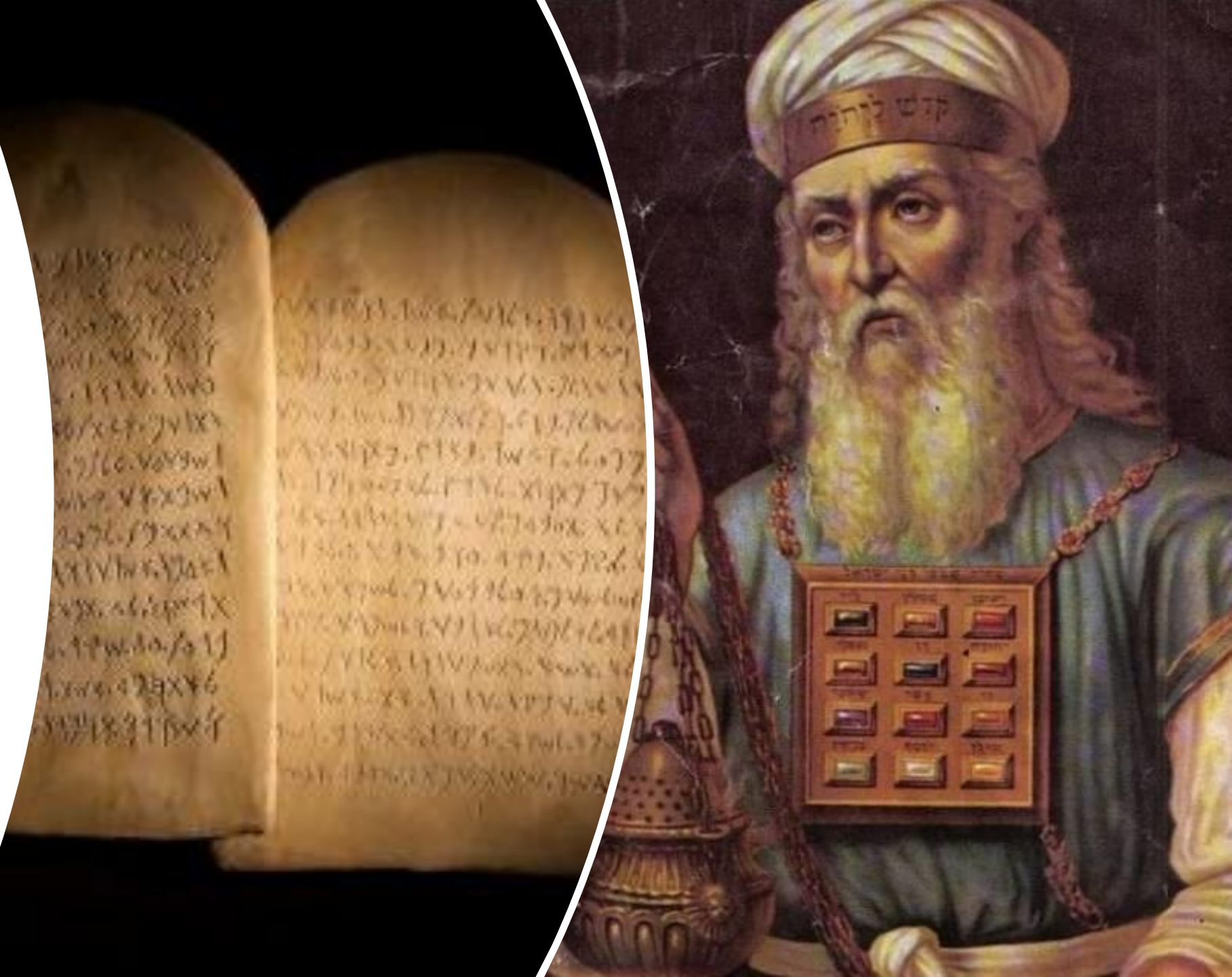


The History of Salvation 6

After the Covenant

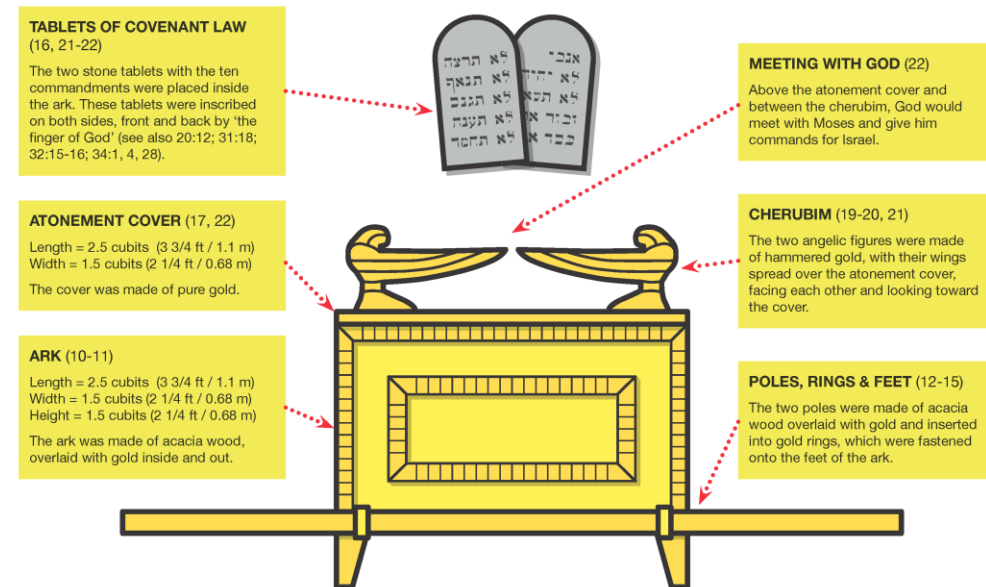
- Moses goes back up the mountain & is gone for 40 days, speaking with God.
- Specifications for the Ark of the Covenant & the Tabernacle.
- Consecrated priesthood & vestments
- The Sabbath
- Moses receives the tablets with the Ten Commandments.



