

Studies In The Holy Bible

THE BOOK OF NUMBERS

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**In the Name of
the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit
One God, Amen**

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF NUMBERS ITS NOMENCLATURE

It was called the book of Numbers in the Septuagint text, referred to in Num. 1:20. In the Hebrew text it is called "BEMIDBAR" which means "In the wilderness." The latter is made up of the forth and fifth word in the book, which embodies the contents of the Book, being a book of the Israel's travels in the wilderness.

ITS CONTENTS

It is a conclusion of the three books preceding it. It tells the story of the wanderings of the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai, and their arrival to the Land of Moab which is close to the promised land.

ITS CHARACTERISTICS

- 1- It is a demonstration of God's Work to prepare man for the entrance to the Promised Land. It is symbolic of the continuous striving through the power of grace.
- 2- It contains a mixture of divine Laws and incidents that took place during their trip. His Laws are our comfort and support as we proceed in this estranged world towards the Heavenly Jerusalem.
- 3- It affirms the continuous providence in every aspect of our lives, and man's unreasonable discontent towards God's care. (Ps 95:10,11; Heb. 4:1)
- 4- It brings out how repugnant sin is, and the punishment to the person who commits iniquity. He punishes sinners even if they are great prophets, like Moses (Num. 20); or Miriam, Moses' Sister (Num. 12), or some of the levities (Num. 16), or from the people (Num. 21).
- 5- The book focuses from the beginning on the establishment of priesthood and cutting off those who attack it. This is to affirm our great need for Jesus Christ, the High Priest who works through His Priesthood throughout the ages.
- 6- It illustrates the power of intercession and its effectiveness, for Moses prayed on behalf of his people and so did Aaron his brother.

OUTLINES

- 1- Preparations for the trip in the wilderness (Num. 1-10:10).
- 2- From Sainai to Moab (Num. 10:11-21).
- 3- Incident of Balaam (Num. 22-25).
- 4- Preparation to enter Canaan (Num. 26-36).

Most of the symbolic references used in this book were taken from the teachings of Origen.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE TRIP IN THE WILDERNESS

NUMBERS 1 TO NUMBERS 10:10

CHAPTER 1

CENSUS OF THE PEOPLE

God guided them and was their King (1 Sam 12:12). He provided for them, thus He ordered that the congregation be counted for the second time. The people were counted first when Moses spoke to all the congregation of Israel asking them to give offerings to the Lord to build the Tabernacle (Ex. 38:25,26). However the first was not registered by tribe, as this one did, and this was for divine purposes:

- 1- To confirm the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham concerning the multiplication of Abraham's descendants (Gen. 28:14), that they may follow his faith.
- 2- To assert the concern of God to everyone of His people for He is the Shepherd of Israel (Ps. 80:1).
- 3- To separate between the real Israelite and the foreigner, and this is not for any discrimination purposes, but that all can be drawn near Him (Eph. 2:14).
- 4- Because God is the Author of Peace, not confusion (1 Cor. 14:33).
- 5- Concern about the genealogy of the people of Israel so that when Jesus comes His genealogy and identity are confirmed.

A) This census was achieved in the start of the second month of the second year of the Exodus. God wanted to assert to His people that their names were registered after their separation from Satan (Pharaoh) and their denouncing him. Their enjoyment of the privileges of the second birth through Baptism (in Suph sea). Their struggle against all the powers of darkness (Gaints). Their privilege of enjoying the heavenly word of God (Mannah) and quenching their thirst through Christ (the Rock). Their attainment of a life of virtue through God's dwelling among them (Tabernacle); and a permanent union with God through the Holy Sacrifice (offerings, sacrifices) and the divine commandment (His Laws).

B) The Characteristics that God determined in the census were: Males only, not females because of their ability for war. The symbolic explanation is their maturity and strife in faith (1 Cor. 16:13). Those who are twenty years or older, which is an indication of spiritual maturity beyond the weakness of childhood (1 Cor 13:11), they have the ability to fight in war, and face the enemy (the Devil). They belong to God's holy people and are members of the unified Church of God. As for the levities they were exempted because they belong to God. They have no other obligations or duties except to worship God and serve the congregation spiritually.

C) To accomplish census, it was necessary to choose a leader for each tribe to assist Moses and Aaron. This was an assertion of the affective role that the people had in the leadership of the church.

It happened that the names of the leaders of the tribes matched the meaning of the tribes' names.

- 1- Reuben (Son of Revelation): Elizur (God is my Refuge). He who has a revelation of faith, acknowledges God as his refuge.

- 2- Simeon (The hearing one): Shelumiel (God is peace) whoever hearken unto the Lord is filled with His peace.
- 3- Judah (Confession)- Nahshon (serpent), who confess unto the Lord tramples on the Serpent.
- 4- Issachar (Retribution): Nethanel (Gift of God). The reward is a gift of God and not his own making.
- 5- Zebulun (Dwelling): Eliab (My God is my father). Whoever becomes a dwelling place for God will enjoy His Fatherhood.
- 6- Ephraim (Fruitful): Elishama (My God Heard). Being fruitful is the result of God hearing to our demands.
- 7- Manasseh (To forget): Gamaliel (God is my reward). Whoever forgets vain glory, has God as his reward.
- 8- Benjamin (Son of the right): Abidan (My father condemns). We may enjoy being on the right Hand of God if we look upon Him as our Condemner, our final Judge.
- 9- Dan (Condemn): Ahiezer (My brother is my aid). As long as man blames himself or condemns himself, his brother will come to his aid and relieve him.
- 10- Asher (Happy): Pagiell (God met me). There is no true happiness without God.
- 11- Gad (Strict): Eliasaph (God gives hospitality). Whoever exercises self-control and firmness, the Lord will grant him spiritual growth.
- 12- Naphtali (Immense, Big): Ahira (My brother is evil). Who- ever's heart is full of love, he can tolerate an evil brother.

D) Counting the children of Israel started with the sons of Leah, Rachel, then the two slave-maidens without relevance to the date of birth.

CHARTER 2

MOSES ARRAYED THE CAMP AND FLAGS

As the census was completed, God arranged a special placement for each standard of force that the children of Israel had to abide by when they were pitching their tents, traveling or taking off.

This arrangement resembled a cross moving towards the promised land. Encompassed inside the cross was another cross (an inner cross). The first cross represents the suffering church (crucified church) which incorporates Jesus crucified (inner cross), Who will guide her across and into His Heavens. This arrangement that God depicted means our obligation to follow an orderly manner in our worship and behaviour, not as an external appearance but with spiritual depth (1 Cor 14:40).

Each tribe had its own flag around which the people congregated. The same way as we all meet at the Cross, with unity and fellowship. For each standard of forces there was a precious stone, as if the whole congregation resembled the breast plate of the garment of the chief priest (Exod. 39:10-14), which contains twelve precious stones in four rows.

It is said that each standard of forces comprises 3 tribes having one banner

A graphic composition of the camp in the wilderness

- in the shape of a Cross that encompasses Christ's Cross.
- it represents 4 placements: the 4 living creatures that carry the divine throne.
- a symbolic picture of Jerusalem: 3 portals in each direction.

NUMBERS 3

THE LEVITIES AS REDEEMERS FOR THE PEOPLE

1- God is merciful and patient with His people, but firm with His servants and priests, because they occupy leading positions and represent the first-born of the people. The punishment against the 2 sons of Aaron: Nadab and Abihu was fast and severe even though their names had significant meanings: Nadab (Generous), Abihu (He is my father). Nadab and Abihu were from the few that God allowed on mount Sinai (Ex. 24:1). They were anointed as ministers to God (Ex. 28:1). It is said that they were drunk when they offered profane fire to the Lord. Hence God prohibited the priests to enter the Tabernacle after drinking wine or spirits (Lev 10:9). Some explained that this resulted from their self-dependence without seeking the advice of their father (The need for priests to become disciples themselves and seek fatherly advice).

2- The levites represented Deacons: They slaughter the sacrificial animal and the priests sprinkle the blood and burn the fat. They prepare the incense and the priests burn it, presenting it to the Lord. The Deacon is an assistant to the priest in all his services whether it is a priestly service or a guardianship service.

3- The levites were considered a gift from the people to God (3:9), they replace first-born. Levi was not the first-born but was the third among his brothers Reuben and Simeon. A "First-born" is not based on physical birth.

4- God divided the work among the levites in this fashion:

- a) Aaron and his sons were assigned the priesthood. As for the rest of the tribe, they merely served as assistants to the priests keeping charge of the holies of the tabernacle, carrying it on their shoulders during their journeys after the priests had covered it. They were one of the groups whom David the prophet chose to sing Psalms to the Lord (1 Chron. 25:26). They obtained great honour.
- b) The sons of Gershon: Chronologically, Gershon was the first-born of Levi. Their duty was to guard the Tabernacle, the tent with its covering and the screen for the door of the Tabernacle of meeting... Two carts and four bulls were granted to help them during their journey.
- c) The sons of Merari: Their duty was to guard the boards of the Tabernacle, its bars and pillars. These were heavy articles so they were granted four carts and eight bulls.

5- The levites were counted. The count of all the males a month old and upwards. They were 22,000. The numeral 22 coincides with the number of the Hebrew Alphabet, the numeral 1000 is a symbol of heaven. As if their work was to register the names of all the people in a heavenly language so that everyone may share in the heavenly glory.

The number of the first-borns from all the people of Israel was 22, 273. 273 souls were left uncompensated for. For the redemption of each one of them, 5 shekels were to be presented to Aaron and his sons. The numeral 273 is a symbol of our redemption through baptism or spiritual birth. The

physical birth requires the fetus to remain two hundred and seventy days in his mother's womb ($9 \times 30 = 270$), and this spiritual birth is accomplished by 3 immersions. As for the five shekels they symbolize the sanctification of the five senses, so that we may become like the five wise virgins (Matth. 25).

