

Numbers Chapter 15 Commentary

1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

In the previous chapter; we left Israel having been smitten by the Amalekites and the Canaanites, because the Lord was not with them in their actions of disobedience. Now we see; the Lord is telling them what they are to do, when they do finally get into the Promised Land. They now have 40 years to teach their children (those 19 years of age and younger) what they are to do when they finally get make entrance into the Promised Land.

We are reminded of the scripture in: *Eph 6:4 "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."* Israel has set a bad example and the children (those 19 years of age and younger) may well be angry, because they are now going to have to spend 40 years wandering in the wilderness. This leads us to ask of ourselves; are we setting a good example for our children, and for those around us?

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land of your habitations, which I give unto you, 3 And will make an offering by fire unto the LORD, a burnt offering, or a sacrifice in performing a vow, or in a freewill offering, or in your solemn feasts, to make a sweet savour unto the LORD, of the herd, or of the flock:

We begin now; a repeat of the sacrificial offerings, and will not be going back over that, at this time. You will find the sacrificial offerings covered in our study in Leviticus. We will make some notes of additional information we see in this chapter.

Israel has the responsibility of teaching their children (those 19 years of age and younger), this is what you are to do when you get into the Promised Land. How do we know this? In the previous chapter God told Israel; all you, that are 20 years and older in age, are going to die in the wilderness and your children, those under 20 years of age, are the ones who will enter into the Promised Land, seen in: *Nu 14:29 "Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me, 30 Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I sware to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun. 31 But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised."*

- First point: The teaching of children is to begin at home with the parents. Parents are to teach their children about the Lord, and instruct them in how to conduct themselves in worship activities, as well as; instruct them in study of God's Word, the bible.
- Second Point: Organized religion (the church) is thus cited to teach, the teachings of the scripture, so those coming into the church have an understanding, of how they are to live in service and obedience to God, and especially the need to worship God.
- The teaching of the bible, by the church should be such that parents are well grounded in scripture, thus saith the Lord; that they, in turn, may correctly instruct their children.

4 Then shall he that offereth his offering unto the LORD bring a meat offering of a tenth deal of flour mingled with the fourth part of an hin of oil. 5 And the fourth part of an hin of wine for a drink offering shalt thou prepare with the burnt offering or sacrifice, for one lamb.

These verses have the proportions of the things to be offered with 1 lamb.

6 Or for a ram, thou shalt prepare for a meat offering two tenth deals of flour mingled with the third part of an hin of oil. 7 And for a drink offering thou shalt offer the third part of an hin of wine, for a sweet savour unto the LORD.

We note the different proportions of the things offered for 1 ram.

8 And when thou preparest a bullock for a burnt offering, or for a sacrifice in performing a vow, or peace offerings unto the LORD: 9 Then shall he bring with a bullock a meat offering of three tenth deals of flour mingled with half an hin of oil. 10 And thou shalt bring for a drink offering half an hin of wine, for an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

And in these verses the still different proportions for 1 bullock.

11 Thus shall it be done for one bullock, or for one ram, or for a lamb, or a kid. 12 According to the number that ye shall prepare, so shall ye do to every one according to their number.

Notice, the proportion, of the things to offer with each offering, is to be per offering, and is not lessened if you offer many sacrifices. This shows us that there is the same requirement for remission of every sin. For us, this is equal to; every sin, to be forgiven, requires the blood of Christ for the remission thereof.

13 All that are born of the country shall do these things after this manner, in offering an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD. 14 And if a stranger sojourn with you, or whosoever be among you in your generations, and will offer an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD; as ye do, so he shall do. 15 One ordinance shall be both for you of the congregation, and also for the stranger that sojourneth with you, an ordinance forever in your generations: as ye are, so shall the stranger be before the LORD. 16 One law and one manner shall be for you, and for the stranger that sojourneth with you.

In these verses; Israel is reminded that the strangers, who would dwell with them, are under the same requirements to worship God, as they themselves. This gives us the prophetic picture; under salvation by grace; there is the same requirement for everyone, as for the Jews, so for the Gentiles (Gentiles are anyone who is not an Israelite). There is the requirement, of the blood of Christ for the remission of sins, and all who enter into church fellowship are to agree to live as required by God.

This is how our nation was founded, all who seek citizenship in the USA are supposed to agree to, and uphold, all the laws and statutes of the nation. We see, in our nation, this is not being enforced; and it is bringing much confusion and unrest, just as it did when Israel listened to the strangers among them in the previous chapters.

It is an example for us; the church is not to compromise, on any of God's commandments, in accepting into its body new members. We are not to take up worldly, sinful, practices to gain more members in the church. We are to be a separate people just as Israel was commanded to be.

Example: God's word of truth teaches that gays, lesbians, whoremongers, adulterers, and such like, (purveyors of sexual sins) are not a part of the kingdom of God. Since God's word condemns the practice of such, the church should not have, in membership, any who are practicing such abominations before God. If one is converted and leaves that lifestyle behind, they can be accepted into the church, as long as they don't revert to their former sins.

