

# NUMBERS

Walking with God Through the Wilderness

Lessons from the Past for Life in the Present

Numbers 12



# The Theological Center to the Holiness Laws

A Vows and Modifications - due to timing of Jubilee: Leviticus 27

B Levites: Census - Numbers 1:1 to 5:4

C Special Situations Involving Gifts to Tabernacle: Numbers 5:5 to 6:21

X-CENTER - Priestly, Aaronic Blessing: Numbers 6:22-27

C1 Special Tribal Gifts to Tabernacle: Numbers 7:1-89

B1 Levites: Special Status: Numbers 8:5-26

A1 Passover and Modification - due to timing of Passover: Numbers 9:1-14

# The Theological Center of the Wilderness Journey

- A Journey Begins: Departure from Sinai (10:11-36)
- B Complaint about Hardship, Manna and No Food (11:1-35)
- C Miriam Punished for her Sin (with Aaron) (12:1-16)
- D Rebellion at Kadesh (in Wilderness of Zin) (13:1-14:45)
- E Ritual Regulations (15:1-36)
- F Holiness of Aaron Above Levites Challenged (15:37-16:50)
- X CENTER - Aaron's Rod Budding (17:1-28)
- F1 Holiness of Aaron above Levites Explained (18:1-32)
- E1 Ritual Regulations (19:1-22)
- D1 Rebellion at Kadesh (in Wilderness of Zin) (20:1-21)
- C1 Aaron Punished for his sin: death (20:22-29)
- B1 Complaint about Hardship, Manna and No Food (21:4-9)
- A1 Journey Ends: Arrival at Plains of Moab (21:10-20)

# I. The Criticism Against Mose's Wife

Numbers 12:1,

And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian (Hebrew - "Cushite") woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian (Hebrew - "Cushite") woman.

Habakkuk 3:7 | saw the tents of Cushan in affliction: and the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble.

Exodus 2:16, Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters (one of them was Zipporah): and they came and drew water, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock.

## II. The Complaint Against Mose's Leadership & Authority

Numbers 12:1-2,

<sup>2</sup> And they said,  
Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses?  
hath he not spoken also by us?

And the LORD heard it.



# “FOR LOVE’S SAKE, I RATHER BESEECH THEE”

Philemon 1:8-9,

Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient, <sup>9</sup> Yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 13:17,

Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

# III. The Complement About Mose's Character

Numbers 12:3,

(Now the man Moses was very meek,

above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)



## IV. The Confrontation with the Offenders

Numbers 12:4-5,

<sup>4</sup> And the LORD spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam,  
Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation.  
And they three came out.

<sup>5</sup> And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud,  
and stood in the door of the tabernacle,  
and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth.



# V. The Clarification About Mose's Uniqueness

Numbers 12:6,

And he said,

Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you,  
| the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision,  
and will speak unto him in a dream.

Numbers 12:7,

My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house.



# The Chiastic Structure of the Poem

Introduction: Hear thee My words (7)

A If either of you is Yahweh's prophet (9)

B I make Myself known to him in a vision (8)

C I speak with him in a dream (7)

D Not so with MY servant Moses (6)

D1 He (alone) is trusted in MY household (7)

C1 With him I speak mouth to mouth (7)

B1 Plainly and not in riddles (8)

A1 And he beholds the likeness of the Lord (7)

Conclusion: How then did you not shrink (7)

from speaking against MY servant Moses. (9)

# VI. The Conviction of the Grumblers

Numbers 12:8,

With him will I speak mouth to mouth,  
even apparently, and not in dark speeches;  
and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold:

wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?



# VII. The Consequences for the Chief Grumbler

Numbers 12:9-10,

<sup>9</sup> And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he departed.

<sup>10</sup> And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous.



# VIII. The Confession of the Complicit Complainer

Numbers 12:11-12,

<sup>11</sup> And Aaron said unto Moses,  
Alas, my lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us,  
wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned.

<sup>12</sup> Let her not be as one dead,  
of whom the flesh is half consumed when he cometh out of his mother's womb.

# IX. The Cry of the Concerned Intercessor

Numbers 12:13,  
And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying,  
Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee.



# X. The Challenge for the Entire Camp - contempt

Numbers 12:14-15,

<sup>14</sup> And the LORD said unto Moses,  
If her father had but spit in her face,  
should she not be ashamed seven days?  
let her be shut out from the camp seven days,  
and after that let her be received in again.

<sup>15</sup> And Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days:  
and the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again.

# XI. The Camping Choice

Numbers 12:16,

And afterward the people removed from Hazeroth,  
and pitched in the wilderness of Paran.



# Why Complaining Provokes God to Anger

1. Complaining is irrational and inconsistent with the nature of God - is a denial of God's goodness
2. Complaining is being ungrateful for God's leading and provisions
3. Complaining is rebellion - pride
4. Complaining illustrates an inflated view of self and a deflated view of God
5. Complaining is classic unbelief in God's Ability and Power to Provide
6. Complaining is contagious
7. Complaining discourages God's leaders

# Christ in Numbers 12

1. Every anthropomorphism in the chapter points to the future, Incarnate Son of God.

“And the LORD heard it” (Ears)

“And the LORD spake suddenly unto Moses,” “With him will I speak mouth to mouth” (Mouth, Tongue)

“And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud” (Physical Descent)

“And stood in the door of the tabernacle” (Standing Position - Legs, Feet)

“And he departed” (Physical Departure)

# Christ in Numbers 12

2. Every Theophany in the OT is a Christophany  
“and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold:”
3. The Humility of Moses and the Prophet Greater than Moses
4. The father spitting on his child - picture of contempt and shame points to the cross where the Father made His Son an object of shame



# Christ being Spat Upon

1. Mark 10:34, And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again.
2. Matthew 26:67, Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands. Mark 14:65, And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.
3. Matthew 27:30, And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. Mark 15:19, And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing their knees worshipped him.

# Prayer to Receive Salvation from the Lord

Dear God,

I know that I am sinner and that I need your pardon. I humbly come to the cross and ask for your blood to cleanse me from all my sin. Please save me by your grace. I want my name to be found in the Book of Life.

Amen.