CHAPTER 4

ORGANIZING THE SERVICES OF THE LEVITES

1. In the census, the levites were considered as first-borns. The ages ranged from one month old sons to older men who were advanced in age and could not be productive at work.

God is the decision maker. The onset of discipleship starts at age 25 (5 X 5 denotes to the sanctification of the 5 senses, both spiritual & physical). According to the Jews a man reaches maturity and virility at age 30, and that is when he starts working (5 sanctification of senses X 6 number of working days per week. This is an indication of working in a holy manner). At the age of 50 he is exempted from work, for the number 50 denotes freedom as in Pentecost, Jubiles, as well as Abraham requesting to forgive the city from the punishment of the Lord because of 50 righteous ones (Gen. 18:14). In the Lord's Parable the creditor forgave his two debtors of their debts of 50 and 500 pence (Luke 7:36-50).

2. This chapter organized the work among the levites [4-33], everyone knows his duty and conforms to it so that he is trustworthy in the talents that were given to him.

"There are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in everyone"
(1 Cor 12:6).

Sons of Kohath carry the hollies on their shoulders.

Just like the angles bear the saints (Heb1:4, Ps. 91:11,12).

Since the hollies have to be carried outside, it is imperative that the priests cover them. As for the inside of the Tabernacle, it remains uncovered. It is becoming of the believers, that their lives open up in an honest way.

During their private dealings with God they discuss things with Him with uncovered faces, in a friendly way without any obstacle, but unrevealed to others (Matth. 6:1-7).

God warned the levites who were not priests neither to touch nor to look at the hollies. For God's volition is that our lives remain concealed from people, but overt before the priests so that they can support us through prayers and guidance.

The covering of the hollies by means of the priests refers to the preservation of the hollies to be uncovered by the priests according to man's endurance.

The shoulder-born covered hollies refer to the laws, symbols and prophecies that Old Testament people carried through the darkness, until it was disclosed in the New Covenant Church through Christ the High-Priest.

Isaiah says: "And He will destroy on this mountain the covering that is cast over all people (Isa. 25:7).

The Ark of this covenant is covered with goatskin and spread on top of it, is clothall of blue [6]. The Ark symbolizes the crucified Christ who chooses to appear Meek (goatskin) inspite of His Divinity. The

table of the Showbread (Christ the Bread of Life) is covered by a cloth all of blue (Heavenly), on top of it is a cloth of scarlet (sign of Blood) and at the very top a goatskin (hiding behind weakness).

In as much for the golden altar or the altar of the incense, as for the brass altar, only it will be covered with a cloth of scarlet (Royal Garment). Because the Lord will reign on the Cross, the divine Altar. Nothing was mentioned regarding a cover for the laver. An indication of the disclosure of the sacrament of Baptism overtly, so that everyone would hasten to it.

CHAPTER 5

THE CONSECRATION OF THE CAMP

The consecration (Purification) came about in 3 levels:-

1. The camp as a whole [1-4]: God's concern is for the totality of the group, for it portrays the pure and chaste bride of God without any blemish, that does not accept the spoiled leaven (1 Cor 5). She has compassion for the sinners and welcomes them with open arms without making peace with them.
2. The Personal Level [5-10]: Along with the generepentance and total consecration, every member of the group should be compelled to confess his sins (Num. 7) and to compensate for plundering of others rights, and offering a sacrificial atonement (faith in the Redeemer).
3. The Familial Level [11-29]: The consecration of the Home Church as it depicts the General Church, represents the heavens, through it, youngsters develop and come in contact with God's Love. Adultery destroys the home and breaks the unity of marriage. The soul that tries to cover up its sin (adultery is scandalized and disgraced publicity) pulverizing the dust of the clay vessel which contains holy water, when the unfaithful woman drinks from it, it will turn into bitter water. This portrays that the Word of God becomes an aroma of death, to death, and to the other an aroma of life to life. (2 Cor. 2:16)

CHAPTER 6

GOD'S NAZIRITE

- 1) As it was announced to the whole group to sanctify themselves, each member and each household presented a specific vow on behalf of the dedicators. The term "Nazirite" was specified to designate only those who pledged before God to dedicate their lives to Him. Some were dedicated while still in their mother's womb and others were just for the specific time. This is regarded as the original source of the doctrines of asceticism and monasticism.
- 2) The characteristics and obligations of the vow-giver [3-8]: Most of his "Separation Time" is spent in studying the "Laws," worshiping and serving others. Therefore he renounces the pleasures of life such as wine and spirits drinking, so as not to forget God's commandments. (Prov. 31:5; Isa. 28:7), and the amazing thing, is that at the onset of God's calling (as a Nazirite), His very first undertaking was to transform the water into wine at the wedding. This gave the people a better understanding of the spiritual side of the "Nazirite" rather than to concentrate on His appearance. The vow-giver is obliged to give up the mundane glory so he shaves not his hair contrary to nature (1 Cor 11:4), he also renounces carnal affairs such as the mourning of the dead (Luke 9:60) in order to be capable of extensive love including his family.
- 3) His purification when touching the dead [9-12]: The correlation between sin and death has been established as death being the outcome, hence touching the dead was considered defilement even if the dead person was a saint or a prophet, and the dedicator was warned to be cautious. In the instance where he touches the dead accidentally he shall wait for 7 days and on the 8th day, he shall shave his head and offer 2 turtles or 2 young pigeons as a sin and burnt offerings, and he starts his "separation days" anew. However the previous time spent will be discarded. This is God's way of confirming to us His hatred for defilement, even if it happens unintentionally. Whenever we lack the will-power, we lose our previous diligent strife and we have to start all-over.
- 4) The completion of the dedicator's life [12-13]: A specific ritual is undertaken of presenting a burnt and a peace offerings, also the presentation of the affairs that portrays the various aspects of the Cross. Our consecration will never be complete without the Cross. He shall also give an unlimited offering to the extent of his capability because we must not put limitations to our love to God, but in contrast we must strive to give as much as possible to our Lord. His hair is shaven and thrown into the sacrificial fire of peace offering, so that he regains his pride (his hair) on the basis of partnership in the heavenly glory. He shall drink wine symbolizing the life of enjoyment to compensate for the troubles that we had to bear in this world. It also points to the wine of the Holy Spirit. In conclusion the completion of the vow separation is only achieved through the sacrificial offering of Christ and our interaction with it lovingly and diligently; besides our acceptance to partake of His divine glory through the work of the Holy Spirit.
- 5) He concluded his discourse by proclaiming the priests' blessings to the people clarifying that this blessing does not originate from them but from the Lord. They shall beseech Him 3 times (The gift of the Holy Trinity) Thus arrogance will not befall the dedicators or "Vow-separators".

CHAPTER 7

OFFERINGS OF THE PEOPLE

It was necessary for the group to present their offerings on behalf of the group as a whole [1-9]. A sign of the unity of God's people. Moreover to present offerings for each tribe [10-14], to confirm God's own personal relationship to everyone through partaking of the union with God.

1) The General Offering: six covered carts were presented, a pair of bulls pulled each cart. Two of those six were presented to the sons of Gershon and the other four to the sons of Merari. As for the sons of Kohath, they were not given any, for they had to carry their share of the hollies on their shoulders. They themselves became God's vehicle, the one that bears Him and His sacraments. The number of carts is 6 representing our delegation to struggle diligently all working days of the week, so that we advance into the Sabbath (Seventh day i.e. day of rest).

Hence we dispense with the carts, for we ourselves become through His Spirit, God's vehicle.

2) The Tribal Offerings: The leaders presented valuable gifts that reveal everybody's rejoice in God. All the tribes presented equal gifts to eliminate any bragging on the part of any tribe. Each tribe gave one silver plate (the word of God is spiritual nourishment), a silver bowl (the need of blood for our sanctification), one gold pan, most of the time for the use with the altar of incense (praying with divine thoughts) in addition to sacrificial burning, sin and peace offerings. This is the way in which each tribe partook of the presentation of their sacrifices and offerings.

CHAPTERS 8 - 9

ORDINATION OF THE LEVITES

The divine inspiration associated between the lighting of the golden candlestick and the ordination of levites and their purification. As if God wanted to declare that His servants are a heavenly lamp with numerous lampstands that illuminate the world.

- 1) The lighting of the golden candlestick (8:1-14). For the first time, Aaron the high-priest lit the lamps over against the candlestick as the Lord Commanded. This points out to the complete and perfect work that the Holy Spirit carries out in the life of the Church (Rev. 4:5), particularly through the seven sacraments. During which the servants are filled with the gifts of the Spirit and the anointment of grace, they are burning with love, to enlighten every soul. It is said that the priest lights the middle candlestick from the fire of the altar, and from it he lights the rest of the candlesticks. An indication to the correlation between the word of God (candlesticks) and the Cross (altar). The wicks the canare made out of the old discarded garments of the priests. As if it is pointing out to the priests, the weary and tedious struggles of their bodies, to the extent of dying for the sake of the enlightening work of the Spirit in the Church.
- 2) In Lev.8 we find the rituals of the ordination of the priests, here that of the levites, where the levites participate with Moses and Aaron and the whole congregation (leaders). Each has his role and assigned responsibility. The act of shaving all their body signifies the cleansing of the body from any defilement disgracing it, and the washing of their vestments is a sign of purification. Moses sprinkles on them the purification water or water of sin (9:7), pointing out that they are bound by the word or the commandment (Moses) that reveals the sin and supports the soul throughout its repentance. Aaron and his sons perform a vital role in declaring that the levites are the people's gift to God, he appointed them to assist the priests (9:19). The leaders lay hands on the levites (9:10), as if the servants are responsible before God for all the actions of the people and as if they are declaring that the levites are the people's gift to God, they present them with their own hands.

