

The Old Testament



Lesson 4: The Book of Leviticus to Joshua

St Mark's Coptic Orthodox Church, London
Preservants Course

The Old Testament

- The focus of the Old and New Testaments is Christ.
- The OT and NT are one book (one story).
- The OT reveals God's plan and the NT is the fulfillment of that plan.
- The NT is hidden in the OT, and the OT is revealed in the NT.

Summary of Genesis

- God created us on his image and likeness.
- Through the transgression, death entered.
- Promise of salvation: “The seed of the woman will crush the head the head of the serpent.”
- God showed them the need for sacrifice.
- God’s covenant with Noah.
- God’s covenant with Abraham
- The nation of Israel moved to Egypt.

The Book of Exodus

- The Israelites in bitter bondage for 400 years.
- The Lord sent Moses to free the people.
- Salvation through blood of the Paschal Lamb
- They crossed the Red Sea (Baptism) into the wilderness (our earthly sojourn).
- God guided them and dwelt among them (the Tabernacle)
- Moses received the covenant at Mount Sinai

Overview of Exodus to Deuteronomy

- Exodus to Deuteronomy reveal to us our spiritual journey to the Kingdom of Heaven
- This is a journey which Christ has completed on our behalf.

Christ	Book
Baptised	Exodus
Sanctified	Leviticus
Led into the wilderness to be tested	Numbers
Defeated Satan by the commandment	Deuteronomy

The Book of Leviticus

- Title: Leviticus - related to the Levites
- Theme:
 - Be “clean
 - Be “holy”
- *For I am the LORD who brings you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. You shall therefore be **holy**, for I am **holy**. (Lev. 11:45)*

Overview of Leviticus

- The sacrifices
- The Cleanliness Code (dietary laws, leprosy ...)
- The Day of Atonement
- The Holiness Code
- The Feasts

Clean vs holy

- The word clean (“tahor”) mentioned about 50 times out of 150 times in the OT
- The word holy (“qadosh”) mentioned about 80 times (out of 400 times in the OT).
- Clean: fitness to be in the presence of God.
- Holy:
 - set apart for God
 - reflecting his character

The Sacrifices

- Cannot be cleansed without shedding of blood.
- Five sacrifices:
 1. The burnt offering,
 2. The grain offering
 3. The peace offering
 4. Sin offering
 5. Guilt offering
- These all **collectively** point to the one sacrifice of Christ
- Sacrifice appeases God's wrath, and reconciles us with God, removes sin.
- Hebrews 10:19

The Priesthood

- Aaron, a high priest, and his sons, as priests were ordained and consecrated to offer sacrifices
- Aaron had to offer sacrifices on behalf of himself and for the congregation
- Aaron foreshadows Christ, the High Priest, who is both priest and sacrifice at once.
- Christ our High Priest is blameless.

The Cleanliness code

- Clean and Unclean animals
 - Unclean animals symbolise passions (e.g. Lust, envy, anger)
 - Eg “Flying insects that creep on earth” -> we cannot love God and mammon at the same time.
 - Clean animals: godly virtues
- Laws concerning leprosy, leprous garments & houses, purification laws for healed lepers
- Purification after childbirth
- Laws concerning bodily discharges.



Cloven Hooves + Chews Cud



The Day of Atonement (Lev. 16)

- Atonement (“at one”): reconciliation
- Cleanses and reconsecrates
- Once a year the priest entered the Holy of Holies with the blood of a sacrifice
- All the sins of the people committed that year were forgiven.
- Christ the one sacrifice, who eternally mediates before us in heaven (the Holy of Holies)
- The one eternal sacrifice -> the Eucharist

The Holiness Code

- Holy = Set apart, reflecting God's character.
- Laws of sexual morality:
 - laws against incest, Homosexuality, cross-dressing
- Laws of social justice
 - Fair wages, honest dealings, regard for the elderly and the immigrant, judging righteously/impartially
- Penalties for Law breakers (God is just)
- Acceptable and unacceptable offerings
- Holiness and love of God and neighbour are connected

The Feasts of the Lord

- Time is holy.
- Types of feasts
 - Daily Sacrifice
 - Weekly Feast: Sabbath
 - Annual Feasts
 - Jubilee (every 50 years) – remission of all debts

The Jewish Feasts point to Christ

Jewish Feast	Christian event/Feast
Pascha	Great Friday
Unleavened Bread	Burial
First Fruits	Resurrection
Pentecost	Pentecost
Tabernacles	Feast of Transfiguration
Trumpets	Second Coming
Atonement	

- The Feasts were also connected with the agricultural season.
- Feasts were joyous -> Our joy is in Christ.

