

# When God's People Rebel

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[ 0 : 00 ] Take out your Bibles with me, please, and turn to the book of Numbers, chapter 10. We are attempting to make sense of the Old Testament.

The Old Testament is huge. It is very foreign to most of us. We know some of the stories, but so much we're unfamiliar with.

And what we're attempting to do these weeks is to kind of hit the mountaintops of the drama. Give the eight acts that unfold the redemptive history we see in the Old Testament.

So we're not doing every book of the Old Testament. So you notice last week we didn't do Leviticus. And last week somebody said, oh, we're doing Leviticus next week? No, we're not doing Leviticus next week.

We're doing Numbers. Oh, then we go to Deuteronomy? No, we're not going to do Deuteronomy.

We're going to go on then to Joshua. Oh, then we do Judges? No, we're not going to do Judges.

[ 1 : 17 ] So we're just trying to hit the highlights. We're not going to hit every detail. We're not going to hit every scene of the Old Testament. But I want you to get the drift. What are the big themes?

What are the big pictures? And the one theme throughout all of the Old Testament, in fact, through the whole Bible, is man's ruin in sin, God's remedy in Christ.

Man keeps ruining things. God continues to remedy. Man's unfaithfulness, God's faithfulness, in spite of our unfaithfulness.

So we come to Numbers, and I don't know if it's displayed more starkly anywhere but here. They're on their journey to the Holy Land.

They're going from Sinai, Mount Sinai, where they have the Ten Commandments. They have all the stuff. They have the tabernacle. Now they're ready to go. Numbers is about that journey from Sinai to just outside the Promised Land, to the Jordan, in fact, opposite Jericho, where the story will pick up in the book of Joshua.

[ 2 : 32 ] So what happens? What happens? They're going to get it right. They're going to get it right this time, right? Okay, so I just want to read a few portions to give the opening of the story.

We're going to start in chapter 10, and then we'll do a little bit of reading in chapter 13 at the highlight or low light of the story. So chapter 10, Numbers, book of Numbers, chapter 10, I'm going to read from verse 11.

So if you're able and you'd like to stand while I read. Book of Numbers, chapter 10, verse 11. In the second year.

So this is from the exodus of Egypt. So it's already been, they're already in the second year since Egypt. Okay.

In the second year, in the second month, on the 20th day of the month, the cloud lifted from over the tabernacle of the testimony. And the people of Israel set out by stages from the wilderness of Sinai.

[ 3 : 36 ] And the cloud settled down in the wilderness of Paran. They set out for the first time at the command of the Lord by Moses. Down to verse 33, the end of the chapter.

So they set out from the mount of the Lord three days journey. And the ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them three days journey to seek out a resting place for them.

And the cloud of the Lord was over them by day whenever they set out from the camp. And whenever they sent, whenever the ark set out, Moses said, arise, O Lord, and let your enemies be scattered.

And let those who hate you flee before you. And when it rested, he said, return, O Lord, to the ten thousands, ten thousand thousands of Israel.

Now, skip the complaining in chapter 11. Skip the complaining in chapter 12. Come to chapter 13. Now, they're on the edge.

[ 4 : 45 ] Okay, they're on the very edge of the southern border of Israel. The Lord spoke to Moses saying, Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I'm giving to the people of Israel.

From each tribe of their fathers, you shall send a man, every one a chief among them. So Moses sent them from the wilderness of Paran, according to the command of the Lord.

All of the men who are heads of the people of Israel. And these were their names. I'm not going to read all the names. But verse 6, notice.

From the tribe of Judah, Caleb. Or in Hebrew, Caleb. Notice verse 8. From the tribe of Ephraim, Hosea, the son of Nun.

We know him by another name. Look at verse 16. These were the names of the men whom the Lord sent to spy out the land. And Moses called Hosea, the son of Nun, Joshua.

[ 5 : 54 ] Or in Hebrew, Yehoshua. Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan and said to them, Go up into the Negev, the south, and go up into the hill country and see what the land is and whether the people who dwell there dwell in it are strong or weak, whether they are few or many, whether the land there that they dwell in is good or bad, and whether the cities that they dwell in are camps or strongholds, and whether the land is rich or poor, and whether there are trees in it or not.

