

Read the Whole Bible with Pastor

Monday (April 10) – Numbers 15

Specific offerings are described for those who will enter the Promised Land. The words, “A pleasing aroma to the Lord,” are repeated numerous times in reference to these offerings. As Christian people our lives are offered by faith in response to saving grace. They are pleasing to God as we thank, praise, serve and obey Him. The second portion of the chapter references the possibility of sinning both unintentionally and with a high hand (intentionally). As an example of this kind of willful sin, the Sabbath breaker is put to death. This is a sin against God and His true worship on the Holy Day. Christ, our true Sabbath rest, calls us to come to Him and find needed refreshment as we worship in His word. As we gather around it, we hold it sacred and receive it with gladness. In so doing, refreshed, and strengthened in grace, we remember Our Lord’s commands to do them.

Tuesday (April 11) – Numbers 16, 17

The prophet Samuel said that rebellion is like the sin of witchcraft (see 1 Samuel 15:23). The people here sin against those whom God has set apart as holy with authority that He has given. Holiness is of God and therefore those people and things that He sets apart for Himself are His alone. This rebellion is another example of willful, high-handed sin. The Lord says that the people sin at the cost of their lives. Aaron rushes in to save the people. His priestly intercession is like that of our true high Priest, Jesus Christ. In chapter 17 the staffs of the tribal leaders are presented before the Lord in the tent of the testimony. In order to put an end to the grumbling of the people, God causes Aaron’s rod to bud, blossom, and bring forth almonds as a sign of his God given authority. All authority is of God and the authorities appointed are given by Him (see Romans 13:1). We thank the Lord for those ordained to speak the word in the stead and by the command of our Lord, Jesus Christ!

Wednesday (April 12) – Numbers 18

The Levites and priests are given for the service of the Lord. This service is of God as through the tithes of God’s people the Lord provides for the needs of His servants. Every male set apart by God may eat of the holy food given. The wave offerings, however, are given for all the family in the household. God still sets men apart for service to the Lord in His church. Still He provides for them through those served by them, for the laborer is worthy of his wages (see Luke 10:7).

Thursday (April 13) – Numbers 19, 20

Our God calls us to purity. He makes provision for the people’s ceremonial cleansing with the water of purification. “The man who is unclean and does not purify himself, that person shall be cut off from among the assembly, because he has defiled the sanctuary of the LORD” (v. 20). We are reminded of Jesus’ words, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with me” (John 13:8). Thanks be to God that He cleanses His Christian people through the

washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit! In chapter 20 the people complain to Moses that there is no water to drink. Both Moses and Aaron humble themselves before God seeking His aid on their behalf. But it is a lack of faith that manifested itself in Moses' disobedience. He does not trust the Lord's word alone as he angrily strikes the rock twice. His sin has consequences. He may not enter into the promised land. We too as poor miserable sinners fail our God's directives each day. So we are in need of the Savior's grace. May the Lord have mercy upon us and strengthen our faith to walk in His ways.

Friday (April 14) – Numbers 21

God gives His people a military victory but they soon become impatient along the way. They speak against God and His servant Moses questioning their salvation from slavery and God's provision along the way in their journey. In response the Lord sends biting serpents and many of the people die. However, in His mercy the Lord provides healing for those who repent. All those bitten who look to the serpent set on the pole will live. This image is fulfilled in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness so too must He be lifted up, that all who believe in Him will not perish but have eternal life (see John 3:14–15). Still the people journey on and God gives their enemies into their hands. We are reminded by way of their wilderness journey that our journey of faith to the promised land in glory is one of many perils and temptations. The Lord alone is able to keep us from falling and to present us blameless before the presence of His glory (see Jude 24).

Saturday (April 15) – Numbers 22

Balak (the king) asks Balaam (the prophet) to come and curse the people of God. But God tells Balaam, "You shall not go with them; you shall not curse the people, for they are blessed" (v. 12). Balaam has a reputation for being a true prophet, calling God his Lord and God (v. 18), yet his motives are corrupted and he loves gain in wrongdoing (2 Peter 2:15–16). When the king offers him great honor and riches if he will curse God's people, Balaam goes to God for permission, acting as though God had not already told him to bless and not to curse. Indeed the beast that the Lord chooses as His mouthpiece acts more rationally than the man who is supposed to be a prophet of God!

Sunday (April 16) – Numbers 23, 24

Even though Balaam is far from an ideal prophet, the Lord does place oracles of blessing in his mouth. This, of course, greatly displeases the wicked king, who wanted Balaam to curse the Israelites, not bless them. Fashioned by Him for His honor, God's people are described in poetically beautiful words as those saved from slavery and blessed by their redeeming God. Prophecies of the true, coming King complete the final Oracle. A star from Jacob and a scepter from Israel will come. This prophecy, spoken by Balaam (whom God later kills for his wickedness, see Joshua 13:22), is the one that leads the wise men to follow the star to find the newborn Christ. Not only can God speak through a donkey, He can speak through sinful men.