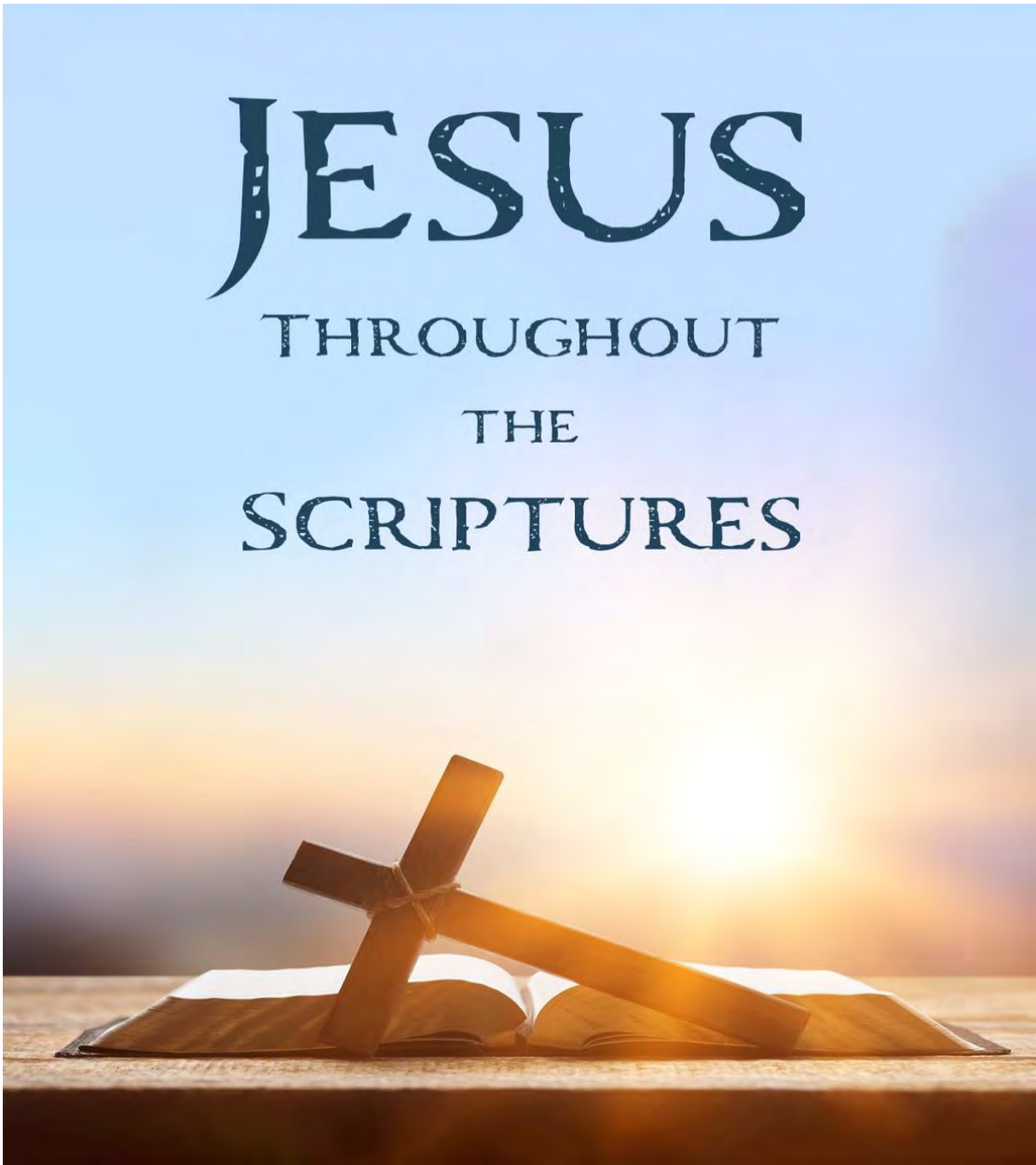


# JESUS

THROUGHOUT  
THE  
SCRIPTURES



Part 3: Leviticus, Numbers

T. M. and Susie Moore

*A Scriptorium Study from The Fellowship of Ailbe*

Jesus throughout the Scriptures  
Part 3: Leviticus, Numbers  
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## Jesus throughout the Scriptures: Leviticus, Numbers—Introduction

The sacrificial system and priesthood, launched and established in the book of Leviticus, testifies of God's sense that His people were going to have to work hard to stay in fellowship with Him. So many kinds of offerings and sacrifices and holy days would have served both to heighten Israel's sense of sin and to remind them of the greatness, holiness, and awesomeness of God.

And all this pointed to Israel's need for a Savior.

Numbers begins the process of moving God's people into the land of promise. Well, almost. The first attempt was a disaster, and the second one lasted 38 years! God shows Himself to be the shepherd of His people and the One Who provides for them according to His Word.

In these two books are many types of Jesus—events of situations or things which, while valid, true, and meaningful in their own time, have a larger purpose—to point forward to the coming of Jesus.

We are pleased to offer this resource at no charge to readers, but we encourage to pray and seek the Lord whether He might have you join in supporting the work of The Fellowship of Ailbe. You can use the contribute button at our website to give online, or you may send a check to The Fellowship of Ailbe, P. O. Box 8213, Essex, VT 05451.

We hope you find these studies helpful so that you grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to increase in love for God and your neighbors.

