

The Books of Exodus - Numbers

I. ISRAEL, ENSLAVED IN EGYPT (EXODUS 1:1--12:36).

- A. God's people. Some seventy-five years after Joseph's death the people of Israel living in Egypt began to be cruelly oppressed by a suspicious Pharaoh.
- B. God's grace. God hears their cries of anguish and begins a plan to deliver them (2:23, 24).
- C. God's man.
 - 1. The prince of Egypt (Ex. 2:1-14). Moses is born (1525 B.C.).
 - a. The baby on the Nile (2:1-9).
 - b. The boy in the court (2:10).
 - c. The boy in the sand (2:11-14). At age forty he leaves Egypt for the Sinai Peninsula. Two reasons prompted this.
 - (1) Because of a manslaughter charge (2:11-15).
 - (2) Because of a Messianic conviction (Heb. 11:24-26).
 - 2. The shepherd of Midian.
 - a. Moses finds refuge in Midian and marries Zipporah, the daughter of Jethro, and lives the next forty years as a shepherd (2:21).
 - b. Moses receives his divine call from the burning bush to deliver Israel (3:1-10). The command was: "Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" (3:5).
 - c. He resisted this call, listing five lame excuses why he could not perform God's command:
 - (1) I have no ability (3:11).
 - (2) I have no message (3:13).
 - (3) I have no authority (4:1).
 - (4) I have no eloquence (4:10).
 - (5) I have no inclination (4:13).
- D. God's enemy--Pharaoh (Ex. 5-10). Pharaoh (Amenhotep II) refuses Moses' demands and makes life even more miserable for the enslaved Israelites (5:2, 4-9).
- E. God's plagues (Ex. 7-10).
 - 1. Water into blood (7:20).
 - 2. A frog invasion (8:6).
 - 3. Lice (8:17).
 - 4. Flies (8:24).
 - 5. Cattle disease (9:6).
 - 6. Boils (9:10).
 - 7. Hail mingled with fire (9:24).
 - 8. Locusts (10:13).
 - 9. A three-day darkness (10:22).

Pharaoh offers Moses four compromises during these plagues, but all are refused.

 - a. Don't leave, but do your thing here in Egypt (8:25).
 - b. Leave, but don't go too far (8:28).
 - c. Leave, but allow your children to remain here (10:10).
 - d. Leave, but without your flocks and herds (10:24).
 - 10. Slaying of the firstborn (12:29).
- F. God's salvation (Ex. 11-12). The final plague would be so severe that even the Israelite homes needed protection. Thus, they were to sprinkle the blood of a sacrificed lamb upon their doors. All such homes would then be spared (11:4, 5; 12:12, 13, 21-23). On April 15, 1445 B.C., at midnight, all this happened, resulting in Pharaoh (whose son was killed) allowing Israel to leave Egypt (12:29-36).
- G. God's selection.
 - 1. The sanctification of the firstborn (Ex. 13:2; 19:6; Num. 8:16).
 - 2. The selection of the safer route (13:17).

II. ISRAEL, EN ROUTE TO MT. SINAI (EXODUS 12:37--18:27).

Ten key events took place between Rameses, their departure city in Egypt, and the arrival at the base of Mt. Sinai. The distance was approximately 150 miles. These events are:

- A. The appearance of God's shekinah glory cloud (13:21, 22). This marks the first appearance of the shekinah, that visible and luminous indication of God's presence (13:21,22). Other Old Testament and New Testament appearances would include:
 - 1. At the Red Sea (Ex. :19, 20).
 - 2. In the tabernacle Holy of Holies (Lev. 16:2).
 - 3. In the Temple Holy of Holies (2 Chron. 5:11-13).
 - 4. Disappearance in Ezekiel's time (Ezek. 10).

