

Numbers 25-27

Bible Study

Review

Chapter 22 (on the plains of Moab)

- Balak, king of Moab, fears Israel and sends for Balaam, a known diviner to curse Israel
- God informs Balaam that he cannot curse Israel because they are blessed

Chapter 23

- Balaam had Balak build altars and perform sacrifices in pagan rituals to seek a revelation from God
- God opens Balaam's mouth in seven oracles that bless Israel rather than cursing them

Chapter 24

- Balaam continues with oracles that bless rather than curse Israel
 - His plan to curse Israel is not permitted by God

Num. 24: 25 "So Balaam rose and departed and returned to his place; Balak also went his way"

"returned to his place" [Eng. Tran. Misleading]— (Heb.)='went his way' or 'to another place'

- Although unsuccessful to curse Israel he devises another plan to attack Israel

Chapter 25

Israel seduced by Moab

“through the counsel of Balaam” (Num. 31:16)

¹Now Israel remained in Acacia Grove,[£] and the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab.

²They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods.

³So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the Lord was aroused against Israel.

v. 1 “Acacia Grove” [OKJ] “Shittim”—literally ‘acacias’ (In Moab)

- The last encampment before they cross the Jordan

“commit harlotry”—both physical adultery and spiritual...sacred prostitution was common in the Canaanite religion

v. 3 “Baal of Peor”

(Companion) “Baal= Lord; Peor was the mountain on which he was worshipped. Baal was a Moabite idol, and those who called the Israelites were the prostitutes necessary for his worship by others.”

Abel-shittim
(Acacia Grove)



²They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods.

³So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the Lord was aroused against Israel.

v. 2 “They (women of Moab) invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods...”



Revelation 2:14 [Balaam advised Balak to set a trap for Israel]

¹⁴But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of **Balaam**, who **taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel**, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.

Psalms 106:28

²⁸ They joined themselves also to Baal of Peor, And ate sacrifices made to the dead.

(KJV) “sacrifices of the dead” (Companion)—necromancy: conjuring up spirits of the dead [some say even human sacrifice involved]

⁴Then the Lord said to Moses, “Take all the leaders of the people and hang the offenders before the Lord, out in the sun, that the fierce anger of the Lord may turn away from Israel.”

⁵So Moses said to the judges of Israel, “Every one of you kill his men who were joined to Baal of Peor.”

v. 4 “leaders of the people”

(Companion) “The number is not stated here, but must have been 1,000, and included the 24,000 of v. 9, and excluded in I Cor. 10: 8.” [23,000]

v. 4 “hang” (Companion) “impaled or nailed to a stake, as in crucifixion”

“in the sun”—probably means so the public can see

⁶And indeed, one of the children of Israel came and presented to his brethren a Midianite woman in the sight of Moses and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who *were* weeping at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.

⁷Now when Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw *it*, he rose from among the congregation and took a javelin in his hand;

⁸and 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 body. So the plague was stopped among the children of Israel.

⁹And those who died in the plague were **twenty-four thousand**.

v.6 Up until this point, relations with the Midianite women had taken place outside the camp, but one brazen Israelite brought one into the camp, in plain view

Phineas, Eleazar's son killed them both—the Israelite man and the Midianite woman and the plague was stopped

- Their names are given in verse 14-15
- v. 8 “Into the tent” (Heb.) *kubbah* “A high and vaulted pleasure tent used in the worship of Baal” Occurs only here (Companion)
- v. 8 ‘her body’ is literally her stomach

v. 9 “24,000” (Companion)

“This includes the 1,000 previously ‘hanged’ (v. 4-5) as well as those who died of the ‘plague’. These must have been the 23,000 of I Cor. 10:8 ‘which fell in one day’”

¹⁰Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:

¹¹“Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned back My wrath from the children of Israel, because he was zealous with My zeal among them, so that I did not consume the children of Israel in My zeal.

