

## LESSON 11

### FROM SINAI TO THE PLAINS OF MOAB

#### Numbers 1:1–21:35

##### Aim

To understand the purpose and meaning of Israel's wilderness experiences.

##### Introduction

With the exception of Exodus 32–34, little narrative material was included after the Israelites arrived at Mount Sinai in Exodus 19. The latter part of Exodus and all of Leviticus deal with ritual and legal codes. Numbers returns to a narration of the experiences of Israel on her journey towards Canaan. The first ten chapters describe preparations for departing from Sinai. The next eleven chapters deal with Israel's experiences in the wilderness until she reached the plain of Moab.

##### Preparation to Depart from Sinai Numbers 1:1–10:10

##### The first census (1:1-54)

A census of the fighting men of Israel was taken by Moses. The men twenty years of age and older were counted according to clans or families. The tribes were usually enumerated in the order of importance: (1) Leah tribes, (2) Rachel tribes, and (3) the four concubine tribes. In the actual census list, Gad of the concubine tribes comes third, following Simeon. A total of 603,550 men were counted. This would give a total number of Israelites in excess of two million, including women and children. Scholars have questioned whether this large number of people could have been maintained in the wilderness. Marching fifty abreast with one yard between each rank, they would have constituted a column twenty-two miles long.

The Levites were not counted since they were separated from the rest of the people and did not participate in military service. They were to transport the Tabernacle during the journeys and protect it during encampments.

##### Positions of the tribes (2:1-34)

The Tent of Meeting was the central feature of the encampment and the march. It was no longer outside the camp but symbolized the Divine Presence in Israel's midst. The twelve tribes were divided into four groups with one tribe as leader in each group: Judah, Reuben, Ephraim, and Dan. Each tribe had an ensign or a banner. Tradition ascribes a lion to Judah, a human head to Reuben, an ox to Ephraim, and an eagle to Dan.

Three tribes were positioned on each of the four sides of the Tabernacle: Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun were on the east side; Reuben, Simeon, and Gad were on the south; Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin were on the west; Dan, Asher, and Naphtali were on the north. When the tribes broke camp, Judah's group was first, then Reuben's, Ephraim's, and Dan's. The Tent of Meeting was carried by the Levites in the centre of the march. The pattern manifested the principle of faith in which Israel, as a

Narration of experiences of the Israelites on their journey towards Canaan is resumed in the Book of \_\_\_\_\_

(Numbers)

God instructed Moses to take a census of men twenty years of age and older, which resulted in a total of \_\_\_\_\_ men.

(603,550)

Had women and children been counted also the number would have been more than \_\_\_\_\_

(two million)

collection of tribes and clans, found unity and organization by focusing on the Presence of God in her midst.

### The Levites (3:1-4:49)

The Levites were traced through Eleazar and Ithamar since the first-born sons Abihu and Nabad had met early deaths. Aaron and his sons were the sacrificing priests, and the Levites were their servants, taking care of transporting the Tabernacle and its furnishings. Only the Levites were qualified to work in the sacred precincts. The approach of unqualified persons to the Holy Place brought the danger of death.

The Lord had claimed previously the first-born of animals and people. The first-born sons could be redeemed by the substitution of a payment of money.

The Levites became substitutes for the first-born sons in Israel. Their ministry proclaimed that all belonged to the Lord because He had delivered them. After a census was taken of all first-born males in Israel, the Levites were substituted for them, but 273 remained unredeemed since the number of Levites was exhausted. These were redeemed by the payment of money. The installation of the Levites was a ceremony of redemption. Of the three Levite clans—Gershon, Kohath, and Merari—the Kohathites were the most favoured and were given the duty to carry the holiest things. Their ages for active service were limited from thirty to sixty (25 to 50 in 8:23-26). The Levites were as carefully organized for the service of Yahweh as the militia was for battle.

Aaron and his sons dismantled and packed the sacred objects of the sanctuary since the Kohathites were not allowed to see or touch them, but the Kohathites transported them. The screen or veil from the Holy of Holies was used to cover the Ark. Additional coverings were placed over the veil to protect it from the elements. Eleazar had general charge of the Kohathites. The Gershonites and the Merarites were under the direction of Ithamar. They carried the hangings and covers, all posts, sockets, and frames.

