

(Through the Bible) Numbers 1-10

by Chuck Smith

Chuck Smith's sermon on Numbers 1-10 emphasizes the importance of God's presence and centrality in the lives of the Israelites and draws parallels to contemporary society.

Duration: 1:24:31

Scripture: Numbers 1:1-7, Acts 13:2-3

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Obedience To God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker expresses their enthusiasm for the book of Numbers in the Bible, despite its initial redundancy. They highlight the exciting experiences of the children of Israel as God leads them towards the promised land. The speaker emphasizes the importance of being sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit, just as the Israelites were obedient to God's commands. They conclude by mentioning the somber moment when David's celebration was interrupted by God, teaching him the right way to do things. The sermon also touches on the challenges faced by the Israelites in the wilderness and the comparison between the number of people who entered and exited the forty years of wandering.

Transcript

This time let's turn to the Book of Numbers, so-called because twice in the book the children of Israel were numbered. Once at the beginning of their 40 years of wandering in the wilderness and then at their coming to the place of entering into the promised land. So in the two numbering of the children of Israel this book got its name.

And we're not going to belabor ourselves with all of the families and the numbers on an individual basis. But we'll be making some interesting comparison showing you that the wilderness experience was tough. That not as many came out at the end of the 40 years as went into it.

There was a population depletion during this period of time. It's like my little grandson a while back was saying, Grandpa, I want to stay at your house a long time. I don't want to go home.

I want to stay at your house, Grandpa. And I said, well, I'd like to have you stay for a long time, William. Grandpa would love to have you just move in with him and just stay with him.

And he said, great grandpa, because I'd like to do that because I don't want to go home. And I said, but why don't you want to go home? He said, it's tough living at home, Grandpa. And compared the way

Grandpa treats him and all, I imagine it would be tough living at home.

But it was tough living in the wilderness. And the children of Israel suffered from the ravages of the wilderness. And we'll be making a quick comparison as we look at the numbers who went in and how many fewer came out of the end of that 40 years of wandering than went into it.

So as we get into the book of Numbers, as I say, the name of the book implies the two census that were taken. And beginning with verse 1, the Lord spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the tabernacle of the congregation on the first day of the second month of the second year. Now the tabernacle was set up on the first day of the first month of the second year.

So this is one month after the tabernacle had been established. And the Lord told him to take the sum of all of the congregation of the children of Israel and their families. And they were to number the men who were above 20 years of age.

Those that would be able to go to battle in case of warfare. So not the children or not the women were counted in this census, but only those men who were above the age of 20. Now of the various tribes, there were chief men in each of these tribes.

And in verse 17, and Moses and Aaron took these men which were expressed by their names and assembled all the congregation together. So these names of these men are expressive of the men. Notice, which are expressed by their names.

Now all of the names actually had meanings in those days. They say that names today have meanings. And you want to, you know, you find out that your wife is pregnant and you want to name the child.

And so you go to a dictionary or something and you start looking at all the names and look at the meaning of the names. And there are some names, though they have beautiful meanings, for certain reasons have never been used for children to any great extent. I think of the name Lucifer.

Son of the Morning, really, it's a beautiful name. And yet it isn't a desirable name because of someone else who is already born that name. But with these men, their names that were expressions, they were expressed by their names.

So let's take a look at the names of these men. In verse 5, Eliezer is the first one, and Eliezer means, my God is a rock. In verse 6, Shalumiel, his name means, at peace with God.

In verse 7, Nashon means, a diviner. In verse 8, Nathanael means, the gift. of God.

In verse 9, Eliab means, my God is Father. In verse 10, Elishema means, my God has heard. And then also in verse 10, Gamaliel means, my God is a rewarder.

And in verse 11, Abaddon means, my father is judge. In verse 12, Ahezer means, brother of health. In verse 13, Pagiel means, event of God.

Verse 14, Eliasaph means, God addeth. And then the last guy, Ahirud, doesn't have too good a name. It is brother, his brother is evil.

So, he probably had an older brother that wasn't of too good a reputation. So, he picked up the name, his brother is evil. So, these are the 12 men who were to be more or less the captains or the leaders, the

princes, over the various tribes.

And so, the tribes are listed with their names. And you can go back and look over, if you are so inclined, the tribe that each of these men represented and were princes over these particular tribes. So, now we begin the numbering of the tribes.

And of the tribe of Reuben, in verse 21, of these adult males over 20 years of age, there were 46,500. In the second numbering, after the end of the 40 years, there were only 43,730. And so, there was a diminishing of almost 3,000 men of the tribe.

Of the tribe of Simeon, verse 22, of the number of Simeon, verse 23, were 59,300. At the end of the 40 years, there were only 22,200 of the tribe of Simeon. It was more than halved.

Of the tribe of Gad, 45,650. At the end of the 40 years, only 40,500. A loss of 5,150.

Of the tribe of Judah, verse 27, there were 74,600. The tribe of Judah increased in the wilderness wanderings to 76,500. So, it's one of the few that had an increase.

In verse 29, Ishkar, 54,400. There was an increase of an Ishkar of almost 10,000. At the end of the wondering, there were 64,300.

Of the tribe of Zebulun, 57,400. It increased to 40,500. Of the tribe of Ephraim, verse 33, 40,500.

It was cut down to 32,500. And so, a loss of 8,000 in the tribe of Ephraim. Of the tribe of Manasseh, 32,200.

And it increased to 52,700. Of the tribe of Benjamin, 35,400. Which increased to 45,600.

Verse 39, of the tribe of Danse, there were 62,700. They increased to 64,400. Of the tribe of Asher, 41,500.