T. M. Moore  
Principal

## 1 Savor of Salt

*Pray Psalm 84.1-4.*

How lovely *is* Your tabernacle,  
O LORD of hosts!  
My soul longs, yes, even faints  
For the courts of the LORD;  
My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.  
Even the sparrow has found a home,  
And the swallow a nest for herself,  
Where she may lay her young—  
Even Your altars, O LORD of hosts,  
My King and my God.  
Blessed *are* those who dwell in Your house;  
They will still be praising You.  
*Selah*

*Sing Psalm 84.1-4.*

(Holy Manna: *Brethren, We Have Met to Worship*)  
LORD of hosts, how sweet Your dwelling; how my soul longs for Your courts!  
Let my soul with joy keep telling of Your grace forevermore.  
Like a bird upon the altar, let my life to You belong.  
Blessed are they who never falter as they praise Your grace with song!

*Read Leviticus 1.1-2.13; meditate on Leviticus 2.13.*

*Preparation*

1. What were the people to do for every offering?
2. Of what did this remind them?

*Meditation*

Our reply to reading through the book of Leviticus is perhaps something like, “So many sacrifices and offerings!” If we become impatient or exasperated *reading* this book, imagine how weighed down the people of Israel must have felt to *carry out the teaching* of Leviticus! Indeed, so many sacrifices and offerings. Why?

To remind the people that their sins were many, a fact they too easily lost sight of, as we see in every book of the Old Testament (*caveat lector*). No one could keep all these offerings. To do so would be literally all one ever did! God understood this, and so the annual atonement offering covered the many sins not offered for in the preceding year. Where Israel’s sin was concerned, God had them covered.

But the focus here is on one word: salt. The offerings of the people were not savory to God. He needed salt. The salt reminded the people of the covenant God made with Abraham and extended through Moses on Mt. Sinai. It was a gracious covenant, brimming with exceedingly great and precious promises, and God insisted that His people remember that, not their sacrifices and offerings but His grace and promises were the means for their having favor before Him. Their offerings represented their lives, which they were to give freely according to God’s Word and for His promises and glory.

Jesus is the salt of the covenant. He makes our lives acceptable to God as we offer them to Him in faith. In all we do, we seek the grace of the Lord to realize the promises of God in Jesus, for the praise and glory and

honor of God unto our peace and joy.

*Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

Lot and his wife lived in one of two exceptionally ungodly cities. God decided to judge these cities for their wickedness; but Abraham pled with Him to save his relatives from the destruction. So, God did. But as Lot and his wife were fleeing from the impending doom the angels said to them: “Escape for your life! Do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be destroyed...Hurry, escape...Then the LORD rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the LORD out of the heavens. So He overthrew those cities...” (Gen. 19.17, 22, 24, 25).

But there was one glitch in this drama. Lot’s wife looked back. Did she think she’d forgotten to turn off the stove? Or did she long for the life she was leaving behind? Was she just curious to see the mayhem? Who knows for sure? What we do know is that she disobeyed. And she paid a steep price. The Bible says, “But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt” (Gen. 19.26).

God could have turned her into anything He wanted; but He chose salt. God never does anything whimsically or for no purpose. He is always doing things to remind His people of a Truth. No words or actions wasted with Him. Salt is a recurring theme. Thus, we are to remember all the good and the bad things about this product.

Salt is a grand preserver and flavor enhancer; and in Mrs. Lot’s case, it was a sincere preserver. Who could ever forget her story? Certainly not God’s children back then. Even we, this far removed, give her dire consequence a remembrance.

Jesus taught the same to a multitude that was following Him: “Whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple. Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, but men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!” (Lk. 14.33-35). Don’t look back. Forsake what you’ve left behind and follow Me! “No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God” (Lk. 9.62).

And why is this important? Why should this salt issue be one that we remember? Because we want to be savory to God. Jesus says to us, “You are the salt of the earth...” (Matt. 5.13).

And because we long to be a sweet aroma to God, presenting ourselves as “a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to [Him] which is [our] reasonable service” (Rom. 12.1).

“The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but the prayer of the upright is His delight. The way of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but He loves him who follows righteousness” (Prov. 15.8, 9). We are to be His love and give Him delight through “salty” prayer and obedience.

But most of all it is important because, as Paul taught, we are to:  
“...be imitators of God as dear children.

And walk in love,  
as Christ also has loved us  
and given Himself for us,  
an offering and  
a sacrifice to God  
for a sweet-smelling aroma” (Eph. 5.1, 2).

He is The Savior of Salt.  
He is the Offering and Sacrifice.  
He is the Savior we love and long to be like.

He is the Savior so we can be salt—  
preferably not in pillar form—but free-flowing and sweetly aromatic.

*Reflection*

1. How is God using you as salt in your Personal Mission Field?
2. What can we learn from Jesus about what it means to be the salt of the earth?
3. Whom will you encourage today in being salty to their world?

*Blessed be God that we have the substance, of which these observances were but shadows. There is that excellence in Christ, and in his work as Mediator, which no types and shadows can fully represent. And our dependence thereon must be so entire, that we must never lose sight of it in any thing we do, if we would be accepted of God. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), Commentary on Leviticus 2.13*

*Pray Psalm 84.5-12.*

What's ahead of you today in your journey with the Lord? Commit all your work to Him. Call on Him to light your path and shield your way. Pray for those you will be with today. Devote yourself as a living sacrifice to the Lord in all your ways.

*Sing Psalm 84.5-12.*

*(Holy Manna: Brethren, We Have Met to Worship)*

Blessed are they whose strength is founded in Your strength, O LORD above.  
All whose hearts in You are grounded journey in Your strength and love.  
Though they weep with tears of sadness, grace shall all their way sustain.  
In Your Presence, filled with gladness, they shall conquer all their pain.

LORD of hosts, my prayer receiving, hear me, help me by Your grace!  
In Your courts I stand believing; turn to me Your glorious face!  
LORD, our sun, our shield, our glory, no good thing will You deny  
to those who proclaim Your story, and who on Your grace rely.

## 2 So Many Offerings!

*Pray Psalm 141.1, 2.*

LORD, I cry out to You;

Make haste to me!

