

# FROM BONDAGE TO FREEDOM | *The Story of Israel*

**CLASS INSTRUCTIONS** | Every Class will have Biblical reading for preparation. However, we will not read the whole text in classes. Please pre-read before the class. Take Home Review Sheets for notes will be provided on a weekly basis. Regarding Health and Safety, we will sit in comfortable distanced seating during class – and it is recommended that masks be worn to your seat and as you leave. #WINTER 2021

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## LESSON SCHEDULE

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| 13. | 1/5  | <b>The Delay that nearly destroys a Nation</b> (Ex. 32:1-34:17).  |
| 14. | 1/19 | <b>The Covenant Calendar</b>   Special days of the Tabernacle (Ex. 23:14-17; 31:12-17; 34:18, 21-26; 35:1-3; Lev. 16:1-34; 19:30; 23:1-44; 25:1-24; 26:2); The Sabbath Day (Ex. 31:12-17; 34:21; 35:1-3; Lev. 19:30; 23:1-3; 26:2); The Sabbath Year (Lev. 25:1-7). The Year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:8-24); *The Passover (Lev. 23:4-5); The Festival of Unleavened Bread (Ex. 34:18; Lev. 23:6-8); The Festival of Firstfruits (Lev. 23:9-14); The Festival of Harvest (Lev. 23:15-22); The Festival of Trumpets (Lev. 23:23-25); The Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:1-34; 23:26-32); The Festival of Tabernacles (Shelters) (Lev. 23:33-44).   |
| 15. | 1/26 | <b>The Tabernacle, the Dwelling Place of God</b>   Exodus 36:8-39:43.   |
| 16. | 2/2  | <b>The Tabernacle Itself</b>   The census and order of the tribes for its travel (Num. 1:1-46; 2:1-34); The Levites (Num. 3:18-24, 27-30, 33-35) and other clans (Num. 3:21-4:49); The support for the Tabernacle (Num. 7:1-89); The Shekinah of the Tabernacle (Num. 9:15-23); The sons of Aaron at the Tabernacle (Lev. 10:1-20); Slander against the God of the Tabernacle (Lev. 24:10-16, 23).  |
| 17. | 2/9  | <b>The Tabernacle</b>   The Priests or stewards overseeing the Tabernacle had regulations regarding their 1) garments (Ex. 28:1-5; 28:39-43; 29:29-30; 39:27-29). 2) The garments for the high priest (Ex. 28:6-14; 39:1-7; 28:15-30; 39:8-21; 28:31-35; 39:22-26; 28:36-38; 39:30-31). The dedication and anointing of the priests (Ex. 29:1-28; 30:30-33; Lev. 8:1-36; Lev. 8:1-36). The Priests or stewards overseeing the Tabernacle had regulations regarding the food for the priests (Ex. 29:31-34; 29:35-46); Further regulations for the priests (Lev. 21:1-24; 22:1-16; 21:7-9, 13-15; 21:16-24). The ministry begins (Lev. 9:1-24). Standard procedures (Num. 5:5-31; 9:1-14) and vows (Num. 6:1-21) and prayers (Num. 6:22-27). |
| 18. | 3/2  | <b>The Tabernacle</b>   The sacrifices in the Tabernacle: The correct way (Lev. 17:1-9; 22:17-33) with the burnt offering (Lev. 1:1-17; 6:8-13); grain offering (Lev. 2:1-16; 6:14-23); peace offering (Lev. 3:1-17; 7:11-38; 19:5-8); sin offering (Lev. 4:1-35; 6:24-30); guilt offering (Lev. 5:1-19; 6:1-7; 7:1-10) and the offering for the firstborn (Ex. 34:19-20)   |
| 19. | 3/9  | <b>The Covenant Ordinances</b>   Blood (Ex. 23:18; Lev. 17:10-16; 19:26; 25:24-55)  |
| 20. | 3/16 | <b>The Covenant Ordinances</b>   Marriage (Ex. 22:16-17); Fathers and daughters (Ex. 21:7-11); Childbirth and ceremonial cleansing (Lev. 12:1-8).   |
| 21. | 3/23 | <b>The Covenant Ordinances</b>   Elderly (Lev. 19:32); Disabled (Lev. 19:14); The deaf and the Poor (Ex. 22:25-27; Lev. 19:9-10); Helping one's enemy (Ex. 23:4-5); Treatment of foreigners (Ex. 23:9; Lev. 19:33-34; Masters and slaves (Ex. 21:1-6).  |
| 22. | 4/6  | <b>The Covenant Ordinances</b>   Dedication of persons and things (Lev. 27:1-29); Diet (Lev. 11:1-47; 20:25); Intentional Ritual Disfigurement (Lev. 19:27-28); The Covenant Ordinances: Leprosy (Lev. 13:1-59; 14:1-57; Num. 5:1-4).   |
| 23. | 4/13 | <b>The Covenant Ordinances</b>   Hatred (Lev. 19:17-18); Lying (Ex. 23:1-3, 6-7; Lev. 19:11, 16); Stealing (Ex. 23:8; Lev. 19:13); Do No Harm or face Punishment (Ex. 21:12-36; 22:1-15, 21-24; Lev. 24:17-22).   |
| 24. | 4/20 | <b>The Covenant Ordinances</b> : Sexual discharges (Lev. 15:1-33); Sexual impurities: Punishments are imposed for various sexual sins. (1) Adultery (Lev. 18:20; 19:20-22; 20:10, 14) (2) Bestiality (Ex. 22:19; Lev. 18:23; 20:15-16) (3) Homosexuality (Lev. 18:22; 20:13) (4) Incest (Lev. 18:1-18; 20:11-12, 17, 19-21) (5) Prostitution (Lev. 19:29).  |
| 25. | 4/27 | <b>From Mount Sinai to Kadesh-barnea   Moving On</b> (Num. 10:11-36) and the sins along the way (Num. 11-12) and shown disrespect of Miriam and Aaron (Num. 12:1-16).   |
| 26. | 5/4  | <b>Encamping for the Promised Land</b>   The spies are sent (Num. 13:1-33) and the people are redeemed (Num. 14:1-21) but still punished (Num 14:22-45). The Sabbath-Breaker Put to Death (15:32-36); Rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram (16:1-40); More Rebellion and Punishment the next day (16:41-50).   |
| 27. | 5/11 | <b>Desert Wanderings</b> —Kadesh to Moab—A New Generation and a New Start (Numbers 20:1-22:1)   First Signs of Retiring Leadership (20:1-29)   Successful Advances to the Plains of Moab (21:1-22:1) The Generation of Deuteronomy and Conclusion   |