Increased to 53,400. And so, the total number of the men that they numbered, verse 46, were 603,550. And so, those are the men above 20 years of age, those that were able to bear a spear and to go into war, who entered in to the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness.

And that whole generation died. Only two of those men were left to go into the Promised Land. The two were Joshua and Caleb.

Of which we will get next week, the faithful spies bringing the good report. Now, the Levites and the tribe of the Levites were not numbered because they were not to go to battle. They were to not be counted with the number of the men of Israel.

But they were to be appointed over the tabernacle to take care of the tabernacle and the vessels. And they shall bear the tabernacle and the vessels, and shall minister unto it, and shall encamp around about the tabernacle. And when the tabernacle goes forward, the Levites shall take it down.

When it is to be pitched there, to set it up. The tribe of Levi had, as its responsibility, the taking care of the tabernacle, the moving of it, the setting up of it, and the, of course, through Aaron and the priest, the services within the tabernacle. Now, as we get into chapter 2, we find God arranges the camp of Israel around the tabernacle.

Verse 2, every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard with the sign of their father's house, or the incense of their father's house, far off about the tabernacle of the congregation shall they pitch. So it is interesting as we get a, a picture in our minds of the, of the great company of people that were moving through the wilderness. I don't know if there is any migration in history that actually parallels this particular migration, as far as the, the length of time in, in which the migration took place, and the number of people that were migrating.

But, to get the picture of the camp of Israel, first of all, the center of the entire camp was the tabernacle. The place of meeting. And the cloud rested on the tabernacle during the day, and the pillar of fire rested on the tabernacle at night.

It is very significant that the tabernacle sat right in the center of the camp of Israel. Because God was desiring to be at the center of the nation. The center of the hearts of these people.

So that every man in Israel, when he would get up in the morning and walk out of the tent door, looking to the center of the camp, he would see the cloud there resting upon the tabernacle, and he was reminded of the centrality of God among these people. Oh, how important it is that God is the centrality of a nation. When a nation is centered around God, that nation is destined for greatness.

As long as there is that consciousness of God at the center of a people, there is always that potential for greatness. It is when people lose the centrality of the concepts of God, and God is no longer the center of their life. God no longer is the center of the national life, then that nation is in decline.

It is tragic indeed that where once God was the center of our nation, and our nation was really founded upon God, and our founding fathers sought to bring to the people a consciousness and awareness of God, and the need of God in our national life. Printing on our coins, in God we trust, which has today become almost a hypocrisy, because we've come to trust in the coins, in the money, rather than in God. But as you look at the Constitution, and as you look at the Bill of Rights, and as you listen to the words of the songs, the National Anthem, and all, we see how that they put God into the whole warp and whoop of the national life of America.

And as long as we had that centrality of God, our nation became strong. In the first public schools in the United States, the Bible was the textbook. They taught the children how to read out of the Bible.

They taught them the ABCs out of the Bible. It was the first textbook, and in many schools the only textbook. And now our courts have ruled that it is illegal to use the Bible in public schools, except it be taught in a class of literature and any expressed faith.

Or belief is illegal. How tragic! Where our nation was really founded with God at the center, we have moved so far. And it is no wonder that we see the national decline that we see today in proportion to our endeavor to put God out of the national life of America.

In that same proportion that God is being pushed out, in that same proportion, we see our nation in a decline. Children of Israel had the tabernacle right in the center, and the whole camp was encamped about the tabernacle. It was the center of their national existence.

It was the center of their national life. What a beautiful place! So, in chapter 2, we find out that they placed the tribes all around the tabernacle, beginning, first of all, with the tribe of Judah and Ishkar and Zebulun. Now, these tribes had for their ensign a lion, and they were encamped upon the east side of the

tabernacle.

And the color was green. The color of the flag of these tribes on the east side was green. The total of the camp of Judah, Ishkar and Zebulun, was a hundred and eighty-six thousand four hundred in their army.

Now, these were to set forth first. Then, on the south side of the tabernacle, was to be the tribes of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad. The ensign of this tribe had the face of a man.

The distinguishing color of the flag was red, and they were camped upon the south side of the tabernacle. A total of a hundred and fifty one thousand four hundred and fifty in their armies. On the west side of the tabernacle, were the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin.

Their ensign had on it the head of a calf. And the color of the flag was golden. The total number of the camp of Ephraim was a hundred and eight thousand one hundred.

Then, on the north side, the tribe of Dan, and Asher, and Naphtali. Their ensign was an eagle. The flag was red and white.

And the total number of the tribe of Dan was a hundred and fifty seven thousand six hundred. Now, with these ensigns, we have, first of all, a lion, the face of a man, and then we have the head of a calf, and an eagle. What does that bring to mind? As we read the description of the cherubim, in Ezekiel and in Revelation, we realize that these were actually the faces that are on the face of the cherubims.

The four faces of the cherubim actually represented in the ensigns of the camp of Israel. So, you have the concept of the angels of the Lord encamping around about his people. God in the center, the tabernacle, the place of meeting God, but encamped around the people of God, the ensigns which are reminding of the cherubim how the angel of the Lord is encamped around about the righteous.

And so, again, even in the banners and in the ensigns was the reminder of the spiritual nature of these people. Now, in chapter 3, God had Moses set out the tribe of Levi into three major families. The family of Gershon, the family of Kohath, and Mereri.

And so, the Levites were divided into the three major family groupings. Verse 10, Thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons. They shall wait in the priest's office.

The stranger shall not, who tries to come near, will be put to death. Verse 12, And I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of the firstborn, that opens the matrix, even among the children of Israel. Therefore, the Levites are mine.

