

People on the Move The Book of Numbers Lesson 3 4Q 2009

Worship and Dedication

SABBATH

Read second paragraph, “Nevertheless, the unifying factor...” thoughts? Do we all worship the same God?

- “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’ Matthew 7:21-23
- Thousands have a false conception of God and His attributes. They are as verily serving a false god as were the servants of Baal. Are we worshiping the true God as He is revealed in His Word, in Christ, in nature, or are we adoring some philosophical idol enshrined in His place? God is a God of truth. Justice and mercy are the attributes of His throne. He is a God of love, of pity and tender compassion. Thus He is represented in His Son, our Saviour. He is a God of patience and long-suffering. If such is the being whom we adore and to whose character we are seeking to assimilate, we are worshiping the true God. {FLB 59.8}

What about the idea that the basic truths taught to the Israelites are the same ones we are to learn today?

This is one of the problems in the church today, failing to grow in truth. Trying to bring us to the point of understanding the truth as the children of Israel did. Truth is unfolding – should we be learning the same basic truths that the Israelites learned or should we be far beyond it?

We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. ¹² In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! ¹³ Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

6 Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, ² instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. Heb 5:11-6:2

Why did God give the Israelites this service? Was it because they understood truth or was it because they were very hard to teach, had darkened minds and understood very little?

- If man had kept the law of God, as given to Adam after his fall, preserved by Noah, and observed by Abraham, there would have been no necessity for the ordinance of circumcision. And if the descendants of Abraham had kept the covenant, of which circumcision was a sign, they would never have been seduced into idolatry, nor would it have been necessary for them to suffer a life of bondage in Egypt; they would have kept God's law in mind, and there would have been no necessity for it to be proclaimed from Sinai or engraved upon the tables of stone. And had the people practiced the principles of the Ten Commandments, there would have been no need of the additional directions given to Moses. {PP 364.2}

As we look at God and His actions throughout human history what do we learn about how God deals with us? God Stoops to Meet us where we are:

- When we were afraid of God – Moses or Jesus stood in between us and God
- When we hated manna – he gave us meat, and with a list of clean and unclean meats
- When we wanted a king to be our leader, rather than God – he gave us a king, even though it was harmful
- When we wanted to cruelly dismiss our wives in divorce – God gave divorce laws
- When we wanted to fight our way into Canaan – God helped us fight
- When we were so hardened and indifferent even to death and killing – God gave us rules such as “an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth”
- When we were too immature and childlike to understand God’s law of love and how breeches bring death, He gave animal sacrifice, when we still didn’t comprehend He gave the 10 Commandments and then the Levitical laws.

Do we need to understand these things like the Israelites did? How did the Israelites understand the purpose of the sanctuary services?

- The next day they made sacrifices to the LORD and presented burnt offerings to him: a thousand bulls, a thousand rams and a thousand male lambs, together with their drink offerings, and other sacrifices in abundance for all Israel. 1Chron 29:21
- The number of burnt offerings the assembly brought was seventy bulls, a hundred rams and two hundred male lambs—all of them for burnt offerings to the LORD. ³³ The animals consecrated as sacrifices amounted to six hundred bulls and three thousand sheep and goats. ³⁴ The priests, however, were too few to skin all the burnt offerings; so their kinsmen the Levites helped them until the task was finished and until other priests had been consecrated, for the Levites had been more conscientious in consecrating themselves than the priests had been. ³⁵ There were burnt offerings in abundance, together with

the fat of the fellowship offerings and the drink offerings that accompanied the burnt offerings. 2Chron 29:32-35

Do you think God was more impressed when the blood of thousands of animals was flowing? Does God like to see animals killed?

Listen to what God says to Jonah after Jonah complains that God didn't destroy the city of Nineveh:

But the LORD said, "You have been concerned about this vine, though you did not tend it or make it grow. It sprang up overnight and died overnight. But Nineveh has more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left, and many cattle as well. Should I not be concerned about that great city?" Jonah 4:10,11

Do you think God likes the sacrificial shedding of animal blood? What did God actually want?