Give ear to my voice when I cry out to You.

Let my prayer be set before You *as* incense,

The lifting up of my hands *as* the evening sacrifice.

*Sing Psalm 141.1, 2.*

(Truro: *Shout, for the Blessed Jesus Reigns*)

O LORD, we call to You in prayer! To us come quickly; hear our cry!

Receive our prayer as incense sweet, our lifted hands as a sacrifice!

*Read and meditate on Leviticus 7.37, 38.*

*Preparation*

1. How many different offerings were required?

2. Who required them?

*Meditation*

Let's imagine a man of Israel who has just come to the place where he is old enough to offer his own sacrifices to the Lord. All the sacrifices. Burnt offerings, grain offerings, sin offerings, trespass offerings, consecration offerings, and peace offerings. Let's imagine that, over the years of his life, he is faithful in keeping every one of these, whenever they are due, in just the right form and substance. Over the course of a lifetime that would amount to a small pond of oil, a considerable mound of grain, a rivulet of blood, and a sizeable heap of dead animals.

Now let's imagine every Israelite doing the same faithfully all their years, for all the years of the Old Testament up to the coming of Jesus Christ. As John might say, I don't think the world could contain the whole of all those sacrifices! So many sacrifices! Why?

Because the sins of God's people were so great, greater than could ever be tallied, just as are our own sins.

And yet that planet-overflowing mountain of sacrifices, all that blood and grain and oil and whatnot, would not have been able to *remove* the sin of even one human being (Heb. 10.1-3). And this is a measure of the infinite greatness of the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. The entire sacrificial system of Israel collapsed into a memory as Jesus died on the cross (Heb. 10.8-10), for He alone, by His sacrifice, is able to take away the sins of the world, not just cover them over for a while (cf. Jn. 1.29).

All the sacrifices of the Old Testament point to Jesus. For Israel could not keep them all, nor did they even desire to do so. God would have to keep the covenant sacrifices for them, as we recall from Genesis 15, and He would do so not with temporal things but with His eternal Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

*Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

“What can wash away my sins? Nothing but the blood of Jesus;

What can make me whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

O! precious is the flow that makes me white as snow;

No other fount I know, Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

For my pardon this I see—Nothing but the blood of Jesus;  
For my cleansing, this my plea—Nothing but the blood of Jesus.  
O! precious is the flow that makes me white as snow;  
No other fount I know, Nothing but the blood of Jesus.”  
(Robert Lowry, 1876)

“But we are all like an unclean thing,  
And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags;  
We all fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind have taken us away” (Is. 64.6).

When that is the best we can do, even with the burnt, grain, sin, trespass and peace offerings, and the consecrations, we can only surmise that we need a Savior. And that Jesus Christ is the only Savior there is. We need Him and the cleansing blood that He willingly came to shed for us. We cannot cleanse ourselves. It is not possible. So, when we read of all those offerings, we knowingly say, “There He is!”

Just as John the Baptist said, “Behold, the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world!” (Jn. 1.29)

“But we see Jesus,  
Who was made a little lower than the angels,  
for the suffering of death  
crowned with glory and honor,  
that He, by the grace of God,  
might taste death for everyone” (Heb. 2.9).

Jesus—The Quintessential Offering.

*Reflection*

1. Why can we rest and rejoice in the sacrifice of Jesus?
2. Why do you think it was so hard for the people of Israel in Jesus’ day to see Him as the Lamb of God?
3. Why do you think so many people today have not been willing to accept Jesus’ sacrifice for their sins?

*A summary listing of the offerings of chs. 1–7, with the reminder that these sacrifices were prescribed by God Himself on Mt. Sinai. What God commanded He made possible, by giving careful instruction (the law of the ... offering) regarding the proper way to bring the offerings before Him. God does not leave His people to wonder how they may approach Him and please Him. All these offerings foreshadow, in one way or another, the perfect sacrifice of Christ upon Calvary. Earl Radmacher (1933-2014), NKJV Study Bible Note on Leviticus 7.37, 38*

*Pray Psalm 141.3-10.*

Pray that God will cleanse your heart, protect you from all evil, and help you to keep the eyes of your heart focused on Jesus, exalted in glory (Col. 3.1-3) throughout the day.

*Sing Psalm 141.3-10.*

*(Truro: Shout, for the Blessed Jesus Reigns)*

LORD, set a guard upon my mouth; let not my heart to evil bend,  
nor let me work iniquity in company with wicked men.

LORD, let a righteous man rebuke—a kindness this shall surely be.  
Like healing oil upon my head, Your sweet rebuke shall be to me.



When to the judgment wicked men by God are cast, our words shall tell:  
Like broken sod or fresh plowed ground, so shall their bones be cast to hell!

We lift our eyes to You, O LORD, and refuge seek; LORD, save our soul!  
From every trap and snare redeem; deliver us and make us whole.

### 3 The Glory of Jesus in the Priesthood

*Pray Psalm 32.1, 2.*

Blessed is *he whose* transgression is forgiven,  
*Whose sin is* covered.

Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity,  
And in whose spirit *there is* no deceit.

*Sing Psalm 32.1, 2.*

(Hendon: [\*Take My Life and Let It Be\*](#))

Blessed are they whose sins the LORD has forgiven by His Word!  
Pure their spirits are within; them He charges with no sin;  
them He charges with no sin!

*Read Leviticus 9.5-24; meditate on verses 22-24*

*Preparation*

1. What would happen when the atonement offering had been made?
2. When did this happen?

*Meditation*

Here, the people experienced the glory of God, which was attached to an offering for atonement and the work of the high priest. When Aaron offered the sacrifice precisely according to the Word of God, and after he (with Moses) entered into the dwelling place of the Lord, and came out with a blessing for the people, then “the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people” and consumed their offering.