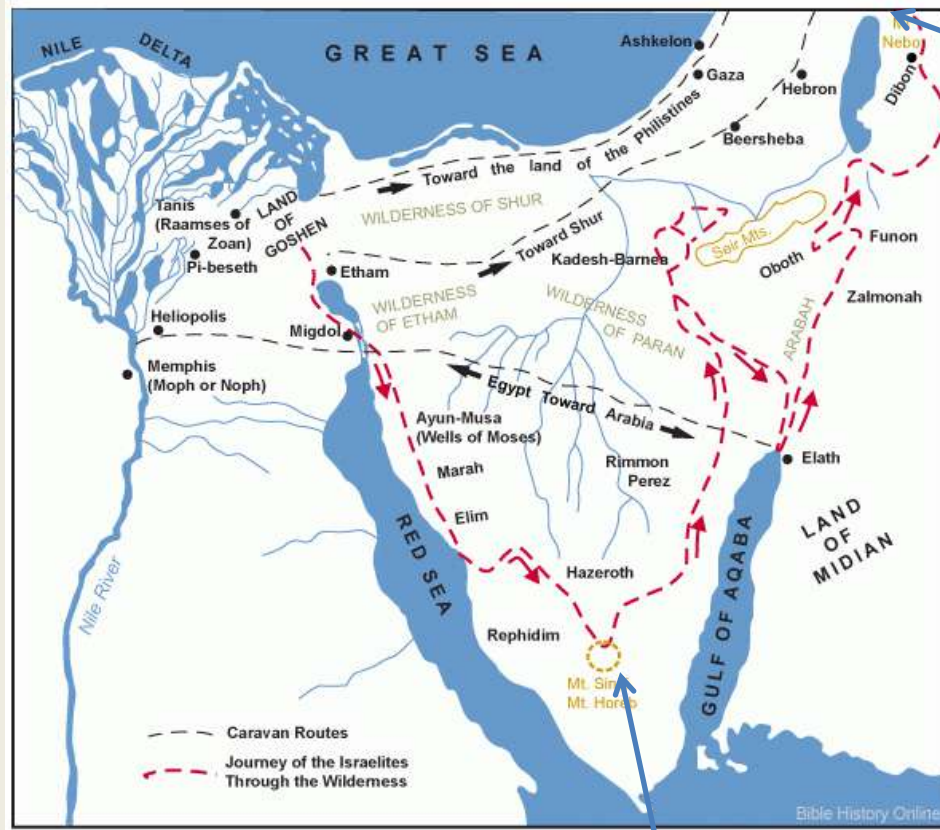
The Book of Numbers

- God guides his people through the wilderness (this world) to the Promised Land (heaven)
- Title of book derived from the Septuagint name, because there was a census of the two generations in the wilderness.
- Only men, aged 20, and above were counted in the census → the Church Militant
- Hebrew title: “In the Wilderness”

- Exodus: Egypt -> Mount Sinai (3 months)
- Numbers: Mount Sinai -> plains of Moab (opposite Jericho). (38 years)
- The people continue their disobedience, murmurings and their rebellions against Moses.
- As a result they wandered for 38 years in the wilderness.