¹²Therefore say, ‘Behold, I give to him My covenant of peace;

¹³and it shall be to him and his descendants after him a covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made atonement for the children of Israel.’”

v. 11 “he was zealous with my zeal among them, that I did not consume...Israel”

(Tyndale) “In other words because Phinehas executed the sinner, expressing so clearly and visibly God’s own anger through his deed, that anger was turned away”

v. 13 “covenant of an everlasting priesthood”

(Tyndale) “Israel had broken the covenant by worshipping foreign gods. Phinehas had restored that covenant by his deed, and is therefore rewarded with the covenant of a perpetual priesthood....this covenant with Phinehas is probably a guarantee that the high priesthood would always remain in his family.” [I Chron. 6:4]

¹⁴Now the name of the Israelite who was killed, who was killed with the Midianite woman, *was* Zimri the son of Salu, a leader of a father's house among the Simeonites.

¹⁵And the name of the Midianite woman who was killed *was* Cozbi the daughter of Zur; he *was* head of the people of a father's house in Midian.

¹⁶Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:

¹⁷"Harass the Midianites, and attack them;

¹⁸for they harassed you with their schemes by which they seduced you in the matter of Peor and in the matter of Cozbi, the daughter of a leader of Midian, their sister, who was killed in the day of the plague because of Peor."

Numbers 22: 7

⁷So the elders of Moab **and the elders of Midian** departed with the **diviner's** fee in their hand, and they came to Balaam and spoke to him the words of Balak.

- The Midianites had been in league with Balaam from the beginning

v. 17 God announces a campaign against the Midianites

God gave Israel instruction to 'harass' the Midianites...to engage them in a battle as a means of vengeance

- This battle is recorded in chapter 31

Numbers 26

40 years had about passed and the generation who came out of Egypt were dead—another census is taken

25:9

¹And it came to pass, **after the plague**, that the Lord spoke to Moses and Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest, saying:

²“Take a census of all the congregation of the children of Israel from twenty years old and above, by their fathers’ houses, all who are able to go to war in Israel.”

³So Moses and Eleazar the priest spoke with them in the plains of Moab by the Jordan, *across from Jericho*, saying:

⁴“*Take a census of the people* from twenty years old and above, just as the Lord commanded Moses and the children of Israel who came out of the land of Egypt.”

1) Part of the purpose of the census [v. 2] “who are able to go to war”

A campaign against Midian had just been declared and the conquest of Canaan was imminent

2) Another part of the census was for inheritance purposes: in verse 54 each tribe will inherit land according to their numbers

⁵Reuben *was* the firstborn of Israel. The children of **Reuben** *were: of* Hanoch, the family of the Hanochites; *of* Pallu, the family of the Palluites;
⁶*of* Hezron, the family of the Hezronites; *of* Carmi, the family of the Carmites.
⁷These *are* the families of the Reubenites: those who were numbered of them were **forty-three thousand seven hundred and thirty.**

⁸And the son of Pallu *was* Eliab.

⁹The sons of Eliab *were* Nemuel, Dathan, and Abiram. These *are* the Dathan and Abiram, representatives of the congregation, who contended against Moses and Aaron in the company of Korah, when they contended against the Lord;

¹⁰and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up together with Korah when that company died, when the fire devoured two hundred and fifty men; and they became a sign.

¹¹Nevertheless the children of Korah did not die.

v. 7 43,730—a decrease of 2,770 from Numbers 1:21

(Companion) “This is an un-designed evidence of accuracy: an uninspired writer would have made an increase.”

v. 11 “the **children of Korah** did not die”

(Companion) “They were Assir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph (Ex.6:24). Their descendants were prominent in the temple worship (I Chron. 6:33-34; I Sa. 1:20)”

¹²The sons of **Simeon** according to their families *were: of* [£]Nemuel, the family of the Nemuelites; *of* Jamin, the family of the Jaminites; *of* [£]Jachin, the family of the Jachinites;
¹³*of* [£]Zerah, the family of the Zarhites; *of* Shaul, the family of the Shaulites.