“When all the people saw *it*, they shouted and fell on their faces.”

Does this really need explaining? Jesus is both our atoning sacrifice and our great High Priest. His blood has cleansed all who believe in Him, and He lives continually to intercede for His people (Heb. 7.23-25). Through Him, we can know the glory of the Lord because we have access through Jesus, our great High Priest, into the eternal dwelling place of God. God shows us His glory through creation, Scripture, and especially through Jesus (Jn. 1.14).

The proper response to this is worship—fearing and loving God and rejoicing to be in His Presence. Through Jesus, our High Priest, we offer ourselves as a living sacrifice day by day (Rom. 12.1, 2).

And unlike the Aaronic high priests, our High Priest made only one sacrifice, once for all, and by it unleashed the fire of His Spirit and the glory of the Lord upon His people forever.

*Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

“Then Moses said, “This is the thing which the LORD commanded you to do, and the glory of the LORD will appear to you” (Lev. 9.6). Obey, then you’ll see.

Before Moses attempted the work of bringing the people out of Egypt, when he was questioning the feasibility of the project with God, God told him not to worry because He would give him a sign that this was, in fact, a task that he had been called to by Him: “I will certainly be with you. And this shall be a sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain” (Ex. 3.12). Wait. What? I’ll know this was the right thing to do, after I have done it, and I am back

on this very mountain leading myriad of people to the Promised Land? Then? Yes, indeed, then.

But when you think about it, that is exactly how employers treat their employees. You do the work, then they pay you.

And this is the same way our beloved Savior tackled the work that was set before Him. Jesus, Who is the Author and Finisher of our faith, “for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame”, and then sat down at the right hand of the throne of God (Heb. 12.2).

He did all the work of redemption before He was reseated back in glory with His Father, to reign and rule His Kingdom forever. Obedience to eternal glory and praise.

This is the way of most work; and most assuredly, it is the way of Kingdom work.

The people were to do what God commanded and then the promised appearance of the LORD would happen. God always keeps His Promises. He foretells, then it occurs. Truth always follows His Word.

As He says of Himself:  
“Who has declared this from ancient time?  
Who has told it from that time?  
Have not I, the LORD?  
And there is no other God besides Me,  
A just God and a Savior;  
There is none besides Me” (Is. 45.21).

“The proper response to this is worship—fearing and loving God and rejoicing to be in His Presence.”  
In obedience we wait for all the promises of God to unfold. Jesus arrived as foretold. He has commanded us to obey Him and enjoy Him and glorify Him forever. Obey, then you’ll see—Jesus, now and forever.

#### *Reflection*

1. What is the glory of God? How do you experience it?
2. Jesus became our High Priest by obeying the will of the Father. How should His example encourage us?
3. As our High Priest, Jesus makes intercession for us. Today, what do you need Jesus to intercede about with the Father for you?

*The fulfilment of this type was at length manifested in Christ, who is not only the source and cause of blessing, but publishes it by the Gospel with effectual results; for He came to "preach peace to them which were afar off, and to them that were nigh," (Ephesians 2:17;) and although He does not appear or speak in a visible form, yet we know what He says... John Calvin (1509-1564), Commentary on Leviticus 9.22-24*

#### *Pray Psalm 32.3-11.*

Thank God for Jesus, our great High Priest, and for the sacrifice of atonement He made for our sins. Rejoice in Him. Call on the Lord to show you His glory. Go forth to live for Him today.

#### *Sing Psalm 32.3-11.*

(Hendon: *Take My Life and Let It Be*)

When in silence I remained, groaning in my sinful pain,  
You Your hand upon me lay; all my strength You drained away,  
all my strength You drained away.

I confessed my sin to You; You forgave me, ever true!  
Let confession's pleading sound reach You while You may be found,  
reach You while You may be found!

When flood waters threaten me, You my hiding place will be.  
O'er them I will rise above, buoyed by Your redeeming love,  
buoyed by Your redeeming love.

Teach me, LORD, how I should live; sound instruction ever give.  
Let me never stubborn be; let Your eye watch over me,  
let Your eye watch over me.

Though the wicked wail and weep, they rejoice whose souls You keep.  
Trusting, we exult with praise, joyfully singing all our days,  
joyfully singing all our days!

## 4 He Knows His Sheep

*Pray Psalm 28.8, 9.*

The LORD *is* their strength,  
And He *is* the saving refuge of His anointed.  
Save Your people,  
And bless Your inheritance;  
Shepherd them also,  
And bear them up forever.

*Sing Psalm 28.8, 9.*

*(Angel's Story: O Jesus, I Have Promised)*

Our strength are You, O Savior, our strong defense and sure.  
Anointed with Your favor, we rest in You secure.  
Save us, and bless us, Jesus, upon us turn Your face.  
With shepherd's care, LORD, keep us forever in Your grace.

*Read Numbers 1.1-19; meditate on verse 19.*

*Preparation*

1. What did God command Moses to do?
2. How was he to do that?

*Meditation*

This passage is the second time God has led Moses to prepare the people of Israel for entering the promised land. The first was in Exodus 18, when God used Moses' father-in-law to help him create a pastoral structure that would work. Here in Numbers a team is put together to take a census, especially of those who are of age to go to war. They would need good leadership, a certain amount of equipping, and probably a good bit of encouragement as Israel approached the land of promise. A second census would be taken at the end of Numbers, as the people approach the land for a second time.

God identified Himself as the Shepherd of His people (Pss. 23, 28), Who led them by human shepherds, especially Moses and Aaron (cf. Ps. 77.19, 20). Shepherding, exercising oversight, taking care, equipping, leading, encouraging—these were key disciplines for leading the people of God to the land of promise. This is the work of shepherds, who are charged with being diligent to know the state of their flocks (Prov. 27.23).