Be of good courage and bring some of the fruit of the land. Now the time was the season of the first ripe grapes. So they went and spied out the land from the wilderness of Zin, which is the very southern tip of the land, to Rehob, near Lebo Hamath, which is the very top of the land.

They went up into the Negev and came to Hebron. Ahimon, Sheshai, and Talmi, the descendants of Anak, were there.

Hebron was built seven years before Zohan in Egypt. And they came to the valley of Eshkol and cut down from there a branch with a single cluster of grapes.

And they carried on a pole between two of them. They also brought some pomegranates and figs. That place was called the valley of Eshkol because the cluster that the people of Israel cut down from there.

[ 7 : 26 ] At the end of 40 days, they returned from spying out the land and they came to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation of the people of Israel in the wilderness of Paran at Kadesh.

They brought back word to them and to all the congregation and showed them the fruit of the land. And they told them, We came to the land to which you sent us.

It flows with milk and honey and this is its fruit. However, the people who dwell in the land are strong.

And the cities are fortified and very large. And besides, we saw the descendants of Anak there. You know who those giants are.

And the Amalekites dwell in the land of the Negev. The Hittites and the Jebusites and the Amorites and the Cellulites and the Termites dwell in the hill country.

[ 8 : 26 ] And the Canaanites dwell by the sea and along the Jordan. So reads Introduction to the Book of Numbers. Let's pray. Father, guide us today.

Help us to see the flow of the story. We see a lot of complaining. We see a lot of rebellion in this story. We see judgment of the Lord to those who are unrepentant.

But we also see the continuing perseverance of your mercy, O Lord, with this stiff-necked people. Your patience.

Your forbearance. Your determination to love them. So help us as those who also complain, who also rebel, to remember your faithfulness and not harden our hearts, but to return to you.

O God, we pray in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated. Have you ever heard about the guy that wanted to take it all with him when he died?

[ 9 : 51 ] Before a man died, he made it clear to his wife he had just one dying wish, to be buried with all his money. The man said he had worked hard for his money and asked his wife that he be buried with it when his time came.

He told her, I want to take all of my money to the afterlife. That's when his wife came up with a brilliant plan. Eventually, the man died, and at his funeral, right before the undertakers closed the casket, his wife asked them to wait while she put one last thing into the casket.

She picked up a shoebox and set it inside. The undertakers then rolled the casket away. I hope you weren't crazy enough to put all that money in there with that stingy old man, the widow's friend said

to her.

Yes, I promised. I'm a good Christian and I can't lie, said the woman. I promised him that I was to put that I was to put the money in the casket with him.

You mean to tell me that you put every cent of his money in the casket with him? Her friend asked. I sure did, said the widow. I got it all together. I put it into my account and I wrote him a check.

[11:20] You can't take it with you, can you? You really can't. This is it in this world. This is it.

The afterlife depends on who your God is. You can't control your life after death.

The God of Israel made a huge promise to Abraham. He promised Abraham an eternal relationship.

He made a covenant, an eternal covenant to be his God and to know him. and he made a promise of a land that was not a temporary dwelling place but an everlasting possession.

The promises to Abraham were about eternal life, an eternal relationship and a land as an everlasting possession.

[12:38] Not simply a possession for a few hundred years. I think Abraham got that more than most people after him because the book of Hebrews says by faith he sojourned in the land.

He did not buy anything there except for a burial plot for Sarah. because he was looking for a greater reward.

He was looking for a city not made by man but by God. He was looking for the eternal promise.

What are we looking for?

So Numbers is the story of the journey from Mount Sinai. So in Egypt they leave Egypt excuse me in Exodus they leave Egypt right and they come all the way to Mount Sinai where they camp and God gives them the law and makes a covenant with them and they build a tabernacle.

So the book of Numbers is the story of their journey from Mount Sinai all the way up to the promised land except they go this way and then they go this way and they go this way and they go back down this way and then they go oh let's go the long way around to the mount to because they had to go around Edom good old Esau didn't want them to go through so they had to go around up to Jordan it's the story of the journey.