### The first priestly scroll (5:1-10:10)

Various laws and regulations are set forth in this section. All unclean persons, including lepers, men and women with unnatural discharges, and individuals who had touched dead bodies, were excluded from the camp because the presence of Yahweh was symbolized in the Tabernacle and Ark. Verses 5-10 supplement Leviticus 6:1-7. When a person committed a wrong act, he was to confess his sins, make restitution with an additional one-fifth, and give a ram as a burnt offering. If the wronged man died, the restitution went to the priests. If a woman became pregnant and the husband thought he was not the father of the child, he brought his wife to the priests who placed her before the Lord. She was required to drink a bitter water which was believed to cause a miscarriage if she was guilty. If she was guilty, the priests would have her agree to a curse, write the curse on the scroll, and wash the curse into the water she was to drink.

Chapter 6 gives regulations concerning the Nazarite vow. The purpose of the vow was to set a person apart to some special service for Yahweh. Perhaps Samson is the best known example of a Nazarite (Judges 13:5). The three restrictions for Nazarites were: abstinence from wine or any fermented liquor, unshorn hair on the head, and no contact with a corpse. If a restriction was accidentally violated, the vow must begin all over again. His head had to be shaved and he had to undergo seven days of purification. He was to give a burnt offering, a sin offering, and a peace offering from the flock. The chapter closes with a beautiful priestly benediction.

Chapter 7 gives a monotonous repetition of the offerings of the twelve leaders of Israel. The first part of the chapter describes

Numbers 3:4 states that Nadab and Abihu, Aaron's older sons, did not succeed him in the priesthood because \_\_\_\_\_

(Compare your answer also with Leviticus 10:1.)

At the time of the plague which brought death to the first-born of the Egyptians, God had consecrated the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ for His own.

(first-born, Israel)

Later, in exchange for the first-born of the sons of Israel, God appointed the \_\_\_\_\_ for His service.

(Levites)

Chapters 3 and 4 of Numbers describe in detail the \_\_\_\_\_ of the three Levite clans.

(duties)

Only \_\_\_\_\_ and his \_\_\_\_\_ were allowed to see or touch the sacred objects of the sanctuary.

(Aaron, sons)

The persons considered unclean who were to be excluded from the camp were:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

(Compare your answer with Numbers 5:1-3)

True or False.

A husband could bring his wife whom he suspected of unfaithfulness to the priest for a type of testing to determine if she were guilty. \_\_\_\_\_

(True)

The purpose of a person's taking the Nazarite vow was \_\_\_\_\_

(to set him apart for some special service for Yahweh)

the gifts made for the maintenance and use of the Tabernacle. These included covered wagons and oxen. The gifts for the altar from each leader were identical to all the others. A silver plate and a silver basin filled with flour for the cereal offerings, a gold dish filled with incense, and domestic animals for the three types of animal offerings were given.

Chapter 8 describes the making and lighting of the lamps of the Holy Place and the purification and presentation of the Levites to Yahweh. Purifying water was to be sprinkled on the Levites, all the hair was to be shaved from their bodies, and their clothes were to be washed. The sprinkling with "water of expiation" was for the purpose of "de-sinning." The symbolism of Christian baptism perhaps has its roots in this ceremony. The background of Christian ordination may be in the whole congregation's laying their hands on the Levites (8:9-10). After the Levites were presented to the Lord by Aaron as a wave offering for the sons of Israel, they were qualified to perform the services of the Lord (8:11). After their dedication, they were qualified to act as substitutes for the nation; therefore, they laid hands on the animals which were brought as offerings. These verses are very important as background to the substitutionary death of Christ for God's people.

Numbers 9:1-14 describes a second Passover for those who did not observe the first because of ritual uncleanness. Since the feast was obligatory and the unclean had been prevented from eating it during the first month, they were instructed to observe it on the fourteenth day of the second month. A second opportunity was not to encourage neglect (v. 13). Numbers 9:15-23 discusses again the fiery cloud which was both a symbol of the Divine Presence and a guide to the Israelites. The people did not break camp if the cloud remained low over the Tabernacle.