This is just an example of one type of sin that some churches are accepting as okay that is condemned directly by scripture. The principle, taught by this example, is what we need to learn and its application to all who live ungodly. Founded upon scripture in:

- ***Ro 1:20-32; 20 "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: 21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, 23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. 24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: 25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. 26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: 27 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet. 28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; 29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, 30 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: 32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."***
- ***Re 21:27 "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."***

17 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 18 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land whither I bring you, 19 Then it shall be, that, when ye eat of the bread of the land, ye shall offer up an heave offering unto the LORD. 20 Ye shall offer up a cake of the first of your dough for an heave offering: as ye do the heave offering of the threshing floor, so shall ye heave it. 21 Of the first of your dough ye shall give unto the LORD an heave offering in your generations.

We see here; another example for us to follow today. God tells Israel; when you enter the Promised Land; you are to offer the firstfruit of everything to the Lord. Thus, they are brought to remembrance; everything they have is by the grace and gift of God. It should be so with us; when we enter into the church, which Christ has established. We should always be ready to acknowledge; everything we have is a blessing and gift from God, through Jesus Christ our Saviour, and manifested to us through the Holy Spirit. We are to never take any glory or honor to ourselves, but render all praise and glory to the name of the Lord.

22 And if ye have erred, and not observed all these commandments, which the LORD hath spoken unto Moses, 23 Even all that the LORD hath commanded you by the hand of Moses, from the day that the LORD commanded Moses, and henceforward among your generations; 24 Then it shall be, if ought be committed by ignorance without the knowledge of the congregation, that all the congregation shall offer one young bullock for a burnt offering, for a sweet savour unto the LORD, with his meat offering, and his drink offering, according to the manner, and one kid of the goats for a sin offering. 25 And the priest shall make an atonement for all the congregation of the children of Israel, and it shall be forgiven them; for it is ignorance: and they shall bring their offering, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LORD, and their sin offering before the LORD, for their ignorance: 26 And it shall be forgiven all the congregation of the children of Israel, and the stranger that sojourneth among them; seeing all the people were in ignorance.

We see that God made provision, knowing that Israel would mess up, for an offering of 1 bullock, for the nation Israel, if they sinned through ignorance. A picture of our sins, committed before the new birth (sins committed in ignorance), being forgiven by the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Also, the prophetic picture of the forgiveness of the sins, of all of God's people being remitted, through the sacrifice of one true Lamb and sacrifice for sin, Jesus the Christ.

27 And if any soul sin through ignorance, then he shall bring a she goat of the first year for a sin offering. 28 And the priest shall make an atonement for the soul that sinneth ignorantly, when he sinneth by ignorance before the LORD, to make an atonement for him; and it shall be forgiven him. 29 Ye shall have one law for him that sinneth through ignorance, both for him that is born among the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them.

We see; when an individual sinned through ignorance; there was the mandated offering of one she goat, compared to the sin offering of the nation in verse 24: ***"one young bullock for a burnt offering, for a sweet savour unto the LORD, with his meat offering, and his drink offering, according to the manner, and one kid of the goats for a sin offering."*** This was applicable to both Jew and Gentile. Remember; a Gentile is anyone who was not an Israelite.

30 But the soul that doeth ought presumptuously, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people. 31 Because he hath despised the word of the LORD, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him.

Now we see; there is a difference made between the sins of ignorance, and the sins committed, knowing they were sin before you did them. This is a prophetic picture of the end of time, and the general judgment, when the goats and sheep are separated, and the goats are cast into the lake of fire, and the sheep are brought into the fold of God, seen in: ***Mt 25:31-46; 31 "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: 33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.***

37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? 38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? 39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? 40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. 41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: 43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. 44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? 45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. 46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

This is why; we cannot continue in sin and be a part of the church of God. To continue in sin and claim to be a part of the church is blasphemous, and hypocritical, as seen in: **Ro 6:1-7; 1 "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? 3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: 6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. 7 For he that is dead is freed from sin."**

This is the reason that known sin, in church membership, is to be dealt with; that the whole body doesn't come into condemnation. God has plainly demonstrated this in the last few chapters, and his dealings with the rebellious, and the usurpers, through judicial wrath.

32 And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day. 33 And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation. 34 And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. 35 And the LORD said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him without the camp. 36 And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the LORD commanded Moses.

We see in this case; Israel had a situation, of which they did not know the penalty, for the crime committed. They did what we should do in the face of sin committed; they went to the Lord and inquired of God what should be done.

We see again; the penalty of known disobedience of God is death. All Israel had, previously, been instructed; do not do any servile work on the sabbath day. This is what Christ rescued us from, the penalty of death for sin.

