

NUMBERS 25-26

REVIEW...

- **NUMBERS 1-12 - ORGANIZE THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL TO TRAVEL / JOURNEY TO THE PROMISED LAND...**
- **NUMBERS 13-16 - REFUSING TO ENTER THE PROMISED LAND / REBELLION OF KORAH...**
- **NUMBERS 17-21- ROD OF AARON / THE ROLE OF THE PRIESTS-LEVITES / RED HEIFER / 40TH YEAR...**
- **NUMBERS 22 - BALAAM THE PROPHET...**
 - After 40 years - Israel was camped on the plains of Moab - opposite from the city of Jericho...
 - Moab was terrified - the King Balak sent for the prophet Balaam to curse Israel...
 - But God told Balaam twice he was not to curse God's people - they were blessed...
 - Tempted by the lure of great riches - a palace of gold and silver - Balaam still went...
 - Along the way an Angel of the Lord sought to kill him 3 times - saved by his donkey...
 - Knowing he should have turned back - Balaam still went with the people of Balak...
- **NUMBERS 23-24 - THE BLESSINGS OF BALAAM...**
 - King Balak of Moab wanted Balaam to curse the nation of Israel - God had other plans...
 - 1st - Overlooking the whole nation Balaam instead blessed the children of Israel!
 - 2nd - Balak took Balaam to curse just part of the nation - Balaam blessed them again!
 - 3rd - Balak enraged - at least don't bless them - took him to his temple - Balaam blessed Israel!
 - Balak taunted - your God has kept you from great riches - a palace full of gold and silver!
 - Balak gave one last prophecy - the coming Messiah / defeat of sin / God's Kingdom!

NUMBERS 25 - THE SIN OF BALAAM...

- **COMPROMISE... VS. 1-5 (3 THINGS) READ: NUMBERS 25:1-18**
 - 1st - The women of Moab came down and began to seduce the men of Israel...
 - They did not send their ugly women - they of course sent the most beautiful...
 - The men were quickly smitten - and began to fall for these pagan beauties...
 - Part of the pagan worship of Baal Peor (*Chemosh*) - the god of Moab - was sensual...
 - The women would entice the men of Israel to worship their god through seduction!
 - This was a devious tactic by King Balak - he could not get Balaam to curse Israel...
 - So instead he got them to compromise - he got them to curse themselves!
 - Satan is patient - if he cannot defeat you directly - he'll try to get you to compromise...
 - That 'one drink' that could not possibly hurt - the one night we go to...
 - The one little 'white' lie we tell - the thing we take cause the owner has so much...
 - When we give in to the sin - it is never enough - we desire more - and then more...
 - We end up on a slippery slope that quickly draws us away from the Lord!
 - 2nd - The idea came from Balaam...

- Balaam wanted to curse Israel - but God would not let him - **Joshua 24:10**...
 - But Balaam still wanted to 'earn' the reward King Balak had for him...
 - So he gave Balak the idea to tempt the men of Israel - with the women of Moab...
 - * **Numbers 31:16** - "These women caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to trespass against the LORD..."
 - He did not care what effect his actions would have - he just thought of himself...
 - We don't always think about the effect we have on other people...
 - But people are watching our actions / listening to our words - impacting their lives!
 - We might be able to handle a 'vice' - but what will it do to a weaker brother...
 - **Matthew 18:6** - "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea."
 - Jesus is deadly serious when it comes to His kids - He is a VERY protective Dad!
 - Imagine what you would do to someone who was trying to kill your children...
 - Sin brings death - imagine what God will do to those who try to kill His kids!
- Balaam was more concerned with riches in this life - than in eternal life...
 - **II Peter 2:15** - "The way of Balaam, who loved to earn money by doing wrong."
 - For some reason many people are determined to miss out on heaven...
 - They are so sure money will make them happy - they will pay any price to get it!
 - They will lie - cheat - steal / use those who love them - just for an extra peso...
 - In the end they end up with nothing - no friends - and no eternal life!
 - The love of money – desire for stuff – only gets us into trouble - **I Timothy 6:9-10**
 - If we desire more money – we are missing the greatest riches of all – Jesus!
 - We cannot dedicate our lives to money and possessions – and to loving Jesus...
 - We waste our life on possessions that don't last – rather than on eternal rewards!
- 3rd - The result was death... vs. 5, 16-18
 - Moses gave the command to the judges of Israel - kill every man who sinned...
 - God also commanded Israel to attack the Midianites (*the allies of Moab*)...
 - When Israel defeated them - **Numbers 31:8** - Balaam also died in the battle!
 - If we only live for momentary pleasure - we are dead - we miss out on real life...
 - **I Timothy 5:6** - "[The one] who lives in pleasure is dead while [they] live."
 - God created for an incredible purpose - we were created to know Him...
 - If we settle for just food / sleep / pleasure - we miss out on life's true purpose!
- **HARDENED TOWARDS GOD... vs. 6-15 (3 THINGS)**
 - 1st - While Moses was there in front of the Tabernacle - Israel weeping before the Lord...