Numbers 10:1-10 describes the making and use of the silver trumpets. These were to be used by Moses in communicating with the people and their leaders. A long blast on one trumpet caused the leaders to assemble. Short blasts indicated time to break camp. Since Yahweh had control over the camp, the priests blew the trumpets.

### The Journey from Sinai to the Plains of Moab

Numbers 10:11-21:35

#### From Sinai to Paran (10:11-12:16)

The Israelites had lacked ten days being at Sinai one year. They were ready to travel to Paran where they would spend most of forty years. The relation of Kadesh and Paran is not clear. Perhaps the Wilderness of Paran was the more inclusive area and Kadesh was situated in the northwest part of it. Paran may have included the entire area north of the Sinai peninsula, south of the Negeb proper, and west of the rift which links the Jordan valley with the Gulf of Aqabah. The Wilderness of Paran was the traditional home of Ishmael (Gen. 21:21).

When camp was broken for the journey, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun went first. The Levites with the dismantled Tabernacle were next, followed by the standard of Reuben. The standard of Ephraim was next, and the standard of Dan was last.

The name of Moses' father-in-law varies from Jethro to Reuel to Hobab. He is called a Kenite in Judges 1:16 and 4:11 and a Midianite in Exodus 3:1 and 4:18. He is identified as Reuel, a Midianite, in Exodus 2:18. Judges 8:22-24 speaks of Midianites who were Ishmaelites. Perhaps these references indicate the overlapping of the ancient tribes. Hobab may have been Moses' brother-in-law since he was the son of Reuel (10:29). Critical scholars use the variation of names to support their

The three requirements of a Nazirite were:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

(Compare your answer with Numbers 6:1-6 and the text.)

From each of the following verses in Numbers 8, list an event which is significant as background to the New Testament.

Verse 7 \_\_\_\_\_

Verse 10 \_\_\_\_\_

Verse 11 \_\_\_\_\_

(Compare your list with the text.)

How long did the Israelites stay at Sinai where God gave them His laws? \_\_\_\_\_

(One year minus ten days)

arguments for differing sources from which the books were compiled.

Numbers 11:1–12:16 describes the problems that were encountered between Sinai and Kadesh. The people grumbled and displayed deep ingratitude to God for his past mercies. The leadership of Moses was threatened. At Taberah, the fire of the Lord broke out. The destruction ceased when Moses interceded. The rabble, perhaps the mixed multitude, incited the Israelites to complain about the manna. Their remembrance of plenty of food in Egypt is typical of man when he is depressed. Moses broke under the weight of the complaining and turned to God with the difficulties. The problems were solved by the appointment of seventy elders and the provision of quails. Moses questioned God's ability to provide sufficient meat for the people, and the Lord responded with the question, "Is the Lord's power limited?" (11:23–NASB).

That Moses was acting under the power of God is indicated by his greater endowment with the Spirit than that of his subordinates. At this early stage, the Spirit of the Lord was related to prophecy (11:25-29). Prophesying was a manifestation of the Divine presence and power. Whether prophecy involved strange ecstatic actions at this time is not stated (cf. 1 Sam. 19:20-24). Joshua was apparently disturbed by the prophesying, lest anyone should rival Moses. Moses gave the famous reply that the power of God cannot be limited by time, place, or performance. He expressed the desire that all people would speak forth the glory of God (11:29).

A strong wind brought quails from the sea, probably from Aqabah (11:31ff.). Even today quails migrate from Africa, cross the Sinai peninsula towards Palestine, and return in the fall. During the migration, they frequently fall exhausted to the ground and are picked up by local inhabitants for food. Possibly the quails flew three feet off the ground and were easily caught in nets. The Israelites hoarded the birds (the smallest catch was over 100 bushels) and spread them out around the camp to dry in the sun. The Lord punished them for their gluttony by sending a plague.

The purpose of chapter 12 is to illustrate the supremacy and uniqueness of Moses. He was greater than any prophet because God spoke to him face to face rather than by visions and dreams. Jealous ambition caused Miriam and Aaron to criticize Moses. The immediate occasion for their complaints was his marriage to a Cushite woman. The real problem was, "Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us as well?" (12:2–NASB). Cushan was related to the land of Midian in Habakkuk 3:7. The reference, therefore, would have been to Zipporah. The statement that Moses was "meek" meant that he was humble before God, but it did not include patience under human maltreatment. The presence of the Lord came down in a pillar of cloud and left Miriam leprous. Aaron recognized and confessed his sin. He petitioned Moses in behalf of Miriam. The supremacy of Moses was again manifested by the healing of Miriam upon his petition.