And all this focus on shepherding points us forward to Jesus, the Good Shepherd, a role He heartily embraced and which He continues to fulfill. We are the sheep of the Lord. He knows us and we know Him. He leads us. He laid down His life for us. He defends and provides for us, gives us eternal life, and brings other sheep to join us in His flock. Through His appointed earthly shepherds, he equips us for ministry to build His Church and advance His Kingdom. Our Good Shepherd is with us always, and His Holy Spirit serves as His Holy Herder, directing, teaching, correcting, and empowering us to follow our Shepherd.

And Jesus expects us to shepherd one another, as is evidenced by all the “one-another” passages in the New Testament. Shepherding was vital to God's people in the Old Testament. It is even more vital today, and Jesus, our Good Shepherd, daily leads and calls and serves and sends His flock to lay hold on His promises and live for His glory.

*Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

“As the LORD commanded Moses, so he numbered them in the Wilderness of Sinai” (Lev. 1.19).

Counting the people individually, numbering them by family and by name was important to God. He knows each one of us, cares about us, and wants us to know that we are remembered and seen. “But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, and He who formed you, O Israel: ‘Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are Mine’” (Is. 43.1).

But God also did this census taking and numbering because the Savior He was to eventually send, would also be numbered; but with a negative connotation for a positive purpose:

“Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows...  
it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief...  
Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great,  
and He shall divide the spoil with the strong,  
because He poured out His soul unto death,  
and He was numbered with the transgressors,  
and He bore the sin of many,  
and made intercession for the transgressors” (Is. 53.4, 10, 12).

There He is! Numbered with the transgressors—two robbers crucified with Him, one on the right and another on the left (Matt. 27.38)—just as God said He would be. But Jesus counted it all joy when He fell into this deathly trial (Jms. 1.2) for our sakes.

Numbering is the action of counting or ordering with numbers.

And since God “is not the author of confusion but of peace” He wants “all things to be done decently and in order” (1 Cor. 14.33, 40). Even the death of His dearly beloved Son. It was all prophesied and carried out exactly as foretold.

As was said of the prophet Simeon, who was an Old Testament holdover proclaiming New Testament good news: “this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel”. It had been revealed to him that he wouldn’t die until he had seen the Lord’s predicted Christ. When he saw the Child Jesus in the temple, he took Him into his arms and said: “Lord, now you are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel” (Lk. 2.25-32). He also warned Mary, prophetically, that as Jesus’ mother, a “sword will pierce through your soul” in sorrow for the way her Son would be treated by others (Lk. 2.35). Simeon gratefully held the Consolation of Israel just as he had been told he would. God chose, numbered, and counted this blessing to fall upon Simeon. Decently and in order.

God has numbered us to be one of His children. Chosen and beloved. Because He numbered Jesus as the one and only Savior. And we are to be willingly numbered, as He was, for God’s Kingdom purposes.

“After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’” (Rev. 7.9, 10). Gloriously counted and numbered.

### *Reflection*

1. Jesus our Good Shepherd numbers us among the members of His flock. What does it mean for us to follow Him?
2. Moses taught us to “number our days” (Ps. 90.12). What does that mean? How do you “number” your

days?

3. Someday God will “call our number” and we will be carried into His Presence with joy. How should we prepare for that day?

*[I]t must be observed, that the people were not numbered except at God's command, in order that He might thus assert His supreme dominion over them; and also, that the mode of taking the census was so arranged, that there should be no confusion of ranks either through fraud or irregularity; for this was the reason why each tribe had its superintendents, lest any one should slip into a tribe to which he did not belong; and this is expressly mentioned by way of assurance, since otherwise many might suspect that so great a multitude could hardly be distinguished into classes with certainty, so that the whole sum should be calculated without mistake. John Calvin (1509-1564), *Commentary on Numbers 1.1-19**

*Pray Psalm 28.1-7.*

Pray that Jesus, our Good Shepherd, will continue His sanctifying work in you, protect you from all evil, and give you strength and joy in serving others today.

*Sing Psalm 28.1-7.*

*(Angel's Story: O Jesus, I Have Promised)*

I cry to You, our Savior, O, be not deaf to me!

LORD, speak to me with favor, lest I should dying be.

Hear now my supplications when for Your help I cry.

Receive these, my oblations, before Your throne on high.

LORD, count me not among those who walk in sinful ways.

With words of peace their tongue glows while evil fills their days.

Your works they disregard, LORD, while evil fills their hands.

Destroy them by Your Word, LORD, and let them no more stand.

Blessed be the Name of Jesus, for He will hear our prayer.

His strength protects and shields us with mercy and with care.

In You our heart rejoices; You help us by Your Word.

To You we raise our voices to praise and thank You, LORD.

## 5 Cloud and Fire

*Pray Psalm 139.11-14.*

If I say, “Surely the darkness shall fall on me,”  
Even the night shall be light about me;  
Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You,  
But the night shines as the day;  
The darkness and the light *are* both alike *to You*.  
For You formed my inward parts;  
You covered me in my mother’s womb.  
I will praise You, for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made;  
Marvelous *are* Your works,  
And *that* my soul knows very well.

*Sing Psalm 139.11-14.*

(Ripley: *Hallelujah! Praise Jehovah, O My Soul*)  
Neither light nor dark conceals me; day as night is with You, LORD!  
All my inward parts You fashioned by Your all-decreeing Word.  
Praise the LORD, for You have made me; all Your wondrous works I’ll tell!  
All Your works declare Your glory, and my soul knows this full well!