Now, after God destroyed the firstborn in Egypt, He said, all of the firstborn are mine. They belong to me. Now, God has chosen the tribe of Levi instead of the firstborn.

And that is, instead of every family committing their firstborn unto the priesthood, now God has chosen one tribe, the tribe of Levi. It is to be the priestly tribe. And as I say, to be divided into the three basic families.

Verse 15, Number the children of Levi after the house of their fathers by their families. Every male from a month old upward shalt thou number. So, instead of the 20 years of age like in the other tribes, they were to count all of the males from a month old, older.

And these are the names of the sons of Gershon and then of Kohath and then of Mererai in 18, 19 and 20. And it names the family heads of these men. Now, of the family of Gershon, there were 7,500 males.

They were to encamp next to the tabernacle on the west side. Of the family of Kohath, well, first of all, their job when they when they would have to move would be the tent and the covering and the hangings for the door and the hangings of the court and the curtain of the door of the court, which is by the tabernacle and the altar roundabout and the cords of it. They were to carry these portions of the tabernacle.

Next, the family of Kohath, and today we have the Kohens, which do trace their ancestry or seek to at least to the tribe of Kohath. And so, you have the rabbis, the Kohens, are of this priestly tribe of Kohath. And of the Kohans or Kohaths, there were 8,600.

They were to pitch on the south side of the tabernacle, and it was their duty to carry the ark, the table, the candlestick, the altars, and the vessels of the sanctuary, the hangings, and the services of them. And of the tribe of Mererai, verse 33, there were 6,200. They were to camp on the north immediately next to the tent, the tabernacle, and it was their duty to carry the boards and the bars and the pillars and the sockets and the vessels and all of that service and the pillars of the court roundabout and their sockets and pins and cords.

But those that encamp before the tabernacle toward the east, even before the tabernacle of the congregation, shall be Moses and Aaron and his sons. So, we get now another view of the camp of Israel. For immediately to the west of the tabernacle, camping next to it, were the tribe or were the tribe of Levi, but the family of Gershon.

And then immediately to the south was the family of Kohan, to the north was the family of Mererai, and then right in front of the entrance to the east side was Moses and Aaron and his sons. And thus, you see now, if you were in a helicopter looking down on the camp of Israel, this is the kind of a view that you would get of the camp. As the tabernacle is right in the center, the tribe of Levi encamped immediately about it, and then the 12 tribes on out around the camp further out.

Now, those that were numbered of the Levites, which Moses and Aaron numbered at the command of the Lord throughout their families, all the males from a month old and upward, were 22,000. Now, because the Lord said, the firstborn are mine, and they numbered all of the male Levites, they're 22,000. God wants to make sure that he gets a fair deal.

So he said, now number all the firstborn throughout all of Israel. And so they numbered the firstborn throughout all of Israel, and there were 22,273. God said, I'm short, because there were only 22,000.

So he's short 273. So he said, you're gonna have to buy the 273. So charge five shekels of silver up for the 273 and give it to Aaron, because I'm short that many.

I should have, if he took all the firstborn, 22,273. Only 22,000 of the Levites, so you owe me 273. So charged at the rate of five shekels of silver.

They brought the silver and redeemed those 273 from the Lord and gave the money to Aaron. Now in chapter 4, we find that from the tribe of Kohath, the men that were to actually do the service of carrying it all, of course, they numbered them from a month old upwards. It's obvious that little kids couldn't carry these heavy boards and these things.

So the men who were in charge, and the older men, would have difficulty. So they chose those men from 30 years of age to begin the ministry at 30 years, and they retired at 50 years. And so the time of service was from 30 to 50.

And when the camp is ready to move forward, Aaron and his sons are to come in, and they are to take down the covering veil and cover the Ark of the Covenant with that covering veil. And then they're to put over it the badgers skins, and shall spread over it a cloth of blue. And they'll put the golden staves in the rings that were on the Ark of the Covenant.

And then they were to take the table of showbread, and put over it a cloth of blue, and put the dishes, and the spoons, and the bowls, and the covers on it. And the continual bread was to be left upon it. And they shall spread on them a cloth of scarlet.

And then they are to cover that with badger skin. So over the table of showbread, there was to be a blue cloth, a red cloth, the badger skin, the little dishes, and the bread was to remain upon it. And they were to put the golden staves through it.

So that when the men from the tribe of Kohath came in, they would not see the Ark of the Covenant. They would not see the table of showbread. They would not see the lamps.

Lest if they see them, they die. Aaron's and his sons were to cover all these things, wrap them up, get them ready to carry. And then these fellows would come in, and just pick up the sticks, and would carry them as porters with these staves, and not even touch the instruments themselves, but carry them between the sticks.

They weren't even to touch the Ark of the Covenant, though it was covered in all with these skins, nor were they to look upon it. And they shall take a cloth of blue, and cover the candlestick, the light, and the lamps, and the tongs, the snuff dishes, and all the oil vessels. And they shall put all of the vessels thereof within a covering of badger skin, and put it on a bar.

And the golden altar, they shall spread over it a cloth of blue, and cover it with badger skins, and put in the staves. And all of the instruments of ministry, wherewith they minister in the sanctuary, put them in a cloth of blue, cover them with covering for badger skins, and shall put them on a bar, and shall take away the ashes of the altar, and so forth. And Kohath shall bear it, but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die.

Verse 15, the latter portion. The things are the burden of the sons of Kohath, the tabernacle of congregation. So, when they got up in the morning, and the cloud had lifted, and was moving, Aaron's sons would have to hustle in, and they start taking the veil apart.