- B. The chase by Pharaoh, who had regretted his action of letting Israel go (14:5-10).
- C. The parting of the Red Sea (14:13-31).
- D. The subsequent celebration of Israel over their deliverance and the destruction of Pharaoh's armies (15:1-21).
- E. Marah's bitter waters made sweet by the casting in of a tree (15:22-26). God at this time promised them freedom from sickness if they would but obey him.
- F. The giving of the manna (16:4, 14, 35). This heavenly bread would become their staple diet for the next forty years.
- G. The institution of the Sabbath (16:23, 26-30; 31:13).
- H. Striking the rock at Rephidim (17:1-7). This was done to provide water, which God supernaturally gave from the side of that rock. Nearly forty years later Moses will strike another rock in a distant place, but at that time he will be out of God's will. (See Num. 20:7-13.)
- I. Israel's victory over the Amalekites (17:8-16). Here four important "firsts" should be noted:
 - 1. The first mention of Joshua, who was selected by Moses to lead the armies of Israel (17:9).
 - 2. The first prayer of Moses for Israel (17:11, 12).
 - 3. The first part of the Bible to be written (17:14).
 - 4. The first reference to one of God's great names--Jehovah-nissi (the Lord is my banner). (See 17:15.)
- J. The meeting of Moses with his family (18:5).

III. ISRAEL, SETTLED DOWN AT SINAI (EXODUS 19:1--NUMBERS 10:10).

On June 15, 1445 BO., Israel arrived at Mt. Sinai. They would be there for eleven months and five days (Num. 10:11).

Three major events took place during this time. These are:

The commandment of the law (requirement for fellowship).

The corruption of the golden calf (ruination of that fellowship).

The construction of the tabernacle (restoration of that fellowship).

We shall now look at an introduction to and a consideration of these three events.

- A. An introduction to the action at Mt. Sinai.
 - 1. On the third day, God manifests himself on Mt. Sinai, accompanied by thunderings, lightnings, a thick cloud, the voice of a trumpet, an earthquake, smoke, and fire (19:16-18).
 - 2. Moses climbs Mt. Sinai where God gives him orally both the Ten Commandments and the seventy laws which compose the Book of the Covenant. Moses then descends and repeats God's words to Israel (19:20--23:33). The people agree to all that God has told Moses (24:3). Moses writes down all that he has told them, builds an altar of twelve pillars, and sacrifices blood upon it to satisfy this agreement (24:4-8).
 - 3. Moses again ascends the mountain. Here he spends the next forty days, at which time he receives the pattern for the tabernacle and two tables of stone (24:18; 25-31).
 - 4. He then is warned to get down immediately to deal with the golden calf episode below (32:1-10).
- B. A consideration of the action at Mt. Sinai. The Commandment of the Law. There were three basic sections of the Mosaic Law.
 - 1. The moral code. This section is commonly known as the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:3-17; Deut. 5:7-21).
 - a. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
 - b. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.
 - c. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
 - d. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.
 - e. Honor thy father and thy mother.
 - f. Thou shalt not kill.
 - g. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
 - h. Thou shalt not steal.
 - i. Thou shalt not bear false witness.
 - j. Thou shalt not covet.
 - 2. The spiritual code. This section deals with the ordinances, all of which foreshadow Christ and salvation. (See Heb. 10:1.) It includes the Levitical feasts, offerings, etc. (Ex. 35-40; Lev.). At this time God makes a twofold promise:
 - a. He would send his Angel (the Messiah) to bring the nation Israel into Canaan (23:20-23).
 - b. He would send his avengers (the hornets) to drive the pagan nations out of Canaan (23:28).
 - 3. The social code. This section deals with the judgments and divine laws of God's new establishment for Israel. It includes rules for diet, sanitation, quarantine, soil conservation, taxation, military service, marriage, divorce, etc. (See Ex. 21-22.) Simply stated, it can be said that the moral code acted as the

revelation of God's law, the social code as the regulation of that law, and the spiritual code as the realization of that law--in Christ! (See Mt. 5:17, 18; Rom. 10:4.)