**Encamping for the Promised Land** | The spies are sent (Num. 13:1-33) and the people are redeemed (14:1-21) but still punished (14:22-45); The Sabbath-Breaker Put to Death (15:32-36); Rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram (16:1-40); More Rebellion and Punishment the next day (16:41-50).

This section in Numbers (13:1-19:22) describes the second year since Exodus experienced at Kadesh and the upcoming 40 years. It's also important to note that Numbers 12 ends with the incident of Aaron and Miriam also complaining against Moses with the result that Miriam was afflicted with leprosy as a direct divine judgment upon her by God. And, it would be well to prepare our thinking that if leaders rebel against the leader, another set of leaders will rebel.

While the succeeding rebellions are not said to have precipitated because of Miriam, it was something that did not prevent future rebellions either.

The nation is in Kadesh-Barnea which was an enormous and lush oasis on the desert's edge, on the southern border of the Land of Canaan.



**The Spies and their Mission.** Numbers 13 records the pivotal experience for the nation in their trek to the promised land. The command, choice and commission of the spies (13:1-20) is clearly revealed so that every generation thereafter would see what happened in the wilderness. These men were on a reconnaissance mission; to observe the land of Canaan and bring back a report to the nation. It's clear the reason God sent them was not really to investigate a winning strategy to take the land but instead to affirm His fidelity to give it to them. According to Deuteronomy 1:20-25, the plan to send spies did not directly originate with Moses, but came from the people. Moses told them simply to go and take the land, and the people suggested this plan to Moses (c.f. 1:22). Moses was pleased with the plan (23). *God already told them what the land was like.* At the burning bush, God told him the land of Canaan was a good and large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey (Exodus 3:8), and Moses told the people of the goodness of the land (Exodus 13:5). Instead of saying "Despite all these challenges, God will...", the ten said "how could we ever..." While much of what they said about the land and people was true from a human perspective (i.e. "that they are stronger than we") but to say, "we are not able to go up against the people" was a lie. The Ten failed the test. But Caleb (with Joshua) passed. It took great courage for them to stand against the tide of unbelief and doubt. They had the spirit of "Let God be true but every man a liar" (Romans 3:4).

Israel stood barely a year out of Egypt, on the threshold of the Promised Land. Over the first part of Numbers, God had fully prepared them – they had been ordered and organized; cleansed and purified; set apart and blessed; taught how to give and how to function as priests; had been made to remember judgment spared and deliverance brought; and had been given God's presence as a guide and the tools needed to lead the people. The unbelief of the ten spies truly represented the unbelieving heart of the nation. Israel wept that night upon hearing that the enemies in Canaan were too formidable, they thought. Although their murmuring was directed first towards Moses and Aaron, still, the brothers were the LORD's leaders; the nation was murmuring against the LORD. They grumbled (14:1-2); They pine for Egypt (3-4); They rebel for a new leader (5).

