

The Floral Heights Informer

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The Book of Numbers

The book of Numbers gets its title from the Greek word *arithmoi*. This is the word assigned by the LXX (The Septuagint {a Greek translation of the OT}), due to the two numberings of the people in chapter 1 and 26. Numbers is the fourth of five books commonly called the Pentateuch (Genesis through Deuteronomy).

Author and Date of Numbers

Moses appears to be the author of the book due to passages such as Numbers 33:1-2 where God tells him to write. Numbers records events that take place during the first month of the second year after coming out of Egypt (Numb. 9:1). Israel had left Egypt in the beginning of their months (Ex. 12:2). Three months latter they arrive at Sinai (cf. Ex. 19:1). Israel remains at Sinai until the second year, second month, and twentieth day (Numb. 10:11-13). Approximately 12 months are spent at Sinai receiving instructions and laws. Thirty eight years latter Israel finds themselves at the plains of Moab (Numb. 33:38). Deuteronomy opens with the date given at the “*fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month...*” (Deut. 1:3). The book thereby covers a span of nearly 40 years (1445-1406 B.C.).

Theme of Numbers

The book of Genesis reveals God’s promises, Exodus God’s mercy, and Leviticus God’s holiness. Numbers reveals God’s wrathful disposition toward sin. To achieve reverence and respect for Jehovah the Lord identifies sin and its consequences to Israel. Sin is identified as being “*unclean*” (Numb. 5:2; 8:21 / Lev. 16:16, 30), “*defiled*” (Numb. 5:3, 27 / Lev. 18:30), guilty of “*trespassing against Jehovah*” (Numb. 5:6), and being impure (Numb. 8:21). The message of the book of Numbers is that man will not go unpunished for sin. Moses warned Israel that if they would not follow God’s instructions regarding the taking of Canaan then “*ye have sinned against Jehovah; and be sure your sin will find you out*” (Numb. 32:23).

The book of Numbers records a multitude of examples of times when Israel’s sin found them out. God’s wrath consumed the wicked

Local News:

Welcome to all our visitors.
We pray that you will be edified by our service and that you will ask questions if things are not as you are accustomed to seeing. Please come back at your every opportunity.

Praise God through whom all blessings flow:

We praise God for the birth of Grace Lilian Isabel Cribbs (9lbs, 20 1/2" L).

Gospel Meeting:

Don't forget to set aside time for our upcoming gospel meeting. We will have men from our own congregation doing the preaching. Dates are September 7, 8, and 9th.

Thanks

A special thanks is in order for the men who preached and taught Bible class during John's vacation time. The congregation as a whole is deeply appreciated for allowing this break.

Continue to pray for our shut-ins:

Stella Davidson
696-1030 (Home)

Calvin York
692-0489 (Home).

Bessie Murphy
4600 Taft Blvd, Apt. 538

complainers at Numbers 11:1 by fire and plague at 11:33. Miriam was struck with leprosy at Numbers 12:9. When the ten spies came back with an evil report about Canaan God determined to kill the whole congregation as one man (Numb. 14:8ff). Numbers 14:26ff reveals God's wrath in that He caused the wicked to wander in the wilderness for forty years until their dead bodies littered the land. During this time of wandering Korah and many of the Reubenites rebelled against God and the Lord opened the earth to swallow them up. Furthermore He caused fire to rain down from heaven to consume 250 princes that had been involved in the sin of Korah (Numb. 16:29-35). Again, Israel complained at Numbers 16:43-46 and 14,700 people died by plague. The people again complain about the manna at Numbers 21:4-6 and God killed them with snakes. Numbers 25:1-5 reveals Israel joining themselves to Baal-peor and thereby God killed 24,000 by plague (Numb. 25:9). Time and time again Israel exercised a spirit of rebellion against the sovereign will of God and they paid a high price (cf. Numb. 14:8-9; 17:10; 20:10). God continued to press them with plague, fire, and death for their error.

Practical Application

Each time Israel rebelled "*against Moses*" or Aaron they were really turning against God's will. When Miriam and Aaron questioned Moses' position among the people God said, "*wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak **against my servant**, against Moses?*" (Numb. 12:8b). When Israel complained about the lack of water at Kadesh they blamed Moses (Numb. 20:2-5). The hard journey and loathsome manna was Moses' fault (Numb. 21:4-6). Israel's irritation at their hardships was not really against Moses or Aaron but rather God (cf. Numb. 17:5, 10). It took many horrid events for Israel to gain an understanding of the truth that God demands man's respect, reverence, fear, and obedience. A turning point in the people's spirit of rebellion seems to take place at Numbers 21. The people had sinned by complaining about the way of their journey and the manna that God gave them to eat. God caused fiery serpents to bite and kill them. The people respond by saying, "*We have sinned, because we have spoken against Jehovah, and against thee (i.e., Moses); pray unto Jehovah, that he take away the serpents from us*" (Numb. 21:7). Said spirit was all that God had ever required of the people (cf. Numb. 5:6-7) and all that God requires of His people today (Acts 17:30; II Cor. 7:9-10; I Jn. 1:9).

You and I will learn to fear, reverence, respect, obey, and submit ourselves to God "*through many tribulations*" (Acts 14:22). We ought to be joyous over these times of difficulties (cf. James 1:1ff) and be content (Phil. 4:12ff). May we all identify our sin with a spirit of humility and learn to look to Jesus for the remedy. Jesus said, "*And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believes may in him have eternal life*" (cf. John 3:14-16).

John C.

Robertson