- "The multitude of your sacrifices— what are they to me?" says the LORD. "I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals; I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats. When you come to appear before me, who has asked this of you, this trampling of my courts? Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations— I cannot bear your evil assemblies. Your New Moon festivals and your appointed feasts my soul hates. They have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them. When you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide my eyes from you; even if you offer many prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are full of blood; wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight! Stop doing wrong, learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow. "Come now, let us reason together," says the

- LORD. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. Isaiah 1:11-18
- “What I want from you is plain and clear: I want your constant love, not your animal sacrifices. I would rather have my people know me than burn offerings to me. (Hosea 6:6 – GN)
 - You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. Psalms 51,16,17
 - One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?” ²⁹ “The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ ³¹ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.” ³² “Well said, teacher,” the man replied. “You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. ³³ To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.” ³⁴ When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions. Mark 12:28-34
 - With what shall I come before the LORD and bow down before the exalted God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:6-8

What did the children of Israel think of the sacrificial system?

- “He was hated and rejected; his life was filled with sorrow and terrible suffering. No one wanted to look at him. We despised him and said, ‘He is a nobody!’ He suffered and endured great pain for us, but we thought his suffering was punishment from God. He was wounded and crushed because of our sins; by taking our punishment, he made us completely well.” (Isaiah 53:1-5 – CEV)

What did they think God wanted? Why did they think God wanted lots of animal sacrifices? Why did they misunderstand the sacrificial system and therefore misunderstand the Messiah?

- It is the duty of priests to teach the true knowledge of God. People should go to them to learn my will, because they are the messengers of the Lord Almighty. Malachi 2:7 GNT
- The Lord says, “Let no one accuse the people or reprimand them—my complaint is against you priests. Night and day you blunder on, and the prophets do no better than you... My people are doomed because they do not acknowledge me. You priests have refused to acknowledge me and have rejected my teaching, and so I reject you and will not acknowledge your sons as my priests. Hosea 4:4-6
- The priests did not ask, ‘Where is the Lord?’ My own priests did not know me. The rulers rebelled against me; Jeremiah 2:8

Who was to teach the people the meaning of all this stuff? The priests, but what if the priests don’t know God for themselves?

Who are the priests today? We are! Are we making the same mistake today? Are Christians today understanding the

sacrificial system very much like the Jews did in the past? Do we think God is pleased by blood, only better blood than animals, the blood of His Son? Do we know God? Are we presenting a better picture than the priests of long ago? What does God want us to learn from this system?

SUNDAY

The altar of dedication – what was the system designed to teach?

- Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? 1Cor 3:16
- Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 1Cor 6:19

What is the sanctuary or temple a model or object lesson for?
The human soul!

- In the building of the sanctuary as a dwelling place for God, Moses was directed to make all things according to the pattern of things in the heavens. God called him into the mount, and revealed to him the heavenly things, and in their similitude the tabernacle, with all that pertained to it, was fashioned. {Ed 35.2}

So to Israel, whom He desired to make His dwelling place, He revealed His glorious ideal of character. The pattern was shown them in the mount when the law was given from Sinai and when God passed by before Moses and proclaimed, "The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth." Exodus 34:6. {Ed 35.3}

But this ideal they were, in themselves, powerless to attain. The revelation at Sinai could only impress them with their need and helplessness. Another lesson the tabernacle, through its service of sacrifice, was to teach--

the lesson of pardon of sin, and power through the Saviour for obedience unto life. {Ed 36.1}

Through Christ was to be fulfilled the purpose of which the tabernacle was a symbol--that glorious building, its walls of glistening gold reflecting in rainbow hues the curtains inwrought with cherubim, the fragrance of ever-burning incense pervading all, the priests robed in spotless white, and in the deep mystery of the inner place, above the mercy seat, between the figures of the bowed, worshiping angels, the glory of the Holiest. In all, God desired His people to read His purpose for the human soul. It was the same purpose long afterward set forth by the apostle Paul, speaking by the Holy Spirit: {Ed 36.2}