Location of Numbers

- Mt Sinai to the Promised Land



Plains of Moab

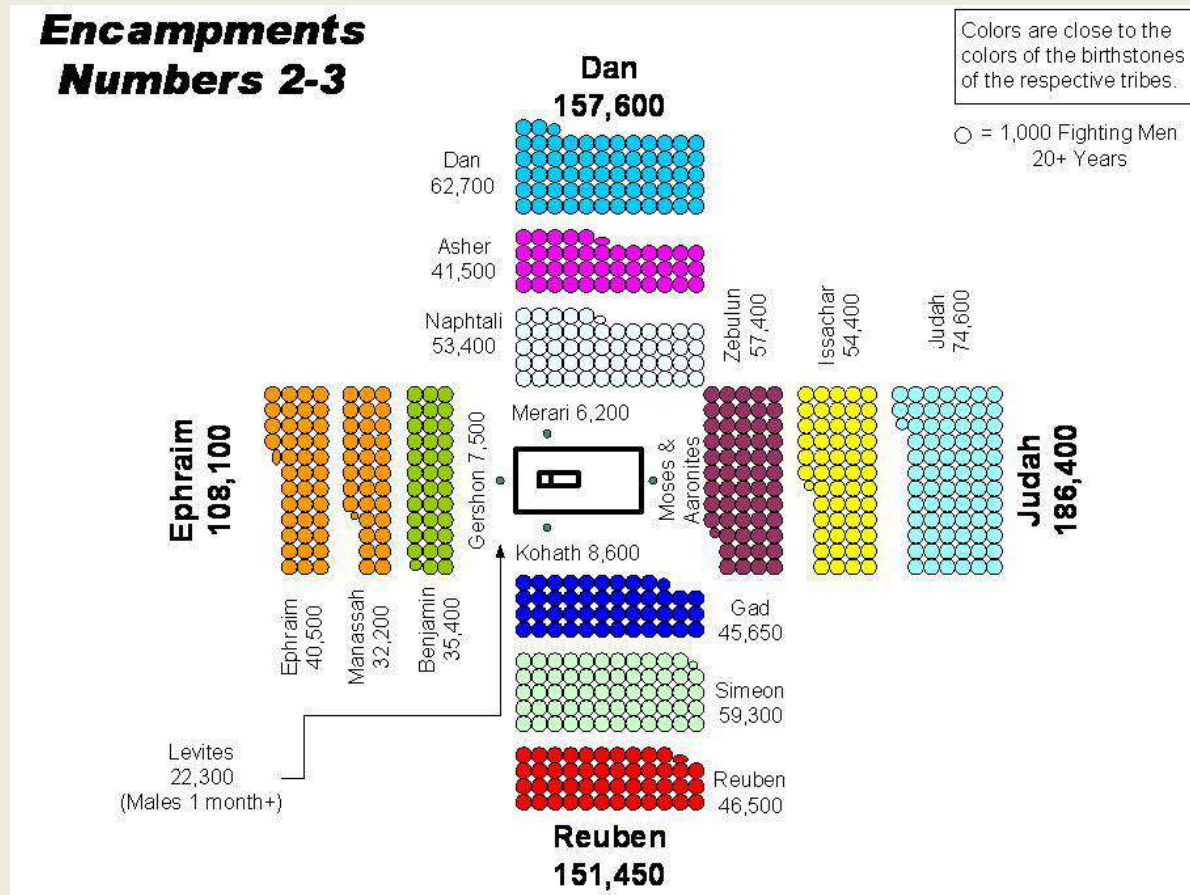
Mount Sinai

Structure of Numbers

- Chapters 1-25: The First Generation (census)
 - 1-10: At Mount Sinai preparing to leave
 - 11-25: Mount Sinai to Moab
 - Entire generation of fighting men died (except Joshua and Caleb)
- Chapters 26-36: The Second Generation
 - Second census (Numbers 26)

The Tribal arrangements

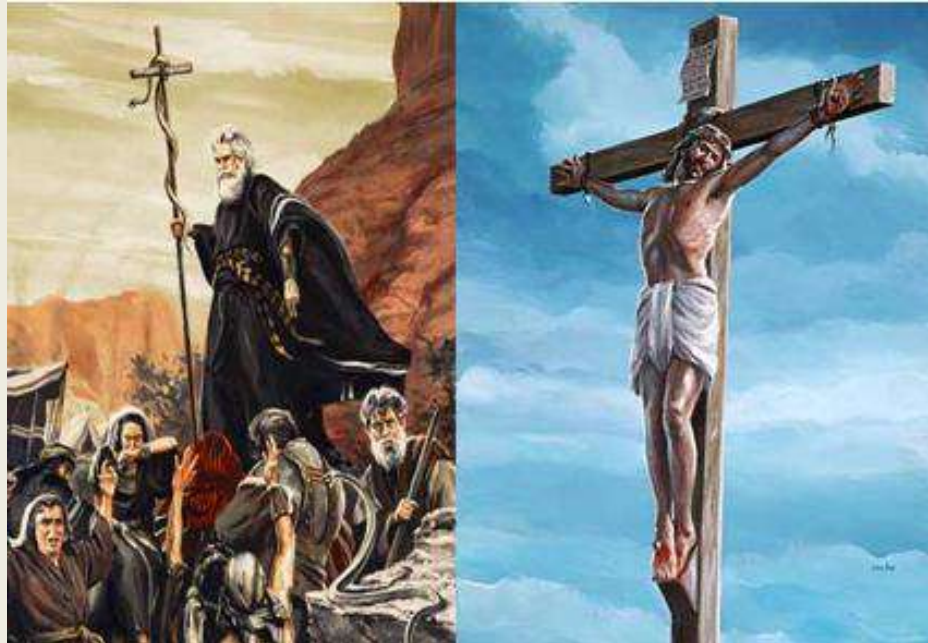
- Tribes were encamped in the form of a cross