Moses and Aaron were older and wiser and therefore knew how bad the situation was. Yet in their youth, Joshua and Caleb are more optimistic, so they attempt to persuade the people through manifesting grief, reminding them of God's promises and warning (14:7-9). God does not even speak with the nation; He knows they are past hearing Him. He will speak with Moses, and Moses alone, and tell him the nation will be given what they said and He will restart with him. But Moses did not entertain God's offer for a moment. Instead, he pled for the nation again and loved them despite their rebellion, and he was zealous for the glory of God. Moses glories in the power of God but asks that God would use His power by showing mercy and longsuffering to a rebellious Israel. Moses' prayer mattered and God listened. This was grace. Divine Justice was served on those older than 20, but grace was given to the next generation.

**The Sabbath Breaker.** All of Israel knew the Sabbath law, and this man no doubt thought himself some type of reformer or renegade. It seems likely that the following story of the sabbath breaker illustrates what sinning with a high hand means. It was presumption (15:30-31). God had not yet delivered the instruction on how violators would be punished. But for God, this man must surely be put to death so that all might fear. This was so all would know that the social order and law of God are more important than any individual's "right" to attack or destroy that social order or law of God.

**The Rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram.** This rebellion, like all, had a leader and followers. Korah was the leader who had descended from Kohath, just as Moses but by different sons (Moses through Amram [Numbers 26:58-59], and Korah through Izhar). The Kohathites had the most exalted duty among the Levites; their charge was to carry the most holy things of the temple, after Aaron and his sons had covered them with the specially prepared coverings (Numbers 4:15). Korah was not content with what the LORD had called him to do in serving with the other Levites of the family of Kohath. He accused Moses of pride and exclusionary leadership – and purposely (and significantly) in public, in front of 250 leaders... men of renown. Men like Korah are always playing to an audience.

Moses first prayed. Being a humble man, he probably asked God if his critics were right or had something to teach him. He probably asked God what should be done in the situation. He certainly asked God to spare the nation before and perhaps now, he asked God to not allow these divisive men to bring permanent harm to the people of God. Dathan and Abiram were co-conspirators with Korah (16:1) and would not even meet with Moses, nor answer his challenge (12-14). They chose to accuse Moses instead. Instead of his efforts to lead where God led, the rebels accused him (and God) that they would try "to kill us in the wilderness" which shows that they assigned an evil heart to Moses (and God). They spoke as if they had discovered the plot which instead showed their foolishness. Against all reason, rebels and divisive people often assign every evil intention to the heart of leaders. After the words of Dathan and Abiram, Moses was angry – very angry. He knew he had done nothing to deserve such an accusation, and he did the right thing – he left the situation to God.

Then God vindicated Moses and Aaron before the people. And then Moses again showed, with Aaron, a deep compassion for the people and interceded on their behalf. Though many were involved (at least more than 250), one man was at the center of it all – Korah. His sin, his drawing of a group after himself, was the cause of all this mess. God had appointed elders back in Numbers 10:16-30, in response to another attack on Moses' leadership. There, the elders were to be men with the same spirit and vision as Moses, men to help him bear the burden, men to stand with Moses. Here they did exactly what God appointed them to do. And then God brought punishment to Korah, Dathan, and Abiram – along with their families – who were swallowed up in the earth (perhaps an earthquake like event). We may be uneasy seeing the families destroyed also, but it clearly shows that the families of the rebellious, divisive, contentious people usually reflect the attitudes of their family head and would still suffer also – even if they disagreed. The leaven of rebellion had to be removed from the camp. Further, a fire came out from the LORD and consumed the 250 men: though not as horrific as the judgment Korah himself received, it was just.

**The People Rebel Again.** On the next day, "all the congregation of the children of Israel" grumbles and accused Moses (and Aaron) by saying, "You have killed the people of the LORD." The accusation was absurd. Moses certainly did not kill them. When the earth opens up and swallows more than 250 people, it is evidently the hand of God, not Moses. God reacted the same way towards the sympathizers as He did towards Korah and his company. But again, intercession on the part of God's leaders – namely Aaron this time – will win the day. While Moses will command, Aaron "will run" to complete it. This shows the urgency of the occasion and the compassion of the man. The plague stopped where Aaron prayed.

"Aaron wisely puts himself in the pathway of the plague. It came on, cutting down all before it, and there stood Aaron the interposer with arms outstretched and censer swinging towards the heaven, interposing himself between the darts of death and the people. 'If there be darts that must fly,' he seemed to say, 'let them pierce me; or let the incense shield both me and the people.'" (Charles Spurgeon).

While Moses will often shadow the work of Christ, the lawgiver, Aaron foreshadows in a profoundly dramatic instance what Christ has done as our mediator. He stands between death and life to offer to save the soul of man from the judgment of God.