

MARCH 19

To keep up reading The One Year Bible it is nice to have some days when we can reverently speed read something. Today in the NT will be one of these days, but only if you want to. The OT reading lends itself to some quick devout reading also.

Numbers 28:16-29:40

At this point, it is either weeks or just a couple of months before Israel enters the land. I doubt that the address of Deuteronomy took less than a week to deliver. And at the end of Deuteronomy when Moses died, the people stayed in one place for 30 days and mourned for him. Still, every day there would have been a growing excitement that the cloud would lift and that God would lead them into Canaan. There are still some things to be put in order and God is focusing on their relationship to Him.

This is good for us to remember too. God's preparation in using us in the harvest has less to do with our abilities than with our heart. When I read John 15 I read about fruit, but that fruit is dependent on disciples being pruned and abiding in Christ. Lots of people do stuff without abiding in Christ. God wants the right kind of disciples, so He will have the kind of fruit that abides and makes disciples, who make disciples.

In our reading today there is a constant refrain. Yesterday God reminded Israel of the daily offerings. These would be daily, perpetual reminders of their need for forgiveness and God's gracious provision of all things for them. Today, as God reviews the holy days and feasts, He will remind them over and over and over not to forget the daily offerings. Even with the offerings of those special days, they were still to offer the lamb in the morning and in the evening.

Numbers 28:16-31

Vs. 16-25 These are the instructions for the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. In spite of all the offerings going on, the morning and evening offerings were still to be daily reminders of their need and God's care. This was one of three occasions where all males had to be present in Jerusalem. Notice that the last day of this feast was a Sabbath rest.

Vs. 26-31 This was the *Feast of Weeks*, meaning that it took place seven weeks after the Sabbath mentioned above. This was the Feast of the Firstfruits or Pentecost. This is the second of the three occasions when all males had to be present in Jerusalem. Notice v. 31. You get the idea that this is really a key emphasis.

Numbers 29

Vs. 1-6 This was like their New Year's feast. It signaled one of the most important events was about to take place, the Day of Atonement, followed by the Feast of the Tabernacles. The males didn't have to be in Jerusalem for this, but it was more an alert for the nation, and men, to get ready to head to Jerusalem.

Vs. 7-11 This is the Day of Atonement. All of the males had to attend this and the following feast. This is the only holy feast day when the Jews had to fast. This is when the high priest took the blood of one goat, went into the Holy of Holies, and sprinkled it on the mercy seat to make atonement for the people. Then they sent the scapegoat out into the wilderness. Notice v. 11.

Vs. 12-40 These are the days of the Feast of the Tabernacles. There are some differences in the offerings of those days but each day ends with the same reminder to continue the normal offerings, morning and evening, that would be done each day.

In 29:40 it says that these instructions were given publicly. We might be saying, "Didn't I just read something like this earlier?" Yet, for many people listening now, they have never heard this

before. Between chapters 19 and 20, 38-40 years passed. There are 40-year-olds who have never heard these laws, and we'll find out when we read Joshua, men who have never been circumcised. What we're reading here is the preparation of the people for entering the land. Just as a reminder for us, for the people to have come to these feasts, it meant they had to leave their homes and fields for weeks. They couldn't work and they had to trust in the Lord, as He promised, to guard their stuff. It all depended on their faith and true gratitude to the Lord for saving them. Unfortunately, once they were in the land, the people seldom celebrated some of these feasts. You just read about the Feast of Tabernacles (or Booths). Now, if you want something that will shock you, read Nehemiah 8:17, a thousand years later. If that doesn't make you want to cry, I don't know what will.

I think there were individuals who celebrated these things, like Boaz and Samuel's parents, but these were national events to keep the heart of the nation healthy and pulsing with love for God.

If you want to challenge yourself as a disciple, read Matthew 5-7 and realize that this was all said to the newly selected twelve disciples. I think it applies to us too. I have the feeling that when Jesus returns, He might say to the majority of the church, "you never obeyed what I told you." I was just reading about Jesus saying to His disciples in Luke 18:8, back then and in the future, *Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?*

In Joshua 5, the first thing the people do after they cross the Jordan will be to circumcise the men. The second thing they will do is to celebrate the Passover. The day after the Passover, the manna will cease.