And with the veil, they'd cover the Ark of the Covenant. And then they'd put over it the cloth of blue, and then the badger skins, and they'd wrap up all of these instruments that were there within the tabernacle, put the golden staves through, and then the sons of Kohath would come in, take the staves, and begin to carry them. That was the duty of the sons of Kohath.

Whenever the call came to move. Now, in verse 16, Eleazar, who was the son of Aaron, the priest, concerning the oil for the light, and the sweet incense, and the daily meal offering, and the anointing oil, and the oversight of the tabernacle, and all that is in it, in the sanctuary, and the vessels of it. And the Lord spake to Moses and Aaron, saying, Cut ye not off the tribe of the families of the Kohathites from among

the Levites.

But thus do unto them that they may live and not die when they approach the most holy things. Aaron and his sons shall go in and appoint them, every one, to his service and to his burden. But they shall not go in to see when the holy things are covered, lest they die.

So, they were not to look upon them, but Eleazar was to take them in and say, okay, you get on that, you get on that. And Eleazar was to direct them to pick up the staves, and how to do it, so that those men who were carrying the Ark of the Covenant would not die. Now, we have an interesting case, later on in history, when the Ark of the Covenant had been taken by the Philistines.

And, of course, it created a problem in every city where the Philistines took it. The men were breaking out with boils, and, and horrible things, and all, wherever they'd take the Ark of the Covenant. So, when they started to bring it to another city, the men met them at the gate and said, no way you bringing that thing in here.

What do you got against us? And so, they decided that they would send it back to the children of Israel. Now, they thought, well, maybe it's just coincidence. So, we'll put it on a cart, and we'll let these oxen go, and, and we'll see what direction they go.

If they just roam around, we know the whole thing is coincidence. But, if they head back for Israel, then we'll realize that that's what our problem is, that we've got this, this spiritual thing here, and we don't know how to handle it. So, they put the Ark on this cart, and they put these oxen to it, and the oxen headed right towards the camp of Israel, just lowing all the way, just going, moo, you know, they're going along, carrying the Ark back towards Israel.

Of course, when the Israelites saw the Ark of the Covenant coming, there was a great rejoicing. And so, David was extremely happy, he, bringing the Ark back to Israel. And so, they were having this great ceremony, and they were out there rejoicing and bringing the Ark, and they went over a bump, and the Ark started to fall, and one of the fellows reached forth his hands to steady the Ark, and in touching it, he was smitten dead.

Now, this upset David. Wow! All of this happiness and rejoicing, all of a sudden, it's very somber. And David said, turn that thing in, and he went on home.

He said, I don't have anything to do with that. And he was really sort of angry with God for breaking up this happy celebration. But God then dealt with David and told him, look, there's, there's the right way to do the right thing.

And you can be doing the right thing in a wrong way. And David was doing the right thing in a wrong way. And so, rather than on an ox cart, like they had it, they were to carry it.

And so, after a time, David went out, brought the priest, they did sacrifices before the Lord, they had the staves, they carried the thing in the way it should have been done, and it was brought back and placed again there in the tabernacle in Jerusalem at the time of David. And so, God was serious when he said, hey, don't let these guys look on it, and don't let them touch it, lest they die. And so, it was a protection for those of the tribe of Kohath that had to handle these holy things, that Aaron's sons do it upright, so that it would protect the lives of these men who would be bearing these sacred instruments that have been created for the worship of God.

Now, the tribe of Gershon, in verse 24, this was the service of the family, not the tribe of Gershon, but the family of Gershon, the tribe of Levi. They shall bear the curtains of the tabernacle, and of the tabernacle of the congregation, the coverings, the coverings of the badger skin that are above it, the hangings of the door of the tabernacle, and the hangings of the court, and the hangings of the door of the gate of the court, which is by the tabernacle, and the altar that is round about it with the cords and the instruments of the service, and all that is made for them, so shall they serve. And at the appointment of Aaron and his son 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 the charge of their burdens, and this is the service of the family of the sons of Gershon.

And so, all of these curtains, and you remember there were actually four curtains over the top of the tabernacle, and the hangings over the door, and this curtain that went all the way around the tabernacle, these were to be carried by the family of Gershon. And then finally, the sons of Mirari, thou shalt number them from thirty years old, and it is their charge to carry the boards of the tabernacle, and the bars thereof, the pillars, and the sockets, and the pillars of the court round about, and their sockets, their pins, and the silver sockets that they went into, and all, and this was to be the burden of Mirari. So, actually, this whole thing was quite portable.

These guys could move in, collapse the whole thing, and carry it off, and then they could set the thing up again. When they came to the place where the cloud was resting, they would go ahead and set up the tabernacle where the cloud rested, and when the cloud moved, they moved. When the cloud set, they set.

And so, the family of Levi, or the tribe of Levi, by these families, each one had their own duty in the carrying of the tabernacle, and the number of the men that were involved in this task was 8,580. So, they had a pretty good crew working on the setting up of the tabernacle, and the taking down of it, and carrying it, and so forth, whatever the case may be. Now, in chapter 5, they are told to cleanse the camp by putting out every leper, and those that have any kind of a issue from their body, and those who have been defiled by touching a dead body.

And God didn't want any type of defilement in the camp where he dwells. So, the children of Israel did so. They put out of the camp those that were leprous, those that had any running type of sores, and those who had been defiled by touching dead bodies.

And the Lord is speaking to Moses, verse 5, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, when a man or a woman shall commit a sin that men commit to trespass against the Lord. The person is guilty. They shall confess their sin, which they have done, and then they shall recompense in their trespass, and offer, actually, before the Lord, the ram of the atonement, whereby an atonement shall be made for him, and an offering of all the holy things of the children of Israel.