- Zimri (*praise*) - one of the men of Israel - a leader from the tribe of Simeon...
 - The suggestion is that he is an older man - a teenager when they came out of Egypt...
 - Someone who'd been influenced by the many sins of Israel - perhaps even involved!
 - He brought Cozbi (*lie*) a woman from Midian - back to his tent...
 - He boldly took her in sight of the whole camp - didn't try to hide what he was doing...
 - He had no conviction - he was calloused to the sin he was openly committing!
- This was not the first time he had sinned - his heart was already far from God...
 - The first time we give in to sin - we are the most affected - most convicted...
 - But each time after - if we don't repent - it gets easier and easier to sin...
 - The reason is because the sin is taking us further and further from the Lord...
 - * **Hebrew 3:13** - "You must warn each other every day, as long as it is called 'today', so that none of you will be deceived by sin and hardened against God."
 - The sin we once would have been ashamed to do - or even talk about...
 - We become bold in - our hearts calloused - hardened towards the conviction of God!
 - That is why sin is SO DANGEROUS - it takes away our desire to follow God!
- 2nd - Phinehas - the son of Eleazar the High Priest (*son of Aaron*)...
 - When he saw this grabbed a spear and ran after Zimri - right into his tent...
 - He speared both man and woman to the ground in their tent!
 - Because of his zeal - he saved Israel - God stopped a plague that had broken out...
 - And God made a covenant of peace with Phinehas - an everlasting priesthood...
 - The solution to a calloused heart - a life that is openly caught up in sin...
 - Take the sin to the cross - nail it there - repent and run back to Jesus!
 - * **Colossians 2:14** - "Jesus canceled the record that contained the charges against us. He took it and destroyed it by nailing it to Christ's cross."
 - Jesus is never more than a step away - all we have to do is turn around - he is waiting!
- 3rd - 24,000 had perished because of Israel's compromise!
 - If you lie to your friends / if you are unfaithful to your word/promise...
 - You can say sorry - and there is forgiveness - but you still have to earn trust again...
 - Jesus died on the cross to forgive us of ALL our sin - taking away the penalty of death...
 - But that does not mean there are no consequences for our sin - **Galatians 6:7**

NUMBERS 26 - THE 2ND CENSUS...