One question I have in all of these instructions is that if the sacrifices called for flour, and the bread for the Holy Place needed flour, where did they get the flour? Also, if the sacrifices required wine, where did they get the wine? They had been doing this for 40 years in the wilderness, so where did they get flour and wine? I think it is safe to say that their main food was the manna. How else do you feed two to ten million people? But, if you were a merchant, or a local farmer, and you knew there were two to ten million people sitting there with money but nothing to spend it on, don't you think you'd want to help them? I'm sure that Israel became a stop, or even a main destination, on one or more caravan routes. For the sacrifices and the temple service, I'm sure they bought wine, flour and olive oil (and the occasional leek and garlic). I'm sure the people also bought cheeses (although they had plenty of milk with their flocks), veggies, flour, wine, clothing (with sheep and goats they had plenty of wool) and other stuff; but again, two million people in the wilderness, off the beaten trail, couldn't have survived solely on outside merchants.

Luke 3:23-38

Luke gives Jesus' lineage from Mary, whereas Matthew uses the lineage from Joseph. Both Joseph and Mary are descendants of David. Matthew traced the lineage back through the kings of Israel. Luke traced the lineage back to David, but through one of his sons who never became the king. Luke gives the lineage here because of Jesus' baptism and anointing as King. This is the beginning of His ministry. (I'm making this up now: Maybe back in the day, when they had gladiator fights or contests, as the fighters entered the arena, they gave their credentials. I don't know. I wasn't there.) But it is interesting that Jesus' credentials are given here, and that He's about to "duke it out" with "the ruler of this world."

Notice that in vs. 32-33 we find *Nahshon the son of Amminadab*. We have read quite a lot about Nahshon in Numbers. Remember it was his sister who married Aaron the high priest (Exodus 6:23) and his son who married Rahab as recorded in Matthew 1:4-5.

Also, Luke takes the genealogy back to Adam and to God. This will fit well with Paul's writing and it shows a Gentile world that Jesus is the Savior of all men.

Psalm 62

I feel like I'm living this psalm. It is very hard to get it into your head. *For God alone my soul waits in silence; from him comes my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation...*

Just circle the repetition of words here: *God alone, my salvation, shaken*, etc. This is a great psalm. I can imagine that as David lived those long years running from Saul, there were rumors and suggestions of help that might have come from people in Saul's government who really liked David. Or there may have been rumors that certain leading men of some of the tribes might come to his aid. None of this ever happened but it is normal for people to hope for help from others, especially when you're running for ten years.

But this is how God "pruned" David and made him the man he was, a man after God's own heart.

Vs. 1-2 This is David's *only* hope.

Vs. 3-4 David suffered because of how he was lied against and wrongly pursued.

Vs. 5-7 Take time to read this. There is the waiting in silence, the seeking of refuge and the pouring out of all of our fears and concerns. It is somehow healing just to read this and know the Lord understands and that this is all He wants when we are weak.

V. 8 As always, David praises God and exhorts everyone to trust Him and make Him their *refuge*.

Vs. 9-10 Maybe David is still talking to everyone, but this truth is also being given to us from God Himself.

Vs. 11-12 Wow! *God has spoken*. To Him belongs *power* and *steadfast love*, and He will judge. Amen.

Where is our help really found? In the western world, many people have deep resources. We have credit cards, friends, advocates, people offering services, Dr. Phil, geek squads, libraries, podcasts, Google. Basically, we have help for everything. The Lord may be the first one we call, but usually we only come before Him like this as a last resort.

As disciples, what brings us to the place where we realize, without God, there is no help, no refuge, no resource, no stability? In reality, it isn't a "what," it's a "who." For the Lord to really train us as disciples, He makes following Him in the harvest the passion we can't live without, and in that context, without Him, we can do nothing.

Proverbs 11:18-19

Notice the pattern of these verses: evil, righteous, righteous, evil. I read in the [Bible Knowledge Commentary-OT](#), that the sound of the words for *wages* and *reward* is very similar. The appearance of what we get in life is also very similar. We could actually think that what we gain by not following God or being "smart" and "shrewd" is a reward. But if it keeps us from God, it is death, and we've been deceived.

It kind of makes you think of Romans 6:19-23, *I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification. For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*