### The events in the Wilderness of Paran (13:1–21:35)

Chapter 13 describes the plan to send a representative from each tribe to spy out the land of Canaan and to report when they returned. Joshua, son of Nun of the tribe of Ephraim, and Caleb, son of Jephunneh of the tribe of Judah, were the only two of the twelve spies who gave favourable reports and who were important in later incidents in the life of Israel. After being in the southern part of Palestine for forty days, the spies returned to report that the land was fertile but the inhabitants were strong and their cities were well defended. The investigation extended

Because of the complaints of the people, God's anger was kindled and fire broke out at a place they named \_\_\_\_\_.

(Taberah)

Choose the correct number: *twelve, twenty, seventy.*

When Moses could not bear the complaining of the people, God told him to bring \_\_\_\_\_ elders to receive His spirit also and be Moses' helpers.

(seventy)

After reading numbers 11:26-30, why do you think Joshua was disturbed at the prophesying of the two men? \_\_\_\_\_

(Joshua apparently thought they would be Moses' rivals.)

In response to Joshua's concern over others prophesying, Moses expressed his desire that all the Lord's people were \_\_\_\_\_.

(prophets)

God punished the people for their gluttony over the quails by sending a \_\_\_\_\_.

(plague)

The occasion for Aaron and Miriam's criticism of Moses was his marriage to a \_\_\_\_\_ woman.

(Cushite)

to Hebron. The spies brought back samples of the fruit from the land. They gave reports of a number of tribes living there. The Amorites occupied the mountains both east and west of the Jordan. The Hittites, offshoots of the powerful Hittite Empire in Asia Minor, were in the northern part of the land. The Canaanites inhabited the fertile areas of the Jordan valley. The Amalekites were nomads. Caleb and Joshua advised the immediate occupation of the land, but the majority reported the land was inhabited by giants who made Israelites look like grasshoppers. They lacked faith and courage.

Chapter 14 presents the discouragement and rebellion of the people, the intercession of Moses, and the repentance of the people. After hearing the adverse reports from the majority of the spies, the people murmured and wanted to return to Egypt. The same attitude was demonstrated at Baal-zephon (Exod. 14), in the Wilderness of Sin when food was short (Exod. 16), and at Rephidim when water was scarce (Exod. 17). In an attitude of rebellion, the people determined to choose new leaders who would take them back to Egypt. Moses and Aaron interceded for the people, and Caleb and Joshua begged them to have faith in Yahweh. The Lord became displeased with the faithlessness of the people and revealed His intention to dispossess them. After Yahweh revealed His plan to begin a new nation with Moses, Moses interceded again for the people, using the argument that the Canaanites would conclude that Yahweh was unable to complete what He had planned and promised. The greatness of Moses was again underscored by the fact that Yahweh pardoned the people in response to his petition. Judgement for their faithlessness, however, would be death in the desert during forty years of wandering for those twenty years old and older with the exception of Joshua and Caleb. The people repented, but it was too late. They attempted an attack on the Canaanites from the south up through the Negeb, but their advance into the hill country without the presence of God—the Ark—and without Moses resulted in their defeat.

Chapter 15 contains a collection of material on ritual observances. Rules for the quantities of flour, wine, and oil to be offered with various animal sacrifices are given (vv. 1-16). Since the grain gifts were those of an agricultural people, the rules were to apply when the people conquered Canaan. Each animal sacrifice was to be accompanied by a grain offering and a drink offering plus a quantity of olive oil. A "heave offering" was to be made from the dough of the first ground flour from the threshing-floor (vv. 17-21). The offering symbolized the fact that all of the grain had come from God and was His. The priests were to use the cake made from the coarse meal. When sins were committed unwittingly by the congregation, a young bull was to be sacrificed for a burnt offering and a male goat for a sin offering. Individuals who sinned unwittingly were to make a sin offering of a female goat (vv. 22-31). A man who worked on the Sabbath received the penalty of death by stoning.