¹⁴These *are* the families of the Simeonites: **twenty-two thousand two hundred.**

Simeon's tribe had a huge decline from the 1st census 59,300—22,200= a decrease of 37,100

¹⁵The sons of **Gad** according to their families *were: of* [£]Zephon, the family of the Zephonites; *of* Haggi, the family of the Haggites; *of* Shuni, the family of the Shunites;
¹⁶*of* [£]Ozni, the family of the Oznites; *of* Eri, the family of the Erites;
¹⁷*of* [£]Arod, the family of the Arodites; *of* Areli, the family of the Arelites.

¹⁸These *are* the families of the sons of Gad according to those who were numbered of them:
forty thousand five hundred.

v.18 Gad—a decrease of 5,150 from the first census

¹⁹The sons of **Judah** *were* Er and Onan; and Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan.

²⁰And the sons of Judah according to their families *were*: *of* Shelah, the family of the Shelanites; *of* Perez, the family of the Parzites; *of* Zerah, the family of the Zarhites.

²¹And the sons of Perez *were*: *of* Hezron, the family of the Hezronites; *of* Hamul, the family of the Hamulites.

²²These *are* the families of Judah according to those who were numbered of them: **seventy-six thousand five hundred.**

v. 22 Judah—an increase of 1,900 from the first census

²³The sons of **Issachar** according to their families *were*: *of* Tola, the family of the Tolaites; of [£]Puah, the family of the [£]Punites;

²⁴*of* Jashub, the family of the Jashubites; *of* Shimron, the family of the Shimronites.

²⁵These *are* the families of Issachar according to those who were numbered of them: **sixty-four thousand three hundred.**

v.25 Issachar—an increase of 9,900 from the first census

²⁶The sons of **Zebulun** according to their families *were*: of Sered, the family of the Sardites; of Elon, the family of the Elonites; of Jahleel, the family of the Jahleelites.

²⁷These *are* the families of the Zebulunites according to those who were numbered of them:
sixty thousand five hundred.

v. 27 Zebulun—an increase of 3,100 from the first census

²⁸The sons of **Joseph** according to their families, by **Manasseh and Ephraim**, *were*:

(Companion) “Manasseh comes before Ephraim here, because the tribe had increased. In Numbers 2: 18, 20 Ephraim comes first, because he was the standard-bearer, and because of the blessing (Gen. 48: 14)”

²⁹The sons of **Manasseh**: of Machir, the family of the Machirites; and Machir begot Gilead; of Gilead, the family of the Gileadites.

³⁰These *are* the sons of Gilead: *of* [£]Jeezer, the family of the Jeezerites; of Helek, the family of the Helekites;

³¹*of* Asriel, the family of the Asrielites; *of* Shechem, the family of the Shechemites;

³²*of* Shemida, the family of the Shemidaites; *of* Hephher, the family of the Hephherites.

³³Now Zelophehad the son of Hephher had no sons, but daughters; and the names of the daughters of Zelophehad *were* Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.

³⁴These *are* the families of Manasseh; and those who were numbered of them *were* **fifty-two thousand seven hundred.**

v.33 “Zelophehad...had no sons, but daughters”

This posed a problem for the inheritance of the land—the solution will be discussed in chapters 27 and 36

v. 34 Manasseh—an increase of 20,500 from the first census

³⁵These *are* the sons of **Ephraim** according to their families: of Shuthelah, the family of the Shuthalhites; of [£]Becher, the family of the Bachrites; of Tahan, the family of the Tahanites.

³⁶And these *are* the sons of Shuthelah: of Eran, the family of the Eranites.

³⁷These *are* the families of the sons of Ephraim according to those who were numbered of them: **thirty-two thousand five hundred.**

These *are* the sons of Joseph according to their families.

v. 37 Ephraim—a decrease of 8,000 from the first census

³⁸The sons of **Benjamin** according to their families were: of Bela, the family of the Belaites; of Ashbel, the family of the Ashbelites; of Ahiram, the family of the Ahiramites;

³⁹of Shupham,[£] the family of the Shuphamites; of [£]Hupham, the family of the Huphamites.