CHAPTER 10

THE LANGUAG OF THE TRUMPETS

God ordered the prophet Moses to make two silver trumpets. The purpose of those trumpets is to call on the congregation whenever the need arises, such as in time of departure, war and ceremonies. The calling of those trumpets is likened to the language used by the priests to notify the people what should be done. Every tune has a significant meaning. As for the fact that it is made out of silver, this is because it represents the word of God (Prov. 12:6) in both testaments. By the power of the word we worship, move diligently, strive and rejoice (feasts) triumphantly.

In the New Testament, the Church substituted the trumpets for bells (Review our book: The Church, House of God, 1969, p. 415-418).

FROM SINAI TO MOAB

NUMBERS 10:11 - NUMBERS 21

CHAPTER 10:11 - 32

THE PEOPLE'S JOURNEY

- 1) Journey started from mount Sinai after God spoke to His servant Moses, gave him the laws, ordered him to build the Tabernacle with all its implements and utensils and asked him to sanctify it. God had announced that He was going to lead the people of Israel Himself. Consequently the heavenly cloud lifted above the Tabernacle heading towards the wilderness of Paran, so the priests blew the trumpets, and the procession started to move together in the shape of the cross as we saw before.
- 2) As Moses was delighted with the divine procession, he invited his father-in-law Hobab son of Reuel (maybe his son, because of the fact that Jethro was too old to travel, so he returned to his homeland Ex. 18:27). Moses calling Hobab to accompany him was a sign of accepting the Gentiles in the church of the New Testament though some look upon this as merely being courteous to his relatives in flesh. A matter that even the prophets, find difficult to denounce. Moses asked him to become their guiding eyes in the wilderness, although God was leading them (10:31).
- 3) The Ark of covenant proceeded the procession (10 and 33) not in physical position but in remaining among the assembly, nor even in time placement because the sons of Kohath were moving, following the standard of camps of Judah and Reuben. The Ark of Covenant proceeded in a spiritual hidden way, its descending upon them was the secret behind the strength and sanctity of the procession. The procession did not stop for 3 days because it is the procession of leadership in Christ (numeral 3 represents the resurrection). This was made clear from the saying of Moses: "Arise Lord..." (10:35).
- 4) The Ark of covenant starts moving, number "**8**" denotes what is beyond time (7 days of the week) to the resurrection of Christ [The first day of the new week (7+1)]. The motion is 8 because the procession starts in this fashion [the standard of camp of Judah (3 tribes)+ the standard of camp of Reuben (3 tribes) + Moses and his companions (1)+ and the sons of Kohath the carriers of the Ark of covenant (the 8th)].

CHAPTER 11

THE COMPLAINTS OF THE PEOPLE

1) Not a long time had elapsed since the leaders of the people had presented their "Rejoice Offerings" to the Lord on behalf of the congregation as a whole, and on behalf of each tribe, until the people succumbed to their old lusts. The book of Numbers is the wilderness book, it manifests God's endless support for His people and the people's unnecessary continuous revolt due to their spiritual emptiness. The fruit of this revolt resulting only in the burning of the outskirts of the Camp [1-3] in order to reveal their burning agitation that preoccupied their hearts. Moses did not stay idle, he persevered lovingly to intercede to God on their behalf until the fire was extinguished. This site was named "Taberah" meaning "a blaze" in order that they might remember the incident that took place, and never repeat it again. During their exodus, a group of Egyptians accompanied them (Ex. 12:38). Their role was to incite them to lust for meat (11:4-9). This represents our leniency in tolerating alien thoughts and allowing them to possess us and enslave us all-over, as well as the false bretheren among the congregation (Gal. 2:4,5; Jude 4; 4, song of Songs 2:15). The people kept remembering the little fish, snake, cucumber and watermelon that was given to working slaves back in Egypt, and forgot all about the whiplash beatings they undertook, as well as their humiliation and disgrace while working in slavery constructing sun dried bricks. They also disregarded God's gifts to them in the wilderness. "Now our souls have dried up." They despised the bread of the angles in order to eat from the food of the slaves. A painful portrayal of continuous denial, disbelief and revolt.

2) Even Moses the great prophet with all his encompassing love felt inadequate to bear this heavy responsibility at times, and begged for death as a relief, but God did not abandon him. He equipped him with seventy elders to support him [16]. Thus the ecclesiastic discipline is completed by the sharing of responsibility by the people's representative, as if from the beginning, it was God's intention, to assert the people's role in leadership.

God being the Guardian, and bestower of His power on Moses, took (a part) and gave it to the elders (11:17). God shed His Light on Moses so that he became a luminous lantern, and from his he ignited the other lamps without allowing him to lose his power. The Spirit of God that was working within Moses, was also moving the representative of the people.

3) God wanted to emphasize that the "gift of Spirit" that was granted to the elders was His own and did not originate from Moses, hence Eldad (whom God loves) and Medad (the loved one), unlike the rest of the elders who departed to the Tabernacle, they remained in the Camp and the Spirit of God rested upon them just like the others and they were acquired the gift of prophecy. They enjoyed the gift of Spirit which is the gift of love as it well shows from their names. There are two (The numeral 2 refers to the love that unites two into one), that represent the loving church.

4) He satisfied their craving for meat, not by sacrificing cattle, nor by fish from the sea [21], but by quails. He caused winds to drive those quails towards their camp so that it is declared that not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit said the Lord of Hosts (Zeh. 4:7).

CHAPTER 12

MOSES MARRIAGE TO THE ETHIOPIAN

1) It seems that Aaron and Miriam grumbled when Moses selected the seventy elders without consulting them first, so they grabbed the opportunity of his marriage to an Ethiopian girl and expressed their envy of him by murmuring: "Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us also?" [2]. Moses dealt with their envy through a great dream [3], and when punishment befell Mir, Moses' ito God on her behalf [3]. This is wisdom behind Moses, success as a leader!

2) God defended him and considered him "entrusted with all God's House" [6-8]. The Lord talked to him face to face.

3) Moses' marriage to the Ethiopian is a prophecy of Christ's acceptance of the Gentiles to be His bride. Hence when Moses' sister outraged him, leprosy befell her [9-10], as soon as cloud departed from the Tabernacle.

As a result of the malicious outbursts and sins, God's glory abandoned the Tabernacle and Miriam was struck with Leprosy. Miriam's inequity affected the whole congregation, the cloud deserted the Tabernacle and the procession stopped advancing towards the promised Land, a bitter portrayal of the misconduct of a leader.

4) Miriam's temporary departure from the camp (7 days) and her returning back is an indication of the Jews (Miriam) back to the faith at the end of times, so that they reenter again the holy Tabernacle and their "lepered lack of faith" is lifted from them (Rom. 11-25). Their lack of faith made them resemble an aborted new-born without any sign of life in it [12].

5) The Lord's statement to Moses when he intercede for his sister: "If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days?" [14] The spitting here denotes denouncement, since God's grace abandoned them due to their malicious rejection offaith, they became dishonoured without the Temple or sacrifices.

6) Miriam's healing was prolonged after Moses, intercession this gave her more time to repent.

7) The procession advanced from Hazereth to Paran which means "the visible mouth". This symbolizes the divine incarnation, with Miriam's healing from lopresy (i.e. Lack of faith), the procession advances towards believing in incarnation, as a means to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

CHAPTER 13

SPYING ON CANAAN

1) As the people were in a continuous state of revolt, always yearning to return back to the land of slavery for the sake of its leek, onion and watermelon... God desired to reveal to them some of the various assortments of the fruits of the promised land, in order to shift their cravings towards it and away from the land of slavery.

God granted them this gift as per their request [1,2], so that this may become the norm according to which teachers will get a sample of eternity and thus experience will back up their witnessing.

2) Among the people, there lived Joshua (Deliverer) who symbolizes Christ, our Leader, through whom the divine promise will materialize, and Caleb who signifies "the heart" of the token of our innermost sincerity. Combining the two, the outcome is: no eternity will be experienced without the Redeemer or without our genuine diligence and sincerity.

3) The orders were to "depart from here... and climb the mountain," so that we may experience a state of eternity we have to remain in a constant state of ascension on the mount of commandment so as to end up hovering in the heavens. The matter does not stop with the ascension but it is important that the spiritual leaders and teachers brace up their courage and toughen-up in the hope of realizing God's promises [20].

4) Departed from Zin [21] which is different from Sin (Exod. 17:1), both meaning "trial," they went to Rehob (a vast region) at the entrance of Hamath (heaven) or at the beginning of the road that leads to it. Then they proceeded south to Hebron (companionship or bondage) which used to be called "Kiriath Arba" Arba village (Gen 23:2), nowadays it is called "The city of Elkhail" or "City of the friend" attributed to "Abraham, God's Friend" (Josh. 2:23). There they met with the descendants of Anak. Later they proceeded to Eshcol (cluster of grapes) where they cut down a vine with a cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff, with some pomegranates and figs [21-23]. What is the meaning behind this trip?

4) The one and only cluster of grapes symbolizes Christ our Lord who was hanged on the Cross to offer His Blood for our redemption. They brought it back with them and with it pomegranates and figs a sign of the church sharing in Christ's sufferings. It was imperative that we start up our way in the wilderness of Sin where we undergo trials until later as we advance to Rehob we experience vastitude, and happiness and then to the gates of Hamath, so that we enjoy the heavenly protection taking shelter behind Christ the Rock of ages. Here we enter Hebron symbolizing our living in union with God and with the people only to face the Giants (sons of Anak) who will not be capable of obstructing our entry to Eschol to enjoy the divine grapevine.

5) Most of the spies witnessed the prosperity of the land, but in lack of faith, they regarded themselves as being equivalent to grasshoppers in their own eyes as well as in the eyes of the sons of Anak [33].

This resulted in the people losing their hope. As for Joshua and Caleb, they believed that the grasshoppers (mortal human nature) is capable of overpowering the Giants, sons of Anak.