C. The corruption of the golden calf (Ex. 32).

1. During the final days of Moses' stay atop Mt. Sinai, the fickle Israelites in the valley below demand that Aaron make them a god. Aaron agrees, and, using their own golden earrings, forms a golden calf god. After the "worship service" the people celebrate by indulging in sexual immorality.
2. God orders Moses down immediately. Upon viewing this terrible sin, he breaks the two stones containing the Ten Commandments (32:19). He severely rebukes his brother Aaron, and Israel is judged by a death plague which falls upon 3,000 trouble making ring leaders.
3. Moses, who Had already pleaded for them while on the mountain (32:11-14), once again intercedes for the sinning nation (32:30-35). Moses asks to see the glory of God. The Lord replies:

"I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. And the Lord said, Behold there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cliff of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen" (33:19-23).

4. He once again ascends Mt. Sinai where God rewrites the Ten Commandments and orders Moses to construct a box and place these tablets of stone in it. This box will later be known as the Ark of the Covenant (34:1-4; Deut. 10:1, 2).

5. He descends from Mt. Sinai (34:29, 30, 33-35).

D. The construction of the tabernacle (Ex. 25-31; 35-41; Lev.).

1. A general description of the tabernacle. It consisted of three sections or divisions:
 - a. The outer court: This was a picket fence arrangement, 150 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 7½ feet high.
 - b. The inner court: Inside the picket fence was a tent, 45 feet long, 15 feet wide, and 15 feet high. It had two rooms separated by a thick veil. The eastern section of the tent was known as the inner court.
 - c. The Holy of Holies: This was the name for the western section of the tent.
2. The furniture of the tabernacle. There were six main objects:
 - a. The brazen (or bronze) altar--Exodus 27:1-8; 38:1-7.
 - b. The brazen (or bronze) laver--Exodus 30:18; 38:8.
 - c. The table of shewbread--Exodus 25:23-30; 37:10-16.
 - d. The gold lampstand--Exodus 25:31-40; 37:17-24.
 - e. The altar of incense--Exodus 36:1-10; 37:25-28.
 - f. The Ark of the Covenant--Exodus 25:10-22; 37:1-9.
3. The priesthood of the tabernacle. Aaron becomes the first high priest of Israel (Ex. 26:1-4). From his tribe (Levi) the other priests were to be chosen (Num. 8:14-19).
 - a. The ordination of the priests.
 - (1) They were washed with water (Ex. 29:4).
 - (2) They were clothed with garments (Ex. 28:39-43; 29:5, 6). (Note: For a description of the high priest's clothing see Ex. 28:1-38.)
 - (3) They were anointed with oil (Ex. 29:7).
 - (4) They were sprinkled with blood (Ex. 29:20).
 - b. The duties of the priests.
 - (1) That of Temple service (Num. 3:5-9).
 - (2) That of legal service (Deut. 17:8, 9).
 - (3) That of personal service (Num. 6:23-27).
4. The offerings of the tabernacle.
 - a. The burnt offering (Lev. 1).
 - b. The meal offering (2).
 - c. The peace offering (3).
 - d. The sin offering (4).
 - e. The trespass offering (5).The first three offerings were used to maintain fellowship with God, while the last two were to restore broken fellowship.
5. The feasts of the tabernacle. There were nine special feasts and rest time in Israel's calendar. The first three were to remind the believers of God's creative work and the last six of his redemptive work.
 - a. His creative work.
 - (1) The weekly Sabbath (Ex. 20:8-11; Lev. 23:1-3).
 - (2) The seven-year Sabbath feast (Ex. 23:10, 11; Lev. 25:2-7).