Chapter 16 describes the revolt against Moses. Two Reubenites, Dathan and Abiram, disputed the civil leadership with Moses. Since they were descendants of the eldest son of Jacob, they claimed the right to share in the leadership of Israel. The old complaint that they would have been better off in Egypt was brought up again. They accused Moses of having made himself a prince over them. Moses' sole authority rested on his ability to lead the children into the land of Canaan. Since he had not fulfilled his promise, the Reubenites rejected his leadership. They implied that his authority was derived from the people, not from God. Moses warned the congregation not to join the rebels in their wickedness. He declared that if the rebels died a natural

The twelve Israelite spies to Canaan reported that the land was occupied by the following tribes:

A \_\_\_\_\_, H \_\_\_\_\_,  
J \_\_\_\_\_, A \_\_\_\_\_,  
C \_\_\_\_\_

(Compare your answer with Numbers 13:28-29.)

Which two spies advised that the Israelites should go and take the Promised Land?

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
(Caleb and Joshua)

Ten spies reported that the men who occupied the Promised Land were \_\_\_\_\_

(giants)

The reaction of the people to the spies' report was \_\_\_\_\_

(rebellion)

God's punishment to those twenty years old and older for their faithlessness would be \_\_\_\_\_ in the desert during \_\_\_\_\_ years of wandering.

(death, forty)

Only \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ were to be spared.

(Joshua, Caleb)

The sons of Reuben led a revolt against \_\_\_\_\_

(Moses)

The ground of their revolt were:

1. They were descendants of the eldest sons of \_\_\_\_\_; therefore, they claimed the right to share in the leadership of Israel.
2. They would have been better off in \_\_\_\_\_
3. They accused \_\_\_\_\_ of having made himself a prince over them.
4. Since Moses had not accomplished his mission of leading the people into \_\_\_\_\_, they rejected his leadership.

(1-Jacob; 2-Egypt; 3-Moses; 4-Canaan)

death the Lord had not sent him. If the earth opened and swallowed the two families alive, the people would know that the Lord had sent Moses.

Korah appears to have led in a second revolt which involved both Moses and Aaron (cf. vv. 1, 2-7, 18-24, 27, 35, 41-50). Two hundred and fifty leaders from all the tribes of Israel joined him in protesting the authority of Moses and Aaron. Since the Lord appeared in the midst of all the Israelites, Korah protested the cultic specialization of Moses and Aaron. Moses agreed to give Korah and his company the opportunity to test their acceptability as priests of God. Each man took a censer, placed fire and incense on it, and approached the Tabernacle. The 250 men who offered the incense were consumed by the fire (vv. 16-19, 35). Two separate stories appear to have been used in chapter 16. The bronze censers used by the 250 princes were made into a cover for the altar to remind the people that none but the Aaronic priests should approach the altar. The next day the people grumbled at the slaughter of Korah and his followers. The anger of the Lord caused a plague to come upon the people. It was stayed only after Aaron had offered atonement and moved among the people with incense.

Chapter 17 reinforces the selection of the Aaronic priesthood and the position of the Levites. Rods representing each tribe were placed in the Tent of Meeting before the Ark. The rod belonging to the tribe chosen of God sprouted and produced blossoms and almonds.

Chapter 18 sets forth the duties and support of the priests and Levites. Since their time was required in sacrificial services, they were dependent for support upon those whom they served. They alone were qualified to draw near to the Holy Place. The Levites assisted the priests; however, they were not permitted to touch the holy vessels or altar. The priesthood was given of God that He might be worshipped and revered. A list of the priests' portion of the offering was given (vv. 8-20), and a tithe from the other tribes was to go to the Levites for their support (vv. 21-32). Since the Levites were the possession of the Lord (substituted for all the first-born in Israel), they received no property but were supported by tithes. They were to offer a tenth of Israel's tithe to God as their own to be used in support of the priests.

Chapter 19 describes the purification for those who touched the dead. A red heifer was to be burned outside the camp, her blood was to be sprinkled before the Tabernacle seven times, and her ashes were to be placed in water, sanctifying it for purification for sin (vv. 1-10). Those who helped prepare the water for purification became unclean and were required to undergo purification rituals. A person who touched a corpse was required to cleanse himself with the purifying water on the third and seventh day. The water of purification was to be sprinkled on them or on the defiled vessels by a "clean" person. If a person failed to cleanse himself, he was cut off from the midst of the congregation.