CHAPTER 14

THE PASSION OF THE RETURN TO SLAVERY

- 1) As the spies were submitting their reports on the new land, its prosperity and its inhabitants, the people started a revolt, they grumbled and wept longing to return back to their slavery under a new leadership [4]. They wanted to get rid of Moses and Aaron, as well as of Joshua and Caleb by stoning them [10], whose Testimony was true.
- 2) In humility both Moses and Aaron, fell to the ground on their faces before all the crowd, a sign of their total disability as well as to turn away the spirit of wrath. Next, Joshua and Caleb gave them an account of what they tasted as pledge of God promise. The people's groaning grew stronger, but God supported his faithful servants by "Manifesting his Glory in the Tabernacle, to all the congregation of Israel" [10], when all the people renounced them, God supported them.
- 3) The people's discontent became more intense, and they revolted against Moses and Aaron as well as Joshua and Caleb. They even refused to submit to God's apparition. Hence God consulted with Moses on a way to chastise them [11-12], as if God in His over abundant Love, did not want to singly enforce His decision, in spite of His Being the Creator and Author of wisdom. He's teaching us to consult always with others before making any decision no matter how high our position or how powerful our authority is; and maybe God intended to glorify Moses by interceding for his enemies, in an attempt to strengthen his guardianship love [13-19].
- 4) Moses mentions God's mercy and justice [17-19], saying "But he will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the inequity of fathers upon children upon the third and upon the fourth generation" [18], in the sense that if the fathers sin, God will forgive them awaiting their repentance, and then if the sons come and repent the sin over again, He will bear patiently with them, but if the following generation insist on following the footsteps, only then will God reprove them sternly. Maybe God's intention is to forgive the first couple of generations while the sin is still a thought or a saying when man is striving to conquer it. However if it converts into action (during the third generation) and into habit (during the fourth generation), God disciplines.
- 5) Moses was tolerant of the people's remonstrations. He prayed God on their behalf, and God pardoned them, but God denied this generation entry to the promised land, with the exception of Joshua and Caleb, their sons were exempted [21-23...]. God intended to punish them by astraying them for 40 years instead of 40 days that they needed while accomplishing their spying mission, substituting one year for each day and emphasizing that while the wounds of transgression occur instantly yet their treatment necessitates a prolonged and tedious period of time.

Due to sin, God deserted them as a result of their turning away from Him [34] consequently, they lost the secret behind their power, peace, happiness, in short the secret behind their lives. God disciplined the ten spies for their lack of belief [37] so that they act as an example for the others; and the people get to understand the truth of the matter. The people lived to regret their transgressions and instead of learning to become obedient to the will of God, they decided to further violate his wish and insisted on departing

towards the promised land. This resulted in their destruction by the Giants and the Canaanites. They were driven back as far as the city of Hormah (forbidden of sacred place).

CHAPTER 15

LAWS OF SANCTIFICATION

God wanted to support them after their defeat by the Giants and Canaanites, so He spoke to them about "Holy life":

- 1) Presentation of Sacrifices and burnt offerings: review levites [1-7], where God assured them that He will grant their children the promised land: "When you come into the land I bring you... You shall present an offering to the Lord". He chose to elevate their thoughts to meditate on His gift to their children, rather than to obsess themselves with their defeat. He also clarified to them the acceptance of the Gentiles as members of the holy church partaking in their worship and their feelings [15-16].
- 2) Presenting an offering for unintentional transgressions that befalls the congregation at certain times, for forgetfulness is a sign that man is inattentive to the commandments and is not industrious enough to preoccupy himself with it.
- 3) Pran offering for unintentional transgressions due to forgetfulness, as well as deliberate ones that occur in the persons lifespan [30,31].
- 4) He revealed to them the importance of leading a life of sanctity and the dangers lying behind a life of transgression, even if it is unintentional, with regards to the group collectively and to the persons individually. He clarified the extent of His hatred to sin especially "the breaking of the Sabbath". A man was found collecting sticks on a Sabbath so an order was issued "The man shall be put to death. All the congregation shall stone him with stones outside the camp" [35]. This became an example to act as deterrent to the reckless. This took care of the negative side; as far as for the positive side He ordered them to make fringes in the borders of their garments and to attach to them ribbon of blue; as indication of their obligation to seek a heavenly life (blue); even to the extent of the hem of their garments which touches down the ground. So how much more should the ideology be?

CHAPTER 16

THE EXTORTION OF PRIESTHOOD

- 1) The matter did not stop with the tumult of the people, but a few of the levites wanted to extort the priesthood. Those were Korah, Dathan, Abiram and 250 others from the elders of the group [1-3]. They wanted to avail priesthood to become within the reach of everybody. They looked upon it as a means of authority and pride, and not as a paternity and service. As for Moses, he fell down on his face in humility and the ground opened up and swallowed the men with their wives and children, as for the leaders a fire came forth from the Lord and consumed them. God wanted to uproot all the seeds of sin affecting the soul (men) the body (women) the abilities and talents of the human being (off-springs).
- 2) Korah meaning Golgothah (skull) died due to his sin, with his wife and children, however he had grandchildren who were blessed, they are sons of the groom that was crucified in Golgothah (skull). They became a chorus praising and glorifying the Lord, their psalms came full of joy.
- 3) Their brazen censers were taken and were spread over the brazen altar to assure that the blemish does not lie in the censers themselves, but in whom so ever used them. For another point of view it was used as a sign to discourage anyone else from repeating this tragedy.
- 4) The people were agitated and started uprising against Moses and Aaron because of what befell those extortionists, they accused them of murder [41], the matter that uncovers the extent of the influence of those rebels, showing opposition to the group, as well as showing the intolerant nature of the people. God was considering destroying the people as a whole in a moment [45], and as usual Moses, modestly interceded for them again. He asked Aaron to hurry into the midst of the people and offer incense to God on their behalf so that God would put an end to the plague. Everytime Moses falls in a tribulation and manifests a merciful heart full of love for the traitors, God supports him by demonstrating His Glory through the apparition of the cloud over the Tabernacle. God embraces his servants during their tribulations, until their hearts grow capable of accommodating their oppressors lovingly. Aaron symbolized Christ the Lord, when he stood in the midst of the living and the dead, offering incense to prevent death.

CHAPTER 17

AARON'S ROD

- 1) Since some of the people wanted to extort the priesthood by revolting against Moses and Aaron, God confirmed His choice of Aaron as the High Priest in a tangible way to set him apart from the false priesthood (Heb 5:4). Moses took a rod from each tribe and wrote on it the name of its leader, by this making these rods were the symbol of leadership and paternity for each tribe. As for the rod of Levi, he wrote on it Aaron's name, each time it was brought forth before the Tabernacle, it germinated and sprouted blossoms and as well produced almonds. Hence the suspicions that Korah and his followers carried for Aaron along with the revolts of the people were transformed to praise for Aaron and confirmation of his designation. God Himself, declared His divine choice and the rod became a symbol of the crucifixion of the Lord of glory who produced a fruitful section of the Gentiles (the dessicated Rod) to become living members in the New Testament Church. It also symbolizes the Virgin Mary who presented us with Christ our Lord the divine fruit and Life-Giver.
- 2) The almonds is a symbol for the word of God, the appetizing spiritual food, it has an outer bitter shell (the literal meaning of the word). Another brittle shell (the Ethical meaning with respect to honesty) and then there is the inner almond (the spiritual or the delving deep beyond the literal meaning to meet with Christ the Word).
- 3) The moisture of the rod that germinated almonds, points out to the believers, since by faith, our souls are set free from a state of death to a living state. The leaves refer to the new life, or the second birth, the flowers to the life of continuous growth after the spiritual birth and the almonds refer to the fruitful results in other's lives.

Therefore we conclude that the believer passes through four phases: [the root (beginning of life) the leaves, the flowers, the fruits]. This correlates to St. John's words: [OH children; Oh teenagers; Oh youth, Oh fathers (1 John 2)].

- 4) Placing the rod before the testimony will remind Aaron and his sons that whatever they are granted is a gift from God, so they should not become arrogant. It also reminds the people that they should not grumble against the priests. Besides, the rod is a symbol of the divine incarnation.

CHAPTER 18

THE RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS OF THE PRIESTS

After confirming that all what Aaron and his sons received came from a divine origin, God sent them the laws that defined their responsibilities and their rights:

- 1) Their compulsion to guard the Tabernacle to prevent intruders, the priests are responsible for the people's inequities, since they represent the spiritual sanctuary. Added to that they are bound by their hallowed priesthood life and thus they are responsible for their own iniquities. The corruption of a priest destroys the congregation. Thirdly they have to co-operate together and work in union with the levites. For the priesthood is a fellowship of love and a joint service with the purpose of preserving the souls as holy temples for God.
- 2) In order that the priests devote themselves to the spiritual work, they were exempted from eaa living (1 Cor. 9:12-15). Things that were prohibited for the people such as first-borns, tithes and pledges were permitted for the priests and levites. The purpose behind it was not leading to a pampered life but to allow them to devote their lives for the spiritual service as well as to empower them to donate generously just like a father would give to his son. The priest feels that God is his inheritance [20]. God will satisfy his needs and give him abundant means so that it may overflow to include others, instead of just adding to his own interests.
- 3) During the harvest season, the people are obliged to offer their first-fruits to the priests. God spoke to Aaron and said "Behold, I have given you whatever is kept of the offerings made to me" [8]. How can he guard it, and he is supposed to eat it and consume it? It symbolizes the first-borns, Hallowed Christ the Lord, the One Who offered Himself to us (to eat) and partake of Him. So through Him and in Him we may become also first-borns. By His death He resurrected us in Him so we may become a church of first-borns, He sublimely manifests Himself through us as God's offering.
- 4) Aaron rejects the firstlings of defiled beasts and redeems them. As for the pure ones, they are "holy" [17], and that is because, first-borns represent Christ the Lord, the Hallowed Redeemer, that is without blemish (John 17:9).
- 5) The obligation of the levites to offer their tithes to Aaron the priest, with no exceptions to any tribe - not even the levites who are entitled to tithes (tenths) t- from tithing; tithing should come naturally from every believer, whether it be a priest or a member of the people.