And every man's hallowed thing shall be his, whatsoever man hath given the priest, it shall be his. And so, then we have this law of jealous husbands. Now, if a woman has had an affair, and her husband doesn't know it, and she doesn't get pregnant, hasn't been found out.

But if a spirit of jealousy would suddenly come on a husband, and he would wonder whether or not his wife was really being faithful to him, then he was to bring his wife before the priest with an offering for her of a tenth part of an ephaph of barley, which would be, a tenth part would be about a couple quarts. He shall pour no oil upon it, or put any frankincense thereon, for it is an offering of jealousy, bringing iniquity to remembrance. And the priest shall bring her near and set her before the Lord.

And the priest shall take the holy water in a earthen vessel, and the dust that is in the floor of the tabernacle, the priest shall take and put it in the water. And then he is to charge this woman with a severe oath, and she is to drink this bitter water. And he said, if you have been unfaithful to your husband, may this water cause your belly to swell and your stomach to rot.

And a woman would have to drink the bitter water, and then wait for the consequences. And if her stomach would swell, and all, then she was considered guilty and was put out. But if there was no ill effect, then she was considered to be innocent, and her husband's jealousy was unfounded.

Imagine if you had an extremely jealous husband, and every week you're drinking this bitter water. Man, you women have come a long way. That would really be tragic.

It would be difficult indeed, if your husband was an extremely jealous kind of a person, always hauling you in before the priest, and going through this routine, and making you drink that bitter water. So that's the law of jealousies, and when the spirit of jealousy comes on a husband and all. Now in chapter six, we have the rules for taking a vow of a Nazirite.

Now the vow of a Nazirite was a vow of consecration unto God. And if you wanted to make a special consecration of yourself to God for a period of time, you could enter into the vow of the Nazirite. During which time that you were going through this vow of the Nazirite, you were not to drink any wine, or any grape juice, or eat any grapes, or even raisins.

You were not to take anything that came from the vine to eat it. You can even eat Sarma, because that's grape leaves and all. And you could have nothing from the vine, and you would allow your hair to grow during the time of the vow.

You wouldn't shave, or you wouldn't cut your hair. And that was the vow of consecration unto God. Now this is the vow that Samson was to have from his birth.

For when Manoah's wife was barren, and the angel of the Lord came to her and informed her that she was going to have a son, and she was not to bring a razor to his head, not to allow him to drink anything from the vine, any wine or anything. And that through him, God would begin to deliver the Israelites from the camp of the Philistines. She came to her husband, and she said, there was a man that met me out in the field, and said I was going to have a son, and I wasn't to shave his head, and he's going to be a Nazirite, and so forth.

And her husband says, I'd like to meet this fellow. If he shows up again, let me know. So she was out in the field again, and the angel appeared again.

She said, would you mind waiting here a minute while I go get my husband? He wants to meet you. So Manoah came, and when he saw the angel, he said, well, I just, you know, she was excited, and I just figured I'd find out directly from you. Just how do you want me to raise this boy now? And so the angel repeated the instructions to Manoah.

He was to be a Nazirite. Never was a razor to come to his head. Devour the Nazirite from birth.

The sign of consecration unto God. Now, in the process of time, Samson became involved with Delilah, and she daily was pressing him for the secret of his strength. And in a moment of weakness, after this continued pressure, he said, if you would shave the hair of my head, then I would be weak like any other

man.

Now, there are many people who from this get a false concept, thinking that Samson's strength lay in his long hair. False. Hair cannot make you strong, or the lack of it doesn't make you weak.

His strength lay in his consecration to God. And the absence of his hair was the sign of the broken commitment to God. Any man who will consecrate his life to God has a source of strength and power.

But a broken vow, a broken covenant, and you become weak as any other man. And that was Samson's own testimony. If they cut my hair, I will be weak as other men.

But all the strength that lies in dedication to God, the strength that lies in commitment, in consecration, and Samson's life from his birth was a life of consecration, the vow of the Nazirite. But when that consecration was broken, the shaving of the head, the symbol of the broken consecration, then the weakness that was there. And so this is the vow of the Nazirite.

Now, Jesus was known as a Nazarene. The vow of the Nazirite was no razor to come during the period of the vow. And not to drink anything from the vine.

And so when you wish to, when the thing was over, your period of consecration that you had made and your time of separation, then you were to bring a lamb of the first year for a trespass offering. And you are to be brought to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And the priest shall offer the offering unto the Lord.

Lamb of the first year without blemish for a burnt offering. And a ewe lamb of the first year without blemish for a sin offering. And a ram for a peace offering.

So the threefold offering, a burnt offering, which is consecration, burnt offering is consecration, which you have been consecrating yourself. The sin offering and the peace offering, the offering of fellowship or communion with God. You are also to bring a basket of unleavened bread cakes, a fine flour mingled with oil, the wafers of unleavened bread anointed with oil for the meal offering and the drink offering.

And the priest shall bring them before the Lord and offer the sin offering and the burnt offering. And he shall offer the ram for a sacrifice of the peace offerings unto the Lord with a basket of unleavened bread. And the priest shall offer also his meal offering and the drink offering.

And the Nazirite shall shave the head of his separation at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation and take the hair and put it in the fire, which is under the sacrifice of the peace offerings. So now your period of consecration, or you shave your head, you take your hair and you burn it there at the time that they are burning the peace offerings. You put it on the fire of the peace offering.

And the priest shall take the sodden shoulder of the ram with one unleavened cake out of the basket and one unleavened wafer and shall put them in the hands of the Nazirite after his hair has been shaved. And the priest shall wave them as a wave offering before the Lord. This is holy for the priest with a wave breast and the heave shoulder.

