

Numbers 25 Bible Study Notes Part 2 of 2

10 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 11 Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, while he was zealous for my sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy. 12 Wherefore say, Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace: 13 And he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel.

Clarke Lee's Commentary: We note that the zealous action of Phinehas is the turning off of the anger of the Lord (the plague was staid).

We see that God rewards Phinehas for his quick action in doing the right thing by granting him and his posterity a great blessing, verses 12-13.

This is a reminder to us there is blessing from God, in doing that which is right and pleasing to God.

According to several different commentators and scriptures, you can trace and verify that this lineage promise was kept in the long haul. Though broken in spaces of time because of sinfulness it is finally accomplished and traceable until the incarnation of Christ.

Ultimately, it is a prophesy of the royal, and eternal, priesthood of Christ Jesus.

Adam Clarke's Commentary: Verse 12. - 13. My covenant of peace-of an everlasting priesthood] As the word peace implied all kinds of blessings, both spiritual and temporal, it may mean no more here than the promise of God, to grant him and his family the utmost prosperity in reference to both worlds. The everlasting priesthood refers properly to the priesthood of Christ which was shadowed out by the priesthood under the law; no matter in what family it was continued. Therefore the Mlwe tnhk kehunnath olam, or eternal priesthood, does not merely refer to any sacerdotal ministrations which should be continued in the family of Phinehas, during the Mosaic dispensation, but to that priesthood of Christ typified by that of Aaron and his successors. The priesthood alone is everlasting, and a covenant or grant of that was made to Phinehas, and his descendants. The Jews reckon twelve high priests of the race of Phinehas, from this time to the days of Solomon, nine more from that time to the captivity, (see 1Ch 6:4,15,) and fifteen from their return to the time of Antiochus Eupator, the last of whom was Onias, slain by Lysias. Ezra, the great priest and scribe, was of this line, Ezra 7:1,5. The family of Ithamar, uncle of Phinehas, had the priesthood for about 150 years; but it was restored to the family of Phinehas in the person of Zadok the priest, 1Ch 6:50, in which it continued in the whole about 950 years. Probably the Maccabees were of the same family; but though this is not certain, there is no evidence against it. See Calmet. God therefore sufficiently fulfilled his promise; he gave to him and his descendants almost the utmost temporal length that could be given of that priesthood which is, in its own nature, eternal. Here then the word Mlwe olam means, not a limited time, but what is eternal in its duration. See ACC for Ge 21:33.

14 Now the name of the Israelite that was slain, even that was slain with the Midianitish woman, was Zimri, the son of Salu, a prince of a chief house among the Simeonites. 15 And the name of the Midianitish woman that was slain was Cozbi, the daughter of Zur; he was head over a people, and of a chief house in Midian.

Clarke Lee's Commentary: The only reason I can find for the names of those individuals slain by Phinehas to be recorded is to show that Phinehas, as well as God, was not a respecter of persons. Both the man and woman were children of upper hierachal order in their respective places.

"Zimri, the son of Salu, a prince of a chief house among the Simeonites."

"Cozbi, the daughter of Zur; he was head over a people, and of a chief house in Midian." Zur was one of the officials named as being slain in: **Jos 13:21 And all the cities of the plain, and all the kingdom of**

Sihon king of the Amorites, which reigned in Heshbon, whom Moses smote with the princes of Midian, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, which were dukes of Sihon, dwelling in the country.

The lesson for us is to not regard any person's hierachal position in doing that which is right. In other words, don't pay favors to those who are considered large in men's eyes, but treat all of God's people equally.

16 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 17 Vex the Midianites, and smite them:

Clarke Lee's Commentary: We find where this happened in: ***Nu 31:1-3; 1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Avenge the children of Israel of the Midianites: afterward shalt thou be gathered unto thy people. 3 And Moses spake unto the people, saying, Arm some of yourselves unto the war, and let them go against the Midianites, and avenge the LORD of Midian.***

Notice, the avenging is for the Lord. This lends new meaning to the scripture: ***De 32:35 To me belongeth vengeance, and recompense; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.*** Also in: ***Ro 12:19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.***

As we consider these scriptures; we suddenly see, it is not about us but about the Lord. All people are to honor and obey God or suffer "His" vengeance. This surely puts us in our proper place of servant to "The Master."

18 For they vex you with their wiles, wherewith they have beguiled you in the matter of Peor, and in the matter of Cozbi, the daughter of a prince of Midian, their sister, which was slain in the day of the plague for Peor's sake.

Clarke Lee's Commentary: We point out again here in this verse the phrase "***and in the matter of Cozbi***". This gives us the indication that the plot to carry out Balaam's secret council to Balak was implemented through the daughters of the heads of the Midianites; Cozbi being the ring leader. We remember that Cozbi was with Zimri who was also of the chief heads of Israel. Thus we see; the "leadership of the tempter" consorting the "leadership of the tempted"; and the result is that others see the leaders indulging in fleshly pleasure. They then yield to temptation because of what the leadership is doing. Don't you reckon this is what Paul meant when he said: ***1Co 8:13 Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.*** The end result of this sin was the death of 24,000 which shows us that our actions have far reaching impacts in the lives of others and the care we need to use in living the Christian life.

As pointed out in Matthew Henry's Commentary; God established enmity between his people and those who would lead them astray. He rightly points out what happened in the Garden of Eden when sin became existent and God's judicial rebukes were given.

Ge 3:13-15 13 And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. 14 And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: 15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

We certainly see this being displayed here in the sin of Israel and God's rebuke of the Midianites.

A further thought in my mind while going through this chapter; we see that God executes judicial judgment on his people when they sin. God intervenes and exacts vengeance on those who are

in opposition to his own chosen people. God may let the ungodly nations of the earth have their own way; until his own people rebel against him, or until the ungodly rise up against God's people and misuse them. Then God begins to exact judicial judgment against the ungodly when they are wrongfully attacking God's people.

We see in this chapter that God is still using the intercessor, that he has given Israel, Moses. By the same token, we today have an intercessor that is in the throne room of God and interceding for us. What a wonderful blessing we are endowed with in Jesus Christ, Saviour and Lord. Praise the Lord! Hallelujah! Praise ye the Lord!

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