24 After this manner ye shall offer daily, throughout the seven days, the meat of the sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD: it shall be offered beside the continual burnt offering, and his drink offering.**

The same set of sacrifices was to be offered each of the seven days following the Passover. It was to begin on the fifteenth and close seven days later.

**NUM 28:25 And on the seventh day ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work.**

Just as it was on the first day of the Passover, it was to be true on the seventh that no work of the type done in earning one's living was to be done.

**NUM 28:26 Also in the day of the firstfruits, when**

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**ye bring a new meat offering unto the LORD, after your weeks be out, ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work:**

This day of the firstfruits is also known as the feast of weeks and the Day of Atonement. See Exodus 22:14 and Leviticus 23:15. On that day also there was to be no servile work done. The day was to be devoted to Jehovah.

**NUM 28:27 But ye shall offer the burnt offering for a sweet savour unto the LORD; two young bullocks, one ram, seven lambs of the first year;**

**NUM 28:28 And their meat offering of flour mingled with oil, three tenth deals unto one bullock, two tenth deals unto one ram,**

**NUM 28:29 A several tenth deal unto one lamb, throughout the seven lambs;**

**NUM 28:30 And one kid of the goats, to make an atonement for you.**

The word “atonement” is made up of three units, “at” “one” and “ment” The Day of Atonement was intended as an occasion when Israel would offer sacrifices which would bring them back into the good graces of the Lord in heaven. The same sacrifices were to be made on that day which were commanded for each month.

**NUM 28:31 Ye shall offer them beside the continual burnt offering, and his meat offering, (they shall be unto you without blemish) and their drink offerings.**

At no time was the daily burnt offering to be neglected. The weekly, monthly and yearly sacrifices were to be added to the morning and evening sacrifices of two lambs.

It is wise to offer the reader a chart summarizing the total number and kind of sacrifices which were to be offered.

| Occasion               | Burnt Offering |       |       | Sin Offering |
|------------------------|----------------|-------|-------|--------------|
|                        | Bulls,         | Rams, | Lambs | Goat         |
| Each Day               | -              | -     | 2     | -            |
| Each Sabbath           | -              | -     | 4     | -            |
| Each New Moon          | 2              | 1     | 9     | 1            |
| 15th-21st of 1st Month | 2              | 1     | 9     | 1            |
| Feast of Pentecost     | 2              | 1     | 9     | 1            |
| 1st of 7th month       | 3              | 2     | 16    | 1            |
| Day of Atonement       | 1              | 1     | 7     | 2            |
| Feast of Tabern. Day 1 | 13             | 2     | 16    | 1            |
| Day 2                  | 12             | 2     | 16    | 1            |
| Day 3                  | 11             | 2     | 16    | 1            |
| Day 4                  | 10             | 2     | 16    | 1            |
| Day 5                  | 9              | 2     | 16    | 1            |
| Day 6                  | 8              | 2     | 16    | 1            |
| Day 7                  | 7              | 2     | 16    | 1            |
| Day 8                  | 1              | 1     | 9     | 1            |

According to Gordon Wenham in his Commentary on Numbers, p. 197, the total would have been 1086 lambs, 113 bulls, 32 rams, more than a ton of flour and some 1,000 bottles of oil and wine for an entire year.

May I suggest that the reader might well examine the following verses. I think he or she will much more fully appreciate the sacrifice of Christ after comparison with the material above.

Heb 7:27 Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.

Heb 7:28 For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.

Heb 9:11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

Heb 9:12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

Christians now offer themselves as living sacrifices. The first day of each week replaces those many days, sabbaths, new moons and annual feasts. The blood of Jesus Christ replaces that of lambs, rams, bulls and goats. We can be thankful for the simplicity of the Christian system. All of this chapter and the next show us how the Lord pointed through the shadows of the Old Testament to the realities of the New.

## Chapter 29

As mentioned in the notes at the beginning of chapter twenty-eight, that chapter and the present chapter could have been combined into one chapter. Both deal with the various sacrifices Israel was to offer upon settling in the promised land. These commands were presented long before this as recorded in the book of Leviticus. There are slight differences in emphasis in Leviticus and in the material at hand. However, Israel was not being introduced to unfamiliar territory.

We continue then with the details of the offerings and sacrifices which God expected from the people He had delivered from Egypt and led through the wilderness.

**NUM 29:1 And in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work: it is a day of blowing the trumpets unto you.**

Just as the seventh day of the week was a very special day, the seventh month of the year was a very special month. There were three celebrations during the course of the month.

1. The Feast of Trumpets.
2. The Day of Atonement.
3. The Feast of Tabernacles.

Israel observed two distinct years. There was the religious year which began on the first of Abib. There was also the civil year which began on the first of Tishri, which was the seventh month.

The first day of the month of Tishri saw the blowing of trumpets and a cessation of servile or manual labor. It was to be a day of devotion to the Lord. A list of the sacrifices

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offered on this first day of Tishri is as follows.

Sixteen lambs.

Three bulls.

Two rams.

One goat.

Accompanying meat and drink offerings.

**NUM 29:2 And ye shall offer a burnt offering for a sweet savour unto the LORD; one young bullock, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year without blemish:**

**NUM 29:3 And their meat offering shall be of flour mingled with oil, three tenth deals for a bullock, and two tenth deals for a ram,**

**NUM 29:4 And one tenth deal for one lamb, throughout the seven lambs:**

**NUM 29:5 And one kid of the goats for a sin offering, to make an atonement for you:**

**NUM 29:6 Beside the burnt offering of the month, and his meat offering, and the daily burnt offering, and his meat offering, and their drink offerings, according unto their manner, for a sweet savour, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LORD.**

All of these offerings were to provide a sweet savour, or pleasant odor which would rise up to God.

**NUM 29:7 And ye shall have on the tenth day of this seventh month an holy convocation; and ye shall afflict your souls: ye shall not do any work therein:**

Another special gathering was to take place on the tenth day of the month of Tishri. This was the Day of Atonement. The affliction of the soul was not a physical

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beating. It was a conscious effort on the part of the person to defeat pride and the fleshly carnal desires. Once again, there was to be no occupational activity.

On this day the High Priest entered the Most Holy and offered sacrifices for both himself and the congregation. Repentance and sorrow for sin was the center of thought.

**NUM 29:8 But ye shall offer a burnt offering unto the LORD for a sweet savour; one young bullock, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year; they shall be unto you without blemish:**

**NUM 29:9 And their meat offering shall be of flour mingled with oil, three tenth deals to a bullock, and two tenth deals to one ram,**

**NUM 29:10 A several tenth deal for one lamb, throughout the seven lambs:**

**NUM 29:11 One kid of the goats for a sin offering; beside the sin offering of atonement, and the continual burnt offering, and the meat offering of it, and their drink offerings.**

One can hardly miss the lesson concerning the need for a once for all sacrifice which would later be made available through the blood of the Lamb of God.

Let us note the first twelve verses of the tenth chapter of Hebrews.

Heb 10:1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

Heb 10:2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

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Heb 10:3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.

Heb 10:4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

Heb 10:5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

Heb 10:6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

Heb 10:7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.

Heb 10:8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law;

Heb 10:9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

Heb 10:10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Heb 10:11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

Heb 10:12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

**NUM 29:12 And on the fifteenth day of the seventh month ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work, and ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days:**

The third major event of the twenty-ninth chapter of



Numbers is the Feast of Tabernacles. We now turn our attention to that memorial.

**NUM 29:13** And ye shall offer a burnt offering, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD; thirteen young bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year; they shall be without blemish:

**NUM 29:14** And their meat offering shall be of flour mingled with oil, three tenth deals unto every bullock of the thirteen bullocks, two tenth deals to each ram of the two rams,

**NUM 29:15** And a several tenth deal to each lamb of the fourteen lambs:

**NUM 29:16** And one kid of the goats for a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, his meat offering, and his drink offering.

This Feast began on the fifteenth day of the month of Tishri and continued for eight days. The number of lambs, and rams sacrificed each day remained the same. The number of bulls decreased by one each day until on the seventh day only seven bulls were sacrificed. As tempting as it may be, I will not speculate on why there were seven bullocks on the seventh day.

**NUM 29:17** And on the second day ye shall offer twelve young bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambs of the first year without spot:

**NUM 29:18** And their meat offering and their drink offerings for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, shall be according to their number, after the manner:

**NUM 29:19** And one kid of the goats for a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, and the meat offering thereof, and their drink offerings.

**NUM 29:20** And on the third day eleven bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish;

**NUM 29:21** And their meat offering and their drink offerings for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, shall be according to their number, after the manner:

**NUM 29:22** And one goat for a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, and his meat offering, and his drink offering.

**NUM 29:23** And on the fourth day ten bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish:

**NUM 29:24** Their meat offering and their drink offerings for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, shall be according to their number, after the manner:

**NUM 29:25** And one kid of the goats for a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, his meat offering, and his drink offering.

**NUM 29:26** And on the fifth day nine bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year without spot:

**NUM 29:27** And their meat offering and their drink offerings for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, shall be according to their number, after the manner:

**NUM 29:28** And one goat for a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, and his meat offering, and his drink offering.

**NUM 29:29** And on the sixth day eight bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish:

**NUM 29:30** And their meat offering and their drink offerings for the bullocks, for the rams, and



for the lambs, shall be according to their number, after the manner:

**NUM 29:31** And one goat for a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, his meat offering, and his drink offering.

**NUM 29:32** And on the seventh day seven bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish:

**NUM 29:33** And their meat offering and their drink offerings for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, shall be according to their number, after the manner:

**NUM 29:34** And one goat for a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, his meat offering, and his drink offering.

**NUM 29:35** On the eighth day ye shall have a solemn assembly: ye shall do no servile work therein:

**NUM 29:36** But ye shall offer a burnt offering, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD: one bullock, one ram, seven lambs of the first year without blemish:

**NUM 29:37** Their meat offering and their drink offerings for the bullock, for the ram, and for the lambs, shall be according to their number, after the manner:

**NUM 29:38** And one goat for a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, and his meat offering, and his drink offering.

I leave it up to the reader to see if he can condense the above into one meaningful paragraph. Then I would ask a question. Since God does not waste words, why do you suppose He repeated Himself so many times? Do you think you will have any great difficulty in remembering



how many bullocks were sacrificed during the Feast of Tabernacles.