- **COUNTING ISRAEL FOR A 2ND TIME... VS. 1-62 (5 REASONS)** READ: NUMBERS 26:1-4, 51
 - 1st - To prepare Israel for battle...
 - Moses was to take a 2nd census - the children of those who came out of Egypt...
 - It had been 40 years since Israel had set out from Mt. Sinai...
 - Israel was poised for war - to once again enter into the Promised Land...
 - The count was only of those men capable of war (*20 and older*) - the army of Israel...
 - **I Corinthians 14:40** - "Let all things be done decently and in order..."
 - God does not work in chaos - God is God of order - He works through structure...
 - Even in the New Testament - God instilled order in His church - pastors/deacons...
 - There is a balance - we are to be open to the Spirit - we are to be flexible...
 - But we are also to be wise - we are to make plans - we are to be organized...
 - Not that they were to trust in numbers...
 - Even today we have a tendency to look to and trust in 'numbers'...
 - The 1st questions someone will ask about a church - how many people come...
 - We see quantity as a sign of God's blessings - but God does not look at numbers...
 - In Acts 6 - God told Philip to leave the multitudes - to go and reach just one man!
 - God looks at the heart - He looks for those who truly desire to follow Him!
 - 2nd - God wanted to give them a new start... vs. 9-11
 - How many millions had died in the 40 years in the wilderness...
 - Like Dathan & Abiram (*Reuben*) who rebelled with Korah against Moses/Lord...
 - The earth opened up and swallowed them alive - but the children of Korah lived!
 - This was a new generation - they did not follow the example of their parents...
 - While it is true that parents have a HUGE influence on their children - good or bad...
 - That does not mean we are not bound to make the same mistakes our parents made...
 - When we receive Jesus - we become a new person - with a new Father...
 - No longer bound to repeat the mistakes of our parent - but free to follow Jesus!
 - 3rd - To redeem the time that had been lost... vs. 5-51
 - Reuben - 43,730 (46,500) / Simeon - 22,200 (59,300) / Gad - 40,500 (45,650)
 - Judah - 76,500 (74,600) / Issachar - 64,300 (54,400) / Zebulun - 60,500 (57,400)
 - Manasseh- 52,700 (32,200) / Ephraim- 32,500 (40,500) / Benjamin-45,600 (35,400)
 - Dan - 64,400 (62,700) / Asher - 53,400 (41,500) / Naphtali - 45,400 (33,400)

- The tribe of Levi was not included in the census of the army of Israel...
- The total number of fighting men in Israel was 601,730 (603,550)...
- Almost the exact number as when they first came to the Promised Land...
- Man of us can reflect back on many years wasted - not living for the Lord...
- We can often regret those 'lost years' wishing we could have them back...
- Joel 2:25 - "So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten..."
- God can restore those years - as if we had never lost any years to the foolishness of sin!
- 4th - To divide the Promised Land... vs. 52-56
 - Each tribe was to receive a portion of land according to their size...
 - The smaller tribes would receive less / the larger tribes would receive more...
 - A blessing say for the tribe of Manasseh - nearly doubled in size over the 40 years...
 - A real bummer for Simeon - who was less than ½ the size after the 40 years...
 - Very little of the history of the 40 years is recorded for us...
 - But chances are the reason for the change was because of the blessing of God...
 - The tribes that followed the Lord - grew / those who did not - shrank...
 - Sometimes we feel like we get 'left out' when God passes out the blessing...
 - Like we did not get our 'fair share' - we think we deserve more...
 - God does not entrust us with great responsibility at first - He just gives us a little...
 - As we are faithful with even the little we are given - we receive the greater blessings!
- 5th - The numbering of the priests and Levites... vs. 57-62
 - The 3 sons of Levi were - Gershon / Kohath / Merari (*north*)...
 - A son of Kohath - Amram - married Jochebed - the parent of Aaron & Moses...
 - Aaron had 4 sons - Nadab / Abihu / Eleazar / and Ithamar...
 - But the two oldest Nadab & Abihu died when they offered strange fire to the Lord...
 - God had every male 1 month old and older counted - 23,00 (22,000) in all...
 - They were given no inheritance in the Land - the Lord was their portion!
- A NEW NATION... vs. 63-65 READ: NUMBERS 26:63-65
 - 626,500 men counted - only two were the same... vs. 63-65
 - The rest all perished in the wilderness - including Moses & Aaron!

- * **Hebrews 3:17-18** - “Now with whom was God angry forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey?”
- Only Joshua and Caleb were counted in both censuses...
- Not because they were younger / or stronger - but because they had faith in the Lord...
- God is not looking for greatness - He is looking for obedience...
 - It is when we believe God can do anything - and obey when He give us His Word...
 - That He takes ordinary people - and makes them Great!
 - He takes us into the Promised Land - the abundant life in Jesus!