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17. {Ed 36.3}

- In the cleansing of the temple, Jesus was announcing His mission as the Messiah, and entering upon His work. That temple, erected for the abode of the divine Presence, was designed to be an object lesson for Israel and for the world. From eternal ages it was God's purpose that every created being, from the bright and holy seraph to man, should be a temple for the indwelling of the Creator. Because of sin, humanity ceased to be a temple for God. Darkened and defiled by evil, the heart of man no longer revealed the glory of the Divine One. But by the incarnation of the Son of God, the purpose of Heaven is fulfilled. God dwells in humanity, and through saving grace the heart of man becomes again His temple. God designed that the temple at Jerusalem should be a continual witness to the high destiny open to every soul. But the Jews had not understood the significance of the building they regarded with so much pride. They did not yield themselves as holy temples for the Divine Spirit. The courts of the temple at Jerusalem, filled with the

tumult of unholy traffic, represented all too truly the temple of the heart, defiled by the presence of sensual passion and unholy thoughts. In cleansing the temple from the world's buyers and sellers, Jesus announced His mission to cleanse the heart from the defilement of sin,--from the earthly desires, the selfish lusts, the evil habits, that corrupt the soul. "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver." Mal. 3:1-3. {DA 161.1}

In the Old Testament service where was the blood applied? In the New Testament, where symbol met reality, where did Christ say the blood is applied? John 6 – in us!

What about the true sanctuary, the one upon which the model was patterned?

- The point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, and who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by man. Heb 8:1,2

Who built this sanctuary? God – when?

- Tell him this is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Here is the man whose name is the Branch, and he will branch out from his place and build the temple of the LORD. It is he who will build the temple of the LORD, and he will be clothed with majesty and will sit and rule on his throne. And he will be a priest on his throne. And there will be harmony between the two.' Zech 6:12,13

What does it mean He will build His sanctuary? Out of what is the sanctuary built?

- Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's HOUSE [sanctuary/temple], built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building [sanctuary/temple] is joined together and rises to become a HOLY TEMPLE in the Lord. And in him YOU too [you all] are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit. Ephesians 2:19-22.
- As you come to him, the living Stone--rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him-- YOU also, like LIVING STONES [building blocks of the Temple], are being built into a SPIRITUAL HOUSE [Temple] to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 1 Pet 2:4,5.

Here is one opinion from one of the founders of this church:

- The first tabernacle, built according to God's directions, was indeed blessed of Him. The people thus were preparing themselves to worship in the temple not made with hands--a temple in the heavens. The stones of the Temple built by Solomon were all prepared at the quarry and then brought to the Temple site. They came together without the sound of ax or hammer. The timbers were also fitted in the forest. The furniture was likewise brought to this house all prepared for use. {3MR 231.3}
 Even so, the mighty cleaver of truth has **taken out a people from the quarry of the world and is fitting this people, who profess to be the children of God, for a place in His heavenly temple.** We want the cleaver of truth to do its work for us. **We are taken from the quarry of the world. The material must not be a dead substance but living souls, and these souls must be brought out of the quarry of the world, where the**

hand of God can fit them for the temple in heaven.

We are here as probationers, and we must pass under the hand of God. All rough edges and rough surfaces must be removed and **we must be stones fitted for the building.** We are brought into church capacity with defects of character, but we must not retain them. **We must be fitted and squared for the building. We must be "laborers together with God," for we are "God's husbandry," we are "God's building."** In view of this we must see that our temple is not defiled with sin. We should be lively stones, not dead ones, but live ones that will reflect the image of Christ. We must be worshipers in spirit and in truth. {3MR 231.4}

When we understand that the temple of God is a living structure, then it make sense when the Bible says:

- Him who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he leave it. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on him my new name. Revelation 3:12

We also understand why Satan wanted to sit in God's temple – because to sit in God's temple means to be enshrined into the hearts and minds of God's intelligent creatures as the one worshipped and adored!

MONDAY

Read first paragraph – thoughts? What does the ark symbolize?

What does the entire system symbolize? Recovery from sin, restoration to unity and oneness with God. The final culmination is living with God for eternity. Before this happens we are brought into unity, or atonement with Him.

In the Old Testament system where was the law of God kept?
In the ark, what about in the new covenant?

- This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. Heb 8:10

What does the ark symbolize?