The Ark of the Covenant

- The Ark: contained a golden urn holding manna, Aaron's rod, & the stone tablets of the covenant (Hb 9:4)
- The Tabernacle: a portable temple where God dwells amongst His people.
- God's own designs & specs – what is worthy of God.
- God takes up residence (Ex. 40: 34-38).

THE ARK OF THE COVENANT EXODUS 25:10-22 © Mark Barry 2015 | visualunit.me | Please do not republish without permission, but feel free to copy for personal use.



The Ark of the Covenant & The Tabernacle





Meanwhile, Back at Camp ...

The people grow impatient & demand Aaron make them a golden calf. Aaron gives in.

Up, make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we don't know what's become of him'. (Ex 32:1)

- The golden bull calf: The calf is an image of Apis, the Egyptian fertility god. Also represents money, sex, power.
- They build an altar, offer sacrifices, eat & drink a ritual meal. Israel's worship is a parody of the covenant at Sinai.
- They also "rose up to revel," a polite way of saying that they engaged in orgies associated with the cult of Apis (**Ex 32:1-6**).
- What the forbidden fruit was to Adam the golden calf was to Israel. It is a second fall from grace, a total betrayal of God & return to ways of Egypt.
- Moses destroys the idol, grinds it up & makes the people drink it. Then there's a slaughter of the apostates.

The Golden Calf

God sends Moses back down. Israel broke its covenant oath & left God. Without God they are cursed, losing the blessings of the covenant. God has sworn his part too. Consequences for the breach.

Moses smashes the tablets as Israel destroyed the covenant. Calf: burnt, ground up & drunk by the people.

God's mercy: Process for repairing broken covenant: Ex 33-40, Leviticus, Numbers 1-10.

- Moses mediates & negotiates for Israel – don't destroy them. (Christ mediates)
- Levitical priesthood. Levites come to Moses, replace the 1st-born sons as priests. Other tribes lose their priesthood. Kill people, as curse for sacrilege. Show they choose God even over their blood relatives.
- Levites ordered to offer animal sacrifices daily in the temple on behalf of Israel. No longer optional. They are addicted to idolatry. Only God saves. This happens until the fullness of time, with the Incarnation, to redeem them.

Figures to bear Israel's curse symbolically until Christ bears it redemptively. (Hb 5-10) The sacrifices pre-figure the sacrifice of Christ, which can redeem from sin where the sacrifice of hundreds of thousand animals cannot. After the Redemption & the coming of the Holy Spirit the sacrifices cease.

Animals the Egyptians sacrificed cannot be sacrificed or eaten by the Israelites: declared unclean.

The Israelites spend 1 year at Sinai getting this straight.



Moses Breaks the Tables of the Law, Gustave Dore, 1866.



The Pentateuch

- Genesis – the origins
- Exodus – going out
- Leviticus – having to do with the Levites
- Numbers - census of the tribes of Israel
- Deuteronomy – ‘Second Law’

Timeline (BC)

- ? Adam & Eve Creation Paradise Gn 1-3
- ? 2800 Noah Flood Mesopotamia Gn 6-9
- 2000-1900 Abraham Call/Covenant Ur/Hebron Gn 12-17
- 1900-1800 Isaac Sacrifice Mt Moriah Gn 22
- 1800-1700 Jacob Jacob's Ladder Bethel Gn 28
- 1700 Joseph Egypt Egypt Gn 50
- 1700-1400 Hebrews Slavery in Egypt Egypt Ex 1
- 1300-1200 Moses Exodus/Covenant Red Sea/Mt Sinai Ex 3-24
- 1300-1200 People Golden Calf Desert Ex 32
- 1300-1200 People 40 Years in the Desert Desert Nm 14
- 1200 Joshua Conquest of Jericho/Covenant Jericho Jos 6, 24
- 1200-1100 Judges Sin/Punishment/Repentance Canaan Jg 1-2
- 1200-1100 Samuel Last Judge Israel 1 Sam 7
- 1020 Saul Disobedient King Israel 1 Sam 13
- 1000-962 David Anointed King Bethlehem 1 Sam 16