⁴⁰And the sons of Bela were [£]Ard and Naaman: *of Ard*, the family of the Ardites; of Naaman, the family of the Naamites.

⁴¹These *are* the sons of Benjamin according to their families; and those who were numbered of them *were* **forty-five thousand six hundred.**

v. 41 Benjamin—an increase of 10,200 from the first census

⁴²These *are* the sons of **Dan** according to their families: of [£]Shuham, the family of the Shuhamites. These *are* the families of Dan according to their families.

⁴³All the families of the Shuhamites, according to those who were numbered of them, *were* **sixty-four thousand four hundred.**

v. 43 Dan—an increase of 1,700 from the first census

⁴⁴The sons of **Asher** according to their families *were*: of Jimna, the family of the Jimnites; of Jesui, the family of the Jesuites; of Beriah, the family of the Beriites.

⁴⁵Of the sons of Beriah: of Heber, the family of the Heberites; of Malchiel, the family of the Malchielites.

⁴⁶And the name of the daughter of Asher *was* Serah.

⁴⁷These *are* the families of the sons of Asher according to those who were numbered of them: **fifty-three thousand four hundred.**

v. 47 Asher—an increase of 11,900 from the first census

⁴⁸The sons of **Naphtali** according to their families *were*: of [£]Jahzeel, the family of the Jahzeelites; of Guni, the family of the Gunites;
⁴⁹of Jezer, the family of the Jezerites; of Shillem, the family of the Shillemites.

⁵⁰These *are* the families of Naphtali according to their families; and those who were numbered of them *were* **forty-five thousand four hundred**.

v. 50 Naphtali—a decrease of 8,000 from the first census

⁵¹These *are* those who were numbered of the children of Israel: **six hundred and one thousand seven hundred and thirty**.

v. 51 601,730

In Num. 2:30 = 603,550; total decrease 1,820

⁵²Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:

⁵³“To these the land shall be divided as an inheritance, according to the number of names.

⁵⁴To a large *tribe* you shall give a larger inheritance, and to a small *tribe* you shall give a smaller inheritance. Each shall be given its inheritance according to those who were numbered of them.

⁵⁵But the land shall be divided by lot; they shall inherit according to the names of the tribes of their fathers.

⁵⁶According to the lot their inheritance shall be divided between the larger and the smaller

The promised land will be divided according to the size of the tribes...the tribes who are larger in number receive more land

v. 56 The precise allocation was determined by lot

⁵⁷And these *are* those who were numbered of the **Levites** according to their families: of Gershon, the family of the Gershonites; of Kohath, the family of the Kohathites; of Merari, the family of the Merarites.

⁵⁸These *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, and the family of the Korathites. And Kohath begot Amram.

⁵⁹The name of Amram's wife *was* Jochebed the daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi in Egypt; and to Amram she bore Aaron and Moses and their sister Miriam.

⁶⁰To Aaron were born Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.

⁶¹And Nadab and Abihu died when they offered profane fire before the Lord.

⁶²Now those who were numbered of them were **twenty-three thousand**, every male from a month old and above; for they were not numbered among the other children of Israel, because there was no inheritance given to them among the children of Israel.

The census of the Levites: They receive no land inheritance (their duties were religious)—during the wilderness wandering the Levites increased in numbers from 22,000 to 23,000

⁶³These *are* those who were numbered by Moses and Eleazar the priest, who numbered the children of Israel in the plains of Moab by the Jordan, *across from* Jericho.

⁶⁴But among these there was not a man of those who were numbered by Moses and Aaron the priest when they numbered the children of Israel in the Wilderness of Sinai.

⁶⁵For the Lord had said of them, “They shall surely die in the wilderness.” So there was not left a man of them, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun.

The generation that had come out of Egypt was completely gone except for Caleb and Joshua

Who would succeed Moses, since he would not go into the land either?
That will be answered in the last part of the next chapter

Chapter 27

¹Then came the daughters of Zelophehad the son of Hephher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, from the families of Manasseh the son of Joseph; and these *were* the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.