Notice, in God's commandment for the judicial judgment of knowingly sinning, there are two parts to the sentence and the execution thereof. The presumptuous sinner shall be put to death is the sentence, and it is to be carried out by the entire congregation. God didn't leave it so that anyone could say; oh, he's my family so I will let him get by with a good scolding, or we have pity on this one so

we will just let it slip by unnoticed and unpunished. God didn't say this was a little sin; God named it for what it was; defiance to God and God's authority. This sets a pattern of how every born again sinner is to deal with all sin, individually, as well as the church body in its entirety.

As an aside note: Did you know that any sin, which is not done in ignorance, is a presumptuous sin? There are no excuses for presumptuous sinning. The born again sinner is given knowledge and understanding to know what is right and wrong. We understand, being born again, that it is no longer my will, but it is totally Thy (God's) will be done. This is why we have sins of commission (done knowing they are wrong before we do them) and sins of omission (things we know we should do and we don't do them). May God grant to us the meekness, like that given to Moses, to be faithful in our service to God Almighty, and not seeking to have our own way. Let us seek to glorify God and not ourselves.

37 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 38 Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband (ribbon) of blue: 39 And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the LORD, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring: 40 That ye may remember, and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God. 41 I am the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD your God.

We see in these verses; God gives them a commandment, to put on some defensive armor by; making fringes on their garments, and a ribbon of blue on the borders thereof, to remind them of God's commandments, and of the God they are serving in life. Since they don't go around naked, they are reminded every day who their God is, and how he has directed them to live every day. They would see this when they were dressing each day; and they were always reminded when they looked upon another, because it was an outward visible sign to them.

So it should be with us. We are under the same direction from God today, how? Let's look at a few New Testament scriptures, and see some of the outward signs of the armor of God we are to put on:

- **Mt 6:11 "Give us this day our daily bread."** Here we are instructed to daily prayers for the bread of life, so we must daily brought to remembrance of our God.
- **Lu 9:23 "And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."** Here we are commanded to take up our cross daily, and we therefore, like Israel, have no excuse for not remembering who our God is.
- **Ac 17:11 "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."** We see in this text that we should be in the bible daily, searching God's word of truth and seeking to find our Saviour testified of therein. Being armed thereby with the Word of Truth, empowered by the Holy Spirit, we can then rightly try the spirits, which we encounter daily in the trials of life, by the Spirit.
- **Heb 3:13 "But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."** In this text we see; we are to be in contact daily with those of like faith, to be a support to one another, in the walk of faith in life. This is one area in which I have failed miserably, in my life as a Christian, and as a pastor. May God forgive me mine error.

There are many other scriptures that support remembering God and Christ daily, but these give sufficient evidence, to us, of the subject under consideration here in Numbers. We have no excuse for not being reminded daily of our God and Saviour. Remember, everything around us in creation is reminding us of the Creator God; who hath declared in His word of Truth: ***Ps 19:1 "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork."*** When we look upward, and see the heavens above; we should be reminded that our God Almighty is the creator of all we see; and cause us to give glory and praise to His Holy Name. When we look on the earth around us; we should see that our God has made provision, for us to have a place to live and abide in time. When we look at creation, not man's creation, we should be reminded of our God; and the abundance of mercy and grace, that has made provision for us by the hand of God.

Ps 50:6 "And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God is judge himself. Selah." We are given here a thought to delve into; the heavens shall declare God's righteousness: Man has made many changes in the appearance of the firmament, the face of the earth, but he has not changed the heavens. Man has, in his own strength and industry, created enough smog to block out his view of the heavens. Thus, we see; man, in his own strength, can only blot out his view of God, and God's righteousness. When man gets so industrious, to blind themselves to reminders of God; they are indeed lost in self-will, and self-righteousness. However, if you move out from under the smog and haze created by man; you can again look upward and see the righteousness of God.

We can take this thought, make self-application, and see that we need to remember, every day, who our creator is. We don't need to get so caught up in living, that we forget through whom we have life. We don't want self-works, and self-will, to bring a veil of darkness between us and God.

We are reminded in this text that God is the Judge. The same principle demonstrated in our study here in Numbers. This teaches us; we are not to judge, in and of ourselves, but according to the written testimony we have set before us, God's word of truth, in accordance to God's will, not our own.

Ps 97:1-12; 1 "The LORD reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof. 2 Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. 3 A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about. 4 His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled. 5 The hills melted like wax at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. 6 The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory. 7 Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all ye gods. 8 Zion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of thy judgments, O LORD. 9 For thou, LORD, art high above all the earth: thou art exalted far above all gods. 10 Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked. 11 Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. 12 Rejoice in the LORD, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness." This chapter of Psalms easily explains the thought of our daily need to be reminded of God.

Have mercy upon us, oh God, in the name of thy beloved Son, our Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ, and grant to us the needed faith, to keep you fully in sight each and every day of our lives. We give you praise, and thanks, for that great blessing of eternal life, and for the salvation, you have provided for us through Christ Jesus. We pray for thy blessing, in the name of Jesus Christ and for his sake, Amen! Praise ye the Lord! Hallelujah! Praise ye the Lord. God ruleth and reigneth forever!