This feast took place at the harvest season. It would remind the people of the years they spent living in tents or tabernacles while passing through the wilderness. It also gave them an opportunity to express their gratitude to God for His sending of a plentiful harvest.

**NUM 29:39 These things ye shall do unto the LORD in your set feasts, beside your vows, and your freewill offerings, for your burnt offerings, and for your meat offerings, and for your drink offerings, and for your peace offerings.**

**NUM 29:40 And Moses told the children of Israel according to all that the LORD commanded Moses.**



## Chapter 30

These latter chapters of the book of Numbers record preparations for entering into the conquest of Canaan. The people of Israel are on the plains of Moab and God is working through Moses to pave the way for life in that land.

This chapter discusses vows made by women. Some were binding and others were not. There was a need to clarify which fell in each category.

Some feel this chapter stands by itself with very little connection between that which came before it and that which is to come after. In spite of the doubts there are fairly clear connections. Chapter twenty-six dealt with the complaints of the daughters of Zelophehad. Chapters twenty-eight and twenty-nine have been concerned with offerings and sacrifices made to God. Since vows often were made concerning what voluntary sacrifices one promised to God, it seems in order that instructions be given to women regarding their responsibilities along that line.

**NUM 30:1 And Moses spake unto the heads of the tribes concerning the children of Israel, saying, This is the thing which the LORD hath commanded.**

Moses did not normally speak to the heads of the tribes in conveying God's will to the people. He was more apt to speak to the congregation.

**NUM 30:2 If a man vow a vow unto the LORD, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth.**

Moses began with a general statement which applied

to all who were capable of making vows. Every person who bound himself concerning a promise to either do something, or refrain from doing something toward Jehovah, was to do the very best to keep that promise. A vow was a statement of intent to act in a certain manner in the sight of the Almighty.

Some hesitate today to take an oath in the courtroom. When they are asked if they swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth before God, they refuse to do so. There is nothing wrong with promising with God as one's witness that the person will be truthful. The kind of swearing which is condemned in the scriptures has to do with taking the name of God in a vain or empty manner.

One more point should be made. Any person who has made the confession that Jesus Christ is the Son of the Living God, and has then been baptized for the remission of sins, has committed himself to live after the example of Christ. He or she is expected to honor that vow. Each time the individual comes together with others to participate in the Lord's Supper, that person is renewing the vow to walk in the footsteps of the Great Shepherd. That commitment is binding.

**NUM 30:3 If a woman also vow a vow unto the LORD, and bind herself by a bond, being in her father's house in her youth;**

The aim of the chapter is now narrowed to vows made by women. The responsibilities of several classes of women will be described. The first of these is the young women who is still under the supervision of her father and is living in her father's house. Her youth would be that period of time before she reached the age where she might be betrothed or married.





**NUM 30:4 And her father hear her vow, and her bond wherewith she hath bound her soul, and her father shall hold his peace at her; then all her vows shall stand, and every bond wherewith she hath bound her soul shall stand.**

If such a young woman made a vow to God, she had bound her soul to honor the vow. If her father heard the vow and said nothing about opposing it, she was honor bound to keep it. God would hold her responsible.

**NUM 30:5 But if her father disallow her in the day that he heareth; not any of her vows, or of her bonds wherewith she hath bound her soul, shall stand: and the LORD shall forgive her, because her father disallowed her.**

However, if her father spoke up right away in opposition to the vow, the young woman was released from the vow. Her father had the right to negate that which she had promised.

The reader should note the words “in that day.” This may, or may not, have meant a twenty-four hour day. But, it most certainly meant the father must not delay his objection. If the father objected, God would not hold the young woman to the vow.

**NUM 30:6 And if she had at all an husband, when she vowed, or uttered ought out of her lips, wherewith she bound her soul;**

**NUM 30:7 And her husband heard it, and held his peace at her in the day that he heard it: then her vows shall stand, and her bonds wherewith she bound her soul shall stand.**

If the woman who made a vow was married, any vow which she made was subject to the approval of her husband. If he did not object “in that day”, her vow was to be effective. Her soul was bound before God.

**NUM 30:8 But if her husband disallowed her on the day that he heard it; then he shall make her vow which she vowed, and that which she uttered with her lips, wherewith she bound her soul, of none effect: and the LORD shall forgive her.**

If her husband did object as soon as he heard of the vow, she was not bound. The Lord would not hold her responsible since she was to be subject to her husband.

The instructions directly above probably concerned betrothed women who were still living in the house of their father, but who were espoused to a husband. The reason for this conclusion is found in verse ten below where the words are directed to the woman who vowed “in her husband’s house.” This makes it appear that the one mentioned in verse six was still living in her father’s house.

Jewish maidens were often committed to a husband for a year or more before they began to live together. In this case the betrothed husband of the young woman had the right to deny her vow as soon as he heard about it.

**NUM 30:9 But every vow of a widow, and of her that is divorced, wherewith they have bound their souls, shall stand against her.**

Both widows and divorced women were no longer under the supervision of a husband. If they made a vow, they were held responsible by the Lord to keep it.

**NUM 30:10 And if she vowed in her husband’s house, or bound her soul by a bond with an oath;**

**NUM 30:11 And her husband heard it, and held his peace at her, and disallowed her not: then all her vows shall stand, and every bond wherewith she bound her soul shall stand.**

This is not a repetition of the that which was presented in verse six. This woman had left her father's house and was living with her husband. If her husband heard that such a woman had made a vow, and he did not object, the vow stood. She must keep it.

**NUM 30:12 But if her husband hath utterly made them void on the day he heard them; then whatsoever proceeded out of her lips concerning her vows, or concerning the bond of her soul, shall not stand: her husband hath made them void; and the LORD shall forgive her.**

If her husband denied the vow without delaying for a number of days, her vow was cancelled. God would not hold her responsible since she was to be in subjection to her husband.

**NUM 30:13 Every vow, and every binding oath to afflict the soul, her husband may establish it, or her husband may make it void.**

**NUM 30:14 But if her husband altogether hold his peace at her from day to day; then he establisheth all her vows, or all her bonds, which are upon her: he confirmeth them, because he held his peace at her in the day that he heard them.**

Silence gives consent! If the woman's husband delayed making objection for a number of days, he had in effect agreed to her oath.



**NUM 30:15 But if he shall any ways make them void after that he hath heard them; then he shall bear her iniquity.**

This verse attends to the difficulty arising if the husband delays making his objection to a vow for a period of time and then decides to cancel his wife's vow. The vow is then broken and the husband is responsible for the broken oath.

**NUM 30:16 These are the statutes, which the LORD commanded Moses, between a man and his wife, between the father and his daughter, being yet in her youth in her father's house.**

This summary verse is somewhat abbreviated. More than two of the classes in the chapter have been condensed into two main groups.

1. The case where the woman is still living in her father's house.

2. The case where the woman is living with her husband.

The matter of widows and divorcees is not included in the summary.

There are other possible cases. For example, that of the young boy who is still living in his father's house. It seems safe to conclude that such a young boy would also be subject to his father's veto.

## Chapter 31

This chapter discusses the war against the Midianites who had been responsible for seducing Israel into fornication and idolatry, thus causing the Lord to bring a plague upon His people that resulted in the deaths of 24,000 of them. Although God punished Israel for allowing themselves to be tempted into bowing down before Baal, He still was not through with the Midianites for having led His children into such sin. (See chapter 25.)

**NUM 31:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 31:2 Avenge the children of Israel of the Midianites: afterward shalt thou be gathered unto thy people.**

Moses was rapidly coming to the close of his leadership. He had labored diligently to bring them out of Egypt and to the border of Canaan. Because of his failure to give God the glory when He struck the rock to obtain water God had refused to allow him to enter the land with the people. This action against Midian was to be his last before he was replaced by Joshua.

But what did God mean by telling Moses he would be gathered unto his people? It was more than a message that the great prophet was about to die. It informed Moses that he would leave this life and be taken to a new state in which he would come into contact with God's faithful who had passed on before him. The consciousness of the faithful has not been extinguished. Jesus verified this truth in His words recorded in Mark 12:26-27.

Mar 12:26 And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush

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God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?

Mar 12:27 He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.

The bodies of men sleep in the grave. The souls go to either Tartarus or Paradise, depending on whether they opposed God, or loved and obeyed Him on earth. Moses appeared with Elijah and Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration. We may take the statement that he was to be gathered to his people as a promise of a new existence in the company of God's true children.

**NUM 31:3 And Moses spake unto the people, saying, Arm some of yourselves unto the war, and let them go against the Midianites, and avenge the LORD of Midian.**

Moses quickly relayed the command of Jehovah to the people. They were told to take up arms and fight against the Midianites.

The word vengeance is used here. Some will object that Christians are not to take vengeance. They are to return good for evil. Why then was Israel to execute vengeance upon Midian? The answer is that God is the proper one to determine when vengeance is needed. "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, I will repay. (See Romans 12;19).

Rom 12:19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

Humans are not omniscient. Our judgment is based on partial information. The vengeance which Israel was to take was commanded by the God of heaven whose



judgment is perfect. He knows the seriousness of the offense. He knows what punishment is due. The cup of Midian had become filled and running over with iniquity. Severe chastisement was necessary.

**NUM 31:4 Of every tribe a thousand, throughout all the tribes of Israel, shall ye send to the war.**

**NUM 31:5 So there were delivered out of the thousands of Israel, a thousand of every tribe, twelve thousand armed for war.**

One thousand armed men were to be taken from each of the twelve tribes and sent against this enemy of God. Twelve thousand may not seem like a massive number of soldiers, but we must remember that David overcame Goliath with a slingshot and a few pebbles. When God is for us who can successfully oppose us.

**NUM 31:6 And Moses sent them to the war, a thousand of every tribe, them and Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, to the war, with the holy instruments, and the trumpets to blow in his hand.**

The careful Bible student expects to find the name of Joshua as the head of this 12,000 man army. Instead, we find the name of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar the priest. Phinehas has trumpets to blow and what are called holy instruments. The Bible does not identify these holy instruments. They could have been the Urim and Thummim or they could have included the Ark of the Covenant. This was a holy war. God was the High Command.

**NUM 31:7 And they warred against the Midianites, as the LORD commanded Moses; and they slew all the males.**

There is a difficulty in this verse. We are told that all the males were slain. The Biblical record later informs us that Gideon fought against the Midianites. This leaves us cause to wonder how Midian could have continued existence for some two hundred years which passed from this annihilation of the males to the time of Gideon.