- (3) The fiftieth year Sabbath feast (Lev. 25:8-16).
 Note: These three speak of God's creation, as they come in endless cycles of seven, just as God rested on the seventh day.
- b. His redemptive work.
- (1) The Passover feast (Lev. 23:4-6). This speaks of Calvary (1 Cor. 5:7).
 - (2) The feast of the first fruits (Lev. 23:9-14) speaks of the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:23).
 - (3) The feast of Pentecost (Lev. 23:15-25). This speaks of the coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2).
 - (4) The feast of trumpets (Lev. 23:23-25). This speaks of the rapture and Second Coming (1 Thess. 4:13-18).
 - (5) The day of atonement feast (Lev. 23:26-32). This speaks of the tribulation (Rev. 6-19). In the Hebrew this is Yom Kippurira and it occurred on October 10 of each year. The order of service on this all-important day is detailed for us in Leviticus 16.
 - (a) The high priest would offer a bull sacrifice for himself. Preachers need to be saved and cleansed too!
 - (b) Lots would then be cast over two goats to determine which one would become a scapegoat, and which would be killed.
 - (c) The high priest would then sprinkle the blood of the slaughtered bull and goat seven times upon the mercy seat.
 - (d) He would finally place his hands upon the scapegoat, confess over it all the sins of Israel, and then appoint a man to lead the goat into the desert.
 - (6) The feast of tabernacles (Lev. 23:33-44). This speaks of the millennium (Rev. 20:1-6).
6. The dedication of the tabernacle (Ex. 30:22-33; 40:33-35). Thus was dedicated the most important building ever constructed on this earth, It took six months to complete, at a cost of millions of dollars (over 3,100 pounds of gold and some 9,600 pounds of silver went into its construction). It was completed on April 1, 1444 B.C. It was built by willing hearts. (See Ex. 35:5, 21, 22, 29; Num. 7.) There was however one tragic event which marred the otherwise happy celebration, and that was the death of Nadab and Abihu, Aaron's two priest sons. These two foolish and wicked young men had offered unholy fire before the Lord. Furthermore, the account indicates (see Lev. 10) that both were drunk at the time.
7. The purpose of the tabernacle.
- a. To provide Israel with a visible center of worship. Here in the Holy of Holies God would meet with man above the blood-sprinkled mercy seat.
 - b. To preview the future work of Christ.
 - c. To picture the entire program of salvation.
8. The census of the tabernacle (Num. 1:1-54). There are two occasions when Israel was numbered during their march from Egypt to Palestine. The first occurred here at Sinai and the second took place some thirty-eight years later in the desert of Moab (Num. 26).
9. The arrangement of the tribes around the tabernacle (2:1-34).
- a. Eastern location: Judah (leader), Issachar, Zebulun.
 - b. Western location: Ephraim (leader), Benjamin, Manasseh.
 - c. Northern location: Dan (leader), Asher, Naphtali.
 - d. Southern location: Reuben (leader), Gad, Simeon.
10. The Nazarite vow of the tabernacle (6:1-21). There were three rules governing this religious vow.
- a. He could not taste the fruit of the vineyard in any manner.
 - b. He could not cut his hair.
 - c. He could not come in contact with any dead person.
11. The great benediction of the tabernacle (6:22-27).
12. The offerings by the twelve tribal leaders to the tabernacle (Num. 7). God shows his personal interest here by recording (and repeating) each of the twelve gifts even though they were identical in nature.
13. The glory cloud of the tabernacle (9:15-23).
14. The two silver trumpets of the tabernacle (10:1-9). They were to be blown on four special occasions.
- a. To gather the people for a meeting.
 - b. To give warning in case of attack,
 - c. When Israel itself would go to war.
 - d. At Israel's appointed feasts.

IV, ISRAEL, FROM SINAI TO KADESH-BARNEA (NUMBERS 10:11--12:16).

This was also a distance of 150 miles.

A. Mobilizing for the march (10:1 !-28).

B. A balking brother-in-law. Moses attempts to secure the scouting services of Hobab, his brother-in-law but the

- offer is refused (10:29-32).
- C. A continuing cloud (10:34-36).

"And the cloud of the Lord was upon them by day, 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!" (10:34-36).

- D. A fiery judgment (11:1-3). God's anger falls upon them because of their sin of murmuring.
- E. A murmuring multitude (11:4-9). Once again this ungodly Egyptian-controlled group stirred up the people to complain, this time about their food.