[14:12] So far we have seen this is now the third act of the drama right in act one in Genesis we saw the promises that God made to the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob there were three promises you will be a great nation I will give you an everlasting possession of the land and in your seed in the seed singular of Abraham there will be a descendant through whom God will bless all the families of the earth not just that nation but all the families of the earth it was a universal promise from the beginning that's Genesis Exodus picks up the story act two now they have grown from 70 people to 600,000 men ages 20 and up so estimate how big when you add the women and children into that million couple million three million who knows so the first part of the promise becoming a great nation is starting to come to fruition now they are multiplied so much that they are filling the land 70 to filling the land so on their way so what happens in Exodus well they are redeemed by the blood of the lamb they are redeemed from slavery by acts of judgment the ten plagues and the last plague being the killing of the firstborn by which

Israel was saved by killing a lamb and putting the blood over the doorpost so that the slayer would pass over them and with that they then rushed quickly out the door and out of Egypt well not real quickly they did plunder Egypt on the way out so the Lord saves them and we see three pictures in the book of Exodus we saw God redeeming them with acts of judgment we saw God making a covenant relationship with them at Sinai the ten commandments that was a covenant remember it was a covenant relationship if you obey me if you keep my covenant you will be my treasured possession you will be a holy nation and you will be a priesthood a kingdom of priests that's who you'll be if if you obey if you keep and then God showed them how he would dwell among them how does a holy God dwell among a rebellious people in a tent he's in them but separate from them and so he tabernacled among them the very same thing that Jesus was said of Jesus in John 1 he tabernacled among them though not separate this time he touched them so Jesus fulfills all of those pictures in Exodus the redemption by the blood of the lamb the covenant

Jesus made a new covenant relationship with us that's not conditional and he tabernacled among sinners not separating himself from them so now we come to act three in this drama they're on their way to the promised land but in the middle of the journey they rebel so there's rebellion in the wilderness in this story the theme of numbers could be described as God's people only advance by trusting him and they journey in this book of numbers through three stages they will first we see in the first ten chapters they are at Sinai they're getting prepared to go into the land they're getting a

census taken right how many are you then second stage after they leave Sinai they camp in the wilderness of Paran so chapters ten through twenty one are there in the wilderness on the very southern end of the promised land at a place called Kadesh and it's there that they send the spies in and the spies come back and the people say two tribes say let's go ten tribes say let's not they rebel they rebel and are then as a consequence to wander in the wilderness for forty years until that whole first generation dies out and then we'll try again with the new generation which is how numbers ends with a second census and a new generation of children that are prepared to go in to the promised land which picks up with the book of Joshua so three stages here numbers got Sinai then the wilderness of Kadesh right where they rebel and then the last ten chapter or sixteen chapters from twenty to thirty six they're now they're around they go around poised to enter the promised land again and they're in the plains of Moab and there

God shows mercy so three stages so it begins in chapters one to ten God prepares his people for the journey they're at Sinai and as I read they've been there for a while right they came out of Egypt it took them three months to get to Sinai they're at Sinai from the calendar date would be 3 10 1 because the date was considered from the time they left so three months out of Egypt until 2 20 what do we read second month 20th day second year so how long were they at Sinai from 301 to 202 11 months right and then 39 years after that right so they take the first so what we didn't read which

James read for us right last week all the names of the book right who are all the people how are they gonna so when they start marching who goes first right well Judah goes first of course because Judah is the tribe and then you have two other tribes with Judah going out and then you have two of the sons of Levi who carried the tabernacle they go forth after the first three tribes and then you have the next three tribes and then after the next three tribes you have another son of Levi the Kohath the Kohathites that's the special group those are the priests all the others are Levites the Kohathites are the priests that's Moses and Aaron's tribe or clan they carry so the other brothers carried the tabernacle right the tent the poles and all that they go ahead then the other ones carry what what's left all the holy things like the ark and the tables and the incense and all the holy articles so that whenever they get to the next place the tabernacle is already set up by the time these guys get there

[ 21 : 42 ] I mean God said this is how you do it so the tabernacle tabernacle tabernacle already be written so that that's the kind of stuff you get in the first ten chapters you get all their names you get all their numbers how the numbers add up James James added up all the numbers and then he read the next verse and said oh here's the total so he could confirm that that that happened so brothers studying hard love it so in those first ten chapters we have the providing of priests the census we have teaching about purity and then in chapters nine and ten we have God giving the presence he's with them in the cloud by day and in the fire by night so God is with them okay so stage two so stage one God prepares the people for the journey at Sinai stage two the people rebel and do not believe God at Kadesh now I want you to notice on your outline you'll see another one of these chiasms or key asms depending on how you want to pronounce it which is the inside of an