40 YEARS IN THE WILDERNESS

Leviticus: After the Golden Calf

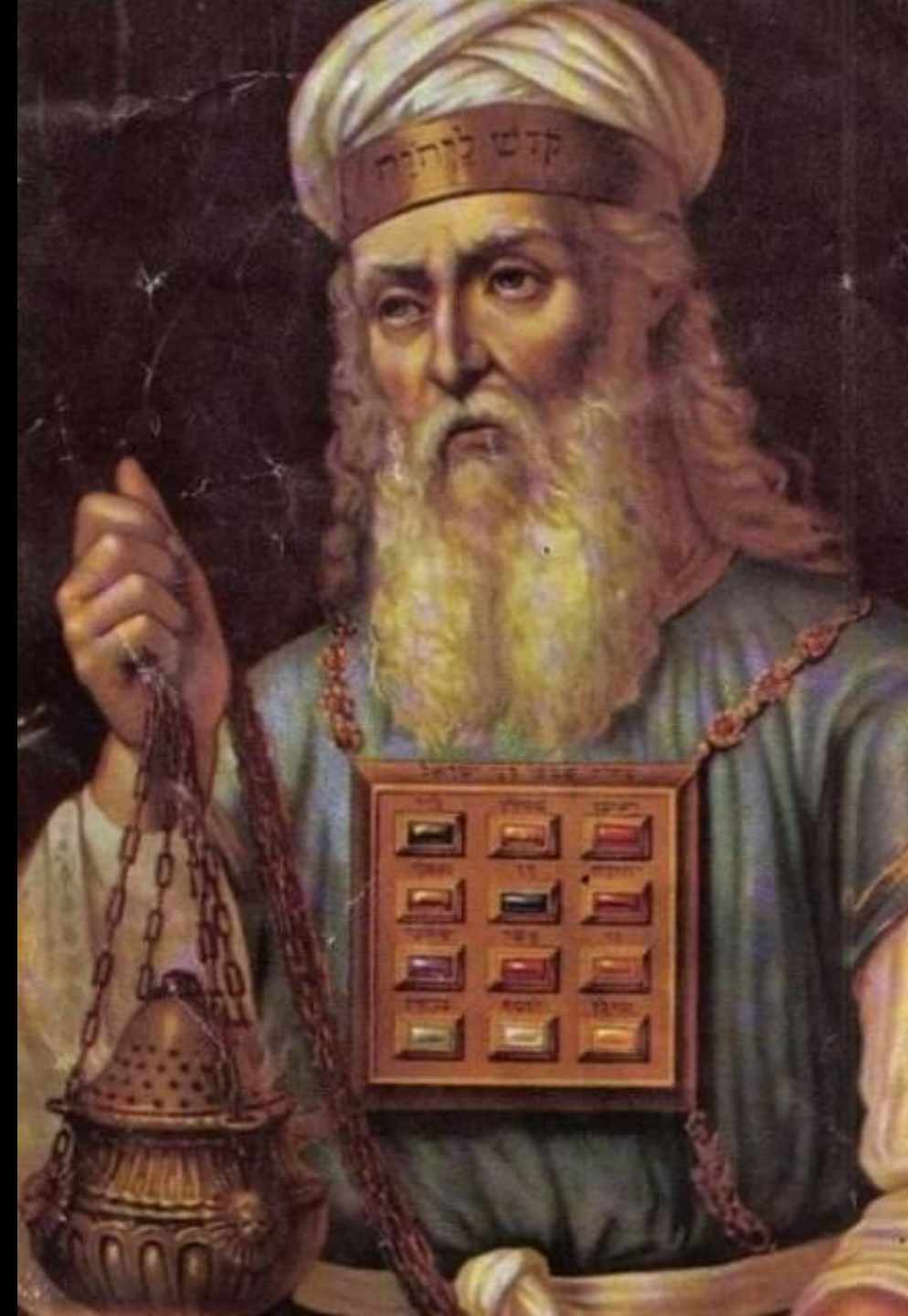


Israelites spend 1 year near Mt Sinai

- Renewal of the covenant, consolidating law & worship.
- Law: a second legislation after the Ten Commandments.
- Worship: rituals, sacrifices, the priesthood.
 - Leviticus is the handbook for priests, to teach Israel how to be holy.
- The Sacrificial system:
 - God did not originally desire animal sacrifice. He didn't need it. God wanted praise, a humble & contrite spirit & walking in His ways (Ps 50:8-14; 51:18-19)).
 - Penance upon the whole nation.
 - The animals God had Israel sacrifice (cattle, sheep & goats) were venerated by the Egyptians. A daily reminder of their apostasy with the golden calf, ritually slaughtering the "gods" they once worshipped.
 - God hoped to free Israel's heart from slavery to idolatry (Joshua 24:14; Ez 20:7-8; Acts 7:39-41).
 - Lev 18: strict laws regarding incest, child-sacrifice, homosexual relations (preparation for practices in the societies around them)

Reading Leviticus

- Conviction that God is Lord of all creation.
- Man needs God & communicates with rites & offerings closely connected to the world on which he depends. The religious sense is expressed in ceremonial worship.
- The priesthood: representatives of the people before God: the priesthood, the king.
- 'Unclean' things: things unsuitable for worship of God. It is external & ritual, but about man's relationship to God, so not just external rules.
- Regulations about man's relationships with God, others, family, the sick, poor, exiles, rules to channel revenge, loans, slaves, jubilees, etc. Apart from what is cultural here there is a lasting religious message.
- Read *Leviticus* is in light of Christ's sacrifice on the Cross. The new Law has a new form of worship. St Paul explains this to the Jewish people in his letter to the Hebrews, especially Hb 4, 7, 8, 9. The New Testament is where we fully find the meaning of holiness (cleanliness) Mt 5, Mt 15, Jn 14.



Numbers

Named so because of the census taken at Mt Sinai, a tribe-by-tribe count of males of military age.

