

The Old Testament – Questions to Consider

Week 13: Numbers 22-36

Small Group Warm Up Question:

If you had to choose one of your five senses (taste, touch, smell, sight, hearing) to lose, which one would you choose? Which sense would you never want to lose?

1. Numbers lists some of the many failures of the Israelite in the desert wanderings. What stands out to you in their rebellions and why? What lessons can we learn from these sins of Israel?
2. The bronze serpent is later referred to as the “Nehushtan” (2 Kings 18:4) and is later turned into an idol by Israel to which they made sacrifices until King Hezekiah righteously destroys it by breaking it into pieces. Why do Protestants (non-Catholic/Orthodox Christians) resist the use of images, statues, amulets, charms, scapulars, beads, and relics? How can you tell if you have an object that has become an idol in your life? What are some examples?
3. In the tribe of Manasseh a man named Zelophehad had no sons, only daughters (Numbers 26:33, 27:1-11, 36:1-12) and specific protections were made for the daughters to receive their father’s inheritance. Why do you think God gives such counter-cultural attention, protections, and provisions to women?
 - See also: “Women of Faith in the Bible”
www.trustworthyword.com/women
4. The 20+ year old male population of Israel was still over 600,000 after 38 years in the desert (from 603,550 to 601,730). Assuming one woman for every man, over 1.2 million Israelites died as a consequence of their rebellion, which equals around 86 funerals a day or 31,500 deaths a year. What do you think it would have been like for this new generation to see so much death? How do funerals affect you?
5. Do you think the new generation of Israelites learned from their forefathers’ failures? Have you seen this problem in your families? Where the sinful influence of one generation normalizes rebellion against God? When a family wanders from God, what can be done to help?
6. Leviticus shows God’s faithfulness in the midst of Israel’s rebelliousness. How have you seen God be faithful in the midst of your rebelliousness? Why is it important not to presume on God’s kindness and patience? (see Romans 2:3-5)
7. The story of Balaam and his donkey is unusual but important (Numbers 22-24). What lessons stood out to you from this story?

More questions @ www.southfork.church/discussion-guide

www.TrustworthyWord.com

www.Bible.video

“Sin No More, that Nothing Worse May Happen to You” Numbers (ESV)

Some Suffering Is Due to Sin:

Learn the E_____ Way, Not the H_____ Way

- John 5:5, 9, 14 “One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. ...[9] And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked. ...[14] Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, ‘See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you.’” (ESV)
- 2 Peter 3:9 “The Lord...is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.”

Not All Suffering Is Due to Sin:

See How God Uses Suffering for His H_____

- John 9:2–3 “And his disciples asked him, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’ [3] Jesus answered, ‘It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.’”
- Job 1:8 “And the LORD said to Satan, ‘Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?’”

7 Ways to Humbly Learn from the Israelites’ Suffering for their Sins (38 Years of Wandering)

1. Don’t Complain...that nothing worse may happen to you. Trust God’s Plan.

- Num 11:1-3 – Complaining about hardships – burned by fire
- Numbers 16:41-50 – the Israelites complain against Moses and Aaron – a plague spreads and kills 14,700 people
- Numbers 17 – constant complaining against Aaron’s priestly leadership – God makes Aaron’s staff bud & produce almonds

April 7, 2024

2. Don't Crave Food (G_____)...that nothing worse may happen to you. Be Grateful.

- Numbers 11:4-34 - Craving for meat & complaining about manna, Moses doubts God's power to provide meat - severe plague kills those with the "craving"

3. Don't Be Jealous (Covetousness)...that nothing worse may happen to you. Be Content.

- Numbers 12 – Miriam and Aaron opposed Moses – Miriam made leprous
- Numbers 16:1-40 – Korah and his followers rise up against Moses, coveting more attention to be priests – the ground opens up & swallows the families of the rebellious

4. Don't Be Afraid (Cowardice)...that nothing worse may happen to you. Be Courageous.

- Numbers 13:26-14:38 – in Kadesh-Barnea 10 out of the 12 spies speak against going into the Promised Land due to fear of the people of the land, Joshua and Caleb speak in favor of advancing, the Israelites wish to be back in Egypt, the Israelites talk about stoning/executing Moses, Aaron, Joshua, & Caleb – Israel banished to wander in the desert for 40 years, 1 for each day that the spies were in the Promised Land, the 10 unfaithful spies were killed by a plague
- www.trustworthyword.com/risk

5. Don't Be Impatient (Immaturity)...that nothing worse may happen to you. Trust God's Timing.

- Numbers 21:4-8 – Israelites impatiently complain against God – the Lord sends venomous snakes that bite and kill many, only the Lord has power over the snake and provides His solution to their sin, they have the responsibility to trust God's commands, move in obedience while wounded by their sin, look up to the image of salvation, believe unto God for their healing; God's perfect justice bring wrath and life

6. Don't Rely on Yourself (Dishonor/Disbelief)...that nothing worse may happen to you. Seek God.

- Numbers 14:39-44 – a group decides to presumptuously go into the Promised Land - they are defeated
- Numbers 20:1-13 – Moses and Aaron pridefully strike – Moses & Aaron will not enter the Promised Land since they did not trust in God enough and honor Him as holy
- Numbers 20:1-21; 21:1-3 – Israelites do not seek the Lord w/ the Edomites – Israel takes the long route around Edom

7. Don't Participate in Sexual Immorality, Idolatry, & Greed (Worldliness)...that nothing worse may happen to you. Walk in Righteousness.