X right so the story unfolds with the certain themes certain themes gets to a high point and then and then the story tells the same themes in reverse order so notice under stage two there on your outline see the little half X there so they depart from the land chapter 10 you go to the bottom they arrive on the edge of the land chapter 21 there in chapter 11 we have complaints about hardship gee guess what on the other end of the story chapter 21 there's complaints about hardship then third we see in chapters 12 through 14 there's rebellion and unbelief we have rebellion from Miriam and Aaron who rebel against Moses and then we have the rebellion of the ten spies against the two spies and then and then you'll see on the coming out of the story chapter 20 there's a rebellion again and this time

Moses is involved he's not rebelling at first until he does or doesn't do what the Lord says to do and then we in the middle we have a revolt against Aaron's priesthood they have the other the other some of the other priests who aren't as special as Aaron want to be as special as Aaron and God deals with that by opening up the earth and swallowing them kind of Moses kind of talks about well you know if God did a normal plague you know like an earthquake or something but what if you just happened to open up the earth and take these people and the earth opens up and swallows them and then closes back up yeah like that yeah you did and then the heart of the story so they rebel against Aaron's priesthood you know why does Aaron get to be so special and so God says okay

take all the staffs take the 12 staffs of the 12 leaders of the tribes right we'll put them all in together and whichever tribe and we'll put them into the tent of meeting where God's tabernacle holiness dwells and whosoever staff blossoms buds comes to life that's the staff of the leader that I choose and of course it's

Aaron's staff buds almond blossoms and then God says let that be a sign for the rebels when you see every time you see Aaron with his staff and it's got a blossom on it don't rebel remember the earth thing you know the whole swallowing don't rebel follow the blossom no I won't go there okay so there's the story right it's unfolding like that there's complaints and complaints and rebellion and rebellion revolt and then ratification God chooses whom he chooses so let us look briefly at the rebellion I just want to highlight a couple of these nice events chapter 12 look at numbers chapter 12 we'll see what Miriam and Aaron do now they're the sister and brother of Moses right I think that Aaron is the oldest and then Moses and I don't know the birth order for Miriam she may have been older than all of them because she ended up dying before them so chapter 12 Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses why what's the problem now because of the Cushite woman whom he had married oh he married a Cushite woman he had married a Cushite woman that's that's not right right from Cush where's that northern Africa so what's wrong with that Gentile what's wrong with that I don't know but they got a problem I honestly don't know what the problem is but they got a problem okay I could kind of guess at what the problem is called prejudice and they said verse 2 has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses I thought they were going to bring up the

[ 27 : 22 ] Cushite woman well that was just the motive! Now they're going to has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses! Has he not spoken through us as well says Miriam and Aaron and the Lord heard it oops now the man Moses was very meek he wrote this right the man Moses was very meek more than all the people who were in the face of the earth okay and suddenly the Lord said to Moses and Aaron and Miriam come out you three to the tent of meeting and the three of them came out and the Lord came down in a pillar of cloud and stood at the entrance of the tent and called Aaron and Miriam and they both came forward and he said hear my words if there is a prophet among you I the Lord make myself known to him in a vision I speak with him in a dream not so with my servant Moses he is faithful in all my house and with him

I speak not in a dream or a vision but mouth to mouth clearly and not in riddles and he beholds the form of the Lord why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses good question and the anger the Lord was kindled against them and he departed when the cloud removed from over the tent behold Miriam was leprous like snow and Aaron turned toward Miriam and behold she was leprous and Aaron said to Moses oh my Lord do not punish us because we have done foolishly and have sin there's confession let her not be as one dead those whose flesh!