"We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick: But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes" (11:5, 6).

- F. A provoked prophet (11:10-15).
 - 1. Moses concludes that God has simply given him too heavy a burden in leading Israel and demands additional help.
 - 2. God grants this regrettable request by taking some of the power of the Holy Spirit from Moses and distributing it equally to seventy chosen Hebrew elders (11:25).
- G. A deadly diet (11:31-34). Again judgment falls upon those chronic complainers who spurned the manna and slaughtered quails for food.
- H. A suffering sister (Num. 12:1-15). Both Aaron and Miriam criticize their younger brother Moses because of his wife and his strong leadership. Miriam, the ring leader, is struck with leprosy by God. At Aaron's request Moses prays and Miriam's leprosy is cured.

V. ISRAEL AT KADESN-BARNEA (NUMBERS 13-14).

- A. The penetration (13:1-25). Moses is instructed to send a leader from each of the twelve tribes to spy out the land of Canaan.
- B. The lamentation (13:26--14:10). After forty days of searching out the land, the twelve return with these reports:
 - 1. The majority report--composed of the leaders of ten tribes: "We can't take the land? (13:32, 33).
 - 2. The minority report--by Joshua and Caleb: "Let us go up at once and possess it, for we are well able to conquer it" (13:30).
 - 3. The vote of the people: "We won't go" (14:1-3). This sad episode marked the tenth occasion when Israel repelled against God. These ten occasions of rebellion are as follows:
 - a. At the Red Sea (Ex. 14:11, 12).
 - b. At Marah (Ex. 15:24).
 - c. In the wilderness of Sin (Ex. 16:2, 3).
 - d. At Rephidim (Ex. 17:1-3).
 - e. At Sinai (Ex. 32:1-6).
 - f. En route to Kadesh (three occasions) (Num. 11:1-3; 4-9; 31-34).
 - g. At Kadesh (two occasions) (Num. 14:1-4; 14:10).
- C. The condemnation. God determined that not one person twenty years or over would be allowed to enter Canaan.

"Since the spies were in the land for forty days, you must wander in the wilderness for forty years--a year for each day, bearing the burden of your sins" (14:34).

VI. ISRAEL, FROM KADESH-BARNEA TO THE EASTERN BANK OF JORDAN (NUMBERS 15-36).

During this period of aimless wanderings, the following events transpire:

- A. A Sabbath-breaker stoned (15:32-36).
- B. A troublemaker swallowed (16:1-32).
 - 1. A very influential descendant of Levi named Korah led a 250-strong conspiracy against the authority of Moses.
 - 2. God stepped in and caused the ground to open up and swallow the troublemakers. Over 14,700 more people would be killed by a special judgment plague from God.
- C. A stick that sprouted--the budding of Aaron's rod (17:1-13). To emphasize the authority he had invested in Moses and Aaron, the Lord ordered the leaders from each tribe to place a rod in the tabernacle with his personal name inscribed on it. The next morning it was discovered that Aaron's rod had budded, was blossoming, and had ripe almonds hanging from it!
- D. The death of Miriam, Moses' sister (20:1).
- E. The sin of Moses (20:1-13). God instructed Moses to speak to a certain rock and order it to pour out its water.

But instead Moses, due partly to unbelief and anger, screamed at the people and disobeyed the Lord by striking the rock twice. God sent water in spite of Moses' disobedience, but told him this sin would keep him from the Promised Land (20:12).