- Numbers 22:32, 25:1-9, 31:16 (2 Peter 2:15, Jude 1:11) – greedy Balaam uses his false, pagan practices to attempt to curse Israel, then resorts to sexual seduction of the Israelites – a plague kills 24,000 Israelites, the Midianites are destroyed
- www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-sexual-sin
- www.trustworthyword.com/idols
- www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-money

Confess Your Sin, Turn Away from Your Sin, Strengthen Your Brothers and Sisters in Christ

- 1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins & to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
- Matthew 3:8 "Bear fruit in keeping with repentance."
- Luke 22:31-32 "I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. & when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."

This Next Week's Old Testament Reading Plan:

Week 14: Deuteronomy 1-15

- **Read the Old Testament w/Us:** www.southfork.church/2024
- **Hope & Purpose in Jesus:** www.southfork.church/jesus
- **Daily Verse by Text Message:** remind.com/join/sfbcdevo

**“Sin No More,
that Nothing Worse May Happen to You”**
Numbers (ESV)

Some Suffering Is Due to Sin:

Learn the Easy Way, Not the Hard Way

- John 5:5, 9, 14 “One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. ...[9] And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked. ...[14] Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, ‘See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you.’” (ESV)
- 2 Peter 3:9 “The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.”

Not All Suffering Is Due to Sin:

See How God Uses Suffering for His Honor

- John 9:2–3 “And his disciples asked him, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’ [3] Jesus answered, ‘It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.’”
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**7 Ways to Humbly Learn from the Israelites’
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- Numbers 16:41-50 – the Israelites complain against Moses and Aaron about the deaths of Korah and his followers – a plague spreads and kills 14,700 people
- Numbers 17 – constant complaining against Aaron’s priestly leadership – God makes Aaron’s staff bud & produce almonds overnight, kept in the Ark as a reminder

**2. Don’t Crave Food (Gluttony)...that nothing
worse may happen to you. Be Grateful.**

- Numbers 11:4-34 - Craving for meat & complaining about manna, Moses doubts God’s power to provide meat, Joshua’s jealousy over 2 prophesying within the camp – 70 elders consecrated, severe plague kills those with the “craving”

**3. Don’t Be Jealous (Covetousness)...that nothing
worse may happen to you. Be Content.**

- Numbers 12 – Miriam and Aaron opposed Moses – Miriam made leprous
- Numbers 16:1-40 – Korah and his followers rise up against Moses, coveting more attention to be priests – the ground opens up & swallows the families of the rebellious, 250 leaders are consumed by fire, the 250 censers become a bronze covering for the altar as a remembrance & warning that only the descendants of Aaron can offer incense

**4. Don’t Be Afraid (Cowardice)...that nothing
worse may happen to you. Be Courageous.**

- Numbers 13:26-14:38 – in Kadesh-Barnea 10 out of the 12 spies speak against going into the Promised Land due to fear of the people of the land, Joshua and Caleb speak in favor of advancing, the Israelites wish to be back in Egypt, the Israelites talk about stoning/executing Moses, Aaron, Joshua, & Caleb – Israel banished to wander in the desert for 40 years, 1 for each day that the spies were in the Promised Land, the 10 unfaithful spies were killed by a plague
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- Numbers 21:4-8 – the Israelites grow impatient, speaking against God and Moses and complaining about their food and water, calling manna “worthless” – the Lord sends venomous snakes that bite and kill many, only the Lord has power over the snake and provides His solution to their sin, they have the responsibility to trust God's commands, move in obedience while wounded by their sin, look up to the image of salvation, believe unto God for their healing; God's perfect justice bring wrath and life

6. Don't Rely on Yourself (Dishonor/Disbelief)...that nothing worse may happen to you. Seek God.

- Numbers 14:39-44 – a group decides to attack and presumptuously go into the Promised Land instead of wandering in the desert – the Lord does not go with this group & they are defeated by the Amalekites and Canaanites to Arad/Hormah
- Numbers 20:1-13 – at Meribah the people quarrel with God, wishing they were dead due to the desert and absence of water, Moses and Aaron pridefully strike a rock for water instead of speaking to it as instructed – Moses & Aaron will not enter the Promised Land since they did not trust in God enough and honor Him as holy
- Numbers 20:1-21; 21:1-3 – Israelites do not seek the Lord when they encounter the Edomites – Israel takes the long route around Edom into the Promised Land, some Israelites are captured by the Canaanites in Arad/Hormah before they seek the Lord in a vow and defeat the Canaanites

7. Don't Participate in Sexual Immorality, Idolatry, & Greed (Worldliness)...that nothing worse may happen to you. Walk in Righteousness.

- Numbers 22:32, 25:1-9, 31:16 (2 Peter 2:15, Jude 1:11) – the Moabites and Midianites pay the greedy Balaam to use his false, pagan practices to attempt to curse Israel (he can't curse what God has blessed – Genesis 12:2-3), but then resorts to sexual seduction of the Israelites and their false worship of their local gods – a plague kills 24,000 before the priest Phineas spears an Israelite man and a Midianite woman simultaneously, in Numbers 31 God executes justice on the Midianites for their sexual immorality
- www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-sexual-sin
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Confess Your Sin, Turn Away from Your Sin, Strengthen Your Brothers and Sisters in Christ

- 1 John 1:9 “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”
- Matthew 3:8 “Bear fruit in keeping with repentance.”
- Luke 22:31-32 “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, [32] but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”