

## 17. Lessons in the Wilderness II

Report of the spies; the people and the quail; divine discipline; marching to Moab; Balak and Balaam; offerings and festivals once more; final events and directions.

Numbers 10:11–27:23, 32:1–34:15.

## Geography

- [Israel Prepares at Sinai (1:1–10:10)]
- **Marching to Transjordan (10:11–22:1)**
  - Kadesh-Barnea
  - Other "Hebrew" peoples / cousins
    - Edom (Esau)
    - Descendants of Lot: Moab, Ammon
  - Conquered Canaanites and Amorites (D's term for Canaanites)
    - Heshbon and King Sihon
    - Bashan and King Og
- **Camping in the Plains of Moab (22:2–36:13)**
  - Battles
  - Baalim and the Donkey



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## Complaining in the Desert (11:1–15)

- “And *when* the people complained, it displeased the Lord: and the Lord heard *it*; and his anger was kindled; **and the fire of the Lord burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp.**” (11:1)
  - Remind you of anyone? Laman and Lemuel weren’t the first Israelites to complain in the wilderness!
  - “And he called the name of the place Taberah: because the fire of the Lord burnt among them.” (11:3; place names are frequently etymological)
- **“Manna is so boring!”**
  - “mixed multitude” (perhaps Gentiles among Israelites) “fell as lusting” (craving)
    - Why do they persist in angering the Lord?
  - “And there went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought quails from the sea...(11:31)
    - Even in the midst of their murmuring, Israel is still blessed.
- **Even Moses reaches his wit’s end!**
  - “And Moses said unto the Lord, Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant? And wherefore have I not found favour in thy sight, that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me? Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them, that thou shouldst say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father beareth the sucking child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their fathers?” (11:11-12)
    - Cf. Exodus and Jethro’s advice when Moses cannot handle everything
    - Also compare to *Lehi’s journey which imitated the journey of the Israelites*

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## The Seventy Elders (11:16–30)

- Seventy Chosen Men
  - “And the Lord said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee. And I will come down and talk with thee there: and ***I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone.***” (11:16-17)
    - Set apart as judges in Israel
- Eldad and Medad – Prophets in the camp?
  - See Revelation 19:10 “...for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”
  - Joshua speaks against them but is rebuked by Moses
  - “And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? ***would God that all the Lord’s people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them!***” (11:29)

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## Aaron and Miriam Jealous of Moses (12:1–16)

- **Problems with the in-laws**
  - There is a Cush in both Ethiopia and in Midian – This is probably still Zipporah!
- **Aaron and Miriam want to prophesy again**
  - “And they said, Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the Lord heard *it*.” (12:2)
  - Moses more devout/meek than all men
- **Miriam, not Aaron, struck with Leprosy**
  - Is this unfair? Aaron was the High Priest, he needed to perform the sacrifices on behalf of the people, he could not be cast out
- “And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned ... **And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee.** And the Lord said unto Moses, If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? ***let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received in again.***” (12:11-14)
  - Cf. modern probation and disfellowship
  - Given time to repent? **Repentance and forgiveness can be instantaneous, but sometimes time “away from the camp” of the Lord is a necessary learning experience**

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## Israel at Kadesh-barnea (13:1–20:13)

- **The Defiance of God (13:1–14:45)**
  - Spies Sent into Canaan (13:1–24)
  - Report of the Spies (13:25–33)
    - Joshua from Ephraim and Caleb from Judah
  - **The People Rebel (14:1–12)**
  - **Moses Intercedes for the People (14:13–25)**
  - An Attempted invasion is Repulsed (14:26–45)
- **The Discipline from God (15:1–20:13)**
  - Various Offerings (15:1–31)
  - Penalty for Violating the Sabbath (15:32–36)
- **Fringes on Garments (15:37–41)**
- **Revolt of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram (16:1–50)**
- **The Budding of Aaron’s Rod (17:1–13)**
- Responsibility of Priests and Levites (18:1–7)
- The Priest’s Portion (18:8–32)
- **Ceremony of the Red Heifer (19:1–22)**
- **The Waters of Meribah (20:1–13)**
  - *Moses oversteps his bounds . . .*

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## Patterns of Faithlessness and Ritual

- Every time the Children of Israel show signs of unfaithfulness, a list of rituals follow
- **The people invade without the Lord**
  - repelled in 14:41–45
  - Chapter 15 is a list of rituals for the people
- **16:1–35: Korah and others want the higher priesthood**
  - Their tents are swallowed and they are burned up
  - Aaron reaffirmed as high priest
  - 16:36–50 Ritual
- Unfaithfulness followed by rituals and procedures to cleanse the people

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## Israel Marching to Moab (20:14–21:35)

- Passage through Edom Refused (20:14–21)
- The Death of Aaron (20:22–29)
  - *Eleazar succeeds his father as high priest*
- The Defeat of Arad (21:1–3)
  - **The Bronze Serpent** (21:4–9; cf. 1 Nephi 17:41, Alma 33:18–22)
- The Journey to Moab (21:10–20)
- King Sihon Defeated (21:21–32)
  - *Israelites gain area across the Jordan*
- King Og Defeated (21:33–35)
  - *Israelites gain Bashan east and north of the Sea of Galilee*



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## Balak and Balaam (22:1–25:18)

Israel on the Plains of Moab (22:1–36:13)



- **Balak Summons Balaam to Curse Israel (22:1–21)**
- ***Balaam, the Donkey, and the Angel (22:22–40)***
- Balaam's First Oracle (22:41–23:12)
  - "Who can count the dust of Jacob?"
- Balaam's Second Oracle (23:13–30)
  - "It shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, what has God wrought?"
- Balaam's Third Oracle (24:1–14)
  - "Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee"
- Balaam's Fourth Oracle (24:15–25)
  - ***"There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel" (24:17; cf. Matt 2:9)***
- **Worship of Baal of Peor (25:1–18)**
  - ***Phineas' "zeal" for the Lord***

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## More of Israel on the Plains of Moab (22:1–36:13)

- **A Census of the New Generation (26:1–65): 601,730 military-aged men**
  - Balances the first census of Israel (1:1–54), which revealed **603,550 military-aged men**
  - *No one of the first generation left alive besides Moses **except for Joshua and Caleb**, alone of the spies who had brought the good report*
- The Daughters of Zelophehad (27:1–11)
  - *Arrangements to keep landed inheritances in the family, even if there are no males*
- **Joshua Appointed Moses' Successor (27:12–23)**

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## Skipped Details!

- Instruction for Offerings (28:1–29:40)
  - Daily Offerings (28:1–8)
  - Sabbath Offerings (28:9–10)
  - Monthly Offerings (28:11–15)
  - Offerings at Passover (28:16–25)
  - Offerings at the Festival of Weeks (28:26–31)
  - Offerings at the Festival of Trumpets (29:1–6)
  - Offerings on the Day of Atonement (29:7–11)
  - Offerings at the Festival of Booths (29:12–40)
- Vows Made by Women (30:1–16)
- War against Midian (31:1–12)
- Return for the War (31:13–24)
- Disposition of Captives and Booty (31:25–54)

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## Dispositions of and Plans for the Promised Land

- Conquest and Division of the Trans-Jordan (32:1–42)
- The Stages of Israel's Journey from Egypt (33:1–49)
- Directions for the Conquest of Canaan (33:50–56)
- The Boundaries of the Land (34:1–15)
- Tribal Leaders (34:16–29)
- Cities for the Levites (35:1–8)
- Cities of Refuge (35:9–15)
- Concerning Murder and Blood Revenge (35:16–34)
- Marriage of Female Heirs (36:1–13)

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