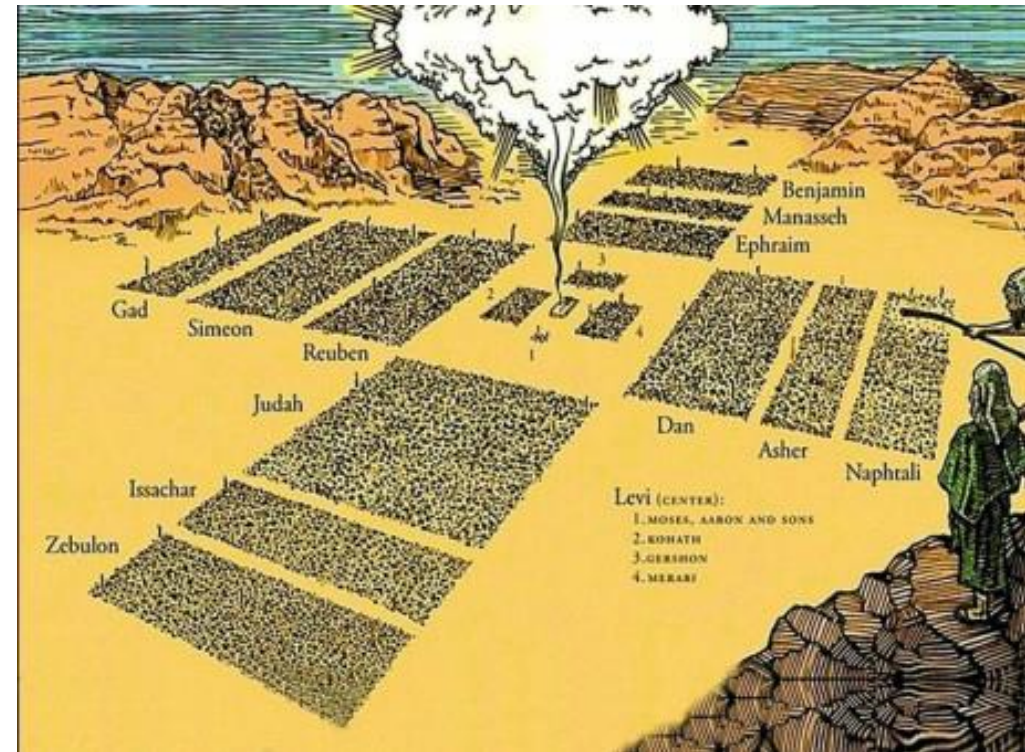
More rules for the Levites.

Anniversary of the Passover.

Preparations to depart.

Accompanied by a cloud.

Exact route unknown.



Watch: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/numbers/>

Rebellion in the Desert (Wilderness of Zin)

Numbers follows the 2nd generation on the way to the promised land. The children of those who came out of Egypt are no more faithful than their parents. They are condemned to wander forty years, for their faithlessness (Nm 14).

The Levites were meant to help them, to teach them in the ways of holiness, so that they wouldn't fall like the 1st generation. But they didn't learn.

- Grumbling & Complaining.
- Spies sent to reconnoitre the land of Canaan (Nm 13). It is very rich but well defended.
- Discouragement & refusal to fight except for Caleb & Joshua who trust God.
- Rebellion. This is their second big fall in the desert



Rebellion in the Desert (Wilderness of Zin)

*The people of Israel murmured against Moses ...
“Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness! Why does the LORD bring us into this land, to fall by the sword? ... would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt?” ...
“Let us choose a captain & go back to Egypt.” Then Moses & Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the people of Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun & Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, rent their clothes, & said to all the congregation of the people of Israel, “The land, which we passed through to spy it out, is an exceedingly good land. If the LORD delights in us, he will bring us into this land & give it to us, a land which flows with milk & honey. Only, do not rebel against the LORD; & do not fear the people of the land, for they are bread for us; their protection is removed from them, & the LORD is with us; do not fear them.” But all the congregation said to stone them with stones.*



Rebellion in the Desert

Moses intercedes for the people before God. Humility of Moses.

People say they would prefer to die in the desert than confront the inhabitants. God punishes them by granting them what they wished for. (Nm 14: 2-3).

None of the men who have seen my glory & my signs which I wrought in Egypt & in the wilderness, & yet have put me to the proof these ten times & have not hearkened to my voice, shall see the land which I swore to give to their fathers; & none of those who despised me shall see it. But my servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit & has followed me fully, I will bring into the land....

Your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness; & of all your number, numbered from twenty years old & upward, who have murmured against me, not one shall come into the land where I swore that I would make you dwell, except Caleb ... & Joshua But your little ones, who you said would become a prey, I will bring in, & they shall know the land which you have despised. But as for you, your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness. And your children shall be shepherds in the wilderness forty years, & shall suffer for your faithlessness, until the last of your dead bodies lies in the wilderness. According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for every day a year, you shall bear your iniquity, forty years, & you shall know my displeasure.' I, the LORD, have spoken; surely this will I do to all this wicked congregation that are gathered together against me: in this wilderness they shall come to a full end, & there they shall die."

- Then they try to enter without God's help (without the Ark or Moses) & are defeated.
- Their hope is kept alive while they wander with rules for what to do when they reach the Land (sacrifices, etc)



The Waters at Meribah

Miracle of water from the rock. Moses strikes the rock twice. For his unbelief he will see the promised land but not enter it (Nm 20).