out of his mother's womb and Moses said to the Lord oh God please heal her please and the Lord said to Moses if her father had but spit in her face should she not be shamed seven days in other words Miriam kind of spit in my face says the Lord not kinda she disrespected me and if she just disrespected her father there would be a consequence let her be shut outside the camp seven days and after that she may be brought in again so Miriam was shut outside the camp seven days and the people did not set out on the march until Miriam was brought out again after that the people set out from Hazeroth and camped in the wilderness of Paran rebellion one judgment and mercy judgment and mercy chapter 13 we read the beginning of that pick it up in chapter 13 when God sends out the spies so let's pick it up at the report and they come back at the end of chapter 20 13 verse 25 at the end of 40 days they the 12 spies came from return from spying out the land and they came to Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the people of Israel in the wilderness of Paran at Kadesh they brought back to them and to all the congregation showed them the fruit of the land they told them we came to the land to which you sent us it does in fact flow with milk and honey and this is its fruit however however the people who dwell in the land are strong the cities are fortified and very large and besides we saw the citizens of Anak there they're reputed to be quite big and the Amalekite I do better if I read it fast because then you don't know that I miss said it dwell in the land of the Negeb which is Negeb means south the

Hittites the Jebusites and the Amorites dwell in the country and the Canaanites dwell by the sea along by the Jordan but so we got a bad report there then stands up Caleb Caleb why Caleb all of a sudden Caleb stands up interesting we'd expect Joshua right this is Caleb Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said let us go up at once and occupy it poor young guy he's just you know

excited doesn't know what he's saying does he let us go up at once and occupy it for we are well able to overcome it and the men who had gone up with him said we are not able to go up against the people they're stronger than we are so they brought to the people of Israel a bad report of the land that they had spied out saying the land through which we have gone to spy out it is a land that devours its inhabitants and all the people that we saw are of great height and we saw there the [ 32 : 27 ] Nephilim you know the sons of Anak who come from the Nephilim you know those really they make us look like grasshoppers chapter 14 where am I going 14 1 to 12 then all the congregation raised a loud cry and the people wept that night and all the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron and the whole congregation said to them would that we had died in the land of Egypt really or would that we had died in the wilderness oh why is the Lord bringing us into this land to fall by the sword our wives and our little ones will become a prey would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt they're thinking real clearly aren't they and they said to one another let us choose a leader and go back to Egypt rebellion mutiny then

Moses and Aaron fell on their faces how many how many leaders when they are challenged do this fall on their faces before all the assembly and the congregation of the people of Israel and Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jeff who were among those who had spied out the land tore their clothes and said to all the congregation of the people of Israel the land which we pass through to spy out is an exceedingly good land if the Lord delights in us he will bring us into this land and give it to us a land that flows with milk and honey only do not rebel against the Lord and do not fear the people of the land for they are bread for us their protection is removed from them and the Lord is with us do not fear them that all the congregation said to stone them to stone them this is not a timid rebellion stone them with stones but the glory of the Lord appeared at the tent of meeting to all the people of Israel and the Lord said to Moses how long how long will this people despise me and how long will they not believe in me in spite of all the signs that I have done among them I will strike them with pestilence and disinherit them and I will make you a nation greater and mightier than they sounds familiar right Moses comes down from the mountain

God says get out of the way let me consume them I'll start over with you here they are on the way to the promise land God says get out of the way let me strike them down I'll start over with you what are you going to do God's going to strike you dead what are you going to do well Moses what's Moses do the guy you know on his face Moses intercedes again he prays for them again he dialogues with the Lord about you know what do the people in Egypt say he talks about how it looks for the Lord not about how it looks for Moses how it looks for the Lord because that's what's most important how does it's about him interesting and so the Lord does pardon them come down to so 14 come down to verse 26 the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron saying how long shall this wicked congregation grumble against me

I have heard the grumbings of this people of Israel which they grumble against me grumble grumble grumble verse 28 say to them as I live declares the Lord what you have said in my hearing I will do your dead bodies will fall in the wilderness and all of your number listed in the census from 20 years old and upward who have grumbled against me not one shall come into the land where I swore that I would make you dwell with the exception of Caleb the son of Jeff and Joshua the son of Nun not Nun Nun it doesn't mean he didn't have any parents okay but your little ones who have said who you said would become a prey I will bring them in and they shall know the land that you have rejected as for you your dead body shall fall in the wilderness and your children shall be shepherds in the wilderness for 40 years and shall suffer for your faithlessness talk about your children you just they will suffer for your faithlessness until the last of your dead bodies lies in the wilderness according to the number of the days which you spied out the land 40 days a year for each day you shall bear your iniquity 40 years and you shall know my displeasure yeah

[ 38 : 11 ] I think so I the Lord have spoken surely this will I do to all this wicked congregation who have gathered together against me in this wilderness they shall come to a full end and there they shall die the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land who returned and made all the congregation grumble against him by bringing a bad report about the land the men who brought up a bad report of the land died by plague before the Lord of those who went to spy out the land only Joshua and Caleb remained alive judgment to the unrepentant and mercy to the rest so this rebellion story we wouldn't do that right?