*Read Numbers 9.15-23; meditate on verse 23.*

*Preparation*

1. How did God make His Presence known to Israel?
2. What was His purpose in doing this?

*Meditation*

God was present with His people throughout their wanderings in the wilderness. He was present in the tabernacle, but He was also visibly present in the cloud and fire.

These two manifestations of God not only marked His Presence but also taught His people how to think about Him. God inhabits great mystery, represented by the cloud, which His people could not completely penetrate. By faith they knew Him, but they also knew there were things about Him which were far beyond their ken (Deut. 29.29).

The fire reminded them that God is Light. He illumined their understanding, their path, and the way they should live in love for Him and their neighbors. He gave them His Word and promises, and He commanded them to obey. As they obeyed the LORD and kept His charge (v. 29), they found Him to be true and reliable, faithful to all His Word and ready to bless them abundantly.

And they knew Him to be with them. Here Jesus, Immanuel, is foreshadowed. The mystery of His incarnation and His perfect dual nature—God and Man—is unfathomable; but the light of His truth and love, and of the Gospel and the Word, is ours to possess and enjoy. And His Spirit is in us, just as God was in the tabernacle; and He teaches us the things of Jesus, so that we know, love, and serve Him as we hear and heed His Word.

Wonder at and worship Jesus as God’s great Mystery; hear and follow Him as God’s abiding Light. He is with us always, and His charge to us is clear: “You follow Me” (Jn. 21.22).



*Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162.*

I hope the children of Israel appreciated the tender way that God was so obviously leading them (Num. 9.23). Because all of us long to know which way, where, and when to go, and what to do. We can often be heard to opine, “Oh, if only I could know the will of the LORD!”.

How glorious that at the command of the LORD they encamped and at the command of the LORD they journeyed. And while they were either encamped or journeying, they had God’s guide of the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20.1-17) to keep their hearts and minds obedient as well. Following all the loving guidance of the LORD at every turn. “For this is God, our God forever and ever; He will be our guide even to death” (Ps. 48.14).

Happily, we need not envy the traveling troupe of Israelites, for we have the very same Leadership and Guidance that they had. We, too, can keep “the charge of the LORD”, and Jesus will “guide our feet into the way of peace” (Lk. 1.79; Is. 9.2-7).

Jesus, Himself, explained about the coming Cloud and Fire: “When He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you” (Jn. 16.13, 14).

But can we always know the will of God? Indeed, we can. Paul wrote:

“Be at peace among yourselves...

Warn those who are unruly,

comfort the fainthearted,

uphold the weak,

be patient with all.

See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone,

but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all.

Rejoice always,

pray without ceasing,

in everything give thanks;

for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Do not quench the Spirit.

Do not despise prophecies.

Test all things; hold fast what is good.

Abstain from every form of evil” (2 Thess. 5.13-22).

As Solomon said: “Hear, my son, and be wise; and guide your heart in the way” (Prov. 23.19).

That’s how we follow best; by obediently guiding our hearts into the Word of God daily, to see and learn about how the New Testament Cloud and Fire leads us into all truth today and every day.

*Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah, pilgrim through this barren land;*

*I am weak, but Thou art mighty; hold me with Thy pow’rful hand;*

*Bread of heaven, Bread of heaven,*

*Feed me till I want no more,*

*Feed me till I want no more.*

*Open now the crystal fountain, whence the healing stream doth flow;*

*Let the fire and cloudy pillar lead me all my journey through;*

*Strong Deliverer, strong Deliverer,*

*Be Thou still my strength and shield,*

*Be Thou still my strength and shield.*

(William Williams, 1745)

*Reflection*

1. How will you know the guidance of the Lord today?
2. What can you do to be more sensitive to His Presence with you always?
3. How do you expect the Lord to show Himself—His Presence in you—to the people in your Personal Mission Field?

*At the commandment of the Lord, our hearts should always move and rest, saying, Father, thy will be done; dispose of me and mine as thou pleasest. What thou wilt, and where thou wilt; only let me be thine, and always in the way of my duty.* Matthew Henry (1662-1714), *Commentary on Numbers 9.15-23*

*Pray Psalm 139.1-10, 23, 24.*

Ask the Lord to make His Presence known to you today, by His Spirit, through the things He has made and the blessings He provides. As you become aware of His Presence throughout the day, look to Jesus—Immanuel—and give Him specific thanks and praise.

*Sing Psalm 139.1-10, 23, 24.*

(Ripley: *Hallelujah! Praise Jehovah, O My Soul*)

You have searched me, LORD, and known me, when I sit and when I rise;  
from afar, my thoughts discerning, all my path before You lies.  
Every word, before it's spoken, You behold and know it well.  
Both behind me and before me, Your sweet Presence I can tell!

Such a blessing is more wondrous than my searching soul can know.  
From Your ever-present Spirit there is nowhere I can go.  
Whether high above the heaven or below the earth in hell,  
even there Your hand shall lead me and Your Right Hand hold me well!

Search my heart, O LORD, and know me, as You only, LORD, can do.  
Test my thoughts and contemplations, whether they be vain or true.  
Let there be no sin in me, LORD, nothing that Your Spirit grieves.  
Lead me in the righteous way, LORD, unto everlasting peace!

## 6 Somethin' Forty

*Pray Psalm 105.8-11, 45.*

He remembers His covenant forever,  
The word *which* He commanded, for a thousand generations,  
*The covenant* which He made with Abraham,  
And His oath to Isaac,  
And confirmed it to Jacob for a statute,  
To Israel as an everlasting covenant,  
Saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan  
As the allotment of your inheritance,"...  
That they might observe His statutes  
And keep His laws.  
Praise the LORD!

*Sing Psalm 105.8-11, 45.*

(Warrington: *Give to Our God Immortal Praise*)

He will His covenant faithfully guard—His oath, the promise of His Word.  
That which He to our fathers swore, He will perform forevermore!