Now there was no water for the congregation; & they assembled themselves together against Moses & against Aaron ... "Would that we had died when our brethren died before the LORD! Why have you brought the assembly of the LORD into this wilderness, that we should die here, both we & our cattle? And why have you made us come up out of Egypt, to bring us to this evil place? It is no place for grain, or figs, or vines, or pomegranates; & there is no water to drink."

Then Moses & Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the door of the tent of meeting & fell on their faces. ... The LORD said to Moses, "Take the rod, & assemble the congregation, you & Aaron your brother, & tell the rock before their eyes to yield its water; so you shall bring water out of the rock for them; so you shall give drink to the congregation & their cattle." And Moses took the rod from before the LORD, as he commanded him.

And Moses & Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock, & he said to them, "Hear now, you rebels; shall we bring forth water for you out of this rock?" And Moses lifted up his hand & struck the rock with his rod twice; & water came forth abundantly, & the congregation drank, & their cattle.

And the LORD said to Moses & Aaron, "Because you did not believe in me, to sanctify me in the eyes of the people of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them." These are the waters of Meribah, where the people of Israel contended with the LORD, & he showed himself holy among them.



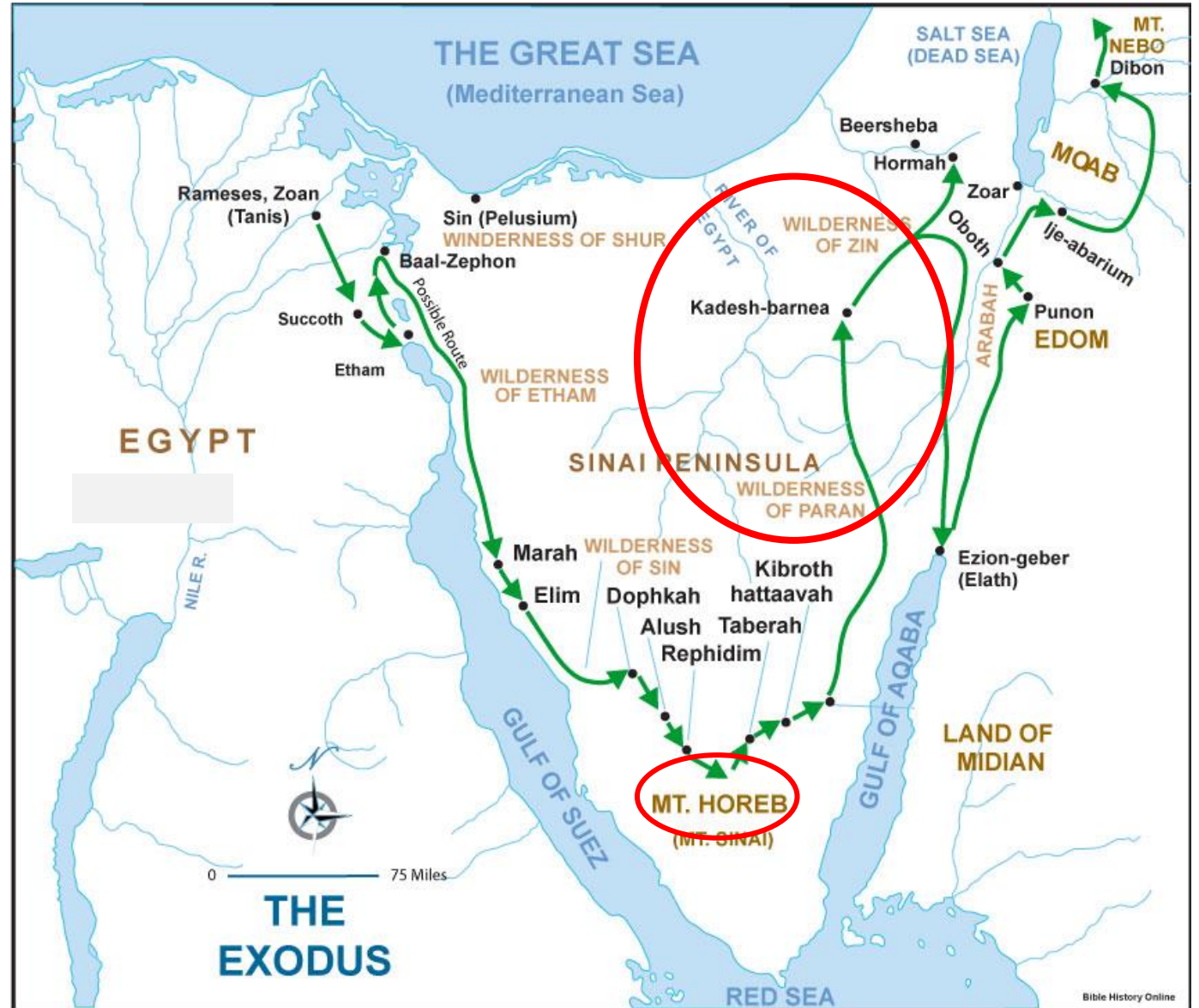
40 Years in the Wilderness

God remains with his people.