I mean if we were there we would have been on the you know with Josh and Caleb right? Yeah let's go get them I don't care if they're giants I don't care if they're huge I don't care if the cities are

fortified I mean we're trained in war right?

we got pitchforks and shovels you understand of course why the tin said no they looked at it with eyes of earth and said no it's like it's like sixth graders playing the NBA right?

it's like Steph Curry trying to go against Joel and Bede okay I was just watching that last night anyway I mean he's huge like this and the commentator even said David and Goliath well we'll know about a David and Goliath story later right?

so what about us? do we do that? does the Lord promise us things and then we don't believe it?

[ 40 : 46 ] so here's how the book of Hebrews talks about it refers back to this and applies it to us as believers writer of Hebrews in chapter 3 verse 12 says take care brothers lest there be in any of you an evil unbelieving heart in other words it's possible for a Christian a brother to have an evil unbelieving heart leading you to fall away from the living God so what's the answer?

exhort one another exhort one another every day as long as it is called today that you may not that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin for we have come to share in Christ if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end as it is said now he's going to quote from Psalm 95 which is also referring to this event in Numbers today if you hear his voice do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion speaking of Numbers 14 interesting interesting didn't call it the land he called it his rest his sabbath they would not enter his rest but to those who were disobedient so we see they were unable to enter because of unbelief it is a warning to christians to every one of us take care lest we have unbelief in our heart lest we become hardened it's a process lest we become hardened by the deceitfulness of sin so we become deceived by sin we look to the enticements of sin we look for a quicker way out we look for a quicker recovery a quicker rest a quicker whatever right and we want the broad road not the narrow road the road less traveled and in fact we're people who are going back to our slavery right we're going back to

Egypt we're going back to wasn't it better then I mean we had leeks and onions at least in Egypt we had free food right you call it free and then he said how do we remedy that well we take care but we also exhort one another here again it shows us the absolute necessity we as believers need our assembly together we need to meet together we need to be with other Christians we need each other we need to exhort one another because we each have our own weaknesses and we each have our own strengths and we each have ability to comfort and strengthen and encourage one another how you doing hang in there a little bit more than hang in there right how do I hang in there right here hang on this one who hung in there right we encourage each other to do that how you doing are you encouraged are you discouraged are you struggling so I would encourage us to ask more than just how you do it and ask how you really doing you doing alright how's your faith and let us when we're asked that be honest remember first John right we walk in the light together we get cleansed because we're open with one another

I may not share that with you right now but say hey let's have a cup of coffee now how much time do you got exhort one another exhort one another encourage check on each other's heart how you do are you trusting God's promise how you doing I'm having a hard time trusting right now so God prepares them at Sinai God the people rebel at Kadesh in the last several chapters we have chapter 20 through 36 even though the people rebel God perseveres with them in mercy so I want to just highlight two more scenes quickly before we come to the end here how we doing is it 430 yet last week we went to 430 apparently I notice it's a different clock up here is this one working okay did you check before service to make sure it was working did you put it forward so okay oh that way he'll think it's 12 and it's all right

I'm not hearing grumbling am I if I am I gotta fall on my face right all right no I know you're teasing so look at chapter 20 couple more grumbles these are interesting though one involves Moses in chapter 20 and one in chapter 21 is a very strange incident so chapter 20 verse 1 the people of Israel the whole congregation came into the wilderness of Zin in the first month and the people stayed at Kadesh and Miriam died there and was buried there so they're right on the edge right at the southern point of the promised land now there was no water for the congregation and they assembled themselves together against Moses and against Aaron and the people quarreled with Moses and said would that we had perished when our brothers perished before the