One possible answer is that the males were those which they were able to find. The Midianites were a nomadic people and many of the males could have been impossible to track down.

A second possibility is that it was only that portion of Midian who had allied themselves with the Moabites against His people that God commanded to be killed.

**NUM 31:8 And they slew the kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain; namely, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword.**

The word “kings” as used here would apply to men of influential leadership. There is a difference in the two Hebrew words used here. The word “slew” and the word “slain” are not the same. It seems that the kings mentioned were taken captive and killed after the heavy slaughter of their people was accomplished.

**NUM 31:9 And the children of Israel took all the women of Midian captives, and their little ones, and took the spoil of all their cattle, and all their flocks, and all their goods.**

Take careful note dear reader! The males among the Midianites were killed, but the women and children were kept alive. Israel should have realized by this time that





the Midianite women were a major reason why God was angry with them and sent the plague upon them. We can certainly see the possibility from our own vantage point that the same apostasy could very well be repeated.

**NUM 31:10 And they burnt all their cities wherein they dwelt, and all their goodly castles, with fire.**

**NUM 31:11 And they took all the spoil, and all the prey, both of men and of beasts.**

Is this a gruesome scene? Yes it is! It would be well to remember, however, that some day God will send the angels of heaven to take vengeance upon those who know not the Lord and who have not kept His word. That scene will not be pleasant either! Do not fight against the Lord.

**NUM 31:12 And they brought the captives, and the prey, and the spoil, unto Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and unto the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the camp at the plains of Moab, which are by Jordan near Jericho.**

**NUM 31:13 And Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and all the princes of the congregation, went forth to meet them without the camp.**

The victory over Midian was undeniable. The returning soldiers had livestock, jewelry, and human captives. This must have been quite a procession which was returning to the plains of Moab where the remainder of the congregation was encamped just across the Jordan River from Jericho.

Moses, Eleazar and the princes of Israel saw them coming and went out to meet them. The soldiers would be much surprised when they saw Moses reaction.



**NUM 31:14 And Moses was wroth with the officers of the host, with the captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, which came from the battle.**

**NUM 31:15 And Moses said unto them, Have ye saved all the women alive?**

Moses found it difficult to believe that those in charge of the battle had been foolish enough to take the women of Midian captive. He desired an explanation for such an action.

He could well have guessed that the men had cast a lascivious eye upon the captive women and looked forward to securing sexual pleasure from them. This would not do!

**NUM 31:16 Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD.**

The soldiers were reminded that these women had listened to Balaam and had led the men of Israel to commit fornication and idolatry which brought on the deaths of 24,000 of the people.

**NUM 31:17 Now therefore kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him.**

**NUM 31:18 But all the women children, that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves.**

Now even the infant males were to be eliminated.  
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Every woman who had participated in sexual intercourse with a man was to also be killed. The only ones of the Midianites that were to be left were the young girls who could not have been involved in the seduction of Israel to worship Baal.

We are not told just how the selection was made as to which of the young women were still virgins. When some saw others dying, it would be quite natural for them to deny ever being with a man. The only guarantee that every one of the women who was not a virgin would be slain was to make certain all who were even close to the age of possible sexual relationships were killed.

What is meant by saying the young women who were still virgins could be kept alive for themselves? Men of that time often had both a plurality of wives, and other women who were concubines. Christ was once asked why Moses allowed such things. His reply was that God had only permitted it because of the hardness of their hearts. It had not been so from the beginning.

The other possible explanation is that the young girls would later become maidservants to the Israelites.

**NUM 31:19 And do ye abide without the camp seven days: whosoever hath killed any person, and whosoever hath touched any slain, purify both yourselves and your captives on the third day, and on the seventh day.**

It had been a longstanding rule that if one touched the dead they became unclean and must go through a period of seven days purification before mixing with the rest of the congregation. Both the soldiers and the captives they brought back were in need of purifying.

**NUM 31:20 And purify all your raiment, and all that is made of skins, and all work of goats' hair,**

**and all things made of wood.**

**NUM 31:21 And Eleazar the priest said unto the men of war which went to the battle, This is the ordinance of the law which the LORD commanded Moses;**

Even the clothing which they wore had to go through the purification process. Coats woven of goat's hair and garments made of the skins of animals were to be cleansed. Any wooden articles were to undergo the same cleansing. This was not Moses judgment. It was God's command.

**NUM 31:22 Only the gold, and the silver, the brass, the iron, the tin, and the lead,**

**NUM 31:23 Every thing that may abide the fire, ye shall make it go through the fire, and it shall be clean: nevertheless it shall be purified with the water of separation: and all that abideth not the fire ye shall make go through the water.**

Metal would not be destroyed by heating it in the fire. The various metals would be melted down but would not be turned into ashes.

Anything that the fire would burn to ashes was to be purified with the water made from the ashes of a red heifer.

**NUM 31:24 And ye shall wash your clothes on the seventh day, and ye shall be clean, and afterward ye shall come into the camp.**

Only after the purification commands had been obeyed could the soldiers, or that which they had brought back, be taken into the camp of Israel.



**NUM 31:25 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 31:26 Take the sum of the prey that was taken, both of man and of beast, thou, and Eleazar the priest, and the chief fathers of the congregation:**

Moses, Eleazar and the princes of the people were to tally the numbers of captives, livestock and booty which had been taken.

**NUM 31:27 And divide the prey into two parts; between them that took the war upon them, who went out to battle, and between all the congregation:**

**NUM 31:28 And levy a tribute unto the LORD of the men of war which went out to battle: one soul of five hundred, both of the persons, and of the beeves, and of the asses, and of the sheep:**

The prey which was to be divided included both man and beast. This prey was to be divided into two equal parts. One part was to be awarded to the 12,000 men who went out into the battle. The other part was to go to the congregation who had been left by the Jordan River.

From that part which each group received a portion was to be taken as a tribute to the Lord for giving them success in the conflict.

For every five hundred of the captives and the livestock which had been given to the men who went to war, one was to be donated to Jehovah.

**NUM 31:29 Take it of their half, and give it unto Eleazar the priest, for an heave offering of the LORD.**

A heave offering was one that was lifted up before the Lord and dedicated to His service. This offering was to be presented to the Lord through Eleazar the priest.

**NUM 31:30 And of the children of Israel's half, thou shalt take one portion of fifty, of the persons, of the beeves, of the asses, and of the flocks, of all manner of beasts, and give them unto the Levites, which keep the charge of the tabernacle of the LORD.**

The tribute of the half which was given to the congregation who had stayed behind was ten times as much as that assigned to the men of war. These had not risked their lives. It was reasonable that they offer more.

**NUM 31:31 And Moses and Eleazar the priest did as the LORD commanded Moses.**

**NUM 31:32 And the booty, being the rest of the prey which the men of war had caught, was six hundred thousand and seventy thousand and five thousand sheep,**

**NUM 31:33 And threescore and twelve thousand beeves,**

**NUM 31:34 And threescore and one thousand asses,**

**NUM 31:35 And thirty and two thousand persons in all, of women that had not known man by lying with him.**

**NUM 31:36 And the half, which was the portion of them that went out to war, was in number three hundred thousand and seven and thirty thousand and five hundred sheep:**



**NUM 31:37** And the LORD'S tribute of the sheep was six hundred and threescore and fifteen.

**NUM 31:38** And the beeves were thirty and six thousand; of which the LORD'S tribute was threescore and twelve.

**NUM 31:39** And the asses were thirty thousand and five hundred; of which the LORD'S tribute was threescore and one.

**NUM 31:40** And the persons were sixteen thousand; of which the LORD'S tribute was thirty and two persons.

**NUM 31:41** And Moses gave the tribute, which was the LORD'S heave offering, unto Eleazar the priest, as the LORD commanded Moses.

**NUM 31:42** And of the children of Israel's half, which Moses divided from the men that warred,

**NUM 31:43** (Now the half that pertained unto the congregation was three hundred thousand and thirty thousand and seven thousand and five hundred sheep,

**NUM 31:44** And thirty and six thousand beeves,

**NUM 31:45** And thirty thousand asses and five hundred,

**NUM 31:46** And sixteen thousand persons;)

**NUM 31:47** Even of the children of Israel's half, Moses took one portion of fifty, both of man and of beast, and gave them unto the Levites, which kept the charge of the tabernacle of the LORD; as the LORD commanded Moses.

Another chart is in order here. The following has been passed down from Houbigant to Adam Clarke and now is set before you.

Total of sheep 675,000 337,500 to the soldiers—675 to God.

337,500 to the people-6750 to God.

Total of cattle 72,000 36,000 to the soldiers—72 to God.

36,000 to the people—720 to God.

Total of asses 61,000 30,500 to the soldiers—61 to God.

30,500 to the people—610 to God.

Total of persons 32,000 16,000 to the soldiers—32 to God.

16,000 to the soldiers—320 to God.

**NUM 31:48 And the officers which were over thousands of the host, the captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds, came near unto Moses:**

**NUM 31:49 And they said unto Moses, Thy servants have taken the sum of the men of war which are under our charge, and there lacketh not one man of us.**

We now come to another difficulty. How were 12,000 men of war able to bring back this amount of booty without the loss of a single man? May I ask a return question? How was Jehovah capable of bringing the earth, moon, sun, stars and all creation into existence? If the latter question can be answered, so can the former. God had already punished His own people by allowing a plague to strike them leaving thousands of them dead. He may have decided that was a sufficient loss on their part.





**NUM 31:50 We have therefore brought an oblation for the LORD, what every man hath gotten, of jewels of gold, chains, and bracelets, rings, earrings, and tablets, to make an atonement for our souls before the LORD.**

It is not absolutely certain that this offering to the Lord was the entire amount of precious jewels and other objects of value. A closer look may persuade the reader that this was the case. We are told it was what every man had gotten. They had brought it to Moses and Eleazar in appreciation to God for the protection of their lives.

**NUM 31:51 And Moses and Eleazar the priest took the gold of them, even all wrought jewels.**

**NUM 31:52 And all the gold of the offering that they offered up to the LORD, of the captains of thousands, and of the captains of hundreds, was sixteen thousand seven hundred and fifty shekels.**

**NUM 31:53 (For the men of war had taken spoil, every man for himself.)**

The point of these last few verses is that the value of the donation was immense. Just the weight of the gold was over four hundred pounds. We are talking about millions of dollars.

