

LESSON THIS WEEK

5) 01 Jan 2012.....Num 16:1-25:18.....Stay Grateful for God's Care

INTRODUCTION

- Can someone witness God's miracles, even work miracles, receive specific instructions from God, and receive prophecies from God, and still not be a heaven-bound saint? See Matthew 7:22
- Many Israelites witnessed God's miracles, but failed to live for Him

Passage	Comments
Numbers 16:1-50 17:1-13 Read vs 16:1-3 16:10 16:28-35 16:41 16:46-50 17:1-2 17:8-10	<p>God's Sovereignty vs Equality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levites had special privileges (e.g., they were exempt from military service) but Korah wanted more <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Aren't we the same? If we are so blessed why do we always want more, and we want it now? • Korah failed to factor in God's sovereignty (God can pick & choose things at will). God chooses who will be born male and female, handicapped or healthy, black or white, and who will be a Priest or a commoner • How should we respond to where God puts us in life? • God proved to the Israelites that Moses was chosen <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The ground swallowed up Korah's clan 2. Fire consumed 250 other disgruntled leaders 3. 14,700 died from another plague for grumbling 4. Aaron's rod budded • But if we have all the evidence that God exists can it really change or convert anyone? Luke 16:31
18:1-32	<p>Levites and Levitical Priests Have a Unique Job</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God reiterates the functions of the Levites & Priests • vv1-7. The 3 clans of Levites (Gershornites, Kohathites, Merarites) shall perform their duties to support the 4th clan – the sons of Aaron (the priests) without jealousy • vv24-28. Israel's tithes supported the Levites, and the tithes of the Levites supported the Priests
19:1-22	<p>The Ashes of the Red Heifer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv1-9. The "unblemished" red heifer was slaughtered outside the camp, then its blood was sprinkled on the tabernacle tent, and its ashes were used to cleanse people ceremoniously from various impurities • Jesus was crucified outside of Jerusalem and His blood makes us whiter than snow Psalms 51:7
20:1-29	<p>More Grumbling Leads to Moses' Biggest Failure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v8. God told Moses to "speak to the rock before their eyes, that it may yield its water" • vv11-12. BUT Moses "struck the rock twice" and God said "Because you did not believe me and treat me as holy...you will not enter the promised land" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ We must always be on our guard to protect our testimony before the world. If we fail to do so, we won't lose our salvation, but we will lose out on blessings in this world and rewards in Heaven
21:1-35	<p>A New Generation Rises Up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv1-3. They were ready to fight and not cower away • They were ready to obey and not grumble • ...until they got to verse 4, where the older generation still complained about leaving Egypt • vv6-9. God sent fiery serpents to correct and restore • The remedy involved looking at the upraised serpent • Symbolic of looking to the crucified Lord for salvation • Note: Hezekiah, ~500 years later, destroyed the bronze serpent because it became an idol.....2Kings 18:4
22:1-41	<p>A Talking Donkey Teaches Balaam about God</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balaam was a non-Jewish seer/prophet/diviner who had a reputation of successfully cursing or blessing people

Passage	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He recognized God, but he preferred wages of unrighteousness 2Peter 2:15, Jude 11; Rev 2:14 • Did that donkey really talk? Did a serpent really talk with Eve? Did God create the universe in 6 literal 24-hour days about 6000 years ago? Did men really live almost 1000 years? Was there really a global flood? Did the sun really stand still during the time of Joshua? Did the sun really move backwards during reign of Hezekiah? Was Jesus really born of a virgin? Did Jesus really walk on water? And did Jesus really rise from the dead? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Considering sound principles of linguistics, biblical hermeneutics, and all those events were written in historical prose and not as allegorical stories YEP!
Note: God conversed with other unrighteous people also	God told Cain to watch his attitude or sin would master him; God told King Abimelech to return Sarah back to Abraham; God gave the Witch of Endor a vision of Samuel; God told King Nebuchadnezzar he would lose his sanity for 7 years
23:1-29 24:1-25	<p>Balaam's Blessings on Israel</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Israel will always be a segregated people 2. Israel will conquer their enemies 3. Israel will be a prosperous and peaceful nation 4. Israel will produce a mighty King
25:1-18	<p>Balaam's Legacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rev 2:14 conveys that Balaam told Balak how to defeat Israel – through idolatry & immorality (i.e., befriend them, intermingle and intermarry) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Recall what happened to Solomon when he married heathen women – he forsook God • v9. 24,000 more Israelites died by another plague • vv10-13. Phinehas, for his courageous actions of taking matters into his own hands & his expert spearmanship, stopped the plague and he received a covenant of perpetual priesthood from God • vv17-18. "Be hostile toward the Midianites" – recall the Midianites were Moses' in-laws .. Exodus 3:1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Who has first priority in our lives? God or family? ♦ Recall in Exodus 32:26-28 – The Levites, who chose to serve God, slew about 3000 of their own idolatrous kinsmen throughout the camp. Family relationships did not matter. The wicked were to be destroyed

CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS

- Can we still be hostile and militant toward people and even whole nations for their ungodliness? **NO! NO! NO!**
- God had a unique covenant with Israel – unlike any other nation
- We do not have to do God's job. Our job is to live righteously without grumbling, and let God do the convicting and judging

NEXT WEEK: Numbers 26-36 – Staying Focused on the Goal

THE BACK PEW - JEFF LARSON



Numbers 23, 24 – Balak hires Balaam to curse the Jews, but instead he blesses them