And after that, the Nazirite may drink wine. This is the law of the Nazirite who has vowed and of his offering unto the Lord for the separation beside that that is in his hand that shall he get according to the vow which he has vowed. And the Lord's speaking to Moses saying, speak unto Aaron, unto his son,

saying on this wise, shall ye bless the children of Israel.

Now the priest had a twofold function. His first ministry was to stand before God representing the people because a man could not approach God. It was impossible for sinful man.

It is impossible for sinful man to approach a holy, righteous God. The holiness of God would just burn you to a crisp because of the sinfulness in your life. Therefore, the unrighteous, unholy man could not approach the holy God.

Thus, you needed someone to approach God for you. And that was the office of the priest. You would come to him, bring your sacrifice to him.

He would take your sacrifice before the Lord and he would go before the Lord to represent you. But then he was to come back to you and represent God. So his ministry was twofold, representing the people unto God and representing God unto the people.

Now, this is how he was to represent God. When he came back to the children of Israel, he was to represent God with this threefold blessing. The Lord bless thee and keep thee.

The Lord make his face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace. And God said, And thus shalt thou put my name upon the people.

This name of God, which is only represented in the text by the consonants, no vowels. So the pronunciation of it became impossible. The name of God was represented in the text by the capital letters Y H V H, just the consonants, because they didn't want people pronouncing the name of God even in their minds.

Thus, the pronunciation for the name of God was lost. And whether it be Jehovah or Yahweh is a matter of theological debate, but nobody really knows for sure. But it was that glorious name by which God revealed himself to the people, which is really not so much a name, but a verb which means the becoming one.

As God becomes to man, whatever man's need might be. And thus the name of God was often coupled with other things. As when Isaac said to his father Abraham, Here is the wood, here is the fire, where is the sacrifice? And Abraham said, Jehovah Jireh.

The Lord will provide himself a sacrifice. And later he called the name of the place Jehovah Jireh. The Lord will provide.

God becomes our provider. Later on, when the children of Israel were battling against the Amalekites, and they had come out against the children of Israel with their trained army, marching under their banners of war. And the children of Israel just so soon from slavery, totally unskilled in the art of war, no banners, just a bunch of guys with staves and sticks.

Someone perhaps said to Moses, Where are the banners? And he said, Jehovah Shammah. The Lord is our banner. He's become our banner.

Again, God revealed himself as Jehovah Rapha. He has become our healer. The Bible tells us in Jeremiah that when that kingdom age comes, he will be known as Jehovah Tisigkanu.

The Lord has become our righteousness. But we know that name in its most familiar form, the name Jehovah as Jesus. For the name Jesus is the Greek for the Hebrew contraction of Jehovah Hashua, or Jehovah is salvation.

And when Joseph was questioning on whether or not to have Mary stoned or to put her away privately, the angel of the Lord said, Don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife. That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. She's going to bear a son.

Thou shalt call his name Jesus, Yahshua, for he shall save his people from their sins. He is expressed by his name, even as were these leaders of Israel. Jesus, Jehovah, our salvation.

So the Lord bless thee. God wanted his name to be put on the people. First of all, relating to blessings for God wants to bless his people and the blessing of his keeping power, the blessing of his grace and the blessing of his peace.

These are the blessings that we are received through Jesus Christ. Now unto him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory. Grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

And he is our peace who has broken down the barriers that existed between us. So the name that God put upon the people was all fulfilled in Jesus Christ. The Lord bless thee and keep thee.

The Lord cause his face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee. Even as the face of Jesus did shine as the sun and the shining face always bespeaks hope of goodness of grace and related to grace and then lift up his countenance, the smiling face. Your countenance is lifted up.

A fallen countenance is a scowl, is a frown. So many people imagine God scowling at them or frowning at them. Our older daughter was going through one of those moods that children often go through where nobody loves her.

And she was just a couple of years old and she was just, she had to be corrected. And when she was corrected, nobody loves her. Everybody hates her.

Nobody loves her. And I said, now Jan, you know better than that. We love you.

Oh, no, you don't. Well, Jesus loves you. No, he doesn't.

I said, what do you mean? She said, I just looked up at that cloud and he put his head out from behind it and stuck his tongue out at me. Her little imagination was running wild, just like my grandson. The other day they were coming home from central California and they came through a tremendous electrical storm, lightning all over the place.

And he was just sitting there in the backseat, just enjoying it thoroughly. And as they were driving down the road, he went to sleep. And when he woke up, he said, I had a dream that Jesus was up in heaven, pulling switches.

And every time he'd pull a switch, the lightning would flash, you know. And he said, there was this little rabbit hopping along the road and Jesus pulled a switch and the lightning electrocuted him. And his mother said to him, oh, William, that's awful.

And he said, well, maybe he didn't know the lightning was going to hit him. And Chuck Jr. said, William, Jesus knows everything. He said, well, I guess he just wanted to zap the rabbit.

But it's amazing what our imaginations can do. They can run wild. And so often we imagine God scowling at us.

God is angry with me. God is frowning at me. God said, this is how I want you to put my name on the people.

Tell them the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace. Oh, how glorious the smile of approval. What peace is in my heart as I with open face behold the glory of the Lord.

See that bright shining face and realize that God is smiling at me because he loves me and I am his son and I am in Christ Jesus. And in him, I have experienced the grace of God, the peace of God, and the keeping power of God. These are the blessings that belong to the children of God who are in Christ Jesus.

But the whole Old Testament economy, the priesthood, the tabernacle, all testify of how unapproachable God is by man. You cannot approach God directly. You pull a switch and you get zapped.

