

VILLAGE

CHURCH

Bible Study Notes

Intro Question: What's is the dirtiest job you have ever done?

Pray: For God to help us understand the book of Numbers for our lives.

Read: Numbers 16:1-7 & 17:1-13

Context:

- Who is Aaron & what is the role of the priest/high priest in Israel?
- How does the concept of 'unclean' show us how God feels about sin?

What does the text say & mean (observe/comprehend):

- Why are the Levites rising up against Moses in 16:1-7?
- What does God make clear in chapter 17? How does he do it?

How does the text point forward to Jesus:

- Have a look at Hebrews 7:23-28, also consider how Numbers 17 might point forward to Jesus' resurrection.

What does the text mean for us (apply):

- How does the rebellion of the Levites show us the nature of our sin?
What did they want? How does that speak to your life?
- How do we know for sure that Jesus can cleanse us from our sin? And what is the significance? See Hebrews 12:1-2
- Do you feel unclean/dirty when you sin? How do you remind yourself of how God sees you in Christ?

Pray: that we would find joy in being cleansed from our sins

Homework: Read Numbers 16-19

Remind: fill out AM survey

Praying to see 10% of the northern suburbs in gospel-centred churches & 250 by 2030 at Village Church who grow, gather, give & go, in love & joy to the glory of God

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Numbers is the fourth book in what is called the “Pentateuch”, the five books of the Torah. These serves as the foundational books of the people of Israel, giving context to their relationship with Yahweh, the God who is and who created all things.

Numbers takes place in the Wilderness. Between the Exodus, where God rescues Israel out of slavery to Egypt, and the Promised Land, where Israel will experience the fullness of God’s blessings. After rescuing Israel, Yahweh covenanted with Israel. He promised them blessing but in response requires obedience to his good law. The question of Numbers is, will Israel trust God and obey? Or will they rebel as they have already done in Exodus and Leviticus. And, how will God respond if they do?

For Christians today. We too live in the wilderness. In the time between our salvation by faith in Christ, and our enjoying the fullness of eternity in the promised land of the new creation. We too are called to obey Christ by faith.

Context:

- **Who is Aaron & what is the role of the priest/high priest in Israel?**

Aaron and his descendents were chosen by God to be the High Priests of Israel. The role of the priest was to care for the tabernacle where God’s presence dwelled. This included bringing the sacrifices on behalf of the people that atoned for their sins - one way this was symbolised was through purification rituals of washing with clean water. The High Priest had the most important role. Once a year he would take a lamb as an offering for all the sins of the people into the Most Holy Place where God dwelled.

- **How does the concept of ‘unclean’ show us how God feels about sin?**

If you have ever been around someone with open sores - that’s kind of how God feels about sin. Unclean is often connected to the smell of death or decay - because that’s the consequence and nature of sin.

What does the text say & mean (observe/comprehend):

- **Why are the Levites rising up against Moses in 16:1-7?**

It seems like there is a perceived issue of equality. The Levites who are not priests, desire to be considered as equally holy to those who are. They resent Moses & Aaron’s authority. They may also desire some of the ‘privileges of the Priesthood’ which is a greater share of the meat from offerings (as one example).

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- **What does God make clear in chapter 17? How does he do it?**

God is clear in who his chosen High Priest is. He does that through a supernatural work of causing a 'dead' staff to sprout into life.

How does the text point forward to Jesus:

- **Have a look at Hebrews 7:23-28, also consider how Numbers 17 might point forward to Jesus' resurrection.**

Jesus is the ultimate High Priest who has been revealed by God through the supernatural work of life coming out of death. The dead staff reminds us of Jesus on the cross, only for life to sprout on the third day.

What does the text mean for us (apply):

- **How does the rebellion of the Levites show us the nature of our sin? What did they want? How does that speak to your life?**

Encourage people to reflect on their own desire for things God has not given them (e.g. wealth, a certain lifestyle or forms of physical attributes). Encourage people to reflect on why trying to have or be something we aren't is foolish/ugly.

- **How do we know for sure that Jesus can cleanse us from our sin? And what is the significance? See Hebrews 12:1-2**

Encourage people to reflect on the certainty that Jesus' resurrection brings. Using Hebrews 12:1-2, have a think about what a privilege it is to draw near to God and how we do that.

- **Do you feel unclean/dirty when you sin? How do you remind yourself of how God sees you in Christ?**

People will feel different things about their sin. It's worth taking time to reflect on why we should feel some guilt/uncleanness and how we should always turn to Jesus in our sin to cleanse us. Remembering that God sees us as 'clean' because of Christ, we might be disgusted with ourselves but if we are washed clean by Christ - he isn't.