**NUM 31:54 And Moses and Eleazar the priest took the gold of the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and brought it into the tabernacle of the congregation, for a memorial for the children of Israel before the LORD.**

Some commentators believe only the officers in charge of the men of war gave this offering from their own share.

It is true that the captains brought the gold to Moses and Eleazar, but verse fifty speaks of what “every man had gotten.”

Moses and Eleazar received the oblation in the name of the Lord and placed it in the tabernacle as a continual reminder that God had watched over His own.



## *Chapter 32*

Up to this point a large number of instructions had been given with respect to God's plan for life in Canaan once they had settled there. Chapter thirty-two is a sort of interlude respecting the attitudes of the tribes of Reuben, Gad and part of Manasseh toward leaving the fertile land west of the Jordan and crossing into Canaan proper.

**NUM 32:1 Now the children of Reuben and the children of Gad had a very great multitude of cattle: and when they saw the land of Jazer, and the land of Gilead, that, behold, the place was a place for cattle;**

We have just previously been told of the large number of livestock which were taken from the Midianites. Livestock require pasture and the land just west of the Jordan has heavier rainfall than much of that area. This results in excellent pasture land. The tribes of Reuben and Gad had not failed to note that fact. Why these two tribes should have had more livestock and the other tribes is unknown. Perhaps they did not, but they were alone is desiring that fertile area.

**NUM 32:2 The children of Gad and the children of Reuben came and spake unto Moses, and to Eleazar the priest, and unto the princes of the congregation, saying,**

These two tribes approached Moses, Eleazar and the heads of the people with a serious request. It is to their credit that they did not simply make the decision to remain in the land of Gilead whether or not the rest of the congregation thought it proper.

**NUM 32:3 Ataroth, and Dibon, and Jazer, and Nimrah, and Heshbon, and Elealeh, and Shebam, and Nebo, and Beon,**

**NUM 32:4 Even the country which the LORD smote before the congregation of Israel, is a land for cattle, and thy servants have cattle:**

**NUM 32:5 Wherefore, said they, if we have found grace in thy sight, let this land be given unto thy servants for a possession, and bring us not over Jordan.**

The locations mentioned were all in the area which had just been taken from the Midianites. Since their eyes were open to the green pastures and their minds had overlooked the fact that this was not Canaan, they were placing themselves in a dangerous position. The borders of Canaan are spelled out later. They did not include the land east of the Jordan River.

Older commentators in particular point out that many in all generations have started to God's promised land, but have stopped short of Canaan. The point is very well taken.

**NUM 32:6 And Moses said unto the children of Gad and to the children of Reuben, Shall your brethren go to war, and shall ye sit here?**

Moses was emphatic in his reply to their request. Surely they did not expect to sit and watch while their brethren fought against the enemies of Jehovah! This would be very poor judgment. God would surely not overlook their shortsightedness.

**NUM 32:7 And wherefore discourage ye the heart of the children of Israel from going over into the land which the LORD hath given them?**



By ceasing their labors outside the land of promise, they were about to dampen the enthusiasm of those who would still have battles to fight.

If the reader doubts that the land Reuben and Gad were wishing to settle was outside the land which God had promised, this verse settles the issue. They were still outside!

**NUM 32:8 Thus did your fathers, when I sent them from Kadeshbarnea to see the land.**

**NUM 32:9 For when they went up unto the valley of Eshcol, and saw the land, they discouraged the heart of the children of Israel, that they should not go into the land which the LORD had given them.**

Moses reminded them of that which they must have heard again and again from the generation past. Moses had sent the spies into Canaan from Kadesh-Barnea. They had come back with news which had discouraged the people. The people then decided not to enter the land. The results were drastic.

**NUM 32:10 And the LORD'S anger was kindled the same time, and he sware, saying,**

**NUM 32:11 Surely none of the men that came up out of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob; because they have not wholly followed me:**

The Lord had been furious with that generation. If they did not wish to take possession of the land, He would honor their fear. Out of all those who were old enough to fight for the Lord, none would enter in.

**NUM 32:12 Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite, and Joshua the son of Nun: for they have wholly followed the LORD.**

Only the two spies who had brought back a report of confidence in following God's will would ever walk in the land of Canaan. These were Joshua and Caleb.

**NUM 32:13 And the LORD'S anger was kindled against Israel, and he made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation, that had done evil in the sight of the LORD, was consumed.**

Out of over 600,000 men, only two were to receive the promise. The rest were forced to wander in the wilderness of Sinai for forty years, until one entire generation had been replaced.

**NUM 32:14 And, behold, ye are risen up in your fathers' stead, an increase of sinful men, to augment yet the fierce anger of the LORD toward Israel.**

Now Moses felt the tribes of Reuben and Gad had forgotten this terrible lesson and were about to repeat the same hideous mistake.

**NUM 32:15 For if ye turn away from after him, he will yet again leave them in the wilderness; and ye shall destroy all this people.**

If the people turned back from following God's will, He would most certainly react as He had before. He would leave them in the wilderness until all of them died. Did the tribes of Reuben and Gad not see what they could be bringing on the entire congregation?

**NUM 32:16 And they came near unto him, and said, We will build sheepfolds here for our cattle, and cities for our little ones:**

The two tribes replied that if given a short time they could build places to protect their livestock and could build cities as dwelling places for their children. The building of cities would require much time. The original language here leaves room for a repairing of the cities which had been taken on that side of the River.

**NUM 32:17 But we ourselves will go ready armed before the children of Israel, until we have brought them unto their place: and our little ones shall dwell in the fenced cities because of the inhabitants of the land.**

Reuben and Gad would not abandon their brethren. They would even take the lead in the coming warfare, and would do so until the victory was complete.

Reuben and Gad had not been in the lead in the marches through the wilderness. They had been in the second rank. This suggestion was made to show they were not attempting to discourage the other tribes. They would do their part.

The fact is that they were not ready to settle in the land which God had promised. This later brought disaster. They were somewhat isolated from the other tribes who did cross the river. When the Assyrians attacked Israel in the years to come, these tribes were the first to fall.

**NUM 32:18 We will not return unto our houses, until the children of Israel have inherited every man his inheritance.**

**NUM 32:19 For we will not inherit with them**

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**on yonder side Jordan, or forward; because our inheritance is fallen to us on this side Jordan eastward.**

The two tribes would be with the others until the entire promised land was secured as Israel's inheritance from the Lord.

Then, when the conquest was complete, they would return to their families and settle in that fine pasture land east of the River.

**NUM 32:20 And Moses said unto them, If ye will do this thing, if ye will go armed before the LORD to war,**

**NUM 32:21 And will go all of you armed over Jordan before the LORD, until he hath driven out his enemies from before him,**

**NUM 32:22 And the land be subdued before the LORD: then afterward ye shall return, and be guiltless before the LORD, and before Israel; and this land shall be your possession before the LORD.**

Moses was willing to make a compromise. They would be expected to do as they had promised. All of them must go across the River with the other tribes and help them to drive out the Canaanites. When the land had been taken, they could return and settle east of the Jordan River.

If they did everything they had promised they would not be held guilty in the sight of God. They could claim the land which they desired.

**NUM 32:23 But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out.**





If they failed to keep all which they had promised, it would be sinful. The verse goes farther than to imply that they would be charged with sin. It means that such sin would also bring undesirable consequences.

This brings on a question as to whether the settlement east of the Jordan was in harmony with the will of Jehovah. Verse twenty-two stated that they would be guiltless, or be considered innocent if they did all they promised. When the men passed over the River the numbers are given. A little addition reveals that the number of men supplied by these two tribes was not all who could have gone. They did not keep their promise.

**NUM 32:24 Build you cities for your little ones, and folds for your sheep; and do that which hath proceeded out of your mouth.**

**NUM 32:25 And the children of Gad and the children of Reuben spake unto Moses, saying, Thy servants will do as my lord commandeth.**

Moses agreed to give them the time to repair the cities and build barriers to fence in their livestock. In return, they repeated their willingness to do all they had said.

**NUM 32:26 Our little ones, our wives, our flocks, and all our cattle, shall be there in the cities of Gilead:**

**NUM 32:27 But thy servants will pass over, every man armed for war, before the LORD to battle, as my lord saith.**

Take notice dear reader. The promise was that every man would pass over armed for war. Let us check it out! The census recorded in chapter twenty-six listed 43,730 men over twenty years old and able to go to war. The tribe



of Gad was said to have 40,500 men. The entire number of men from the tribe of Manasseh was 52,700. Half of the latter number would be 26,350. The total for the two and one half tribes would have been-

|              |               |
|--------------|---------------|
| Reuben       | 43,730        |
| Gad          | 40,500        |
| 1/2 Manasseh | <u>26,350</u> |

110,580 Men able to go to war.

If we then go to Joshua 4:13 we find the actual number who crossed over into Canaan.

Jos 4:12 And the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, passed over armed before the children of Israel, as Moses spake unto them:

Jos 4:13 About forty thousand prepared for war passed over before the LORD unto battle, to the plains of Jericho.

This means that over 70,000 men remained at home. It is little wonder that the two and one half tribes fared worse than the others in later days.

**NUM 32:28 So concerning them Moses commanded Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the chief fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel:**

**NUM 32:29 And Moses said unto them, If the children of Gad and the children of Reuben will pass with you over Jordan, every man armed to battle, before the LORD, and the land shall be subdued before you; then ye shall give them the land of Gilead for a possession:**

With Eleazar, Joshua and the fathers of the tribes as witness, Moses sealed the agreement. The Reubenites,



Gadites and one half tribe of Manasseh would be expected to help in conquering Canaan. In return, they would be allowed to possess the land of Gilead on the east side of Jordan.

**NUM 32:30 But if they will not pass over with you armed, they shall have possessions among you in the land of Canaan.**

If they would rather do so, they could go over with the others and settle on the west side of Jordan.

**NUM 32:31 And the children of Gad and the children of Reuben answered, saying, As the LORD hath said unto thy servants, so will we do.**

**NUM 32:32 We will pass over armed before the LORD into the land of Canaan, that the possession of our inheritance on this side Jordan may be ours.**

**NUM 32:33 And Moses gave unto them, even to the children of Gad, and to the children of Reuben, and unto half the tribe of Manasseh the son of Joseph, the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, and the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, the land, with the cities thereof in the coasts, even the cities of the country round about.**

This verse is the first mention of the 1/2 tribe of Manasseh. Only Reuben and Gad had been a part of the discussion previous to this. I assume that Reuben and Gad took the initiative and that the Manassehites followed their lead.