So let us all in our Savior confide, and in His holy Law abide.  
Let us observe His glorious Word, and praise our sovereign, faithful LORD!

*Read Numbers 13.1-30; meditate on verse 30.*

*Preparation*

1. What were the spies to do?
2. What did they report upon returning?

*Meditation*

There's something about the number forty that is significant in God's plan. Reading through the Old Testament, we keep coming upon that number. The rain by which God judged the earth lasted forty days and forty nights (Gen. 7.4). Moses was on the mountain, receiving the Law, for forty days (Ex. 24.18). The spies spent forty days investigating the land God had promised to His people (Num. 13.25). Israel wandered the desert for forty years (Deut. 8.2). After the conquest of the land, Israel had forty years of rest (Jdgs. 3.11). David reigned in Jerusalem for forty years (1 Kgs. 2.11). Through Jonah, God gave the Ninevites forty days to repent (Jon. 3.4). And more instances of this number could be cited. Just seems kind of important.

We can't help wondering, "What's next, forty?"

For forty days Caleb, Joshua, and the other spies investigated the land of promise. They found it to be abounding in plenty, just as the Lord had promised (Num. 13.27). This was the land of promise, the place God had designated for His people, where they might know, worship, and serve Him in the fullness of His covenant.

By contrast, for forty days Jesus endured the barren wilderness of Judea, a symbol of the domain of the devil and the waste and ruin his rule had brought upon the world. He came not as a spy but as a Conqueror. Jesus brought the promises of God to this realm, bound up in Himself. He met the devil on his own turf and wrested the world and all its creatures from the father of lies by holy spiritual force (Matt. 12.22-29).

And for forty days after His resurrection, Jesus laid out His Kingdom plan for His disciples, who were like Moses, receiving the Law; like the spies, glimpsing the promises of God; and like Jesus Himself, entrusted with His Kingdom and promises (Acts 1.1-8).

The lesson for us? “Let us go up at once and take possession” of Jesus and His precious and very great promises, in the power of God’s Spirit and according to His Word.

*Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

What were those spies afraid of? They had been scoping out this beautiful land for forty days, unscathed, untroubled, and unbothered by the strong people, the fortified cities, or the giants. They culled beautiful fruit from the vineyards and never heard so much as a “Howdy do” from the residents. But for all that, they could not muster the willpower or courage to go back and obediently take possession of something God had already promised to give them? (Num. 13.1) How pathetic.

But wait. Isn’t that what we do? God says to us, “I AM giving salvation to you. It’s a gift. All you must do is take possession of it. Here He is. I AM giving Him to you. To give you the Kingdom, here and now and there and then. “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast” (Eph. 2.8 9).

But when we take those grapes, pomegranates, and figs, we show appreciation by acting upon The Giver’s desire. And here it is: “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2.10).

Christmas is almost upon us, and we have all purchased, or made, gifts that we think loved ones will want to have. And our expectation is that they will open their gifts and do something with them. Wouldn’t we be a bit disappointed if our love-laden gifts were never even opened, cast aside, or never used?

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 6.23).

Yesterday in the car, I heard a radio preacher waxing eloquent about God’s love. And he quoted this verse, but only the last part, omitting completely the first. The question I shouted back to said preacher was, “How can we possibly appreciate God’s gift of love, without knowing that it is given, in spite of our gross sin, that caused the death of His dear Son?”

Unless we know that God is giving this Gift to us, and that amazingly all we must do is accept it—take possession of it—we will never fully appreciate the magnitude of the Gift. And we will never act upon it.

It will all just be rather “Ho-hum”, and we will have no impetus to thank Him fully with our lives—our whole lives—hook, line, and sinker.

“But God demonstrates His Own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5.8). That’s what He is giving us, that’s what He has promised, and that is what we must take possession of, regardless of the circumstances, or the fears, or the giants involved. We do not want to wander aimlessly for forty years by refusing...that’s old news, already covered stupendously by an earlier group.

#### *Reflection*

1. Why is it important that we try to see Jesus in every part of the Bible?
2. The people of Israel let fear keep them from the promises of God. What can you do to keep that from happening to you?

3. Whom will you encourage today to lay hold on the promises of God?

*Caleb, however, encouraged them to go forward, though seconded by Joshua only. He does not say, Let us go up and conquer it; but, Let us go and possess it. Difficulties that are in the way of salvation, dwindle and vanish before a lively, active faith in the power and promise of God. Matthew Henry(1662-1714), Commentary on Numbers 13.26-33*

*Pray Psalm 105.1-7.*

Praise Jesus the Conqueror! Call on Him to reveal more of His Kingdom plan for you (Ps. 90.16, 17) and to give you strength and grace to advance His rule on earth as it is in heaven.

*Sing Psalm 105.1-7.*

*(St. Christopher: Beneath the Cross of Jesus)*

Give thanks unto the LORD Most High; call on His Name, before Him cry!  
Make known His deeds in every land; sing praise for all the works of His hand.

Glory in God, rejoice in heart, all you who seek His holy part.  
Him and His strength and Presence seek; His works proclaim, His judgments speak.

You holy children of Abraham, you chosen ones of Jacob, stand!  
He is our LORD, of wondrous worth; His judgments are in all the earth.

## 7 In and Out

*Pray Psalm 110.1, 2.*

The LORD said to my Lord,  
“Sit at My right hand,  
Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”  
The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion.  
Rule in the midst of Your enemies!

*Sing Psalm 110.1, 2.*

(Aurelia: [\*The Church's One Foundation\*](#))

“Sit by Me at My right hand,” the LORD says to my Lord,  
“until I make Your foot stand on all who hate Your Word.”  
The LORD sends strength from Zion: “Rule all Your enemies.”  
While those who Him rely on go forth their LORD to please.