- F. A simple request scorned (20:14-22). The Edomites, descendants of Esau, refused to allow Israel to march through their land, thus forcing God's people to trek an additional 180 miles in a hot and hostile desert.
- G. A high priest stripped (20:23-29).
 - 1. God ordered Moses to strip Aaron of his priestly garments and place them upon his son, Eleazar.
 - 2. Aaron died at the age of 123 and was buried on Mt. Hor.
- H. A serpent problem solved (21:5-9).
 - 1. God sent poisonous serpents to punish rebellious Israel.
 - 2. The people repented and a cure was provided.
 - 3. A serpent of brass was placed atop a pole where all could view it.
 - 4. Anyone bitten needed only to look upon the brass serpent to be healed.
- I. A perverted prophet (Num. 22-24).
 - 1. Balak, the frightened King of Moab, offers Balaam, a pagan diviner from Mesopotamia, tempting riches if he will put a hex on the advancing Israelites and thus save Moab (22:1-8).
 - 2. God warns Balaam not to accept this bribe (22:9-12).
 - 3. The offer is increased and Balaam agrees to go with Balak's men (22:15-21).
 - 4. En route to Moab, Balaam is soundly rebuked by the very animal he rides and narrowly escapes death at the hand of God's angel (Num. 22:22-35).
 - 5. Balaam arrives in Moab and, looking down upon Israel's armies in a nearby valley, attempts to curse them on four occasions. But in every case, words of blessing proceed from his mouth, to his amazement and Balak's anger. These four blessings are as follows:
 - a. First prophecy (23:1-10).
 - (1) That Israel would dwell alone and not be reckoned among the nations.
 - (2) That Israel's seed would be as the dust of the earth.
 - b. Second prophecy (23:11-30). That nothing could penetrate that divine defense which God had placed around Israel.
 - c. Third prophecy (24:1-9).
 - (1) That Israel would be exalted as a kingdom.
 - (2) That Israel would eat up its enemies.
 - d. Fourth prophecy (24:10-25). Concerning the Messiah:

"I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel ..." (24:17).

- J. A patriotic priest (Num. 25).
 - 1. In spite of his failure to curse Israel, Balaam nearly succeeded in destroying that nation by craftily arranging for the Moabite women to sexually seduce the Israelite men (25:1; 31:16).
 - 2. Phinehas, godly grandson priest of Aaron, averted the full wrath of Almighty God by his drastic action in executing an especially brazen sexual couple, a prince from the tribe of Simeon and his harlot lover from Midian. In spite of this, 24,000 died (25:7-18).
- K. The second census (Num. 26).
 - 1. The total of the second census is given as 601,730. (See v. 51 .) This census, about thirty years after the first (1:46), was 1820 fewer.
 - 2. Not one individual was alive who had been over twenty at the Kadesh rebellion, except for Moses, Caleb, and Joshua (26:64, 65).
 - 3. The greatest decrease from the first census was in Simeon's tribe (37,100) and the greatest increase was in Manasseh (20,500).
- L. A change in commanders (27:12-23).
 - 1. Eleazar the high priest is instructed to lay hands upon Joshua in a public ceremony, thus transferring Moses' authority over to him.
 - 2. Joshua then becomes the new leader. Moses himself delivers the ordination address.
- M. The mortification of Midian (Num. 31).
 - 1. The attack (31:1-6).
 - 2. The battle (31:7-18).
 - 3. The purification (31:19-24).
 - 4. The spoils (31:25-54).
- N. Some worldly warriors (Num. 32).
 - 1. The Reubenites, Gadites, and half-tribe of Manasseh come to Moses and ask permission to settle in Gilead, an area east of Palestine, just across the Jordan Rive;.

2. Moses sadly issues the requested permission, providing these two-and-a-half tribes would cross over with the remaining tribes and help defeat the Canaanites. To this they agree.
- O. Six cities of salvation (Num. 35).
1. These cities were: on the eastern side of Jordan--Bezer, Golan, and Ramoth. On the western side (in Palestine itself)--Kadesh, Shechem, and Hebron (Num. 35:10-14; Deut. 4:43; Josh. 20:7-9).
 2. These six were part of the forty-eight cities given to the Levites who did not receive a regular section of land as did the other tribes when the land was later divided by Joshua.
 3. The six were designated as refuge for all accidental manslayers to avoid the dead man's avenging relatives.
 4. The manslayer was safe as long as he remained in one of these six cities until the death of the high priest, at which time he could safely return home (35:25-28).