**NUM 32:34 And the children of Gad built Dibon, and Ataroth, and Aroer,**

**NUM 32:35 And Atroth, Shophan, and Jaazer,**

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and Jogbehah,

**NUM 32:36 And Bethnimrah, and Bethharan, fenced cities: and folds for sheep.**

The territory claimed by the Gadites lay directly east of the Jordan.

**NUM 32:37 And the children of Reuben built Heshbon, and Elealeh, and Kirjathaim,**

**NUM 32:38 And Nebo, and Baalmeon, (their names being changed,) and Shibmah: and gave other names unto the cities which they builded.**

The Reubenites settled the land east of the Dead Sea. The names of several of these cities were changed. The previous names had given honor to false gods. These names were eliminated.

**NUM 32:39 And the children of Machir the son of Manasseh went to Gilead, and took it, and dispossessed the Amorite which was in it.**

**NUM 32:40 And Moses gave Gilead unto Machir the son of Manasseh; and he dwelt therein.**

These last verses of the chapter have to do with the Manassehites. Machir and Jair were both sons of Manasseh. Machir subdued Gilead which lay to the northeast of the Sea of Galilee.

**NUM 32:41 And Jair the son of Manasseh went and took the small towns thereof, and called them Havothjair.**

Jair was also a son of Manasseh. He captured the smaller towns and renamed them.



**NUM 32:42 And Nobah went and took Kenath, and the villages thereof, and called it Nobah, after his own name.**

The name “Nobah” is found in only one other scripture. That is Judges 8:11. Because of it’s location here along with the Manassehites Machir and Jair, it seems logical to see Nobah’s territory as controlled by that tribe. Apparently the town was called Kenath until Nobah took it and then became known as Nobah.



## Chapter 33

This chapter contains a list of stops on the way from Egypt to the border of the promised land. Some have found it the most tedious reading in the entire Bible. Others have found just the opposite.

Many of the names included here are found only in this chapter. The record in the early part of Exodus should be examined and compared with this chapter. The names which are given are not necessarily those of villages. They are thought to have been attached to the stop by the Israelites themselves just to identify an encampment.

The attention of the reader is invited. The material may well be more vital than he or she first thought.

**NUM 33:1 These are the journeys of the children of Israel, which went forth out of the land of Egypt with their armies under the hand of Moses and Aaron.**

**NUM 33:2 And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys by the commandment of the LORD: and these are their journeys according to their goings out.**

The list begins as the congregation left the land of Egypt after the tenth plague when Jehovah visited upon the Egyptians. Moses and his brother Aaron were the leaders.

Moses was commanded to keep a record of their journey. He did so, and this chapter is the outcome of his labor. Moses is given credit for the first five books of the Bible, however this is the only place where it is specifically said that Moses did the writing. The chapter takes the form of a diary with a brief listing of the stops.



**NUM 33:3 And they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the morrow after the passover the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians.**

**NUM 33:4 For the Egyptians buried all their firstborn, which the LORD had smitten among them: upon their gods also the LORD executed judgments.**

Rameses was located in the land of Goshen in Egypt in the area of the Nile delta. The firstborn of the Egyptians had been slain on the fourteenth day of the first month of the year. The Egyptians were still grieving over the loss of the loved ones and were in the process of burying them.

The use of the words “high hand” means that Israel had the upper hand at that time and all the Egyptians could do was allow their departure. The false gods of the Egyptians had been shown to be helpless before the power of the Creator of heaven and earth.

**NUM 33:5 And the children of Israel removed from Rameses, and pitched in Succoth.**

The present verse is typical of the rest of the travel log. “And the children of Israel removed from \_\_\_\_\_ and pitched in \_\_\_\_\_.”

If the student of the Bible examines a good atlas map of the travels of the Israelites through the wilderness, it is easy to come to the conclusion that each of the stops has been precisely located. This is not the case. There are even serious doubts about the location of Mount Sinai. The general areas are fairly well defined, but exactness is impossible.



To save the reader from a task which might not be completed if we were not to give some assistance, a composite list of the locations listed in this chapter and those listed in the book of Exodus is given below.

Where significant events occurred a note will be added later when we look at the text verse by verse.

1. Rameses
2. Succoth
3. Etham
4. Pi-hahiroth
5. Marah
6. Elim
7. Red Sea
8. Wilderness of Sin
9. Dophkah
10. Alush
11. Rephidim
12. Sinai
13. Kibroth-Hattaavah
14. Hazereth
15. Rithmah
16. Rimmon-Perez
17. Libnah
18. Rissah
19. Kehalathah
20. Mount Shepher
21. Haradah
22. Makheloth
23. Tahath
24. Terah
25. Mithkah
26. Hashmonah
27. Moseroth
28. Mene-Jaakan
29. Hor-Haggidgad



30. Jotbothah
31. Abrona
32. Ezion-Geber
33. Wilderness of Zin
34. Hor
35. Zalmonah
36. Punon
37. Oboth
38. Iye-Abarim
39. Dibon-Gad
40. Almon-Diblathaim
41. Abarim Mountains
42. Plains of Moab

**NUM 33:6 And they departed from Succoth, and pitched in Etham, which is in the edge of the wilderness.**

The word Succoth means booths or tents. It does not appear to be the name of a village. Israel was living under tents.

Etham was at the edge of Egypt at the edge of the wilderness.

**NUM 33:7 And they removed from Etham, and turned again unto Pihahiroth, which is before Baalzephon: and they pitched before Migdol.**

**NUM 33:8 And they departed from before Pihahiroth, and passed through the midst of the sea into the wilderness, and went three days' journey in the wilderness of Etham, and pitched in Marah.**

The wilderness of Etham is called the wilderness of Shur in Exodus 15:22.

**NUM 33:9 And they removed from Marah, and came unto Elim: and in Elim were twelve fountains of water, and threescore and ten palm trees; and they pitched there.**

**NUM 33:10 And they removed from Elim, and encamped by the Red sea.**

Water and shade were precious to both humans and livestock. We are not told how long they remained. We know the entire wandering took forty years. We do not know the amount of time spent at each of the encampments.

They had been moving steadily toward the Red Sea from the time they left the land of Goshen. The translation is wanting here in that the literal meaning of the Hebrew is “Sea of Reeds.” Many later versions use that phrase.

**NUM 33:11 And they removed from the Red sea, and encamped in the wilderness of Sin.**

The wilderness of Sin is not the same as the wilderness of Zin which is mentioned in verse 36. This wilderness was entered in the early part of their travels and was near Mount Sinai. The wilderness of Zin was in the land of Midian and not encountered until near the end of the wanderings.

**NUM 33:12 And they took their journey out of the wilderness of Sin, and encamped in Dophkah.**

**NUM 33:13 And they departed from Dophkah, and encamped in Alush.**

**NUM 33:14 And they removed from Alush, and encamped at Rephidim, where was no water for the people to drink.**

Rephidim is notable in that it was at Rephidim that the



people complained for lack of water. Through the power of God, Moses brought forth water from the rock.

**NUM 33:15 And they departed from Rephidim, and pitched in the wilderness of Sinai.**

Important events took place at Sinai. The people spent about a year there. The reason these events are not recorded is that this is not a complete history of the travels. It is intended for the most part as simply a list of encampments.

**NUM 33:16 And they removed from the desert of Sinai, and pitched at Kibrothhattaavah.**

At Kibrothhattaavah the Israelites complained for lack of flesh to eat.

**NUM 33:17 And they departed from Kibrothhattaavah, and encamped at Hazeroth.**

**NUM 33:18 And they departed from Hazeroth, and pitched in Rithmah.**

The name Rithmah means “Juniper tree.” Very likely from a number of those trees which grew there.

**NUM 33:19 And they departed from Rithmah, and pitched at Rimmonparez.**

**NUM 33:20 And they departed from Rimmonparez, and pitched in Libnah.**

**NUM 33:21 And they removed from Libnah, and pitched at Rissah.**

**NUM 33:22 And they journeyed from Rissah, and pitched in Kehelathah.**

**NUM 33:23 And they went from Kehelathah, and**



**pitched in mount Shapher.**

**NUM 33:24 And they removed from mount Shapher, and encamped in Haradah.**

**NUM 33:25 And they removed from Haradah, and pitched in Makheloth.**

**NUM 33:26 And they removed from Makheloth, and encamped at Tahath.**

**NUM 33:27 And they departed from Tahath, and pitched at Tarah.**

**NUM 33:28 And they removed from Tarah, and pitched in Mithcah.**

**NUM 33:29 And they went from Mithcah, and pitched in Hashmonah.**

**NUM 33:30 And they departed from Hashmonah, and encamped at Moseroth.**

**NUM 33:31 And they departed from Moseroth, and pitched in Benejaakan.**

**NUM 33:32 And they removed from Benejaakan, and encamped at Horhagidgad.**

The locations mentioned in verses 19 to 31 are completely unknown.

The name Horhagidgad means cavern. A large cavern was probably found in this location.

**NUM 33:33 And they went from Horhagidgad, and pitched in Jotbathah.**

**NUM 33:34 And they removed from Jotbathah, and encamped at Ebronah.**

**NUM 33:35 And they departed from Ebronah, and encamped at Eziongaber.**

Eziongaber is thought to have been located on the western coast of the Red Sea.

**NUM 33:36 And they removed from Eziongaber,**

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**and pitched in the wilderness of Zin, which is Kadesh.**

Kadesh was the place where Miriam died. It was also a place where water was obtained from the rock. It lay near the border of Edom.

**NUM 33:37 And they removed from Kadesh, and pitched in mount Hor, in the edge of the land of Edom.**

Mount Hor is to be recognized as the place where Aaron died.

**NUM 33:38 And Aaron the priest went up into mount Hor at the commandment of the LORD, and died there, in the fortieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the first day of the fifth month.**

**Num 33:39 And Aaron was an hundred and twenty and three years old when he died in mount Hor.**

Aaron had been eighty-three years of age when the wanderings began. It is now forty years later.

**NUM 33:40 And king Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south in the land of Canaan, heard of the coming of the children of Israel.**

**NUM 33:41 And they departed from mount Hor, and pitched in Zalmonah.**

**NUM 33:42 And they departed from Zalmonah, and pitched in Punon.**

**NUM 33:43 And they departed from Punon, and pitched in Oboth.**



**NUM 33:44 And they departed from Oboth, and pitched in Ijeabarim, in the border of Moab.**

**NUM 33:45 And they departed from Iim, and pitched in Dibongad.**

This location is also known as Dibon. It seems to have been near the brook Arnon. The letters “gad” in the name may indicate the land of the Gaderenes in the area of Edom.