²And they stood before Moses, before Eleazar the priest, and before the leaders and all the congregation, *by* the doorway of the tabernacle of meeting, saying:

³“Our father died in the wilderness; but he was not in the company of those who gathered together against the Lord, in company with Korah, but he died in his own sin; and he had no sons.

⁴Why should the name of our father be removed from among his family because he had no son? Give us a possession among our father’s brothers.”

(Tyndale) “Zelophehad had no sons, and therefore under traditional law his inheritance would on his death be transferred to his nearest male relative. By that means the land would be kept within the family.

His daughters challenged this accepted practice pleading that it would lead to their father’s name being forgotten. Their plea was accepted...”

⁵So Moses brought their case before the Lord.

⁶And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:

⁷“The daughters of Zelophehad speak *what is* right; you shall surely give them a possession of inheritance among their father’s brothers, and cause the inheritance of their father to pass to them.

⁸And you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘If a man dies and has no son, then you shall cause his inheritance to pass to his daughter.

⁹If he has no daughter, then you shall give his inheritance to his brothers.

¹⁰If he has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to his father’s brothers.

¹¹And if his father has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to the relative closest to him in his family, and he shall possess it.” And it shall be to the children of Israel a statute of judgment, just as the Lord commanded Moses.

v. 7 “speak what is right”

(NSB) “God’s decision was that the daughters of Zelophehad had presented a just cause. They would inherit the land in the name of their father. The case would become a precedent for other families in which there were no sons, only daughters. If there were no daughters, the inheritance would go to the nearest surviving relative. This was a significant departure from the custom of the day.”

v. 12-14 Moses gets a glimpse of the promised land

¹²Now the Lord said to Moses: “Go up into this Mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given to the children of Israel.

¹³And when you have seen it, you also shall be gathered to your people, as Aaron your brother was gathered.

¹⁴For in the Wilderness of Zin, during the strife of the congregation, you rebelled against My command to hallow Me at the waters before their eyes.” (These *are* the waters of Meribah, at Kadesh in the Wilderness of Zin.)

Because of Moses’ striking the rock at Meribah, he was not permitted to go into the promised land.

But God allowed him to view the land of Canaan from the high point at Mount Abirim

¹⁵Then Moses spoke to the Lord, saying:

¹⁶“Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation,

¹⁷who may go out before them and go in before them, who may lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the Lord may not be like sheep which have no shepherd.”

v. 16 “the God of the spirits of all flesh” (a title of God appears only here)

(BKC) “Refers to God’s omniscient understanding of everyone, which guaranteed the wisdom of his choice”



To be the true leader that Israel would need at this important time in their history

¹⁸And the Lord said to Moses: “Take Joshua the son of Nun with you, a man in whom *is* the Spirit, and lay your hand on him;
¹⁹set him before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation, and inaugurate him in their sight.
²⁰And you shall give *some* of your authority to him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient.

Joshua had already proven himself as a leader with qualities and character to serve
v. 19 “before the congregation”—a public appointment so that the nation would know to give Joshua the respect that Moses had received...and that he would receive some of Moses' authority

²¹He shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire before the Lord for him by the judgment of the Urim. At his word they shall go out, and at his word they shall come in, he and all the children of Israel with him—all the congregation.”

²²So Moses did as the Lord commanded him. He took Joshua and set him before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation.

²³And he laid his hands on him and inaugurated him, just as the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses.

(Joshua) “Stand before Eleazar the priest”—to symbolize the relationship between the leader and priest

“By the judgment of the Urim”—Eleazar would reveal God’s will by means of the Urim (Ex. 28:30) so that Joshua would carry out God’s directives

Lessons

Israel was on the threshold of going into the promised land when they were tested...and plunged into the abomination of idolatry and sin

2 Peter 2:15 (Referring to false teachers)

¹⁵ They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the *son* of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;



We must beware of and recognize apostasy and keep our focus on God's way and the kingdom