CHAPTER 19

THE ORDINANCE OF THE RED HEIFER

In chapter 18, God declared that it was possible to approach the Lord through His priests, here He reveals the need for sanctification, without it no-body can see God. Here He talks to us about "the ordinance of sanctification" by preparing the ashes that are used in the sanctification water, or "defilement water" (91), that is the purification from defilement.

- 1) The presentation of heifer as a sin offering [9]; its red color refers to Christ the Lord who was slain (Isa. 53:1-3).
- 2) "Without defect, in which there is no blemish and upon which a yoke has never come" [2], our Lord is without sin (John 8:46; 2 Cor 5:21). He never fell under the yoke of sin.
- 3) Eleazar (son of Aaron) stepped forth to take it outside the camp, and witness its slaying [3], just as Christ our Lord suffered on the Cross outside the gate (Heb 13:12,13).
- 4) "And Eleazar the priest shall take some of her blood with his finger, and sprinkle some of her blood towards the front of the tent of meeting seven times". It is the work of the Lord, that He sprinkles His Blood on the face of the Church, so it lifts Him up at liberty directing Him towards the Father. He sprinkles it throughout the ages (7 times) although He was slain only once, for He is still alive and everlasting. His one and only unrepeated sacrifice, remains everlasting in the Eucharist sacrament (the divine liturgy).
- 5) The burning of the heifer [5] points out to the assurance of the bodily death of Christ. As for the casting of cedar wood, hyssop and scarlet in its fire, the materials that are used in the purification of the leper (Lev 4:6-7), it points out to blending of ashes of the offering with the purification elements [the cross (cedar wood); the washing (Hyssop); the blood (scarlet)].
- 6) The relationship between the ashes of the sacrificial offering, and the water presented for the purification (19:9) symbolizes the relationship between the Cross and Baptism (Col. 2: 12).
- 7) Whoever burns the sacrifice and gather its ashes, remains defiled until the evening [8-10], an indication of our iniquities born by Christ, Granter of purification who came in the fulness of time.

The need for purification [11-13], whoever touches a dead body needs to get purified on the third day, so that he becomes pure by the seventh day; as if whoever does not experience the resurrection of the crucified Christ through baptism (Numeral 3) will remain defiled for the rest of his estranged days on earth (7 days).

The water used in the purification ritual [14-22]:

- 1) If a man dies inside a tent, anybody that was inside the tent or enters it, will be defiled for 7 days, emphasizing the hideousness of sin (he compares it to a dead person), it defiles the person for the rest of his estranged earthly life (7 days), there is no remedy for it. The matter does not stop at mankind but it extends to the hard creations, for every uncovered utensil is defiled [15]. From the health aspect, it is apprehensible that death might be due to an infectious disease. Therefore it is imperative to discard the utensils that were used by the dead person. As from the spiritual aspect, it points out to the senses that are uncontrolled by the Holy Spirit, it is a utensil that is opened for corruption, it destroys the soul and body.
- 2) The treatment is the purification through the ashes of the offering and the living water in a vessel [16], the dipping of hyssop in that water and sprinkling it on the tent, the vessels and the people that touched the dead body or touched his tent. All this will take place on the third and seventh days [19]. This is the work of the Church, it takes the offering of the Cross to present it as a sacrament of purification through the water of Baptism. The invisible Christ (The clean man [9]) Himself does the sprinkling on the third day, with the power of His resurrection so that we may enjoy the total purification at the end of times (7th day).

NUMBERS 20

THE WATER OF MERIBAH

After presenting the ordinance of purification for touching a dead person's body or his belongings, God talked about the death of Aaron and Miriam to prove that there is no exception when it comes to the application of the ordinance. God also talked of Meribah water (19:2-13) to manifest man's feebleness no matter how important his standing is:-

- 1) The death of Miriam [1]: she died in the wilderness of Zin, this was a dreadful ordeal for the people, as for Moses, who was tender-hearted, he did not grieve her, because he believed in resurrection.
- 2) Meribah water [13]: The people revolted because of the lack of water, so Moses and Aaron fell flat on their faces and the glory of God appeared to them [6]. With every tribulation, they humbled themselves and consequently God revealed to them his glory and they get to enjoy new blessings. God extracted water out of the rock by means of the rod. This symbolizes the overflowing gift of Christ who was raised on the Cross.

God wrath was upon them (Ps 106:23,33), because they did not hallow Him before the people, and as a result, they were forbidden to enter into the promised land. Perhaps because they were doubtful from the very beginning or may be because they struck the rock twice, when our Master only struck once according to His own will (Heb 12:2). As for the second strike, it only implies our re-crucifying the Lord, due to our slackness with regard to His sacrifice (Heb 6:6).

- 3) The Edomites refused their passage [14-21]: Moses corresponded, in a brotherly way with the king of Edom trying to make him realize that they are both descendants of the same blood. He adopted an attitude of modesty and obedience to the King, but Edom (meaning bloody) intolerant of the Kingdom of God, manifested animosity and hatred. He represents the enemy of virtue and righteousness who reigned over the souls like a king would rule over a land. However Christ the Lord entered the land and bound Edom by His Cross, thus unlocking a sovereign pathway through which, the procession of the divine Church would cross over, just like a triumphant procession under His leadership, directed towards the heavenly Jerusalem without deviating to the right or left (selfrighteousness or iniquity).
- 4) The death of Aaron [22-29]: He died on the mountain of Hor i.e. on a nameless mountain on a high spot. He was the first high pr, even in his death he was lifted upwards in opposition to Korah and his company who dropped into the Abyss.

Moses climbed up the mountain with Aaron and Eleazar his son, in order to strip him off his priest vestment and dress up his son instead. This took place while Aaron was still alive, so as to prevent the vestments from getting defiled. This conduct is an indication of the priesthood ritual that was handed down through the ages. This event took place in the attendance of the congregation [27], because he was the public priest.

Aaron died, and his priesthood was transferred to his son and the priesthood is still being handed over throughout the generations, till the almighty everlasting comes (Heb 8:1). The Redeemer who intercedes for sinners with His Blood (Heb 7).

CHAPTER 21

THE ROAD TO VICTORY

1) As Edom opposed the passage of the children of Israel, they made a detour around his Kingdom, thus avoiding mischief. This is the way to victory, and that is not to confront evil with evil, but to over one's instincts for revenge, so he controls his heart and his emotions before he reign over others. As for King Arad (Zebra) the Canaanite, he attacked them as they were coming from Atharim (Traces) and as if King Arad, just like a Zebra trailed in their footsteps, so as to catch up with them, and destroy them. To prevent them from reaching the promised land. The children of Israel were defeated at first in order to realize their helplessness. But since they begged for the divine support, pledged that they will rob nothing of the cities, thus they and were victorious.

When we rely on our weak natures, we fail in the most trivial of matters where as by God's embrace we live triumphantly.

2) Once again the congregation revolted even after their victory. Hence the fiery serpents from the wilderness were sent to sting them and Kill them. There was no way for their salvation except to gaze at the bronze serpent the symbol of the crucifixion (John 3:14,15). Where God was carnally crucified and while the devil's might was crucified, he was disarmed of his authority over the believers.

3) By means of the Cross, we are granted victory over deadly vipers, so we move from one encounter to the next adding new glories while undergoing those continuous tribulations. As for the names of the battles they are "Oboth" (succession of growth), Iyeabarim (depth of the crossing) i.e. we are constantly undergoing continuous growth experiencing new depths.

4) As the people traveled, bearing the scars of the bites on their bodies yet still surviving, i.e. having the signs of victory over these bites, God ordered Moses the Prophet to assemble the people in order to supply them with water from a well to drink. Why such a request? To proclaim that by the triumphant spirit of the Cross we enjoy inner spiritual wells (John 7:38; Prov 5:15, 16). It is the acknowledgement of the Holy Trinity wells that works in us through the Holy Spirit. In other words we believe in our Crucified Redeemer who was stung by the serpent and through whom we enter into baptism, and therefore are given the membership in God's Body through His Holy Spirit; and our lives overflow with joy and praise, and so we sing "the song of the well." This well - as it was referred to in the Septuagint text - was dug by the (honest) leaders, rulers of nations as well as those prophets who witnessed for the Messiah, the Saviour. However it was disguised through misconception until the apostles (the rulers of the earth) came and uncovered it by stripping it of its misconceptions and by revealing the depths of our Lord's and Saviour's work.

5) As the congregation drank from the well they traveled to Mattanah meaning "their donations." We accept His gifts so that we can present them back to Him as offerings (Num. 28:1). Then they proceeded to Nahaliel meaning "from God," we present to Him what has been originally His, and then He returns it back to us manifolds. Later to Bamoth meaning "the coming of death," where death does not terrify us, but we consider it as merely a Passover. They proceeded to Pisgah which means

"ascension" or "Mount Crest" and this is the purpose of our voyage as if to ascend the mountain in order to sit in heavenly places (Eph 2:6).

In brief the journey starts by the well of knowledge through trials, so that we are risen to the hight of our Saviour's Perfection.

6) Victory over Sihon [12-30], Sihon meaning "haughty," it refers to the devil, king of the Amorites "Bitterness." He resists God's people and he tries to prevent them from crossing over peacefully, so he ends up being defeated. As for the battle field it was called Jahaz "the fulfillment of the commandment," where we were triumphant (Jer. 6:16), by the blade of the Spirit which is God's word (Eph 6:17). Hence we occupy all his land from Arnon to Jabbok [i.e. from the curses up to the struggles, we enter into the land of curses, and we struggle until it is superseded by blessings], and we occupy Heshbon meaning "reckoning or thought" and we recover our ideology after the proud enemy was controlling it.