- The visible presence represents God
- The angels represent the onlooking universe
- The lid – made of solid gold, hilestereon – represents Christ
- The box, made of acacia wood covered in gold – the heart of the believers who are sealed, so settled they cannot be moved
- Three things were kept in ark – 10 Commandments, manna, Aaron's rod that budded – what order were they put in the box?
- The manna first – manna represents what? We must first partake of Jesus, the bread of life who is the truth. As we partake of the truth Jesus brought we are restored to trust in God. In trust we open our hearts and invite Him in...
- Then He fulfills the New Covenant and writes the law on our hearts and minds – and once the law of love is written again in our hearts we...
- Are no longer dead branches, dead in trespass and sin, but are restored to life, lives of love and bring forth fruits of righteousness!

The ark represents God's universe restored to unity when all things in heaven and earth are unified through Christ Jesus. Jesus - the golden lid – is the connecting link as all are united in Him – the Father touches the lid, the angels are on the lid, and the box is covered by the lid – unity again through Jesus!

Middle question – asks us to read Exodus 25:22:

- There, above the cover between the two cherubim that are over the ark of the Testimony, I will meet with you and give you all my commands for the Israelites.

Then asks, “Try to imagine what kind of an experience this would be. How would you like to have that kind of close encounter with God? What makes you think that you wouldn’t be destroyed completely were you to get too close to Him?” – thoughts?

TUESDAY

The Candlestick- made out of solid gold with almonds carved upon it. What does it symbolize?

Christ, primarily, infused with the Holy Spirit, but anything else?

- “You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:14-16

Does the candlestick also represent the believers? Those who are filled with Christ? The High Priest was the one who trimmed the lamps morning and evening, what does this represent? Christ working in the heart/mind of the believer to trim us to shine more brightly for Him!

Interestingly the sanctuary had almonds and pomegranates associated with it and both of these foods have been shown to promote brain health and prevent dementia.

WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY

Dedication of the Levites –

Who do the Levites represent in the system? The priesthood of believers.

What was the duty of the Levites?

The High Priest represented who? Christ
The daily priest represented who?

How were the daily priests dressed? In white, why? What was being taught?

What did the daily priests do? They carried vessels with blood around the system applying blood to the various point and depending on the offering also ate some of the meat and ate the showbread each Sabbath. What is being taught?

What does it mean in Numbers 8 that the Levites make atonement for the people?

The word translated atonement is:

3722 כָּפַר, כִּפֶּר [kaphar /kaw·far/] v. A primitive root; TWOT 1023, 1024, 1025, 1026; GK 4105 and 4106; 102 occurrences; AV translates as “atonement” 71 times, “purge” seven times, “reconciliation” four times, “reconcile” three times, “forgive” three times, “purge away” twice, “pacify” twice, “atonement ... made” twice, “merciful” twice, “cleansed” once, “disannulled” once, “appease” once, “put off” once, “pardon” once, and “pitch” once. **1** to cover, purge, make an atonement, make

v v: verb

TWOT Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament

GK Goodrick-Kohlenberger

AV Authorized Version

reconciliation, cover over with pitch. 1A (Qal) to coat or cover with pitch. 1B (Piel). 1B1 to cover over, pacify, propitiate. 1B2 to cover over, atone for sin, make atonement for. 1B3 to cover over, atone for sin and persons by legal rites. 1C (Pual). 1C1 to be covered over. 1C2 to make atonement for. 1D (Hithpael) to be covered.

¹

How do the Levites accomplish this? They stand between God and the people do to what? Why is it important for them to be cleansed and purified? What work are they doing? For what purpose?

Read second paragraph in Thursday's lesson, "Scholars are divided..." thoughts?

Is this the lesson we are to learn that we need someone to protect us from the wrath of God?

FRIDAY

Question 1 – Is it only the pastor who functions as a Levite or is it every true believer is a priest of God? Do we err in thinking only of pastors in such a role? What is the danger? Do we set up a false hierarchy in the church? Does this undermine the health of the church?

Questions 2,3 read and discuss.

¹Strong, James: *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible : Showing Every Word of the Text of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order.* electronic ed. Ontario : Woodside Bible Fellowship., 1996, S. H3722