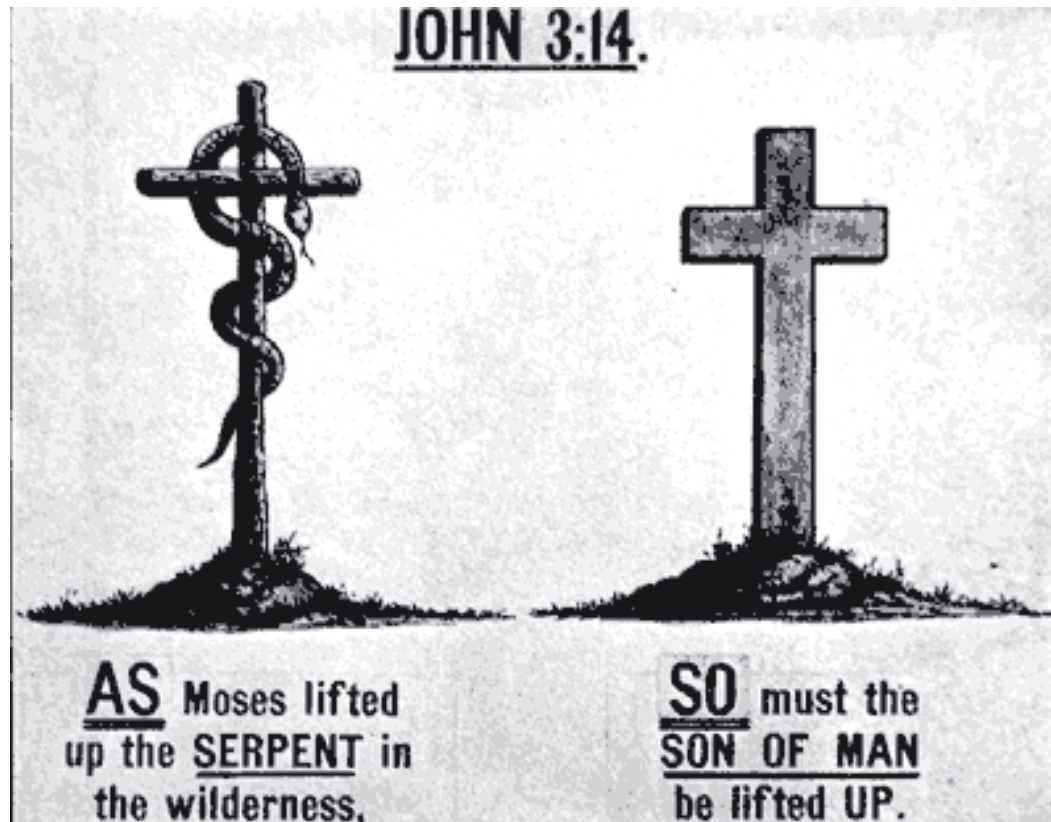
40 years allows for a new generation to be formed by God, not influenced by other religions. They are moulded into God's people in preparation for taking the Promised Land & building a new civilisation among their pagan neighbours.

Forming Israel as a people
Learning to worship one God
Preparing hearts & minds for the coming of the Redeemer.

Edom refuses right of way. Moses sent to king of Edom 'thus says your brother Israel'.
The Israelites divert to Moab.



On the Way to Moab: The Bronze Serpent (Nm 21: 4-9)



From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; & the people became impatient on the way. And the people spoke against God & against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food & no water, & we loathe this worthless food." Then the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, & they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. And the people came to Moses, & said, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD & against you; pray to the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. And the LORD said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent, & set it on a pole; & every one who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live." So Moses made a bronze serpent & set it on a pole; & if a serpent bit any man, he would look at the bronze serpent & live.

This is just after one of their first military victories.

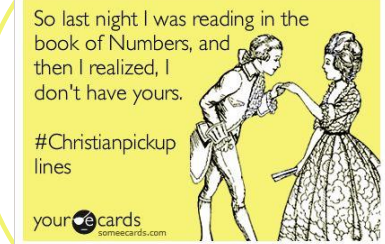
God's mercy, grumbling, punishment & mercy.

Even amid their backsliding, God gives signs of the Redeemer He will one day send.

Moses raises up the bronze serpent to heal the faithless Israelites, giving us a sign of the Cross (Nm 21:4-9; Jn 3:14).

Reading *Numbers*

- Read in light of the New Testament.
 - At the beginning of his public life Jesus is led out into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit.
 - The manna – the Eucharist 11:4-9
 - The bronze serpent – the Cross Jn 3: 14-16.
 - The Church also journeys.
- The time in the desert is an important time in Israel's relationship with God. God's goodness is manifested; how God acts towards his chosen people who are unfaithful.
- Cycle of temptation, discouragement, rebellion, chastisement, mercy, forgiveness.
- 40 years in the desert: a period of transition, forming a people. God keeps leading them, does not give up on them or abandon them. They are purified through the tests and trials.
- The whole generation that left Egypt rebelled, including Moses & Aaron. The people are purified as that generation dies out in the desert. The people who enter are a renewed people.
- Later the desert is recalled or seen as a place for encounter with God, conversion, etc.
- God's presence: the tent of meeting, the Ark of the Covenant, the cloud. God leads the way even if they can't see the sense of it.