7) Victory over Og (Crookedness), the King of Bashan "Shame." So we destroy every twisting in thought that will deter us from preoccupying ourselves with the heavenliness, and every disgrace is removed, and we enter into the inner divine glory.

Balaams' Prophecies

- 1) 23:7,10 : The divine incarnation.
- 2) 23:16-24 : The suffering of the Saviour and His ascension
- 3) 24:1-14 : The day of the Pentecost (the descent of the Holy Spirit).
- 4) 24:15-19 : The preaching of the gospel.
- 5) 24:20-25 : The Acquisition of Christ.

THE INCIDENT OF BALAAM

NUMBERS 22 TO 25

CHAPTER 22

THE STORY OF BALAAM

- 1) As the people were getting close to entering the promised land, the devil devised a new war not through leaders and kings, but through Balaam the prophet. He asked that a curse befall them just like Balak, king of Moab, requested.
- 2) Balaam did not belong to children of Israel, as is shown in verse 11, neither was he a member of the people of Balak [24]. Most likely he belonged to the Midian people, allies of Moab. Some historians believe that he was a true prophet for a temporary period of time because of his good natured relationship with God (22:9,12-32-32:16). He uttered some very deep prophecies. (23,24). As for the early Church, she believed that he was a sorcerer and fortune-teller [7]. God used him to accomplish His objective (to extract from the eater food). He accepted the rewards of divination [8], and asked for altars for Baal to be built (22:41; 23:1).
- 3) Balak was terrified from God's people, he portrayed them as being an ox that licks the nations just as he grazes the grass, of the fields (22:4). He fights by word of mouth while he is preaching and praying, that is why he asked Balaam to use that same weapon, i.e. the mouth of curse.
- 4) The divine command came to Balaam, not to curse the people [9,12], interacting with Him directly or through the idols of Balaam.
- 5) Balak repeated his request by sending more honourable princes [14], and by trying to allure him with expensive gifts [18], and his reply came back, a firm refusal to curse God's people. But it seems that his desire for greed overtook him, and he asked his visitors to spend the night so as to find out God's will.

God deserted him because of his deviant heart (22:20; Ezek 14:4). God used Balaam's donkey to rebuke him for his deviant heart [22-23], so that the mute beast may become the executer of everyone who thinks that he is wise. Balaam-being a seer-started an argument with his donkey just like he did before with other animals and birds.

God chose to rebuke him back using his own methods. From the symbolic side, Origen believes that the angel who appeared to Balaam, depicts the Angel of God who was leading His people (Ex. 23:43), Balaam represents the non-believers, his name denotes "vain people." As for the donkey it refers to the simple Church that serves . The Church that reveto them what they cannot perceive.

CHAPTER 23 TO 24

THE PROPHECIES OF BALAAM

1- The first prophecy (23:7-10) concerning the divine incarnation. Balaam could not curse the children of Israel because he was raised to the top of the rocks (Christ the Lord) to behold the sacraments of the incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection, as well as descent of the Holy Spirit, and the preaching for the Saviour.

If Balak brought Balaam from the mountains of the east (23:7), where the devil transforms himself into an angel of light (2 Cor 11:14), and shines like an easterly light, however God took him to the corner stone, i.e. to the peak of the mountains, and to the holy hills. Thus witnessing the people of God, dwelling alone [9], and practicing the elevated divine life (Phil 3:20). Beside to see the Church of God founded over Christ the Lord, the Rock of ages. He was incapable of denouncing God's holy church, for he saw it multiplying and being blessed, where its dust (posterity) is uncountable [10]. He saw the church through the divine incarnation and said: "Let me die the death of the righteous"; [10 LXX]. He wanted to die and get buried in the baptism water and then rise as one of its living members. He longs to partake in the saints' death with Christ.

When Balaam blessed God's people, Balak beseeched Him to move into another place [11-15]. He obeyed without hesitation because he was getting paid, but then he presented his second prophecy regarding the sufferings of Christ and His resurrection.

2- The second prophecy [16-24]: it was said: "Rise Balaak" [18]. Although he was standing with Moab's leaders by his burnt offerings [17]; it is an invitation to the nations personified in Balak (which means the destroyer or corruptor). So the new nature bears the reformation instead of the destruction and corruption. The same thing happened with Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:6, Eph 5:14). "Listen to me O son of Zippor" (Bird); if he resembles the fallen bird, without any value, yet he is taken into account before God (Luke 12:6). "The Lord their God is with them" [21]. God sets in the midst of His people through the cross, bestowing upon them their freedom in exchange for Egypt's Bondage [22], represented in the lamb of the Passover. Thus crossing takes place rapidly and strongly like a unicorn [a wild bull that became extinct, it was known for its speed and strength, it had one horn; a sign of sovereignty, Deut 33:7]. It is fulfilled through Christ, the resurrected King. He will rise bestowing the power of resurrection to His people and so they become like lions [24] that never rest until they have devoured their prey [24], i.e. they have extorted the Kingdom. Likewise, through the sufferings of the Master and His resurrection, He bestowed upon His church the resurrection spirit and victory, so there is no place for denunciation but only for blessings. For the second time he asks him to move to a different spot. He took him to the top (peak) of Peor (immorality), His aim was to drive him to seek sensual pleasure and immorality and alienate him from God, so that he may curse God's people.

3- The third prophecy [24:1-14] the day of the Pentecost: this time around, he did not make use of omens and sorcery as has been his habit [1] or did he find a place of solitude. On the contrary, he

directed himself towards the people [2] and the Spirit of God came upon him, his eyes were opened so he could see the situation more clearly [3,4]. He saw the Chruch in union with Christ, enjoying the blessing of salvation, so he gave an account on her birth on the day of Pentecost and said: "How fair are your tents, O Jacob, your encampments, O Israel" [5]. He saw it as a moving church that abides in tents and at the same time a settled Church being the Lord's Body. That is why he found it in its resting place in the bosom of the Father. Although it is forever growing and moving (Phil 3:13), yet it enjoys an inner stability due to the gift of the Holy Spirit. He calls it "valleys that stretch afar" [6] valleys overcrowded with congregations of righteous people (the holy trees). "Gardens beside a river," it was transformed into Paradise watered by the Holy Spirit (Ps. 46:5; John 4:13; Song 5:1). "Tents that God pitched," these were the product of God" and cedar trees besides the waters" those are God's cedars which support the diving vine branch (Ps 80:8).

That is how, the Holy Spirit establishes the Church as God's Paradise, dwelt by Christ the Lord who reigns over many nations [6]. Its goal is releasing the spirit and passing it over from the land of slavery, he says: "God brings him out of Egypt" [7], where evil will undergo destruction with all its fireworks [8]. As for the Church's testimony it is the manifestation of the victory of the Groom and bride together. He couched, he lay down like a lion. Who will raise him up? [9] because He was like a reigning lion when He was up on the Cross, giving His bride the power of resurrection with Him.

4- The forth prophecy [15-19]: Jesus' preaching of the gospel, the divine sacrmaments that surpassed the liminations of the human mind were revealed to Balaam [16] He says "I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not nigh, he is talking about witnessing for Christ, he refers to Him until the fullness of time" (Gal 4:4). The Nations will get closer to Him and the Magi will comprehend those words while offering Him thier gifts. He is like a deputy of the nations, he praises God and glorifies Him. He also talks about the unification of the divinity with the humanity by saying "a star shall come forth out of Jacob and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel". Since all this was written in the east the Magi recognized during the birth of Christ, his identity, that He was the Messaih, destroyer of Satan's labours until no one is left in the city [19]; and bestower of power and authority to those who believe in Him.

[Note: "Sons of Tumult", "Sons of Sheth" were mentioned in the Septuagint].

5) The fifth prophecy [20-25]: the acquisition of Christ, some scholars consider it a part of the forth prophecy, it depicts the destruction of Amalek who resisted God and His people. The term "the kenites" [21] refers to the Lord Jesus, the aquired place for dwelling, like a rock we find in Him "Enduring is your dwelling place and your nest is set in a rock." We enter it just like birds nesting in the rock are beseeching Him without fearing the Amalek or Asshur (symbol of the heretics) i.e. from the resistance we face outside the Church or inside it (24:22).

He questioned "Alas who shall live when God Does this !" [23] Here he predicts what is going to happen in the future "But ships shall come from Kittim (Crete)" [a prophecy about the Greek empire led by Alexander the Great, most probably he also meant the Roman empire arising from the west]. "And shall afflict Asshur and Eber and he also shall come to destruction" [24]. That is after the submission of the Hebrews to the Babylonian capture (Asshur). Some Scholars regard the submission of Eber to

destruction as a symbol of the rejection of those Jews to Christ, and their perishing because of their lack of faith.