**NUM 33:46 And they removed from Dibongad, and encamped in Almondiblathaim.**

Almondiblathaim belonged to the Moabites according to Jeremiah 48:22.

**NUM 33:47 And they removed from Almondiblathaim, and pitched in the mountains of Abarim, before Nebo.**

Nebo was the mountain upon which Moses died.

**NUM 33:48 And they departed from the mountains of Abarim, and pitched in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho.**

**NUM 33:49 And they pitched by Jordan, from Bethjesimoth even unto Abelshittim in the plains of Moab.**

The plains of Moab were on the east side of the Jordan River just across from the city of Jericho. Moses leadership was nearing it’s close.

**NUM 33:50 And the LORD spake unto Moses in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho, saying,**

A charge is given Moses which is to be related to the people regarding God's expectations after they have cross the Jordan River and entered the land of Canaan.

**NUM 33:51 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye are passed over Jordan into the land of Canaan;**

**NUM 33:52 Then ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and destroy all their pictures, and destroy all their molten images, and quite pluck down all their high places:**

The Canaanites were to be entirely driven out of the land. The pictures of their false gods which were no doubt graven in stone were to be destroyed. The gold, silver and brass images which they worshipped were to be demolished. The high places where they worshipped were to be torn down

The Lord thy God is a jealous God. He loathes rivals.

**NUM 33:53 And ye shall dispossess the inhabitants of the land, and dwell therein: for I have given you the land to possess it.**

The promise of a land which would be given to his descendants reached all the way back to Abraham. God was now ready to give His people a second chance to take possession of it. They had failed because they saw themselves as "grasshoppers" before. Hopefully, the forty





years lesson to which they had been exposed would prevent such lack of faith this second time.

**NUM 33:54 And ye shall divide the land by lot for an inheritance among your families: and to the more ye shall give the more inheritance, and to the fewer ye shall give the less inheritance: every man's inheritance shall be in the place where his lot falleth; according to the tribes of your fathers ye shall inherit.**

The casting of lots was a means of determining which part of the land was to belong to each of the tribes. Under normal circumstances such an activity would be governed only by chance. It would not be so in this case because God would see that the lots fell in accordance with His will. Larger tribes were to receive larger portions of the land.

**NUM 33:55 But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell.**

The land of Canaan was to be completely rid of those who had lived there. Any who were allowed to remain would only make life difficult for Israel in the days to come. Neither an object in the eye, nor a thorn in the side is a pleasant experience. Both are to be avoided whenever possible.

God's prediction came to pass. Israel failed to completely eliminate the Canaanites from the land. As a result of intermarriage with those idolatrous people, Israel became corrupted and brought God's wrath upon them.



**NUM 33:56 Moreover it shall come to pass, that I shall do unto you, as I thought to do unto them.**

God had commanded that the Canaanites be driven out of the land. Since they were not driven out, Israel found herself driven from Canaan and taken into captivity in Assyria and then later in Babylonia.

### A FASCINATING NUMBER!

There is a strong possibility that this chapter contains significant truth which is only revealed by comparison of a number found here and also found in numerous other Biblical references. After having spent a large amount of time in writing commentary on the book of Revelation the present commentator is inclined strongly to follow the lead of Burton Coffman in his commentary on Numbers.

Coffman is not alone in his notes. At least a portion of what he has to suggest was advocated by a number of early writers. These individuals came to the conclusion that the number forty-two holds special meaning. We shall pursue the line of thought.

Any diligent student of the Holy Scriptures will recognize certain numbers as being especially meaningful. There is **one** God, **one** church, **one** mediator between God and man, etc. There are **three** persons in the Godhead. Christ rose on the **third** day. There were **three** great feasts. The heavens and earth were created in six days and God rested on the **seventh**. The **seventh** or Sabbath day was to be a day of rest. The blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat **seven times**. There were **twelve** patriarchs and **twelve** tribes. There were **twelve** apostles. There are **twelve** months in one year.

One represents unity. Three represents divinity. Seven represents perfection. Twelve represents leadership. We



could go further with this but this is enough to remind us of the meaning of certain numbers as used in the Bible.

In this thirty-third chapter of Numbers we have encountered the number forty-two. There were forty-two encampments for Israel as they made their way through the wilderness from Egypt to the land of Canaan. We can look at this as a period of testing as they moved from bondage to the land of promise.

The number occurs again in the first chapter of the book of Matthew. There were fourteen generations from Abraham to David. There were fourteen generations from David to the carrying away into Babylon. There were fourteen generations from the carrying away into Babylon until the birth of Christ. The three fourteens add up to forty-two generations. Is this coincidence?

Now note that the crossing of the Red Sea is a type of Christian baptism as seen in I Corinthians 10:1-2.

1Co 10:1 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;

1Co 10:2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

That same chapter goes on to compare the experiences of Israel in the wilderness to the trials of life in Christ in the wilderness of this world. On both a national and a personal basis, the record sees God's chosen as meeting the tests of faith before passing from bondage to the land of promise. The book of Hebrews makes the same type of comparisons.

We turn next to the book of Daniel. The number forty-two rises up in front of us again. (See Daniel 7:25.)



Dan 7:25 And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

A time is a year. A time, times and the dividing of a time is three and one half years. Three and one half years is forty-two months. Thus the saints were to be tested for forty-two months. (Next see Daniel 12:7.)

Dan 12:7 And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.

The power of the Holy people was to be scattered or tested for forty-two months.

Now let us move to the book of Revelation and follow the line of thought even further.

Rev 12:6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.

The woman in this verse is the church of Jesus Christ. She would be forced to flee into the wilderness where God would care for her for 1260 days, or forty-two months. Another reference to a period of testing and preparation for later reward.

Rev 12:14 And to the woman were given two wings of  
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a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

The church is nourished or fed by God to exist through the poisonous lies of the Devil for that same forty-two months.

Rev 13:5 And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.

The sea beast poured out boasting and blasphemy for forty-two months. His efforts were in opposition to God's people.

Rev 11:3 And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

God produces two witnesses who prophecy of testify for a period of forty-two months. This time we have support from the divine side and the truth.

Luk 21:24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

Rev 11:2 But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.

Both Luke and John, the penman for the Revelation, indicate that spiritual Jerusalem, the Holy City, will be



persecuted for forty-two months.

If this compilation of scripture is not sufficient to stimulate the curiosity of the reader, it certainly should do so. Three and one half is precisely half of a perfect seven. There is something which comes after the period of testing. That period of wandering in the wilderness of a world saturated with sin will some day come to a close. Across the river, on the other side of the Jordan of death, lies the land of promise.

1Co 10:11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

Heb 4:1 Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

My dear friends, if this chapter of Numbers is still only a boring list of forty-two stopping places whose names cannot be pronounced, you have gagged on manna from heaven!



## *Chapter 34*

The topics considered in this chapter are first, the divinely stated borders of the land which would be Israel's inheritance, and second, the selection of those men from each tribe who were to take the lead in the allotment to the nine and one half tribes who settled in Canaan proper.

**NUM 34:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 34:2 Command the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land of Canaan; (this is the land that shall fall unto you for an inheritance, even the land of Canaan with the coasts thereof:)**

Moses was not to define the borders of Canaan. Jehovah would set the limits of the land. The north, south, east and west boundaries would be drawn out carefully by the Divine will.

**NUM 34:3 Then your south quarter shall be from the wilderness of Zin along by the coast of Edom, and your south border shall be the outmost coast of the salt sea eastward:**

The southern line would begin at the east side of the south end of the Dead Sea, which is also known as the salt sea. This body of water is several times as salty as the Mediterranean. The Jordan River flows into it, but there is no outlet. Thus the minerals which enter it are trapped and accumulate. It lies some twelve hundred feet below normal sea level.

**NUM 34:4 And your border shall turn from the south to the ascent of Akrabbim, and pass on to Zin: and the going forth thereof shall be from the south to Kadeshbarnea, and shall go on to Hazaraddar, and pass on to Azmon:**

The line dipped southward a bit to include Kadesh-Barnea which was the site where the spies had been sent out forty years earlier. It then moved toward the Mediterranean through the Wilderness of Zin.

Just as in the case of the route taken by Israel as they wandered for those forty years, the precise location of the sites listed here is very difficult to pinpoint. The borders are fairly east to approximate, but impossible to draw with perfect confidence.

**NUM 34:5 And the border shall fetch a compass from Azmon unto the river of Egypt, and the goings out of it shall be at the sea.**

To fetch a compass is to follow a curved line. In this case, the river of Egypt is not the Nile. It is a much smaller waterway farther to the eastern part of Egypt.

**NUM 34:6 And as for the western border, ye shall even have the great sea for a border: this shall be your west border.**

The western border of the land is much simpler to envision. It followed the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. There is, however a difficulty in knowing just where the northern end of the western border was found. Historians differ sharply on this issue.

It is well to note here that Israel failed to take the land all the way to the sea on the west. The Philistines and





others who resided in that area put up serious opposition. This might have been a different story if the two and one half tribes that settled on the east side of the Jordan had continued to live in Canaan after aiding the other tribes, rather than going back across the river.

**NUM 34:7 And this shall be your north border: from the great sea ye shall point out for you mount Hor:**

The line was then to be drawn by looking from the Mediterranean toward Mount Hor. This cannot be the same mountain as that on which Aaron died. The latter would have been much farther south than this description would allow.

**NUM 34:8 From mount Hor ye shall point out your border unto the entrance of Hamath; and the goings forth of the border shall be to Zedad:**

**NUM 34:9 And the border shall go on to Ziphron, and the goings out of it shall be at Hazarenan: this shall be your north border.**

**NUM 34:10 And ye shall point out your east border from Hazarenan to Shepham:**

**NUM 34:11 And the coast shall go down from Shepham to Riblah, on the east side of Ain; and the border shall descend, and shall reach unto the side of the sea of Chinnereth eastward:**

Hamath and Zedad can be located with some degree of accuracy. The other sites listed in verses nine through eleven are much less definite.

The northern border does reach over to the northeast coast of the Sea of Chinnereth, which is also known as the Sea of Galilee, the Sea of Tiberias and the Lake of Gennesaret.