- The tribes were encamped in form of a cross.
 - Tabernacle at the centre (Christ)
 - Levites surrounded tabernacle (Priests , deacons)
 - The twelve tribes arranged in form of Cross (Laity)
 - Judah at the front (Christ from Judah is our leader)
- Christ is the centre and focus of the Church:
church is priest, deacons and laymen.
- Christ is in our midst

Grumbling and rebellion

- Numbers Ch 14 mentions that the Israelites tested the Lord 10 times, e.g.
 - lusted for meat, and rejected the manna (Numbers 11). The Lord gave them quail.
 - Miriam and Aaron murmur against the authority of Moses → Miriam became leprous. (Num 12)
 - Rebellion against Moses and Aaron by sons of Reuben and tribe of Kohath (Num 16-17)
 - Murmur against Moses (Num 21) → bronze serpent
 - Lack of faith in God's power (twelve spies)



And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:14)

Application

- Our focus should be the Kingdom of Heaven
- Christian life characterised by thankfulness:
 - “nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. ” (1 Cor .10:10)
 - “In everything give thanks” (1 Thess 5:18)
- Honouring the Church Authority
 - Obedience to church teaching to preserve unity
 - ‘But hold His priests in honor.’ [Sir. 7:31]

The Book of Deuteronomy

- Deuteronomy = “second Law”.
- Delivered in the 40th year to the second generation on the plains of Moab.
- Emphasises obedience out of love.
- New laws introduced to cater for the life in the Promised Land (e.g. Laws for a king, centralisation of worship)
- Greater emphasis on social justice (poor, widows, orphans, slaves ...)

The Shema

- ⁴ “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God,
the LORD *is* one! You shall love the LORD your
God with all your heart, with all your soul, and
with all your strength. (Deuteronomy 6:4-6)

- "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." (Deut. 8:3)
- You shall not tempt the LORD your God (Deut. 6:16)
- You shall fear the Lord your God and serve Him. (Deut 6:13)

The book of Joshua

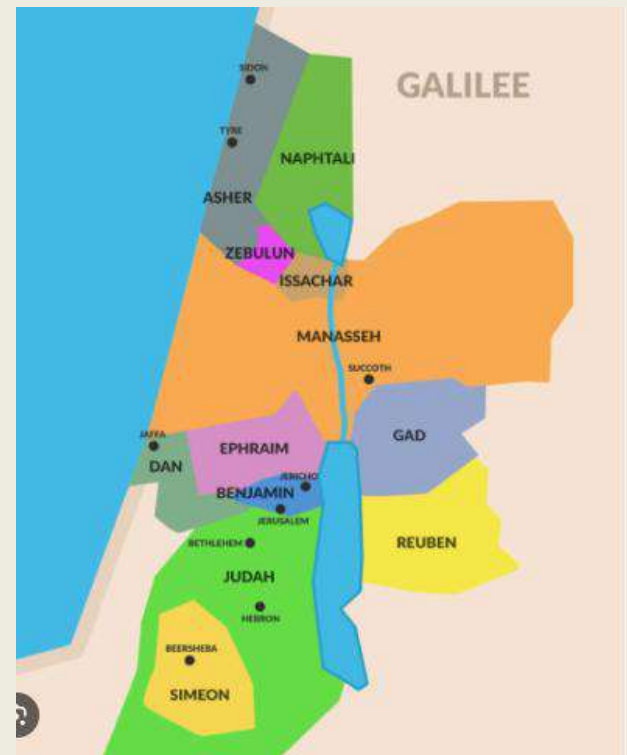
- Moses struck the rock twice
- Moses could only look at the promised land from a mountain but he could not enter it.
- The Law not can lead us into the kingdom.
- Joshua is the one who lead them into the Promised Land
- We cannot enter the Kingdom of heaven by our own righteousness but through the grace of Christ Jesus.

The Battles in Canaan

- After entering the land they had to drive out seven pagan nations before they could rest.
- The battles symbolise the struggle against the 7 passions to inherit the kingdom of heaven.
- Joshua led them into battle. We are victorious in Christ.
- The tribes fought for their brethren to win the land -> life of fellowship and concern for others

Distribution of the Land

- The Land was distributed among the 12 tribes.
- The kingdom of heaven is accessible to all:
 - Monastics vs weddings.
 - Rich and poor.
 - Clergy and laity.
 - Jews and Gentiles (Rahab)



Summary

- If we ..
 - Have faith in Christ, the incarnate God who was born in the fulness of time (Genesis)
 - to save us from the bondage of sin (Exodus),
 - And are sanctified by the Holy Spirit (Leviticus)
 - And are led by Him (Numbers)
 - And live a life of obedience (Deuteronomy)
- Then we will enjoy eternal rest in His Kingdom (Joshua)