On the Plains of Moab

- **On the way to Moab:** death of Aaron, various battles & victories.
- **Route to Moab:** Uncertain.
- **On the Plains of Moab (Nm 22-36)**
 - An overview of the desert period
 - Preparations for entering the Land.
 - Balaam's oracle.
 - Infidelity at Peor.
 - New census for dividing up land.
 - Joshua called to succeed Moses.
 - More laws about conquests, sharing out the land, & things to do once settled.
 - They're ready to go, but 1st need law again - *Deuteronomy*.



Balaam (Nm 24)

- The Moabites & Ammonites were descendants of Lot (by incest). They called God Chemosh. (God did not reveal His name until Moses). Their practices were inconsistent with what God had revealed about Himself and asked for from the Israelites, the Covenant, the Law, etc.
- The unfaithfulness of the second generation culminates on the plains of Moab. There Israel is seduced and worships Baal of Peor, a Moabite god. The Israelites are led into pagan cults, intermarrying (Nm 25). God: no hanging out with the Moabites, Midianites, etc.
- The prophet, Balaam, sent to curse the Israelites, is used by God to deliver a prophecy that a star shall rise over Jacob and the staff of leadership will rise from Israel. Christmas liturgy relates Balaam's star to the star of Bethlehem.
- Similarities between this story and the golden calf episode. Worship of the false god & ritual immorality, punished with slaughter of Israelites by Levites/Phineas.



No Foreigners

God's commands before entering Jericho on the plains of Moab: Nm 33:50

Say to the people of Israel, When you pass over the Jordan into the land of Canaan, then you shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, & destroy all their figured stones, & destroy all their molten images, & demolish all their high places; & you shall take possession of the land & settle in it, for I have given the land to you to possess it.

You shall inherit the land by lot according to your families; to a large tribe you shall give a large inheritance, & to a small tribe you shall give a small inheritance; wherever the lot falls to any man, that shall be his; according to the tribes of your fathers you shall inherit.

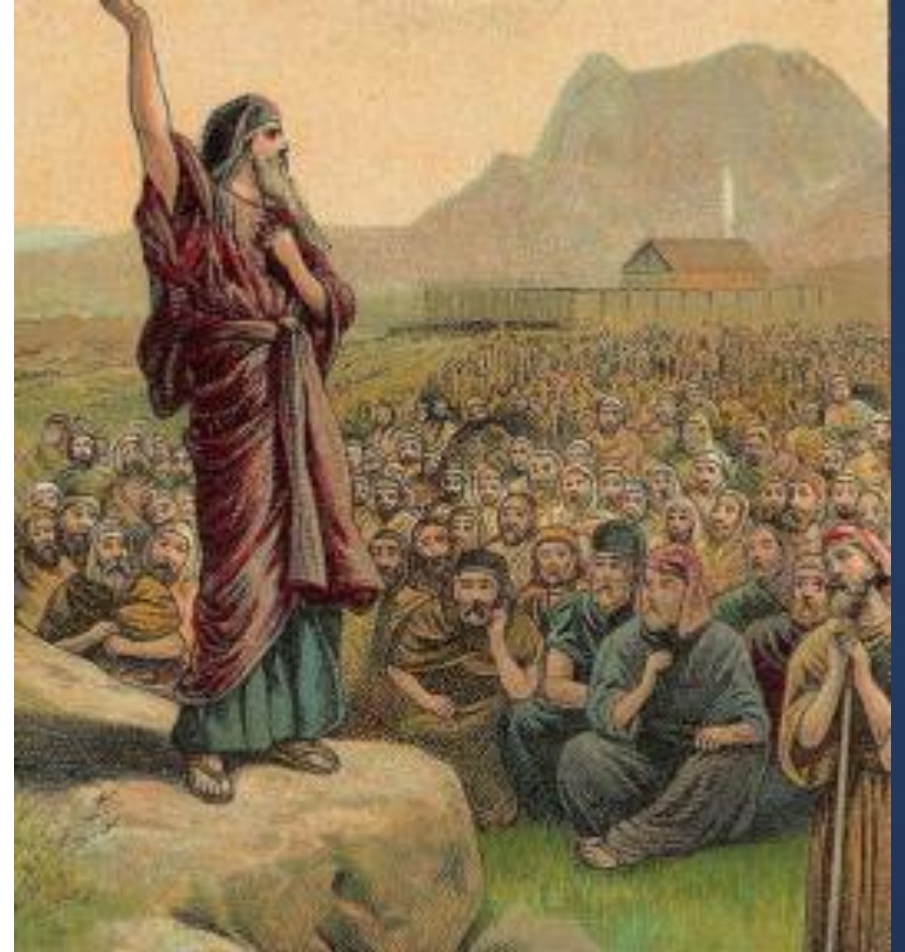
But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then those of them whom you let remain shall be as pricks in your eyes & thorns in your sides, & they shall trouble you in the land where you dwell. And I will do to you as I thought to do to them."



