

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

Lesson 4 w/answers

Numbers (cont'd) & Joshua (Chaps. 1-6)



This week we'll continue our study beginning in about the middle of the book of Numbers. As we discussed in class last week, it seems so incredible that God's chosen people, the Jews, could have personally witnessed so many miracles and yet so easily allow their faith to diminish. This week we'll see their rebellious hearts once again, as they continue to displease God and seek after their own desires and gods. Yet God will use them in a decisive victory over the city of Jericho.

Here's your assignment for this week:

1. What prompted the sin of Korah? Describe what God did to Korah and his followers. (Numbers Chapter 16)
 - a. ANSWER: Dissatisfaction with the leadership of Moses and his followers. Korah and his 250 followers wanted to take over leadership of the nation of Israel. As punishment, God caused a great earthquake to take Korah, his followers, and their families.
2. Describe in detail the activity of Balaam and his dialogue with Balak. (Numbers chapters 22 through 24)
 - a. ANSWER: Balaam was a prophet of a pagan religion, who had been summoned by the King of the Moabites, Balak. Balak feared for his country because of the size and power of the Israelites who had traveled into the plains of Moab. Upon the request of Balak, Balaam, a pagan diviner, sought counsel from his god about what curse to put on the Israelites. God (Yahweh) however answered and told him they were a blessed people and not to curse them. Balaam thus turned the king's messengers back to the king without cursing Israel. The king replied by sending more important and distinguished people, and offered more wealth to Balaam if he would curse Israel. This time, God told him to go to the king, but to do only what God tells him to do. Over the next two and a half chapters, Balaam meets the Lord, sets aside his practices of divination and in the end blesses, not curses, Israel. This infuriates the king who sends him home without reward, believing he is punishing Balaam; and yet Balaam reminded him that he would never accept anything for cursing the nation blessed by God.
3. Describe the sin of Baal-Peor. What happened, and how did God deal with it? (Numbers 25)
 - a. ANSWER: The Baal-Peor incident was the low point for the children of Israel. In Numbers 25:1, we see that the people of Israel became involved in a cult, a religious practice which saw the men of Israel lying with the women of Moab. The greatly kindled the Lord's anger against them and 24,000 people were killed as a result.
4. What internal evidence is there to support the position that Moses wrote the Pentateuch? (Where in the Bible can you find verses that would indicate this - Numbers 33:1-2, for instance, is an example.) List what you've found below:
 - a. ANSWER: This evidence can be found in the following biblical references: Exodus 14:14, Numbers 33:1-2, Deuteronomy 31:22, Judges 3:4, 2 Kings 21:8, Malachi 4:4, Matthew 19:8, Acts 3:22 and Romans 10:5.
5. Why would you believe the Dead Sea Scrolls are valuable as evidence for the accuracy of the Old Testament texts? Jeremiah Chapter 36 will give you some insight into this answer.
 - a. ANSWER: Jeremiah Chapter 36 is proof that great care was taken in transmitting copies of the manuscripts. When the Dead Sea Scrolls were found in 1947 (written around 150 B.C.), they gave us a way of comparing the current version of the scrolls written in 900 A.D. to check the accuracy of both the text and the procedure for transmitting the manuscripts over time. The extremely high degree of accuracy spanning over 1,000 years attest to the accuracy of today's Old Testament as representing God's original and authentic word.

6. In what land did Moses die, and how old was he? (Deuteronomy chapter 34)
 - a. ANSWER: Moses died when he was 120 years old, in the plains of Moab - in the valley opposite Beth-Peor.
7. Locate and describe in the space below a description of "Baalism".
 - a. ANSWER: Baal worship required human sacrifice and sexual activity. Fertility was a key tenet and issue addressed by this form of worship, as the Canaanites were farmers. Child sacrifice was also a very important part of the worship, and it was required that it be done without emotion - or the sacrifice was not considered a "good" sacrifice.
8. Beginning in the book of Joshua, God's "holy war" begins with the invasion of Canaan. God sent "the army of Lord" to go against the Canaanites and, with Joshua being led by the "Commander of the army of the Lord", he was to destroy both the inhabitants of Canaan and the worship of Baal. (Joshua chapters 1-6) After reading these chapters summarize below the instructions given Joshua for how he was to attack and destroy Jericho.
 - a. ANSWER: He was to march around the city once each day for six days with all "the armed men". The Ark of the Covenant was to lead them on the march, with seven priests with rams' horns marching in front of the Ark. On the seventh day, they were to march around the city seven times, this time with the priests blowing the ram's horns. At some point during the seventh trip, the armed men were to listen for the priests to give a loud blast on the horns, and when it occurred the armed men were to shout and the walls would come tumbling down. They did exactly as they were told, and indeed the city walls collapsed before them.

This week, we see that God will not tolerate sin, nor will He tolerate the worship of idols and other gods. We also see that when God deals with evil and sin, He deals with it completely. We also see that even though the people of Israel sinned and demonstrated their lack of faith many times, God remained faithful and led the new nation into the land of Canaan victoriously -- leaving no doubt to their surrounding neighbors that God is the God of all creation and that He is above all gods. With the conquest of Canaan and the elimination of the worship of Baal as their mission, the new people of Israel score a decisive victory in Jericho as God leads them into battle. Next week we'll see if they can fully accomplish this mission.

Thanks for studying with us as we continue to watch for the coming of our King and Savior -- Jesus the Christ.

In Christ,

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