

Wilderness Wanderings - 2

Numbers 22-36

- ▶ Continuing our study of Israel in the wilderness.
- ▶ From the exodus to Mt. Sinai.
- ▶ In our last 2 lessons we noted:
 - Leaving Mt. Sinai and refusal to enter
 - Korah and his rebellion
 - Moses' error at Kadesh
 - Edom's refusal to let Israel pass through
 - The bronze serpent
 - Other events mentioned

Sihon and Og Defeated

▶ **Numbers 21:21-35**

- ▶ Sihon, (Ammorites) like Edom, refuses to let Israel pass through. BUT they come out to engage in battle. YHWH helps Israel defeat them
- ▶ Og, (Bashan) also comes out to battle and falls to Israel. They inhabit both lands.

Cf. Deuteronomy 2:26-3:11 – retells the conquests. This helps Israel as they prepare to take Canaan.

Note **Deut. 3:11 (Num. 13:33)**

Balaam and Barak

▶ **Numbers 22-25**

- ▶ Balak, king of Moab (along with Midian) is concerned and seeks to curse Israel with enchantments.
- ▶ He desires to hire Balaam (described by Joshua as a soothsayer – **Josh. 13:22**).
- ▶ The first time, Balaam inquires of YHWH, he is told to not go.
- ▶ They return a 2nd time with greater gifts – he asks again and is told he can go but **ONLY** speak the message of YHWH (**22:18-21** - the only thing he could do).

▶ **Numbers 22-25**

- ▶ On the way, the angel of the LORD tries to kill Balaam, but his donkey saves him 3 times. After his conversation with a dumb animal, he sees the angel and offers to return home. He is told to go but WARNED to only speak what YHWH tells him.
- ▶ 4 times, in different places, Balaam blesses Israel and Balak becomes angrier each time.

▶ **Numbers 25**

- ▶ Tragic result – Israel commits harlotry with Midian (and Moab) at Acacia Grove.
- ▶ A plague is sent through the land
- ▶ Before the tabernacle and congregation, Zimri, an Israelite presents Cozbi, a Midianite woman and goes in to her (**25:14-15**).
- ▶ Phinehas takes a javelin into the tent and impales both of them. The plague stops.

▶ **Numbers 25**

- ▶ Phinehas is blessed by YHWH (**25:10-13**)
- ▶ 24,000 died in that plague
- ▶ Israel is ordered to harass Midian (**25:16-18**, more in a few moments)

A 2nd Census Taken

▶ **Numbers 26**

- ▶ Toward the end of their wilderness wanderings, Moses & Eleazer are told to take a census of the men of war
- ▶ 20 years old and above. The total was, 601,730 (**26:51**). They also counted the Levites from 1 month old and above (**26:57-63**) – 23,000
- ▶ Compare **Num. 1:1-3, 45-46** – 603,550
- ▶ Note **Numbers 26:64-65**

▶ **Numbers 27:1-11**

- ▶ Daughters of Zelophehad had no brothers and their father died.
- ▶ Inheritance laws (given by YHWH), permitted them to receive an inheritance.
If no children, then his brother, then his uncle (father's side), then his closest relative.

Joshua appointed Israel's next leader

▶ **Numbers 27:12-23**

- ▶ Moses was instructed to anoint Joshua as Israel's next leader.
- ▶ Eleazer was to anoint him (confirming it with the Urim) before the congregation.
- ▶ **Numbers 28-30** – more laws related to the offerings of various feasts and the importance of vows.

Dealing with the Midianites

▶ **Numbers 31**

▶ Recall **Numbers 25:15-18**

- ▶ With 12,000 men, Israel totally defeats the Midianites and possesses their land.
- ▶ They brought back women and children. Moses was angry and all women who had known a man, and all male children were put to death (this was to stop the idolatry).

Dealing with the Midianites

▶ **Numbers 31**

- ▶ They divided the spoil between: 1) the 12,000 soldiers, 2) the rest of Israel (each received $\frac{1}{2}$).

The total of the spoils –

675,000 sheep

61,000 donkeys

72,000 oxen

32,000 virgin girls

- ▶ Portions were to be given to Eliezer & the Levites – $\frac{1}{500}$ from men of war, $\frac{1}{50}$ from rest of Israel.

- ▶ Note **Numbers 31:48-54**, no man of Israel died in the battle. They offered a gift of atonement to YHWH.

Inheriting the land East of Jordan

▶ **Numbers 32**

- ▶ Reuben, Gad and ½ Manasseh requested their inheritance be the land already conquered (Amorites, Bashan and Midian).
Moses expresses concerns that they will forget God and also discourage the other tribes.
- ▶ The men agree to go before Israel in battle to help conquer Canaan and not return until every tribe receives its inheritance.
- ▶ With that provision, their request is accepted.

The rest of Numbers

- ▶ **Numbers 33** – a review of places traveled
 - ▶ **Numbers 34** – Israel's appointed boundaries
 - ▶ **Numbers 35** – cities of the Levites, including the establishing of 6 cities of refuge
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Lessons to consider

- ▶ Balaam, an example of what greed will do.

1 Timothy 6:9-10,

Balaam mentioned 3x in NT – **2 Peter 2:15-16,**
Jude 11 & Revelation 2:14

- ▶ You cannot defeat God –

Balaam thought he could outsmart God.

24,000 die in a plague, BUT...

Midian is utterly defeated

Balaam is killed

1 Peter 1:24-25, Proverbs 19:21 – His plans stand

Lessons to consider

- ▶ When God says “no”, we need to respect His will
After the first time, Balaam should have quit asking!
– Why did God say to go the 2nd (and 3rd) time?
Was this a test of loyalty? Would you pass that test?
- ▶ When God speaks through a prophet, it is His word.
4x, Balaam declared he could NOT speak contrary
to YHWH (**Num. 22:18, 38, 23:26, 24:13**).
See **2 Peter 1:19-21**.
We can have confidence that what we have is His
word!

Lessons to consider

- ▶ Are you zealous for God?

Phinehas acted in zeal for YHWH. He was blessed. Will your zeal for Him prompt you to obedience even when unpleasant?

John 2:13-17, Matthew 21:12-13

Titus 2:14

- ▶ When God is silent, we must respect it. Consider the inheritance of daughters (**Num. 27**). They needed an answer from Him to progress
- ▶ If God be for us, who can be against us? When numbered against the Midianites, none were lost. Consider **Romans 8:31 (1 John 4:4)**

Spiritually we are in the midst of
our “wilderness wandering”
(**cf. 1 Peter 2:11**)

Are you preparing to
enter His Promised Land?

Let us pray!

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