

Jesus in Numbers

The book of Numbers tells us of the tragic account of the failure to enter the Promised Land. God in his grace and mercy had allowed them to take two years so that they would be prepared to enter and prepared to trust God for the battles ahead. Ex 13:17 But upon hearing the reports of 10 of the 12 spies, that the enemy was too powerful, they lost heart. God's judgement on their rebellion and lack of faith in the One who had sheltered and visibly guided them the last two years was to have them die in the desert. It was a very just judgement as it was one they had themselves chosen. Nu 14:2. Verse 3 is a clear declaration that they doubted the very heart of God in spite of all the illustrations and patience He had shown them.

Is this a picture of the delivered Children of God today as God leads us to a life of victory and yet we refuse to trust Him and step into that life? Just like the Children of Israel were led to that border at the time when they were ready to enter, so God's Spirit leads us to a border that we must cross believing that He can do what looks impossible to us. Don't doubt the heart of God and spend the rest of your life in the wilderness. Refuse to accept death in the desert as a substitute for entering into His rest! But here is a display of the wonderful patience and mercy of God. The cloud still guided them and protected these doubting rebels from the sun. Their clothes still did not wear out. The manna still fell from above. Water still came from the Rock. If we are faithless He remains faithful. He walks with us and provides for us even in judgement because of our lack of faith in Him.

THE CLOUD: The cloud stayed over the tabernacle and probably mushroomed out over the whole camp shading them from the intense desert sun. Not only was it their guidance but it was their shelter. Nu 9:15 By night it was a pillar of fire giving light to the whole camp. What a night light! "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life." It remained in place for a day or two or a year and would move when they were meant to move. We must keep looking unto Jesus. When He moves we are to follow. Silver trumpets were used to announce the moving of the Cloud.

SILVER TRUMPETS: Not only did they announce time to break camp but they called the men to war, and announced the feasts. Wherever one was in the camp they could hear the call of the trumpets. "My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me." We should be listening for the voice of Jesus within our hearts as He announces the times to move, the times to go to battle in prayer, the times to celebrate his goodness in our lives.

AARON: We have considered Aaron as the High Priest and the shadow he was of the Great High Priest to come. Numbers gives us another picture we have not seen yet. Just after the people are ready to stone Moses and Aaron for leading them to this land of giant enemies, the Lord sends a plague that sweeps through the camp. Aaron runs

with his censor of incense to stand in front of the plague and stop its advancement. What picture of our Lord who was so verbally abused and yet went to stand before the sweeping deadly plague of sin so that some could live. Nu 16:46-50 The censor is a picture of the prayers of Jesus to the Father on our behalf as He ever lives to make intercession. Right now He stands between you and the wages of sin, death, and intercedes for you to the Father. "The sins of this one do deserve death and I died in their place so they could live."

It is incredible to me that a short while later they questioned Moses choice of Aaron as a High Priest. Nu 17 It was all right to let him have the best of the tithe since he was not going to inherit any land but now that the inheritance is 38 years away others wanted his title and role. The rods of each tribal leader were placed before the Lord. The next morning Aaron's rod – the symbol of his leadership and authority had blossomed and had almonds on it. It was a dead stick but it came to life and bore fruit. This was an early picture of the resurrection of Jesus which is a sign that He alone is the Great High Priest, the chosen of God. In the end time the False Prophet will give resurrected life to the Antichrist in an attempt to claim this role. The difference is in the fruit. Mt 7:20

THE WATER OF SEPARATION: In Nu 19 the water of separation was prescribed for those contaminated by touching death. The water was mixed with the ashes of a red heifer. This looks forward to the cleansing blood of Jesus. 1Jn 1:7 Perhaps this is the water Jesus was referring to when he told Nicodemus he had to be born of water and the Spirit, not the shadow but the reality of his blood.

THE BRAZEN SERPENT: In chapter 21 the people again complain about their difficulties. As a judgement, fiery serpents are sent into the camp whose poisonous bite would bring a painful death. It is reported today in this same area that there are large snakes with fiery red dots and a poisonous bite. When the people confessed their sin the Lord had Moses make a bronze serpent and put it on a pole. They had but to "look upon it and live". In John 3 Jesus claimed this to be a shadow of Himself. Bronze is a symbol of judgement. The pole pictures the cross. There on the cross is the image of what was bringing a painful death to the people. "He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin: that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. 2 Co 5:21 Those people who were bitten had death in them. When they looked they were not just healed of the puncture wounds but they received life. When Nicodemus puzzled over Jesus' expression of being born again the Lord pointed him to the picture of new life. Read Jn 3:14,15

PROPHECY of the STAR: Nu 24:17,19 and Mt 2:2 and Rev 22:16

MOSES PRAYER: Nu 27:16,17