Thus, if you want to approach God apart from Jesus Christ, there's no way. There's not even a priesthood anymore. There's not even sacrifices being offered.

There's no one to go before God for you. This is the thing that troubles me most about the so-called devout Jew today. I don't care how devout they are in their worship.

What are they doing about their sin? How can they approach their God? God established the covenant whereby men could approach him in the Old Testament. But that covenant that God established was by the law and by the sacrifices of the law. And without any sacrifice, without any priest, without someone to go before God for them, how can they dare come before their holy, righteous God, bringing their good works, and expect to be accepted? They're not even honoring the covenant that God made with their own people.

And thus, no matter how sincere or devout they may be, they have no approach to God until they reestablish that old covenant. But even then, they will not find that it will avail now that God has abolished the old covenant that he might establish the new covenant through Jesus Christ. Now, Christ is the mediator of the new covenant.

For it is necessary that in the approach of God there be a mediator. The priest was a mediator of the old covenant. Jesus Christ has become the mediator of the new covenant.

And it is through Jesus Christ that I approach God, and that God approaches me. It is through Jesus Christ that I come into fellowship with God, and I come to know God. And thus, Jesus Christ is very important to anyone who seeks to approach God.

Now, in chapter 7, we find that the twelve princes of the tribes of Israel brought in their offerings to the Lord. And in verse 3, we read, they brought six covered wagons and twelve oxen, and a wagon for two of the princes. In other words, every two princes brought one wagon and an ox from each, and they brought them to the tabernacle.

And they were to be given to the tribe of Levi, the families, in order to help them as they carried some of the curtains and all that went with the tabernacle. And so, two wagons and four oxen he gave to the sons of Gershon. Four wagons and eight oxen they gave to the sons of Mirari, according to the service that they did.

But the sons of Kohath, who carried the Ark of the Covenant and all, they did not use wagons. They were carried on those golden staves. And so, they were to be borne upon their shoulders.

They did not get any wagons. Now, each of the princes then came forth, and they brought their offering of one silver charger. The weight of it was 130 shekels, and one silver bowl of 70 shekels after the shekel of the sanctuary.

Both of them were full of fine flour mingled with oil for a meal offering, and one spoon of ten shekels of gold full of incense, one young bull, one ram, one lamb the first year for a burnt offering, one kid of the goats for a sin offering, and for a sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five goats, five lambs of the first year. This was the offering of Nason, the son of Aminadab. And each of the princes brought the identical same offering.

And so, it would only be redundant if we read each of them in the seventh chapter. But each of them brought the same offering to the Lord, and it was given unto the Lord. This was for the dedication of the altar in the day that it was anointed.

The princes of Israel brought these offerings unto the Lord, and they are summed up, beginning with verse 84, to the end of the chapter. And in verse 89, 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 on the ark of the covenant between the two cherubims, and there God spoke to Moses. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron, and say unto him, When you light the lamps, the seven lamps that shall give light, there in the candlestick.

And so Aaron lighted the lamps of the candlesticks. And then there was to be the cleansing of the Levites, and they were to be sprinkled with the water of purifying, and to wash their clothes and make themselves clean. And they were to bring the Levites before the Lord, and the children of Israel shall put their hands upon the Levites.

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. So this is sort of almost an ordaining for the ministry. Like in the New Testament, they would lay hands upon those that were going to minister.

Fifteenth chapter, is it? Acts 13 chapter. And the Spirit said, Separate unto me Paul and Barnabas for the ministry where I have called them. And so when they had fasted and prayed, they laid hands on them, and the Spirit sent them forth.

It's sort of an ordaining kind of a process, the laying on of hands. And so the tribe of Levi was to be brought before the tabernacle, and then the congregation of Israel gathered around them and laid their hands on them. These men are to minister for us in spiritual things.

And then those of the tribe of Levi shall lay their hands on the heads of the bullocks. And they were to offer one for a sin offering, and one for an offering of consecration to the Lord, to make the atonement for the Levites. And thus they were to begin their ministry and service unto God for the people.

Verse 24, This is that which belongs to the Levites from twenty-five years old and upwards, who will go in and wait on the service of the tabernacle of the congregation. But at fifty years they retire, and there's no longer a service. But they will minister with their brothers in the tabernacle of the congregation to keep the charge, but you don't have to carry any burdens after you're fifty years old.

In chapter nine, the Lord, in the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, there were certain men who came to Moses and they said, When you kept the Passover, we were unclean. That is, they had touched a dead body or something, and thus on the fourteenth day they weren't able to observe the Passover. And so they came to Moses with this problem.

That day we were ceremonially unclean. We couldn't participate. What shall we do? So Moses said, Well, let's wait and inquire of the Lord.

So Moses went in before the Lord and said, Lord, what shall we do about these fellows? And the Lord said that if they were ceremonially unclean and could not observe the Passover in the fourteenth day of the first month, or if they were out of the country, then they could observe it in the fourteenth day of the second month. But if you were not ceremonially unclean or you weren't away, then there was no excuse for not observing at the fourteenth day of the first month. And if you failed to observe it, then you were to be cut off from the camp of Israel.

In other words, it was a requirement for every adult male to observe the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month, unless there be the extraneous causes, which would then give you the privilege or permission to observe it the fourteenth day of the second month. But by all means, you were to observe it every year. And so God gave the special orders concerning those men.

Now, beginning with verse fifteen, we read how the camp moved along. And on the day that the tabernacle was raised up, the cloud covered the tabernacle, namely the tent of the testimony. And that evening there was upon the tabernacle the appearance of fire until the morning.