Chapter 20 describes the sin of Moses at Meribah (vv. 1-13), the refusal of the Edomites to allow passage through their land (vv. 14-21), and the death of Aaron (v. 22-29). Thirty-eight years had passed since the departure from Mount Sinai. The narrative of Israel's wilderness sojourn continues with the people camped at Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin. The beginning of the chapter notes the death of Miriam, and the end of the chapter presents the death of Aaron and the transfer of his priestly role to his son Eleazar. The reason given for Aaron's prohibited entrance into Canaan was that he rebelled against the Lord's command at the waters of Meribah (v. 24). The rebellion at Meribah explained the condemnation of both Moses and Aaron (v. 12). The people com-

The punishment to the rebels and their families was \_\_\_\_\_

(the earth's opening up and swallowing them alive)

Korah and his company protested the authority of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

(Moses, Aaron)

The 250 men of Korah who assumed the right to offer incense to God were \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.

(consumed, fire)

God asked that a rod from each tribe be brought to the \_\_\_\_\_

(Tent of Meeting)

God's choice of the Aaronic priesthood and the position of the Levites was reaffirmed by His causing Aaron's rod to \_\_\_\_\_

(sprout and produce blossoms and almonds)

The Levites, who assisted the priests, were to be supported by the \_\_\_\_\_ of the people of Israel.

(tithe)

The Levites were to present a \_\_\_\_\_ of the people's \_\_\_\_\_ to support the priests.

(tithe, tithe)

plained that Moses had brought them into the wilderness to die. They expressed the opinion that they would have been better off to have died with their brothers in Egypt. On this occasion the Lord instructed Moses and Aaron to speak to the rock rather than strike it with the rod. The words of Moses revealed that he took credit for producing the water (v. 10). Because of his sin, Moses was not permitted to enter the land of Canaan. The rock may have been the massive hill of solid rock from beneath which the large spring of Kadesh still issues. The incident at the rock was to restore Israel's faith, as well as to provide needed water. The act of Moses in striking the rock called attention to himself rather than to the Word of God pronounced over the rock.

Moses apparently desired to cross the Arabah from Kadesh-barnea to the King's Highway and travel northward through Edom and Moab. The Arabah is a valley of depression (much of which is below sea level) that extends from the Sea of Galilee to the Gulf of Aqabah. Moses instructed messengers to offer the king of Edom payment for the water consumed and to promise that the people and cattle would remain on the road and would not damage the crops. The scarcity of water and the precarious existence of a small nation caused the Edomite king to refuse passage to the Israelites. The incident was characteristic of the continuing hostility between the descendants of Jacob and Esau.

Chapter 21 reports the incidents during the journey from Kadesh to Pisgah. The first victory over the inhabitants of Canaan came in a battle with the king of Arad for a city seventeen miles south of Hebron in the Negeb. In the first skirmish, some of the Israelites were taken captive. After Israel vowed to place Arad under the ban of utter destruction, God gave her the victory. Since the people of the city worshipped an idol, they were the enemies of Yahweh. Victory would come only to the Israelites through divine power. The spoils of the conquest were to be devoted to Yahweh who gave the victory. Although the custom of destroying all of the inhabitants of a defeated city appears savage today, the only hope for Israel's survival in her struggle against the historical powers lay in the destruction of her enemies.

The last of Israel's stories of complaint is given in 21:4-9. After Israel was turned back by the Edomites, she started south in the Arabah to pass around Edom's southern and eastern borders. The way was long and difficult, and food and water were scarce. The faith of the people ebbed again, and they accused God and Moses of bringing them into the wilderness to die. They expressed dissatisfaction with the daily manna which God provided. The Lord sent fiery serpents whose bites brought death and caused the people to remember that God's provision of manna was for life and not death. The people repented and were promised deliverance by an expression of faith in God, symbolized by their willingness to look at the bronze serpent placed on a pole in the midst of the camp. The bronze serpent did not deliver, but the Word of the Lord delivered those who were willing to express obedience by looking to the bronze serpent.