**NUM 34:12 And the border shall go down to Jordan, and the goings out of it shall be at the salt sea: this shall be your land with the coasts thereof round about.**

The eastern border then moves down the east side of the Sea of Galilee and follows the Jordan River and the Dead Sea until it reaches the southern end of the body.

It is very difficult to picture these borders, even approximately through the use of words alone. The reader will find a dependable Bible atlas to be of much help.

**NUM 34:13 And Moses commanded the children of Israel, saying, This is the land which ye shall inherit by lot, which the LORD commanded to give unto the nine tribes, and to the half tribe:**

**NUM 34:14 For the tribe of the children of Reuben according to the house of their fathers, and the tribe of the children of Gad according to the house of their fathers, have received their inheritance; and half the tribe of Manasseh have received their inheritance:**

God declared through Moses that the above boundaries were the limits of territory which were to be assigned to the nine and one half tribes who would settle in Canaan. The tribes of Reuben and Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh had already decided to claim land on the east of the river.

**NUM 34:15 The two tribes and the half tribe have received their inheritance on this side Jordan near Jericho eastward, toward the sunrising.**

**NUM 34:16 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 34:17 These are the names of the men which shall divide the land unto you: Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun.**

God appointed two men to lead in the division of the land. They were Joshua and Eleazar. This is interesting in that Joshua was a military leader and Eleazar was High Priest. They were to replace Moses, who was a military leader and Aaron, who was High Priest.

**NUM 34:18 And ye shall take one prince of every tribe, to divide the land by inheritance.**

The selection of one man of influence from each of the tribes would make it much less likely that unrest might occur over the allotment.

The location of the tribes in the land follows the list of princes beginning in the south and moving to the north. Judah and Simeon are southernmost. Asher and Napthali are in the north.

**NUM 34:19 And the names of the men are these: Of the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh.**

**NUM 34:20 And of the tribe of the children of Simeon, Shemuel the son of Ammihud.**

**NUM 34:21 Of the tribe of Benjamin, Elidad the son of Chislon.**

**NUM 34:22 And the prince of the tribe of the children of Dan, Bukki the son of Jogli.**

**NUM 34:23 The prince of the children of Joseph, for the tribe of the children of Manasseh, Hanniel the son of Ephod.**

**NUM 34:24 And the prince of the tribe of the children of Ephraim, Kemuel the son of Shipthan.**

**Num 34:25** And the prince of the tribe of the children of Zebulun, Elizaphan the son of Parnach.

**Num 34:26** And the prince of the tribe of the children of Issachar, Paltiel the son of Azzan.

**Num 34:27** And the prince of the tribe of the children of Asher, Ahihud the son of Shelomi.

**Num 34:28** And the prince of the tribe of the children of Naphtali, Pedahel the son of Ammihud.

**Num 34:29** These are they whom the LORD commanded to divide the inheritance unto the children of Israel in the land of Canaan.

The Levites did not inherit as did the other tribes. They were assigned certain cities with their suburbs. They were supported by tithes from the other tribes.

## *Chapter 35*

The instructions given in this chapter were delivered to Moses by Jehovah and were to be relayed to the people of Israel before they initiated the conquest of Canaan. The entire chapter presents a sort of court system which would deal with the proper treatment of those who had killed another person either intentionally or unintentionally. The Levites were to be given forty-eight cities of refuge. The nature of the cities and the purpose of the cities is explained.

**NUM 35:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho, saying,**

Israel is still encamped on the plains of Moab on the east side of the Jordan River. The tribes of Simeon, Gad and half of Manasseh were to inhabit that area. The other nine and one half tribes were to receive their inheritance after crossing the Jordan. These instructions apply to all of the people, regardless of the site of their inheritance.

**NUM 35:2 Command the children of Israel, that they give unto the Levites of the inheritance of their possession cities to dwell in; and ye shall give also unto the Levites suburbs for the cities round about them.**

The Levites had a different relationship with God than did the rest of the tribes. God claimed them as His peculiar possession in place of the firstborn of all Israel. They would not own these cities, but were to be given permission to dwell in them.

**NUM 35:3 And the cities shall they have to dwell in; and the suburbs of them shall be for their cattle, and for their goods, and for all their beasts.**

A certain amount of land surrounding each of the Levite cities was to be used for the grazing of their livestock. This livestock was a result of the tithe which the people were to present to the Levites. This tithe was not just money. It included other necessities of life.

**NUM 35:4 And the suburbs of the cities, which ye shall give unto the Levites, shall reach from the wall of the city and outward a thousand cubits round about.**

These Levite cities were no doubt of various sizes. From the outskirts of the city a measurement of one thousand cubits was to be made. This would not necessarily be a straight line. It would follow the outline of the city at a distance of one thousand cubits, or fifteen hundred feet.

**NUM 35:5 And ye shall measure from without the city on the east side two thousand cubits, and on the south side two thousand cubits, and on the west side two thousand cubits, and on the north side two thousand cubits; and the city shall be in the midst: this shall be to them the suburbs of the cities.**

In addition to the one thousand cubits assigned for the pasturing of the livestock, another one thousand cubits was to be measured off. This would probably have provided a place for other activities connected with the life of the city.

This two thousand cubits extending east, west, north and south of each city does not imply a perfect square.



It only informs us that there were two thousand cubits from the walls of the city to the extremity of the suburbs in every direction.

**NUM 35:6 And among the cities which ye shall give unto the Levites there shall be six cities for refuge, which ye shall appoint for the manslayer, that he may flee thither: and to them ye shall add forty and two cities.**

There were to be six cities appointed as cities of refuge. If a person had been responsible for the death of another person, that manslayer could flee to the closest city of refuge to insure that he or she was not the subject of a revenge murder.

Another forty-two Levite cities were scattered throughout the entire land, making a total of forty-eight.

**NUM 35:7 So all the cities which ye shall give to the Levites shall be forty and eight cities: them shall ye give with their suburbs.**

**NUM 35:8 And the cities which ye shall give shall be of the possession of the children of Israel: from them that have many ye shall give many; but from them that have few ye shall give few: every one shall give of his cities unto the Levites according to his inheritance which he inheriteth.**

After their selection these cities were still the property of the people of Israel, even though they were given to the Levites to dwell in.

If a tribe had a larger number of people and a larger territory, more Levite cities were to be selected. The number of cities was dependent upon the size of the tribe.



**NUM 35:9 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**NUM 35:10 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come over Jordan into the land of Canaan;**

The topic now narrows to those six Levite cities that were to be designated as cities of refuge.

**NUM 35:11 Then ye shall appoint you cities to be cities of refuge for you; that the slayer may flee thither, which killeth any person at unawares.**

If a person claimed he had taken the life of another person unintentionally, he had permission to flee to one of these cities of refuge to escape possible unjustified vengeance which might be attempted by the friends and loved ones of the person who had lost their life.

**NUM 35:12 And they shall be unto you cities for refuge from the avenger; that the manslayer die not, until he stand before the congregation in judgment.**

The word “until” is a key word in this verse. The person who had fled to the city of refuge was safe for the moment until he had gone through a trial to determine whether he was an intentional murderer, or had committed unintentional manslaughter.

There is reason to believe that the person was taken to the area in which the killing had taken place for the trial. Verse twenty-five speak of returning him to the city to which he had fled. This means the trial was held before a congregation in another place, probably the area in which the life was taken.





**NUM 35:13 And of these cities which ye shall give six cities shall ye have for refuge.**

**NUM 35:14 Ye shall give three cities on this side Jordan, and three cities shall ye give in the land of Canaan, which shall be cities of refuge.**

Three of the cities were to be located east of the Jordan. The other three were to be west of the river. Thus no one would find it necessary to cross the Jordan to reach a city of refuge.

The names of the six cities are not given in the book of Numbers. They are given in the twentieth chapter of Joshua.

Jos 20:7 And they appointed **Kedesh** in Galilee in mount Naphtali, and **Shechem** in mount Ephraim, and **Kirjatharba**, which is Hebron, in the mountain of Judah.

Jos 20:8 And on the other side Jordan by Jericho eastward, they assigned **Bezer** in the wilderness upon the plain out of the tribe of Reuben, and **Ramoth** in Gilead out of the tribe of Gad, and **Golan** in Bashan out of the tribe of Manasseh.

Jos 20:9 These were the cities appointed for all the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them, that whosoever killeth any person at unawares might flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, until he stood before the congregation.

**NUM 35:15 These six cities shall be a refuge, both for the children of Israel, and for the stranger, and for the sojourner among them: that every one that killeth any person unawares may flee thither.**



The regulations given were to apply not only to the children of Israel, but to any who had chosen to dwell in Canaan, and also to those who might be passing through the land. Travelers and non citizens who are in a land in which they are not citizens are still subject to the laws of the land in which they are found. It was to be so in Canaan.

**NUM 35:16 And if he smite him with an instrument of iron, so that he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death.**

The representatives of the congregation were to determine whether the refugee had committed intentional murder, or unintentional manslaughter.

The method of killing aided in determining this. If the one who did the killing used an iron instrument, it was almost certainly intentional. In that case the killer was to pay with his own life. (See Genesis 9:6.)

Gen 9:6 Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.

**NUM 35:17 And if he smite him with throwing a stone, wherewith he may die, and he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death.**

**NUM 35:18 Or if he smite him with an hand weapon of wood, wherewith he may die, and he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death.**

A stone can be just as deadly as a sword. If the killer had thrown a stone at the dead person, it could be assumed



that he committed murder. If he had used a wooden club, or even his fist, with deliberate malice, the killer was a murderer and was to die.

See Deuteronomy 19:4-6 for further details on manslaughter.

Deu 19:4 And this is the case of the slayer, which shall flee thither, that he may live: Whoso killeth his neighbour ignorantly, whom he hated not in time past;

Deu 19:5 As when a man goeth into the wood with his neighbour to hew wood, and his hand fetcheth a stroke with the ax to cut down the tree, and the head slippeth from the helve, and lighteth upon his neighbour, that he die; he shall flee unto one of those cities, and live:

Deu 19:6 Lest the avenger of the blood pursue the slayer, while his heart is hot, and overtake him, because the way is long, and slay him; whereas he was not worthy of death, inasmuch as he hated him not in time past.

**NUM 35:19 The revenger of blood himself shall slay the murderer: when he meeteth him, he shall slay him.**

The revenger of blood was the nearest of kin to the dead. It was his responsibility to see that the murderer paid with his life.