And so it was always the cloud covered it by day, and there was the appearance of fire by night. 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 rested there, the children of Israel pitched their tents at the commandment of the Lord.

The children of Israel journeyed at the commandment of the Lord. They pitched as long as the cloud rested on the tabernacle, they rested in their tent. If the cloud stayed there for a long time on the tabernacle for many days, the children of Israel just kept the charge of the Lord and they did not journey.

And so it was when the cloud was there for a few days, the tabernacle, according to the commandment of the Lord, they obeyed. They stayed in their tents, according to the commandment of the Lord, they journeyed. In other words, God was in direct control when they moved, when they stayed.

They were obedient unto the Lord. God was in charge of their movements completely. Whether it was two days, verse 22, or a month or a year that the cloud tarried on the tabernacle, remaining thereon on the children of Israel, they stayed in their tents and they journeyed not.

But when it was taken up, they journeyed. And at the commandment of the Lord, they rested. At the commandment of the Lord, they journeyed.

They kept the charge of the Lord. Then in chapter 10, he was ordered to make two silver trumpets. And these silver trumpets were to be used for calling an assembly of the people together, or they were to be used at the time of battle in sounding the alarm.

And if they sounded one alarm, then the camp that were on the east part were to go forward into battle. If they sounded two alarms, then also the camp on the south side was to go in to battle. And so these trumpets were to be used to help direct the people.

Naturally, when you've got, what, over a half a million adult males out there, plus all the women and children, and you don't have any real communication system, they don't have radios or transistors or whatever, you've got to keep the camp in order. And if you're attacked, you could be attacked over here on the east side and people on the west side wouldn't even know what's going on. So even as in the years of warfare up until modern communication, the bugle was blown to instruct the troops for various things and is even still practiced today in many of our army camps.

When we were over in Hawaii, we were on some of the military bases there and we'd hear the bugle blowing to call the guys to the mess at lunchtime. And we would hear the various bugles and the fellows responding to the sound of the bugles. And that was basically what it was all about.

They would sound assembly or they would sound the alarm for an attack or the various things. And thus they had the various signals that would be blown by the trumpets. And of course, that is why we read in the return of Jesus Christ, the trump of God.

It's the trump of God is going to sound an assembly for all of the children of God. And what a glorious, I can hardly wait to hear that trumpet blow. And I don't know what the melody will be, but I'll tell you, I'll recognize it the minute I hear it.

And I'll know that it's, you know, the Lord is calling an assembly of His children, calling us home to be with Him. And thus we are awaiting really God's call of assembly for the church. Now the trumpets were also to sound at the beginning of their Sabbath days and the holy days, the solemn days, the beginning of their months.

And the blowing of the trumpets over the burnt offerings and the peace offerings and so forth and memorial unto your God for I am Jehovah your God. Now it came to pass on the 20th day of the second month in the second year that the cloud was taken up from off the tabernacle and the children of Israel took their journey in the wilderness of Sinai and the cloud rested in the wilderness of Perun. So now God is beginning now, the tabernacle is set up, the whole thing is working.

So now God is beginning to move them towards the land that He has promised. So the cloud was lifted up and it moved now from the wilderness area of Mount Sinai and it is now moving to the promised land or towards the promised land and leading them into this area of Perun. And so the Levites all went in, they dismantled, of course, the tabernacle and Aaron's son's covering.

Now it's sort of a dress rehearsal. They've been taught what to do and now they're doing it as the cloud begins to move and the Kohathites move in and they take their load. The Gershonites come in, the Merorites and we're moving.

We're on the way. Excitement. God is now moving us.

Now Moses said to his father-in-law Hobab, the son of Raguel, the Mennonite, Moses' father-in-law, we're journeying to the place which the Lord said He was going to give to us. Come with us and we will do the good. For the Lord has spoken concerning Israel.

But he said unto Moses, I'll not go but I'll depart back to my own land and to my own family. Now his area was there near Mount Sinai and rather than journeying towards the promised land, he just wanted to go back to his own home and family. And Moses said, leave us not, I pray thee, for as much as you have knowledge how we are to encamp in the wilderness that you may be to us instead of eyes.

In other words, this fellow was really a man of the desert. He was able to track in the desert. He was able to tell them where the water was and he had that desert savvy, that desert knowledge.

And so Moses was really desiring the guy to stick with him because he really had all that desert savvy. And you can be as eyes for us and all. And Moses was asking the fellow to remain with him.

And it shall be that if you go with us, that whatever goodness the Lord gives to us, we're going to share with you. And they departed from the mount of the Lord for three days journey. And the ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them for three days journey to search out a resting place for them.

And the cloud of the Lord was upon them by day. And when they went out of the camp 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. And when it rested, he said, return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel.

So that's beautiful. Whenever the cloud would rise up, he'd say, rise up, O Lord, move on and let your enemies flee before you. And when the cloud would settle, he'd say, all right, Lord, rest among your people, you know, among the thousands of Israel.

And so now God is beginning to move them toward the land of promise. And we've got some many exciting adventures in the book of Numbers as we move ahead. I really like the book of Numbers.

The first part is a little redundant in some of the numberings and all, but now we're starting to get into some pretty exciting experiences as God begins to lead them toward the land that he had promised unto their fathers. Shall we stand? May the Lord be with you and guide you through the week. Even as he led the children of Israel and they were obedient to the charge of the Lord and moved when he said to move and rested when he said to rest.

So may God make us sensitive to the leading of his Holy Spirit. We may know when to move and when to rest at the commandment of the Lord. And thus may we walk in fellowship with him and may the Lord bless thee and keep thee.

May the Lord cause his face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee. May the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace.

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