CHAPTER 25

THE DOWNFALL WITH THE MOABITE WOMEN

- 1) Since Balaam could not curse the children of Israel, he offered Balak a wicked suggestion and that is to make them stumble by offering them the Moabite women as whores. Then God's wrath befall them (Rev 2:14; Jude 11), and in effect, the people committed adultery with the daughters of Moab [1] in Shittim (meaning reply). As if the people returned God's love by insubordination. They committed adultery, offered sacrifices for idols and worshiped their gods [2]. Origen depicts in the Moabite women, the bounds to the secular philosophies, lacking sanctification, that pull the believer away from God's word.
- 2) The leaders of the people were negligent by disobeying God's command to kill and hang the Moabites against the sun, a sign of the grant day of judgement where every sin will surface up in the presence of the "Soof righteousness."
- 3) Phinehas wan Israelite man bring a Midianite woman to his brethren in the sight of all the congregation by the door of the Tabernacle. So he pierced him and the girl with a spear killing them both. The plague was stopped after it had killed 24,000, a symbolic picture of God's jealousy over His holies. It portrays the hideousness of the sin of adultery in the eyes of God, as well as God's divine work in man's spiritual life through baptism. He did not allow this to happen as a personal vendetta, but with honest feelings and jealousy towards God's holies in order to permit the destruction of the sin from its roots. Phinehas represents "the death of Christ" who aimed his arrow towards us to kill the old sinful mortal in us that is, the sin that overpowered us, and so we become a holy altar for God. The slaying of the man and the woman together refers to the destruction of both the sinful soul and body.
- 4) If God disciplines his sons, He also disciplines those who trample them. He ordered a total destruction of all the Medianites because of their evil entrapment that they pitched to cause God's children to perish.

PREPERATION FOR ENTERING THE LAND OF CANAAN NUMBERS 26 TO 36

CHAPTER 26 THE SECOND CENSUS

As the plague was lifted, the people chastised and the congregation got ready to enter the promised land, there was a divine command for a census. It was to be carried out on the same lines as the first one except for a few changes such as:

1. The count which included both tribes and families was as follows:

Dan: Comprises one family. Now one denotes God. It follows that whoever gives himself up to it i.e. becomes a member of Dan's tribe, is blessed with knowing God by being united with Him.

Zebu: [The abode] was counted as three families because whoever abides in the Lord enjoys the blessing of the Holy Trinity. For each of *Ephraim* [the rich crop]. *Issachar* [the reward] *Naphtali* [spacious] and *Reuben* [the son of revelation] each has four houses. This denotes that whoever has the abundant fruit of repentance accepting both chastisement and reward from the Lord with a heart wide enough not only to hold God and man but also a clear spiritual vision; that person will enjoy salvation. This is testified by the four Gospels namely that salvation can be attained through its four corner stones: [incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension]. Each of *Judah* [confession.] *Simeon* [listeners] *Asher* [rejoicing] were considered five houses, denoting that whoever has real faith or true confession hearing to God's words in obedience (listening) while practising a happy joyful life enjoys the full power of the cross as revealed during the five offerings of the Old Testament.

Gad [seriousness] and Benjamin [Son of the right hand] each share was seven houses, because whoever takes life seriously will stand at the rightside of the Lord, enjoying spiritual perfection [numeral seven]. Manasseh's share was eight houses because whoever forsakes the temporal for the eternal will rise above time [seven] to enter everlasting life or transcends time.

2. The tribes that were included under Judah's dominion and from which the Messiah would eventually emerge, had greatly increased in number, for whoever takes shelter under His wing will constantly grow and never stop.

3) The tribe of Manasseh doubled its number twice because whoever forsakes the temporal for the eternal will be doubly rewarded in both this world and the eternal one.

4) The count of Simeon dropped drastically as they were smitten by the plague, because the head of the tribe Zimri [Hippopotamus-like] indulged in adultery like a beast, and was killed by Phinchas.

5) God decreed the principles of dividing the shares [52-53], according to the census and the picking by lot [57].

6) The levites were separately counted. Their share was God not the earth.

CHAPTER 27

THE LAWS OF INHERITANCE AND THE ORDINATION OF JOSHUA

1) The daughters of Zelophehad presented their case with courage, faith and hope. They demanded their fathers' share of land. They were disinherited because their father had died without begetting a son. For their sake a new law of inheritance was decreed giving them the right to inherit. Their father was called Zelophehad [a shadow in a mouth or in fear], this points out the fact that our earthly body is like a shadow that is present in life only to disappear on death with the Messiah, giving rise to the five blessed daughters who denote the five senses. These are sanctified as they die with the Saviour. Because of them the earthly body enjoys a heavenly inheritance [the promised land].

2) This new inheritance law declared that the legal heirs are as follows:

The son: stands for men of knowledge or spiritual reward.

The daughter: the fruit of the holy body in the Lord (active life).

The brother: Those who strive during life to follow their brother's footsteps.

The uncle: The simple hearted who have good qualities but no intellectual or spiritual depth, those who are the closest in the clan those whom God assigns to do simple godly jobs.

3) God directed Moses to ascend (Mount Abarim) to see the promised land from afar and then dies [12]. It is fit that the perfect human being should rise to the holy mountains and see God's promises fulfilled, so he rests. On the other hand the Scripture asserted that the death had reigned from Adam's time to Moses (Rom. 5:14), thus Moses could not have possibly entered the promised land according to the Law, but had to pass the leadership to Joshua who is the symbol of Jesus Christ.

4) Moses did not give leadership to any of his sons but handed it to Joshua who was a living picture of serious spiritual leadership.

5) Moses lays his hand on Joshua (Num. 18) to bestow on him God's special blessing of leadership work. (Acts 6:6; 13:3; 1 Tim 5:22; 2 Tim 1:16).

NUMBERS 28 TO 29

FEASTS AND PERMANENT OFFERINGS

There was more work to entering the promised land than the mere conduction of a census, a new decree of inheritance, and consecration of a new leader. What was really needed was a clear definition of rest, by practicing continuous spiritual joy during the sacrifices of reconciliation, love and feasts.

- 1) Daily sacrifices (28:1-8):** Review details of sacrifices in Leviticus. It's clear that the joy of sacrifices is the joy of the Lord Himself in them through His self-sacrifice (28:2). The constant burning sacrifice every morning and evening means that our life is a happy unceasing feast which is realized through the joyful sacrifice on the cross.
- 2) Weekly sacrifices (28:9,10):** There is the weekly feast on the Sabbath which denotes that we will find real rest, joy and heavenly song in the resurrection of Christ.
- 3) Monthly sacrifices (28:11-15):** which take place on the first of the month (the Crescent Feast) during which, it was said that the moon had become renewed by approaching the sun. Thus proves that we should be always approaching the Sun of righteousness in order to enjoy ceaseless renewal.
- 4) Yearly feasts:** Passover (28:16-25): the stress here is on eating unleavened bread so as to begin a new year far away from the yeast of evil (1 Cor. 5:8). The Feast of Pentecost or of the weeks which is together with the Passover, where they offer to the Lord from the new harvest (Exod. 23:15), which signifies our comfort in the work of the Holy Spirit which descended on the Pentecost to join new people converters to the church. The day of blowing trumpets (29:1-6) called the day of the Holy convocation; the Day of Atonement (Review Leviticus 16; 23:26-32), and the Feast of the Tabernacles denoting the joy of resurrection and the setting towards heavenly matters through a feeling of estrangement (abiding in tabernacles).
- 5) PERSONAL OFFERINGS:** to unite the personal work with the communal.

Daily sacrifices = A never ending feast.

Weekly sacrifices = A jofeast.

Monthly sacrifices = Continurenovation.

Yearly sacrifices = Salvation events [Pasch, the descent of the Holy Spirit...].

Personal sacrifices= Rejoicing through a personal relationship.

CHAPTER 30

VOWS

- 1) The general rule: Man is bound by the vows or oaths he makes as long as they are according to the Lords commandments.
- 2) The word "man" is repeated because whoever vows has to express his vow by uttering with his tongue beside by meaning it by his innerself. The repetition twice also symbolizes love [through love two become one]. Therefore a vow is worthless if it is not backed with love.
- 3) A daughter that vows within hearing of her father who doesn't rebuke her on the same day, then her vow will stand. The young daughter symbolizes the Old Testament Church that promised to obey the commandments but could not fulfill her vows (Exod. 42:3).
- 4) The wife's vows are also binding if they are made within her husband's hearing and he keeps his peace for the day. This signifies the Church of the New Testament who is bound to fulfill her vows with the consent of her Bridegroom's Spirit that He sanctifies and prepares her for eternal wedding.
- 5) The widow and the divorced both represent those who deny faith, the ones that are deprived of their Bridegroom's house would they be able to fulfill their vow?

CHAPTER 31

A FINAL WAR

1) The last thing that Moses did before he ascended Mount Abarim was to wage war against the Medianites who had seduced his people and caused them to fall into evil ways [25]. This looks as if all the testament can do is to urge fighting evil without offering positive goodness and grace. Indeed this war carries a symbol of removing the obstacle (Luke 17:2).

2) Not many men took part in this war. Each tribe sent out a mere one thousand (the number symbolizes heaven) denoting that we need to fight throughout our heavenly life (Eph 6:14; Ps. 27:3). All got together as a sign of the spirit of love and partnership. That is why there is no mention of the military and weapons. The only mention is of leadership and the Zeal of Phinehas with the holy instruments and trumpets [7] that was aimed at every male, i.e. at evil thoughts.

3) The killing of the five kings points at the crucifixion of the five senses to guard against evil thoughts. The names of the five kings were:

- Evi meaning "a wild animal" = evil and wild desires.
- Rekem "clouring or striping" which denotes deceit and flattery to entrap the soul.
- Zur meaning "rock" = the stone heart (Exod. 36:26).
- Hur might mean either "Horus" or an Ackadian name meaning "child" = aimless life not a serious one.
- Reba four denoting the four cardinal points of the compass = ties of the heart to the earthly matters.

4) The spoils of war bear a symbolic side denoting the spiritually victorious human being. He enslaves the body (i.e. women), his deeds (the children) and his energies (the beasts) to win the kingdom of God. The burning of cities and forts denotes the destruction of the roots of sin in man's heart. Bringing all the spoils to Moses and Eleazar at the camp near Jordan signifies sanctifying all we have during the efficacy of baptism [13-20].

5) The killing of sinful women [13-20] denotes the elimination of all causes leading to sin.