[ 47 : 24 ] Lord why have you brought the assembly of the Lord into this wilderness that we should die here both we and our cattle and we have so you know not only is there no water for the people there's no water for the livestock remember they brought great herds so it's a big problem verse 5 why have you made us come up out of Egypt you made us come up out of Egypt and bring us to

this evil place there's a lot of blaming isn't there just like Adam and Eve no it's the woman no it's the serpent it is no place for grain or figs or vines or pomegranates and there's no water to drink so then Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the entrance of the tent of meeting and fell on their faces there they are again falling on their faces at the entrance of the tent before the Lord and the glory of the Lord appeared to them and the Lord spoke to Moses saying take the staff and assemble the congregation you and Aaron your brother and tell the rock speak to the rock before their eyes to yield its water so you shall bring water out of the rock for them and give drink to the congregation and their cattle and Moses took the staff before the Lord as he commanded him then

Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly before the rock the rock and he said to them this is a little ad lib because Lord didn't tell him to say this so okay he said to them here now you rebels shall we bring water for you out of this rock wait a minute we who's bringing water shall we bring water you rebels now did he say it like that I think so I think there's a big attitude issue going on right here okay chapter 20 verse 11 what did the Lord say to Moses speak speak to the rock so verse 10 and Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock with his staff not once but twice and and water came out abundantly and the congregation drank and their lives up so God was still merciful

God was still merciful don't miss that part so okay now he's got to face the Lord okay that moment of okay okay I gotta go talk to the Lord and the Lord said to Moses and Aaron because what because you struck the rock instead of talk to the rock no that's not what the Lord says watch what he says because you did not believe in me to to believe in you how to uphold me as holy in the eyes of the people of Israel therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them judgment one act so is is hitting the rock that much different than speaking to the rock

I mean is that the big deal what's the big deal glorification of God he's still doing what the Lord said didn't he well well but the first time back in Exodus when he hit the rock he was told to hit the rock remember strike the rock and the rock has been struck once you don't re-strike the rock he only needed to be struck once now we speak to the rock by the way who's the rock 1st Corinthians 10 4 Paul said the rock is Jesus Jesus was there in the wilderness he's the rock he's the one supplying abundant water right don't strike don't strike Jesus again speak to him he's already been struck now he provides abundant water for you and I found it interesting that by doing this

Moses one did not believe in God to just speak to the rock but the Lord said you did not believe in me to uphold me as holy before their eyes so the implication is what somebody brought out in the class earlier is how would before their eyes be not upheld unless the people heard what the Lord said to Moses because remember he's not in the tent with the Lord he's outside the tent so he's in public and maybe they're hearing the voice of the Lord saying speak to the rock oh he's going to speak to the rock and then he strikes the rock and they go he wasn't supposed to do it that way but faith in the Lord upholds him as holy to uphold the

[ 53 : 17 ] Lord is holy before the eyes of others it's the same thing we pray in our daily prayer the first thing we pray hallowed be thy name cause thy name to be holy cause thy name to be hallowed cause thy name to be sacred and sanctified set apart in my heart my mind and my soul in whatever I do today whatever happens today cause right so so that is his mind oh shall we bring the water out what happened to the Lord bringing the water right how do we how we do things matter to the Lord well it's close enough God still blessed it yeah God's still gracious but with that one act Moses didn't the

Lord say back in chapter 12 to Miriam and Aaron Moses is faithful he is my faithful servant and one time one time one time and who can blame him those people you bunch of rebels and just and he's out not out for good he just doesn't get the blessing of going into the promised now God's going to show him from the top of the mountain see see can you see it it's over there see it can you see heaven I showed it to you in revelation you see what it looked like!

well kind of yeah it's really bright and shiny really shiny okay the other incident I want you to see is in chapter 21 and this is a strange one so 21 4 from Mount Hor they sent out by the way to the Red Sea to go around the land of Edom right so they're getting closer to the land they're on the way to Jericho but they have to go the long way okay instead of just going straight up God takes them back south down and then they gotta go oh eat them eat them Esau won't let them go through Esau still carrying a grudge okay against Jacob right so Jacob no you go around I'm not letting you through so they gotta go all the way around okay so so so understandably longer route the people became impatient on the way and the people spoke against God and Moses and against Moses why have

you brought us out of Egypt to die in the wilderness boy same song second verse third you know for there's no water no food and we loathe this worthless food so the Lord judged the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people so that many people of Israel died and the people came to Moses and said we have sinned oh confession okay not hardness of heart but confession we have sinned for we have spoken against the Lord against you pray to the Lord that he may take away the serpents from us so there's genuine repentance there right okay we see we've done wrong okay make it right we confess pray for us Moses so Moses prayed for the people and the Lord said to Moses okay here's the strange part the Lord said to Moses make a fiery!