Deuteronomy

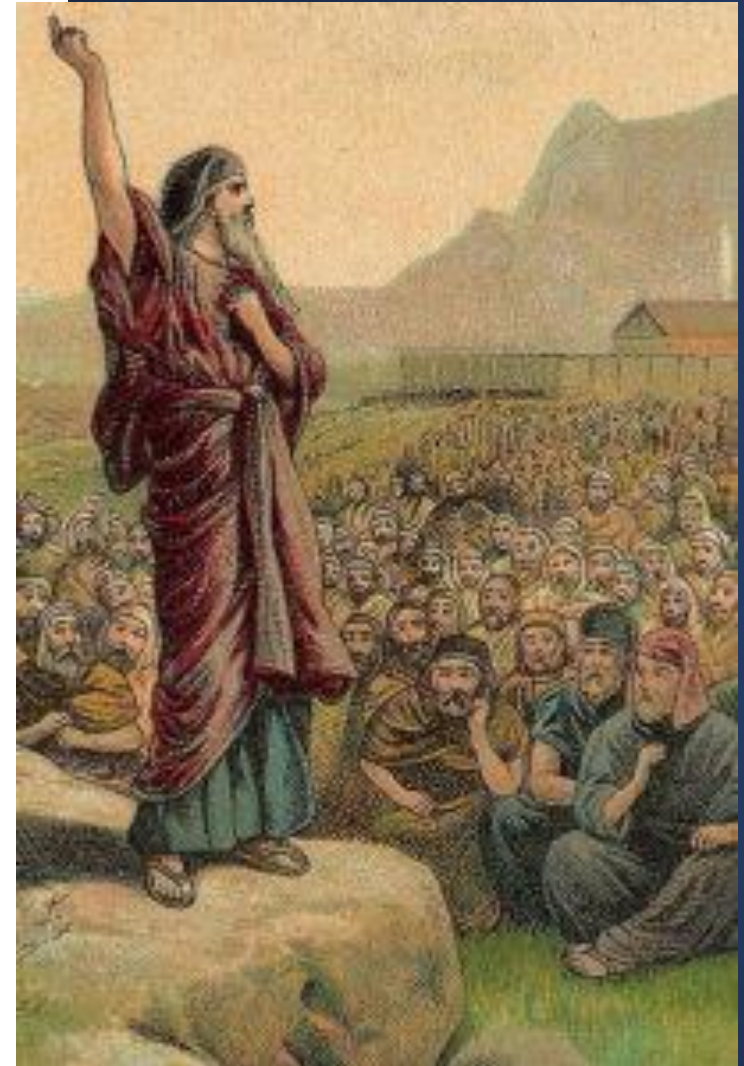
The Message: 1 God, 1 People, 1 Temple (Dt 12), 1 Land, 1 Law.


- At Moab, getting ready to enter Jericho. Moses' last address, rules & blessings.
- Historical Intro - review
- The Law
- Joshua succeeds, canticle of Moses, blessings on the tribes, & death.
- Correlation between
 - faithfulness to the covenant & settlement on the land;
 - infidelity & exile. – Israel can't blame God for not keeping his promises, their sins brought about the exile.
- Rebellion, punishment, repentance, salvation cycle. Call to faithfulness.
- Reading Deuteronomy in light of the New Testament: unity finds its fulfillment in Christ.
- Instructed to appoint judges 16; future kings
- Entering the promised land: God will go before you. Joshua will lead.
- Moses dies 120. Mourn 30 days & Joshua takes over.



Reading *Deuteronomy*: a 'Second' Law

- Written 40 years after the Exodus & idolatry of Baal Peor (Num 25), these are laws that take into account that the people *won't* always be holy. A middle ground that doesn't reflect the expectations of God, but does bring the people closer to the good.
- Given by Moses, not God. Jesus explained it as a law for the hardhearted (Mt 19:8), a concession to Israel's stubbornness. The people can't live up to the law of Sinai, so Moses grants permissions that seem at odds with the covenant at Sinai, eg divorce & remarriage (Dt 24:1-4; Mt 19: 8), taking foreign slave wives, genocidal warfare. These concessions are "lesser evils" (eg they are instructed to slay the Canaanites because if don't they will end up worshipping their gods).
- God later explains through the prophet Ezekiel, "I gave them statutes that were not good, & ordinances through which they could not live" (Ez 20:25). God had not abandoned the idea that the people could ever be holy, & Moses reminded Israel of the call to holiness, requiring them to make sacrificial offerings at a central sanctuary.
- The law won't save the Israelites from the curses of breaking the covenant. Moses warns them of exile "if you do not hearken to the voice of the Lord". Moses says that, when this happens, God will show mercy "if you & your children return to the Lord, your God, & heed His voice", & save them. The curses will finally bring them to repentance. Then, "the Lord, your God, will circumcise your hearts & the hearts of your descendants, that you may love the Lord, your God with all your heart & all your soul & so may live". Moses initially ordered the people to circumcise their hearts (Dt 10:16), but at the end of Deuteronomy he recognizes that Israel is incapable of that. Only the grace of God can change their hearts. This is the promise the prophets teach Israel to hope for during its years of exile & captivity.
- Promises: God will give the people a new heart, taking away their hearts of stone (Ez 36:22-28). God will write His law upon the hearts of the people (Jer 31:31-33). These promises await the coming of Jesus Christ for their fulfillment. Moses had prophesied the coming of "a prophet like me" (Dt 18:15). Jesus will be this prophet (Jn 6:14; 7:40; Acts 3:22; 7:37).





"The Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend." Moses' prayer is characteristic of contemplative prayer by which God's servant remains faithful to his mission. Moses converses with God often & at length, climbing the mountain to hear & entreat him & coming down to the people to repeat the words of his God for their guidance. Moses "is entrusted with all my house. With him I speak face to face, clearly, not in riddles," (CCC, 2576)

"Moses was very humble, more so than anyone else on the face of the earth." (Nm 12:3)