6) Purification of metals and clothing [21-24]: denotes our need to be purified by blood (Rev 7:14), through the performance of God's fiery Spirit. It is a wonder that those fighters we considered impure remained defiled until they underwent purification before they could enter the camp. This indicates that God wanted to stress the fact that no man is invulnerable to sin no matter what heights his spiritual stature reaches or his spiritual endeavor for that matter.

7) Dividing the Spoils [25-54]: the fighters were given more than double the share of non-fighters (John 14:2; 1 Cor. 15-14); which is a gift from God. Nevertheless everyone was committed to pay tribute to God [28]. Gold wholly given away to the Tabernacle because whatever is heavenly must always be there where God abides.

CHAPTER 32

THE LAND OF GILEAD

- 1) When the tents of the congregation were pitched in the land of Moab, the children of Reuben, Gad and Manasseh coveted to own it because it was grazing land and they were the clans owning herds and cattle in great numbers. They wanted to have all the land especially the cities of Ataroth (crowns), Dibon (disgrace), Jazer (helper), Elealeh (God of High) Shebam (cold) Nebo (announcer) and Beon (Baal of the house).
- 2) These tribes might have wanted to acquire the first pick of the fruit of victory as a compensation for losing the right of the first-born, Reuben being the eldest and Gad the eldest of Zilpah Leah's maid and Manasseh was the first-born of Ephraim. These settlers of east Jordan represent the Old Testament whereas the rest of the tribes that crossed the Jordan represent the New Testament, because they enjoyed the water of baptism. The former won victory over the kings under the leadership of Moses but the latter won under Joshua.
- 3) Moses firmly but compassionately reproached the two and half tribes because they asked to be allowed [5] not to cross the Jordan saying:" do not take us accross the Jordan" [5]. As if they stopped at the gates and because they gave their herds and cattle priority over helping their brethren in their war after crossing.

He granted their wish on condition that they help their brethren. In fact they even asked to go on the foremost line of the army [16]. They also vowed not to return to their land until all the tribes had had their share [18]. This put Moses mind at rest. He assured them that their proposal was a commitment before the Lord [20].

NUMBERS 33

THE SUMMARY OF THE JOURNEY

God commanded Moses to write down a summary of the journey since they set out from the land of Egypt until they reached Moabs plains east Jordan, in preparation for entering the promised land.

The philosopher Origen believes that the journey included forty two stops. This reminds us of what came in (Matthew 1) that there were forty two generations between Abraham and Christ. This seems to symbolize the history of salvation throughout history. It is a chariot that carries us across the road of salvation which the Lord Himself has prepared for us to elevate us from one glory to another (Ps 84-7), and from strength to more strength. Moreover most of these stops had names bearing symbolic meanings that were previously mentioned, namely:-

Rameses, Succoth, Etham, Pihahiroth, Marah, Elim, the shore of the Red Sea, the wilderness of Sin, Dophkah, Alush, Rephidim, the wilderness of Sinai, Kibrothhattaavah, Hazeroth, Rithmah, Rimmon-perez, Libnah, Rissah, Kehelathah, the Mount of Sheper, Haradah, Makheloth, Tahath, Tearah, Mithkah, Hashmonah, Moseroth, Benejaakan, Horhaggidgad, Jotbathah, Abronah, Eziongeber, the wilderness of Zin (Kadish), Mount Hor, Zolmonah, Punon, Oboth, Iyeabarin, Dibon-gad, Almondiblathaim, mountains of Abarim before Nebo.

CHAPTER 34

THE BOARDERS OF THE PROMISED LAND

1) After the Lord had given them the order for the quick summary of the journey which denotes the journey to salvation, He gave a final Commandment not to leave idols in their midst. Then He specified the boarders of the promised land from all sides as it represents the shadow of heavenly blessings. Its greatness does not lie in its size but in the fact that it is the center of divine worship (Ps 76:1). The existence of boarders means that in spite of its size, no impurity can enter therein (Rev 21-27). The boarders were natural ones: the Mediterranean Sea to the west, the Dead Sea to the east and the wilderness of Sin southward.

2) He specified the heirs.

3) He appointed the dividers by name: Eleazar the high pries, Joshua the son of Nun the leader, and prfrom each tribe with Caleb at the forefront. These names reveal the nature of the Eternal kingdom which is the redeeming handwork of God, the result of God's granting our pleas through His Son. It also reveals the secret of his divine compassion accepting us in the holy Synod, the invisible Synod where each of us rejoices in his brothers' greatness [Shemuel (God has heard), Elidad (beloved of God), Bukki (who is tested by God), Hanniel (God is compassion), Kemuel (God's convention), Elizaphan (the Lord hid), Paltiel (the Lord saved), Ahihud (my brother is great) and Pedahel (the Lord redeems).

CHAPTER 35

THE LEVITIES' CITIES AND THE CITIES OF REFUGE

When the Lord had specified the boarders of the land and named the dividers, He showed concern for disinherited servants. He ordained that they live in certain cities. Part of these would be set aside as cities of refuge for those who had committed accidental slaying (manslaughter).

- 1) He decreed that forty eight cities be assigned to his servants, six of which would be refuge cities and 42 for his servants. The numeral 42 was formerly mentioned in (Num. 33). The Lord also specified certain grounds or suburbs round these cities to be a thousand of cubits symbolizing the heavenly nature because everything that had to do with the levities had to carry the signal of heaven.
- 2) Three cities were assigned east of Jordan and three west of it in Canaan because believers, whether of the Old or New Testament will always find shelter in the Lord (Ps 56:9,7) the Holy Trinity.
- 3) The Law of Refuge cities:
 - a) This ordinance is for the priesthood because the aim of their work is to carry humanity to the Lord as their refuge.
 - b) The accidental slayer would take shelter in the nearest city of refuge. Clear signs would show him the way to these cities (Deut 19-3). The ways to shelter represent the Holy Bible open for all. It leads the spirit to the Lord only to find His Hand outstretched to receive it.
 - c) The slayer would then plead his case in front of the elders. If they were convinced that the slaying was accidental then he would join them. It was prohibited to take revenge on him while he was abiding within the city. He was free to leave at the death of the high priest. The city symbolizes Jesus Christ who accepts the repentants in Him. He dies for them as the High Priest did, thus completely liberating them.
- 4) For fear that someone might think that the law of refuge lightly of murder, the Lord made clear the grave nature of the crime. The sentence for murder was death. However the guilt had to be proven beyond doubt by more than one witness. No ransom was acceptable for fear the rich would think they could get away with murder. Every slighting in punishing the murderer would defile the land.

CHAPTER 36

THE ORDINANCE (LAW) OF INHERITABILITY OF WOMEN

As the daughters of Zelophehad were granted the right to inherit their father's share (Num. 27), the elders from the tribe of Gilead son of Machir son of Manasseh approached Moses with a complaint. If the daughters of Zelophehad were married to men from other tribes, then their inheritance would be taken away. Moses answered asserting two principles.

- 1) The right of girls to choose their husbands, marriage being a matter of choice.
- 2) Their freedom of choice was restricted to men of their own tribe for the safe keeping of the tribe inheritance.

Finally the chapter was concluded with the following sentence.

"These are the Commandments and the ordinances which the Lord commanded by Moses to the people Israel in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Why was this book called "Numbers"? what role does it play among the Law Books?
2. Why did the Lord order the census to be carried out twice: at the outset of the journey (Num. 1) and at its end (Num. 26) whereas David was punished for doing the same thing (2 Sam 24 - 1 Chor 21)?
3. How was it stressed during the journey that the Lord was the real leader and that he was at the forefront and amongst them?
4. What was the idea behind specifying a certain tribe for divine service?
5. "The Lord is the Source of His people's sanctification" Explain.
6. Compare the "Nazarene" in the Old Testament and the consecration of the heart in the New Testament (Num. 6).
7. What is the idea behind the personal and collective offerings (Num. 7). Compare this with personal and general worship.
8. What is the connection between the consecration of the levities and the lightening of the golden candlesticks? (Num. 8)
9. What was the role of the silver trumpets in the life of the congregation? In your own life?
10. What are the main events in the journey from the wilderness of Sinai to Moab at the gates of Canaan? (Num. 10-12)?
11. How did the congregation pay the Lord's Goodness with complaints? (Num. 11).
12. Compare between the attitude of Mary towards Moses' wife Ethiopian and that of the Jews towards the Church; (the bride of Christ) (Num. 12).
13. Compare between the bunch of grapes that the two spies brought back and the crucified Christ (Num. 13).
14. The sick man loves his sickness and man yearns for the obsequiousness of enslavement. Explain (Num. 14).
15. Why was the punishment of breaking the Sabbath severe?

16. The priesthood is service and fatherly love, mention the cause of deviation that Korath, Dathan and Abiram committed (Num. 16).
17. Compare Aaron's rod with the pastoral rod (Num. 17).
18. What responsibilities do the clergy have? what are their rights (Num. 18)?
19. Write a summary of the red heifer ordinance and what it symbolizes?
20. What is the stricken rock that shall bring forth the water of life (Num. 20)?
21. Point out the events that bore the symbol of the Cross in the book of Numbers (Num. 21).
22. Was Balaam a prophet or a sorcerer? (Num. 22-25)
23. What was the topic of Balaam's five prophecies?
24. What were Balaam's transgressions?
25. What was Phinehas role in the deliverance of the people? (Num. 25).
26. Why do some people try to deny the existence of God? (Num. 25)
27. Compare the census in Numbers 1 and Num. 26.
28. Why were the daughters of Zelophehad praised? (Num. 27)
29. Distinguish between holy rejoicing and those of the world (Num. 28- 29).
30. The power of Christianity and its sweetness lies in its difficult commandments? what is the cause?
31. What was Moses last act? Why? (Num. 31)
32. Why did the tribes of Reuben, Gad and Manasseh choose the land of Gilead? What conditions did Moses put down? To what did this condition symbolize? (Num. 32)
33. Why were the levites and refuge cities decreed? (Num. 35)