serpent and set it on a pole and everyone who is! when he sees it shall live so Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole and if a serpent bit anyone he would look at the bronze serpent and live serpent and live okay that's weird isn't it aren't they not supposed to make images he forms a bronze serpent serpent isn't that the Genesis 3 serpent thing what's going on you know he bites so make an image and put it on a pole lift it up on a pole put the image of the curse put the image of the punishment put the image of the judgment on the pole right put the image of the plague on the pole and when the people look at that they will live instead of die what's going on well we get a big clue in

[ 58 : 08 ] John chapter 3 when Jesus is speaking to Nick at night right a lot of things got revealed in that little you know about being born again and then he said in John 3 14 he says as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness as Moses lifted up on a pole that image of the serpent in the wilderness so must the son of man be lifted up that whoever believes in him whoever looks at him whoever looks and believes upon him who's also on what who's also on a symbol of judgment who's also bearing a curse who's also being punished for sin just like you look at the serpent so look at Christ who is bearing our punishment for us bearing our curse for us bearing our iniquity for us whoever believes in him may have eternal life he'll live for

God so loved the world that he gave his only son that whoever believes in him should not perish not die like in the wilderness not but shall have eternal life not just life not just live for now but live eternally for God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world he didn't come to condemn he doesn't send us to condemn either right but in order that the world might be saved lifted up on a cross bearing a curse bearing judgment and all who look on the crucified Christ will live with faith there's a promise of Christ by picture salvation by judgment God saves through judgment all through the Old Testament doesn't he he saved Noah through the flood he saved Lot through Sodom and Gomorrah he saved Israel right through the plagues of judgment against Egypt he saves through judgment it all points forward to the great salvation by a judgment God's holy wrath descended on one who bears our blame carries our iniquity there's gospel did you know there's gospel in numbers didn't you know the gospel is in numbers no all right the book of numbers it's the same story that God promises the land of rest but the people do not believe so let me turn it on you how about you are you a believer do you believe and trust what God has promised for you do you believe that he is always with you that he will never forsake you do you believe that everything that you have gone through is for good even the hard horrible stuff you go through do you believe he has promised it is for good that you are being conformed to the image of his son so likewise you will go through hardship like the son did do you believe do you believe that he will bring you into rest do you believe as Jesus said come to me all who are weary and heavy laden I will give you rest did he mean a nap I'll give you time for a nap no he didn't mean that I'll give you rest for your what your soul your soul that's the deep agitated right that's the part of you that yearns yearns thirst are you on a journey with God yeah life's a journey right and his journeys bring us from Mount Sinai to wildernesses to Kadesh to the wilderness of Zin to the edge of the promised land where God promises to us as he did to Abraham an eternal relationship and an eternal place of rest and you get to ding and you get to must be lunchtime and you get to start experiencing that now right eternal life is now

I know him now and as Jesus promised I get rest now I don't have to wait for the Sabbath I can have it today today today today if you hear his voice enter into his rest do not harden your heart do not think I know better I know better no it's better back there why'd the Lord bring me here here's a hundred applications here I hope you see that and I hope as you think through it you see those applications for your journey let's pray father we thank you for your word we thank you that your gospel is in genesis and exodus levticus numbers deuteronomy we thank you that your gospel is

there because sin is all over the place and sinners need you to rescue them but the only sinners who get rescued are the ones that see their sin and confess their sin and humble themselves before you and pray and seek you and recognize your tremendous mercy and grace and faithfulness and that you're you're so willing to forgive not just our failures but our rebellions and our twisted stuff oh god you are our god help us to see  
[ 65 : 12 ] Jesus as our rock and to hang on to him we pray in Christ's name amen amen to Thank you.