*Read Numbers 27.12-23; meditate on verses 15-17.*

*Preparation*

1. Why did Moses need to select a new leader?
2. What would this new leader do?

*Meditation*

Moses disqualified himself to lead the people into the land of promise by his disobedience at the waters of Meribah (Num. 20). Another leader would deliver the people into Canaan, and God determined that leader should be Joshua.

In Psalm 110 we glimpse two aspects of the work of Jesus, exalted in glory. He is seated at the Father's right hand, where He goes before us to bring us into the Presence of the eternal God and His glory. And He goes out to battle with us, conquering and to conquer. Jesus ever lives to make intercession for us (Heb. 7.25). And He is with us by His indwelling Spirit to empower us for witness by our lives and words (Acts 1.8). The commissioning of Joshua to go out before the people of Israel in battle and to lead them, as the congregation of the Lord, into His Presence thus foreshadows the work of Jesus.

The leaders God seeks must be prepared to fulfill both duties. They must lead people into the Presence of the Lord, by their example and their teaching. J. I. Packer wrote (*Finishing Our Course with Joy*) that we all have people in our Personal Mission Field who look to us for guidance in following Jesus. They must see us as going in frequently to Him, and we must lead them in the same, that together we might see Jesus and His glory and be transformed into His image. In other words, we must lead others for a more consistent and fruitful spiritual life.

Similarly, those we lead must see us living as a witness for Jesus. All we do should be for His honor and glory (1 Cor. 10.31). All our words should be gracious and edifying (Col. 4.6; Eph. 4.29), showing Jesus by our words. We must be always ready to give a reason for the hope that is within us (1 Pet. 3.15). And we must encourage those in our Personal Mission Field to go out into their own, ready to live and speak for Jesus.

Joshua foreshadows Jesus and Jesus, as He fulfills His ministry, shows us how to lead others into the precious and very great promises of God.

*Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

We have Joshua foreshadowing Jesus, and Moses whose sin required him to step down from his leadership role, so we should probably discuss what happened to precipitate Joshua's necessity.

“Now there was no water for the congregation; so they gathered together against Moses and Aaron...”

“So Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and they fell on their faces. And the glory of the LORD appeared to them. Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals.’”

“So Moses took the rod from before the LORD as He commanded him.” (So far, so good).

“And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock; and he said to them, ‘Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?’ (We?) Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank.” (His anger gave way to disbelief and disrespect).

“Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, ‘Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them’” (Num. 20.2, 6-12).

Moses the leader was held to a higher standard than the grumbling followers. Moses also had fellowship with God and direct guidance from God.

Things are maybe starting to look a little perilous for us—no? Don't we have fellowship with God through His Holy Spirit and daily guidance through His Word? Won't we too, be held to a higher standard?

Where have we been told to hallow God and His commands? Here are some starting points:

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy...Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it” (Ex. 20.8, 11).

“But the LORD of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God Who is holy shall be hallowed in righteousness” (Is. 5.16).

“In this manner, therefore, pray:  
Our Father in heaven,  
Hallowed by Your Name.  
Your Kingdom come, Your will be done  
On earth as it is in heaven” (Matt. 6.9, 10).

Moses was a sincere man of God, whom the LORD spoke to “face to face, as a man speaks to his friend” (Ex. 33.11). And God said to him, “you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name” (Ex. 33.17).

In fact, Moses was “very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth” (Num. 12.3).

So, when his brother and sister were grumbling against him, God said to them: “Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, the LORD, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream. Not so with My servant Moses; he is faithful in all My house. I speak with him face to face, even plainly, and not in dark sayings; and he sees the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant

Moses?” (Num. 12.6-8). Amazing, yet sinful, Moses foreshadowed our need for a Savior. There He is! Jesus.

*Reflection*

1. How does Jesus lead us into the very Presence of the eternal God?
2. What can you do to lead people in your Personal Mission Field into a deeper relationship with Jesus?
3. How does Jesus lead you to go out into your Personal Mission Field each day?

*This man God appoints to succeed Moses; a man in whom is the Spirit, the Spirit of grace. He is a good man, fearing God and bating covetousness, and acting from principle. He has the spirit of government; he is fit to do the work and discharge the trusts of his place. He has a spirit of conduct and courage...also the Spirit of prophecy.* Matthew Henry (1662-1714), *Commentary on Numbers 27.15-23*

*Pray Psalm 110.3-7.*

Ask the Lord to fix in your mind His twofold work of going in and leading out. Pray that He will show you what that means for you, as you come before Him and go out into your Personal Mission Field. Wait on the Lord today and each day to teach, guide, and empower you.

*Sing Psalm 110.3-7.*

(Aurelia: [\*The Church's One Foundation\*](#))

Your people in Your power, arrayed in holiness,  
like dew of morning's hour shall serve like youth refreshed.  
The LORD has sworn and never will He His promise check:  
“You are a priest forever after Melchizedek.”

The Lord is at Your right hand to execute His wrath,  
and judge all kings and all lands—doomed sinners in His path.  
Then, all His foes defeated, He takes His hard-won rest,  
in glorious triumph seated with us, redeemed and blessed.



*Questions for Reflection or Discussion*

1. How are the priesthood of Israel and the sacrifices fulfilled in Jesus?
2. Can you think of any other ways Jesus is foreshadowed or typified in Leviticus?
3. How does the book of Numbers encourage us to think of Jesus as our Shepherd and Leader?
4. What do the cloud and fire teach us about Jesus?
5. What's the most important lesson you have learned from seeing Jesus in Leviticus and Numbers?

*For Prayer:*

## The Fellowship of Ailbe

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