

**Numbers 17****Key Verse:** v.8**Key Word:** "Choose"**X-Ref:** Acts 2:22-36; Hebrews 4:14-15

**Paraphrase:** God commands Moses to tell Israel to bring a staff for the head of each house, 12 staffs in all. They would deposit them all in the tent of meeting. God would show them who He chose to lead them as priest by causing one of the staffs to bud. God chose Aaron and made his staff bud.

**Examining the Text:**

- 1) Why was it necessary for God to command Moses to retrieve 12 staffs from the leaders of the houses? *Because of their grumbings – v.5.*
- 2) When God chose Aaron what happened to his staff? *It budded, blossomed, and bore ripe almonds – v.8.*
- 3) Compare God choosing Aaron as High Priest with God choosing Jesus as High Priest (Acts 2:22-36; Hebrews 4:14-15). *God's sign was new life through Aaron's dead staff. With Jesus, there were many signs but the ultimate sign was Christ's resurrection from the dead.*

**Numbers 18****Key Verse:** v.20, v.6**Key Word:** "given" v.6**X-Ref:** 1Corinthians 9:13; Matthew 10:10

**Paraphrase:** Details pertaining to the duties and privileges of the Levites.

**Examining the Text:**

- 1) According to verse 6, the Levites were what to the rest of Israel? *A gift given by God to them.*
- 2) Count the number of times the word "guard" is used in this chapter. Why is this duty mentioned so much? *"Guard" is used four times (vs.3, 4, 5, 7). This duty was important because anyone who came near to the holy things that didn't belong there had to be put to death. – v.7.*
- 3) The Levites were supported by the sacrifices and tithes of the other tribes. What was also different about their inheritance? *They would receive no land inheritance in the promised land. God was their portion – v.20.*

**Numbers 19****Key Verse:** v.11**Key Word:** "impurity", "unclean" v.10**X-Ref:** Hebrews 9:19

**Paraphrase:** The laws regarding purifying someone who touched a dead body.

**Examining the Text:**

- 1) What type of animal was burned for the waters of impurity – v.9? *A red heifer, without defect, no blemish, never had a yoke on it. – v.2.*
- 2) What other items are burned with the whole animal? *Cedarwood, hyssop, and scarlet yarn – v.6.*
- 3) How was the "water for impurity" made? *Ashes from the red heifer sacrifice were added to fresh water and put into a vessel. – v.17.*

**Numbers 20****Key Verse:** v.20**Key Word:** "quarreled" v.3**X-Ref:** Psalm 78:15; 1Corinthians 10:4; Amos 1:11; Obadiah 10, 12

**Paraphrase:** Moses strikes the rock and disobeys God. Edom refuses to let Israel pass through his land. Miriam and Aaron both die in this chapter.

**Examining the Text:**

- 1) Where are the children of Israel when Miriam dies? *The wilderness of Zin in Kadesh – v.1*
- 2) What did God tell Moses to do to solve the water shortage problem? *Take the staff, assemble the congregation, and speak to the rock – v.8.*
- 3) Examine Moses' words in verse 10. What conclusions might we draw? *Moses was frustrated with the people, and this led to him making a bad decision. Also, he said "shall WE," as if it was of their power that the water came from the rock.*
- 4) Who else was punished along with Moses when Moses struck the rock? *Aaron – v.24.*

**Numbers 21****Key Verse:** v.2, v.34

**Key Word:** “do not fear” v.34

**X-Ref:** John 3:14; 1Corinthians 10:9

**Paraphrase:** Israel complains and many die. Moses makes a bronze serpent. Israel defeats several kings.

**Examining the Text:**

- 1) What happened to Arad and the Canaanites after they took some Israelites captive? *They and their cities were devoted to destruction. V.3.*
- 2) What did God command Moses to make for the people to look upon if they were bitten by a serpent? *A bronze serpent on a pole – vs.8-9.*
- 3) What was the name of the city of the King of the Amorites? *Heshbon – v.26.*
- 4) What did God tell Moses concerning Og the King of Bashan? *Do not fear... I have given him into your hand. – v.34.*

**Numbers 22**

**Key Verse:** v.6, v.38

**Key Word:** “curse” v.6

**X-Ref:** 2Peter 2:15

**Paraphrase:** Balak tries to hire Balaam to curse Israel for him.

**Examining the Text:**

- 1) How did the people of Moab feel about Israel? *They dreaded and feared them – v.3*
- 2) If you have access to the internet, search “Balaam Deir Allah.” Record your findings. *“Balaam at Deir Allah. In 1967 a Dutch archaeological expedition led by H. J. Franken discovered some inscribed pieces of plaster at a site in Jordan known as Deir ‘Allah. The fragments are apparently written in Aramaic and date to about 850 B.C. They mention Balaam son of Beor, the same figure described as a “seer” in Numbers 22–24. Although the text is very fragmentary, with many breaks and uncertain words, it can be established that Balaam was a seer who received a divine message during the night and that his message was not what his neighbors expected to hear. Whether this text refers to the events described in the Bible is questionable, but it does establish a nonbiblical tradition current in the ninth century of a prophet named Balaam. It may be that Balaam’s notoriety was such that he remained an important prophetic figure for centuries and could thus be identified with the earlier Israelite narratives of the conquest. Numbers 22:4” – IVP Bible Background Commentary.*
- 3) Who spoke to Balaam and saved his life? *His donkey – vs.28ff.*
- 4) What did Balaam say to Balak about his unwillingness to come to him at first? *“Behold, I have come to you! Have I now any power of my own to speak anything? The word that God puts in my mouth, that must I speak.” Numbers 22:38*
- 5) Considering 2 Peter 2:15, we can conclude about Balaam? *Balaam typically did not have a problem accepting money to curse people.*

**Numbers 23**

**Key Verse:** v.8, v.19

**Key Word:** “bless”, “blessed” – v.25

**X-Ref:** Hebrews 6:18

**Paraphrase:** Balak seeks a curse from Balaam upon Israel but instead God blesses them twice.

**Examining the Text:**

- 1) What did Balaam do to prepare to speak to the Lord? *He offered sacrifices on 7 altars – v.1.*
- 2) Read verse 8 again. If Balaam had uttered a curse against Israel, would it have done anything? *No. God is the only one who can fulfill a curse or a blessing.*
- 3) After two failed attempts at cursing Israel, what did Balak plead with Balaam to do? *Don’t curse them or bless them. Then he asked him to try cursing them from a new location – vs.25-27.*