Numbers 21:10-20 traces the route around Edom and Moab to the Jordan valley. The Israelites seem to have gone around the southern end of the Dead Sea and then east along the brook Zered (Zared), the boundary between Edom and Moab. Pisgah is a mountain peak overlooking the plain of the Jordan valley located at the point where the Jordan empties into the Dead Sea.

As Israel crossed the river Arnon, she entered the land of the Amorites. King Sihon would not permit Israel to cross his borders. The Amorites were Semitic people of the northwest who established the kingdom of Sihon in the thirteenth century. With the defeat of Sihon began the story of the conquest. Israel had no choice but to fight when Sihon's army tried to prevent her

Underline the words which make the statement true.

Numbers 20:10 indicates that (Moses took the credit, Moses gave God the credit) for producing water from the rock.

(Underline Moses took the credit)

God's punishment to Moses for his disobedience was \_\_\_\_\_

(prohibiting him to enter Canaan)

God's plan for Israel's future required the destruction of all of her \_\_\_\_\_

(enemies)

What did the Lord send on the people when they began complaining again? \_\_\_\_\_

(Fiery serpents)

The people's deliverance from the serpents came through an act of obedience which was to \_\_\_\_\_

(Compare your answer with the text.)

crossing his territory. There was no other way to the Promised Land. The victory of Israel was celebrated by a ballad emphasizing the strength of Sihon who had conquered part of Moab. The territory of Sihon extended from the Arnon to the Jab-bok. A second battle was fought against Og at Edrei. All of the people of Og were slain, and Israel took over the land.

The conquest of the Israelites began with the defeat of two kings named \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and their people.

(Sihon, Og)

Match the following:

\_\_\_\_\_1. Balak

\_\_\_\_\_2. Balaam

a. king of Moab

b. a diviner from Syria

(1-a; 2-b)

## Home Study Exercise

**Basic activity** (Levels 1, 2, and 3). After reading Numbers 3–21 and the study manual, do the following exercise.

1. According to the census, a total of \_\_\_\_\_ men were counted. If women and children had been counted, the number probably would have been in excess of \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Explain why Nadab and Abihu did not succeed their father Aaron as the chief priest (ch. 3). \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Explain the relation of the Levites to all of the first-born of the sons of Israel (latter part of ch. 3). \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. How did the responsibilities of Aaron and his family differ from the responsibilities of other Levites? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. From chapter 5, list the three categories of people sent away from the camp. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. How could a husband determine whether his wife had been unfaithful?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. List the three requirements for Nazirites. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Name three events in chapter 8 which are important as background to the New Testament. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Explain the significance of Taberah in chapter 11. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Why was Joshua disturbed by the prophesying of the two men in the camp in chapter 11? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. Why did Aaron and Miriam criticize Moses (ch. 12)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. What tribes occupied the land of Canaan according to the spies? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
13. In chapter 14, what was the response of the people to the report of the majority of the spies? \_\_\_\_\_  
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14. In chapter 16, why did the sons of Reuben challenge the leadership of Moses?

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15. What did Korah and his company protest, and what was the result? \_\_\_\_\_

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16. In chapter 17, how was the selection of the Aaronic priesthood affirmed?

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17. According to chapter 18, what were the duties of the Levites, and how were they supported? \_\_\_\_\_

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18. According to chapter 20, why was Moses prohibited from entering the land of Canaan? \_\_\_\_\_

19. Why was Israel instructed to destroy all of the inhabitants of the defeated cities? \_\_\_\_\_

**Supplementary activity** (Levels 2 and 3). Draw or trace a map of the Sinai peninsula with the northern and eastern borders including Moab. Indicate the route followed by the Israelites from Mount Sinai to Pisgah, writing in the names of places where important events occurred.

**Advanced activity** (Level 3). Based on the events described in Numbers 1–21, evaluate the spiritual strength and leadership ability of Moses.

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### Seminar Discussion

1. What is a holy war? Why did God require that all of the inhabitants of the defeated cities be destroyed? Would this action be justified today? Explain.
2. What strong and weak points of Moses are revealed in this lesson?
3. Can you see any practical value in the observation of the laws of cleanness?
4. Was God justified in preventing Moses from entering the Promised Land? Explain.
5. Why did the people revolt against the leadership of Moses?
6. What kept the people together during the trials of the wilderness wanderings?