**NUM 35:20 But if he thrust him of hatred, or hurl at him by laying of wait, that he die;**

**NUM 35:21 Or in enmity smite him with his hand, that he die: he that smote him shall surely be put to death; for he is a murderer: the revenger of blood shall slay the murderer, when he meeteth him.**

The murderer would be one who had premeditated the killing and had done it through malice or hatred.



**NUM 35:22 But if he thrust him suddenly without enmity, or have cast upon him any thing without laying of wait,**

**NUM 35:23 Or with any stone, wherewith a man may die, seeing him not, and cast it upon him, that he die, and was not his enemy, neither sought his harm:**

**NUM 35:24 Then the congregation shall judge between the slayer and the revenger of blood according to these judgments:**

It was the responsibility of the congregation to decide whether the death was unpremeditated. If that was the case, the congregation was to declare the refugee innocent.

**NUM 35:25 And the congregation shall deliver the slayer out of the hand of the revenger of blood, and the congregation shall restore him to the city of his refuge, whither he was fled: and he shall abide in it unto the death of the high priest, which was anointed with the holy oil.**

The one who had undergone trial was to be taken back to the city of refuge to which he had fled for protection from the revenger of blood. He was to be protected in that city until the High Priest of Israel died. As long as he remained in the city of refuge, he was safe. If the avenger of blood killed him while he remained in the city of refuge, the avenger himself was counted as a murderer.

**NUM 35:26 But if the slayer shall at any time come without the border of the city of his refuge,**



**whither he was fled;**

**NUM 35:27 And the revenger of blood find him without the borders of the city of his refuge, and the revenger of blood kill the slayer; he shall not be guilty of blood:**

**NUM 35:28 Because he should have remained in the city of his refuge until the death of the high priest: but after the death of the high priest the slayer shall return into the land of his possession.**

Woe be unto the one who had fled to the city of refuge if he or she left the border of the city before the High Priest died. The avenger of blood could then kill him without guilt.

The reader is invited to compare what is said in Hebrews 6:18.

Heb 6:18 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

Writers have noted that Jesus Christ is our High Priest, and that no forgiveness of sins is possible without that death.

It is also wise to recall the protection afforded to those who caught hold of the horns of the altar. (See I Kings 1:50 and Exodus 21:14.)

1Ki 1:50 And Adonijah feared because of Solomon, and arose, and went, and caught hold on the horns of the altar.

1Ki 1:51 And it was told Solomon, saying, Behold, Adonijah feareth king Solomon: for, lo, he hath caught

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hold on the horns of the altar, saying, Let king Solomon swear unto me to day that he will not slay his servant with the sword.

Exo 21:14 But if a man come presumptuously upon his neighbour, to slay him with guile; thou shalt take him from mine altar, that he may die.

Later on it seems that others besides those who had killed also caught hold of the altar for protection.

Some have called attention to a similar practice among the heathen, but in those cases even vile criminals were protected if they managed to get within a certain distance of the gods shrines. This led to a concentration of wickedness and evil in those places. There is a sharp contrast between protecting criminals and providing time for an unprejudiced trial.

**NUM 35:29 So these things shall be for a statute of judgment unto you throughout your generations in all your dwellings.**

**NUM 35:30 Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses: but one witness shall not testify against any person to cause him to die.**

It was to be a continuing practice that if two witnesses agreed in their testimony that a murder had been committed, the murderer was to die. One witness would not be enough.

**NUM 35:31 Moreover ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death: but he shall be surely put to death.**

The word "satisfaction" here refers to some type of  
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ransom which would be paid in place of the death of the murderer. There is no payment valuable enough to compensate for the murder of one who has been created in the image of God.

A question then arises. Will the ransom paid by Jesus Christ as He shed His blood upon the cross be sufficient ransom for the murderer who truly repents for his deadly sin. It is possible that the answer may be found in the words of Christ while he looked down upon those at the foot of the cross and said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!" There are several lines of thought here. The statement in Genesis 9:6 seems absolute. Yet Jesus said, Ye have heard that it hath been said and eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, "but I say unto you—" We also run head on into the "sin unto death." (See I John 5:16-17.) Are there some deliberate sins which are never to be forgiven?

One thing is certain. Even under the Christian dispensation repentance is mandatory. If it is possible under the Christian age for a person who has truly repented of a deliberate murder to be forgiven, that person would have to penitent.

**NUM 35:32 And ye shall take no satisfaction for him that is fled to the city of his refuge, that he should come again to dwell in the land, until the death of the priest.**

That person who has been declared a manslayer rather than a murderer cannot be bailed out of the city of refuge. He must remain there until the death of the High Priest.

This may seem unjust, but we must remember that even his accidental taking of life is a loss to all mankind.



**NUM 35:33 So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are: for blood it defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it.**

If the regulations given in this chapter were to be ignored, Jehovah declares that blood shed during a murder pollutes the entire society in which it takes place. The murderer must pay with his own life.

**NUM 35:34 Defile not therefore the land which ye shall inhabit, wherein I dwell: for I the LORD dwell among the children of Israel.**

How strange it is that blood is a purifying agent and at the same time may act as a pollutant. Murder pollutes. The blood of the Son of God washes away the sins of the faithful and obedient.

God is not pleased to dwell in the midst of pollution. He did not wish to dwell among a defiled people in the days of Moses. He does not wish to dwell in hearts polluted with blood in any age





## *Chapter 36*

This short chapter of thirteen verses concludes the book of Numbers. Because of its close relationship to the first eleven verses of chapter twenty-seven many commentators feel it is out of place and should either follow immediately after those eleven verses, or those eleven verses should be placed in this present chapter before those which we find here.

This is not necessarily true. A period of time could have elapsed since the legislation given in those verses found in chapter twenty-seven. Moses is about to go up into Mount Nebo and close out his life. Such items as that mentioned in this present chapter would need to be attended to before the leadership was transferred to Joshua.

**NUM 36:1 And the chief fathers of the families of the children of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, of the families of the sons of Joseph, came near, and spake before Moses, and before the princes, the chief fathers of the children of Israel:**

The princes or chief fathers of the Machirites, who were of the tribe of Manasseh anticipated a serious problem. They brought it before the rest of the chief fathers of Israel for clarification.

**NUM 36:2 And they said, The LORD commanded my lord to give the land for an inheritance by lot to the children of Israel: and my lord was commanded by the LORD to give the inheritance of Zelophehad our brother unto his daughters.**

The word Lord is used twice in one sentence. Jehovah is "the Lord." Moses is referred to as "my lord. A lord was

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one who had the right to give directions. Moses was “my lord” because he had received directions from “the Lord” to relay to the people.

The daughters of Zelophehad had no brothers. They had been given permission to inherit their father’s property. This was going to cause complications in the passing of property only to members of the same tribe.

**NUM 36:3 And if they be married to any of the sons of the other tribes of the children of Israel, then shall their inheritance be taken from the inheritance of our fathers, and shall be put to the inheritance of the tribe whereunto they are received: so shall it be taken from the lot of our inheritance.**

If the daughters of fathers who had no sons had inherited property, as had the daughters of Zelopahad, and then married men from another tribe, the property would be transferred from one tribe to another. Property passed down through male members of a household.

**NUM 36:4 And when the jubile of the children of Israel shall be, then shall their inheritance be put unto the inheritance of the tribe whereunto they are received: so shall their inheritance be taken away from the inheritance of the tribe of our fathers.**

Even in the year of Jubilee, when purchased property was to return to its original owner, the problem would not be corrected since it would revert to the males whom the women had married. The Jubilee regulation applied only to property that had been purchased, and not to that which had been inherited. If anything, the Jubilee rule would only compound the problem.



**NUM 36:5 And Moses commanded the children of Israel according to the word of the LORD, saying, The tribe of the sons of Joseph hath said well.**

**NUM 36:6 This is the thing which the LORD doth command concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, saying, Let them marry to whom they think best; only to the family of the tribe of their father shall they marry.**

Moses consulted Jehovah and informed the people that the problem was real and needed to be dealt with. The solution was for the women who had inherited property in such manner were to marry only in their own tribe. The daughters of Zelophehad had married their cousins. Others were free to marry any whom they chose, as long as the man was of their own tribe. They did not have to marry their first cousins.

**NUM 36:7 So shall not the inheritance of the children of Israel remove from tribe to tribe: for every one of the children of Israel shall keep himself to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers.**

**NUM 36:8 And every daughter, that possesseth an inheritance in any tribe of the children of Israel, shall be wife unto one of the family of the tribe of her father, that the children of Israel may enjoy every man the inheritance of his fathers.**

**NUM 36:9 Neither shall the inheritance remove from one tribe to another tribe; but every one of the tribes of the children of Israel shall keep himself to his own inheritance.**

The basic reason for these precautions was that the land not pass out of the possession of the tribe to which it was first assigned.



Some see this as an indication that the land of Canaan was never to leave the possession of the descendants of the twelve tribes of Israel. This seems doubtful since in the Christian age the Jew is not the descendant of Abraham by flesh but by faith. The inheritance is spiritual rather than material.

**NUM 36:10 Even as the LORD commanded Moses, so did the daughters of Zelophehad:**

**NUM 36:11 For Mahlah, Tirzah, and Hoglah, and Milcah, and Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad, were married unto their father's brothers' sons:**

**NUM 36:12 And they were married into the families of the sons of Manasseh the son of Joseph, and their inheritance remained in the tribe of the family of their father.**

Christians today are commanded to marry "in the Lord." There would be less agony if every young man and woman took these words seriously. Yes, some mixed marriages between Christians and non-Christians have resulted in the non-Christian being converted and the children following Christ. However, many a man or woman has shed bitter tears when a non-Christian mate resisted their efforts to serve the Lord in spirit and in truth. Too many have watched as their children ignored the faith and failed to walk in the light of the gospel.

Tragically, it is also true that sometimes marrying another Christian can result in grief and sorrow. That mate whom one trusted to be faithful to God and to themselves "until death do you part" does not do so. Then the eternal inheritance may be lost to both, as well as to the children.

**NUM 36:13 These are the commandments and the judgments, which the LORD commanded by**



**the hand of Moses unto the children of Israel in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho.**

Thus closes the book of Numbers. It does not however close the directions being given to Israel before beginning the entry into Canaan. The book of Deuteronomy will continue with that task.



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