

Handout: Numbers Lesson 7

The creation of the holy nation of Israel is a story told in three acts:

- Act I: the Exodus liberation and journey to Mt. Sinai
- Act II: the covenant ratification, the giving of the Law and the journey from Sinai to Kadesh-Barnea
- Act III: the birth of a new generation in the wilderness years and their preparation to conquer the Promised Land on the Plains of Moab

Chapter 14 is divided into four parts:

1. Israel's rebellion (verses 1-9).
2. God's anger and Moses' intercession (verses 10-19).
3. Yahweh's judgment and the people's punishment (verses 20-38).
4. The abortive attempt to conquer Canaan (verses 39-45).

The Israelite's Complaints	Yahweh's Judgment
<i>Would to God we had died in Egypt, or even that we had died in this desert!</i> (14:2b)	<i>In this desert your dead bodies will fall, all you who were counted in the census, from the age of twenty years and over who have muttered against me.</i>
<i>We cannot attack these people; they are stronger than we are</i> (13:31).	<i>I swear none of you will enter the country where I swore most solemnly to settle you ...</i> (14:30)
<i>And they began disparaging the country they had reconnoitered to the Israelites, saying, 'The country we have been to reconnoiter is a country that devours its inhabitants' (13: 32). Why had Yahweh brought us to this country, for us to perish by the sword and our wives and children to be seized as booty (14:3)?</i>	<i>Your children, who you said would be seized as booty, will be the ones whom I shall bring in so that they get to know the country you disdained, but, as for you, your dead bodies will fall in this desert and your children will be nomads in the desert for forty years, bearing the consequences of your faithlessness, until the last one of you lies dead in the desert</i> (14:31-33)
<i>And they said to one another, 'Let us appoint a leader and go back to Egypt'</i> (14:4).	<i>In this desert, to the last man, they shall die</i> (14:35b).

Chapter 15 is divided into three parts:

1. Laws that will take effect when the people live in Canaan (verses 1-21)
2. Laws concerning unintentional and intentional sins and a judgment for the intentional sin of working on the Sabbath (verses 22-36)
3. A reminder of the need for obedience and separateness from the Gentile world (verses 37-41)

The Series of Seven Laws in Numbers 15:1-31:

1. The law for grain offerings and wine libations with each lamb (verses 3-5).
2. The law for grain offerings and wine libations with a ram (verse 6).
3. The law for grain offerings and wine libations with a young bull (verses 7-9).
4. The law for offering the first-fruits of the bread dough to God (verses 17-21).
5. The law for the unintentional sin offering of the whole community (verses 22-26).
6. The law for the unintentional sin offering of an individual (verses 27-29).
7. The law for imposing exile for a defiant sin (verses 30-31).